

THE SIEGE AND RELIEF  
OF  
LEYDEN



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IN 1574**

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WITH THREE MAPS



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## INTRODUCTION

*This Essay by Robert Fruin, originally written to commemorate the three-hundredth anniversary of the Relief of Leyden in 1574, presents an altogether satisfying account of one of the most important, and, at the same time, dramatic episodes in the history of the world. It answers the two essential requirements of the best historical narrative, — it is eminently readable, and it is eminently trustworthy. In literary merit it cannot, indeed, surpass Motley's account of the same event, so familiar to many Anglo-Saxon readers; but it does surpass it in accuracy, and in fulness of detailed knowledge. Motley knew very little and therefore told very little about the parties and divisions inside the besieged City; and his account of the amphibious operations of the relief, though splendid in its general outlines, cannot be followed in detail, for want of local knowledge on his part, and for want of maps in his volumes. In these two respects, Fruin's Essay and the maps with which it is here accompanied, will be found to add fresh interest, and in some respects to put a new complexion on the events of the Siege and Relief.*

*The reasons why this episode is of supreme importance in the history of Holland and of the whole world, are summed up in a masterly manner in the early pages of Fruin's Essay below. The Relief of Leyden claims, indeed, an equal place with the Defeat of the Armada as having given the decisive check to the conquest of Europe by the Spanish Monarchy and by the Catholic Reaction. Leyden was the first event to stem the tide. Fourteen years later, after the English victory over the Armada, the tide began to roll back. But the Armada would not have been defeated, nor the Elizabethan regime saved in England, if Holland had not first been saved in its last extremity by the Relief of Leyden.*

*And the importance of the Relief in its results is equalled by the strange picturesqueness of its method of accomplishment. The letting in of the waters (not indeed of the sea, as is often supposed, but of the rivers of South Holland) upon the meadows and low-lying "polders"; the overland voyage of the boats that carried the "Beggars" of Zeeland to the rescue; the flight of the finest infantry in the world before the onslaught of the water and its fierce children, — this tale is not surpassed for strangeness by any of the famous romances of history, neither by the tale that tells how a peasant girl overthrew the veteran English archers at the crisis of the Hundred Years' War, nor by the*

*story of how Garibaldi destroyed an army and a Kingdom by a handful of volunteers in mufti or red shirts.*

*Here, too, we have the defeat of a great professional army by strange means. The Dutch nation of merchants, fishermen and farmers were singularly deficient in feudal or military tradition, and at this period of their national history had no organised military force that could look the Spaniards in the face. In the following generation they acquired such a force under that great scientific soldier, Prince Maurice, — not without the help of the „fighting Veres” and their English regiments in the pay of the States. But in 1574 neither the Dutch themselves nor the German and English allies whom they hired, were of any real service in the field. From the sea must their help come, from the skill and fury of their fishermen and sailors, from the dykes and waters of their land, from the strength of the walls of their ancient cities, and from their own readiness to endure starvation behind those walls, to drop dead in the streets and inner chambers rather than yield to the most abominable of all human tyrannies. And above and behind the whole resistance, brooded the spirit of William of Orange, the wisest, gentlest and bravest man who ever led a nation.*

*This translation by my sister-in-law is made by one familiar, since childhood, with both the Dutch and the English languages. The translation has been revised and the notes written by Professor Geyl of London University, who so ably represents Dutch history and culture in this country. He tells me what it may interest British readers to learn, that Fruin was of English origin. "His grandfather was a Warwickshire paper factory owner, who emigrated after great business losses, intending to go to America, but settled at Rotterdam. His son, Fruin's father, was a dispensing chemist at Rotterdam. The name was originally Frewen or Frewin".*

*Robert Fruin was born in 1823 and died in 1897. In 1860 he became Professor of History in the University of Leyden. Mr. Gooch, in his "History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century", speaks of him as "the Ranke of Holland". And if his works were in a language more generally understood than Dutch, his reputation would certainly stand nearer to Ranke's than it actually does. He did not indeed write a series of complete opera magna like the great German. But the comparison with Ranke is frequently made by those who best know Fruin's writings and the spirit in which he conducted his researches into the past.*

*In 1857 he published "Tien jaren uit den tachtig-*



jarigen oorlog", — *ten years of the Eighty Years War between Spain and Holland; the ten years in question were 1588—1598 the period in which, as he made clear, the Republic of the Seven Provinces was definitely established and made safe against a return of the foreign masters. Professor Geyl tells me that it is "perhaps the most completely successful work in Dutch historical literature, a classic in every respect. All the great problems of the history of the Dutch Republic are firmly indicated, — social and economic and military as well as political and constitutional history". Unfortunately, there has never been an English translation. In his own lifetime he was, over here, completely overshadowed by Motley. Yet the long essays that he wrote in the form of reviews of Motley's volumes showed him to be not only the profounder scholar, but one who understood the inner workings of Dutch religion, society and constitution of that early day, in a manner for which the brilliant and studious American had never had the time or training. I should be the last to depreciate the work of Motley — in spite of his constant unfairness to England and English policy under Elizabeth. Motley made the details of the heroic Dutch struggle familiar to scores of thousands of all classes in Victorian England. No man to-day can repeat such a feat as that; History has fallen on evil days*

*in its relation to the great reading public, partly because the supply of Motleys has run short, and partly because readers now seek slenderer fare than of old, preferring to dine off tinned meats and made dishes while their grandfathers cut from the joint. But no lover of Motley's volumes can fail, as he reads the following essay, to perceive that the full tale of the Dutch struggle for freedom is even more interesting and many-sided than Motley himself was aware.*

G. M. TREVELYAN

## THE SIEGE AND RELIEF OF LEYDEN IN 1574

In the year 1574 only two of the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands, namely Holland and Zeeland, were in rebellion against the King of Spain; the rest remained submissive, but in a state of extreme discontent. Without openly joining the rebels, they took every opportunity to complain about those very grievances that had led to the rebellion. But they obtained no redress, nor could they hope for any during the war, which was in part the cause of their grievances. Acts of violence committed by the underpaid soldiers, and excessive taxation in order to meet part at least of the cost of the militia, were the inevitable consequences of the war. Naturally discontent grew the longer its cause continued. It was only to be expected, and was foreseen both by friends and foes, that in the end complaints would lead to acts and finally to a general rising. The Government at Brussels was therefore anxious to pacify the rebellious provinces on any terms, provided their obedience to Church and King remained inviolate.

But a peace that enforced this dual obedience was intolerable to the rebels; for whatever the Government might pretend in its present embarrassed situation, the real intention of this double demand was the destruction both of political freedom and of liberty of conscience. Nor was there the slightest guarantee that the peace-terms would be fulfilled when those who had compelled the Government to concede them should have disarmed. Was it not a well-known fact that Rome could absolve a popish government from its obligations and promises? Once the rebels had laid down their arms, who could prevent the Government from acting according to its own conception of its duty to Church and Monarchy? The struggle, which Holland and Zeeland had entered upon, was a struggle for life and death, in which there could be no compromise. Reconciliation with the King of Spain was impossible. It was only with their compatriots in the other provinces that they could come to terms, since their interests and wishes were the same. Thus the war would have to be carried on, until everyone had lost patience, and made common cause with the rebels in order to throw off the Spanish yoke.

But not everyone was of this opinion. The chances seemed too unequal, the struggle too desper-

ate. How long might not the two provinces be obliged to carry on the fight single-handed? In the meantime the country was being ruined, and the people were becoming demoralised by the cruelties they endured and committed. Would it not be advisable immediately to conclude a tolerable peace, which at least would bring relief and tranquility? The Catholics would then remain in the country, though they might have to put up with the loss of a few rights and liberties; while the Protestants, if need be, could retire into exile where they might serve God according to their belief. Such were the thoughts of many despondent citizens, and they were shared even by Prince William's friend and confidant, Marnix of St. Aldegonde, when in his captivity he was brought up against the superior force of the enemy and felt the hopelessness of further resistance. He wrote letter after letter to the Prince to this effect, and even offered to act as mediator between him and the Spanish Government. The Prince, and all those who understood the state of affairs in the way that he did, dreaded the danger of entering into negotiations, which would be very difficult to break off, when once alluring visions of peace and prosperity had taken hold of men's minds. On the other hand they could not afford to refuse to treat

for peace and appear to take up an irreconcilable attitude. So with the utmost caution they began negotiations during the investment of Leyden, and continued them at Breda after the deliverance of the town. With superlative skill the Prince conducted them through many months, and in the end broke them off only when the impossibility of making peace had become clear to everyone. Thus he succeeded in prolonging the war, in spite of its hardships, until at last the Spanish Fury <sup>1)</sup> drove the whole of the Netherlands to desperation, while at the same time the death of the Governor <sup>2)</sup> and the weak interregnum of the Council of State, presented an opportunity to shake off the intolerable yoke and conclude the Pacification of Ghent with the provinces which had already risen against Spain <sup>3)</sup>. Henceforth Holland and Zeeland were to be free for ever.

This event was due in the first place to William of Orange; but if Leyden had not been saved, it would have been far more difficult for him to do all that he did. When the peace-negotiations were opened at Breda, Leyden had been delivered, and the whole of South Holland, except Haarlem and Amsterdam, had been purged of the enemy. A glorious example had shown what might be accomplished by daring and self-sacrifice. Both the

desire for peace and the need of it were considerably diminished in Holland, and the conviction became established that at any rate open war was preferable to a false peace. The Prince and the States, who were thoroughly imbued with his spirit, could now take the lead in the negotiations, and were not driven by discouragement in the people to accept terms which they felt to be unacceptable. When finally they broke off negotiations and resumed armed resistance, the majority of the nation supported them, and no further reluctance on the part of the citizens was to be feared.

Very different would the course of events have been, if the enemy had succeeded in capturing Leyden before the opening of the negotiations. In that case they would have commanded the open country as far as the Maas; they would have invested Delft, as they had done Leyden; the towns on the Maas would have been threatened, at least from the landward side; moreover the terrible suffering of Leyden, which had found safety only in submission to the King, would have powerfully influenced the spirit of the towns which were in daily expectation of a similar fate and were offered the same means of escape. Would it have then been possible to refuse the seductive promises of a victorious enemy? In the midst of such

disasters thousands would have hankered after peace, who, now that Leyden was relieved and the open country delivered from the enemy, sternly rejected all thought of surrender or exile. It is true that South Holland <sup>1)</sup> was only one of the three strongholds of the rebellion. We must not forget North Holland and Zeeland, to say nothing of Bommel and Buren, which were all at that time maintaining their resistance not unsuccessfully. Zeeland had even gained a considerable advantage that very year by the capture of Middelburg. But Prince William's position was based mainly on the middle district, which kept north and south together, and whose large towns provided most of his revenues. Though we cannot assume that he and his friends would have given up the struggle if Leyden had been lost and South Holland had been reduced to despair, it is uncertain whether under the shadow of such a disaster, the war-party in the States Assembly could have maintained its supremacy. In any case the issue of the siege was bound to produce a marked effect upon the fate of the country. Leyden saved would everywhere raise men's courage, Leyden lost would cast it down; and only very little was needed to turn the balance either towards war or towards peace. Among the series of historical events, which gave birth to



Dutch freedom and national existence, the relief of Leyden stands foremost in importance.

Has not the liberation of the Netherlands reacted in its turn upon the whole of Europe? It was bound to make a vast difference to Belgium, to Germany, and especially to England, whether the Netherlands became a free state, or was annexed as a province to Spain. Imagine what would have happened if during the Thirty Years' War the Spanish army had not been kept busy by the Dutch Republic, but had been at liberty to turn towards Germany and lend its support to the Emperor and the Catholic reaction; or if the Republic of the United Netherlands had not existed during Louis the Fourteenth's wars of conquest, or during the misrule of the last two Stuarts. It is never possible to affirm with any certainty what the course of history would have been if a given event had not occurred; but we venture to say that in all probability the after-effects of the heroic fortitude of our ancestors in 1574 were felt far beyond the limits of their own country and of their own period. An event of such importance in the world's continuous struggle for freedom, deserves to be recalled to the imagination as clearly and vividly as possible.

## I

We always speak of the siege of Leyden; but Leyden was never actually besieged like Haarlem and Alkmaar; it was only blockaded and reduced to starvation. The enemy dug no trenches in order to approach and breach the walls, and planted no batteries; nor did they ever attempt an assault. All these means were employed at Haarlem and Alkmaar, but not at Leyden. Nor was there ever much fighting. Except for a few serious sallies, skirmishing was the only form of combat, so that very few burghers were actually killed. Thus the siege of Leyden differs considerably from the two other sieges, though it is usual to speak of them together.

It was chiefly owing to their former experiences that the Spanish generals adopted such different tactics in the case of Leyden. Haarlem had not been captured by battery and assault; it had been forced to surrender, when by the loss of the Fuick<sup>1</sup>) it had been cut off from the lake by which alone supplies of food could reach it, and when finally the defeat on the Mannenpad<sup>2</sup>) had destroyed all hope of relief. Alkmaar also had been bombarded by heavy artillery and assaulted. But in spite of all the labour it had cost them to bring up their

heavy battering pieces and place them in position, the bombardment had not produced the desired effect, and the assault had been repulsed. Alva had taken the lesson to heart. A few days after he had broken up his camp before Alkmaar <sup>1)</sup>, he wrote a letter to the King explaining the new method of warfare which he meant to adopt: "I am now engaged in distributing the troops in carefully chosen quarters, from which they will be able to prevent the Beggars from drawing any further support from the country districts. I expect great success from this measure. By these means the rebels will be imprisoned in their towns, and will perish by starvation. Some wintry night, when the canals and ditches are frozen hard, I may succeed in surprising and overwhelming them". He at once began to act according to this new plan. In November he sent Baron de Chevraux to Waterland, and Francisco de Valdez to Rijnland <sup>2)</sup>. Valdez made himself master of the Hague without difficulty, then of 's-Gravezande and the half-finished fortress of Maaslandsluis (where Marnix van St. Aldegonde was taken prisoner), and finally of Vlaardingen, all within a very few days. But this was only a beginning in order to gain a firm footing: Leyden was his real goal. It was necessary that all communication between it and other

towns should be cut off, and after these first successes, this was the task that Valdez set himself. He did not meet with many difficulties, for Prince William was for the moment unable to undertake anything further in Holland, and the possession of Amsterdam and Haarlem gave the Spaniards the secure command of the Haarlem and Leyden Lakes, and of the rivers running from them towards Leyden. The Rhine too could easily be blocked to the east and west of the town. It was only on the south side, towards Delft and Gouda, that the blockade was difficult and remained incomplete, so that communications, though hindered were not entirely broken. Moreover the town was abundantly provisioned. After the loss of Haarlem, the corn that had been intended for that city, was retained at Leyden, and now came in very useful to its beleaguered inhabitants. During the five months of the first siege they suffered no privations. Just when they were beginning to grow anxious and to feel the need of stricter rationing, the siege was raised <sup>1</sup>). When the news came that Louis of Nassau was approaching with a considerable army from Germany and was expected to join forces with Prince William at Bommel, the enemy withdrew from around Leyden and retired towards Utrecht. This was the first and

only fruit of that great enterprise which had raised hopes in the rebels of so rich a harvest, but which ended in the terrible defeat on Mook Heath <sup>1</sup>). It was once more proved that no mere miscellaneous bands of German mercenaries, led by gallant and adventurous nobles, could hold their own in open battle against the experienced Spanish army under the command of first-rate generals. The troops of Valdez had not even taken part in the fight. While they were still on the march, their fellow soldiers had decided the battle without them.

Would the Spaniards return at once to their former positions? In the province of Utrecht, where they were for the moment, it was asserted that such was their intention; and indeed this seemed likely enough. But no one in Leyden would believe it. So overjoyed were the citizens at regaining their freedom, that they could not immediately be anxious about the future. As soon as the Spanish troops were gone, the town had dismissed its garrison and turned out its dissolute spendthrift governor de Noyelles. In those days such protectors were a necessary evil, only to be tolerated so long as protection were required. It was like a second relief when the garrison departed and the citizens could be their own masters once more. But without a military force it was im-

possible to drive the enemy out of the few strongholds which they still occupied; and yet now, if ever, was the right moment to attack the redoubts on the Kaag and the Oude Wetering, south of the Leyden Lake, which it was most important not to leave in the hands of the enemy. But no such attempt was made. All that was done was partially to demolish a couple of redoubts in the neighbourhood of the town, and to start building a fortification on the Rhine near Valkenburg, which was never even finished. At the urgent request of the Prince some provisions were laid in, but not enough for a lengthy siege. And indeed why should they be in such a hurry, while they did not yet know how complete the disaster on Mook Heath had been? And when once doubt as to this had become impossible, no time was left them. Just two months after the town-gates had been opened at the raising of the first siege, they had to be closed once more. In the night of May the 25th the enemy returned unexpectedly to their old quarters at Leyderdorp.

We must allow due credit to the Spanish general for the skill and energy with which he invested the town for the second time. It was most important to make the blockade complete, before the citizens were on their guard, and to allow them no

time to strengthen the garrison or revictual the city. In this Valdez was completely successful. His vanguard under Don Luis Gaytan left Amsterdam by water, and reached the Rhine by way of the Amstel and the Dracht, past the Oude Wetering and across the Brasemer Lake. They landed at Leyderdorp in the middle of the night, and at once began to fortify themselves in the old redoubts. At early dawn a party of Freebooters from Leyden, who were reconnoitring, fell into the trap laid for them by Don Luis, and were driven back with the loss of a few men, among whom was the brave Corporal Andries Allertsz, the only professional soldier in the service of the town. Convinced that after this failure no second sortie would be attempted, the Spanish general, leaving a small force at Leyderdorp, withdrew with the rest along the Weypoortsche road, by Zoeterwoude, thence by the Stompwyker road to Leidschendam, and so by Voorburg to the Hague. At all these places he posted a few soldiers in their old quarters. He met with no resistance anywhere except at the Geestbrug, where Nicolaas Ruichaver with a handful of men skirmished with him long enough to allow the Beggars to escape from the Hague to Delft. On the evening of the day when he had reached Leyderdorp, Gaytan made

his entry into the Hague, where he was received with acclamation by the populace, whose livelihood was largely dependent upon the Spanish Government and its officials.

Thus in one day Leyden was invested on the east and south and west sides. The besieging force was small, and the encircling line incomplete; yet it sufficed to prevent any provisions being brought into the town along the main roads, except by stealth.

The next day, another company of soldiers was seen approaching from the direction of the Haarlem dunes, by Noordwyk and Rynsburg, towards Valkenburg, where a month ago the Dutch had begun building a redoubt, which though never finished, had been garrisoned by five companies of English soldiers. The approach of the Spanish troops was enough to put them to flight. They ran along the Ryndyk towards the town, where they begged for admittance at the Witte Poort. We are told that the authorities, considering that the town contained no proper garrison, were inclined to grant their request; but the burghers opposed and prevented their admission, not without good reason. What would have been the use of such defenders, soldiers who had fled before they had even seen the enemy? They would only add so many



more mouths to be fed from the scanty provisions; and when these were finished, they might even compel the town to surrender. A good deal might be urged against this reasoning, but in the end it was justified by events. The town never suffered from want of soldiers, but from want of food. An additional five hundred mouths to feed might have exhausted the stores so many days earlier, that the relief might well have arrived too late. Anyhow the English were not turned away unconditionally: it was suggested that they should encamp by the Singel, under cover of the guns on the ramparts, until further orders were received from his Excellency <sup>1</sup>). But they did not relish this proposal. Alleging that they had been betrayed by the citizens of Leyden, most of them surrendered to the approaching Spaniards, who in the meantime had advanced as far as the Ter Wadding. Only a very few, who had stoutly refused to surrender, were finally admitted into the town and enlisted in the company of Freebooters. Meanwhile part of the newly arrived Spaniards were quartered in the village of West Rynland, and the rest were sent to strengthen the garrison at the Hague.

More courage was displayed that same day, by a body of English soldiers belonging to the same

regiment, under the command of Captain Gensfort. They were stationed towards the east of the town, in the redoubt near the Goudsche Sluis and in the fortified village of Alphen, which now had to be defended against the main force of the Spaniards under Valdez himself. The position was strong and well fortified; the garrison was adequate, but was insufficiently supplied with powder and shot. Though it would mean hard fighting and the loss of many lives, the Spaniards were determined to capture the stronghold, for it dominated the main road from Utrecht to Leyden, and they could not allow it to remain as a menace to their rear. The Spanish general and historian, Don Bernardino de Mendoza has given us a detailed description of the fighting, based no doubt on the report of one of his fellow-soldiers. Three assaults were bravely beaten off, but at the fourth attack the redoubt was carried and the garrison dispersed after heavy loss. Gerrit van der Laen, the Leader of a troop of Freebooters, fled with a few others towards Leyden: the rest were scattered far and wide. The enemy claimed in that one day to have killed 600 men and taken 400 prisoners in the two engagements at Valkenburg and Alphen. Of course Valdez left a sufficient garrison in the important post he had captured, while with

the rest he marched westward. No further strongholds remained to be captured near Leyden, but he strengthened his garrisons in several of the posts already occupied. It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of the besiegers at this period. At a later stage they were estimated at nine or ten thousand; but at this moment there was probably a force of six or seven thousand in Rynland, and this would be amply sufficient to close effectually all the approaches to the town.

But the aims of Valdez were more far-reaching. As far as was possible without hindering his main object he wished to embarrass the other towns of South Holland. Accordingly a detachment under Don Luis Gaytan marched southward and recaptured the important fortress at Maaslandsluis, a success dearly paid for by the death of Don Luis himself. Other forces established themselves at the Hoornbrug and round Delft, at Pynakker, Nootdorp, and Schipluiden, and in the old convent of Sion. But fortunately for the Dutch, the plan of surprising the redoubt on the Poldervaart, between Delft and Overschie, failed. If this had fallen into the enemy's hands, communications between Rotterdam and Delft would have been seriously hampered. Even as it was, the roads in that district were frequently threatened; a fore-

taste of what would happen if once Leyden were taken and the main Spanish army moved into Delfland and Schieland, For the present however it was the blockade of Leyden to which Valdez devoted his most careful attention.

He was exactly the right man for such an enterprise. Though a Spaniard, he had none of that Castilian pride and arrogance which rendered his countrymen so hateful in the eyes of the Dutch. He did not despise the natives, but had friendly intercourse with many of them. It is well known that he had relations with a young lady of good family at the Hague, Magdalena Moons, who afterwards became his wife. He was a scholar in his way, wrote books about his own profession, and enjoyed meeting and discussing with learned Catholic priests. His army chaplain was a Dutch cleric. With a man of such temperament and manners, the *glippers* (the name given to the burghers and noblemen whose loyalty to Church and King had caused them to emigrate from the heretical towns) readily found themselves at their ease. Matenesse and de Huyter, and their likes, were on a very friendly footing with him, and gladly put at his service their knowledge of persons and places. They were always ready to convey his letters to their renegade countrymen, and to hand on his

proposals with due recommendation. This co-operation explains how it was possible for a foreign general to organise the blockade of the town so completely, and to know so exactly where to place his redoubts. It is not without cause that an Orangist writer complains that the *glippers* did as much mischief by the information they gave the Spaniards, as the Spaniards did with their weapons. There still exists a map of Leyden and its approaches, drawn for the use of Valdez by an engineer from Amsterdam, called Bilhamer.<sup>1)</sup>

But many weeks were to pass before all the redoubts could be built, and the approaches to the town barricaded. Towards the end of June the investment was so far complete that messengers began to find it difficult to go in and out of the town. Further improvements were being carried out during the whole of July, and even on August 30th a new redoubt was built on a spot which had hitherto been neglected. As it would be tedious to follow these operations step by step, it will be better to give a short survey of the completed scheme.

Let us begin with the Rhine. On either side of the town, the river and the roads along its bank were completely blocked in two places: to the east at Leyderdorp on both banks, and further on at

Alfen and the Goudsche Sluis; to the west at Ter Wadding, at the point where the road from Voor-schoten cuts the Ryndyke, and on the other side nearer the town at the Galgeveld<sup>1</sup>), where the low Morschweg meets the northern Ryndyke. These posts were supported by the redoubts at Valkenburg further to the west.

No relieving army could approach the town from the north, because Haarlem and Amsterdam and the lakes were in the hands of the Spaniards, so that the only danger on that side lay in sorties from the town, which might intercept convoys of provisions for the Spanish quarters. As a safeguard against this, the best situated posts were cleverly selected and occupied. The redoubt at the Voskuil, to the north of Endegeest, commanded all the roads converging at that point, which led towards Oestgeest from the Ryndyke and from the town. At about the same distance the river Mare was blocked by a redoubt at the Kwakel, and the river Zyl by a redoubt at its junction with the Dwarswetering. Between these two the road that ran eastwards from Kwakel was commanded by a redoubt at the Broekweg. All these points were supported in the rear by strong fortifications at the Kaag and the Oude Wetering, which in their turn dominated all the approaches to Am-

sterdam, either by the waterways or across the lakes.

When we see with how much care the town was invested on the safest side, we can imagine how thoroughly the blockade was organised on the side from which relief might be expected. A threefold line of redoubts and fortified villages cut off the town from its allies to the south. The inmost line consisted of two redoubts on the Rhine at Ter Wadding and Leyderdorp, connected with that of Lammen, which was situated right between the two on the spot where the Delft canal, the Zoetermeer canal and a third waterway coming from the Rhine near Leiderdorp converge. The second line was formed first by the fortified village of Voorshoten, then close to that, on the banks of the Vliet, by the redoubt of Jaep Claesz, and last, behind Lammen, by the village of Zoeterwou, which was connected with Leyderdorp by the Weypoort road.

The third line was intended as a barrier against any attempt of relief on the part of the allies of Leyden, rather than as a part of the investment. It began at the Hague and Voorburg, then continued by Leidschendam, Wilsveen, Zoetermeer, Zegwaard, Benthuizen, and ended at Hazerswoude. All these villages were more or less forti-

fied and garrisoned. A few villages beyond this line, even as far as the neighbourhood of Delft and Rotterdam, were occupied by the Spanish general. These merely served as posts of observation, from which he could withdraw as soon as a relieving force approached. Of still less importance for the siege were several posts and redoubts in the Westland, reaching as far as the Hook of Holland. They would only become of importance when Leyden was taken, and it was the turn of Delft. At present they were just convenient points from which to harass that town and its neighbourhood. The country round Schipluiden in particular was rendered so unsafe that the burghers were obliged to pull down and level out anything that might serve as cover for the enemy. We can imagine what the country-folk suffered at the hands of the soldiers, who lived chiefly on plunder, while in addition heavy contributions were exacted from them in a more regular way, for the army chest. On account of this Count de la Roche, the King's Stadtholder in Holland and Utrecht, plucked up courage, and lodged a complaint with the Spanish Governor against Valdez and his associate Talavera; but it was all to no purpose.

It must not be assumed that the burghers of Leyden had allowed this chain to be drawn round



them without making occasional efforts to break it. Early in June, when the enemy began to fortify Lammen, they attempted to interrupt the operations by a sally with six boats full of armed men; but after a short skirmish they were driven back with the loss of one boat and four or five dead. This was anything but encouraging. However valiant they might be, they would have to learn by experience that they were no match for so experienced an enemy. A week later also they failed to prevent the garrison at the Voskuil from capturing a redoubt at the Poelbrug outside the Rynsburg gate, which the burghers themselves had built, and from which the Spaniards were now able to harass the vegetable gardens on either side of the Steenstraat. They were more fortunate when the enemy attempted to entrench themselves still nearer the gate, which would have made it quite impossible to use these gardens. In a bold sortie they succeeded in beating off the enemy, who in future kept somewhat farther away from the guns on the walls.

But on the side of the Witte Poort the besiegers crept on ever closer and closer beneath the town-walls. Issuing from Ter Wadding in the middle of July, they built a new fortification near the bridge at Boschhuizen, whence their fire could even reach

the defenders on the ramparts. Not content with this, they dug up the Ryndyke in two or three places even nearer the Singelgracht <sup>1)</sup>, and aimed at the sentinels on the bulwarks from behind their mounds of earth. This at last became such a serious menace, that a sortie was planned in order to seize and destroy these small trenches and the larger ones near the bridge at Boschhuizen. It was obvious that this enterprise, even if successful, could bring no permanent advantage: what was pulled down to-day, could be rebuilt to-morrow. But in any case it might be wise to allow the Civic Guard and the Freebooters, who were burning with military zeal, to vent their ardour and strengthen their confidence, while at the same time they showed the enemy that fullers and weavers, as well as professional soldiers, understood the use of arms. The sortie was to be attempted early in the morning of July the 29th. Everything was carefully planned: no precaution was omitted. The main attack on the enemy's front along the Ryndyk was to be carried out by the company of town-soldiers, led by Jan van der Does, seigneur of Noordwijk, and by the Civic Guard under Mees Havikszoon. They were to be supported on the flank by Jan van Duivenvoorde with his Freebooters, one half of them armed with pikes, and the other half

with fire-arms, who were to issue from the Vlietgat and march across the meadow towards the bridge at Boschhuizen. In the meantime Andries Schot with his company of Civic Guards were to station themselves along the northern side of the Ryndyk (outside the present Morschpoort) <sup>1)</sup> and keep an eye upon the Poelbrug redoubt. At that time the enemy had not yet occupied the Galgeveld. Finally on the Ryn itself the attack was to be supported by a kind of floating fort, a monstrous boat, which was to be rowed along, with Gerrit van der Laen and his musketeers on board. All this together would seem to be a force sufficient for the attack of a second-class redoubt, defended only by sixty soldiers, and indeed, the numbers and the courage of the assailants gave them the victory. Bottles containing powder, with a lighted tinder stuck in them, a sort of hand grenade, were thrown into the enemy's redoubt, and caused at least a great panic, if but little damage. The redoubt was taken, and everyone found in it was slaughtered; no quarter could be given, as this would mean bringing prisoners into a town suffering from lack of provisions. But it was found easier to capture than to hold. Hearing the alarm, Spanish soldiers appeared from all quarters in support of their comrades, so that the Dutch were

compelled to summon to their aid Andries Schot with his civic guard from his post on the northern Ryndyke. But this gave the enemy an opportunity to conceal themselves in a pit under the gallows at the Galgeveld, whence they attacked the big boat so effectively that it was forced to retire. This was the signal for a general retreat. The burghers withdrew into the town in good order, bringing back one badly wounded prisoner whose life had been spared as a rare exception, and carrying shameful trophies in the form of a number of heads and ears. Their losses were slight in comparison with those of the enemy. They left behind them a few prisoners and carried home a few wounded men, among them Mees Havikszoon, who died of his wound afterwards. He was a courageous man, much hated by the friends of the Spaniards. It was he who coined the phrase which was afterwards so often used; "one arm to chew, another to fight with — as long as we keep those, we refuse to surrender". He gave his life as if to prove this proud saying, and certainly did not deserve the remark made by the Burgomaster van Noorden, when he saw the body: "This arm at any rate won't be eaten; and the other won't do any more harm to the Spaniard!" These two sayings, the first expressing rash pride, the second an attitude

of cynical mockery, are characteristic of the two great factions which divided the town. But more about this later on.

The sortie could not affect the general course of events, nor could it impede the progress of the investment. Indeed the Spaniards, taught by experience, now set about building a redoubt at the Galgeveld which should prevent any further sally of the monster ship. They also entrenched themselves at the Koepoort and at several other points, from which they could hinder the cattle from being turned out to grass. Thus the burghers felt their imprisonment growing closer day by day.

If left to its own resources, the town would sooner or later be obliged to surrender—of that there could be no question. Whence could relief come? Would the Beggars venture to the rescue, as at Haarlem the year before, and again expose themselves to such a chastisement as had been inflicted on them at the Mannenpad? Or might perhaps another army be summoned from Germany, to be taught a second lesson on some other Mook Heath? It would be a choice of evils. Three thousand well-trained Spanish soldiers, with twenty-two companies of Germans and eighteen companies of Walloons, were ready for them. Valdez need not

hurry or be anxious: when the fruit was ripe, it would drop into his lap, without the necessity of shaking the tree.

Such appeared to be the state of affairs in June and July. It is no wonder that during these months the Spanish general confined himself to completing the investment. Why should he bring up his cannon in order to breach and storm the walls, and so expose his men to unnecessary slaughter and a possible repulse? All he needed was the patience of the cat, for the mouse that he was watching, to fall into his claws. But such a policy, natural and intelligible at the end of July, becomes difficult to understand towards the end of August; for by that time it began to appear that the expectations on which he relied so confidently, might after all fail to be realised. Relief by water, not by land, was to be attempted by the rebels; and in alliance with the friendly element, they had a fair chance of success, if only the flooding of the land would answer their expectations. Therefore the sooner the fate of Leyden was decided, the better. No effort must be spared to hasten the surrender, and it was obvious that the quickest method was to bombard and storm the un-garrisoned town. Why then did Valdez not make the attempt? It has indeed been suspected that

his inaction was due to the entreaties of his Dutch mistress, who dreaded the horrors of a capture by assault of the town where her friends and relations were living.

But this explanation is superfluous. There was another quite sufficient reason why the assault should not be ordered. The army had no siege artillery. It is true there were in the redoubts a certain number of *pederos* and light cannon, but no *canones de batir* for making breaches. There were none even in the arsenals. The Governor frequently deplored this lack in his letters to the King, but there was no money to make good the deficiency. Thus he writes on December the 30th, 1753: "What we most of all lack is artillery. We are informed that the rebels are richly provided with it, and have found more than 250 pieces of large calibre in the towns and ships they have seized". Half a year later, during the siege of Leyden, he writes again: "We might perhaps succeed in seizing Bommel and Gorcum, if only we had cannon and pioneers at our disposal, but we are in want of everything, because of our lack of money". About the same time his secretary writes to Ruy Gomez <sup>1</sup>): "Bommel is not besieged because of our lack of cannon". It is obvious that in the mouth of a soldier lack of cannon means lack

of sufficient cannon; and these complaints must not be taken to mean literally that, in case of need, the Spaniards could not have got together from all over the country enough heavy guns to bombard Leyden. They could have brought them from all sides by water to Amsterdam, and thence to the beleaguered city. But no doubt it would have been a long time before they could have started breaching the walls. Let us consult the military experts of that age upon this point. Most of all we should like to hear Valdez himself, who, as we know, has written about the art of war. But unfortunately, in his *Espejo y Diciplina Militar*, written in 1571, he only deals with the duties incumbent on his own rank, that of *Sargento Maior*, and does not mention siege operations or artillery. So we have to turn elsewhere, and from whom shall we obtain better information than from Don Bernardino de Mendoza, the famous general, diplomat and historian, who besides his *Comentarios* also wrote a *Theorica y Practica de Guerra*, dealing with the whole art of war. He will tell us what preparations are necessary before a town can be stormed.

To begin with, the point of attack must be carefully chosen. Then, starting at a proper distance, trenches must be dug, approaching this point *en*



*zigzag*. When the right place has been reached, a redoubt must first be constructed, and then the cannon must be brought up and planted in a battery. Now the bombardment can begin; and when a sufficient breach is made in the walls, a bridge that has meanwhile been put together, must be thrown across the moat and the assault can be made. All this takes time; how much Mendoza does not say: but that we can learn from the siege of Alkmaar, where everything happened according to the rules. According to Mendoza's detailed account in his *Comentarios*, the army appeared before the city on August the 21st (1573) and began the assault on September the 18th, so that a little less than a month was needed for the preparations. It is thus clear why, even when it seemed desirable to hasten the capture of the town, Valdez did not think of breaching and storming the walls.

But why did he not make a single attempt to take the town by surprise or by a night attack, especially after sickness and death had reduced the number of sentinels, and hunger and exhaustion had made them less watchful? That question cannot be satisfactorily answered. It is true that during the last weeks of the siege his attention was specially drawn towards the direction from which

he expected a relieving force to approach; but this seems hardly to be a sufficient excuse. Both Boisot and the besieged burghers feared that the enemy might force their way into the town by a surprise attack; yet we cannot discover any evidence that Valdez ever even contemplated such a plan. I cannot believe that love for Magdalena Moons prevented him. It is only natural that he should have preferred to wait until the town was compelled to surrender, rather than to take it by storm. But that he should have preferred to allow it to be relieved, rather than to seize it by whatever means lay within his power, that surely is inconceivable. Besides, the Government at Brussels never accused him of bad faith or wilful negligence; nor did his enemies, who were numerous and very spiteful, ever bring against him any charge they could substantiate. On the contrary, their complaints are so contradictory that they cancel each other out. His soldiers, disappointed in their hopes of plunder or of levying contributions, accused him of having accepted a bribe of two hundred thousand guilders to let the town slip through his fingers. On the other hand La Roche and Champagny asserted that he had put a stop to their negotiations with the besieged, because he hoped in the end to capture and plunder the town. So far as we

know, there was not the slightest foundation for either of these statements, The Government at Brussels, who were in the best position to discover the truth, and to whose interest it was to do so, believed in the innocence of the general, and maintained him in his rank in spite of the numerous charges brought against him.

## II

Let us turn from the besieging army to the besieged, and see what was happening meanwhile inside Leyden.

In 1574 the town covered about the same area as at the present day. The "Oude Singel" <sup>1)</sup> then protected the walls on the northern side, while the present Heerengracht formed the eastern boundary. This will suffice to give an exact idea of the size of the town in those days to any one who knows present day Leyden. The fourteen or fifteen thousand inhabitants within the walls enjoyed a fair amount of prosperity, which however during the last few years had been much diminished owing to the war, and the disturbances and oppression which preceded it. All the same Leyden could still be reckoned

among the large and important towns of the time.

The great majority of the people were faithful upholders of the new principles of State and Church, which in the summer of 1572 had been generally accepted in Holland. Of course not all were equally ardent partizans. A few were full of religious fervour and love of liberty, and wanted to live and die with the Prince; there were others who shrank from the dying and preferred to enjoy life, who were willing to follow the Prince, so long as the sacrifices demanded were not too heavy. Finally there were those who professed a lukewarm preference for the new conditions, but could if necessary manage to live under the old, and therefore needed no strong inducements to return from the Prince to the King, from the sermon to the mass. A small minority were definitely opposed to the new order, and genuinely attached to King and Pope. They desired to see the old conditions restored; and though few were ready to take up arms in support of their cause, most of them were prepared to assist the King's servants in every other way. These were called *Papists*, not *Catholics*, from whom they should be distinguished. As Prince William put it, those were Papists who held that loyalty to the Pope came before

loyalty to the fatherland. As usual, it was the lower classes who held the strongest opinions for or against the new order. The higher the social status, the greater the indifference. Among the well-to-do citizens many were incapable of sacrifice for either party, but were willing to accept any authority which might be in power, so long as their worldly goods were left undisturbed, or possibly even increased by each change. It is to the famous Janus Douza <sup>1)</sup>, Seigneur of Noordwijk, as skilful with his pen as with his sword, that we owe the little information we possess as to the sentiments of the citizens. He particularly complains about the great industries, the rich weavers or manufacturers, as they would be called nowadays, and above all about the heads of those guilds. Their zeal and self-sacrifice lagged far behind that of the mass of the people. They were inclined to come to terms with the enemy before it was too late, by which they really meant the sooner the better. Even more bitterly does Douza complain of the Municipal Government. "It went to my heart", he writes, "to see that the citizens were more truly devoted to the good cause than the Regents" <sup>2)</sup>. We are not surprised at this. In those days the government of the towns was in the hands of the well-to-do; it could not but be im-

bued with the cautious spirit characteristic of that class. It was no secret that when in 1572 the town went over to the Prince's side, most of the Regents had been opposed to this step, and had only yielded to the clearly expressed wish of the citizens. But the officer who with his band of Beggars, had instigated this movement had lost their favour for good, and they did not rest until they had driven him out of the town. However, once they had accepted the Prince, they remained loyal to him. Many offers of reconciliation with the King were addressed to them during the siege of Haarlem, but though they did not close their ears, yet they shook their heads in answer to them. The force of circumstances was not sufficiently strong to make them change sides.

The constitution of the Town Government of those days had this result, that a political persuasion, which once had mastered it, was apt to remain in control. The Government consisted of a Corporation of forty life-members, also called "the Forty", who filled their own vacancies by co-option, and who thus more or less stood for our modern Town Council, and at the same time the electors. It was they who every July chose a "double number" of sixteen men, from whom the Stadtholder in his turn selected the eight Alder-

men <sup>1)</sup> and it was they who on St. Martin's Eve in November appointed the four Burgomasters without the interference of the Stadtholder. At these elections the Corporation would naturally bring into office men belonging to their own party and religion; and thus, even after the revolution of 1572, they tended to appoint men of a cautious and moderate spirit, who respected rather than loved the new order. Only now and then did they make an exception. Occasionally the wishes of the citizens were so pronounced, or the recommendation of the Stadtholder was so pressing, that the Regents, like the wise men they were, complied, however unwillingly. Thus it happened that in 1572 a new member had been added to the Council, who appeared somewhat out of place there. He was called Pieter Adriaansz Vermeer, or Van der Werf, and nick-named Zeemtouwer, or the chamois-tanner, after the trade which he had followed before he had been proscribed by Alva for his activities during the troubles of 1566, and on account of his well-known Protestant sentiments. He had consequently been obliged to leave the country. During his banishment he gained the confidence of the Prince of Orange, who employed him, like many other exiles, on various missions, particularly for collecting secret contributions

from partisans in Holland, which proves that he had a reputation for honesty and courage. Even after the revolution he had continued this work for some time, until in August 1572 he was ordered by the States of Holland to give it up. He then resumed his former trade of dealing in skins and chamois-leather, which necessitated frequent journeys to Hamburg and elsewhere. The Prince, who had now returned to Holland and undertaken the government of the country, provided him with a passport, which served the double purpose of facilitating his journeys and of rehabilitating him, in case his discharge by the States should be interpreted to his disadvantage. In this document the Prince stated that Van der Werf was a loyal and faithful adherent both of himself and of the common cause. About this time also he was appointed a member of the Corporation of Leyden, probably at His Excellency's desire, though this is not anywhere expressly stated; and a few months later, when the post of Burgomaster unexpectedly fell vacant, he was chosen to fill this high office, by the help no doubt of the same influence. Thus he was Burgomaster when the first siege began in October 1573; and so in the following month, when three of the four Burgomasters retired, it was natural that he, being the latest ap-



pointment, should stay on for another year with the title of old-Burgomaster. Thus he continued during the whole of the second siege at the head of the Municipal Government as presiding Burgomaster; and this was most fortunate, because his three colleagues, Cornelis van Noorden, Cornelis van Zwieten and Jan Halfleiden were grievously tainted with that selfishly cautious and lukewarm spirit, which was so frequently found among the upper classes. George Montigny de Noyelles, the military Governor of the town, in a letter addressed to the Prince, went so far as to assert that three of the Burgomasters deserved to be hanged. Like so many other nobles of the Compromise <sup>1)</sup>, exiles and Sea-Beggars <sup>2)</sup>, Noyelles was somewhat of a rake, loose in his living, fond of the bottle, and far from steadfast in his religious and political principles. Not too much importance therefore should be attached to his judgment; yet even if we allow for some exaggeration, it is clear that the three men were no true friends to the cause of liberty. The letter was intercepted, and Valdez forwarded it with his respects to the Burgomasters, who thus were made acquainted with the Governor's feelings towards them. We can imagine their satisfaction when the first siege was raised and they could get rid of Noyelles in an

honourable way. The Prince turned a deaf ear to his accusations against the Burgomasters and left them in their office. It was not his way lightly to change or to dismiss. Temperate as he was by nature, and forced by mere stress of circumstance to assume the leadership of the revolution he did not wish to drive the moderates out of the Government, even though their moderation might be carried rather far. How could he have foreseen that the loyalty of these gentlemen would shortly be put to so severe a test?

No more than the first Burgomaster was the Secretary of the corporation, Jan van Hout<sup>1</sup>), in agreement with the majority of the Regents. This man had entered the town's service at an early age, and at the time of the first troubles, he was already Town secretary, although still quite young. His conduct had not found favour with the Spaniards, and though his name did not appear on the proscription lists, he had been dismissed in 1569 at the request of the King's Stadtholder, Bossu<sup>2</sup>). He had thought it prudent to retire to East Friesland<sup>3</sup>), where he remained till 1572, when affairs in Holland took a new turn. In June of that year he came back to Leyden with the first batch of Beggars, and as soon as it appeared that the man who now occupied his post, Foy van Broekhoven,

was willing to resign in his favour, he begged the Government to reinstate him. At first he was told that he must be patient yet awhile; but when soon after in August 1573 Broekhoven became Dykemaster and Bailiff of Rynland, he was reappointed secretary — an invaluable asset to the good cause. Douza, who had no high opinion of Van der Werf, celebrates in his poems the fortunate event which placed Jan van Hout in a position from which he could watch all that went on at the meetings of the Corporation. Memorable indeed were the services rendered by the Secretary in aid of the cause of liberty during the difficult period of the second siege.

Several times already we have mentioned Douza. It is time to say a few words about him. Jan van der Does or Douza, Seigneur of Noordwijk, was not a citizen of Leyden: he had only come to live here in 1571, when the Beggars by their continued raids on the coast had made it unsafe for him to live on his estate at Noordwijk. This is sufficient proof that he could not have taken any part in the early troubles. In 1566 he was only 19 years old, and had just returned from his travels in pursuit of learning. During that summer his family had arranged his marriage with Lady Elizabeth van Zuylen. It does not seem to have been a

happy union. Thus he had had no opportunity of compromising himself in 1566. At first he appears to have kept outside all party strife. He became successively member of the Water Council of Rynland<sup>1</sup>), member of the Conscript-Knighthood<sup>2</sup>) and therefore also member of the States of Holland. These were the appointments he held when the revolution broke out in April 1572. He was in no great hurry to side with the rebels; he did not even attend the first meeting of the States of Holland at Dordrecht in the month of July: but he must have declared himself shortly afterwards, for in December he was sent to England as envoy of the States and of His Excellency. By that time, therefore, he had thrown in his lot with the Prince and the party of rebellion and he had done so once for all. For just as his youthful history shows that he did not take sides lightly and would not work with pirates or wild Beggars, so now, when once his choice was fixed, no distress or peril, no threats or bribes could shake his loyalty. His presence in the besieged town was of incalculable value. It is true that he held no post in the Government, but as a member of the States of Holland, he was invited to attend the general meetings of the Corporation and the Notables. He also held a military appointment. When in the first days of the siege,

Captain Andries Allertsz was killed, Douza had been persuaded to take over the command of the company of town-soldiers, which otherwise might have dispersed. It is uncertain whether he had ever carried arms before, but he certainly did not lack courage. We mentioned above that he took part in the sally againts the Boschhuizen redoubt at the head of his company. But it was more by his personal influence than by the importance of his military command that he rendered such good service to the besieged town. His resolution, steadfastness and common sense were an inspiration to the loyal Regents and the citizens with whom he was in daily contact.

He found support in his relative, Jacob van der Does, a man of ripe age, who was a nobleman by birth and in that capacity a member of the Conscripted Knighthood op Holland, but at the same time a citizen and ex-Regent of Leyden, where he usually resided. In 1572 he had joined the party of rebellion, and in November of the same year he was elected to the Committee of the States, appointed to consult with his Excellency on current affairs, but he seems to have stayed at home as much as possible. His half-brother Hendrik had distinguished himself at the siege of Haarlem and had been killed there. The old man had no longer

the physical strength to take up arms for Leyden, but his personal courage remained unshaken, and in difficult times his example sustained the half-hearted and put cowards to shame.

The supreme command of the town was in the hands of the representative of the Prince of Orange, Dirk van Bronkhorst, Ordinary Member of the High Court of Holland. His memory also will live in the history of Leyden. Little is known about his early life; but he seems to have been a member of the High Court already before the revolution of 1572. Most of his colleagues left their posts at that time and withdrew with the Spanish soldiers to Utrecht; but he remained and joined the rebels. At the end of 1572 he was like Douza a member of the embassy sent to England by the Prince and the States. After his return he was more than once employed by the Prince in business that required a man of unflinching determination. It was probably some such business that had brought him to Leyden at the moment when the town was invested for the second time. There was no Governor; for as yet no successor to Noyelles had been chosen. Bronkhorst was clearly the right person for this difficult post, so the Prince appointed him as „Commissary for both military and political affairs”. He proved himself worthy of the Prince’s

confidence. He was severe, determined and inflexible. Douza praises him abundantly, though he mentions one occasion upon which he seems to have behaved less well; but as Douza gives no details, it is impossible for us to judge. Anyhow Bronkhorst excelled in all the qualities that were especially needed in his position. He was resolute and could at times inspire awe. Men knew what to expect of him. At the first indication of a mutinous spirit in the town, he erected a gallows in the middle of the Breestraat at the blue flagstone <sup>1</sup>). The Malcontents understood the hint and controlled their tongues. As long as he lived and was at the head of the administration no one dared to mention surrender. His death, occurring at the critical moment when the party of surrender was aiming at supremacy, was a great disaster, though fortunately not an irreparable one.

As the town was without any garrison, the Civic-Guard, being the only armed force besides the Freebooters, were naturally of great importance, and much depended on their loyalty. The very ancient organisation of the Civic-Guard would lead us to expect that they were imbued with the same spirit as the town Government, upon which according to their statutes they were entirely dependent, since no one could be enrolled except by

consent of the Magistracy. But at the time of the siege the Civic Guard was a very different body from the old Guard Guilds. After the first troubles of 1566 these had been ordered to disband in all the Holland towns. The result was that after the revolution of 1572 new Civic Guards were recruited from the most zealous partisans of the new order. In Leyden this new body continued until 1578, when the old organisation was re-established, and its former dependence on the Town Government renewed. However that may be, during the siege the Civic Guard rendered good service, for which Douza praises them exuberantly. The officers were nearly all warm adherents of the good cause and in favour of holding out till the end. The leaders of the Freebooters too were brave and trustworthy men. The weapons were thus in good hands.

During the first two months the idea of surrender was never mentioned. As soon as the consternation, caused by the enemy's unexpected appearance and preliminary successes at Valkenburg, at Alfen, and all over the countryside, had somewhat subsided, and the situation was reviewed more calmly, courage rose again. The town indeed had but a meagre supply of food, but there was enough for the next few weeks. The memory of the last siege was far from discouraging, for it was



only quite towards the end that some slight scarcity had been felt, and relief had come just in time. Perhaps the same thing would happen again. There was no need yet to be anxious. The blockade was accepted in the best possible spirit. The letters to the Prince were written in a confident tone, and though probably drawn up by Van Hout voiced the general feeling.

All proposals of the enemy and all warnings from the *glippers* fell upon deaf ears. Throughout the siege from the first days onwards, various persons, both high and low were vying with each other to bring about a reconciliation between the town and the King. On the 26th of May the enemy arrived at Leyderdorp, and before the end of the month proposals for a settlement had come from three sides. The first was from Haarlem, where the Governor, Seigneur de Licques, who was on the point of departure, was most eager to perform this charitable service for Leyden and the King before giving up his office. His friendly intention first became known through a letter from two *glippers*; and soon afterwards a letter from the nobleman himself was brought by a drummer. Douza, who happened to be keeping watch at the town-gate, refused to accept the letter and returned it unopened. About the same time another

refugee, one Hoochstraten, wrote from Leyderdorp offering his services and sage counsel, but he received the famous reply: "fistula dulce canit, volucrem dum decipit auceps" \*). No need to ask which of the Regents at Leyden was so familiar with Cato's distich. Again we discover Douza's influence in this reply. The third proposal came from the headquarters of Valdez at the Hague, in the form of letters from Matenese van Wybisma and De Ruyter, both men of good birth and distinction, who put their pride in winning over the town for the King. In the refusal to admit the English garrison they saw a good symptom: it was a beginning of disobedience to the Prince, and showed that the town wished to retain its independence of action. If it were now offered specially favourable terms, as an inducement to return to its former allegiance, would it still remain obstinate? The attempt was well worth making. They could already give the assurance that a general amnesty had been granted and would soon be published, from which no citizen of Leyden would be excepted. Their two letters received not a word in answer. They were not thought worth examining, any more than the preceding overtures, and they

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\*) "The flute sings sweetly, while the fowler is beguiling the bird".

were not laid before the Corporation. A comprehensive and an unequivocal answer to all *glippers* and other kind friends was the renewed oath of loyalty to the Prince and the States, which was exacted from all burghers by a resolution of May the 31st.

During the first part of the siege no proper measures were taken to increase the supplies or to economise such stores as there were. Until the middle of June the blockade was not so complete, but that any one with an intimate knowledge of footpaths and ditches might succeed in smuggling some provisions through. One attempt was made from the direction of Gouda, but in such an awkward and hesitating manner that it proved a failure. On the other hand about that time the Freebooters succeeded in intercepting a convoy on its way from Amsterdam to the enemy's quarters on the Rhine, and so with the rest of their booty brought some food into the town. But this did not amount to much; and it does not appear that during June any steps were taken towards saving the supplies in hand and encouraging economy. It was not until July that by means of house to house visits a register was made of the amount of corn left in the town. It was then found that no more than one hundred and ten lasts of grain (about 8800 bushels) remained for fourteen thousand mouths.

It would certainly have been wisest to have collected the whole of these supplies under one authority, which could then have distributed daily rations to rich and poor alike. But to interfere so drastically with private property, went against the grain. Everyone was allowed to keep what they had except those who possessed provisions out of all proportion to their needs. Their superfluous stores were commandeered in order that half a pound of bread could be sold each day to those who had nothing, either in exchange for money or for labour at the fortifications. In the long run this amount proved to be insufficient and had to be doubled. By this arrangement the well-to-do lived in plenty for the time being, and it was only the poor who suffered privation. Another mistake was made, which was afterwards much regretted. Brewing and everything connected with it was allowed to continue, which meant that valuable corn was turned into almost inedible malt. When the stores had been still further reduced, even this food was bought from the brewers to be distributed among the poor. Fortunately a number of cows, horses and small stock remained, which could be put to grass under the town-walls, They were guarded with great care, and during all those weeks only a very few fell into the hands of

the enemy. The vegetable gardens near the gates produced some useful food, such as cabbages and turnips, with which the rich could vary the monotonous daily fare. Nevertheless every week and every day the number of those who felt the pinch of hunger increased, and complaints grew louder and louder. Then a further disaster supervened; the plague which that year was raging not only in the province of Holland, but over the whole of the Netherlands, now broke out in Leyden, and was soon intensified by the badness of the food. The state of affairs began to cause grave anxiety. News from outside was growing very scarce. It was known that the States had decided to flood the surrounding country, and to equip a fleet to relieve the town. Tidings were brought that the dykes had been pierced and that the water of the Maas was steadily flowing towards the *landscheiding* <sup>1)</sup> of Rynland. Meanwhile time was passing and no relief was in sight. The promises from Rotterdam<sup>2)</sup> remained unfulfilled. Between the 12th and 20th of August, just when distress began to grow more threatening, not a single messenger returned from his errand. The last news received, which had announced that the Prince hoped to deliver the town within a few days, had merely led to bitter disappointment. On the 20th and 21st messengers

arrived saying that the water was steadily rising and stood already eleven hands high at the *landscheiding*; that every town was busy preparing for the relief, that ships were being equipped and manned, labourers enlisted to work at the dykes, and soldiers posted to guard the approach of food-ships. This was welcome news indeed. But when would these preliminaries at last be finished, and the relief itself begin? Preparations were all the time going forward, but so slowly that they lagged far behind the rapidly approaching famine. To the general misery, caused by hunger and sickness, was now added a feeling of abandonment and of resentment at the dilatoriness of the allies, who though living in plenty themselves, seemed in no hurry to assist their famished neighbours. The murmurs of the people could no longer be suppressed. In the second half of August they were growing louder every day. Those who favoured the Spaniards began to come forward, now that they could count on the support of so many faint-hearts. Why should the cup of misery be drained any further, since the means of salvation were in their own hands? The enemy still continued to offer the most acceptable conditions; the past would be forgotten: probably no garrison, or at most a couple of German companies, would be

stationed in the town; while those who refused to adopt the Catholic faith would be free to depart. Surely all this would be better than to perish by hunger. Besides, if Leyden were to come to terms, that might bring about the pacification of the rest of the country. These ideas, which had long been secretly cherished in men's hearts, were now openly expressed, and were approved of even by many members of the Government. At the very moment when the more reassuring dispatches at last arrived, a letter addressed to His Princely Excellency was waiting ready to be sent off, in which the town bitterly complained that it had not received a single line from the States since the beginning of the siege, so that it appeared as though it had been completely forgotten by the allies. To this complaining letter another was now added expressing gratitude for the preliminary efforts towards relief; but the resentment against the States remained, though based upon such unsubstantial grounds, that we can only explain it as being due to the hopeless condition of the town.

On August 27th a mutiny broke out for the first time. A number of Freebooters assembled at the Town-hall, demanding either food or passports from the Magistracy. They declared their willingness to remain faithfully on duty, provided

they were saved from starvation. The magistrates answered with many fair words and promises, and gave passports to those who were still unsatisfied. To have thus got rid of them was no doubt a relief. But what a sinister omen for the future! The same evening three burghers, who were found willing to undertake the perilous adventure, were sent to His Excellency with letters, calculated to arouse his gravest anxiety. For three months of the deepest misery, so he read, the town had endured the siege, and still nothing was offered them but idle hopes. Leyden had done its duty; but the States would find it hard to justify their negligence. If no means were available to relieve the town, they begged to be released from their oath of allegiance.

That very day new regulations were proclaimed dealing with the famine among the poor. No one was allowed to store more food than was required for a fortnight; the rest was commandeered for the use of the needy. Those who had any provisions left were forbidden to buy any more. All animals fit for food, including horses, were registered, to be slaughtered and distributed according to everyone's need. After two months of plenty and a third of privation, a fourth month of famine was at the door.



In the early morning of August the 30th the messengers returned with a letter from the States, written the day before, and signed by all the members who were then present, the two deputies from Leyden among them. The tone of the letter was excellent; full justice was done to the town's perseverance; but at the same time attention was drawn to the damage caused to many thousands of peasants by the piercing of the dykes. The messengers themselves added that they had seen with their own eyes that the preparations for the relief were in full swing and it would soon be carried into execution. Most gladly did the loyal party turn this joyful news to good use. Signals were flashed and shots fired from the St. Pancras tower, in order to let Delft know that the news had been received. The authorities proclaimed the tidings to the burghers, and manifested their joy by ordering pipers to play at the street-corners, to the astonishment of the besiegers, who could not guess the occasion of the noise and excitement, and blindly fired their cannon at the town-wall.

One part of the news, no doubt, the Government knew better than to divulge. No letter had been received from Prince William, because His Excellency was lying seriously ill at Rotterdam. The messengers had visited him, but had only

brought back a verbal message from him, which, as ever, was full of sympathy and comfort. What would become of the relief, what would become of Leyden, if that were to happen, which the enemy insinuated had happened already — if the Prince were to die?

Thus the good news, qualified as it was by so great a misfortune, had little effect. The relief was still in the far distance; famine and death were still raging in the city itself. On the last day of August a proclamation was read to the effect that, as the stores of corn were completely exhausted, the animals would be slaughtered and the meat distributed, but that no one who had any provisions left should be allowed to fetch meat-rations, as long as their provisions lasted. The first distribution took place on the 2nd of September in the choir of St. Peter's church. For every mouth two pounds to last four days — half a pound of meat and bones as the only nourishment for twenty-four hours! No wonder that in many households a death was carefully concealed, so that the ration could still be fetched. No wonder that search was made, even among the refuse heaps, for anything that could be eaten, however offensive and nauseating. The sharp sword of hunger ruled the town, and nicety and delicacy were put out of court.

All the more clamorous on the contrary did the spirit of mutiny become. The friends of the Pope and of Spain now openly declared that nothing remained but to treat with the besiegers. They knew that they could count on considerable support among the Regents and in the Corporation; they informed their friends outside the city of the situation within, and left it to them to give the push that was to start the movement they desired.

On Sunday, September the 5th, two letters were received by the magistrates. One was written by Matenese van Wybisma from the fort at Poelbrug on September the 3rd, and dealt at length with the miserable conditions in the town, which, he said, bad as they were now, would certainly grow much worse in future. He also pointed out that relief was impossible, as Rynland was higher than Schieland and Delfland, so that the floods were uselessly spoiling the land along the Maas, and would never reach the higher level of Leyden. Besides, of what value were the forces collected by the Prince, compared with the army of Valdez which, if necessary, could be even further strengthened? It was only in the mercy of the King and of his Governor that safety should be sought, and could no doubt be found. In the most friendly terms he offered to act as mediator with

Requesens. The second letter, dated September the 4th, was written by Valdez at Leyderdorp, and in a very different tone "Ye rebels against God and the King, ye stiff-necked citizens of Leyden", so he addressed them, "although you have more than forfeited all claims to mercy, yet mercy and pardon are still offered, but for the last time. No one need fear for his safety. Everyone without exception shall be pardoned, even Bronkhorst, Douza and Van der Werf. For this I pledge my honour as a Christian and a nobleman. The whole of Monday I give you to deliberate upon this proposal; at the same time I send you a safe conduct for one or more persons to come to Leyderdorp in order to negotiate with me".

Hitherto such letters had never been answered; they had not even been discussed. The corporation had not been consulted, in fact it had met only on rare occasions. Bronkhorst governed with the magistrates only, and with them no more than he could help. To Douza and Van Hout, he constantly complained of the Regents and had also written about them to His Excellency. He had always wished to push them aside entirely. But now his days were numbered: the plague had thrown him on his deathbed. There was no one to take his place. In default of a Governor, the pre-

siding Burgomaster, Van der Werf, became the head of the town. He judged it prudent to consult his co-Regents, and (at the instigation of the Papists, according to Douza) he convoked a great assembly for Monday September the 6th, consisting of the Magistracy, of the Corporation or "Forty", of the nobles, of the most prominent burghers, and of the captains and sergeants of the Civic Guard. The town-beadles went round with the summonses. All the town knew of the meeting, and felt that momentous deliberations were about to take place. The two parties, that of surrender, and that of continued resistance, assembled in a mood of great tension at the Town-hall.

The presiding Burgomaster began by stating his reasons for convoking the assembly. He described at length the distracted condition of the town, and spoke about the fine promises the enemy had made. Finally he begged them all to consider these promises carefully, and after due reflection to assist him in arriving at such a decision as would bring the greatest advantage to the town and would at the same time be consistent with their oath of loyalty to the King. Some of his audience noticed with annoyance that he never once even mentioned the name of the Prince. Perhaps the omission was not intentional; but Douza

received the impression that he wanted to forget the obstacle to negotiations with the enemy. Douza always regarded Van der Werf with a critical eye: in his poems he describes him as courageous and loyal, but unable to control his wrong-headed colleagues, and even liable to yield to their opposition. This view of his character may well have been just; and we can give some idea of how the Spanish partisans and the faint-hearts tried to influence his mind. It is probably about this time that the corpse of a man who had just died, was brought to Van der Werf's door, in order to show that he was held responsible for his death. Also he once complained to the full assembly that his colleagues charged him with ruling the town by himself, and asserted that had it not been for him, the town would long ago have made its peace with the King. Whatever may have been the truth, he certainly did not satisfy the stubborn Douza during these momentous days. Who knows what might have been decided after his discouraging address, if the decision had depended on the magistrates alone? Fortunately it was impossible to pass over the two cousins Van der Does and the chiefs of the military. Courtesy demanded that Jacob van der Does, as a nobleman and a member of the States of Holland, should be asked to give his opinion

first. It is well known how great a difference it may make in a large assembly which opinion is first expressed with eloquence, authority and dignity. The good cause could not have had better fortune. Van der Does began by saying that before they could rely on promises, they ought to know by whom they were made. Valdez was a Spaniard, an arch-enemy of Dutch freedom. Naarden, Zutphen, Haarlem and Mechlin bore witness to what might be expected from that quarter. Matenese, it was true, was a Dutchman and a Knight; but he had once before been guilty of a breach of promise, and shown how much his word could be relied upon. Would it then be wise to accept his assurance that the water could not reach Leyden, although it had already risen as far as the *landscheiding* and would it not be better to put their trust in the States, who surely would not have flooded the low-lying country without due investigation and knowledge? He was therefore of opinion that they should await the promised relief, and hold out to the last. Besides, their oath to the Prince and to the other towns allowed no separate treaty to be made.

We can well imagine the impression created in the assembly by these calm, proud words, the embarrassment of despondent friends and the ill-

suppressed irritation of his enemies. After him spoke his cousin, Douza, the seigneur of Noordwijk. He was a younger man, and more easily moved. He could not understand, so he said almost with scorn, how the Spaniard, who had so often professed to offer them pardon for the very last time, should now be trying to force his pardon upon them, without any body asking for it, again for the very last time. Probably this was not yet the last of these "last time" offers. Anyone who desired mercy would always be able to obtain it for the asking. But they must be blind if they could not see that the object of all these promises was merely to entice the bird into the snare. "As for our selves", he continued, "it seems to me we have no right even to deliberate upon such a proposal; if we do, everyone will denounce us as traitors and perjurers, and for very shame we will never be able to lift our heads again". For the rest he was in agreement with Jacob van der Does, among other things in regard to the honour of Matenese, who once, when he broke his secret marriage vows to the daughter of Van Vliet, had justified his action by the Council of Trent, and who now, if the promises to Leyden were broken, would no doubt justify the treachery by the Council of Constance, according to which



pious Catholics need not keep faith with heretics.

The next speakers were Jan van Duivenvoorde, the eldest son of the Seigneur of Warmond, member of the States of Holland, and Foy van Broekhoven, bailiff of Rynland. Both were in agreement with Van der Does and Douza.

Then came the turn of the Burgomasters, the Aldermen and the Forty, who compensated by mere numbers for what they lacked in dignity and weight of argument. Some of them may have voted with the noblemen, but probably only a few: Douza can mention no more than seven well-intentioned members. The great majority were of an opposite opinion, and thought that the offer to negotiate ought not to be rejected. Some maintained that "need breaks oath", and that the fault lay, not with the town, which had held out faithfully and courageously during the agreed period, but with the States, who had failed to keep their promise of relieving the town within that time; so their advice was that negotiations should be immediately opened. Others thought that it would be better first to ask for a safe-conduct for three or four envoys, to carry a request to the Prince and the States that they should release the town from its oath, in order that they might then be free to do what they would never do except reluctant-

ly. This last suggestion, as it was the least definite of all, was carried by a majority, and the matter was so decided; but not without protests from Douza and from the captains and sergeants of the Civic Guard, who desired that it should be recorded that they were opposed to the resolution, and that it had only been carried by a majority.

Thus as usual the middle party had defeated the extremists on both sides. A decision had been taken, which was bound to lead to nothing. For it was evident that whatever happened, Valdez would never allow envoys to visit the Prince for a whole week, which was the time asked for as necessary for the journey and for consultation with the States. Without definitely refusing, he sent a request the same day that the envoys should be sent to him with a commission from the Magistracy and from the Government of the town. If they complied with this request, it would amount to entering at once into negotiations, which could not be undertaken without a further resolution of the full assembly. Meanwhile Valdez let it be known indirectly that he would prefer to speak with Van der Does and Van der Werf, and would be glad to receive them as the envoys from the town. And no wonder; for he would rather that they should be anywhere than in the Town-hall of Leyden.

While matters stood thus, something happened, owing to a blunder made by the Spanish partisans in the town, which seriously interfered with their machinations. They had helped one of their friends over the town-walls, on a mission to Utrecht as envoy to Fernand de Lannoy, Count de la Roche, Stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. In that capacity he was Captain General of these provinces, so that officers of a lower rank, like Valdez, were subject to his command as long as they were stationed there, and thus strictly speaking, it was La Roche and not Valdez, who had the right to negotiate with Leyden. It was unfortunate for the cause of King and Church that these two men were divided by a recent and bitter feud. When Valdez marched for the second time from Utrecht upon Leyden, he and his soldiers had behaved with more insolence towards the civil authorities than a Netherlands nobleman, such as La Roche, could put up with in a Spaniard of inferior rank. What more appropriate occasion could there be than the negotiations with Leyden, for reviving this struggle for official precedence? The Stadtholder could now make it clear that he had the right to give orders to this Spanish soldier. On the other hand, the commander of the mighty army before Leyden could show

how little he troubled himself about this figure-head of a Netherlands Stadtholder. On September the 7th, a trumpeter appeared before the Rynsburg Gate carrying a letter from La Roche, accompanied and as it were introduced by a letter from ten *glippers*. Only with the greatest difficulty, so they stated, had they succeeded in persuading La Roche to offer these conciliatory advances. La Roche himself urged the townspeople to make their submission now, while there was still time, and offered them his best assistance, if so they desired.

These letters made it necessary to convoke a second assembly on September the 8th, which the officers of the Civic Guard were apparently not invited to attend. Van der Werf opened the meeting by announcing the death of Commissary Bronckhorst, which was already known to everyone. He thereupon requested Jacob van der Does to fill the post of Governor of the town, which proved that, though van der Werf may not have been sufficiently resolute to please some people, he yet remained a staunch adherent of the good cause, and himself sought the support he needed in order to hold his own against the ill-intentioned. Unfortunately, Van der Does was only able to accept the appointment conditionally, as he could

receive this commission from no one except the Prince. All the same he agreed to attend daily at the Town-hall and assist the Magistracy in every possible way. But it is evident that in this capacity he could exercise no more than a moral influence, as he lacked the authority which an appointment by the Statholder alone could give. After this important matter was settled, the letters from Valdez and La Roche were discussed. A fairly numerous section, whose chief spokesman was Burgomaster Halfleyden, still urged that negotiations should be opened immediately; but Jan van Hout, who as secretary could not take part in the discussion, and whose duty was merely to keep the minutes, managed by a clever trick to rout this party. When he noticed that the meeting was growing noisy, and that many members were talking at the same time, and so exciting and inflaming one another, he begged that each gentleman should speak in turn, lest he should make mistakes in noting down their opinions. This calm reminder that everyone's opinion would be set down in writing, and so might some day bear witness against the speaker, had an immediate effect. The members began to think before they spoke, and common sense again prevailed. It was decided to write to the Prince immediately, and to

dispatch the letter by a secret messenger; also to wait until the following day before writing to the gentlemen of the Spanish party. Of these two they would prefer to treat with La Roche, and acquaint him with what had passed between themselves and Valdez, informing him that their request for a pass to the Prince had been refused. At the same time they would inform Valdez of the letter they had received from La Roche, begging him to grant a free passage to Utrecht for the messenger who was to carry an answer to the Stadtholder's letter. In vain did Douza, and probably others with him, protest against this decision. He demanded that such action, as being a first step toward negotiations with the enemy, should not be taken without first consulting the Civic Guard and their officers. Thereupon a violent quarrel arose between him and Halfleyden, against whom he was especially irritated. Van der Werf, believing Douza's words to contain a reflection upon himself, joined in the dispute. He asserted that he could quite satisfactorily justify their decision to the Prince, and therefore proposed to send His Excellency copies of the letters to Valdez and La Roche. Douza was equally unsuccessful in his demand that the letters should at least not be signed in the name of the captains and sergeants of the

Civic Guard, and that they should wait a few days before sending them, in case a reply should come from the Prince in answer to their message. It was of no avail: the letters were signed "by order of the Magistrates, captains and Sergeants, together with the wealthy burghers of the city of Leyden", and they were dispatched on the following day as had been decided. The letter to the Prince was sent off the same night.

During the meeting a crowd consisting chiefly of women had gathered in the street before the Town-hall. They were acting in collusion with the Regents of the Spanish party, and were meant by their clamour and threats to put fear into the hearts of the patriots, and so provide another forcible argument in favour of immediate negotiations. Fortunately Jan van Hout had been warned of this plot by one of the women who was in the secret without being an accomplice. He had thus been able to arrange that the Civic Guard should, without rousing attention, be posted at the dangerous corners, in order to control the populace. Consequently nothing happened beyond a slight disturbance, which failed to influence in any way the assembled Regents.

The next day a drummer was sent to Leyderdorp with the letters for La Roche and Valdez. But

the Spanish General refused to grant a safe conduct to Utrecht. He was furious that the town wanted to pass him over in order to negotiate with his personal enemy; so he ordered de Huyter, who happened to be at his quarters, to write a letter to Douza, in which it was pointed out how foolish it was to provoke in this way the resentment of the Commander-in-Chief, into whose hands the town would finally have to be surrendered.

Probably this letter had a very different effect upon Douza from what Valdez and de Huyter expected. Could any news be more welcome to him than that Valdez should be preventing negotiations with La Roche? His enemies were of more assistance to Douza than his friends. First La Roche had interrupted the negotiations with Valdez soon after they had been begun; now it was Valdez who was hindering the correspondence with La Roche. The result was that nothing was done for the present.

At a third meeting of the Regents and Notables on September the 10th, after these newly arisen difficulties had been reported, the patriots succeeded in carrying a resolution to the effect that before anything further was done, they should await His Excellency's answer to the letter which had been sent the night before. It was a great vic-



tory to have gained time thus. At that moment everything might take a new turn in a single day.

The following morning, September the 11th, soon after dawn, the burghers heard with surprise a sound of firing in the distance, not merely a few desultory shots, but continuous and regular firing, which showed that a serious engagement must be taking place. Could they be fighting at the *landscheiding*? Could it be the beginning of the long-wished-for relief? Since August the 29th there had been no news from outside. Not a single one of the many messengers sent out had returned and no one had the least idea how far the relief expedition might have progressed. The firing grew more intense, and continued with a few intervals throughout the whole day. There could be no doubt; relief was coming at last. The sweetest music could not have ravished their ears as did that distant roar. It was as though a voice, coming from the States themselves, were calling to the besieged across the enemy's redoubts: "Courage! you are not lost, nor abandoned. We are coming. Hold out yet a little while". The people ran to the walls, whence (and yet more clearly from the tower of St. Pancras) a big conflagration could be seen behind Zoetermeer in the direction of the *landscheiding*. "Whereupon the burghers

took courage and were gladdened", the Journal of the Siege<sup>1</sup>) says in its sober account, leaving it to our imagination to fill in the scene in its true proportions.

Expectation had now risen to such a pitch that the people could no longer endure to wait in patience until one of the messengers might at last return. Three new messengers were sent out that very night, September the 11th, but first each had been made to take his oath to return as soon as possible. They kept their promise faithfully.

But the interval was to be a time of great anxiety. The cannon were silent once more; the fighting seemed not to have led to any result. Had the attack perhaps been repulsed and the relief postponed? Everything seemed uncertain again. The only certain fact was the distress of the town, which was growing more unbearable day by day. Every emaciated figure in the streets must have seemed to Douza and Van der Werf a living reproach. Was it not in their power to procure deliverance if they chose? When they returned home to their meals they were met by the pale faces of their wives and children, and saddened by tales of death, and of sickness which was hopeless because the remedy for it could not be bought at any price. It was probably during these days that

Van der Werf spoke those words which have never been forgotten, nor ever will be. Surrounded by a famished crowd, that was clamouring for bread or surrender, he answered: "I cannot break my oath; but if my body can serve you, cut it in pieces and distribute it among yourselves". What indeed was mere physical suffering in comparison with the grief caused by the sight of so much misery, which one could, yet might not, relieve? And then the thought of what might happen, if in the end Leyden should fall, and perhaps in its fall drag down with it the whole of Holland, and so bring about the domination of the hated foreigner and the despised priest! It was a relief to have opposition to struggle against and to give vent to anger and indignation instead of pity and grief. And indeed there was occasion enough. The Papists forgot their hunger in order to jeer at the Beggars. "Put on your wading boots", they would call after them, "and bring out your corn-sacks. Your Prince is on his way, bringing you herrings and loaves". They were not content with merely jeering. Now that, much to their disappointment, the Corporation was no more convened, they did what they could to intimidate the magistracy in the Town-hall, and to drive them into surrendering. On September the 15th some forty Papists forced

their way into the Council-chamber and peremptorily demanded bread or surrender. Indeed their despair was only too well founded; and Halfleyden declared in their presence that he would not willingly be the cause of so many people dying of hunger. Fortunately the elder Van der Does was present. Though he and Van Hout and all those who agreed with them were overwhelmed with reproaches and threats from the mutineers, as they brandished their rusty weapons, they yet remained resolute and did not yield. So the crowd retreated, though threatening to return next day three hundred strong.

Such was the extremity to which the town had been reduced when at last relief came in sight. The messengers who had last been sent out, faithfully kept their oath to return and appeared at the gates during the night of the 15th of September. They brought letters from the Prince and from the States; but even before the letters could be read, they joyfully announced that they had found the Admiral and his sailors and soldiers already at the *landscheiding*, full of hope and eager for battle. The letters were then opened with trembling hands, and were found to corroborate these tidings, and to contain other good news besides. "Oh, what happiness is mine", writes Douza in his

Latin Ode to Van Hout, "what happiness is mine when the image of that night arises in my memory!" The letter from the States was written on the 12th. It not only expressed gratitude for the town's endurance, and encouragement to hold out, but it contained the news that the day before, when the firing had been heard, the *landscheiding* had actually been pierced, so that now there was every reason to hope for a speedy relief. The news too about the Prince was of the happiest. His illness had subsided, and his strength was gradually returning; and now he, the soul of the Government, was pressing forward the relief with all his might. Finally Mr. Jacob and Mr. Jan van der Does received the most gratifying compliment: they were appointed joint Commissaries by the Prince, to succeed the late Mr. Bronckhorst. No wonder that in later days Douza felt his bosom swell with pride and happiness when he remembered the events of that night. The recovery of the Prince made it certain that nothing would be omitted that might further the relief; while the appointment of the Commissaries was a guarantee that the town would hold out, for now that they were invested with this authority, and supported by the Civic Guard they had no more need to concern themselves any further with the feelings

of the Burgomasters or of the "Forty". But their authority was hardly required any more. As Douza puts it, these comforting letters brought the burghers back to their senses, and steeled their exhausted frames to yet further endurance. The following morning the letter from the Prince was read aloud to the people from the steps of the Town-hall. He wrote that "with his whole heart he thanked the burghers for the good faithfulness which they had shown to him, and that they must not doubt but that by God's grace victory was at hand". We can well imagine with what satisfaction those who had remained steadfast must have listened to these words of their beloved Prince, and what deep shame must have been felt by the faint-hearted, who were already repenting that for a brief moment they had gone astray.

After this memorable night, the town still went through much suffering, worse perhaps than before. It was found necessary to slaughter horses, because the store of cattle diminished too rapidly, and later when meat of any kind grew scarce, even salted skins were distributed. Many citizens who had listened and rejoiced at the public reading of the Prince's letter, did not live to witness his entry on the day after the relief. None the less the misery of these last days was easier to endure than

that of the earlier stages. Hope had returned, and there was an end to mere purposeless suffering and despair. The burghers now knew that hundreds of faithful friends were exerting themselves on their behalf, and they heard and saw their salvation ever drawing nearer. Each day lived through was a day gained. And during those hours of agony, many no doubt found comfort in the thought expressed in the letter from the States to the town; "Leyden saved is Holland saved". It was for the sake of the Fatherland that Leyden was suffering and holding out.

### III

We must now enquire what efforts the Fatherland had been making in order to relieve Leyden,

At the beginning of the second siege the Prince was at Dordrecht, where he had arrived from Bommel by Gorcum a few days after the defeat on the Mook Heath. He had found the States still in session there, though not in full numbers. The uncertain fate of his favourite brothers, Louis and Henry, must have been a great grief to him at this time; but he could have felt little doubt that they, as well as the Duke Palatine Christopher, had been killed in the battle. The death of Count Louis in

particular, was not only a sorrow to the Prince, who loved him dearly, but was also an irreparable misfortune for the good cause to which he had devoted his life, and for which he had now sacrificed himself. Moreover grave anxiety as to the future was bound to be caused by the defeat of the army, which it had been expected, or at least hoped, would have achieved the salvation of Holland. About this time the Prince wrote to his brother Jan that he felt quite dazed by the multitude of affairs pressing upon him, and by grief for the loss of his beloved brothers, so that he hardly knew what he was doing. While he was thus bowed down by cares and sorrows, the English Colonel Chester appeared in the Council-chamber on May the 27th, bringing the bad news of the loss of the redoubt at the Goudsche Sluis owing, so he said, to lack of powder and ammunition. For a moment the Prince seemed irritated by these tidings, coming on the top of so many other misfortunes. "This first loss will not be the only one", he said. "We are sure to have further losses, unless those who have been entrusted with authority attend more zealously to their duties". He also complained about the Leydeners who would not take in a garrison. He foresaw that Leyden would be surrounded, while it still lacked adequate military



defenders; and this was then actually happening, though the news had not yet reached him, nor the report that the English companies from Valkenburg had been refused admission. He also heard that no heed whatever had been paid to his warnings to lay in stores of provisions in good time. Had he not cause to be impatient at so much carelessness and obstinacy, and even to despair of the struggle for liberty? But such was not the character of this noble Prince, who had made the cause of the people of the Netherlands his own. Though some might fail in their duty, he could never do so. The evil could no longer be averted, but might perhaps be repaired. He immediately set to work, and summoned a full meeting of the States on June the 1st at Rotterdam, whither he went in advance, in order to keep a closer watch on Leyden.

Finance first claimed his attention. If Leyden was to be saved, then the war-chest which was always empty to the bottom, must now be filled. It is true that Holland was contributing a sum ten times as great as that which it had obstinately refused to pay to the Spanish Government; indeed it was so considerable that Prince William himself expressed his astonishment that after so much plunder and destruction the people were still able

to collect such a sum of money. But vast sums were needed in order to hold out against the King of Spain, the lord of the American silver-mines; and the Province had to manage without two of its chief cities, Haarlem and, more disastrous still, Amsterdam. Moreover the towns of Holland had preserved from their mediaeval past strong mutual jealousies, and an intense spirit of particularism. Each suspected the other of a desire to shift its share of the common burden on to the shoulders of its neighbours, a suspicion born of self-knowledge. Only a mediator and leader such as William of Orange, respected and beloved by all, and gifted with inexhaustible patience and devotion, could succeed in inducing such selfish and unruly allies to collaborate. No wonder that the enemies of our national and religious freedom made him, as they do even now, the butt of their hatred and calumnies; for without him this freedom would never have been won. We fully recognise the great merits of various other men; but the special work of Orange, which no one but he could have accomplished, was to induce all these various individuals to join hands and serve the common cause, regardless of their own separate interests.

Since 1572, everything had gradually come to

be taxed, that had hitherto been free from taxation. There was nothing upon which the Treasury did not lay claims; excise duties were levied on wine, beer, cattle and corn; monthly contributions were demanded; trade was depressed by import and export duties; crown and church lands, the possessions of enemies and of refugees, were all appropriated. Notwithstanding all this, there was a constant shortage of money; civil servants received an insufficient salary or none at all, and there was no money for the soldiers on pay-day. It was only by continual warnings and threats that the towns could be forced to pay their contributions, and continual excuses and fair promises were necessary to pacify the ill-paid, and induce them to remain in the service. At any time it was difficult enough to make both ends meet, but now that Geertruidenberg, Bommel and Gorcum were simultaneously threatened by the enemy and needed protection, while at the same time Leyden had to be relieved, the normal income fell far short of what was required. Such exceptional penury demanded new sources of revenue. The Prince estimated the provisional expenditure at a hundred thousand guilders, and he proposed to the States to borrow this sum from two hundred private persons, who, he hoped, could

be induced to lend five hundred guilders each, in return for which they would receive, as they preferred, either debentures issued by the Province, or securities in the form of certain designated property that would be set aside for the purpose. On June the 12th the States agreed to this proposal, and on the 19th the Commissioners chosen for this work received their instructions and started on their travels from town to town in order to find lenders, and conclude the loan with them.

The scheme appears to have been a failure. As an investment it would offer no attractions, so long as the fortunes of the rebellion were still uncertain; and regarded as a donation, the sum asked for was too large. It was not possible to find two hundred sufficiently wealthy and generous persons, and the experiment merely caused loss of time. An amended scheme was then drawn up and considered by the States on the 8th, 9th and 10th of July, and finally agreed to on the 24th. The estimates were raised to a hundred and twenty thousand guilders, and it was decided to borrow that sum from the towns. Each town was to contribute according to its capacity, and could then recoup itself from the purses of its wealthy burghers. A yearly interest of one penny out of twelve, that is  $8\frac{1}{3}$  percent was to be paid; and in addi-

tion certain designated property within their walls or in their neighbourhood was assigned as security to the towns, so that they in their turn could hand over a due proportion of this property to the private money-lenders. In this way the success of the scheme was ensured; but all the same, it was only very slowly that the funds could be obtained. At the end of September the Government of Delft was still trying to collect its quota. It is probable that the greater part of the equipment for the relief of Leyden was obtained on credit, and was paid for some months later out of the money raised by the loan. Such postponement of payment was only possible after the States had established their credit by floating the loan.

The next question was, how this money was to be spent; in other words by what method the relief of Leyden was to be attempted. Should another army be recruited from Germany, and the expedition of the previous spring be repeated, in the hope that this time it would be more successful, and not be destroyed by a second Mook Heath before it could reach the beleaguered city? In view of recent costly experiences, such a plan was not worth considering seriously. The Prince certainly would have been glad if his German friends

had made another venture, so long as it was at their own expense; but he refused to spend the country's money upon it. Anyone who was acquainted with these German lords, knew that in that case not a single regiment would be equipped. What then was to be done? Before long a rumour spread that an attempt would be made to save Leyden by flooding the South Holland district.

Such a plan had indeed been in the Prince's mind from the very beginning. The project had already been considered, when Valdez appeared in Holland in the autumn. The Prince had then ordered Aldegonde, who was at Maaslandsluis, to open the sluices and to flood the surrounding country; but he countermanded his order before it could be executed, because the experts, whom the States had in the meantime consulted, declared that as a result the country would be drowned and that it would be extremely difficult to drain it afterwards. Accordingly nothing had been done. It is true that on a smaller scale the people of Delft had flooded the polders<sup>1)</sup> in the neighbourhood, of their town, so that several skirmishes with the enemy had taken place on water. But no steps had been taken to let in the water from the large rivers. On that occasion Leyden had been relieved

in another way; the enemy had withdrawn of his own free will. But now, since he had returned to resume the siege, and a similar relief of the town seemed impossible, the Prince once more reverted to his old remedy, which, if it could be applied, would indeed be a radical cure. The whole body of Holland was infested with "la vermine Espagnole", as the Prince once had called the enemy's soldiers; to dive under water and so drown the vermin in a bath, was no doubt the best way to get rid of them. But how much else would be drowned and ruined with the enemy? Who could predict where the floods would stop, what places of refuge for the people and their goods would be spared, or when and at what cost the land could be drained again? An even more important question was whether Rynland and the environs of Leyden could be actually reached and covered by the waters of the Maas. First Delfland and Schieland would have to be flooded, by which they would suffer incalculable mischief. But what if after all the water were to remain standing at the boundaries of Rynland? Then all the harm would have been done, and the relief of Leyden would not have been brought any nearer; on the contrary, it would have been rendered impossible, for whence could the money then be raised to continue the

struggle? Once more the experts were consulted. They maintained that the level of Rynland was higher than that of the two southern districts; but many were of opinion that the difference of level was not so great but that one might hope that under favourable circumstances the water would flood Rynland. Not everyone however was of this opinion. Among others, De Huyter, who was a member of the Water-Council of Delfland, kept continually reassuring Valdez, pledging himself that Rynland was high enough to remain dry. The event showed that neither of these opinions was altogether correct, and that the prophecies on both sides were partially wrong. It was indeed a hazardous undertaking, and its success or failure depended upon unforeseen circumstances,

“To venture all for all” was at that time the watchword of our bold ancestors. Freedom of thought and religion, national life, independence and self-government, were to them not merely the highest good, but the only good, the all in all. In order to preserve this, no price was too high, no venture too bold. They risked everything, and they won everything: a lesson and an example to all times.

We know nothing about the deliberations which preceded this decision; we have no record as to



who were the experts consulted by the States, and what were the arguments for and against the plan which was brought forward in the Assembly. We only know that, besides the Prince, the Public Advocate <sup>1)</sup> Paulus Buys was the most zealous supporter of the scheme, and that the complaints of those who resented the damage they would suffer by it, were chiefly directed against these two. On July the 30th, when the siege had already lasted more than two months, the important resolution was passed. It was to this effect, "that the lands of Rijnland, Delfland and Schieland, and those adjoining them, should be inundated by opening the sluices and by cutting through all the dykes and banks <sup>2)</sup>, so that either the enemy should be dislodged from these lands, or else that, after general consultation and consent, a plan should be decided upon for the relief by water of the city of Leyden by boats or barges". It was further decided "that all costs and damages, arising from the inundation and from the cutting and breaking of sluices, dams and dykes, and also from the repairing of same, should be borne jointly by the country and the towns of Holland." Immediately afterwards, on August the 1st, an order was placarded that all farmers and villagers in these three waterdistricts, unless they were living

in enclosed or fortified places, should remove within eight days with all their goods and cattle to a town or fortification subject to the Prince, on pain of having all their goods seized as lawful booty. This term was shortly afterwards prolonged to a fortnight; but in the meantime the work of cutting the highest dykes, along the Maas and Holland Ysel was already begun. On August the 3rd, the Prince in person travelled to Capelle and ordered the dyke on both sides of the village to be cut under his own eyes. From time to time, when it seemed advisable, new openings were cut in this dyke, so that in the end the river Ysel was flowing over the land through sixteen gaping breaches in the dyke between Gouda and the ferry at Yselmonde. A little later the Maasdyke was cut on either side of Rotterdam; and the sluices of Schie-land, within Rotterdam and Schiedam, were opened, as well as those called the "Five Sluices". The advantage of the sluices was that they could be closed when the rivers were low, whereas nothing could then be done to prevent the water from flowing back from the land into the rivers through the gaps in the dykes. The Rotterdam sluices in particular, let in great quantities of water. Yet many days had to pass before the flood, after filling up all the numerous ditches and channels,

could rise and spread to an appreciable depth over those many thousands of acres. At the same time, the summer-dykes and waterfenders between the various polders and bosoms <sup>1)</sup> had to be pierced, and a careful watch had to be kept, lest selfishness should close what had been opened for the common good. A few noblemen and notables were entrusted with this important but invidious task of organizing the inundation.

While the water was flowing in and gradually rising over the flooded land, His Excellency summoned Louis de Boisot, Seigneur of Ruart, from Zeeland, in order to give him the command of the relief expedition. He was one of the original noblemen of the Compromise, who had remained faithful to the good cause, enjoying and deserving the Prince's complete confidence. In the year 1572, shortly before the night of St. Bartholomew, he had carried letters from the Prince to Coligny and other important men in France; after the massacre he had been arrested and kept in confinement for several months. When he was released, he returned to support again the tottering cause of liberty; and since the Admiral of Zeeland, Bouwen Ewouts, had lately died of his wounds, the Prince and the States of Zeeland offered him the chief command of the fleet, small as his experience

of naval affairs had probably been hitherto. But he had a very capable Vice-admiral in Cornelis Claesz; and several of his captains were skilful seamen, while he himself was courageous, enterprising and efficient, so that the Prince had no occasion to repent of his choice. In January 1574 he had defeated the enemy in the terrible battle at Roemerswaal<sup>1</sup>), which led to the surrender of Middelburg and the permanent recovery of Walcheren. And quite recently during the first days of the siege of Leyden, he had gained a still more glorious success by the defeat of the Antwerp fleet and the capture of its admiral Haemstede. No one more suitable could have been found to organise and lead to success an expedition such as this, in which sailors and soldiers would have to work together, and which therefore required both seamanship and military skill. Zeeland indeed could not well spare Boisot at this moment, for it was expecting the approach of a formidable Spanish Armada, with fresh troops on board, and it had no intention of allowing these ships to reach harbour without an attempt to make them share the fate of former Armadas. But before long the rumour spread that this fleet, after it had met with various misfortunes — lately it had been ravaged by infectious disease — had given up the

expedition and was already being dismantled. Fortunately this report was soon confirmed, and so Zeeland was able to lend its admiral and its sailors to Holland for a time. Boisot now came to Rotterdam to consult with His Excellency and the States, who appointed him Admiral of their province. Such questions as what kind of vessels should be used, and how to equip and man them, were discussed. He then returned to Zeeland in order to select the best possible crews, and the most reliable captains, and to procure the necessary cannon of both heavy and light calibre. There was no time to be lost. Letters from Leyden spoke of increasing famine and distress, and were urgent in their entreaties for help.

But just at this moment, when Prince William could least be spared, and when he needed all his health and resiliency, his physical strength gave way under his anxiety and accumulated sorrows. He was struck down by a serious illness, which was accompanied by exhausting fever. The doctors did not immediately recognise its nature, and for a moment it was feared, even by the patient himself, that he had caught the plague, which was prevalent that summer in the whole of the Netherlands, and most of all in Holland. The three doctors in attendance were in agreement upon one

point: the cause lay in a deep melancholy, and they feared that the disease would develop into consumption. And indeed what a life had not the Prince led for several years past, and especially during the last months! He had espoused a great and holy cause, to which he had sacrificed fortune, rank, friends and brothers, but all in vain, he seemed to be carrying on a hopeless struggle against an overwhelming force, which weighed down and threatened to crush him, and together with him, the liberty of the Dutch nation. Who would not have lost his courage, energy and health under the burden of such memories and such prospects? Exhausted by sickness and worry he lay on his bed at Rotterdam in a dismal and comfortless building, which had formerly been a convent, and by a few slight alterations had been adapted as his residence. His faithful servants would have gladly carried him to his own house at Delft, which was far more comfortable; but he was not strong enough to stand the journey. The illness began on August the 10th and increased in severity till nearly the end of the month. His friends had but little hope of saving him, and his enemies looked forward eagerly to his death; rumours indeed spread both at home and abroad that he was already dead. There is no doubt that

he was nursed with care and devotion, but only by friends. None of his near relations were at his bedside. His wife, who was completely estranged from him, lived far away, and was his wife only in name. His eldest son, now twenty years old, who might have been a comfort and support to him, was being educated in Spain by his enemies; and it was many years since he had seen his younger children, who were living with his brother at Dillenburg<sup>1</sup>). What save torturing and despairing thoughts could occupy his mind? He only found peace when he turned to the God in whom he believed, and to whose will he bowed, in the firm conviction that under His guidance evil could not permanently triumph over good. On August the 28th he was lying alone with his thoughts and apparently deserted, when Cornelis Mierop, who afterwards became Receiver-General of Holland, appeared unannounced at his bedside. Messengers had arrived from Leyden, begging to be allowed, before they returned, at least to see the Prince, in order to be able to contradict the rumours of his death. When asked how he was feeling, and why he was left lying there alone, the Prince answered in a weak voice that he had sent his servants away and that he felt very ill. All the same he received the messengers in audience, “and understanding

that Leyden had not yet been taken by the enemy he rejoiced and thanked God. From that hour he began to improve and occupied himself again with the relief of the town, which had made but feeble progress on account of his illness". No poet could describe the scene more movingly than the chronicler Bor <sup>1</sup>) does, whose simple words I have just quoted. Who does not recognise Father William in the sick man who sends away his servants for fear of infecting them, yet ill as he may be, does not refuse audience to those who wish to see him; who revives at tidings that the good cause is not yet lost, and rises from his sick bed to toil and keep watch over his "poor people" <sup>2</sup>). Fortunately his health continued to improve. After the last days of August the fever did not return; yet though he seemed to be cured, it was long before he regained his strength. But he did not wait for complete recovery before resuming his task. He might have chosen "*Repos ailleurs*" for his device with a better right even than his friend Marnix of St. Aldegonde.

When he returned to his duties, he found that fortunately there had been little neglect during his illness. As was readily admitted by the Prince's servants, the States had done everything that it was in their power to do, nor had they been



found wanting in good-will or in zeal. All the same they could not replace the Prince. They lacked his authority, his firm will which was respected by everyone; for though he never used force unnecessarily, yet he always acted with energy, whenever anything needed to be done. During his absence private interests had not always been subordinated to the common interests of the country. All the dykes had not been pierced, nor all the land flooded. The water had not spread as far as it might have done. All the same at the end of August, a man who had stood on the top of the high Zeedijk near Yselmonde reported that he could see nothing but water either in the direction of Delft or of Leyden. The villages rose out of the flood like islands, and agricultural produce had to be brought in barges to the gates of the towns. But the flood was arrested by the *landscheiding* at the frontier of Rynland. From ancient times (certainly from before 1313) this dyke had served rather to protect Delfland and Schieland against the water from the district of Rynland, than to protect Rynland against the superfluous water from the lower land of the two southern districts, which consequently had to bear the costs of maintenance. This encircling dyke, a couple of feet high on the average, was crossed by only one

canal properly provided with sluices for the passage of shipping that came from the Ysel near Gouda and was going to the Rhine near Alfen. The crossing, was called the Goudsche Sluis, a position, as has already been mentioned, of great strategic importance, now in the hands of the enemy who had strongly fortified it. Besides this there was at Zegwaard in the *landscheiding* between Schieland and Rynland one other passage for small ships, called "de Verlaten", and this was also held by the enemy. Nowhere else was there any break in the dyke. Leyden Dam in those days was what is implied by its name, which has now become a misnomer: it was a dam right across the Delft Vliet, over which the ships had to be brought across by an *overtoom* <sup>1</sup>). So long as the besiegers carefully guarded this dyke, and were able to prevent its being cut or at least to repair it immediately, they would have no need to fear the flooding of Rynland by the waters of the Maas, nor the approach of the relief force. Valdez had been informed of the strategical importance of this dyke by his Dutch friends, and had therefore, as we know, drawn his outer line of defence through the villages which were situated at no great distance from each other along the *landscheiding*. It is clear that he was on his guard and aware of what might be

attempted, for when early in September the Freebooters from Gouda pierced the Hildam in order to let the water from Schieland flow into Rynland, his soldiers were immediately on the spot and succeeded in stopping up the gap. Accordingly his vigilance would have to be outwitted, and a surprise attempt made to cut the dyke at a carefully chosen spot. The gap would then have to be kept open by force, until Rynland should be under water, and a broad road thus be opened for the flotilla to approach Leyden. At Rotterdam extravagant hopes were entertained: it was thought that if only the *landscheiding* were pierced, the water would flow unhindered into the Zoetermeer lake (now since many years a polder, then still a vast expanse of water), carrying the flotilla with it, which thence would easily reach Leyden. A successful surprise attack, followed by a stiff fight at the *landscheiding*, and the relief would be a certainty. How sadly were later events to belie these high hopes!

As soon as the Prince was convalescent his influence made itself felt in a quickening of the necessary preparations. About that very time, on August the 25th the minutes of the States of Holland begin, and it is interesting to see by the numerous detailed instructions there recorded, how

activity and zeal were stimulated in all who were to take part in the relief. During the whole month of August the work of equipping the barges selected by Boisot was busily going forward in the towns of Holland. Early in September the last stage was reached. These vessels were in the main of two kinds. There were in the first place *praams*, long flat-bottomed boats, which could take a heavy load, yet were of shallow draught. Some hundreds of this type had been collected. They were intended to be used only in the transport of soldiers, ammunition and provisions. The second kind were of a stronger build, though they also drew no more than from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 feet of water. They were called by the imposing name of galleys; and indeed they were propelled by oars. Some seventy were fitted out. They each mounted three or four small cannon, and carried seven or eight arquebusiers, besides their crew of sailors and rowers. The captains and the crews and most of the cannon had to be got out of Zeeland; the towns in Holland were responsible for the soldiers and for everything else. Towards the end of August, about the time of the Prince's recovery, Boisot, with his staff of skilled captains and eight hundred picked sailors entered Rotterdam harbour in seven large ships called Kromstevens.

They were of a robust and formidable type, these Zeeland sailors. They had won renown in many an encounter on the channels and shallows of the Schelde, and in many a victorious sea-fight with the Spanish armadas. They created a great sensation in Holland. Among them were those pious fanatical Beggars, who, like the English Puritans of the following century, severe towards themselves as towards their fellow-men, concealed beneath a commonplace exterior a heroism for the faith which would reveal itself at the right moment. But it was the wild Beggars who chiefly astonished the multitude — savage in appearance, with faces and bodies scarred, hats decorated with a half-moon and with the device, “Sooner Turkish than Popish”, rough customers, whose religion did not go beyond a passionate hatred of Pope and Papists, and who, under the banner of freedom committed the same excesses and atrocities as the mercenaries of all nations whom the Spanish Government employed against them. Of this kind was the savage who, in a subsequent battle, tore out the heart from the enemy he had slain, fixed his teeth in it and then threw it away because it tasted bitter. It is characteristic of the demoralisation of these times that this cannibal deed was not regarded with abhorrence, that it

was almost praised by men of culture and eminence. The Spanish methods of carrying on the war against the rebels inevitably created defenders of liberty, whose principle was "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth", and who rivalled their opponents in cruelty. In any case the men whom Boisot brought with him gave the impression of being equal to their task. If relief by water was possible, it could only be accomplished by such men as these. They were not only familiar with the element that was to be their ally, but with the enemy who was awaiting them, and they were not afraid of him; on the contrary they had made themselves formidable to him already. The best soldiers in the service of the States, mostly Walloons and Frenchmen, had been selected to cooperate with these sailors. The Walloons were commanded by the Colonel de Noyelles, whom we met as Governor of Leyden during the first siege, a bad governor of a Holland town, but an excellent officer at the head of his men. The French were led by Colonel La Garde, a Parisian who had entered the service of the States the year before, and remained faithful to them until his death. He was a brave soldier and a man of culture, highly valued by Prince William. Whatever service might be required of him, whether diplo-

matic or military, he was equally competent to perform it. His conduct during the relief was exemplary and after the happy issue, the States gave him a special reward. He has also laid us under a further obligation by writing an account of the expedition, part of which has fortunately been preserved.

The soldiers were not embarked all at once: they had to hold themselves in readiness in the neighbouring towns, so that they could be immediately shipped to whatever post they were ordered to. But a few Netherlands noblemen and important citizens, who had volunteered for the expedition, went on board at once. Among these were the Seigneur van Boetselaer, and Guillaume de Maulde, Sieur de Mansart, author of the "Discours du siège", which contains the fullest account of the relief. More illustrious than either of these was Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, then twenty seven years of age and a barrister at the Hague, a passionate lover of the cause of liberty and the new order, which later on he was destined to establish, when the great William of Orange was no longer among the living.

In the early days of September the preparations were so far forward that on the evening of the 5th, a trial expedition was sent out, in order to decide

upon the exact point against which the future attack should be directed. A few galleys, with La Garde and Pieter Wasteel, a member of His Excellency's Council, on board, explored in the Delfland direction, while Boisot himself investigated the Schieland section, where he met and skirmished with the enemy at Bleiswijk. After setting fire to some houses, he returned to Rotterdam with a number of cattle which he had looted. The result was a decision that it would be well to allow the water to rise for a few days more, and then to make an attack towards the south of the Zoetermeer Lake.

No one in Rotterdam knew of the critical struggle which in these very days was going on in the Town-hall at Leyden, and which, had it not been for the cousins Van der Does and the few well-intentioned Regents, might well have robbed the relief expedition of its object. The days, wasted in waiting for a few inches of water, might have proved fatal to Leyden. But at last this final delay was at an end, and the actual work could be begun. The night of September the 10th was chosen for the attack on the *landscheiding*.

#### IV.

On the evening of the 10th an expedition of suf-



ficient strength for the purpose moved from Rotterdam along the Rotte and so on to the flooded land. Sixteen galleys, commanded by Boisot himself, escorted a number of transport barges, which carried two companies of French arquebusiers, in all about three hundred and fifty men under the command of La Garde, besides two companies of Dutch pioneers. The attack was intended to take place under cover of night; but the journey took longer than was expected, and day had already dawned when the flotilla reached the point on the *landscheiding* chosen for the attack. This delay was of no consequence. The enemy were totally unprepared, and no one was there to prevent a landing. The pioneers set to work hastily, and threw up defences to right and left along the dyke with a space of about 250 yards between them. The French soldiers were posted behind these, and on either side the galleys were stationed so as to command the approaches along the dyke. Then the section of the *landscheiding*, which had been isolated, was cut through, and the water from Delfland could flow into Rynland. Considerable progress had been made, before the Spanish in Wilsveen and Zoetermeer, becoming aware of what was going on, hurried up with a much superior force, in order to chase away the Beggars and stop

up the gap. But they were already too late. The galleys made it dangerous to march along the dyke and the French arquebusiers were in a very strong position behind their breastworks. The Spanish attack was repulsed. But now the fiery impetuosity of the French could no longer be restrained. Rushing out of their defences, though the Admiral had forbidden them to do so, they engaged in a hand to hand fight with the enemy, so that the galleys were obliged to cease firing altogether, for fear of hitting them. Fortunately their insubordination had no evil consequences, and La Garde excused himself by saying, not without some justice, that in a first encounter like this, it was most important to strengthen the confidence of the troops, and not to encourage the delusion that our men were not equal to the Spaniards in open fight. In this struggle only a few of the victorious Beggars were wounded, the Admiral's pilot among them, whereas ten or twelve of the enemy were killed.

But after this success it was immediately apparent that a sad miscalculation had been made by those who had predicted that, if once the *landscheiding* were cut, everything else would follow as a matter of course. Only a short way off, the inflowing water was held up by a road which ran

parallel with the *landscheiding*. This road was called the Groeneweg, so a peasant said whom the soldiers caught. It was about a foot higher than the neighbouring meadows, and would have to be cut as well as the *landscheiding*. But worse than this, it was understood that beyond this there was yet a third road, parallel to the others, which would have to be cut before it would be possible to reach the Zoetermeer Lake, and there the enemy were encamped.

This new task could not be undertaken without reinforcements; so a message was sent to the Prince informing him of the victory, and at the same time begging him to send more troops. These arrived on the same day: the remainder of the five companies of Frenchmen, and four companies of Noyelles' regiment of Walloons. In addition a number of provision boats were sent under the escort of several more galleys, in case Boisot should be able to advance directly upon Leyden without further hindrance. So little did the Prince and his associates anticipate all the various obstacles which had still to be overcome.

Encouraged by these reinforcements, the Admiral decided to seize the Groeneweg on the very next day. At early dawn La Garde occupied it with six hundred soldiers, and proceeded to

make a cutting, just as had been done at the *landscheiding*. He met with no resistance, and the enemy did not interfere. Evidently Valdez thought it would not be worth while to contest this road with the Beggars. Its capture would not be of any advantage to them, unless they could also occupy the third parallel road, and there he could lie in wait for them in a most advantageous position.

The Voorweg, as it was called, ran from just north of Wilsveen in a slight curve towards the village of Zoetermeer. All along it were peasants' houses, barns and sheds, which even as they were, would offer excellent shelter for arquebusiers, and could easily be transformed into a series of fortifications, each protecting the other. While the Dutch were cutting the Groeneweg, Valdez made use of the interval to establish himself as firmly as possible on the Voorweg. He collected no less than three thousand men and a few field-pieces. The task that awaited the Beggars here, was more difficult than a surprise attack upon an undefended dyke. The officers of the rebel force, when they saw all these fortifications from their galleys, realised that it would be mere folly to attack them with no more resources than they had hitherto possessed. Without siege-guns it would be im-

possible to force their way through. La Garde went himself to Delft to which the Prince had already moved his quarters, followed a little later by the States. He reported to him the position of affairs, and begged for the necessary artillery.

The cannon were ready, but not the ships that were to carry them. They had first to be acquired, which took time. Four or five days were lost in this way; and meanwhile the fleet remained inactive. It was not until September the 16th that La Garde returned, bringing with him the cannoneer Asseliers with four strong flat-bottomed corn-barges, of the same draught as the galleys. Each barge mounted a so-called half-cannon, that could fire twenty-six pound balls, and carried a double bulwark of boards, with wet netting stretched between, for the protection of the cannoneers. No time was to be lost; so all preparations were made for an attack upon the following day.

The main difficulty was the shallowness of the inundation. The galleys were hampered in their movements and were constantly running aground. They had to remain within the channels of the numerous ditches which ran at right angles to the Voorweg, and ended there. It was only discovered by actual experience that these ditches grew shallower as they approached the road. Thus it

was a long time before the fleet could be drawn up in proper order, and the battle could begin.

The attack was chiefly directed against a bridge that carried the road over the canal which was the only entrance to the lake. If this could be seized, then the passage of the fleet would be assured; whereas at any other point victory would be useless, for wherever else the road might be cut through, the water on the other side would not be deep enough for the boats; and of course there was no time to dig a canal for that special purpose. So the bridge was the vital point. But the enemy were equally aware of this, and had therefore fortified it with special care, and placed their best artillery among the buildings on either side. At eight o'clock the four heavy cannon and the sixty smaller pieces opened fire from the galleys. They were answered by the enemy's guns, and a terrific cannonade burst forth, such as had seldom been heard in Holland, and such as Valdez so he wrote to Philip, did not remember having witnessed, since twenty-eight years before, he had assisted in beating off the German Protestants' attack on the camp at Ingolstadt <sup>1</sup>). But all this heavy thunder had very little result. The water was so shallow that the boats could not approach within effective range; and the corn-barges were

so unsteady that the cannoneers found it difficult to aim straight. It was not long before one boat after another was split by the recoil of its own guns, and so rendered useless. Fortunately the enemy had none too much ammunition, otherwise he might have used his field-pieces to greater advantage, placed as they were on the firm ground. For hours the Dutch had been thus wasting their powder, when the commanders of the fleet realised that the fight would not lead to any result, however long it might last; so about midday they gave the signal to retreat. But as they did not make the signal sufficiently clear, it was not noticed by everyone. A number of brave Frenchmen fell victims to the mistake. A short time before, the captains Durant and Catteville had become tired of fighting from a distance, and landing with about thirty arquebusiers, had taken shelter behind some stacks of peat which they found on the roadside. Thence they kept up a brisk fire upon the Spaniards posted in the houses near the bridge, creeping gradually nearer with the intention of lighting fires, which they hoped would spread and drive away the defenders of the bridge. But just at this moment the flotilla gave up the fight and retreated, so that they were left behind and the full force of the enemy now burst

upon them. They fled to the boat which had brought them, and Catteville threw himself into it so impetuously that it capsized. Those who could not swim were drowned or slaughtered. Among these were Catteville himself, and Guilleresse, Durant's lieutenant, both of them excellent and courageous officers. Their death made the unsuccessful attack appear a veritable defeat and disaster. The Spaniards on their side boasted of the victory and of the numbers of Beggars they had slain.

It really mattered little whether or no the retreat ought to be called a disaster. The Dutch had certainly been repulsed, and for the present they were unable to advance. Seigneur van der Aa, one of the noblemen who had voluntarily joined the expedition, was sent to the Prince to report what had happened and to ask his advice.

The situation was indeed most disheartening. What was to be done? Would it be best to wait, hoping that the water would rise, and in the meantime equip some boats that would be more suitable for carrying heavy cannon? But in that case valuable time would be lost; and the growing distress of the besieged town did not allow of further delay. Or should they sacrifice all that had so far been accomplished, and try once more



to find a passage for the flotilla elsewhere? Bitter as this was, it was the only plan that now remained, and the council of war decided to follow it.

If the Dutch commanders had been able to read the letters sent by Valdez about that time to the Governor at Brussels describing his condition and prospects, their courage would certainly have risen. As early as September the 15th he had written that the water was steadily rising, and that if it continued to do so, he would soon be obliged to abandon the outermost line of his siege-works. This statement acquired a deep significance when on the 18th, the day after the fight, a strong wind rose from the North-West and blew persistently for two days, accompanied by heavy rain-storms, so that the water rose still higher. This would have made but little difference to the Hollanders and Zeelanders. If it had been they, who had to defend the Voorweg, they would have been able to hold the position, even when it was under a few inches of water; and so it did not occur to them that the Spaniards would look upon it in such a different light. Gradual experience alone taught them to understand and profit by the Spanish hydrophobia; for the time being they could only judge the enemy by what they felt themselves. Not for a moment did they suspect

that he would abandon the line which he had just defended so successfully. They therefore assumed that the passage would at this point be blocked for good, and looked about for another place where they might try their luck once more. It was the Leydschedam which they naturally considered first.

At that point the *landscheiding* could be reached as easily as the section that had already been cut through, but the enemy was stationed there in a strong redoubt and would first have to be driven away. If the rebels succeeded in doing this, they would find behind the dyke a broad waterway called the Delftsche Vliet, which would be an excellent road for the flotilla. Probably the commanders did not know that the enemy had built several redoubts along this canal; but this possibility must have occurred to them; and they must also have feared that at some point of the canal there might be a narrow passage, where the enemy, as at the Zoetermeer bridge, would be able to fortify themselves strongly within a few hours.

While they were thus considering the comparative advantages of the various ways of approach, Mr. Pieter Wasteel, the late Pensionary<sup>1</sup>) of Mechlin, now a member of His Excellency's Council, arrived at head-quarters. From the first he

had shown great interest in the relief expedition, and as soon as he heard that the advance of the flotilla had been checked at Zoetermeer, he had gone round among the neighbouring villages to inquire whether there might not be other more practicable waterways. He brought with him some men from Zoetermeer, one of whom was a boat-builder who had given him especially valuable information. They would be able to serve as guides, if the commanders were willing to follow the plan they advised, which was that the attempt to penetrate into Rynland should be made, not as hitherto from Delfland, but from Schieland. On that side there was more water, because the Yseldyke had been the first to be cut; also the channels ran northwards and were deeper, and there were fewer cross-roads for the enemy to occupy. So far as we can judge, this was in itself sound advice, but it was the circumstances of the moment which particularly recommended it. It is by no means certain that less resistance would have been met with if the first attempt had been made from the Schieland side. The enemy would have fortified himself on the banks and along the waterways, just as he had done upon the Voorweg, and would have found strategic points, as suitable as the Zoetermeer bridge to prevent the flotilla from passing

through. But it was quite a different story, now that Valdez was concentrating his whole attention upon that part of the *landscheiding* where the engagement had taken place, and was not expecting an attack from any other quarter. It might now be possible to find some of the roads and waterways unguarded on the Schieland side, and to penetrate into Rynland so rapidly that the enemy would not have time to establish himself anywhere. Moreover, a fact which the rebels did not and could not know, the steady rise of the water, slow as it might be, caused the gravest anxiety to the Spaniards; they were in a state of doubt whether to retreat or no. In this mood, very little would suffice to make them abandon the whole of their outer line. Thus the chances were really much more favourable than the Dutch thought them to be. The commanders eagerly welcomed the plan proposed by Wasteel, chiefly because it would put an end to further indecision and waste of time.

Obviously it would be unwise to employ their whole military and naval force on this hazardous enterprise. The fleet of transports was to remain where it lay, protected by the greater number of the galleys and of the soldiers. Only eight galleys, with eighty arquebusiers and sixty pioneers on

board, were chosen to take part in the exploring expedition. Boisot and La Garde undertook the command, and they were joined by the most enterprising among the noblemen volunteers. As they rowed eastward, it was discovered at once that the guides had spoken the truth: the water grew continually deeper, so much so even, that the galleys could row across the *landscheiding* between Delfland and Schieland without having a cutting made for them. Further on they followed the *landscheiding* of Rynland in a northerly direction as far as the Zegwaard sluice, locally called the *Zevenhovensche Verlaten*. This sluice was broken through without much difficulty, and then the water flowed into Rynland with full force, flooding the land beyond the dyke to an ever increasing depth. The fleet soon followed through the deep channels as far as a road running south and north, which the guides told them was the Zegwaard road. It was the continuation of that Voorweg, which they knew only too well, and led from Zoetermeer and Zegwaard to Benthuizen. The last-named villages had been occupied and fortified by the enemy. It seemed a rash plan to post themselves with so few men on this road, with the enemy so close to them on either side; but the Admiral took this risk, in

the hope that the Spaniards, being taken by surprise, would not be able to arrive on the spot immediately. And so it turned out. The pioneers dug the usual entrenchments to right and left in great haste; the eighty arquebusiers were divided into two groups: one half led by Bouchard, faced towards Zegwaard; the rest, led by Citadelle, towards Benthuizen. The galleys were placed in such positions that their guns covered the approaches along the road, and so near that in case of need the soldiers and pioneers could save themselves by jumping on board. Boisot himself decided to remain, while La Garde went to fetch the rest of the fleet and the soldiers. The day had closed before all this was done. The weather was very rough, with frequent heavy rain-storms, and the night that followed was full of discomfort for the men in the open galleys, and still more for those who were posted upon the unsheltered road. The water splashed up over the ground on which they bivouacked amid wind and rain. But though the weather thus maltreated them, it was as favourable as possible for their purpose. The enemy in the neighbouring villages never dreamt of troubling them. On the contrary, the Germans encamped at Benthuizen moved hurriedly away to higher and drier ground. The next morning they

were discovered to have abandoned the village, and Boisot was able to occupy it with the half of his arquebusiers led by Citadelle. No sign came from the direction of Zoetermeer, but it soon appeared that there too the enemy was preparing to retreat.

Meanwhile La Garde was conducting the fleet away from the Voorweg, along the new waterway to where the Admiral was awaiting it. This was no easy task, and he performed it very indifferently. The chief difficulty was to keep that crowd of ships in order, and to prevent the deeper boats from running aground in the ditches, and so blocking the way for those that followed. At first insufficient attention was paid to this, so that soon at various points confusion and congestion arose, which was increased by clumsy attempts to disentangle the ships. Furthermore most of the galleys that carried the soldiers, and ought to have protected the unarmed boats in the rear, had been ordered to sail in the van. It was most fortunate that the Spaniards on the Voorweg were equally disorganised and badly led. Had they not been more concerned for their own safety than anxious to inflict damage upon the Beggars, it might have gone badly for the latter. A bold sortie by a few hundred courageous soldiers would

have wrought terrible destruction and slaughter among that disordered crowd. But as the enemy did not stir, the confusion did no harm. After long shuffling, the fleet succeeded in passing through the narrow passage without any loss. But a large unwieldy ship, derisively nicknamed Noah's Ark, was still to cause much embarrassment. It was composed of two boats coupled together, and propelled by wheels placed between them, which had to be turned by hand. Bulwarks, cannon and arquebusiers made of it a kind of floating fort, which might have rendered good service, if it had not proved so awkward and unmanageable on those shallow waters. First it ran aground and refused to be refloated. Three hours were spent in desperate efforts and it had already been condemned to be set on fire, so that it might not fall into the enemy's hands as a trophy, when at last the Vice-Admiral succeeded in getting the monster under way. Finally the whole fleet was brought without loss or damage through the *landscheiding*, and then over flooded Delfland and Schieland into Rynland, to where beside the Zegwaard road Boisot lay waiting impatiently. He knew the danger of any further delay at this juncture: the enemy might have discovered in what direction the fleet was moving, and it was important not to



allow him time to entrench himself. That very evening (September the 20th) Boisot with his vanguard rowed away from the Zegwaard road, and at nightfall reached a broad deep canal, which was well known to his guides, who called it the Walle-Wetering. The next morning La Garde was to follow with the rest of the fleet.

At this moment the Dutch were certainly in a much more favourable position than when they were preparing to attack the Voorweg a few days before. Yet if they had been confronted by an enemy who was thoroughly acquainted with the ground and its possibilities, they would have still been but little better off. Fortunately Valdez and his soldiers were not at home in our waterland. The flood, lashed by storms of wind and rain, and rising slowly but steadily day by day, and the soft ground gradually turning into a vast morass, inspired them with a fear which was boundless, because they did not know the extent of the danger. No wonder that they completely lost their heads when they heard that the Beggars had suddenly broken through at a quite new point, and were now threatening to cut the communications between the various redoubts and isolate the garrisons one by one. Lest worse should befall, the Spanish general decided to completely abandon

his outer line and withdraw from Zoetermeer to Zoeterwoude. And so the Spaniards began their retreat in the same direction as that in which the Beggars advanced.

Before La Garde started the next morning (September the 21st) with the rearguard of the fleet, he heard that Zoetermeer had been evacuated. As the Admiral had never contemplated the possibility of this event, he had left no orders to meet the case. But La Garde was a good enough soldier to understand that the situation was now completely altered, and that new measures were urgently needed. Though Benthuizen was well fortified, he gave orders for it to be evacuated, and also for the cutting in the Zegwaard road to be abandoned, contenting himself with occupying Zoetermeer. In that village he placed three companies under Captain Cret, which he considered sufficient to repel the enemy in case he should return. This showed excellent judgment. The Walle-Wetering, the route chosen by the Admiral, flowed through Zoetermeer, and so the occupation of this village would completely cover a retreat. The Spaniards had made an irreparable blunder in abandoning this position without being compelled to do so.

Meanwhile in the early morning Boisot had

started northwards along the Walle-Wetering with twenty galleys. Every now and again his guides warned him to beware of various farm-steads which they had to pass, and where the enemy might be lying concealed; but not one of them was occupied, and he met with no resistance anywhere, until he reached the little Noordaa Lake at the end of the Walle-Wetering. There, close by the mouth of the Lake, a few hundred German pikemen were seen to issue out of some houses. Fortunately they appeared to have no intention of molesting the fleet, and without disputing the entrance of the galleys into the lake, retreated to another house further along, where some Spanish soldiers were stationed. All this sufficiently proved that Valdez was taken by surprise, since otherwise he could have stopped the fleet here at the houses at the north of the Lake, just as easily as he had done at Zoetermeer. As it was, when the galleys reached the open lake, they drew up in order of battle, and immediately opened a hot fire with musketry and cannon upon the Spaniards, who answered it vigorously but with little success, apparently because they were not sufficiently calm and composed to take good aim. All that evening the skirmishing continued, but when night fell, the enemy withdrew under cover of darkness

towards Zoeterwoude. They thus abandoned the lake, which branched northwards into two canals, and the Dutch took possession of it at once. The fleet of transports, which under La Garde's guidance appeared gradually on the scene, found a safe and spacious anchorage there.

Only now was it possible to review what progress had been made during the last few days. It was indeed considerable. The distance to Leyden was halved; the wide expanse of the Zoetermeer and Noordaa Lakes could now be used as harbourage for the provision-ships; and a safe retreat was assured to the village of Zoetermeer, and thence over flooded Delfland to the friendly towns in the south. Nevertheless the main object was still far distant. The nearer they approached to Leyden, the less water was found on the land. In the Weypoort district, north of the Noordaa, the cattle were still grazing in the meadows. Yet the only approach to Leyden lay across these fields, unless an attempt were made to advance along the canals which were commanded by the fire of the enemy.

The following day (September the 22nd) the Admiral first of all made use of the wide space to arrange the fleet in better order, so that the gal-

leys should be able to move freely; after this he drew up his armed vessels along the Weypoort Vliet, which runs from the Noordaa to the Rhine, and ordered them to fire with all their cannon a rousing salute to the besieged town, whose steeples and roofs were clearly visible from the ships. This method of communication had now become necessary, for though some messengers still succeeded in making their way out of the town, they found it almost impossible to return.

Since that memorable night of the 16th, when the cousins van der Does had received from the Prince their appointments as Commissaries, no news had reached the town from outside. On the 17th the sound of firing had been heard, and again after a long silence on the 21st, but now from much closer. Burning wisps of straw were even blown by the wind onto the town-walls. This raised the spirits of the burghers and gave them hope that relief might yet come in time. The distress was extreme. What remained of their stock of cattle was rapidly diminishing. On the 22nd, when Boisot fired his salvo of greeting, horses were slaughtered for the first time, so that milch cows might be spared a little longer for the benefit of the sick. Two pounds of meat, one of horse and one

of beef: that made one person's ration for four days; but as this included bones and waste, it was hardly enough to keep life going. No wonder the citizens made a search for anything that could be eaten so as to still their hunger. The particulars that are related are sickening and we will not repeat them here. We will content ourselves with the few words in which the simple Journal, that we have quoted before, sums up the situation "It is the truth that there are some who go to bed seemingly in good health, but are found dead in the morning, killed by famine, yea three or four together in one house". Was death really always due to famine? The exclusive diet of animal food must have been the cause of special diseases. By far the greatest number of the population had not tasted any bread for five weeks. No wonder that under these conditions the plague, which was always raging, should increase to a terrible extent. Everything contributed to bring about a terrible mortality. So intolerable were the pangs of hunger that the rations had to be increased, and henceforth the distribution of the two pounds of meat took place every three days instead of every four. The period of time during which the town could still hold out, was thus reduced by one fourth. The moment could be foreseen, and was even no longer

very distant, when further resistance would be impossible, and the town would have to surrender however close relief might be. But now that the cousins van der Does had got the upper hand, it was certain that Leyden would not capitulate an hour earlier than could be avoided. The citizens supported them in their policy of endurance, and continued to suffer in patience.

No further overtures were made by Valdez, for his whole attention was concentrated upon the relief expedition. But Count de la Roche's trumpeter reappeared several times at the gate. First on the 17th he came to ask for an answer to the letter of the 5th. He then learned that the answer would have been sent long ago had not Valdez held up the messenger. On the 21st the trumpeter was again sent to inquire whether or no the offer of mediation was accepted. The next day the Sheriff<sup>1</sup>) van Broeckhoven gave this final answer in the name of all the citizens: for the present they did not wish to come to an agreement, but would await how Almighty God might dispose of them. Thus ended the negotiations with the enemy, which ought never to have been begun.

After the firing and the conflagrations of September the 21st, very little was heard or seen of the relief force during the following few days. It

was noticed that a polder beyond the Weypoort was under water, which made them feel sure that the fleet could not be far away. Now and then the sound of firing was heard, but there were no signs of a real battle. Patience was most severely tried. Not a single messenger entered the town. As soon as Boisot had entered the Noordaa Lake, he had written a letter on the 22nd to Van der Does and entrusted it to messengers in the Prince's service; but they returned, as usual, without having succeeded in their mission. If it was a question of escaping from the town, the adventure was nearly always successful; for obvious reasons the return to the abode of hunger and death was usually found to be impossible. Thus another day, September the 25th, passed by without tidings. The town was at its last gasp. Boisot must be informed that they were counting the days, and that the decision could not be long delayed. Three courageous men were chosen to carry the message. One of them soon returned, baffled by the dangers he met with; but the two others reached their destination. Now at last the burghers would be able to learn what the chances of relief were, for the men had taken pigeons with them, so that in case they could not return themselves, they could send a winged messenger. But again two long days



passed by without any sign of either man or dove. It was now the 28th. On that day for the first time salted skins were distributed with the horse-meat, another warning that starvation was at the door. Fortunately that same evening a pigeon flew into the city, carrying a note which at least explained the long silence. On the 26th, when the last message from Leyden had reached Boisot, he had immediately replied and had sent the messengers back to the town with letters; but after several vain attempts to penetrate the enemy's lines, they had brought the letters back to the Admiral. Not until then had the pigeon been released and had faithfully and quickly performed its task. On the 29th a second bird followed the first, carrying a letter written by Boisot only a few hours before. The Commissaries and the magistrates immediately ordered the chief contents to be read in public and made known to the citizens. It was the old promises of speedy relief, now confirmed by the news that the day before Prince William himself had arrived at the flotilla in order to push forward the preparations. His Excellency sent warm greetings and reassuring messages to the burghers. He had never doubted but that with God's help the town would be delivered out of its misery, to which end everyman was admonished

to humble himself before God, and with a sense of their own sinfulness and unworthiness implore Him to take compassion on the town. Excellent wishes and sentiments no doubt! But he must have been easily satisfied who could find comfort in them. A week had now gone by since the flotilla had reached the Noordaa Lake. It was still there, and had not advanced an inch. Relief remained on the horizon, as far away as ever.

It no progress was made, it was not anybody's fault. It was due to the low level of the water. How ardently a rise was hoped for! But the water remained all the time at about the same height. At first it had risen some five or six inches; but when the wind turned to the east, it had fallen back to its original level in forty-eight hours. The average depth of the water on the flooded land was about one foot, whereas the boats and galleys drew from one and a half to two feet. Unless the water were to rise considerably, further progress was out of the question.

Two fairly broad canals flowed out of the Noordaa Lake. The first, called the Weypoort Vliet, fell into the Rhine near the House at Zwieten, and could be of no use to the relieving force for between Zwieten and Leyden lay the fortified vil-

lage of Leyderdorp, which effectively blocked the river. The second canal flowed past Zoeterwou, which, being also fortified, was just as much an obstruction to the passage of the flotilla. It could only proceed over the meadows between the two canals as soon that is, as it found two feet of water. There was indeed a road called the Kerklaan, running across from the one canal to the other, which would have to be seized and cut through; but that would not be an impossible obstacle, if only they could count on the necessary depth of water. Already on the 24th a small cutting had been made by the rebels in this road, but it could not be of any immediate use, and shortly afterwards the enemy had closed it up again.

To the sailors and soldiers, this period of waiting and inactivity was a severe trial. They were consumed with impatience and suffered many hardships. There was hardly room for them to turn round in the narrow open vessels, in which they were exposed at all hours to the wind and the rain. The only distraction was some skirmishing with the enemy stationed at Zoeterwou and at the House at Zwieten; but this mostly consisted of a good deal of random firing, by which very little damage was done. They were constantly search-

ing for new waterways. Armed with gauging-rods, they rowed in all directions, investigating the depth of the inundation and the course of the various ditches, always in hope of somewhere discovering a channel by which they might advance; but nothing could be found, so for lack of something better, the old plan of breaking through into the Delft Vliet and advancing towards the town along that waterway was reconsidered. The first obstacle in that direction was the Stompwyk road to the west of the Zoetermeer lake, which would have to be seized and cut through; a difficult task, for the enemy were posted there in large numbers. And suppose it had been successfully accomplished what would have been gained? Just as much as the Weypoort and Zoeterwou canals, the Delft Vliet led past fortifications which could easily block the passage of the flotilla. The obvious way was straight across the Kerklaan and over the meadows beyond. If that was impracticable, every other way seemed even more so. It was madness to attempt the impossible. All that could be done was to wait, fully prepared, for the water to rise, which was certain to happen if only a strong wind would blow for a few days from the right direction, and to keep prepared to seize that opportunity as soon as it offered itself.

Naturally there were plenty of wise-acres who shook their heads over Boisot and his captains, professing that they could not understand why they should make so little progress. The Admiral, in order to justify himself and silence these critics, was anxious that Prince William should come and see for himself how matters stood. The Prince, though practically recovered, was still feeling weak and he dared not risk the journey so long as the weather remained stormy. But the 28th was a fine sunny day; so he embarked in a galley and was rowed to the flotilla, where he was received with loud cheers and salvos. He examined everything very carefully, conversed with the commanders and officers, and declared that he was perfectly satisfied with the preparations that had been made, and was convinced that for the present nothing further could be done. Possibly however, an attack on the Stompwyk road might be risked, so that nothing should be left untried. Towards evening His Excellency returned to Delft. His visit had not altered the situation, but it had quickened everyone's courage. That same night the galleys set out to find the Stompwijk road; but they got hopelessly lost among the ditches and canals which had to be followed, and returned towards morning, without attempting

anything further. The experts indeed had never liked the plan. All hopes were now centred on the coming spring-tide. If it should coincide with a strong west wind, and if as a consequence the water should rise a couple of feet, then there still was a chance. Otherwise . . . but who dared to put into words the calamities which, after all their exertions and sacrifices, might in that case still be in store for them?

This time of anxious doubt was not to last long. The day after the Prince's visit the fine autumn weather, which had favoured him, came to an end. Black clouds covered the sky, and the wind which had turned to the north-west, blew that day and the next with increasing force, growing at last into a gale. The North Sea, which owing to the spring-tide had risen to an unusual height, was driven by the wind into the mouth of the Maas against the outflowing river-water, which checked thus in its downward course, burst over the land through the open sluices and the breaches in the dykes. Then the wind veered once more, this time towards the south, and drove the flood into the direction of Rynland and Leyden, where the flotilla, quite prepared and eager for battle, lay waiting for that alone. The gauging-rod now sank ever deeper into the water. By October the 1st,

the depth which had remained at one foot for so long, had increased to over three feet: water enough for the flotilla to sail over the Kerklaan and to venture upon the attack.

After waiting impatiently so long, they could not endure a moment's further delay. Towards midnight of October the 1st the flotilla set forth in a broad line of battle. As usual the galleys were drawn up on either side to right and left. In the centre were a score of boats carrying two hundred pioneers, and a supply of sods and wattles, and whatever else was needed in order to construct defences at a moment's notice. The enemy were expecting the attack and had taken their precautions; sentinels were posted along the whole length of the Kerklaan, and a few small vessels were stationed in advance, to keep a close watch on the movements of the flotilla. The alarm was given; but the Dutch continued to row on in silence till they had come close up to the road. Then their cheers and firing burst forth together, announcing that the game had begun in earnest. On both wings the Beggars jumped on land and began skirmishing with the Spanish sentinels, who, after first retreating to right and left, soon returned with strong reinforcements, whereupon the arquebusiers opened fire upon them in front, and

the galleys cannonaded them in the flank. Already the pioneers were busily constructing defences in both directions, and digging deep cuttings in the road between. Before long the whole road was cleared of the enemy, and was then thickly sown with snares and man-traps so as to prevent their return, a plan which had been suggested by Prince William, and proved most effective. Meanwhile the water was rushing in the direction of Leyden through the wide openings that had been cut. It was barely given time to rise sufficiently. Hardly was it deep enough to carry the galleys, when they all pushed forward through and over the Kerklaan, and the early morning of October the 2nd found the whole flotilla struggling in the shallows beyond. It could hardly be called sailing: the galleys went sliding and scraping over the ground. Rather than wait for the water to fill the vast polder, the crews jumped overboard and shoved and hauled the ships along by main force over the shallows, until at last they reached the wide and deep canal of the Meerburg. There the galleys were got afloat once more, and speedily dispersed in all directions over the whole network of ditches and canals. The enterprise was a complete success; the enemy had been overpowered and Zoeterwou had become untenable. The nearest



houses were set on fire by the Dutch, and the flames soon spread to the centre of the village and to the enemy's quarters. The galleys which penetrated into all the waterways, opened fire from every side, while the rising flood streamed in, covering roads and embankments. No wonder that the enemy, unused to fighting with their legs in the water and their feet on the slippery mud, lost courage and took to flight. For it was more of a flight than a retreat from Zouterwou. One party waded up to their knees in water along the nearest road, called the Hofweg, towards the redoubt of Jaep Claes on the Delft Vliet, hoping to escape thence towards Voorschoten. But at a little distance to the north of that road there is a small lake, called the Papenmeer, traversed by the Meerburg canal. In no time, as soon as the flight of the Spaniards was discovered, the galleys were on the spot and were firing upon the bewildered throng. Without any thought of resistance the Spaniards fled before the Beggars over the flooded land, where they found their death in the ditches and canals. Another detachment, attempting to escape along the Stompwyk road, which was longer, but in better condition, found themselves within range of the big cannon of the Dutch, which had been left behind

on the Noordaa Lake with three companies of soldiers under the command of Asseliers. The thick crowd of fugitives offered an easy mark to the gunners; but they suffered more from their own confusion than from the fire of the Beggars. In terror of their pursuers, they diverged from the road on to the flooded fields on either side, where it was impossible to distinguish the ditches, in which many of them were drowned. The exact number of the losses sustained by the Spaniards this day was never known, but it must have been very considerable. On the Dutch side there were only a few wounded, and very few killed. So far the whole expedition, which was now nearing its end, had cost them less than forty men.

By midday the whole affair was over. The Beggars had good reason to be satisfied with the advantage they had gained. The second line of the investment was broken through. There before them was Leyden. Only the Lammen redoubt still barred the way. But for that, they could have reached the town within half an hour.

But was the relief too late? Had the town surrendered already? How otherwise could the inactivity of the citizens that morning be explained? Early on the previous day a pigeon had been released carrying a note which announced that the

attack on the Kerklaan would take place that same night, and begged the citizens to harass the enemy in the rear by a sortie against Lammen. Yet nothing had happened; the burghers made no sign. But it was the pigeon that was at fault. It had lost its way, and only delivered its message when it was too late. Boisot of course did not know this, and kept anxiously watching the town for a signal. But within the walls, the sound of the battle, which had even partially been seen, was the cause of indescribable joy, and before long from the steeples and the sails of windmills, flags were waving a message of welcome to the Admiral and his fleet.

Nevertheless, though the chances of success were now very favourable, victory was by no means certain. Lammen still stood in the way and was a formidable obstacle. Taken it must be, for it completely blocked the passage from Zoeterwou to the town. This was the only channel by which the fleet could approach, because the level of the ground towards the town rose too high to allow ships to sail over the land between Lammen and the Rhine. The fort therefore had to be taken at any cost. But it had been strengthened in proportion to the importance of its position; it was manned by a garrison of at least three hundred

men, and could boast two cannon of heavy calibre and formidable range, whose effectiveness had been proved that very day, when a few Dutch sailors had been killed at the entrance of the Pappenmeer, at a considerable distance from Lammen. In the afternoon Boisot carefully reconnoitred the fort, and finding that it would have to be besieged in accordance with the art of war, and that he would need his siege-artillery, he at once sent for Asseliers who was waiting on the Noordaa Lake with the big guns. There was one position, and one only, in the narrow waterway, from which the barges with the heavy cannon could fire at the fort. But already several times it had been found to be very hard to take effective aim from the lurching vessels; whereas the enemy had the great advantage of firm ground for his artillery. The situation was indeed difficult, especially because the distress of the besieged burghers demanded speedy relief. No wonder that the tone of Boisot's letter to the Prince in which he reported his victory, was somewhat subdued.

But he had not counted on the powerful ally his latest victory had won for him. Fear of the unusual and unexpected fought on his side. Valdez had seen with his own eyes at Zoeterwou how much the water and the Beggars could

achieve together. He had himself taken part in the retreat to Voorschoten, and so had experienced how slippery and perilous to foreigners our land — if land it can be called — could be, and how thoroughly the Hollanders and Zeelanders were at home on it. He foresaw that Lammen could not escape the fate that had befallen Zoeterwou, and counted it as already lost to the Beggars. The same evening he sent orders to Captain Borja, the commander of Lammen, not to await an attack, but to withdraw towards Leyderdorp. During the night of October the 2nd, while Boisot was considering how to attack the fort on the following day, the evacuation and the retreat were carried out in all secrecy.

Meanwhile the straying pigeon had reached its destination, so that the Freebooters and the Civic Guard now learnt to their grief what Boisot had asked of them and waited for in vain. They at once prepared for action on the following day. Lammen, they thought, was still in the enemy's hands, and was sure to be attacked to-morrow. Once Boisot began, the Leydeners would not be slow to do their share. In the early morning of Sunday, October the 3rd, van der Laan's Freebooters were at the Vlietgat, ready for a sally at the first signal. A few boats with pioneers were

sent in advance along the Vliet in order to break down and remove the palisade, with which the enemy had blocked the channel. To their surprise nothing could be seen or heard of the garrison at Lammen. It was a regular October morning, and a thick white mist hung over the water, blotting out the view. They strained their ears. All was still as death. Could the garrison be perhaps lying in ambush, in order to fall upon them suddenly as they approached? They were at a loss what to do. At that moment a boy appeared who had spent the night on the walls of the city. He had noticed, so he told them, considerable movement and the flaring of torches in the neighbourhood of Lammen. Finally, all the torches had moved away towards Leyderdorp and had not returned. Could it be that the fort had been abandoned? The boy was willing to go and investigate, on being promised a couple of guilders. He ran along the path by Kronestein towards Lammen, followed at a distance by a few Freebooters, who saw him disappear into the fort, and a moment later come out again waving his cap. They at once hurried up and found the whole place empty and deserted. But now beyond, in the canal leading from Zoeterwou, they saw the vanguard of the fleet advancing cautiously, for the admiral too

was mistrustful of the silence in the fort. The sight of these ships, betokening blessed deliverance from deepest misery, lent wings to their feet. They rushed along the half submerged towpath, and wading towards the boats, carried the welcome tidings to Boisot.

Nothing remained but to clear away the palisade that blocked the channel, and then the fleet could sail towards Leyden without further hindrance. The joyful news spread through the town like wild-fire, and according to an eye-witness, it brought "exceeding great consolation and astonishment at the wonderful deliverance". Whoever had the strength to move, hurried to the Koepoort to welcome the fleet. About nine o'clock at the Vlietbrug, the meeting between the burghers and their deliverers took place. What a spectacle for the sturdy soldiers and sailors was the famished and wasted appearance of the besieged, "their hollow faces and shaking limbs"! At a glance they were able to realise how much the town had suffered during the last seven weeks. What feelings of pity must have filled their hearts, as they threw the provisions they had brought among the populace, who eagerly seized and devoured them! It was a joy to feast upon those precious loaves after their fast of seven weeks.

It was bliss to hand them to the hungry and watch them enjoying their meal. But these pleasures were as nothing compared with their victorious exaltation at the thought that stubborn endurance and bold courage had together overcome superior force and tyranny. At this moment if ever, all felt themselves brothers, united in suffering and in strife, one in principles and ideals. But self-glorification was checked as soon as it arose. Religion assigned all glory to the Lord of Hosts, and to Him alone. It was not their own unaided strength that had defeated the enemy, but the miraculous power of God, who had sent the storm-wind and the flood to help them in battle. The people crowded into the churches to pour out their hearts in prayer and hymn, and were thus gradually restored to composure in the blissful certainty of their deliverance.

But prayer and thanksgiving could not long detain the Admiral and his officers; there yet remained too much to be done. The victory must be followed up and made fruitful. The enemy must be allowed no time to take breath. A mile from the town lay the strongly fortified village of Leyderdorp, which could not be left in the hands of the enemy. Straight from the church the Beggars marched out through the Hoogewoerd gate;



but the enemy did not wait for them. They retreated along the Rhine towards Alfen. Even there they did not make a stand, but evacuated the village, together with the fortification at the Goudsche Sluis. The Dutch immediately occupied all these important positions. Better still: the enemy's galleys from Amsterdam, which had been on guard in the Rhine, made themselves scarce at the mere report of the relief, and their example was followed by the forces occupying the Kaag and the Oude Wetering. When the rebels reached these strong fortifications, which commanded the entrances to the Leyden and Haarlem Lakes, they found both of them deserted and inviting occupation. It was the same all round the town, except where they had a sandy soil beneath their feet. There the enemy made a stand. At Ter Wadding, a mile from the Witte Poort, they even remained in occupation for many weeks to come.

The Prince of Orange was attending the Sunday service in the Walloon church when the glad tidings reached him, the first moment of joy after so much sorrow and disappointment. He told the preacher to read aloud to the congregation the good news, which spread swiftly through Delft. And now here too the whole population poured into the churches to thank God for the deliver-

ance of Leyden, which meant deliverance for them no less, for it would have been Delft's turn next, if Leyden had been lost.

The following day His Excellency came in person to convey his greetings and thanks to the town. There still exists a letter, begun by him at Delft and finished at Leyden. At the end of it he writes: "I cannot find words to describe the great joy of the burghers here because of the relief. We hope that henceforth they will be more careful, and that the victory, which God has given us, will bear yet more fruit". He lodged at the house of Dirk Jacobsz. van Montfoort, an important burgher though not a member of the Town Government. He stayed there for ten days, till he had put everything in order. He arranged that the company of Holland soldiers, led by Van der Does, should be kept in service under his command; and he persuaded the town to receive as an addition to the garrison three companies of Frenchmen, who had taken part in the relief. He also saw to it that abundant supplies of food should be brought in; and before long the town was provisioned for at least two years. Finally — and this was a task of great delicacy — he changed the Government, which had represented the loyal burghers so unsatisfactorily. This measure

was a pressing necessity, but was in conflict with the charters and privileges of the town, according to which the Corporation consisted of forty irremovable members, who chose the Burgomasters and appointed the Aldermen. But now the worst members, at any rate, would have to be removed from the Corporation, and the new Regents chosen without consulting it. For this once it was better to make an inroad upon the securities of freedom, than to allow freedom itself to be endangered. It is hardly surprising that His Excellency put off dealing with this thorny question till the last day of his visit. He then called together the Regents and told them that, at the request and with the approval of the most prominent burghers and members of the Government, he had decided to reduce the number of the Corporation from forty to sixteen, because during the recent wars and disturbances, many of the leading citizens had died or their circumstances had changed for the worse. Moreover, at the request of the same prominent personages, for this once he would himself choose the Burgomasters and the new Aldermen as well; and this he proceeded to do. Of the former magistrates and Corporation members, eighteen were retained in office, and the rest were dismissed. Among the

latter were two of the four retiring Burgomasters, Halfleiden and Van Zwieten, while the other two Van Noorden and Van der Werf, headed the list of the new Corporation. Five new members were added. The eight Aldermen were all former Regents. Among the new Burgomasters were the two deputies who had sat in the Assembly of the States during the siege, Van Heemskerk and Van Loo; the third was the ex-treasurer of the town, Huig Claesz. Gael, and the fourth was His Excellency's host, Van Montfoort.

It is very significant that this important measure was planned without consulting Van der Werf. He only heard about it when it was on the point of being carried out; and he then made a protest against it. This proves how little political sense the Prince credited him with, and how little in fact he possessed. For who that was a real statesman could doubt that in times of such great danger, the Government of the town ought to be entrusted to more reliable hands? Who could not see that if the Corporation were to continue, according to its privileges, to use its own discretion in filling up vacancies, the old spirit would dominate the Assembly for years to come, and that it would choose its Burgomasters after its own likeness? Nevertheless Van der Werf was never convinced.

Even as late as 1600 he declared that the Prince had adopted this measure at the instigation of certain unstable spirits, who were in love with novelty, and boasted that he had never countenanced it by word or deed, nor had any knowledge of the plan until His Excellency had made it public.

The only criticism of this reform that might reasonably have been made, was that it did not go far enough. The new Government, even after the purge, still continued to be refractory and obstinate. As early as the 29th of October it called down upon itself a severe reprimand from the States, on account of "its reluctance and disobedience in acting according to His Excellency's letters and carrying out his wishes". This obstinacy towards the Prince and the opposition to the cousins Van der Does, who remained Superintendents of the town, showed that there was still too much of the old leaven left. But such was Prince William's accustomed method of acting. He did not make the task of governing easy for himself by once for all breaking down all opposition: he made the best of what he found, and only insisted on such changes as were unavoidable, and then no more than was absolutely necessary. He was averse to all tyranny, however

good its purpose might be. He desired co-operation, no mere blind obedience.

The most prominent personages of the siege and the relief were rewarded according to their deserts, but with the economy which the state of the finances imposed. Boisot received a gold chain and medal, La Garde a sum of money; the cousins Van der Does were appointed to military and civil offices, Van der Werf and Chief Sheriff Van Broeckhoven to the Commissariat of provisions. In the letter announcing the appointment of the ex-Burgomaster Van der Werf, the Prince declared that he had no hesitation in choosing him, "having complete confidence in his piety, experience and industry"; an honourable testimonial, which the good man fully deserved.

We saw that on the day of his arrival in the relieved town, the Prince expressed the hope that the victory would bear further fruit. Was he perhaps cherishing the idea that the relief of Leyden would make Amsterdam repent, and bring it over to his side? We know that at least Requesens, the king's Governor at Brussels was anxious upon that score. Boisot too had already on October the 5th written in that sense to the Government of Amsterdam; but in vain: the town remained faithful to Church and King. Had it not

done so, the consequences would have been serious. For in that case the Spanish troops, deprived of their provisions, which came to them chiefly through Amsterdam, would have been obliged to evacuate Holland. But, as it was, the mutinous spirit of the Spaniards brought about what in its short-sightedness Amsterdam failed to do. The defeat before Leyden had irritated the Spanish troops of all nationalities in two ways, first by injuring their military honour, and further by cheating them of the booty and contributions upon which they were reckoning after the surrender of the town. They naturally blamed their generals, especially Valdez for their misfortune. Throwing discipline to the winds, they demanded to be paid within a definite period fixed by themselves. When they only obtained a part of what they claimed, they refused to be satisfied and carried out what they had already more than once threatened to do: they took Valdez prisoner, together with several other commanders; they chose for themselves a Commandant, or *Electo*, abandoned their fortifications and quarters, and demanded a free passage by Haarlem and Amsterdam into the province of Utrecht. The *Electo* added the threat, that if he could not obtain a safe-conduct from the King's generals, he would ad-

dress himself to the Beggars. To prevent worse from happening, Hierges, La Roche's successor as Stadtholder of Holland and Utrecht, had nothing for it but to let the mutineers pass through to the province of Utrecht, where the obedient subjects of the King were now to be given a taste of what the rebels in Holland had suffered for the last two years. It was only now that the object was fully achieved which the Prince and the States had had in view, when they flooded Rynland. Not only the neighbourhood of Leyden, but the whole of the province of Holland, from the Maas to Haarlem was cleared of the enemy.

He has never returned. The war was still to last for seventy years and longer, but Leyden and Rynland saw no more of its terrors. It is true that for the next two years they were in constant danger of being once more harassed from Amsterdam and Haarlem; but the Spaniards were now tired of fighting, and would not venture again into the midst of a population that was prepared for any sacrifice in order to repel them. At the end of those two years of anxiety and trouble, the situation suddenly changed. The whole of the Netherlands ranged themselves on the side of Holland and Zeeland in opposition to the Spanish sol-



diering and drove them across their frontiers. A pacification of the whole country, with the King left out, took place. Amsterdam and Haarlem, and whatever other parts of Holland and Zeeland had remained subject to the enemy, were re-united with the main body of those provinces, and brought back under the authority of the Prince and the States. The garden of Holland was now finally closed, the danger of hostile invasion was dispelled, and security permanently established. Henceforward the war would be waged with the money, but no longer with the blood and chattels of the inhabitants. The activities of peace came once more into the foreground.

It seemed now as though the suffering which the population had endured was about to bear fruit. It had bent down, but not broken them; on the contrary it had strengthened their resiliency. In the effort not to yield, all their faculties had been exercised and strained to the utmost. This mental energy was now no longer needed in order to resist a foreign army, or to face death by starvation rather than accept a life without freedom. Those anxious days had passed away for ever, and the vital force thus roused and stimulated, now threw itself into every activity of peace, into commerce, into industry, into art and science.

There dawned a period of work and prosperity, of venturing and winning, of exertion and enjoyment of life, such as the Dutch nation never experienced either before or afterwards. Nowhere was this more clearly seen than in Holland. The province which had suffered the most, and resisted the most, now became the most thriving of them all. Can it be that under this apparent contradiction there is a real connection of cause and effect? The prosperity and glory of the seventeenth century are inseparably associated in our imagination with the endurance and courage of the 16th century. Is that association to be found in our imagination only, or has it an existence in reality? For my part, I have no doubts about the answer to this question.

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## NOTES

p. 4

<sup>1)</sup> The Spanish Fury. On Nov. 4, 1576, mutinous Spanish troops seized and sacked Antwerp.

<sup>2)</sup> The King's Governor over the seventeen Netherlands provinces, Don Luis de Requesens, the Duke of Alva's successor, died on March 4, 1576.

<sup>3)</sup> The Pacification of Ghent was a treaty between the States-General representing the provinces still nominally faithful to the King and Holland and Zeeland for the purpose of driving the Spanish soldiery out of the Netherlands. In effect it was a union of all the Netherlands to free themselves from Spanish control.

p. 6

<sup>1)</sup> During the period Fruin is dealing with, South Holland and North Holland were merely geographical expressions. It was not until the nineteenth century that the province of Holland was divided into the two provinces which now bear those names. Bommel and Buren are districts adjoining Holland, Bommel being part of Gelderland and Buren a county belonging to the Prince of Orange.

p. 8

<sup>1)</sup> The Fuick was an entrenchment by which the rebels commanded the entrance to the Haarlem Lake from Leyden; it played an important part in the siege of Haarlem.

<sup>2)</sup> Early in July 1573 a small army approaching from Leyden in order to relieve Haarlem was cut to pieces by the Spaniards at the Mannepad. The surrender followed soon after (July 12).

p. 9

<sup>1)</sup> On October 8, 1573, the Spaniards had abandoned the siege

of Alkmaar; an event which did much to restore the morale of the people, badly shaken by the loss of Haarlem.

<sup>2)</sup> Waterland is the district immediately north of the Y, north of Amsterdam in other words. Rynland is the district south of the Haarlem Lake, of which Leyden is the centre; the Ryn after which it is called is an arm of the river Rhine, and, although it had preserved the name, a far less important one than that which is called Lek and New Maas. Waterland, Rynland, Schieland, Delfland, etc., are all units of water organisation, controlling, by means of dykes, sluices and mills, the inlet and outlet of water and having a central committee of polder representatives for the purpose, presided over by the Dyke-master. The places mentioned in the text as having been occupied by Valdez are not in Rynland, but further to the south.

p. 10

<sup>1)</sup> The first siege was raised on March 21, 1574.

p. 11

<sup>1)</sup> In the battle on Mook Heath, April 14, 1574, the army which Prince William's brother Louis of Nassau brought from Germany was annihilated by D'Avila. Louis of Nassau and yet another of the Prince's brothers, Henry of Nassau, were both killed.

p. 15

<sup>1)</sup> This was the title by which the Prince of Orange was addressed. It was not until 1635 that his son Frederick Henry made good a claim to the higher title of Highness.

p. 19

<sup>1)</sup> This map is reproduced at the end of this volume: map no. III.

p. 20

<sup>1)</sup> Galgeveld means Gallows Field.

p. 24

<sup>1)</sup> The Singelgracht or Singel is the canal encircling the town.

p. 25

<sup>1)</sup> This gate was still in existence when Fruin wrote, but has since been demolished.

p. 29

<sup>1)</sup> Ruy Gomez, Philip II's favourite minister.

p. 33

<sup>1)</sup> Compare note to p. 24.

p. 35

<sup>1)</sup> Douza is the latinised form of the Dutch name Van der Does. Douza's Latin poems were highly valued in his own day.

<sup>2)</sup> Regents is the name given in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries to the members of the oligarchic governments of towns or provinces in the Netherlands. A Regent might be either a burgher patrician or a nobleman. Regents of a town of the province of Holland, however, would not include any noblemen.

p. 37

<sup>1)</sup> By Alderman we render the Dutch word *schepen*. In most Holland towns there were seven or eight *schepenen*, elected as at Leyden annually by the corporation. Their functions were largely judicial, but they had also, in conjunction with the burgomasters, executive functions to fulfil. Burgomasters and Aldermen together, with the addition very frequently of gentlemen who had held these offices in the past, constituted the body of Magistrates, which is often referred to as the Town Government, an expression which is also used to indicate the whole of the Corporation with the executive officers.

p. 39

<sup>1)</sup> The Compromise of the Nobles was an association formed in 1566, largely by the efforts of Louis of Nassau, among the lesser nobility in all the Netherlands provinces, with the object of petitioning the Governess, Margaret of Parma, for concessions to the national point of view. It served as an organisation of the wide-spread opposition to the Spanish Government.

<sup>2</sup>) Beggars is the usual translation for the Dutch word *Geuzen*, which is an adaptation of the French *Gueux*. It is well-known that Berlaymont's contemptuous description of the Nobles of the Compromise when they came to hand the Petition to the Governess at Brussels in 1566, was adopted by the party of opposition to the Spanish Government as its *nom de guerre*. Later on in the text the word is sometimes used to indicate the party of the rebellion, the rebel leaders in Holland and Zeeland. The name was more specifically applied to those who in 1567, on the arrival of the Duke of Alva, had left their homes and had taken to guerilla fighting against the Spaniards, either in the wilder parts of the Southern provinces (Wood Beggars), or on the sea (Sea Beggars). The piratical Sea Beggars, who recognised the Prince of Orange as their leader and who had been organised to some extent by Louis of Nassau at La Rochelle, gave the first signal for the Holland and Zeeland rebellion of 1572 by their capture of Brill. Since the rebellion had spread in those regions and had shown surprising powers of resistance, Beggars had naturally come flocking towards them from all sides.

p. 40

<sup>1</sup>) Since Fruin wrote this essay, Jan van Hout has won a place of his own in the history of Dutch literature. His poetry, scattered, and for a large part unpublished, has been collected, and an interesting poetical personality has detached itself from it, which is now generally recognized to be one of the forerunners of the Renaissance period of Northern Netherlands literature.

<sup>2</sup>) Count de Bossu had been appointed Stadtholder of Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht in William of Orange's place when the latter emigrated in 1567. When the Holland and Zeeland towns rose in 1572, they recalled the Prince of Orange and, without renouncing their allegiance to Philip II, pretended to look upon Orange as the King's lawful Stadholder in spite of his dismissal.

<sup>3</sup>) East Friesland, to the east of the Netherlands province of Groningen, did not belong to the Habsburg possessions. After the arrival in the Netherlands of Alva in 1567, Emden became, like

Cologne and London, a favourite resort of Netherlands refugees.

p. 42

<sup>1)</sup> Compare note 2 to p. 9.

<sup>2)</sup> Not all the noblemen of Holland were admitted to the States of the province, but only those who were, „conscripted” to represent the whole body, Together they had one vote in the assembly, as against eighteen of the towns — this at least became the number when matters settled down after the rebellion.

p. 45.

<sup>1)</sup> The blue flagstone is still in the pavement of the Breestraat, in front of the Townhall. In mediaeval times executions were carried out there.

p. 51

<sup>1)</sup> The *landscheiding* was a low dyke or bank, running from East to West, and dividing the water districts of Rynland and Delfland. Compare p. 95.

<sup>2)</sup> At Rotterdam the Prince resided with the rebel Government of the province, that is to say, the States of Holland, or when they were not sitting, the Committee appointed by the States to consult with his Excellency. The Hague was, of course, traditionally the seat of the provincial Government and was later on to become so again. But it was an open place and at this moment, as has been mentioned in the text, in the occupation of the Spaniards. From Rotterdam the Prince was soon to move to Delft.

p. 72

<sup>1)</sup> The Journal of the Siege, the *Dagverhaal*, was printed for the first time in the same year 1874 when Fruin wrote his little book, but the manuscript had been extensively used by all the earlier historians of the siege. The writer's name is unknown, but he must have been a well-to-do burgher of Leyden.

p. 84

<sup>1)</sup> A polder is the smallest unit in the organisation of the low-

lying land of the Netherlands for the purpose of water control. It is a piece of land fenced in with dykes or banks in order to keep out the water from outside and to regulate the water inside. There are polders of several types, as those obtained by draining a lake or those in older regions which but for constant human care would be subject to occasional inundation. Some polders can be kept dry "naturally" by the use of sluices only; others (practically all of those in the province of Holland) have to be pumped dry. Early in the 15th century wind-mills came into use for that purpose and permitted of the extension of the polder system over land which until then had been unreclaimable marsh. The wind-mills are now being rapidly replaced by steam, motor, or electric mills.

p. 87

<sup>1)</sup> The Public Advocate (*Landsadvokaat*) was the chief official of the States of the Province. The importance of the office was soon to be raised by Johan van Oldenbarnevelt's long tenure of it. After his downfall it remained essentially the same, although the title was changed to that of Grand Pensionary (*Raadpensionaris*).

<sup>2)</sup> Banks is our translation of the Dutch word *kaden*, by which are indicated low dykes within a polder. The word *dijk* is reserved for the main dykes round the polder.

p. 89

<sup>1)</sup> A bosom, Dutch *boezem*, is a water or a complex of waters, serving as a provisional reservoir of their superfluous water to a polder or a number of polders, which are not immediately contiguous either with the sea or with an open river, or which, even if they are, cannot for one reason or another conveniently get rid of their superfluous water directly into it. A bosom water may be either an old river, stagnant and under control of sluices since the land was "poldered in", or a canal constructed for the purpose or for the requirements of navigation. In practically every case a bosom water, apart from its functions in the polder system, is to a greater or lesser extent used by shipping as well.



p. 90

<sup>1)</sup> Near Roemerswaal the fleet of the Beggars had defeated a fleet which attempted to relieve Middelburg, the capital of Zeeland, then, like Amsterdam, still in the occupation of the Spaniards. The other feat to which Fruin alludes was an attack on the Spanish fleet in the very harbour of Antwerp. The rebels' control of the waterways contributed greatly towards their ultimate success.

p. 93

<sup>1)</sup> Dillenburg, the residence of that branch of the house of Nassau to which William of Orange belonged.

p. 94

<sup>2)</sup> Pieter Bor, a notary of Utrecht, published between 1595 and 1601 his *Oorsprongk, begin ende aenvang der Nederlantsche oorlogen*, an immense compilation of documents and reports concerning the early history of the rebellion, dry but valuable.

<sup>3)</sup> An allusion to Prince William's dying words: „My God, have pity on this poor people”.

p. 96

<sup>1)</sup> An *overtoom* is a spot where ships are rolled across a road or a dyke from one water to another.

p. 108

<sup>1)</sup> At Ingolstadt, on August 30, 1546, Philip of Hesse, commanding the forces of the Schmalkaldic League, had subjected the Emperor's camp to a terrific cannonade with no fewer than 110 pieces, but there had been no assault.

p. 112

<sup>1)</sup> The Pensionary of a town was its salaried legal adviser, who often had a real share in shaping the town's policy. There were of course many Brabant and Flemish, as well as Walloon refugees, now acting with the Holland and Zeeland rebels.

p. 125

<sup>1)</sup> Sheriff is our rendering of the Dutch word *Schout*. There was in each Holland town one Schout, who was, like the Burgomasters and Aldermen, elected for a short period by the corporation. Originally, he had been the Count's representative in the town. His principal function was that of head of the police.

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