

NATIONAL CHURCHES

THE NETHERLANDS

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P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S.

THE

CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS.



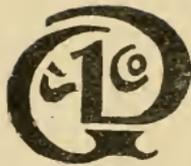
THE CHURCH
IN
THE NETHERLANDS

BY
P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., F.S.A.

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY;
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With Map.

LONDON:
WELLS GARDNER, DARTON & CO.
2 PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS, E.C.
AND 44 VICTORIA STREET, S.W.



1893.

Church, to the Rev. S. Baring-Gould, and to the Rev. Canon Reusens, Professor of Archæology at the University of Louvain, for their advice in the selection of books, and to the Rev. Canon Meyrick and the Rev. H. Salwey for the trouble they have taken in assisting me in correcting proof-sheets.

P. H. DITCHFIELD.

BARKHAM RECTORY,
December 5, 1892.

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND WILLIAM STUBBS, D.D., LL.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD,
CHANCELLOR OF THE ORDER OF THE GARTER,

TO

WHOSE KIND SYMPATHY

THE AUTHOR IS DEEPLY INDEBTED,

This Book .

IS

GRATEFULLY DEDICATED.

P R E F A C E.

THE object of this series, of which this volume is the fourth, is now well known; it is to lay before English Churchmen unbroken narratives of the chief events in the history of the National Churches of Christendom, from the time when they were first founded to the present day. It is hoped that the interest which the preceding volumes have aroused will be extended to this account of the history of the Church in the Netherlands.

In writing this volume some difficulties have presented themselves. It has not been an easy task to compress within the space at my disposal the story of many centuries of active and vigorous life. Moreover, it has been found necessary to give some account of the many national and political changes which have occurred so frequently in the annals of Dutch and Belgian history, inasmuch as a knowledge of these is essential to the understanding of the ecclesiastical history with which they are so intimately connected.

The differences in religion, race, customs, and laws which exist between the northern and southern inhabitants of the country, the separation caused by these differences, the early partition of the southern provinces between France and Germany, the almost independent sovereignty of the Prince Bishop of Liége, have added to the difficulty of the task in presenting one unbroken narrative of the ecclesiastical history of the Netherlands.

A list of works relating to the history of the Church will be found at the end of this volume, which have supplied me with abundant materials. I have consulted several works in the libraries of Brussels, Louvain, and other towns; and with regard to the account of the present condition of the Church of Holland it was my privilege to accompany the Bishops of Salisbury and Newcastle on their mission to the bishops of that Church, and to be present at the conferences which were held with the Archbishop of Utrecht and his clergy, and which afforded me much information with regard to their former troubles and present prospects.

I desire to express my thanks to M. Deelder, pastor of the Church of S. Gertrude at Utrecht, who first aroused my interest in the misfortunes of his struggling

CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. ROMAN OCCUPATION AND THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY	I
II. THE APOSTLES OF THE NETHERLANDS	15
III. DIOCESAN ORGANISATION	32
IV. THE CONVERSION OF THE NORTHERN PRO- VINCES AND FOUNDATION OF THE UTRECHT BISHOPRIC	49
V. CHARLEMAGNE	63
VI. THE RULE OF THE COUNTS AND DEVASTATIONS OF THE NORTHMEN	81
VII. THE WARS OF THE COUNTS AND THE TEMPORAL POWER OF THE HIERARCHY	100
VIII. THE CHURCH IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY	125
• IX. THE CHURCH IN THE TWELFTH AND THIR- TEENTH CENTURIES	140
X. THE POWER OF THE TOWNS	160
XI. PRECURSORS OF THE REFORMATION	175
XII. THE CHURCH IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY	198
XIII. THE REFORMATION	217
XIV. THE INQUISITION	230
XV. THE REVOLT OF THE NETHERLANDS	247

CHAP.	PAGE
XVI. CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN HOLLAND AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPUBLIC	260
XVII. THE SYNOD OF DORT	271
XVIII. STATE OF THE CHURCH IN BELGIUM AFTER THE REFORMATION	281
XIX. RISE OF JANSENISM	297
XX. HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS FROM THE PEACE OF MUNSTER (1648)	306
XXI. RESURRECTION OF JANSENISM AND THE TROUBLES OF THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND	318
XXII. THE BELGIAN CHURCH IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY	338
XXIII. THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, AND THE EFFECTS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN THE NETHERLANDS	351
XXIV. THE BELGIAN CHURCH IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY	365
XXV. THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND IN THE NINE- TEENTH CENTURY	378
INDEX	391

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE NETHERLANDS.

CHAPTER I.

ROMAN OCCUPATION AND THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

Love of liberty characteristic of the Dutch—Connection of England and Holland—Early legends—SS. Paul, Eucharius, Valerius—Native tribes and their religions—Menapii, Nervii, Aduatici, Eburones, Treveri, Batavii, Frisii—Relics of Druidism—Roman occupation—Christianity preached in first century—Trèves, the metropolis of the North—Legendary bishops—Persecutions—S. Maternus—Early martyrs—Epagatus, Photinus, Sanctus—Diocletian persecution—Evidence of Sigebert—Theban legion.

IN tracing the history of a National Church, its rise and progress, its periods of stagnation and subsequent revival, we may notice how closely its destinies are interwoven with the natural characteristics of its people. Some natures are more prone to reverence this or that principle of Christian faith and practice ; some nations are excitable and easily influenced, swayed by feelings which need but a breath to turn them first in one direction, and then in another. Forms of error are prolific in certain soils, and special natural virtues seem to be indigenous. Again and again the national

character asserts itself; and neither the forcible arguments of the sword, the faggot, and all the stern horrors of persecution, can change the nation's mind, nor alter its determined course.

To mark this continuity in the history of a country is part of the philosophical study of national life; and in no country is the national character more evident, and its continuity more remarkable, than in the history of the Church in the Netherlands.

From the early times of the "Free Frisians," ere yet the Roman sovereignty had dwindled into decay, all through the nameless horrors of the Inquisition, and down to our own time, the desire and love of freedom has been the prevailing characteristic of the peoples of Holland; and although this ardent longing after liberty has often lured the nation on to baneful and dangerous courses, it has, on the other hand, often rescued the people from degrading and oppressive tyranny.

Church history is intertwined so closely with the civil and political record of events, that it is difficult to separate them. The heroes of the Church and of the State, the iniquitous Inquisitor, the subtle courtier and avaricious prelate, mingle so closely in the drama of a nation's life, that it is a hard task for the historian to keep each *rôle* distinct. And indeed in the history of the Netherlands the action of the Church and of the States is often so entirely identical, religion plays so important a part in national destinies, that it is impossible to separate the National Church from the national life of the country.

The history of the Church of the Netherlands is a mournful, and yet an inspiring one. Nowhere has persecution raged with fiercer hate; nowhere has it found braver or more defenceless victims; and when the roll of the martyrs is made, countless will be the numbers of lowly men and women who feared not to die for their faith, and witnessed their confession with their blood.

The history of the Church of Holland possesses a peculiar interest for Englishmen, inasmuch as from this country the light of Christianity first shone on Holland. It is true that some efforts had been made previous to the advent of the English preachers to evangelise the northern tribes of the Netherlands, but with no permanent results; and a devoted Englishman, S. Willebrord, was the real founder of the Church and apostle of the greater part of the country of the seven provinces of Holland.

The southern part of the Netherlands, which had been occupied by the Romans, probably received the truths of Christianity as early as the first century of our era. In some of the writings of the old chroniclers we meet with the familiar legend of S. Paul's visit to Britain, but the Belgian historians carry the conjecture one step further. They suppose that S. Paul must have passed through Belgium to reach Britain, and further, that he was accompanied by S. Peter, who also sent certain disciples of his, S. Eucharius, S. Valerius, and S. Maternus, to evangelise the province and rescue the barbarous peoples from heathendom. Roman martyrologies speak of

Eucharius, whose feast is observed on December 8, a saint of Treves, a disciple of S. Peter the apostle, and first bishop of that province. Valerius is also mentioned, and Maternus, another disciple of S. Peter, who turned the people of Tongres and Cologne, and other neighbouring districts, to the faith of Christ. "These are they," wrote S. Leo IX., "O most dear Belgian fatherland, through whom the Gospel of Christ shone upon thee. These are the true pastors who purged thee from a bloody and great superstition, and bore thee to that glory, so that thou becamest a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that thou shouldest show forth the praises of Him who hath called thee out of darkness into His glorious light. Who in time past wast not a people, but art now the people of God, which hadst not obtained mercy, but now hast obtained mercy.¹ Through these thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, and the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian."²

But, in spite of these assertions of pious monastic historians, we fear that the names and records of these early saints are purely mythical. However, although nothing positive is known of the beginnings of Christianity in this region, there is reasonable ground for concluding that the Gospel was preached in the first century of our era along the banks of the Meuse, the Schelde, and the Rhine.

Before proceeding further, it will be necessary to describe the numerous tribes and peoples who in-

¹ 1 S. Peter ii. 9, 10.

² Isaiah ix. 4.

habited the country. When the wave of Celtic invaders rolled over Europe, at length reaching its western shore, the Gauls proceeded to occupy the country bounded on the north by the Rhine; but at a later period, the Belgæ, a tribe more powerful than any other of Celtic race, drove out the Gauls, and occupied a large tract of country, bounded on the north and east by the Rhine, and on the south by the Seine and Marne. Cæsar, their conqueror, tells us that they were the bravest of all the Celtic tribes, and they probably owed their superiority to the presence among them of a Teutonic element, which added endurance and perseverance to Celtic daring. They were divided into tribes, of which the five principal were the Menapii, the Nervii, the Aduatici, the Eburones, and the Treveri.

The Menapii occupied the country which now embraces the province of Antwerp and the part of Flanders on the west of the Schelde. The Nervii, who so stubbornly resisted Cæsar to the last, and well-nigh conquered the Imperial Legions, inhabited East Flanders, part of Brabant, and Hainault. The Aduatici occupied Namur and part of Limbourg, and the remainder of the province of Brabant. The Eburones held the country comprised between the Meuse and the Rhine (Liège and Limbourg). The Treveri occupied Luxembourg, Condroz, the French Ardennes, and part of the German provinces as far as the banks of the Moselle.

These Belgic tribes had for their neighbours on the north of the Rhine the Batavii, a part of the

warlike race of the Chatti, who were of German origin. These were the bravest of brave people, whose arms have won many a battle for the proud Romans, their allies not their conquerors, and whose will once made a Roman Emperor. Their country was the island formed by the two mouths of the Rhine. It will be remembered that at that time the Zuyder Zee was not in existence; it was not formed until the thirteenth century, when a terrible inundation occurred which overwhelmed many cities and villages, and left behind the large inland sea. On the north of the Batavii lived the Frisii, who were also of German stock; although great lovers of freedom, they were obliged to bow their heads before the Imperial power of Rome, and to pay taxes out of the produce of their farms to fill the Roman exchequer. They were not allies, like their kinsfolk the Batavii, but subjects.

It is a remarkable fact in the history of the Netherlands that the northern and southern inhabitants of the country have always differed greatly in character, polity, and religion. This was as evident in the early days of their history as it is at the present time. The Celtic tribes in the south were enveloped in the dark superstition of Druidism, with its priestly caste, its bards and prophets, its cruel system of human sacrifices, and reverential honours paid to founts, forests, hills, and lakes. They worshipped Ditis, who corresponded to the Roman god Mercury; Belinus, a Celtic Apollo; and Ardoina, the goddess of hunting, who presided over groves and

woods, and from whose name Bucher erroneously derives the word Ardennes.¹ Some traces of their strange weird worship still remain in the monuments, which are known by the name of "*Brunehaut Stone*," near Tournay, of "*The Devil's Stone*," near Namur, and in certain flint blocks in Luxembourg, which are believed to be relics of Druidism.

The Frisians and Batavians, being of German origin, had a purer faith and simpler creed. They believed in a supreme Almighty Father, whom they reverently worshipped in the dark recesses of the sacred groves, where, with bound feet and suppliant gesture, they sought to know Him, the All-Vater, whom in ignorance they worshipped. Not until their purer faith was corrupted by contact with their Celtic neighbours did they offer human sacrifices. They lived chaste lives, each man treating his wife with respect, and honouring her as a companion and partner of his toils—a great contrast to the incestuous Celts, most of whom, even before they became acquainted with Roman vice and luxury, lived in a state of most revolting concubinage.

Such were the religions of the early inhabitants of the country which were soon, through the providence of God, to be overthrown by Christianity; soon the cross of Christ was to be planted where before dark superstition reigned, and Christian anthems resound through the woods and groves which once rang with

¹ *Ardennes* is derived from two Celtic words, *ard*=high or great, and *den*=a forest.

the shrieks of human victims sacrificed by the Druids' sacred knife.

It will now be necessary to speak of the extent and the effect of the Roman occupation of the country. Pagan Rome believed that her mission was to produce a reign of peace throughout the world under the shade of one grand, universal, and ever-enduring monarchy ; but, in carrying out her mission, she caused great sufferings to the tribes and peoples over whom she desired to extend her sovereignty. Some of the Belgic tribes—the Eburones and the Aduatici—were entirely destroyed, vast territories were made destitute of inhabitants, and, in order to repeople the deserted country, the successors of the conqueror, Julius Cæsar, transported thousands of prisoners of the Sigambii and Suevi, and settled them in their new homes amidst the Belgian forests. They took the name of Tongri. The Ubii and the Toxandri were also strangers, invited or compelled by the Romans to take up their abode in the Belgic province, and these Teutonic immigrations produced considerable changes in the character of the inhabitants, and reduced the pure Celtic element.

The Romans divided the country into four provinces :—*Belgica Prima* and *Belgica Secunda*, which stretched between the Seine and the Meuse, and which had for their respective metropolises Trèves and Rheims ; *Germania Superior* and *Germania Inferior*, which had for their metropolises Mayence and Cologne, and stretched between the Meuse and the Rhine. The boundaries of *Belgica Secunda* com-

prised the territories of the Nervii, Morini, Menapii, and Atrebates; *Belgica Prima* contained the Treviri, and in *Germania Inferior* were the Tongri and Toxandri.

In many parts of the country the evidences of Roman occupation still remain. The grand military roads, with their branches and sub-branches, connected the province with the centre of the Empire. In the north the work of draining and clearing the forests improved the condition of soil and promoted agriculture. Tournay, Tongres, Arras, Bavai, Trèves, Cologne, Arlon became populous towns, and the Celtic population, by nature receptive of new ideas, adapted themselves to Roman manners and customs.

Some patriotic writers of Belgian history have frequently endeavoured to prove that their Celtic forefathers often revolted from the Roman rule, and preserved their own manners and customs during the period of the Roman occupation. But there is little ground for this theory, and the researches of archæologists and the more accurate study of history, clearly show that in the first centuries of our era the people became Romanised; they adopted the manners of the conquerors — their pleasures, manners of life, their dress, and their religious rites. They were brought in contact with the commerce of the civilised world, and were familiar with Roman arts and literature. They experienced also some disadvantages from the closeness of their intercourse with Rome. They were oppressed with heavy fiscal burdens and with the forced services which they were obliged to render

to their haughty governors ; and, above all, they were initiated into the refinements of corruption and moral degradation which characterised their lords and masters. The ancient simplicity of their race became to them but a vague remembrance, which was lost amid the unbridled pleasures and degraded vice of pagan luxury.

And yet it must be remembered that the Roman occupation was never complete in this country. The vast forests of Hercynienne and Ardennes, the impassable swamps and marshes near the coast, defied the foot of the conqueror. In the north the Roman influence was only very partially felt ; in the centre and in the west it was stronger, but still imperfect ; whereas in the eastern portion of ancient Belgium it was complete.

The providence of God seems to have ordered the affairs of the world at the time of the foundation of Christianity for the special purpose of spreading the truths of the Gospel far and wide. The vast extent of the Roman Empire, and the early establishment of the true faith in the imperial centre, were favourable to its progress. Along the military roads which connected Rome with the Belgian provinces, the precious truths were carried by converted legionaries or merchants ; and in the populous towns of Tournay, Trèves, or Arlon, while the mass of the people were revelling in licentious pleasures, there would be many who were discussing the new doctrines, and some who embraced the teaching of the Cross. That Christianity was preached here in the first century it seems certain, but by whom we cannot speak positively.

We must go beyond the borders of the present country of the Netherlands to find the seat of Christianity, whence the early preachers came. Trèves, the metropolis of *Belgica Prima*, was the source from which the light shone upon the rest of the Roman province. "The Church of Trèves, the mother of all the Belgian Churches both in dignity and age, can alone give an uninterrupted series of bishops during these early times." So writes the historian Bucher; and he regards it as the great glory of this Church, that amidst so many persecutions, devastations, and burnings, it has preserved the names of its chief pastors, when most of the lists of bishops of the German and Gallican Churches are wanting in one age or another. But this glory rests upon very insecure foundations, and we have no certain warrant to prove that these bishops ever existed. The names of these somewhat mythical characters are as follows:—

1. S. Eucharius, who was the first bishop in Belgium, and held the See A.D. 50–73. He converted a large number of the people, and baptized them. Another fable states that he was present at the Last Supper.
2. Valerius, "a man of mellifluous eloquence, most pleasing to the people," who was bishop A.D. 73–89.
3. S. Maternus, who is recorded to have ruled the Church for forty years, whom the people of Cologne and Tongres venerate as father and

apostle. Legendary tradition states that he was the son of the widow of Nain, and that he was raised from death, after being forty days in the tomb, by the staff of S. Peter. "De tempore dubito, de re ipsa certus," writes the historian.

Then follows a list of fifteen names of bishops who were martyred in fifty years, when the persecutions were almost continuous. After the Diocletian persecution there were eight other bishops, whose names alone are given, all of whom suffered martyrdom.

With regard to the early ecclesiastical history of the rest of the country, there are few and scanty records. Persecutions were frequent, and the early preachers of the Gospel were probably driven to wander into the vast solitudes of the forests, to live amongst the mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, rather than to write history.

S. Maternus, the supposed Bishop of Trèves, but more probably another of that name who lived in the age of Constantine and took part in the Council of Arles, converted the people of Cologne, and also those of Tongres, where he is still held in honour as their first apostle. He was buried at Tongres, and his body was afterwards carried in a silver coffin to Liége by S. Servatius.

The early Belgian Church even sent out missionaries, and two holy men, Fugatianus and Damianus, who came from Belgium, are said to have

converted and baptized Lucius, the British king; but we fear that the mission is as mythical as Lucius himself.

When persecution raged against the Christians throughout the Empire, the Belgian province did not escape the storm. Orosius asserts that the persecution of Nero penetrated to Belgium, and that the Christians at Treves suffered.¹ When the fierce wrath of the pagan power was again aroused under Marcus Aurelius, there were many martyrs among the Belgic Christians, who were forbidden to enter the public buildings, the baths, or forum; having confessed their faith, they were put to death most cruelly. Among them was one Vectius Epagatus, an illustrious man, who on his trial requested that he might be heard, and exclaimed in a loud voice that he was a Christian, and that he had found nothing in his faith of wickedness or impiety. Photinus of Sugdunum, an old man of ninety years, was slain with barbarous cruelty. "Who is God of the Christians?" scornfully asked his heathen judge. "Thou knowest, if thou art worthy," calmly replied the venerable martyr, whom in their rage they beat and cast half dead into prison, where he lingered in agony for two days. There is the story of a deacon named Sanctus, who was tortured with indescribable horror; of Blandina, the noble and kind mother, who was cast to the beasts, placed on a wheel, torn by a bull, and at last slain by the sword: but all these traditions rest on no sound evidence.

¹ Sulpitius Severus thinks this was the fifth persecution under Severus.

Of the effects of the Diocletian persecution we have more certain testimony. Sigebert, in his chronicle, states that he saw in the church of S. Paul at Trèves, in a subterranean crypt, the body of S. Paulinus, suspended by iron chains, and near it the martyred bodies of many saints, among whom were Palmatius, the consul, Patritius, chief of the Theban legion, and seven senators of the city.

Gregory of Tours states that a detachment of fifty men of the Theban legion suffered martyrdom at Cologne, and describes the basilica erected in their honour. A singular and beautiful church at Cologne is dedicated to the memory of their captain, S. Gereon, and his 318 companions, and the relics and skulls of the martyrs are exhibited under gilded arabesques.¹

But the names of Belgian martyrs "are saved as from shipwreck," the chroniclers narrate. Devouring time has snatched away the brilliant rewards (*purpureas adoras*) of such noble soldiers of the Cross. It would not be probable that amid an age of persecution and war many records could remain; and these stories of Belgian martyrs are narrated as being derived from tradition only, and are not based on any foundation of historical certitude.

¹ The famous story of the Theban legion is told by all ecclesiastical historians. Cf. Robertson, vol. i. p. 203. The Church of S. Gereon is said to have been built by Helena, mother of Constantine the Great.

CHAPTER II.

THE APOSTLES OF THE NETHERLANDS.

Zealous workers of the second and third centuries—S. Hubert—S. Piatius—S. Martin—A period of peace during rule of Constantius and Constantine—Constantine's vision—Progress of Christianity—Formation of Episcopal Sees—Tongres, Cologne, and Rheims—Belgian bishops attend councils—S. Athanasius at Trèves—Orthodoxy of the bishops—Trèves, the Rome of the North—Mission of S. Victricius—Progress of Christianity arrested by Huns—S. Ursula—Terrible ravages by barbarians—Poem of S. Prosper—Rise of Franks—Disastrous condition of Church—Conversion of the Franks—Re-evangelisation of country necessary—S. Remigius—S. Vaart—Hindrances to conversion—New era of conversion—S. Cunibert, S. Arnulf—Lupus de Sens—S. Eloi—Specimen of his preaching—S. Amand and his fellow-workers—Irish missionaries—Foundation of monasteries—"Age of Saints"—Livinus and his labours—Frank monarchs support Church—Rise of the Pépins—Attempted conversion of Radbod and the Frisians—Progress of the Church.

In the third century we pass away from the regions of romance which the pious monks and historians have woven around the first plantings of Christianity on Belgic soil. There was no lack of zealous men at the end of the second century, who by their labours succeeded in establishing Christian communities throughout a great part of the country comprised within the borders of modern Belgium. S. Hubert toiled in the region of the Morini to convert the scattered populations which inhabited the country bordering on the sea-coast; S. Piatius was the apostle

of Tournay; the northern Menapii were converted by S. Chrysolius, the warlike Nervii by S. Fuscianus and S. Victoricus; and S. Martin¹ was the apostle of Hesbaye, which comprised the districts around Louvain, Liége, and Aerschot. But these early preachers and their flocks had to contend with a remorseless persecution; they were the enemies of the Empire, the despisers of the gods, and one Rictius Varus, a Roman prefect, was their fierce and implacable foe, who threatened the existence of every Christian community.

But brighter days were in store for the suffering Church when Constantius and Galerius divided the Empire, and the Belgian province came under the dominion of the former. He often came to Trèves, where Valentinus, and afterwards Agricinus, were bishops, and under his fostering care Christianity spread rapidly. Constantine, A.D. 306, carried on the same policy. Belgian historians and chroniclers claim that, while he was on Belgian soil, the great Emperor witnessed the wondrous vision of the luminous cross which shone out resplendent in the bright noonday sky, and which became to him an ensign of victory, a pledge of the protection of God, and a call to acknowledge its holy teaching. "This is the great glory of our Belgic Church, a rare and heavenly laurel," writes an old chronicler. "Either Britain or

¹ Placentius states that this S. Martin was the seventh Bishop of Tongres, and records the story of a rock, near which he reposed, transforming itself into a stately cathedral. According to tradition, his predecessors were S. Maternus, Navitus, Marcellas (who built four churches at Tongres, and converted Lucius, a British chieftain, and all his race), Metropolus, Severinus, and Florentius.

Dardania gave Constantine to the world, the same Britain gave him to the Empire, but Belgium to Christ." ¹

It is beyond the scope of this history to inquire whether Constantine's conversion was the result of policy, or of partial or full conviction; but there can be no doubt that the edicts of toleration which he published, and the encouragement which he gave to Christian prelates and professors, greatly favoured the growth of Christianity, and in Belgium the progress was rapid. Amongst the Roman population of the towns there were many who embraced the new faith from motives of policy, because it seemed an easy road to court favour, and had become a fashionable cult; but by the new order of things earnest men were enabled to worship the Christ they adored, and to preach His Word fearlessly to the scattered peoples of the province without danger of a violent and cruel death. Christians became numerous; and as their communities became more firmly established, there was a need of more definite organisation. Instead of the regionary bishops, who possessed no fixed See, diocesan bishops were appointed, and it seems to be the received opinion of all accurate historians that it was not until the fourth century that the ordinary ecclesiastical hierarchy was established in the Belgian province. The divisions of the Roman provinces were adopted as the boundaries of the new bishoprics. S. Servatius became Bishop of

¹ The scene of the vision is placed by other writers near Rome. Cf. Milman, ii. 351.

Tongres, S. Maternus of Cologne, and S. Sixtus of Rheims.

In the age of councils and heresies the Bishops of Cologne and Treves took prominent parts in the great controversies which arose in the speculative period of the third and fourth centuries. Maternus of Cologne and Agricius of Trèves were appointed by Constantine as judges of the Donatists, whom they condemned at Rome, A.D. 313. The same two bishops, together with the Bishop of Rheims, were present at the famous Council of Arles, A.D. 314. After the rise of the Arian heresy, S. Athanasius came to Trèves and stayed there two years and a half, instructing those who were tainted with the false teaching, and confirming the faith of the orthodox party. S. Servatius visited him during his sojourn in that city. The results of his teaching were manifest in subsequent councils, in which the Belgian bishops showed themselves true followers of Athanasius in their zeal against the fatal Arian errors. Before the Council of Sardica, Maximinus, Bishop of Trèves, separated certain Eastern bishops from the communion of the Church of Gaul on account of their heresies; they replied by excommunicating the Gallican bishops. In the subsequent council (347) the Belgian bishops, especially Maximinus, were the leaders of the orthodox party, and would sanction no addition to the Nicene confession of faith.

Athanasius paid a third visit to Trèves in 348. "Happy Gaul! happy Belgium! happy Trèves! who so often received and hearkened to so great a

defender of the faith, a confessor glorious with so many victories, so holy and learned a teacher." All through the troubles of that controversial age the Belgian bishops stood firm. Paulinus, a successor worthy of Maximinus, refused to sign the condemnation of Athanasius at the Second Council of Arles (353), and was driven into exile on account of his opposition to the heretical party. Some, indeed, of the Gallican prelates yielded to the violence of the storm, when the days of Nero and Decius seemed to have returned ; but, under the guidance of Hilary of Poitiers, the greater number stood firm, and neither the terrors of exile nor the sophistries of opponents could wean them from the faith. There is a letter written by Hilary to "*Beatissimis fratribus Primæ Belgicæ et Belgicæ secundæ, Lugdunensis Primæ et Lugdunensis secundæ,*" &c., which testifies to the integrity and devotion of the Belgian bishops through all those years of controversy and strife.

And this constancy was chiefly owing to the teaching of S. Athanasius, who bore witness to the piety of the citizens of Trèves. He saw them constructing their first basilicas, and before the workmen had placed the last stone he witnessed the impatient crowd of worshippers thronging through the arches. He familiarised them by his writings with the ideas of monastic life. While the court was at Trèves, an officer, leaving the public games at which the Emperor presided, wandered with two companions to a poor dwelling inhabited by a few monks, where they found a copy of the history of S. Anthony by

Athanasius. The first reading of this work touched them so forcibly that they renounced the gaieties of court life and took upon them the monastic vows, and their betrothed entered a convent. Trèves, formerly celebrated for its schools of classical culture, the fountain of ancient learning, where the mutilated text of Homer was restored and poems written upon the grandeur of the Northern Rome, became a home for monastic institutions, the religious metropolis of the West. S. Jerome stayed here and transcribed the writings of S. Hilary. Here S. Ambrose was born; and here, when he in his infancy was sleeping in the court of the prætor, a swarm of bees settled on his lips. Here S. Martin, the famous Bishop of Tours, protested against the punishment of the heretic Priscillian and his partisans. Two bishops had handed them over to the secular court of Maximus, who condemned the heretics to death or banishment; the Church protested against the trial of ecclesiastical offences by a secular judge, and the severe sentence pronounced by him. S. Martin bravely contended against the unjust decree, and refused to communicate with the bishops who had acted so unworthily. With such noble names was the early history of Trèves connected.

Favoured by the edicts of toleration, Christianity was gaining ground in the country. In 396, Victricius, Bishop of Rouen, preached on the banks of the Schelde, and penetrated as far as the country of the Frisians. S. Paulinus of Nola wrote to Victricius to express his happiness on account of his

successful missionary journey to the Morini, who inhabited "the extreme borders of the world beaten by the waves of a barbaric ocean." Instead of wandering bands of marauding savages, he says that choirs of angelic men throng the churches and monasteries, and made the isles and depths of the forests re-echo with their sacred harmonies.

But the progress of Christianity was altogether arrested by the hordes of barbaric invaders who devastated the country in the fifth century. The Huns, Vandals, and other fierce tribes crossing the Rhine poured over the land, destroyed the villages, pillaged the churches, slew the inhabitants, or reduced them to slavery. Christian institutions perished entirely before these savage barbarians, and the Christians were massacred in one un pitying slaughter. Poetical fancy has woven around the memory of S. Ursula a story of faithful perseverance, which is probably not without foundation. It describes the British princess, accompanied by her eleven thousand companions, going on a pilgrimage to Rome, and finding on her return the hordes of the Huns surrounding Cologne, who forced them to choose between dishonour and death. With heroic bravery they preferred death, and the Church of S. Ursula at Cologne records their memories. The number, 11,000, is probably an incorrect rendering of the inscription XI.M.V = *Undecim Martyres Virgines*, and this construction diminishes the improbability of the legend.¹

¹ Cf. Ozanam, ii. 48. Another form of the legend gives S. Ursula ten companions.

This story is only one of many. Everywhere the ferocious barbarians raged; the struggling Church was overthrown; the inhabitants who were left relapsed to paganism. S. Jerome, in a letter which he wrote A.D. 409, traces the ravages which the barbarian hosts inflicted, and records the ruined cities, Worms, Rheims, Amiens, Arras, Therouanne, Tournay, and others, which marked the course of the dread invaders. A poem, found in the works of S. Prosper, composed by one who had witnessed the mournful spectacle of the desolation wrought by the marauding hosts, recalls the lamentations of the Jewish prophets over the ruins of the Holy City, and earned for the writer the title of the Jeremiah of the fourth century. Everywhere the succession of bishops was interrupted. It was therefore necessary to begin the work of evangelisation entirely afresh. History tells us of the victories of the warlike Franks, of the last struggles of the effete Roman power, which died in its death-struggles with invading swarms of warriors who knew no pity; of the absorption of the Batavians with the Frisians, who maintained their ancient liberties; of the stalwart Franks succeeding to the old Roman dominion, subduing the Romanised Celtic Belgæ, and occupying the Belgian portion of the Netherlands; effacing the old Roman provinces, and dividing their new territory into two divisions—Austrasia and Neustria. All these mighty changes are recorded in secular history.

The Church of Christ seemed powerless against so many foes. If ever there was a time when the gates of hell seemed to have prevailed against her,

it was at this period of her history, when Europe seemed to be abandoned to her enemies. Odoacer, the so-called King of Italy, was an Arian heretic. The Visigoths, also Arians, ruled in Spain and Southern Gaul. The pagan Saxons had conquered Britain. Arianism prevailed in other countries, while in the East, Christians were being persecuted by the Emperor Zeno. But when the night was darkest, hope dawned for the struggling Church, and with the Franks came Christianity.

On Christmas Day, A.D. 496, the Bishop of Rheims, S. Remigius, baptized their chief, Clovis, and three thousand of his warriors. A new era had begun; the deluge was passing away, and the ark of Christianity was about to rest upon the desolate earth.

The task of reclaiming the people from paganism was indeed great. S. Remigius sent S. Vaast to Arras, Antimond and Athalbert to Therouanne; S. Domitian, S. Monulphus,¹ and other holy men devoted themselves to the work, and began by attempting to reorganise the bishoprics. But this had little effect in converting the heathen population. Difficulties, dangers, and obstacles were met with on every side. The uncivilised manners of the people, their dialects strange and unfamiliar to the more southern clergy, the wild nature of the country, the continual influx of new German tribes, and the reflux of all those Franks who refused to follow the example of Clovis—all these presented very formidable obstacles to the onward progress of Christianity, and almost defied

¹ For an account of the labours of these men, see next chapter.

the isolated efforts of priests and prelates. Indeed, the bishops confined their ministrations to their cities, and tried to attract the country folk thither to keep the solemn festivals, but they did not seem to regard it as part of their duties to evangelise the heathen.

However, in 625, a new epoch of proselytism was inaugurated. S. Cunibert, Bishop of Cologne, who obtained the concession of the Castle of Utrecht for the missionaries whom he sent to Friesland, and S. Arnulf, Bishop of Metz, a warlike propagator of the faith, began the good work. Lupus de Sens, a banished bishop, inaugurated a mission on the banks of the Schelde and the Meuse, which was carried on with such success by S. Eloi and S. Amand.

The life of S. Eloi (Eligius) was a remarkable one. A carver by trade, he became one of the greatest men of his time, a confidant of kings, a bishop of the Church, a devoted missionary. Raised to the See of Noyon in 640, he was not content to follow the example of his less zealous brethren, but hastened to visit the barbarous tribes encamped in the plains of Flanders, extending from Courtray to Antwerp. With the fierceness of wild beasts they threw themselves upon him. But he disarmed all their violence and rude resistance by the majesty of his person and the gentleness of his discourses. He baptized a large number of these savage converts; old men with white hair, and young warriors, flocked to him at Easter to be received into Christ's holy Church. He planted oratories and monasteries amid the forests and beside the streams. His friend, S. Ouen, has pre-

served for us some examples of his preaching which exercised such a marvellous power and achieved such rapid conquests. The following is an example:—

“Do not adore either the sky, or the stars, or the earth, or anything else but God; for He alone has created and ordained all. Doubtless the sky is high, the earth large, the sea immense, the stars beautiful; but He who made them is greater and more beautiful. I declare to you that you must not practise any of the sacrilegious customs of the heathen. Let none of you observe what day you leave or return to your house, for God has made all days. Neither must you fear to begin a work on the new moon; for God has made the moon that she should serve to mark the times and temper the darkness, and not that she should suspend labour and trouble spirits. Let none think himself subjected to a destiny, a fate, a horoscope, as it is the custom to say that ‘every one will be what his birth has made him,’ for God wills that all men should be saved and arrive at the knowledge of the truth. But every Sunday repair to church, and there do not trouble about business, or quarrels, or frivolous tales, but silently listen to the divine lessons. It is not sufficient for you, my well-beloved, to have received the name of Christians, if you do not perform Christian works. He bears profitably the name of Christian who keeps the precepts of Christ, who does not steal, nor bear false witness, nor lie, nor commit adultery, nor hate any man, nor render evil for evil. He is a true Christian who does not believe in phalacteries, nor in other superstitions

of the devil, but who puts his trust in Christ alone, and who receives strangers joyfully as Christ Himself, because it is said, 'I was a stranger and ye took Me in.' Such a one, I say, is a Christian who washes the feet of his guests and loves them as very dear relatives, who gives alms to the poor, who does not touch his fruits without offering something to the Saviour, who does not know false weights and measures, who lives a pure life, and teaches his neighbours to live in chastity and the fear of God, who, in short, remembering the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, makes it his business to teach them to his children and his household."

Such was the plain, simple mode of speech which won the hearts of the warlike people whose lives were spent in murder and rapine, who honoured their false deities with human sacrifices, and who knew no wiser guide than the precept of the Edda, "Let him who covets the life and riches of others rise early in the morning; rarely does the wolf if he lies asleep find a prey!"

In contrast to the gentle, loving persuasions of S. Eloi we have the sterner preaching of S. Amand, who desired so eagerly "to compel men to come in," that he requested an order from Dagobert for the purpose of constraining by royal authority those who refused to be baptized. After visiting Rome, where he believed that he saw in a vision S. Peter, who ordered him to carry the Gospel to the heathen, in 626 he was consecrated a regionary bishop, and preached in the country of Ghent and Tournay. He

was received with insults and rough handling by the wild people of the district, being beaten by the men, jeered at by the women, and thrown into the rivers. But an event occurred which entirely changed their behaviour towards him. One of his persecutors was condemned to death, and in spite of the entreaties of the saint was hung. Amand cut down the body from the gallows, and carried it to his oratory, where he restored it to life. The fame of the supposed miracle spread rapidly, and produced an amazing effect on the people of the country, who cast away their idols and flocked to S. Amand for baptism. He built several monasteries and collected around him a band of earnest workers, such as S. Bavon, S. Florbert, S. Humbert, and others, who added many converts to the faith. In 647 he became Bishop of Tongres or Maestricht, but after a few years resumed his missionary labours, preferring the hardships of travel to the luxury and sloth which had already begun to invade episcopal palaces.

A grand enthusiasm animated these holy men, who traversed the whole of Belgium, and succeeded in overthrowing the pagan power. The Irish missionaries had taught them the secret of success. At the end of the sixth century S. Columbanus had established his famous monastery of Luxeuil, which became the centre of religious movement in the northern part of the kingdom of the Franks. The Irish saints set the example, which was nowhere followed with greater readiness than in Belgium. S. Columbanus himself, and some of his devoted com-

panions, traversed Austrasia and Neustria. Monastic houses, centres of piety and evangelistic zeal, sprang up everywhere; and it is to these centres of religious teaching and practice, to the devout labours of hard-working monks, that the country comprised within the limits of modern Belgium owes the establishment of Christianity. The charters of the monasteries state that these religious foundations were established amidst immense solitudes and interminable forests, which were penetrated only by the Frank nobles for the sport of bear-hunting.

The seventh century has been rightly termed "the age of the saints." Some of their names have been recorded, and some account of their labours and their lives have survived; of others we know nothing except their names. The good Bishop Livinus, who abandoned his country and preached to the people in the neighbourhood of Ghent, suffered martyrdom at their hands. All the Gallican Church honoured his death. There is extant a touching letter of this holy man, written to his friend Florbert, who sent him some provisions and asked for some verses in return. S. Livinus replied, "I dare to speak of many wonderful things: I have seen the sun without rays, the day without light, the night without repose. Whilst I am writing an impious people demand my blood. O people, what evil have I done? I bring you peace; why do you declare war against me? But your barbarity will only bring me a triumph, and will give me the palm of martyrdom. I know in whom I have believed, and my hope shall not be

broken." The good bishop thanks his friend for the delicacies which he sent—the milk, the butter, eggs, and cheese—and concludes sadly :

“ Non sum qui fueram festivo carmine lætus :
Qualiter esse queam, tela cruenta videns ? ”

The labours of the monks and missionaries were aided by some of the Merovingian kings, and especially by Dagobert (A.D. 628), son of Clothaire II., who took the Castle of Utrecht and granted it to the missionaries sent by Cunibert, Bishop of Cologne. He favoured S. Eloi in his noble work, and when persuasions failed tried to force Christianity upon the people by the power of the sword. When the kingly power of the Franks waxed feeble, its functions passed into the strong hands of a puissant family, the Pépins, who possessed vast estates in Brabant. Their chief, Pépin de Landen, was chosen by Clothaire II. as mayor of his palace, which office he held during the reigns of Dagobert and Sigebert. His grandson, Pépin of Héristal (the son of S. Begge), attained to almost regal power, and conquered the Frisian chief, Radbod (A.D. 692). This pagan prince *almost* became a Christian. Induced by the vigorous blows of Charles Martel, or the Hammer, Pepin's bastard, or by the more gentle persuasions of Wolfram, Archbishop of Sens, he consented to be baptized. When one foot was already in the water, he turned round and asked the Archbishop, “ Where are my dead ancestors now ? ” “ In hell, with all other unbelievers,” was the answer. “ Mighty well,”

replied Radbod, withdrawing his foot from the font ; "then will I rather feast with my ancestors in the halls of Woden than dwell with your little starveling band of Christians in heaven." Neither threats nor entreaties shook his determination, and the story tells how he died three days afterwards. This event was regarded by the superstitious people as a judgment from the God of the Christians, and numbers of Frisians, terrified by his example, became converts. Poppo, the successor of Radbod, who, like his father, was a heathen, revolted and was defeated by Charles Martel, and Friesland became part of the kingdom of the Franks. The account of the conversion of the Frisians to Christianity will be given in a subsequent chapter.

Charles Martel, the conqueror of the Saracens, the saviour of the Church and of the kingdom of the Franks, might have attained to royal honours had he lived, but he died prematurely and was succeeded by his son Pepin, "the short," who compelled the last descendant of the Merovingian dynasty to enter a monastery and assumed the title and rank of king. He was the first of the Carolingian line of kings of which Charlemagne was the most illustrious representative, whose accession to sovereign power (A.D. 768) was fraught with very beneficial results to the Church in the immense kingdom over which he exercised so wise and temperate a sway.

We have seen that the period of the seventh century was a time of great religious activity, an age of saints, and of indefatigable missionary enterprise.

The southern part of the Netherlands was conquered by the cross. The Franks' chieftains accepted the teaching of the Gospel as the corner-stone of the new society. The Church was recognised as the chief civilising power; the bishops were regarded as a great temporal as well as spiritual order. They took their places in the national assemblies, and were regarded both as the guardians of learning and the representatives of intellectual culture to thousands of warriors. The laws of the country were framed on the principles of the Gospel, and the Church and the State constituted one body politic, wherein the Christian element occupied the first place. We have seen that the conversion of the people was accomplished by the monks; their monasteries were the fixed abodes of religion, civilisation, peace, and learning amidst a migratory and restless people. The abbeys were the schools of culture, sacred and profane, of industry and agriculture; the monks were the architects, the painters, the sculptors, the goldsmiths of their time. They formed the first libraries; the catalogues of the books of the monasteries at Stavelot and Brogne show the immense variety of the studies and the intellectual culture of the monks. They taught the young; they educated women in their convents; in a word, these great foundations of the seventh century, these centres of light in a dark age, by degrees dispersed the shades of ignorance, idolatry, and barbarism, and out of chaos and confusion reformed the world.

CHAPTER III.

DIOCESAN ORGANISATION.

Origin of Liége bishopric—S. Servatius—S. Domitian—S. Monulphus—S. Amand, monasteries founded by him: Ghent, S. Bavon, Blandinium, &c.—Towns derive origin from monasteries—Diocese of Tournay—Residence of Salian Franks—S. Eleutherius—S. Medardus—Tournay and Noyon united—S. Eloi—S. Mommolin—Diocese of Therouanne divided into three, S. Victricius, Antimond, and Athalbert—S. Omer—Monastery of S. Bertin—Diocese of Arras and Cambray—S. Vaast—S. Géry—Pépin of Héristal—S. Remaelus of Maestricht—Monasteries of Malmédi and Stavelot—Troubles concerning the succession—S. Lambert—Story of his martyrdom—S. Hubert—The growth of Liége.

IN the preceding chapter we have recorded the evangelisation of the southern portion of the Netherlands; it will now be necessary to review the early history of the dioceses which were formed in that part of the country. Foremost among these was the important diocese of Tongres, subsequently Liége, the seat of which was first fixed at Tongres, afterwards removed to Maestricht, and then to Liége. The chroniclers of this diocese reckon the early bishops of Trèves as bishops also of Tongres, but S. Servatius was really the first bishop of that See. He took part in the councils of Sardica, Cologne, Vaison, and supported the courage of the orthodox party at Rimini, A.D. 359. During the invasions of the idolatrous Franks he prayed and wept, fasted and implored that his country might

be delivered from a people so cruel. Some writers narrate that, being warned by a revelation that Tongres would be destroyed by a barbarian foe, he resolved to remove his episcopal seat to Maestricht, where he died. After his death there is a break in the succession of bishops, caused by the savage inroads of the Franks; and of his immediate successors we know nothing except their names. S. Domitian, who is accounted the twentieth bishop (*i.e.*, including the bishops of Trèves, as also bishops of Tongres), was one of the fifteen bishops who composed the Council of Auvergne, A.D. 535, and his signature is found among those of forty-nine other bishops at the Fifth Council of Orleans. He was a learned man, and enjoyed the favour of Theodebert, King of Austrasia, who made an edict for the restoration of all episcopal property which had been seized during the troubles of the barbarian invasion. He is regarded as the patron saint of the town of Hui, where he is said to have slain a dragon which troubled the neighbourhood, and died A.D. 538.

S. Monulphus succeeded him, a man of noble birth, a clever theologian, and zealous apostle. He built a church at Maestricht, dedicated to S. Bartholomew. Travelling one day to Dinant he beheld the beautiful country where the city of Liége was destined to arise, and it is recorded that God revealed to him that it would be the site of a noble town, which should be honoured by a martyr's blood. Where the present cathedral church now stands he built a chapel in

which S. Lambert was destined to suffer martyrdom. He died A.D. 597.

Of the next four succeeding bishops we know nothing except their names, and that they were noble, learned, and pious prelates;¹ but of the zealous missionary labours of S. Amand, the twenty-sixth bishop, there are voluminous records. Some account of his career as a preacher and apostle has already been given. He did not occupy the See many years. After his appointment in 647 by Sigebert, he at once visited his diocese, and found that grave disorders and scandals existed among his clergy. He endeavoured with all the energy and power of his impetuous character to correct them; but all his efforts were in vain, and he was obliged to confess that it was far easier to convert idolatrous pagans than to reform scandalous priests. He longed to retire from a position which had become so distasteful to him, and begged the Pope to release him from his episcopal duties, and to allow him to pursue his missionary labours, and seek the retirement and solitude which he so dearly loved. The Pope tried to comfort him in his work, and advised him to remain. He further requested that some Belgian priests might be sent to the East to counteract the heresy of Monothelism which then prevailed. Amand wished to undertake this work, and went to Rome to reiterate his reasons for resigning his See. At length he was released from the duties which, on

¹ Their names were Gondulphus, S. Perpetuus (patron saint of Dinant), S. Elregise, and S. Jonnes, called the Lamb, from his sweetness and modesty, died 649.

account of the laxity of his clergy, had become so distasteful, and resumed his missionary labours, preaching to the Basques and subsequently returning to Belgium.

Many are the monuments of S. Amand's zeal scattered over the country, and numerous are the abbeys and churches which he built, or which were built at his instigation. The preachers of these times built monasteries as the Norman conquerors built castles to protect a conquered country; and wherever missionary enterprise had gained converts to the faith, there they built some monastic house to preserve their work and maintain the hold they had gained on the people. We will now enumerate some of these centres of religious life which owe their origin to S. Amand.

At Ghent, the capital of Flanders, but at that time consisting of a few huts, he founded a monastery known afterwards by the name of S. Bavon, who is regarded as the patron saint of that town. He was a man of illustrious family in Hesbaye; after a wild youth he was converted by his daughter, described as "an angel of candour and piety," with the help of S. Amand, whom he followed in his missionary journeys. Then he retired to the new monastery at Ghent, where he practised every kind of austerity in order to atone for the errors of his past life. He lived for some time as a hermit in the hollow of a large tree, and finally begged to be allowed to live as a recluse in a walled-up cell, in which he died A.D. 654. S. Amand founded also a second

monastery on a hill named Blandinium, which was afterwards known as Montagne de S. Pierre; and a third on the banks of the Lys, named Tronchiennes. The monastery of Ghent was really the foundation of the great city, which in after ages became so famous and so powerful as to be able to resist the armies of kings and emperors, and to play no small part in the troublous history of the Netherlands.

At Renaix, in Brabant, S. Amand raised a fourth monastery, and another also at Leuxe. At Forest, near the present city of Brussels, he consecrated for a church the house of a rich Christian. By his advice Ida, the pious widow of Pepin, built a nunnery at Nivelles, and Gertrude, her daughter, who had refused many offers of marriage, became the abbess at twenty-six years of age. She exercised a kind yet firm rule over the large community of sisters, and was learned in the Scriptures, knowing them by heart. She invited two Irish missionaries to aid her by their advice, S. Follianus or Faelan, and S. Outain or Ultain; the former was the head of a monastic house and was assassinated A.D. 655, the latter was abbot of Péronne and died A.D. 680.

Many of the towns of Belgium owe their origin to the monasteries which were established in the wild wildernesses and pathless forests. We have seen that the town of Ghent arose round the walls of the religious houses built by S. Amand; and Antwerp likewise dates its history from the time when the saint raised a church to the honour of SS. Peter and Paul on the spot where the city now stands. At

Marchiennes a monastery was founded by S. Adal-
bald, which Amand especially loved, and another at
Maroilles. During this period were founded also
Malonne, of which the abbey buildings still remain,
Mons, Haumont, S. Ghislain, Soigniers, dedicated to
S. Vincent, which still remains but was rebuilt in the
twelfth century. S. Begge, a daughter of Pépin of
Héristal, built a nunnery at Andenne, in which the
nuns were not bound to abstain from matrimony ;
and this religious house existed until A.D. 1785.
These were only a few of the famous monastic
institutions which arose at this time, and which owe
their origin chiefly to the zeal of the good Bishop
of Maestricht.

The country around Tournay had been evangelised
by S. Piatus, A.D. 287. We have already noticed
that the city was laid in ruins by the Vandals ; after-
wards it became the principal residence of the chief-
tains of the Salian Franks. In the time of Childeric
there were a few Christian families, amongst which
was that of Serenus and Blanda, the parents of the
future Bishop S. Eleutherius. In the year 484, while
Clovis was marching on Soissons, a cruel tribune
banished all Christians from the city and seized their
goods. They settled at a place two leagues from
Tournay, called afterwards Blandinium ; they built a
church, and a numerous company of Christians soon
gathered together and requested a bishop for their
community. A man named Theodore was appointed,
but he soon died, and, with the consent of the whole
body, Eleutherius was made bishop, A.D. 487. A

terrible plague raged at Tournay, which was attributed to the Bishop for having offended the ancient deities and evil spirits. He was seized and thrown into prison. It is recorded that he was released by an angel. Subsequently his persecutors were converted and S. Eleutherius was hailed as the father in the faith, as an angel sent from heaven in presage of more happy days. The idols were overthrown; converts flocked to the baptismal font; and the onward course of Christianity was only interrupted by the Arian heresy, which vaunted itself at Tournay, its partizans being most vehement persecutors. Eleutherius maintained the true faith, and at a public synod confuted the heretics. He fell a victim to the sword of an assassin, A.D. 532.

His friend S. Medardus was chosen to succeed him. He was Bishop of Noyon; so the two dioceses of Tournay and Noyon were united under one bishop, and were not separated until A.D. 1146, when Eugenius III. gave a separate bishop to Tournay. S. Medardus converted many to Christianity; he was the friend and adviser of Clothaire, who regarded him as a protector; and when he died, after fifteen years of episcopacy, the King removed his body to Soissons, and built a church and monastery in his honour.

Of S. Eloi, Bishop of Tournay and Noyon, A.D. 640, we have already spoken in the previous chapter, whose loving discourses turned the hard hearts of idolatrous barbarians on the sea coasts, and made converts among the peoples of Ghent, Courtray, Antwerp, and among the Frisii and Suevi. He was

succeeded by S. Mommolin, a monk of Luxeuil, who had been one of the companions and friends of S. Omer, or Audomar.

The diocese of Therouanne was of vast extent, and was divided by Charles V., who destroyed the city, into three other dioceses—Boulogne, Ypres, and S. Omer. S. Victricius had evangelised this part of the country. A chieftain of the Franks named Cararic lived here, and was probably a Christian, for when Clovis attacked the city and defeated him, taking possession of his property and kingdom, he compelled Cararic to enter a monastery. Two priests, Antimond and Athalbert, were sent by S. Remigius to preach the Gospel, and some writers have wrongly regarded them as the first bishops of Therouanne. S. Omer was really the first bishop. He was born in the diocese of Constance, and went with his father to the famous monastery of Luxeuil, where he was so distinguished for his piety and learning that S. Achaire, Bishop of Noyon, persuaded Dagoberth, A.D. 637, to appoint him to the bishopric of Therouanne and Boulogne. This was then almost an uncultivated field for Christian enterprise; the faith which had been planted had almost been stifled by vices and superstition. But S. Omer made religion to flower again, aided by three zealous workers, who were also monks of Luxeuil—S. Bertin, S. Mommolin, and Ebertram. They founded the monastery of Sithiu, which afterwards bore the name of S. Bertin, and became very famous during the time of S. Amand.

One other diocese remains to be described, that of Arras and Cambray. When Clovis conquered the country, S. Remigius of Rheims ordained S. Vaast, Bishop of Arras. This prelate was much esteemed by Clovis, and was remarkable for his piety and zeal. When he came to the city he found the ruins of a church which Attila had destroyed, and gave vent to the devout words: "Alas! all these evils have fallen upon us because we have sinned, we and our fathers. Remember us, great God, of Thy pity! Spare poor sinners, spare them always." He gained all hearts and firmly established Christianity in his diocese. After administering the affairs of the See for forty years he died A.D. 540. He was succeeded by S. Dominicus, and then S. Venulfus was appointed, who transferred the episcopal seat to Cambray. The two towns formed one diocese until 1094, when Pope Paul II. gave a bishop to each. S. Gerius was the fourth bishop. As a child he was considered "an angel of piety," and during his early life won golden opinions from every one. He was received by the people with acclamations, and with much pomp and ceremony by the authorities of the city. Amid the cheers of the crowd which greeted his arrival, the story relates that groanings were heard issuing from the ground. The Bishop asked whence these strange sounds proceeded, and was informed that they were the cries of twelve prisoners incarcerated in some terrible subterranean vaults. He asked if it were not possible that the poor men might share in the rejoicings of the day; and when the stern jailer refused to release

them, the bishop prayed, the chains fell from the limbs of the prisoners, their prison doors flew open, and the poor men cast themselves at the feet of the good bishop. He said to the astonished jailer, "You see, sir, that God is more merciful than we are." Over the ruins of an idol temple which stood outside the town he raised a church, where day and night hymns of praise rose in homage to the one true God. He ruled the See for thirty-nine years.

We have now described the early diocesan history of the southern portion of the Netherlands, a land rich in saints, by whose labours the people were rescued from idolatry. Belgium owes much to the race of Pépin for the aid which they accorded to the Christian preachers, especially to Pépin of Héristal, to whose court flocked not only the holy men of his own country, but saints from other lands, who found in him a protector and a friend. At the end of the seventh century began the influx of faithful and eager missionaries from England to Holland, of which we shall speak in the next chapter. Belgium also partook in the benefits which they conferred upon the countries they visited. Among those who came to the court of Pépin were two bishops from Scotland, Wiron and Pléhelme, accompanied by a deacon named Othger. Pépin sent them to evangelise Saxony and Frisia, and on their return gave them S. Odile, near Ruremonde, where was an oratory. He regarded Wiron as his spiritual adviser, and visited the oratory every Lent, coming as a penitent, with bare feet, to pray to God and seek pardon for his sins. Wiron died A.D. 700.

Of the remaining Bishops of Maestricht who belong to this period we will now proceed to give some account. S. Remaclus, who succeeded S. Amand, was a noble of Aquitain and Abbot of Solignac, a monastery founded by S. Eloi, and began to rule the See A.D. 650. He enlarged Liége, the future seat of his bishopric, which then consisted of only a few houses. He went to the court of King Sigebert, and told him the Ardennes were alone destitute of monastic institutions, and that there idolatry had made its last retreat. "Holy Father," said the King, "it is for you to teach us our duty, it is for us to fulfil it. Choose what you please in the Ardennes; my help will not be lacking to you." Aided by Sigebert, the Bishop built a monastery at Malmédi and also at Stavelot.¹ S. Trond, a rich lord in Hesbaye, came to the Bishop and offered to give to God according to his direction. Remaclus advised him to build a monastery on his estate for clerics who should assist the Bishop in his duties. This was the origin of the famous abbey of S. Trond. Remaclus resigned the See in 653 and retired to Stavelot, which he governed, together with Malmédi, during the remainder of his life. These two monasteries became very rich in possessions, and were always governed by one abbot, who ruled as temporal lord of the country attached to the monasteries, and was accounted as a Prince of the Empire.

S. Theodard succeeded Remaclus, a zealous prelate, who exercised wise discipline over his clergy, and

¹ The name is derived from *Stabulum*, because the place seemed to be a very lair of wild beasts, which roamed the dense woods, and often frightened the monks by their savage cries.

required that they should perform their duties. He visited all the churches of his diocese, and ordered those to be rebuilt which the pagans had destroyed. He was much grieved at the rapacity of powerful lords who had seized the property which belonged to the Church, and by his censures incurred their displeasure. The good Bishop was massacred in the forest of Bievault, near Worms, by an ambuscade prepared for him by his enemies, A.D. 655.

During his time there were sad troubles on account of the succession to the kingdom of Austrasia. Sigebert left his young son, Dagobert, as his successor, and thus annulled a previous disposition that the son of Grimoald, a descendant of the race of Pépin, should succeed him in case he died without children. Though Sigebert was a very religious prince, he was not always a wise politician, and foolishly left his son in the charge of Grimoald, who had expected the throne for his son. When the old king died Grimoald seized the young king, caused him to be tonsured by Didon, Bishop of Poitiers, and banished him to Scotland, causing his own son to be proclaimed king under the title of Childebert. But the Franks did not brook this high-handed proceeding. They seized Grimoald and put him to death, and Childeric, the brother of Sigebert, was proclaimed King of Austrasia. Further troubles followed. Childeric invaded Neustria, of which his brother Thyerri was king, hated by his people on account of his cruelties; and seizing him confined him and Ebroin, mayor of the Palace, in the monastery of Luxeuil, where he compelled them to become monks. In 668 Childeric, with

one of his sons, was attacked by one of his subjects and imprisoned; then Thyerri and Ebroin escaped and retook the kingdom of Neustria. Young Dagobert, who had been allowed by his uncle to reign in Alsace and the Rhenish provinces, having returned from banishment, thought this a favourable opportunity to regain the throne of Austrasia; but after a few years' rule he was killed in the hunting-field by some of the partisans of his old enemy Grimoald. Thus the country was in a sad state of turmoil and confusion. Ebroin, a proud and cruel man, avenged himself not only on those who had exiled him, but also on all those who had enjoyed the favour of Childeric. Amongst these was Lambert, Bishop of Maestricht, who had succeeded Theodard. Bishop Amat of Sens, and Leger of Autun also suffered from Ebroin's wrath. The latter was beheaded, and Lambert and Amat retired to Stavelot, and an usurper, Faramond, was foisted into the See of Maestricht. The Archbishop of Cologne, Albuin, was a party to this conspiracy, for he urged Ebroin to suppress Lambert because his holy life was a cause of reproach to that of the Archbishop.

Lambert remained five years at Stavelot, patiently and resignedly. The people soon saw that God had sent him there to comfort the solitary monks, as He had made him a bishop for the honour of the ministry, the glory of the Church, and the salvation of the people. A touching story is told of his humility. He was praying in his chamber one night, and continued his prayer after the time appointed for rest. The abbot, hearing a voice, and thinking it was one of his

monks holding conversation with some neighbour, ordered the offender to go to the foot of the cross, at some distance from the monastery, and pray. Immediately Lambert arose in the dead of night; the snow was falling heavily; but laboriously he wended his way through the terrible snowstorm to the foot of the cross, and knelt in prayer. In the morning the names of the monks were read in the choir, and all except the good bishop were present. They searched for him everywhere, and found him at last at the cross deep in prayer. The abbot rushed to meet him and implored pardon; but Lambert remained in the same posture, and asked pardon of the monks as if he had offended grievously against the monastic rules.

When young Dagobert was killed, Pépin of Héristal was elected governor of Austrasia, under whose care the Church flourished. He drove the usurper Faramond from the bishopric and reinstated Lambert. He restored religion, which, during the troublous times, had almost died. Lambert was contemporary with Willebrord of Utrecht, of whom we shall read in the next chapter, with whom he had frequent conferences and joined in his missionary labours. During the intervals between his journeys he used to reside at his house at Liége, which had become a considerable town, partly on account of the presence of the bishop and its nearness to the court of Pépin at Héristal and Jupile. As we have already stated, Pépin, although he did not assume kingly rank, acquired authority over the whole kingdom by driving out Berthram, the new mayor of the Palace of the Neustrian kingdom.

One sin stained the memory of this prince, his adultery with Alpäide. S. Lambert boldly rebuked Pépin for his conduct, and some historians narrate that the woman, desiring to be revenged on the Bishop, urged her brother Dodon to kill him. It is not certain whether this was the actual cause of Lambert's death, as opinions are divided upon this point. At any rate, Dodon accomplished the cruel deed. He came by night with his companions, and attacked the church at Liége when the Bishop was about to recite the office. The murderers rushed into the sacred building as the holy man was reading the words, "The Lord will avenge the death of His saints," and with a javelin quickly despatched him. His body was carried with great pomp to Maestricht, but after three years was removed to Liége.

He was succeeded by S. Hubert, a friend of the holy Lambert, who had fled from Neustria on account of the persecution of Ebroin, and received a welcome at the court of Pépin. While hunting in a wood, he saw a stag with a cross between its antlers; and this strange vision is commonly reported to have been the cause of his conversion. But his deep sorrow on account of the premature death of his wife, the Princess Floribane, and constant intercourse with the holy Lambert, probably caused him to turn his thoughts to religion. He left the court, and retired to the monastery of Stavelot. According to the custom of the times, he went to Rome to pray at the sepulchre of the Apostles, to behold their relics, and to resolve to copy their examples. After the murder of Lambert,

he was elected bishop by the clergy and people, A.D. 699.

Liège had now become a town, and one of the first acts of the new bishop was to transfer the episcopal seat from Maestricht to that place. On the spot where Monulphus had built his small chapel he raised the magnificent church of Notre Dame and S. Lambert. When Charles Martel held the chief rule, he gave to S. Hubert and his successors territorial jurisdiction over the neighbouring country. This was the origin of the vast power of this important See, whose bishops in later times ruled as great temporal princes. The town continued to increase rapidly, and the Church became very rich in possessions. Hubert proved himself a wise and capable ruler. He drew up a code of laws for the inhabitants, fixed the weights and measures for their use in commerce, built strong walls round the town with three gates, and provided well for the temporal affairs of his cathedral city. Nor was the Church forgotten in the midst of all his secular duties; he established in his cathedral church a body of twenty canons, who lived in common, and observed monastic rules; and also founded a lower order of clerks, who were called Canons of the Small Table. He built a monastery for fifty monks, which was known as the famous monastery of S. Hubert; and, for the better regulation of his province, he instituted the office of Grand Mayor, who should attend to temporal affairs. Nor were his labours confined to Liège alone. He frequently went on missionary journeys through his diocese, evangelising the people;

he pierced the wild forests of the Ardennes, and softened the ferocity of the rustics. During his episcopacy two councils were held at Liége in his new church, the first in 710 and the second in 720, which decided in favour of the faction in the Church called Iconoduli, or image-worshippers, and condemned the teaching of the Iconoclasts, who numbered many adherents in his diocese. After an arduous episcopal life of twenty-nine years he died, A.D. 728.

Little is known of the two successors of S. Hubert, Floribert and Fulcaire, except that during their time the revenues of the Church increased and its power was magnified. The latter died A.D. 769. During his rule Mayence became a Metropolitan See, and Liége was placed under its jurisdiction. We have now traced the first beginnings of the growth of this important diocese, which owed much of its greatness to the wisdom of S. Hubert, and the holy lives of his predecessors. They inspired in the minds of kings and warriors a reverence for holy things, and respect and honour for the Church whose officers and representatives they were.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONVERSION OF THE NORTHERN PROVINCES AND FOUNDATION OF THE UTRECHT BISHOPRIC.

Early apostles of Frisia—Saxon missionaries—S. Wilfrid—S. Willibrord—Causes of their success—Life of Willibrord—Utrecht made an archbishopric—S. Acca and other companions of Willibrord—Labours of S. Boniface in Frisia—His martyrdom—Decline of Christianity and degradation of the Church in eighth century—Revival—Synods and reforms of Boniface—Foundation of monastic school at Utrecht—Gregory—Curriculum of the school—Ludger—Lebvinus at Daventer—Albricius—Saxon hatred of Christianity—Alcuin's verses in praise of Ludger—Revolt of Widukind—Conquest of Charlemagne—Utrecht loses its metropolitan rank, and is assigned to the province of Cologne.

ALTHOUGH the cross had triumphed in the south, the "free Frisians" in the north resisted for a long time the advent of Christianity. As we have already seen, several attempts had been made during the seventh century, with partial success, to spread the Gospel among these worshippers of Thor and Woden. Even the zealous labours of Wolfram, Archbishop of Sens, and his monks from the abbey of Fontenelle, aided by the powerful sword of Charles Martel, only produced a transitory effect. Before him S. Eloi strove to convert these people who clung so perseveringly to their old superstitions. S. Wilfrid, Bishop of York, who through diverse persecutions was obliged to implore the protection of Dagobert II., laboured zealously

among them; but it was not until the advent of S. Willibrord (A.D. 690) and his eleven companions from England that any permanent work was accomplished.

Indeed, the Church in Holland owes its origin to the Saxon missionaries from England, and the cause of their success it is not difficult to determine. They came not to strangers, nor as victors, but to brothers who spoke a similar language, and had preserved the traditions of their common ancestry. The Benedictine rule of the Saxon monks, more practical and less austere than that of the disciples of S. Columba, a rule which did not so much "take men out of the world," or doom them to the peace of an eternal solitude, was better suited to the freedom-loving Frisians. Hence the English Saxons succeeded where S. Eloi and others had failed. The Frisian chroniclers regard with reverence these devoted Saxon missionaries, and lovingly describe the ancient monastery at Ripon, whence they came to the shores of Holland.

S. Willibrord was born of pious Saxon parents in Northumbria. Alcuin has recorded many details of his life. Before he was born his mother in a dream saw in the heavens a new moon, which gradually increased in size until it became full, and shone upon her countenance with rays of splendour. The dream was interpreted to mean that a son should be born to her who should disperse the shades of error and enlighten the world. He is often called by early writers "sol mundi," as in the following lines:—

"Quadrifidi Cosmi solem peperêre Britanni.
Solem Wilbrordum qui comit lumine mundum."

His father Wilgis was a devout man, and subsequently became a monk. Willibrord was educated at Ripon, and passed his life in the school of the monastery until he was twenty years of age with such devotion that it was thought a new Samuel had arisen "in favour with God and also with men." His chief monitor was S. Wilfrid, the Abbot of Ripon, who had visited Frisia and fired the soul of the youthful saint with the enthusiasm and zeal of a missionary. Having heard of the fame of Egbert and Wigbert, and of the learning of the monks in Hibernia, he migrated thither, and "with the prudence of a bee he plucked the mellifluous flowers of piety, and constructed in his breast the sweet honeycomb of virtues."¹ He seemed to hear the Divine voice calling him to forget his own people and his father's house, to leave the sweet fields of his fatherland, his parents, kinsfolk, and friends, and to convert the heathen to Christ. S. Egbert himself desired to preach the Gospel in Frisia, but he was prevented by a Divine intimation, and sent Willibrord and his companions to accomplish the great work. The names of the holy men who accompanied him were Swibert—who was consecrated bishop by Wilfrid—Wigbert, Acca, Wilibald, Winibald, two Ewalds, Werenfrid, Marcellinus, Lebvinus, and Adelbert.

This faithful band of eager missionaries came to Utrecht, the *Trajectum ad Rhenum* of the Romans, called by the Frisians *Wiltaburg*, the future seat of a most powerful mediæval bishopric. The heathen

¹ "Diatribai de primis veteris Frisiæ Apostolis," by F. Willibrord Bosschaerts (Mechlin, 1650), p. 27.

prince, Radbod, received them, but was unmoved by their preaching, and clave to his idols. Turning to Pépin of Héristal, mayor of the Palace of the Merovingian king, and the conqueror of Radbod, they received the benefit of his protection,¹ and whatever Willibrord desired Pépin granted. Willibrord was sent to Rome with presents and letters of recommendation from Pépin, and consecrated Archbishop of the Frisians by Pope Sergius I. When he returned the city of Utrecht was assigned to him as his episcopal seat, and during his fifty years of faithful ministration he converted vast numbers, and firmly planted the Church in that country.

His comrades were no less indefatigable in their labours or less renowned for their holiness and zeal. S. Acca, "*vir strenuissimus et coram Deo et hominibus magnificus*," "a man skilled in music who taught the people to sing hymns which they did not know before," accompanied Willibrord, but afterwards returned and became Bishop of Hexham (Hagulstalde). Indeed, there seems to have been continual communication between England and Frisia, the missionaries coming and going, and new labourers continually following in the footsteps of S. Willibrord. The two Ewalds preached among the Saxons and were martyred. Wilibald and Winibald laboured in Friesland, the former becoming the first Bishop of Aichstadt, and the latter Abbot of Heydenheimensis. Lebvinius directed his course to Deventer, where he built a church and turned many to the Lord. S. Marcellinus preached in

¹ Bede, v. 11.

Overyssel, and by degrees the whole of the northern provinces which formed the great diocese of Utrecht received the faith.

S. Willibrord was succeeded by another Englishman, S. Winfrid, the apostle of the Germans, better known by his adopted name Boniface. He was born at Crediton, in the kingdom of Wessex, and received instruction in the monasteries of Exeter and Nutcell. Being fired with missionary enthusiasm he sailed to Frisia ; but the time was not favourable to his enterprise, as the war between Charles Martel and Radbod was in progress, so Winfrid retired to England. Then he went to Rome, and received from the hands of Pope Gregory a letter of authority "to carry the kingdom of God to the infidel nations." Armed with this document he went forth to the peoples of Germany, and "as a bee wandered from flower to flower without resting long on any." At last he came to Frisia, offered his services to Willibrord, staying three years in that country destroying the pagan altars, building churches, and turning the people to Christ. He then wandered into Germany ; at Palatiolum, near Trèves, by the sweetness of his discourse, he attached to himself a young man of royal birth, named Gregory, who refused to leave him, and followed the saint through all his wanderings. At Rome, in 723, the Pope ordained him a regionary bishop. It is beyond the scope of our history to record the labours of this holy man amongst the German peoples, his valiant wrestling with idolatry, his destruction of the Oak of Thor, the monasteries he founded, his writings and preachings,

his elevation to the Metropolitan See of Mayence. But towards the end of his life, at sixty-five years of age, he resolved to devote his few remaining years to his beloved Frisians. He resigned his archiepiscopal dignity to his disciple Lull, and with a band of faithful followers he sailed down the river to Utrecht. On the 5th of June A.D. 755 the Archbishop's tent was pitched at Dokkum, in Friesland, near Leeuwarden; the Eucharist was about to be celebrated, and a great multitude were gathered together for confirmation. But bands of armed pagans surrounded the camp; his followers rushed to their weapons, but he said, "Fear not those who may kill the body, but cannot touch the soul. Pass with boldness the narrow strait of death, that ye may reign with Christ for ever." Falling on his knees he awaited the attack of his murderers, who quickly despatched him. The furious band rushed into the tents in search of plunder, and finding only some books and relics, began quarrelling among themselves, and fell an easy prey to the Christians, who took up arms and exterminated them.

It is evident from the writings of Boniface, and from other sources of information, that at the beginning of the eighth century there was a strong reaction in favour of idolatry. After the defeat of the Saracens by Charles Martel, his officers demanded rewards for their services, and the bishoprics and abbeys were assigned to them. The See of Mayence was held by two soldiers; the military element invaded the sacred offices, and according to Hincmar Christianity was for the moment abolished in the eastern provinces, and the

idols restored. The statutes which Boniface established at various councils show the pitiable state of the country and the corruption of manners which prevailed. Persons who had been baptized adored trees and founts, and abandoned themselves to augurs, divinations, enchantments, adultery, and every kind of error. Even the bishops and priests were no better; they were addicted to the superstitious customs of the time, abandoned themselves to immorality, and became skilled in arms and in the chase. But the crisis did not last long. Through the exertions of S. Boniface and Carloman, the son of Charles Martel, the Church was saved and reformed. In the years 742, 743, and 744 synods were held, composed of the bishops and chief officers of the Franks; one of these was held at Leptines, near Cambrai, when S. Boniface presided, and severe edicts were passed against depraved manners and superstitious practices, and the rights and powers of the Church established.¹ The third synod was held at Soissons, under P^épin, which ordered the publication in the country of the Nicene Creed, and the observance of the canons of ancient councils. The priests were ordered to teach the people to say the creed and the Lord's Prayer in the vulgar tongue.

Thus a great reformation was accomplished. The Church and the State were united; the Church purified, the State christianised, and the sacred truths of religion brought home to the hearts of the people. And all this was due to the courage, energy, and

¹ Cf. *Bel. Cath.*, vol. i., p. 268.

devotion of S. Boniface, who crowned an heroic life by a martyr's death. He was aided by several devout coadjutors, Floribert of Liége, Elisius of Tournay, Etherius of Therouanne, and Treward of Cambray. He regenerated society, transformed the State, established the Church on a secure basis, and by his wise counsels, his courteous manner and gentle consideration for others, won the hearts of princes, popes, and people. His name is venerated not only in Frisia, the object of his early affections, whither he returned in his old age to suffer and to die, but throughout Germany, of which he was the first apostle.

His work was rendered permanent by the establishment of a monastic school at Utrecht, where men were trained for the ministry, and especially for missionary labours.¹ Gregory, the young man whom Boniface attracted to himself by the beauty of his discourse,²

¹ Heda, in his history of the bishops of Utrecht, states that the school was founded by Willibrord. "Collocasse canonicos cœnobitates, hoc est, communem et apostolicum vivendi legum observantes. Non fuerant monachi; sed canonici, qui utique regulam divi Augustini aut beati Isidori tunc profitebantur per universas Germanicæ et Galliæ ecclesias." To this college he added a seminary for the teaching of candidates for the ministry, which was the origin of the famous Utrecht school.

² Ludger, a disciple of Gregory, describes the incident which took place on his journey to Hesse at a nunnery on the Moselle. Boniface was expounding the Scriptures, which the boy Gregory had read, and "it was evident from what source the words came, for they passed with such power and rapidity on Gregory's mind, that at a single exhortation of this teacher, hitherto unknown to him, he forgot parents and native land, and at once declared that he wished to go with this man and learn from him to understand the Scriptures. It appears to me that at that time the same Spirit was working in this young man which inflamed the apostles, when at the word of the Lord they forsook their nets and their father and followed their Redeemer. This was the work of the Supreme Artificer, that same Divine Spirit who works all and in all, imparting to every one as He will."

was appointed abbot, who sowed the seed in the hearts of many scholars, which brought forth abundant fruit in after years. Young men from France, England, Saxony, and other countries flocked to him, and formed "a nursery for the kingdom of God." Loving individual attention the good abbot gave to each pupil, sitting in his cell early in the morning, and imparting to each one as he came to him, the sacred truths he knew so well. Not even a stroke of palsy, which befell him in his seventieth year, dulled his energies or dimmed his cheerfulness; he continued to teach his beloved scholars, who carried him whither he would, and listened to the voice they loved so well. Three years afterwards he died, having received the Holy Eucharist in the church, where he breathed his last—a man greatly beloved and honoured by all.

His most devoted disciple was Lindger, or Ludger, a native of Friesland, who at an early age showed a great thirst for knowledge, and was placed under the care of Abbot Gregory.¹ The education imparted at this school was of no mean order; rhetoric, grammar, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy formed part of the secular studies. Holy Scripture was read, studied, and transcribed. Its library abounded with precious manuscripts. Ludger tells us that Abbot Gregory "acquired at Rome very many volumes of the Holy Scriptures, which he carried home with no slight labour."² Alfrid states that Ludger returned to Utrecht from York, bearing with him a great store of

¹ *Disquisitio de Ludgero*, Gerhardus, Paris; Amsterdam, 1859.

² *Greg. Vita*, cap. 12.

books. The library, therefore, must have been well filled. Possibly by one of the pupils of this school, under the guidance of the good abbot, the famous Utrecht Psalter, preserved in the University library, was written.¹

Ludger remained many years at Utrecht. His gentleness and cheerfulness made him a great favourite among his companions; and he was known to be a devout and diligent student of Holy Scripture, and remarkable for his prudence and temperance in all things. The bishopric of Utrecht seems to have been void at this time, after the death of Boniface;² and Ludger accompanied Alubert, an Englishman who desired to evangelise the Frisians, to England, in order that he might be ordained by the Bishop of York. He stayed one year in our country in order to profit by the wisdom of the great teacher Alcuin, whose school at York was celebrated for its profound learning and deep studies. So attracted was he by Alcuin's teaching, and by the well-furnished library at York, that he did not wish to accompany Alubert to Frisia; but after three years of happy intercourse with his beloved teacher he returned to Utrecht, and was present to console his former friend and the loving instructor of his youth, the good Gregory, in his last hours.

It has already been recorded that the Englishman, Lebvinus, preached the Gospel at Deventer. Accompanied by another Englishman, Marchelmus, he went

¹ It certainly belongs to this period. At the end of the volume there is a copy of the Athanasian Creed.

² Beka and Heda state that Gregory was the third bishop of Utrecht and the successor of Boniface, but this appears to be an error.

to the savage people, lived and worked amongst them, and built a church; but the wild Saxons resisted their peaceful mission, and collecting an army, attacked the place, burnt the church, and expelled Lebvinus and his colleague. Afterwards he returned to the attack with great boldness. Hearing that the Saxons were about to hold their great assembly at Markelo, near Deventer, he resolved to present himself and convince them of their errors. A friend tried to prevent him from undertaking the rash enterprise, because of the great dangers which threatened him; but Lebvinus knew no fear, and arrayed in his priestly garments, bearing the cross in his hands and a book of the Gospels under his arm, he went to the place of assembly. His words were not likely to appease the wrath of the Saxons. He threatened them with the Divine displeasure, and warned them that if they did not forsake their idols and turn to the one true God, they would be punished with great and terrible evils. "If you do not renounce iniquity, I proclaim that a terrible misfortune awaits you; for the King of heaven has ordained that a strong and indefatigable prince shall fall upon you like a torrent, in order to soften the ferocity of your still hardened hearts, and to make your proud foreheads bend. By one single effort he will invade your country, lay it waste by fire and sword, and lead your wives and children into slavery." The fierce warriors were greatly enraged at his preaching, and desired to slay him; but, happily, gentler counsels prevailed. They respected him as the ambassador of the great God, and sent him away unhurt.

In the year 775 Albricus succeeded Gregory at Utrecht, and in the same year Lebvinus, the heroic champion of God, died and was buried in his church at Deventer. The Saxons again destroyed the church, and inspired such fear among the Christians that the devoted work of Lebvinus seemed to have been entirely thrown away. At this crisis Albricus asked Ludger to restore the tomb of the departed saint at Deventer, and to rebuild the church over the body of his beloved brother. Ludger faithfully accomplished the task, and again reared the church which had so often fallen a prey to the rage of the Saxons.

Afterwards he extended his labours to Ostraga, in the country of Dokkun, where Boniface was murdered. In the meantime Albricus was made Bishop of Cologne, and seems to have been endowed with the gift of organisation. To each cleric he assigned a district or province. He regulated the Utrecht College, and finding that the care of so many students taxed the strength of one man, he divided the year into four parts, and arranged that he, Adalger, Ludger, and Thiatbrat should preside in turns for each quarter of the year.

Ludger found a grateful welcome from the Christians in Ostraga who had been converted by Boniface, and greatly strengthened by the preaching of an Englishman named Willehad. There he laboured for seven years, and the verses of Alcuin record his memory and his zeal :—

“ Frater, amore Dei cognato dulcior omni
Et consanguineis merito pretiosior ipsis,

Ludger amate mihi, Christi te gratia salvet ;
 Vive tuæ gentis Fresonum clara columna
 Doctus in eloquio prudens, et mente profundus
 Ipse gradum meritis ornas, et moribus almis."

But troubles came again upon the growing Church and checked its growth. In 782 Widukind, the brave Saxon chief, rebelled against the mighty power of Charlemagne, and for three years carried on a vigorous war. The Frisians, ever ready for revolt and the pursuit of freedom, made common cause with the Saxons. Christianity was the religion of their enemies, which the great Frank king forced his conquered foes to embrace. They loved their old gods better than the teaching of the Cross which was inculcated by such means. No wonder, therefore, that in the disturbed provinces Christians were persecuted by the savage Saxons. Ludger was forced to leave Ostraga, and went to Rome.

At length all Frisia was subject to the strong rule of Charles the Great, and in the words of the chronicler, "The sword of the victor fortified the way to the messengers of the eternal peace, even to the river Laubachus." To Ludger Charles assigned five districts in Frisia, where he laboured for many years. He restored the sight of a blind bard, Bernlef, who ever remained his faithful friend, learnt from him the Psalms, and, instead of singing the fierce war-songs and mythical adventures of the deified heroes of his country, chanted the holy strains of the Hebrew singers, and accustomed his countrymen to reverence things divine. Ludger founded a Church in Heligo-

land, and subsequently became Bishop of Münster, where he died A.D. 809. The story of his life is given as an example of the brave, eager, indefatigable English missionaries who in the ninth century evangelised Frisia, and, in spite of all opposition, founded the Church among the restless, savage, and stubborn inhabitants of the northern Netherlands.

Thus the ancient Bishopric of Utrecht was founded. It has been recorded that Willibrord and Boniface were the first bishops of the See, which at first was independent of any other jurisdiction. It was the Metropolitan See of the country; but after the death of Boniface, the Bishop of Cologne claimed jurisdiction over the new converts, and did not approve of the archiepiscopal honours of his neighbouring prelate. For a few years the Archbishopric of Utrecht was in abeyance;¹ the third bishop was Albricus, who was translated to Cologne when, by a decree of the Pope, that See was raised to metropolitan rank, and Utrecht became a diocese within its province. Thus it continued to be until the reign of Philip II. in the sixteenth century, when it again became an Archiepiscopal See.

¹ Cf. p. 58, *note 2*.

CHAPTER V.

CHARLEMAGNE.

Charlemagne's Christian empire—Lay element in Church government—Character of the Emperor—Relation to Papacy—Founder of political liberty of the Church—Conquest of the Saxons—At first no compulsory acceptance of the faith—Subsequent massacre of Verden—Alcuin's remonstrance—Its effect—Increased power of the Church—Reforms—Synods—Capitularies—Synod at Aix-la-Chapelle—Petition against militant bishops—Charlemagne respects rights of the Church—*Missi dominici*—Promotion of education—Alcuin—Charlemagne's studies—Geographical divisions of dioceses—Careful selection of bishops—Increased privileges of Liège—Charlemagne resigns his crown—His closing days—S. Gommard and S. Rumold, the Apostle of Mecklenburg.

THE great reforms in the Church instituted by Boniface were carried on with vigour by the Emperor Charlemagne. Pépin had greatly strengthened it by giving it the support of royalty; Boniface had purified it by abolishing many abuses and corruptions which the lawlessness and laxity of the times had generated; but it was left to Charlemagne to complete the grand work, and to create a great Christian empire. He infused into the affairs of the Church the lay element. Hitherto the clergy and people, the two orders of Christian society, had not acted together for the good of the Church. Laymen had left the clergy to manage ecclesiastical affairs, and did not regard it as a duty to concern themselves in its wel-

fare. The two functions with which the secular power was invested were to defend the Church against all enemies from without, and to maintain its internal constitution and laws. Constantine the Great, the first Christian emperor, was the first to recognise this duty, but it was left to Charlemagne to carry it into practice. At the outset of his career he fully understood the grand mission which was entrusted to him ; and even in the full vigour of manhood and in all the splendour of conquest, he reposed his trust in the Almighty, and eagerly clung to other support than that of victory and might. Although fierce passions assailed his heart, he fought against them as bravely as he opposed the hosts of the Saxons. Many writers have attributed the favour which he showed to the Church to wise policy rather than to deep conviction and religious earnestness ; but this can scarcely be regarded as a just view of the character of the great Christian monarch. In his heart the claims of religion ever held due sway. He ever tried to beat down the violence of his own inclinations by prayer and fasting ; he devoted his wealth to the cause of the Church, and sent alms to Africa and Palestine to support the persecuted faith of the Christian population. Respecting the Papal See he listened to the appeal of the Pope, and saved Rome from the Lombards. His father, Pépin, had wrested from the Lombards the Exarchate of Ravenna,¹ the temporal sovereignty of which he presented to Pope Stephen II. This celebrated *donation* Charlemagne confirmed in the year 774, when he

¹ This included the territories of Ravenna, Bologna, and Ferrara.

defeated the Lombards and increased the grant by additional territory. Thus he drew still closer the bonds which allied him to the Bishop of Rome, and secured for himself the zealous assistance of the Pope in all his enterprises.

Charlemagne was the founder of the political liberty of the Church, and by this means strengthened his own authority. Assuming the functions of a patriarch, he recognised the two main duties which his high office entailed upon him—to strengthen Christianity within the Church, and to extend its sphere without; and “as great duties make great men, the first made him a legislator, the second made him a hero.”¹

It is beyond the scope of this history to narrate the events of the life of Charlemagne, to tell of his wars, victories, and exploits. It is only in his relation to the Church that we have to consider his actions and career. Indeed, his wars against the Saxons, which broke the power of that brave and stubborn race, were regarded in after days of chivalry as a crusade; and when Peter the Hermit stirred the popular mind with the idea of rescuing the Holy Sepulchre from the infidels, the report arose that Charlemagne was about to rise from his grave at Aix-la-Chapelle, and lead the Christian army against the infidels. The historians of the age declare that the great Emperor was not animated by any political motives, by any desire for conquest or love of war, but solely by a devout purpose to rescue the barbarous Saxons from heathendom; and since they would not listen to the gentle

¹ Cf. Ozanam, vol. ii. p. 233.

persuasions and reasonings of the missionaries, he was obliged to resort to the sterner lessons of war.

Doubtless Charlemagne was guided by two motives. He saw that the suppression of the Saxons, their continual inroads, murders, rapine, and burnings of towns and villages, was a political necessity; and he hoped at the same time to soften the manners of the wild tribes, and convert them to Christianity. He did not then contemplate that ruthless massacre of brave men by which his memory is stained.

Soon the stern prophecy of Lebvin was fulfilled. In spite of the brave resistance of the Saxons, led by the hero Widukind, about whose memory romance has woven many a legend, the royal arms prevailed. It was far from the intention of the conquerors to enforce Christianity by the sword. The treaties which followed the first campaigns clearly show that the subdued Saxons were not compelled to embrace the religion of their conquerors. They were only obliged to take the oath of fidelity to the Emperor Charles. When the armies of the Franks withdrew, the priest was left to instruct the Saxons, and to lead them to a holier faith; but at first there was no compulsion. At last, however, the fatal error was committed. The labours of the preachers were of no avail among the fierce warriors of the Saxon hosts. Again and again they returned to renew the war, breaking the treaties, and refusing to listen to the Gospel messengers who were sent by the Emperor; it was then that he erred. Wearied by the long struggle, disappointed in his hopes of making the Saxons a Christian race, he

imagined that he had the right to punish them for their disobedience and obstinacy, and the massacre of Verden was the result of this fatal error, which has stained the memory of a pious and religious sovereign. The Saxons were forced to receive baptism at the hands of the clergy who accompanied the conquerors, and those who refused were condemned to death.

The severe measures of Charles were not regarded favourably by the Church, and the learned Alcuin, who had been invited by the Emperor to his court to promote education in his empire, severely censured the stern edicts of his master. He wrote: "Faith, according to the definition of S. Augustine, is a voluntary act and not compulsory. You can draw a man to the faith, you can never force him to it; if you force men to baptism, you do not make them take one step towards religion. That is why those who convert the heathen ought to use prudent and peaceful words; for the Saviour knows the hearts that He wants, and opens them that they may understand. After baptism indulgent precepts are still necessary to weak souls. The Apostle S. Paul wrote to the newly converted Christians of Corinth, 'I have fed you with milk and not bread.' . . . Let the propagators of the faith instruct themselves, therefore, in the example of the Apostles; let them be preachers and not plunderers; and let them trust in Him of whom the prophet gives this pledge, 'He never leaves those who hope in Him.'"

These remonstrances seem to have produced some effect on the Emperor's mind. In the second capitulary, 797 A.D., the harsh edicts were omitted. In 803

a reconciliation was agreed upon at the assembly at Salz. The Saxons promised to renounce the worship of idols, to obediently receive the bishops, from whom they would learn what they ought to believe, and to pay the tithes prescribed by the law of God. In return the monarch, reserving to himself the right of visiting them by his commissioners, and of choosing their judges, freed them from all kind of tribute, left them the laws of their fathers, and all the honours of a free people. The Frisians also obtained the same favourable conditions and preserved their freedom, upholding the proud boast which forms the prelude to their statute-book, "The Frisians shall be free as long as the wind blows out of the clouds and the world stands."

The union of the Church and the State was well-nigh complete, and conferred numerous privileges on the hierarchy. The secular power enforced the decrees of Church, compelled the observance of Sundays and Holy Days, and recognised the right of asylum in churches and other consecrated places. The bishops and abbots of the principal monasteries were recognised as a powerful aristocratic power, and enjoyed a rank equal to that of the highest layman. The State bestowed special protection on all ecclesiastical property. The system of the payment of tithes for the endowment of cures was thoroughly organised, and all church property was freed from taxation. All the education of the country was conducted by the clergy, and in the administration of justice the bishops were not only the exclusive judges of the clergy in spiritual, civil, and criminal matters, but also exercised jurisdiction over

laymen in conjunction with the secular judges. Thus the Church attained to a position of high dignity and importance.

The chief benefit which Charlemagne conferred on the Church was the great work of reformation which he so zealously carried out. He wished to increase the power of the Church, to augment its wealth, to exalt the dignity of its prelates, and to enlarge their privileges; but he was not blind to the weaknesses and lax manners which a corrupt age had spread amongst the clergy. To correct these abuses, desiring to strengthen the Church, he instituted certain vigorous measures of reform in order to improve the condition of the ecclesiastical power. He adopted the plan of holding synods, which had proved so successful in previous ages; forty of these assemblies, at which the Emperor himself generally presided, were held during his reign, and helped to maintain the doctrine and ancient discipline of the Church. Sometimes at these assemblies the representatives of the spiritual and temporal powers held their sessions separately, the bishops and priests arranging their ecclesiastical affairs, and the earls devoting their plans for the political welfare of the State. Sometimes the matters discussed were entirely ecclesiastical, and the decisions of the bishops were invested with the sanction of the Emperor, and marked with his seal, in the famous ordinances which were called capitularies. Among the sixty-five acts which compose this collection, out of 1151 articles, no less than 477 relate to religious affairs.

An important synod was held at Aix-la-Chapelle in

the year 789, when a capitulary was published in eighty articles, with a view to restore the ancient discipline of the Church. It was addressed to all ecclesiastics, and was carried by the officers of the Emperor into all the provinces of his empire. The abuses which had arisen are clearly shown in these instructions, which exhorted the bishops to select their clergy from free men rather than from slaves, and forbade all bishops, abbots, and abbesses to possess dogs, or hawks, or buffoons, or jugglers. At the council held at Frankfort in 794 the great question of the adoption and worship of images was discussed, and it was enacted that bishops should not be translated from city to city; that the Bishop should never be absent from his church for more than three weeks; that he should diligently teach his clergy in order that a worthy successor might ever be found among them; and that after his death his heirs should only succeed to such portion of his property as he possessed before his ordination—all acquisitions subsequently made were to return to his church. Other articles regulated the discipline of the inferior clergy.

Fighting bishops were a cause of offence to the devout laymen of this period, and when in 803 Charlemagne summoned a synod at Worms, the following petition was presented to him by all the people of his states.

“We pray your majesty that henceforth bishops may not be constrained to join the army, as they have been hitherto. But when we march with you against the enemy, let them remain in their dioceses, occupied with their holy ministry, and praying for you and your

army, singing masses, and making processions, and almsgiving. For we have beheld some among them wounded and killed in battle, God is our witness with how much terror! And these accidents cause many to fly before the enemy. So that you will have more combatants if they remain in their dioceses, since many are employed in guarding them; and they will aid you more effectually by their prayers, raising their hands to heaven, after the manner of Moses. We make the same petition with respect to the priests, that they come not to the army, unless by the choice of their bishops, and that those be such in learning and morals that we may place full confidence in them."

The Emperor replied as follows: "In our desire to reform ourselves, and to leave an example to our successors, we ordain that no ecclesiastic shall join the army, except two or three bishops chosen by the others, to give the benediction, preach and conciliate, and with them some chosen priests to impose penance, celebrate mass, take care of the sick, and give the unction of holy oil and the viaticum. But these shall carry no arms, neither shall they go to battle, nor shed any blood, but shall be contented to carry the relics and holy vessels, and to pray for the combatants. The other bishops who remain at their churches shall send their vassals well armed with us, or at our disposal, and shall pray for us and our army. For the people and the kings who have permitted their priests to fight, have not gained the advantage in their wars, as we know from what has occurred in Gaul, in Spain, and in Lombardy. In adopting the contrary practice

we hope to obtain victory over the pagans, and finally everlasting life."

Although Charlemagne used his autocratic power to interfere greatly in ecclesiastical affairs, he did not seek to establish any royal supremacy in spiritual matters. By his capitularies¹ he strove to extirpate paganism, to reform the clergy, by punishing ignorance among the priests, and by forbidding them the pursuits of the chase and war. The election of bishops was placed in the hands of the clergy and people; the rights of the metropolitans over their suffragans, and of the bishops over their clergy, were duly recognised and established; and whatever influence Charlemagne exercised over ecclesiastical legislation, it was directed towards the strengthening and purifying of the Church, and not for the increase of his own power or sovereignty. The following words of the great Emperor reveal his humble mind and pure intentions for the furthering of the cause of religion: "It has pleased us to solicit your wisdom, O pastors of Christ, leaders of His flock, and shining lights of the world, lest the infernal wolf devour those whom He finds transgressing the canonical rules, and the traditions of the holy canons. For this purpose we have subjoined several articles extracted from the canons which have appeared to us more necessary." In another passage he says, "It is our duty under the good pleasure of the Divine mercy to protect everywhere the Holy Church of Christ, by defending it from without by arms against the incursions of the heathen

¹ *Cf.* note at end of chapter.

and the ravages of the unbelievers, and by strengthening it within by the profession of the Catholic faith."

In order that the decrees of the synods might be observed throughout the states of his vast empire, he appointed two commissioners, who were called *Missi dominici*, to visit each diocese and province, to see that the laws of the Church were duly observed, and to report to him any cases of disobedience or neglect. They were chosen from the two orders of prelates and laymen of exalted rank; and although their supervision may have been somewhat distasteful to those clergy who held defective views of the duties of their high office, it was in no way prejudicial to the regular jurisdiction of the bishops.

The cause of education found in Charlemagne a keen promoter. He induced the learned Englishman, Alcuin, the most celebrated divine of his day, to forsake the cloisters of York, and to help in the great work of the restoration of learning. Alcuin loved the great Emperor, and consented to die in a foreign land on condition that he might live in solitude and have around him his "English flowers," which name the learned monk gave to his books. Although inferior to his celebrated countryman, Bede, as a writer, nevertheless, on account of his great love of teaching and his devotion to books, he was well suited for the position assigned to him by Charles. He took great pleasure in correcting ancient manuscripts, restoring the text which time had changed. When Charlemagne was crowned at Rome, Alcuin presented him with one of his greatest treasures—a Bible annotated and corrected

by his own hand. Examples of his method of imparting instruction have come down to us in his work *De Septem Artibus*. His letters give us a picture of the palace of his royal master, the centre of the enlightenment of the age; its academy, where the great scholars met whom the Emperor called together to discuss abstruse questions; its library, containing a rich store both of sacred and profane literature; and its school, where the young were instructed. There Alcuin hoped to revive once more the glories of ancient Athens, purified and Christianised.

Charles himself set an example of patient study and a desire for learning. He consulted his learned teacher about difficult questions in grammar, arithmetic, and astronomy. He could converse in Latin, and set himself the task of learning Greek in order to correct the Latin text of the Gospels with the help of the original version. Learned men of all races flocked to his palace, but their attainments did not always satisfy the high ideal of their august patron, who, sighing after the pursuit of more perfect knowledge, used to exclaim with impatience, "Would to God I had only a dozen scholars like S. Augustine and S. Jerome." He was very determined in his efforts to establish a learned hierarchy, requiring the bishops to write theological treatises, which if they were not considered satisfactory were returned to their authors for reconstruction. He reproved the Bishop of Trèves for his devotion to secular rather than to religious study, and exclaimed, "Would that the Bishop were as well acquainted with the four Gospels as he is with the twelve books of the *Æneid*!"

To this period of the history of the Netherlands may be traced the complete organisation of the dioceses, which was not changed until the stormy reign of Philip II. The country was divided into six dioceses—Cambray, Tournay, Therouanne, Arras, which were in the province of the Metropolitan See of Rheims; and Liége and Utrecht, which for a short period were in the province of the Metropolitan See of Cologne, and afterwards of Mayence. The geographical divisions of the six dioceses were as follows:—

1. Cambray comprised the neighbourhood of that city, the greater part of Hainault, part of Namur, Brabant, on the left bank of the Dyle, Flanders, on the right of the Schelde, and part of the province of Antwerp, including Hooghstraeten and Turnhout.

2. The Bishop of Tournay exercised jurisdiction over the Menapian State.

3. Arras comprised the ancient city of the *Attribates*.

4. To Therouanne was assigned the State of the *Morini*.

5. The seat of the bishopric of Liége was first established at Tongres, afterwards for a short time at Maestricht, and finally at Liége by S. Hubert in 709. It embraced a large amount of territory, and comprised within its borders the country around Liége, the part of Brabant on the right of the river Dyle, including Louvain, part of the province of Antwerp, Limbourg, Namur, Luxemburg, part of the Rhine province, and the eastern part of Hainault.

6. The immense Utrecht diocese embraced all the central and northern portions of the Netherlands.

The extreme parts of the Netherlands on the east and north were attached to other bishoprics. Nijmegen and the country lying between the Meuse and the Waal belonged to Cologne; and some parishes on the eastern side of the kingdom of Holland were under the jurisdiction of the Bishops of Munster, Minden, Paderborn, and Osnabruck. Parts of Luxemburg belonged to the dioceses of Trèves, Rheims, Cologne, Metz, Toul, and Verdun. Thus the ecclesiastical supervision of the country was complete.

Charlemagne also took special care that those who were nominated to vacant Sees should be men of piety and zeal. On one occasion he nominated one of his chaplains to a vacant bishopric. Rejoicing at his promotion the Bishop designate invited his friends to a banquet, and the festivities were prolonged so far into the night that he did not appear in chapel on the following morning at Matins, when he ought to have been in his place to chant the response "*Domine, si adhuc populo tuo sum necessarius,*" &c. The service was somewhat disarranged by his absence, and Charlemagne, who was present, was so indignant that he revoked the nomination, and gave the bishopric to a poor priest who had chanted the response in place of the defaulting chaplain. The story shows the almost absolute power which the Emperor exercised in ecclesiastical affairs, and his earnest desire to reform the clergy, and to nominate to bishoprics men worthy of the office.

Under his fostering care the city and diocese of Liége increased in size and power. During the

episcopacy of Agilfride, who wrote the main portion of a "Life of S. Lambert," commenced by Godescalc or Gotteschalck, the Emperor visited the city A.D. 769, to celebrate Easter with great solemnity. On this occasion he wore the insignia of royalty, and was attended by all the officers of his court and the great men of the kingdom. He beautified the church, enriched its prerogatives, and granted privileges to the citizens. The Pope also visited Liége and increased the privileges of the church during the rule of Gerbald, the thirty-fourth bishop. Here resided the dethroned king of the Lombards with his wife and daughter, whom Charles had defeated in his Italian war. The citizens of Liége were ever ready to summon their forces, which they did by ringing the bell in the clock-tower, and march under the Emperor's banner; and he, wishing to requite them for their faithfulness, gave them the privilege of freedom from toll, and to have escutcheons and silver buttons as a mark of their nobility. Bishop Gerbald, who was much beloved by the Emperor and by the clergy and people, died 809 A.D.

When Charlemagne felt that his days were fast drawing to a close, he ordered his son Louis to attend an assembly at Aix-la-Chapelle; and in the church which he had built, he resigned his crown to his son, bidding him to love and believe in Christ, to keep the commandments, and to protect the Church; to honour the bishops as fathers, to love his people as children, and to comfort the monks and the poor. The imperial crown—placed by Charlemagne upon the altar as a token that to God he resigned that rule which His

Divine will had granted to him—was then received by his son, amid the acclamations of the multitude, and after a solemn celebration of the Eucharist, Charlemagne returned to his palace.

He lived one year after this event, employing his time in studying the New Testament in Greek, and correcting the Latin version; but he was attacked by fever in January, A.D. 814. For seven days he lingered in pain and weakness, and for a time bereft of reason; he recovered sufficiently to make the sign of the cross, and to repeat the words of the Psalmist, "Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and then died. He was buried in the magnificent church at Aix-la-Chapelle which he had built, arrayed in his imperial robes, sitting upon his throne, with a sceptre in his hand, and a book of the Gospels bound in gold on his knees, and "his sepulchre remaineth until this day."¹

Many illustrious and devoted men lived and worked in the Netherlands in the time of Charlemagne. We have already recorded the patient labours of S. Gregory of Utrecht, and the indefatigable zeal of S. Ludger, who extended his missionary enterprises far and wide. The names of two other saints ought not to be omitted—S. Gommar and S. Rumold. Gommar was born at the village of Emblehem, near Lierre, where there is a church dedicated to him. He served in the armies of

¹ Here the body of the great Emperor reposed for 350 years. The tomb was opened by Otto III., A.D. 1000; and also 150 years later by Frederick Barbarossa; and later still, the remains were placed in a reliquary made of gold and silver, still preserved in the Cathedral Treasury. The throne on which the body of Charlemagne rested in his grave was afterwards used for the coronation of the Emperors.

Pépin, and at the court; but in an evil hour he had the misfortune to marry a shrewish wife, who was like a household fury, and during the absence of her husband used to cruelly ill-treat his servants. He finally retired into an oratory, which he built in honour of S. Peter, where he devoted his life to pious works and deeds of charity. S. Gommar is held in honour as the patron saint of Lierre.

S. Rumold was of Saxon origin, and was ordained a regionary bishop at Rome. He was the chief founder of Christianity at the famous city of Malines or Mechlin; S. Lambert had indeed done much to spread Christianity in the neighbourhood, but it was left to S. Rumold to complete the work. He was received with kindness by Count Odon and his wife, and prophesied that God would give her a son, who would be renowned for his piety and zeal for the honour of God and the Church. The prophecy was fulfilled, and a child was born, whom they named Libert. This boy fell into the river, and was drowned; but the saint, touched by the great grief of the parents, restored him to life.

In gratitude the Count and Countess founded a monastery, of which S. Libert was the abbot when the savage Northmen invaded the land, who slew him at the foot of the altar. Few details of S. Rumold's life are given. He built a chapel, and was murdered by two men whose anger he provoked by the boldness of his reproofs, and who desired to possess themselves of the treasures they imagined he had acquired. His body was buried in the church which he had built, upon the site of which now stands the grand cathedral

of S. Rumold, erected in the thirteenth century, and afterwards restored. His memory has always been venerated by the inhabitants of the important city of Malines, which owes much of its former greatness to the saint, and became one of the great centres of monastic life in the Netherlands. Sohier, a Bollandist, justly remarks that if Louvain holds the palm for learning, and Antwerp for commerce, Malines is no less distinguished for its piety.

Note on Capitularies of Charlemagne.—It is well to bear in mind that all the capitularies of Charlemagne are not genuine. After his death, when the Papal claim to universal authority over the Church began to be formulated, in order to prove that Charles had ever recognised that claim, it was found necessary to forge a series of decrees and insert them amongst the genuine capitulary decrees. Benedict the Levite, of Mayence, was the author of these spurious documents, in which Charles is represented as accepting the most astounding claims formulated by the Pope. Cf. vol. i., "The Church in Germany," p. 115.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RULE OF THE COUNTS AND DEVASTATIONS OF THE NORTHMEN.

Rule of Louis le Débonnaire—Favours the Church—Council at Aix-la-Chapelle—Regulations for clergy—Reforms—Monastic rules—S. Benedict—Frederick, Bishop of Utrecht—Martyrdom—Missions of Belgic Church—S. Adalard—Ansker—Division of empire on death of Louis—The power of the Counts—Theodore, Count of Holland—Foundation of monastery of Egmond—Baldwin *Bras-de-fer*—Inroads of the Northmen—Utrecht destroyed—Terrible devastations—Base conduct of Charles the Fat—End of Norman invasions—Rebuilding of towns and monasteries—Increased power of the bishops—Tournay loses temporal jurisdiction—Increased authority of the Pope—His treatment of Lothaire II.—Liége rebuilt by Bishop Franco—Bishop Stephen—Baldwin the Bald—Prosperity of Flanders—Degeneracy of the times—Council of Trosli—Scandals—S. Gérard.

NOT many years elapsed before the grand empire bequeathed by Charlemagne showed signs of disintegration; the race of kings degenerated; the counts and nobles frequently revolted, and wars and fightings became general. Amidst the confusion which soon reigned, the cause of religion suffered. Louis le Débonnaire, the son of Charlemagne, began his rule well, and continued the policy of his father in showing favour to the Church, confirming the privileges granted by his predecessors, and causing those who had seized Church property to restore it. He summoned a Council at Aix-la-Chapelle in order to reform abuses; he

exhorted the bishops to attend to the education of their clergy, and to reform the communities of canons and female canons, whose discipline had become lax. The writings of the Fathers and the decrees of the Synods were examined, and a code of rules drawn up for the use of the clergy, of which the following are the chief heads :—

After several quotations from the writings of Isidore, Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great, Prosper, showing the qualities required for the pastoral office, the Council enjoined clerical celibacy, the fixity of the pastoral charge except with leave from the bishop, abstinence from public shows and trade of all kinds, inns, &c. The canons were allowed to have their own property and benefices, which were not permitted to the monks, but the goods of the Church were only to be regarded as the pay of the soldiers of Jesus Christ, and for the nourishment of the poor. The bishops were forbidden from appointing serfs to canonries; this it appears they were in the habit of doing, in order that no complaints might be made by these subservient clerics. The canons were not to be idle, but to apply themselves to reading, prayer, study, and the service of the Church. They were to be present at all “the hours,” and at a conference every day, when Holy Scripture and books of piety were ordered to be read, disciplinary sentences pronounced, and the general affairs of the community discussed. During meals books of devotion were to be read aloud. The punishments of whipping or imprisonment might be inflicted, but the superiors were to remember that the “Church

ought to be compared to a dove, because she does not tear with her claws, but strikes gently with her wings." The erection of hospitals for the poor, houses of retreat for infirm canons, and the education of children were strictly enjoined.

Rules for the regulation of female canons were also drawn up, principally taken from the writings of the Fathers, and compared to "a bouquet of flowers chosen from a fine meadow."

These acts of the Council were sent to each bishop, with instructions to see that they were duly enforced. The capitularies were published; liberty of elections given to the Church, the bishops to be elected by the clergy and people, the abbots by the monks. Two-thirds of the donations of rich monasteries were ordered to be given to the poor, and one-third to the maintenance of the monks.

The result of these enactments was a considerable improvement in the lives and conduct of the clergy. Evidently some reforms were needed, as we may judge from the words of a contemporary historian. "Then the clerks and bishops began to quit their scarfs of gold and girdles charged with cutlasses garnished with stones, as well as precious dresses and spurs; and if any ecclesiastics affected ornaments proper to laymen, they were regarded as monsters."

A Synod was held at Aix-la-Chapelle composed of abbots and monks, to draw up one uniform rule for the various monasteries, when S. Benedict of Aniane was the leading spirit. The old Benedictine rule was used as a model of monastic government, and to it eighty

articles were added dealing with the most minute details of monastic life—the times for shaving, bathing, eating fowls, fruits, dress, washing each other's feet, &c.

In all the monasteries of Belgium these rules were enforced, and discipline enjoined everywhere. Many of the monks, accustomed to lax manners, found them somewhat irksome, and became discontented and inclined to revolt; but they were forced to comply with the new regulations, and great improvements were effected.

The diocese of Utrecht at this period was governed by a good bishop named Frederick. For eighty-four years after the martyrdom of S. Boniface, the chronicles are silent concerning the achievements of the Utrecht bishops. We are told that they were worthy of their great predecessors, devout, pious, and faithful men, who ruled their clergy and people well, and were buried in their cathedral. Albricus, the fourth bishop, was an Englishman from the diocese of York, who urged Ludger to carry on the good work of Lebvinius at Deventer. Of Theodard, an illustrious Frisian preacher, who died A.D. 790, of Harmarkarus and Rixfrid we know nothing. But of Frederick, the eighth bishop, fuller details are recorded. He was the adopted son of his predecessor, Rixfrid, and a brave, fearless, and devout bishop. Before his election, Louis le Débonnaire came with a great retinue to Utrecht, demanded the bishopric for Frederick, and ordered the consecration to be performed in his presence. A great banquet was held, which was attended

by the King, his nobles, and the chief men of the city. On the following day Louis said to the new bishop, "My son, you have been chosen Bishop of Utrecht to admonish profane people by your preaching. There is the island of Walcheren, where fearful incest and adultery are practised; I call upon you to correct and punish the offenders." The Bishop replied, "Which part of a fish ought one to eat first?" "The head, I suppose," said the King, "for it is more full of marrow than any other part." The Bishop answered, "You, O king, are the chief and head of this people; therefore I would first reprove you before I go to the poor people of Walcheren. You have married, against the decrees of the canons, Judith, the sister of the Duke of Bavaria, who is a blood-relation of yours. Abstain from intercourse with this woman; repent of your sin; or terrible danger and loss will befall you." Louis was humbled by the stern reproof, and promised to put away his wife.

The good Bishop was renowned for his prayers, charity, and fasting; he prudently repaired the ruined walls of the ancient camp near Utrecht; he corrected the scandalous crimes at Walcheren, visiting his diocese and reforming abuses. But at last he fell a victim to the anger of the enraged Judith, whose divorce from Louis he had so strenuously advised. Two men came to Utrecht on a pretended embassy from Louis. Frederick, knowing by divine inspiration that his martyrdom was at hand, told them to wait till the close of the service. The Church of S. Salvator was crowded with worshippers; the Bishop preached, and in an allegory spake of his approaching death. At the

end of the mass, when the words "*Ite missa est*" had died away, he called the men, and bade them fulfil their mission, which with swords they speedily accomplished, saying, "Now the Queen has her revenge!" Prophesying the scourge of the Danes as a punishment for the unpurged adultery of Louis, he breathed his last, and, amidst the lamentations of his flock, was buried in the crypt of the church, A.D. 838.

Of Walcand and Pirard, bishops of Liége, there are no records, except that they were good men; but a proof of the vitality of the Belgian Church at this time exists in the fact that it sent forth missionaries to other lands. S. Adalard or Adelhard, a Belgian, Abbot of Corbie, sent a company of monks to reconvert the Saxons and to found a monastery, which they called New Corbie. This became a nursery of apostles and missionaries. Adalard died A.D. 825. Ebbon, Archbishop of Rheims, Halitgaire, afterwards Bishop of Cambrai, Ansker, of Corbie, endeavoured to convert the Danes and Normans; if their labours had been successful, they would have saved their country much misery. Ansker, the apostle of Sweden, was remarkable for his gentle, loving disposition, which resembled that of S. John. King Harold of Denmark, when visiting Louis, requested him to allow a zealous preacher to accompany him and his warriors to their native land. Ansker was chosen for this adventurous journey, and won the hearts of the wild Danes; he used to purchase native children and train them as teachers. Thence he sailed to Sweden; by his prayers and labours he softened the hearts of the pagans, and, after

thirty-four years of hard toil in his Master's service, died there.

Louis le Débonnaire ruled the empire twenty-six years without much strength or dignity. His own children rebelled against him and imprisoned him in a German monastery, where he died, A.D. 840. He had three sons, Lothaire, Louis, and Charles, who fought amongst themselves, and divided the monarchy between them. Lothaire governed the largest part of Belgium, between the Rhine and the Schelde; the country east of the Rhine fell to Louis; that part which lies on the west of the Schelde to Charles called the Bald. Thus Belgium was separated into two regions, divided by the Schelde, and governed by two sovereigns. The new rulers seem to have wished well to the Church, for the three brothers held an assembly at Mersen, near Maestricht, where they endeavoured to remedy the evils of the times, and enacted that the churches should have all the possessions which they held in time of the late king, and forbade all rapine and violence.

Terrible times of confusion followed, and it needed stronger hands than those of the feeble descendants of the illustrious Charlemagne to direct the empire torn and rent into shreds of sovereignty. The power of the Counts arose, the chief nobles ruling like independent princes, the sovereigns being too weak or too distant to enforce obedience. Gisibert, Count of Mansuaria, in the duchy of Lorraine, forcibly married Ermengarde, daughter of Lothaire, and his son, Reginald of the Long Neck, became very powerful, at one

time the "faithful and unique" councillor of the German emperor, at another time enjoying viceregal authority under the French king. It is beyond the scope of this history to narrate his adventurous life and that of his successors: the quarrels and continuous fightings between the Counts belong to secular rather than to ecclesiastical history. Charles the Bald granted to Theodore Egmond and the north-west territory of the Netherlands,¹ which he held by feudal tenure. Theodore was the first Count of Holland, a noble man, who drove the Danes and Northmen from his territories. His armour was made of gold, a red lion his device, which often struck terror into the hearts of even the brave Vikings. He married a noble lady, Ghena, and begat an illustrious son, Theodore, who succeeded his father as Count of Holland. He built the monastery of Egmond, a wooden edifice, dedicated to S. Adelbert, Archdeacon of Utrecht under S. Willibrord, and established a colony of monks of the Benedictine Order. This monastery was rebuilt in stone² by his son Theodore II., who endowed it with large possessions; its library contained a text of the four Gospels bound in gold with precious stones; a gold altar, resplendent with many gems, was given by his Countess. This famous abbey, destroyed by the ruthless hands of the fanatical iconoclasts in 1572, was a great centre of

¹ It will be remembered that the Zuyder Zee did not exist at this time. That inland sea, which divided Friesland into two parts, was caused by a great physical convulsion in the thirteenth century.

² This must have been a work of importance in a country wholly destitute of materials for such a purpose, and where from the nature of the ground great skill was required for making secure foundations.

learning; its chronicles are most valuable, and from them much of the early history of Holland is derived.¹

The country on the west of the Schelde was under the rule of Charles the Bald, and Flanders was originally a small countship in the neighbourhood of Bruges; but it was governed by a valiant man, the celebrated Baldwin, called *Bras-de-fer*, who carried off Judith, the daughter of Charles, his sovereign, and widow of an English prince. Charles was at first furious; but, at the intercession of Pope Nicholas I., he recognised Baldwin as his son-in-law, and gave him the government of the whole country west of the Schelde, which was then called the Countship of Flanders. Baldwin governed vigorously and well, fortifying his cities Ghent and Bruges against the attacks of the dreaded Normans, and successfully drove them from his shores.

A disastrous period ensued in the history of the Netherlands, and left the country full of ruined cities, desecrated churches and monasteries, and ravaged homesteads. This desolation was caused by the inroads of the Northmen and Danes, who were the scourge of this and other countries for so many years. The fierce Vikings knew no pity, and, attracted by the wealth of the churches and monasteries, animated by a savage hatred of Christianity, the opposing force of their old Scandinavian deities, who had inspired their

¹ "Chronicon Egmundanum seu Annales Regalium Abbatum Edmundensium, auctore Johanne de Leydis," &c. (Leyden). I have found this chronicle full of materials for the early ecclesiastical history of Holland.

ancestors to deeds of glory and lived again in their war-songs and were hymned by the Scalds, they everywhere attacked the houses of God, plundered the shrines and slaughtered the priests. While valiant Baldwin lived, the blows of his iron arm struck such terror into the hearts of the Northmen that they did not attack Flanders; but during the rule of his youthful son they sailed up the rivers and committed frightful ravages. It is needless to describe the successive invasions of these ruthless devastators. During the days of Hunger, the eleventh bishop, 856 A.D., Utrecht was destroyed, in which there were said to be fifty-five parish churches. They slew all the people and nearly all the clergy. Hunger and a few canons escaped the general massacre, and fled to Lothaire, who had retired to the monastery at Prüm. He granted to the weary exiles the monastery of Mount Odilie in the Vosges Mountains, where they lived peacefully for several years. Liége, where Franco was bishop, Tongres, Cologne, Aix-la-Chapelle and the palace of the Emperor, were a prey to the flames. Hunfroi, Bishop of Théroutanne, was driven from his See and his city destroyed. He desired to retire from his bishopric, but the Pope told him "that a good pilot does not desert his vessel during the storm." S. Edmond, Bishop of Tournay, was taken prisoner by the Normans and massacred with other nobles, A.D. 860.

The monasteries especially suffered. In the diocese of Cambrai, of which Rothade was bishop, the monasteries of Géry, Condé, Mechlin, Gislain, Hautmont (re-established in the eleventh century), Sogniers (re-

established in the tenth century), and many others were utterly destroyed. In the diocese of Tournay, S. Bavon, S. Peter, Tronchiennes (soon rebuilt), Thourout (restored A.D. 1073), and all the monasteries along the Schelde and Lys, shared the same fate. Stavelot and S. Trond, in the diocese of Liége, also perished, and everywhere ruin and desolation reigned.

The conduct of Charles the Fat, who, after defeating the Normans twice, purchased a dishonourable peace, was base and pusillanimous. He gave to the Norman chieftains Sigefroy and Godfrey immense wealth, and to the latter the province of Friesland and the hand of his daughter.

Disgusted with his cowardice, the Germans revolted and chose Arnold as emperor, of the race of Charlemagne, a brave and good prince, who, aided by Franco, Bishop of Liége, defeated the Normans at Louvain, and rescued Lorraine from them for ever. In the tenth century their dreaded invasions ceased. They ended, as they began, at Utrecht, during the rule of Bishop Anfrid, A.D. 1010. The Normans defeated the Frisians and advanced on Utrecht. No resistance was offered, the gates of the city opened, and the bishop, arrayed in his episcopal vestments, attended by his clergy, went forth to meet the conquerors. Animated by esteem for the sanctity of good Bishop Anfrid, or by veneration of the See, the armed hosts of warriors retired, and infested the country no more.

The indomitable perseverance and energy of the people of the Netherlands and their patient industry, which is evident in every page of their history, were

called into play to restore the ruined cities, churches, and monasteries which the Normans had left, and it is wonderful how soon the towns arose from their ruinous heaps, and the hymns of the monks were again heard in the abbey churches. During this period the ecclesiastical power increased greatly. The bishops of Utrecht, Liége, and Tournay attained a position of high importance in the country. The Counts were strong and mighty, but they could be removed according to the pleasure of the sovereign; whereas the bishops held their possessions secure from any interference by the crown. The successors of Charlemagne vied with each other in pouring wealth and lands into the lap of the Church; and the bishops supported the royal authority, and were useful to the monarch in checking the ever-increasing power of the Counts. They possessed temporal power as well as spiritual authority; they had vassals whom they could summon for military service, and although they had not yet attained to the summit of their power, year by year their authority and their wealth were increasing. After the sack of Tournay by the Normans, its bishop never regained temporal jurisdiction, but the two great dioceses of Liége and Utrecht were amassing lands, wealth, and power. The bishops assembled at the Council of Fimes, in the diocese of Rheims, A.D. 881, told the young King Louis, the son of the Stammerer, that the dignity of bishops was greater than that of kings, because kings were consecrated by bishops.

It is evident also at this period in the history of the Netherlands, as it is in the history of all countries when

governed by weak sovereigns, that the power of the Pope increased enormously. In the times of Pépin and Charlemagne, the Papal authority was scarcely recognised by the sovereigns of the mighty empire; but during the reigns of their feeble successors that authority increased amazingly.

An example of the exercise of this power may be given. Lothaire II. sought to repudiate his wife and to marry another. He persuaded some bishops to take his side, but Pope Nicholas I. espoused the cause of the injured wife, and excommunicated the bishops who had favoured the king. The bishops of Cologne and Trèves denounced the Pope as the tyrant of Christians, and armed Louis against him. Nicholas was chased from his See, but in the end Lothaire yielded to the Pope's demands. When, however, Adrian succeeded Nicholas, the king again deserted his wife. A strange scene took place at Mont Cassin in Italy, whither Lothaire and his nobles went to meet the Pope. The sacrament was about to be administered. The Pontiff warned all who had partaken in the unpurged adultery of Lothaire to abstain from receiving the sacred elements. Some drew back in fear, but Lothaire and some of his nobles received the sacrament from the hands of the Pope. All who did so were attacked with fever on their journey homewards and died. Such is the story, a solemn warning to future emperors and kings who dared to act contrary to the Papal decrees; and although in this instance the Pope acted in the interests of justice and morality, it was a new thing for those in whose veins ran the

blood of Charlemagne to humble themselves in the presence of the Roman Pontiff.

The Belgian bishops, after the departure of the Normans, set themselves to work to rebuild their cities. Bishop Franco of Liége exhorted the people to restore the waste places; he contributed largely from his own purse, and in two years the city was almost rebuilt. In consideration of his services the Emperor Arnold gave back to the church of Liége the Abbey of Lobbe, which had been seized by the Duke of Lorraine. Zuentibold, the son and successor of Arnold, a very religious prince, gave large possessions to the church of Liége. Franco was succeeded by Bishop Stephen, a man of noble birth, piety, and learning. Abbot Trithenu, in his book on the lives of illustrious men, speaks of him as "a prelate who was greatly skilled in all knowledge, both divine and human, prudent in affairs, eloquent in his discourses, pious and edifying in his manners. He composed many works worthy of praise, amongst which were an office of the Holy Trinity as chanted in the church of Liége, and other pieces of that nature." He died A.D. 920.

The city of Utrecht was still in ruins when Radbod was bishop, who died A.D. 917. He too was a holy, learned, and high-born prelate, skilled in the seven arts, and the author of several poems in praise of Willibrord, Boniface, and Martin. He lived and died at Deventer. Baldric, his successor, the fifteenth bishop, rebuilt Utrecht, fortified it with towers and walls, and restored the ruined churches and other buildings. He died A.D. 977.

Under the able rule of the successors of the brave Baldwin, Flanders soon recovered from the Norman invasion and attained to great prosperity. Baldwin the Bald, who married Alfritha, daughter of King Alfred of England, repaired the fortifications of the towns, and became a very powerful Count. His court was very brilliant, in which twelve of the principal nobles of Flanders occupied the first rank as peers. He was not a very pious prince, and scrupled not to take possession of Church property. He seized the Abbey of S. Vaast and lands belonging to the church of Noyon. But the Church had a brave defender in the person of Foulques, Archbishop of Rheims, who summoned a Council, and sent a letter to Dodilon, Bishop of Cambrai, charging him to demand explanations from the powerful Count, and restitution of all the lands which he had so unjustly acquired. The Count refused; and by the advice of Foulques, Charles the Simple besieged Arras, and seized the monastery of S. Vaast. Baldwin was so enraged that he vowed vengeance against the Archbishop, and ultimately caused him to be assassinated. Hervée succeeded him, and his first act was to excommunicate Baldwin, which sentence of excommunication was signed by Dodolon of Cambrai, Heriland of Théroutanne, and other bishops. Terrible as the sentence was, it does not seem to have had much effect on the Count, nor reduced him to submission. After forty years' reign, he was succeeded by Arnold the Great, A.D. 918, the brave defender of the grandson of Charles the Bald, and the fearless enemy of

the French lords, who were leagued against their king. He defended himself against Otto the Great, who possessed the rest of Belgium. Nothing seemed to be able to check the growing power of the Counts of Flanders. Baldwin III., who succeeded, A.D. 958, favoured the progress of industry and commerce, and his successor, Baldwin the Bearded, was able to extend his territory across the Schelde.

In Flanders civilisation progressed rapidly, towns multiplied, and commerce extended. Bruges was at that time "marvellously famous for multitudes of merchants found there, and for the abundance which the world has of precious things." The population of the country increased rapidly, and the prosperity of Flanders was established.

In spite of the increased secular power of the bishops and the improved material condition of the Flemings, the spiritual condition of the people was at a low ebb in these times. The historian Fleury wrote that in the tenth century it was as difficult to find a true Christian as it was for Diogenes to find an honest man in the open market. Some of the more religious clergy realised fully the degenerate state of religion, and in the acts of the few Councils which were held bewailed their own shortcomings and the low moral condition of their people. At Fimes they acknowledged their negligence, their disregard of preaching; they sought honours, not virtues; they were silent about open sins. "Why do we not reform ourselves, if we cannot reform others? Mundane affairs occupy us; therefore are our towns burnt, our monasteries overthrown. We are the

cause, because we have not taught our people better. If we are not able to preach, at least we can set an example."

At the Council of Trosli, held some years later, Archbishop Hervée addressed in mournful words the assembled bishops: "Religion appears on the verge of ruin; the whole world is delivered to the evil spirit. We do not blush to confess it; it is our sins, and those of the people whom we guard, which attract on us cruel scourges. The voice of our iniquities has reached to heaven. Fornication, adultery, sacrilege, and homicide have deluged the face of the earth. Every one enjoys to the full his passions. The most powerful oppress the weak, and men are like the fishes of the sea, of which the greater devour the less. In a word, the whole order of the Church is confounded and overthrown. And we who are honoured with episcopacy—what can they not reproach us with? Alas! we bear the glorious name of bishops, and we do not fulfil the duties of it. We leave by our silence the flock of the Lord to lose itself and miss its way. We shall have a terrible account to render when at the last day the pastors will appear in the presence of the Eternal Pastor, to carry Him the profit of the talent, that is, the increase of flock which He has confided to their care. They call us pastors—how shall we dare to appear without our lambs? How can we present ourselves?"

In such pious words and mournful reflections did the more earnest of the bishops show their realisation of the degeneracy of the times, which is further

depicted in the fifteen canons which they drew up at Trosli. Amongst other scandals, they mention that lay abbots were living in monasteries and nunneries with their wives and children, their men-of-war and dogs, unable even to read. They passed four heavy maledictions on the appropriators of Church property. "May the door of heaven be closed to them! may the gates of hell be open to them! may they be excommunicated from the society of all Christians, and may dogs alone receive of their charity!" To prevent the goods of any bishop from being pillaged after death, the neighbouring bishops were exhorted to attend his funeral. They showed their adherence to the doctrines of the Western Church by protesting against the tenet of the Greek Church with regard to the Procession of the Holy Ghost.

These articles, while they reflect very clearly the errors of the times, at least show that the spirit of religion was not dead, and that amongst the more earnest bishops there was a strong desire for better things. The decrees were signed by Stephen of Cambray, Stephen of Théroutane and other bishops of the province of Rheims.

The task of restoring the fabric and the discipline of the monasteries was mainly accomplished by S. Gérard, a native of Namur, of great piety and learning. He was materially aided by Arnold the Great, Count of Flanders, and laboured with the sanction of Transmaire, Bishop of Tournay. Arnold contributed largely to the work of restoration, comparing himself in his official act to Judas Maccabæus, who re-estab-

lished the Temple which the impiety of Antiochus had destroyed. S. Gérard rebuilt the monasteries of S. Bavon at Ghent, Blandin, S. Bertin, and twelve others. Another holy man, Count Guibert of Gembloux, devoted his life and possessions to God, and founded monasteries. In A.D. 957 the famous S. Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury, driven from England by Edwin, took refuge at Blandin, and was received with affection by its abbot, Womar, and the monks, who were struck with admiration by his virtues.

Although the night was dark, and storms raged wildly around the Church, its light still burned feebly ; and men such as S. Gérard, Hervée, Arnold the Great, and others, guarded well the sacred flame, and by the mercy of God its light was not quenched.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WARS OF THE COUNTS AND THE TEMPORAL POWER OF THE HIERARCHY.

Civil wars—Ended by S. Bruno of Cologne—Duke Charles at Brussels—End of Carlovingian race—Emperor's policy in building up the power of the bishops—Degeneracy of the hierarchy—Number of vassals and slaves—Condition of Church slaves—The Liége bishopric made subject to Emperor—Bishop Richaire—Irregularities of election to bishoprics—Rathere of Liége—Count Reginald and the monks of Lobbe—Liége a seat of learning under Eracle—Bishop Notger, a warlike prelate—Expected end of the world, A.D. 1000—Calamities—Increase of wealth of Utrecht bishopric—Adelbord, the first warrior-bishop—War with Count of Holland—Degeneracy of the bishops—Possessions of the See—Wolbodon of Liége—Gérard of Cambray and early heretics—Simony of Reginald of Liége—Famine—"Peace of God"—"Tribunal of Peace"—Bishop Wazon and ecclesiastical jurisdiction—Schism at Rome—Reform of monasteries by S. Richard—Some lights in a dark age.

WE have already noticed the increased power of the Count of Flanders and the flourishing condition of the western towns. The affairs of the rest of the country which was under the sovereignty of the Emperors of Germany, and was called Lorraine, were not so prosperous. The Carlovingian family had lost the empire of Germany. Otho the Great, a prince worthy of the title, gave the dukedom of Lorraine to Conrad of Franconia, which proved an unhappy choice. The new Duke, like many of his predecessors, desired to be independent, waged war against the lords of

the province, and being worsted by them, invited the hordes of the Huns to Southern Belgium, where they committed great ravages, A.D. 954. The barbarians did not succeed in gaining the towns, and were defeated in Westphalia, where Conrad was slain. Otho gave the dukedom to S. Bruno, Archbishop of Cologne, a wise and virtuous man, who put an end to the civil wars which had so long harassed the country, defeating Reginald III. and restoring peace where anarchy prevailed. Unfortunately Bruno died young. He had divided Lorraine into two provinces, High and Low Lorraine. The latter, comprising the whole of Belgium between the Rhine and the Schelde, was the scene of war between two parties, one supported by the King of France, the other by the Emperor of Germany. The first party was composed of the friends of Reginald III., whose sons, Reginald IV. and Lambert, had fled to Paris. Reginald IV. married the daughter of Hugh Capet, who helped him in his endeavours to take Hainault, A.D. 975, which was defended by Godfrey of Ardenne, to whom the Emperor Otho II. had given the province. War was imminent, but a compromise was effected, Otho retaining the province, but granting the government to Duke Charles, the brother of the King of France.

This Duke came to reside at Brussels, where he built a fortress and held his court. The grandeur of the present capital of Belgium dates from this period. He contended with Hugh Capet for the throne of France, and was at first successful, but, A.D. 989, he was surprised and died in imprisonment. In 1005 his

son, Duke Otho, died, and with him expired the Carlovingian race. The sons of Reginald recovered their lands, Lambert taking possession of Lorraine and Reginald IV. of Mons; but Henry II. gave Lorraine to Godfrey of Ardenne; hence a new war arose. In the end Godfrey was victorious, and used his victory well in endeavouring to promote peace between the various contending parties. He earned the title of "the Pacific," and gave his niece in marriage to Reginald V., the nephew of his old enemy. Thirty years of peace ensued, which proved an immense blessing to the country distracted by so many wars. Godfrey and his brother Gothelon, Dukes of Lorraine, did not disturb the various Counts in their possessions, who strengthened themselves in their sovereignty, fighting occasionally among themselves. It is recorded as an astonishing fact that Henry, Count of Louvain, who held Brabant, with his brother Lambert III., reigned twenty-three years without quarrelling with his neighbours.

In the midst of all the wars and fightings which harassed the country during this period, the cause of religion suffered, though the power of the bishops increased enormously. In order to check the lawless Counts the Emperor lavished wealth and honours on the prelates, who lived as gallant knights and warriors instead of ministers of the Church of Christ. They loved to hunt the stag and fly their falcons rather than to follow the example of the apostles as fishers for the souls of men; to feast and revel in the banqueting hall, rather than to "feed the lambs" and care for the flock of Christ. The Emperor could always rely upon

the aid of the bishops, their vassals and men-at-arms, in his struggles with the Counts ; and they were quite willing to lend their aid in return for the wealth and privileges which the Emperor lavished upon them. They possessed enormous numbers of vassals, who were bound to rally round the episcopal standard whenever war was declared. The Abbey of Nivelles alone had 14,000 families of vassals. The bishops and powerful abbots had a large number of slaves. Church slaves enjoyed much greater privileges than those who were in the ordinary position of bondage. They could inherit goods, make wills, and plead for justice ; in days of violence, and especially during the Norman invasions, people sold themselves into slavery to the Church in order to gain protection. The Bishop of Utrecht had an enormous number of slaves. It was part of the episcopal policy to grant privileges to plebeian vassals in order to create opposition to the Counts and lords ; thus the bishops helped to build up the power of the burghers in order to place a barrier to the lawlessness of their opponents.

The appropriation of the revenues of the abbeys by powerful laymen also tended to increase the wealth of the bishops. In order to protect themselves, the abbots and monks at first appointed some one powerful noble or Count as *advocate*, who in return for a money payment guarded them from other rapacious neighbours. But the demands of the advocates were often excessive ; they regarded their office as a means for making profit, and the abbots were forced to look elsewhere for more efficient protectors. They found

them in the hierarchy of the Church. Thus in the eleventh century the Abbey of S. Trond was placed in dependence upon the bishopric of Metz. The bishops of Liége were the protectors of the abbeys of Fosses, Lobbes, Hastières, S. Rombant at Mechlin, Gembloux, and others. The bishops of Utrecht had the supremacy of the Abbey of Egmont. Thus the prelates became the temporal lords of the possessions of the monasteries. In addition to this source of power, the emperors and kings assigned to the bishoprics several countships. In the tenth and eleventh centuries Utrecht received the countships of Teisterbant, Stavelen, Drenthe, &c.; Liége received those of Huy, Brunengeruz, and others, and some of the chief abbeys were raised to the dignity of countships. Other privileges were also bestowed upon the bishoprics and ecclesiastical corporations. The right of coining money, of trading, the privileges of the chase, and the profits of the royal fisheries were some of the other advantages assigned to the hierarchy by their patrons, among whom the Emperor Otho was the chief benefactor.

As the power and wealth of the bishops increased, the occupants of the Sees were not chosen for the special qualities which would make them worthy of their high calling, but ambitious Dukes and lords strove to obtain them for their children, parents, or friends. Influence, not merit; political usefulness, not character; wealth, not learning, were the keys which opened the palace gates, and decided the election of the candidates for the office of chief pastors.

Liége was at this time the most powerful of the

Netherland bishoprics. On the death of Stephen,¹ Charles the Simple, for political purposes, appointed Richaire abbot of Stavelot, although Hilduin had been elected by both clergy and people. During his episcopacy Charles ceded Lorraine to Henry, Emperor of Germany, by treaty, A.D. 923, and the bishop became subject to that monarch. But he did not lose anything by the transfer, as the Church of Liége received from Henry and his successors a large amount of territory and the confirmation of all grants made to it by other lords and princes. Richaire was no meek-spirited prelate, as one instance will show. A lord built a castle without the consent of the bishop on land belonging to the Church of Liége. Richaire summoned his men-at-arms, marched to the spot and destroyed the new castle. He enjoyed the favour of Otho the Great, and obtained many privileges for his bishopric, and for his neighbour, Fulbert, Bishop of Cambray. He died A.D. 945.

As an instance of the strange irregularities of episcopal elections, Hugh was made Archbishop of Rheims at the age of five years; but Farabert, Bishop of Liége, persuaded Otho to summon a Council, which excommunicated the youthful prelate. During Farabert's episcopacy, which lasted until A.D. 953, Otho enriched Liége by granting to it the rich monastery of Eyck. Rathere, his successor, had a very stormy life, but seems to have been a conscientious and brave bishop. Driven from the See of Verona in Italy for reproaching the new king, Berenger II., for his crimes, he was

¹ Cf. p. 94.

appointed to Liége, where he also made powerful enemies by his brave denunciation of the vices of the age, and was again driven from his See. He found a resting-place in the Abbey of Lobbe, where he devoted himself to literary work, and wrote the "Life of S. Ursmare, Abbot of Lobbe," a book on predestination, and combated the Anthropomorphic heresy, which was prevalent at this time. He died A.D. 974.

Baldric I. succeeded in 956, and was much troubled by his uncle, Reginald III.,¹ who thought to use his relationship with the bishop as a means of gaining wealth and lands. This insolent and haughty lord began to attack the monks of Lobbe. He entered the abbey furious with rage, deposed the abbot, and set up a creature of his own, Erluin. A holy monk was one evening praying in the church; Reginald seized him, carried him into the porch, and stabbed him. After many other shameless acts, his career of crime was ended by the sword of Archbishop Bruno, as we have already narrated. The monks of Lobbe did not show much Christian mercy and forgiveness; for, on the death of their persecutor, they half-murdered his creature, Erluin, put out his eyes, and sent him to the monastery whence he came.

Eracle, forty-fifth bishop of Liége, A.D. 959, was a notable and worthy prelate, the counsellor and friend of Otho, a learned man, and great lover of *belles lettres*. He commenced to found great schools at Liége, inviting scholars from other countries to lecture therein,

¹ Cf. p. 101.

and promoted learning with great zeal. Young men flocked to the academy at Liége as to a new Athens, and it became one of the most famous in Europe. He accompanied the Emperor on his military expeditions. He greatly enriched the Abbey of Lobbe, and built a magnificent church at Publemont as a thank-offering for recovery from sickness ; after an illustrious episcopate, he died A.D. 971.¹

His successor, Notger, was a fair type of the bishops of his times. He was a famous warrior and courtier, the son of the sister of the Emperor Otho, who nominated him to the bishopric, although he was not then ordained. Gereon of Cologne consecrated him to the office, which he sought on account of the power and riches attached to it. He began his episcopacy by hanging Henry of Marlagne, a turbulent robber, with two hundred of his companions, which severity had a good effect in checking lawlessness and in producing respect for his own authority. He repaired the church of S. Lambert, his palace, and many other churches ; built the city walls, and fortified it with a moat. He obtained many privileges for Liége from his uncle, the Emperor ; rebuilt the town of Mechlin, which had been destroyed by the Normans, and founded a college of twelve canons.

Notger did not scruple to adopt strange devices in order to accomplish his objects, as the following examples will show :—On an eminence overlooking

¹ During his episcopacy the Countship of Luxembourg arose. Sigifrid obtained the title of Count of Ghurich in 960, and, by permission of Bruno, changed the title to that of Luxembourg.

Liège stood the fort of S. Michael, which commanded the town and offended the haughty bishop. He desired eagerly to obtain possession of this Naboth's vineyard. Going on a warlike expedition into Germany, he took with him the owner of the fort, who was his vassal, and his nephew Robert, provost of S. Lambert. After some days' march, he sent Robert back with secret instructions to seize the fort. On the return of the Bishop and the owner, they found the building converted into a church, and the latter did not conceal his vexation at the high-handed procedure of the Bishop; but he was compelled to assent to the arrangement, and to receive some equivalent. S. Michael's Church is now called the Church of the Holy Cross.

Another act of Notger shows his duplicity and craft. A powerful noble, Immon, son of Giselbert, occupied the fortress of Chevremont, with a garrison composed of brigands, who pillaged the country and terrified the townsfolk by their robberies. The Bishop wished to dislodge him from his stronghold; but the gates and walls were too strong, and the place almost impregnable. But all things come to him who waits. The wife of Immon bore a son, and the bishop was asked to baptize the infant. He consented joyfully, and in order to render the spectacle more imposing, he undertook to bring with him a number of monks and clergy from his diocese. On the appointed day Notger took with him a number of men-at-arms disguised as monks, and repaired to the fortress. After the baptismal rite had been duly performed, Notger informed

Immon that the fortress really belonged to the See. Immon replied very haughtily, and pointed to his guards and warriors, who showed themselves in all directions; but the bishop gave the signal, the monks' cloaks were thrown off, the men-at-arms rushed to the attack, and quickly gained possession of the place. Immon, transported with rage, cast himself from the walls of the fortress; his wife was drowned in the well of the place, and it is not known what became of the infant. Whether the lawlessness of Immon—which perhaps may have been urged as a pretext by ecclesiastical chroniclers—was a sufficient excuse for the treacherous device of the bishop, must be left to the judgment of the reader.

Aix-la-Chapelle benefited by the destruction of the fortress, for Notger applied the revenues of three churches, a chapel and oratory, which he destroyed, to that church. The son of Immon, Count of Hainault, endeavoured to avenge the death of his father, and forming a league with the Count of Flanders, besieged Liége with a powerful army. But Notger was invincible; summoning the Counts of Huy and Clermont to his aid, he defeated his foes, extracting a heavy ransom from the Count of Flanders, and from Immon's son he received the town of Thuin and 2200 pounds of silver.

To describe the numerous wars in which he was engaged, the churches he built and enriched with ornaments of gold and silver, the communities of canons which he founded, would require many pages. In spite of his warlike propensities, he is described in

the chronicles of Liége as very religious, remarkable for his learning, sagacity, and wisdom, which he used for the glory of God, the honour of his Church, and the good of the people. Certainly Liége owed much of its material prosperity to Notger, who obtained so many privileges for his episcopal city from his kinsman, the Emperor Otho II. On the death of the latter, Notger was appointed governor during the childhood of Otho III. When the young Emperor came to the throne, he showed himself a zealous protector of the Church and increased its privileges. At the instigation of Notger he granted the Countship of Cambrai to Erluin, Bishop of Cambrai. He built several churches, not with the intention of "meriting the praise of men, but in the hope of awaiting from heaven his recompense." After a brief reign he died, A.D. 1002.

Before the thousandth year of the Christian era had dawned a wild rumour was spread that the end of the world was at hand. This idea was founded on a literal translation of the passage in the Apocalypse which speaks of the dragon being unchained at the end of a thousand years. Antichrist was expected, and the last judgment was believed to be at hand. The tumults and conflicts which raged throughout Europe, "the wars and rumours of wars," seemed to fulfil the prophecy of Jesus, and the physical signs were not wanting to cause men's hearts to fail them for fear. Young and old, rich and poor, shared the popular belief. Earthquakes and shooting stars increased their terror, and a dreadful plague visited the land, carrying off half the population. None expected

to live. Other calamities speedily followed; immense floods inundated the low-lying parts of Flanders and the island of Walcheren, where thousands perished. Chaos seemed to have returned. The people were stunned by the calamities which befell them, and by the dread of future woes; but amidst the universal panic there were not wanting some devout men who raised their hands to God to avert the evils which devastated the country. But another scourge threatened the unhappy people; for these years the land was barren; then famine stalked through the country, and spared neither rich nor poor. So grievous was hunger felt, that it even made men cannibals. Such was the pitiable state of the country in the early years of the eleventh century.

But these calamities did not suppress the quarrels of the Counts nor the aggrandisements of the bishops. Possibly the expectation of the approach of the end of the world induced Ansfred, Count of Huy, to present his countship to the Church of Liège (A.D. 985) during the bishopric of Notger, who procured for Ansfred the bishopric of Utrecht. He built a monastery for girls at Thorn, near Maëstricht, and died at Utrecht, A.D. 1008.

The bishops of that See had been quietly gaining possessions and increased wealth, but as yet had not used the power of the sword, like their neighbours at Liège, to win for themselves territory and riches. But Adalbord, the nineteenth bishop, who began his episcopate A.D. 1015, was the first who waged war and led his troops to battle. His predecessors were often com-

pelled to defend themselves from the revolting Frisian, or savage Normans. Alfric and Hunger, a worthy successor of Boniface and Willibrord, had attacked the murderous Danes, and vainly endeavoured to repulse the bold Vikings; but Adalbord was the first bishop who actually waged offensive war against his neighbours. His foe was Theodore, Count of Holland, with whose race the bishops of Utrecht were often destined to cross swords. John Egmont, an old chronicler, says that the Counts of Holland were "a sword in the flanks of the bishops of Utrecht."

A vassal of the Bishop, Theodore Bavo, had endeavoured, possibly with the encouragement of his liege lord, to extend his authority within the confines of the territory of Count Theodore of Holland. The Count compelled Bavo to evacuate Bodegrave, and built and fortified Dordrecht. This was an important place, situated on an arm of the Maas, and from its strong walls the Count's men could sally forth and levy tolls on the merchant ships that sailed down the river. To this arrangement the merchants strongly objected, and petitioned the Emperor that this new exaction of the Count of Holland should be abolished, stating that all the trade with England would be stopped if the toll was continued. The Bishop of Utrecht, "with banners flying and flashing in the sunlight, and with trumpets sounding," marched against the Count, but was severely defeated. The Emperor of Germany ordered Godfrey, Duke of Lorraine, to help the bishops to drive out the aggressive Count from his fortress at Dordrecht. A kind of crusade was instituted; the bishops of Cologne

and Cambray with their forces flocked to the uplifted standard ; the Bishop of Liége, though actually dying, insisted upon joining the expedition to revenge his brother prelate and to punish the audacious spoiler of Church property. But all in vain their efforts. In the midst of the battle a terrible voice uttered the words "Fugite, fugite!" which struck terror into the hearts of the allied forces ; they fled in confusion and were utterly conquered, Godfrey being taken prisoner. So ended the first efforts of the bishops of Utrecht in military affairs ; so commenced that strong power of the Counts of Holland against which the ecclesiastical and civil powers were for centuries contending and struggling in vain to overcome.

The bishops of Utrecht had begun to exercise great temporal sway, and from this period may be traced their decline as faithful overseers of the Church of God. They possessed great property ; they enjoyed a kind of sovereignty as temporal lords of the country, and had vassals under them whose feudal service they claimed. They became jealous of their power and might, and indifferent to the duties of their sacred office. They became worldly and ambitious, and were in the habit of making armed expeditions in order to increase their power and wealth. As grand seigniors and warriors who loved the palace and the camp, they disdained to exercise their episcopal functions, and assigned their duties to suffragans. It was remarked as an extraordinary fact, that Burchard, the twenty-third bishop, who was a pious and good prelate, ordained priests and deacons with his own hand. The

prelates who presided over the See of Utrecht in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries were very different in character from the good and earnest men whose lives we have already studied.

The possessions of the See were extensive. In 722 Charles Martel had granted to the Church of Utrecht all the royal domains and privileges in and around Utrecht, with several rich estates. After the death of Gerolf, the father of the first Count of Holland, Bishop Odilbald obtained for his church from Zuentibold, Duke of Lorraine, a sixth part of the fishery at the mouth of the Rhine, and a third of all the royal tolls and customs in Kemmerland and West Friesland as far as the Texel. In 937 the Emperor Otho I. of Germany granted to Baldric the privilege of coining money, and bestowed on him the land lying between Gouda and Schoonhaven, and the tolls at Muiden on the Vecht. During the rule of Bishop Anfrid, the ancient county of Teisterband was added, and thus the boundaries of the See were brought very near to these of the Counts of Holland. Over the territories of the latter the bishops exercised spiritual jurisdiction, which was often used as a pretext for temporal sovereignty. Hence disputes frequently arose, which led to hostilities and bloodshed, and for a few acres of swampy pasture thousands of lives were sacrificed to satisfy the greed of the lordly prelates of Utrecht.

In spite of his warlike propensities, Adelbord earned great praise for his knowledge of Holy Scripture, his virtues, and regular life. He governed his diocese with great prudence; he built and consecrated the

Dome Church at Utrecht; at the dedication, the Emperor and twelve bishops were present, and with great solemnity the rite was performed in the presence of a vast concourse of people.¹ During the visit of the Emperor Henry II. in 1021, he held an assembly of his liegemen, and amongst the number of his vassals were enrolled such names as the Duke of Brabant, Duke of Gueldres, the Counts of Holland and Cleves, and many other powerful warriors. He was also engaged in some literary work, and wrote a biography of the Emperor Henry II., "who reigned only to make Christ reign in his vast empire, and was the soul of all good works," besides two treatises on the Holy Cross and on the worship of the Virgin. He died in the year 1027.

The Bishop of Liége who accompanied Adalbord in his disastrous war against the Count of Holland was Baldric II. (A.D. 1008-1018), another "fighting prelate," although not so successful as his predecessor Notger, but liberal and charitable to the poor. He gave up one of his estates for the relief and support of twenty-four poor persons. During his rule wars were incessant. Lambert the Bearded, Count of Louvain, invaded Lorraine and Liége, which Geoffrey and the Bishop defended. A great battle was fought at Stongarde, which proved most disastrous to the episcopal party. Then followed endless disputes about the countship of Loz, which Count Arnold II., having no heirs, bequeathed to the Bishop. Lambert objected to this arrangement, and endeavoured by his courtesy to

¹ This church was afterwards burnt, and rebuilt A.D. 1173.

Lutgarde, Countess of Loz, to obtain the lands and possessions. Thus endless wars ensued for scraps of land, and after ten years of feuds and strife Baldric died on the march in the expedition against the Count of Holland.

Wolbodon (A.D. 1019–1021), who succeeded Baldric, was a great contrast to his predecessors, being a peace-loving, devout man, greatly beloved by the saintly Henry II., and a helper of the poor. He is said to have despoiled his church and palace of ornaments in order to minister to their relief, and observed so closely all fasts and vigils, that even in winter he used to pray at the doors of the churches, his feet being almost petrified by frost.

In the time of the next Bishop of Liége, Durand (A.D. 1021–1026), a sect of heretics arose who did not believe in the necessity or efficacy of the sacraments, and scorned all external modes of worship. Some writers assert that Berengarius, professor of S. Martin of Tours and Archdeacon of Anger, was the founder of the sect; but this cannot be the case. Their errors differed widely from the views of Berengarius with regard to the Lord's Supper. They seem to have been a branch of the Paulicians or Manichæans, who appeared at Orleans in 1017, and were allied to the Cathari of Italy, and the Albigenses of France. They found an able opponent in Gérard de Florinis, Bishop of Cambrai and Arras (A.D. 1025), a man of learning and merit, who in dealing with heretics adopted the methods of argument and persuasion, rather than the violent and sanguinary means which

were in use in later times. He invited them to a conference, for which he prepared by proclaiming a fast for his clergy. A synod was called, and on the appointed day, Gérard, accompanied by all the abbots, priests, and monks in his diocese, proceeded to the church, bearing a book of the Gospels in his hands. The choir chanted the psalm "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered;" the sectaries were conducted to the Bishop, who questioned them with regard to their belief.

"What is your doctrine and who is your master?" asked Gérard. They replied that they were the disciples of Gandulfe, an Italian, who had taught them evangelical and apostolic doctrine. They rejected Baptism and the Lord's Supper; they denied that the churches were endowed with a greater degree of sanctity than private houses; that the orders of the ministry were of Divine institution; that acts of penance were of any avail. They said that the souls of the departed could not be benefited by masses celebrated by the living; marriages and burials were alike unprofitable; images and relics of the Saviour and His saints ought not to be adored, but veneration was due to the apostles and martyrs.

"How is it that ye glorify yourselves," asked the Bishop, "in following the doctrine of the Evangelists—ye who reject Baptism, of which Christ marked the necessity?"

"Our doctrine is not contrary to apostolic teaching," they replied. "We quit the world; we repress lust; we live by the work of our hands; we do harm

to on one, and give charity to others. Baptism is not necessary, because when conferred by a bad minister it can have no effect, because every one soon contracts fresh sins, and because in the case of unconscious infants the will, faith, and confession of others cannot profit them."

The Bishop proceeded to argue with them and to refute their errors, which they at length renounced, and from which they were absolved. The heresy spread in other parts of the country, where it did not meet such zealous opponents as Gérard. Some indeed were deceived by the errors of these ignorant but honest and docile mystics. Amidst much that was absurd in their teaching, there was much that was plausible and reasonable; and in a corrupt and superstitious age, men of piety might be attracted by the novel doctrines of these simple but mistaken men, when they beheld the corrupt lives of many of the professors of the old Catholic religion of the country.

The immense revenues of the Liége bishopric were a tempting bait for simoniacal transactions; in 1026 Reginald of Bonn gave the Emperor Conrad II. a large sum of money for the See, to which he was appointed. He, however, showed proofs of penitence, and the Pope granted him absolution, saying, "Take the government of your church, and remain in the house of God not as a mercenary merchant, but as a faithful pastor and lawful dispenser of the Church's goods." During the time of the great famine he fed 300 persons daily at Liége, and the same number at Huy, Dinant, and Fosse. No words can describe the

terrible sufferings that existed. A writer of the period says that he saw poor wretches unearthing human bodies and devouring them. They hunted each other, and attacked men on the roads on purpose to eat their bodies. Inns became man-traps, and human flesh was exposed for sale in the markets. The bishops and abbots distributed their wealth to the poor, and suffered with them; but at length God had pity on the wretched people, and the harvest of 1033 was so abundant that food once more became plentiful.

When the famine abated, a great longing for peace ensued; and following the example of the bishops of Aquitaine, Berold, Bishop of Soissons, and Guerin, of Beauvais, endeavoured to induce the Counts to swear to keep peace and justice. All consented to the movement except Gérard of Cambray, who objected on constitutional grounds; and the decree was carried and consented to with joy. They imagined that a new era of peace and good-will had dawned. No one was allowed to carry arms, nor wreck property by violence, nor avenge the blood of relations. Every Friday they were to fast on bread and water, and eat no flesh on Saturday. Those who did not keep these articles were to be excommunicated. This was called the "Peace of God."

But its promoters were too sanguine. The rules were too irksome, and the love of war too deeply seated in the hearts of the chiefs to yield to such measures of reform. The regulations were therefore modified, A.D. 1040. Peace was ordered to be observed from Wednesday to Monday in each week.

This was called the "Truce of God," and offenders were ordered to be excommunicated or exiled. The truce was again modified so as to last only from Saturday to Monday. With the same worthy object, forty years later, the Tribunal of Peace was established by Bishop Henry de Verdun of Liége, which should take cognisance of all robberies, burnings, pillages, &c. The Bishop was elected by the lords as judge of the tribunal; he sat on a throne at the door of the church of Notre-Dame-aux-Fonts, and pronounced sentence on offenders. If the accused were a freeman, he could appeal to the trial of combat, which took place in a neighbouring field, called the Bishop's meadow, the issue of the fight being interpreted as the judgment of God. None of these schemes for promotion of peace were of much avail, and the tribunal of Liége was effectual chiefly in enhancing the already vast power of that See.

Some account of Wazon, who became Bishop of Liége in 1043, must not be omitted. His tomb bore the well-deserved epitaph, "*Ante ruet mundus quam surgit Wazo secundus.*" He boldly advocated the right of an ecclesiastical court to try ecclesiastical offences in the matter of Wigére, nominated Archbishop of Ravenna, who exercised episcopal functions without being consecrated. Some contended that this man ought to be judged by the Emperor who nominated him; but Wazon declared that submission and obedience were due to that ruler in all matters which concerned the empire, but that all causes ecclesiastical should be left to the jurisdiction of the bishops. "If Wigére had erred in any matter which concerned the

state, the king should judge him; but if he sinned against the sacred canons, he ought to submit to the judgment of a tribunal of bishops." In 1046 the schism of the Popedom occurred, when three Popes, Benedict IX., Sylvester III., and John, contended for the Roman See. The Emperor Henry III. went into Italy with a powerful army to put an end to the scandal. Of this schism it is beyond the scope of this history to treat; but the King of France wished to profit by the absence of Henry, and raised an army to attack Lorraine. Wazon remonstrated with the French king, telling him that if he wished for fame, it would be much more glorious to wait for the return of the Emperor, warning him that he and his allies would resist attack, and threatening him with the judgment of God, who would demand an account for the lives of so many men slaughtered in a war so unjust. The French king abandoned his enterprise.

In spite of this service, Wazon fell into disfavour with the Emperor on account of their difference of opinion with regard to the nomination of Pope Damasus II. He was summoned to the court to defend himself for not leading his vassals to the war against the Frisians. He defended himself and said, "If Wazon did not deserve respect, his episcopal office ought to be regarded." The Emperor replied haughtily that he too was consecrated as well as a bishop. "True," replied Wazon, "but your royal unction is of this world; the power which you exercise over the body is inferior to that which I exercise over the soul." The murmurs of the courtiers arose at this bold speech; even the

bishops joined with the Emperor's party, and Wazon, finding himself alone, yielded to the torrent, casting himself at the Emperor's feet and craving pardon for his disobedience. He was readily forgiven, but the grief of mind caused by his yielding to popular opinion hastened his death, which occurred in 1047.

During the tenth and eleventh centuries the Church suffered greatly from the acts of spoliation on the part of the sovereigns. When a rich abbey became vacant, they did not hesitate to bestow it upon some layman as a reward for his services to the state or in order to secure his support. Thus the abbeys of S. Maximin and of Stavelot in the tenth century were granted to the Dukes of Lotharingia. Benefices also were in the hands of powerful families, and kings gave to their wives the endowments of rich abbeys. Thus the revenues of the Church were seized by those who ought to have been her "nursing fathers." In 862 Lothaire distributed to his faithful servants a large part of the possessions of Stavelot and Malmedy. In 1023 King Henry seized part of the property of S. Maximin, and gave it to the Lords of the Ardennes. In 1191 the monks of Echternach appealed to the Emperor to restore the lands of which his predecessor, Arnold, had acquired possession. These are a few of the instances of the rapacity of the rulers and the acts of spoliation which were of frequent occurrence.

In spite of the disorders of the times and the grave scandals which existed, the sale by auction of ecclesiastical charges, the open simony and constant strife which prevailed, the Church did not lack some faithful

men. The condition of many of the monasteries was greatly improved, and this work was chiefly accomplished in Belgium by S. Richard, who laboured vigorously for forty years, and reformed the monasteries of S. Amand, S. Bertin, S. Vaast, Malmedy, and others. He died A.D. 1046. Poppon, who became Pope under the title of Damasus II., was a disciple of S. Richard.

S. Olbert, abbot of Gemblours, was a wise and holy man, who "shone as a brilliant star in the midst of these cloudy days to lighten sinners, and to show to the just the gate of eternity." Cambrai and Arras had a good bishop named Lietbert, a disciple of S. Gérard, whose "goods were for the poor and his heart for all." He went to the Holy Land, and on his return founded the monastery of the Holy Sepulchre at Cambrai. At this time regular canons were introduced instead of the secular canons, who were attached to many of the old churches and cathedrals. In the diocese of Tournay, when Hugh was bishop, establishments of poor clerks were founded at Falempin and at other places; and several of the old houses adopted the new rule, which effected a great improvement in their condition. Baldwin V. of Flanders and his pious wife Adèle founded several religious houses, and a relative of his, S. Bruno, Bishop of Toul, who in spite of his reluctance was consecrated Pope under the title of Leo IX., was one of the first who tried to remove the grave scandals which attached themselves to the administration of the Papal See.

For 150 years there had been a long series of revolutions, crimes, and murders at Rome. The Popes were

feeble and degenerate. Sometimes two or three Popes ruled at one time, and the condition of the Papacy was corrupt and debased. Leo IX. was the first who tried to retrieve its honour and to reform abuses in the Church ; he endeavoured to enforce the celibacy of the clergy with only partial success. He died A.D. 1054. Then arose the power of Hildebrand, who was content for some years to fill the office of Archdeacon of Rome, to direct pontifical affairs, until the death of Alexander II. (A.D. 1073), when his rise to the Papal chair was fraught with weighty consequences to the whole of the Western Church.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHURCH IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY.

The Netherland bishops independent of Rome—Gradual increase of Papal power—Struggle between the Emperors and Popes—Hildebrand and Henry IV.—Bishops espouse cause of the Emperor—William of Utrecht at Council of Worms—Bishops of Utrecht and Liége excommunicated—Great assembly at Utrecht—Bishop William excommunicates Hildebrand—Death of William—Papal pretensions—Wars of the Counts and Bishops—William the Conqueror aids the Count of Holland against the Bishop of Utrecht—Civil wars—“Free Frisians”—Abbey of S. Trond—Distracted state of the country—Crusades—Enthusiasm in the Netherlands—Godfrey of Bouillon—Hollanders hold aloof—Crusades increased wealth of hierarchy—Condition of serfs improved—Power of towns increased and commerce promoted.

THE relation in which the Church of the Netherlands stood to the Papal See had hitherto been one of independence. Its bishops were never very subservient to the jurisdiction which some of the predecessors of Hildebrand ventured to claim over national churches. The Church was certainly in the time of Charlemagne subject to the supremacy of the crown; for although the bishops were elected by the clergy and people, the Emperor often interfered or nominated a person selected by himself. When the bishops became very powerful, they objected to this arrangement, and subsequently Lothaire and Charles the Bald were dethroned by the same ecclesiastical power. The ninth century has been called “the Age of Bishops,” but the period of

the eleventh and twelfth centuries was "the Age of Popes."

The gradual growth of Papal pretensions, the tracing from small beginnings to absolute sovereignty claimed by the later Popes, is an oft-told tale, and one that we shall not again narrate. As far as the Netherlands are concerned, the bishops do not seem to have acknowledged even the appellant jurisdiction of the Roman See, which Gregory the Great tried to establish in the sixth century. It is true that Boniface was a staunch upholder of the Pope, and under his presidency at the Council of Frankfort (A.D. 742) an act was passed requiring all metropolitans to receive the pallium at the hands of the Pope as a token of subjection, and to obey all his lawful commands; but beyond appealing to Rome in case of disputed elections, the Bishops do not seem to have troubled themselves about their allegiance to Rome. Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, the conqueror of the Normans, resisted strongly any Papal pretensions, and such powerful prelates as Notger, Eracle, or Adalbord were not willing to submit to any foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

The struggle between the power of the sovereign and that of the Pope lasted for centuries. We have already noticed the first instance of Papal supremacy when Nicholas I. excommunicated Lothaire, and took arms against the sovereign of Germany. John VIII. threatened to excommunicate Charles the Fat, and even claimed the right to select an Emperor. Hitherto the Bishops of Rome had to seek the sanction of the Emperor for their election, but when the sovereigns

were weak they were not consulted. Then followed the time of Papal degeneracy to which we have alluded, the partial reformation wrought by Leo IX., who was of Belgic origin,¹ the short reigns of five other Popes, two of whom were natives of Liége,² until at length Hildebrand was raised to the Papacy, the power of which he strove to make supreme.

Upon the full details of his dispute with the young Emperor, Henry IV., and of the checkered life of that unhappy monarch, we cannot now enter. It is beyond the scope of this history to narrate the base plots and haughty assumptions of Hildebrand, the feebleness of Henry, followed by flashes of courage, marred by headstrong wilfulness, all this belongs to other histories than ours, although the Netherland bishops took part in the contest, and espoused the cause of the Emperor, and not of the Pope. We shall allude only to the part which these bishops played in the strange drama.

When the Pope presumed to summon Henry to appear before him at Rome, and vindicate himself from certain charges which were alleged against him, a synod was called at Worms by the opponents of Hildebrand in support of the Emperor. At this synod, William, the aged Bishop of Utrecht, was most vehement in his orations, and by his powerful advocacy overcame all the scruples of the waverers. A unanimous resolu-

¹ His predecessor, Damasus II., was a Belgian; his original name was Poppon, and he was a disciple of S. Richard. *Cf.* p. 123.

² These were Stephen X., formerly Archdeacon of Liége, whose rule only lasted nine months, and Nicholas II., a canon of Liége, who was greatly under the influence of Hildebrand.

tion was adopted, signed by twenty-four bishops, renouncing obedience to Gregory VII., and declaring him deposed. A scornful letter was addressed to "Brother Hildebrand," setting forth his despotic government, accusing him of murder, simony, necromancy, profligacy, and of an impious profanation of the Eucharist. This epistle was sent to Rome. The thunders of the Vatican were hurled at Henry, who was declared deposed and excommunicated, and against all who had dared to support him. Bishop William of Utrecht and Henry of Verdun, Bishop of Liége, were amongst the number.

After a foolish expedition into Saxony, whereby he estranged the hearts of many of his subjects, the Emperor came to Utrecht. A great concourse of the chief men of his kingdom was assembled. Courtiers, men-at-arms, vassals, thronged the streets, and without the city countless banners waved over the tents of a vast army, the flower of German chivalry. But the averted gaze of some of his followers showed him that the dread sentence of excommunication had been pronounced against him, that, in spite of his imperial crown, he was an outlaw and placed beyond the pale of the society of Christian people.

"On Easter-day in the year 1076, surrounded by a small and anxious circle of prelates, William, Bishop of Utrecht, ascended his episcopal throne, and recited the sacred narrative which commemorates the rising of the Redeemer from the grave. But no strain of exulting gratitude followed. A fierce invective depicted in the darkest colours the character and career

of Hildebrand, and with bitter scorn the preacher denied the right of such a Pope to censure the Emperor of the West, to govern the Church, or to live in her communion. In the name of the assembled synod he then pronounced him excommunicate.

“At that moment the summons of death reached the author of this daring defiance. When the last fatal struggle convulsed his body, a yet sorer agony affected his soul. He died self-abhorred, rejecting the sympathy, the prayers, and the sacraments with which the terrified bystanders would have soothed his departing spirit. The voice of Heaven itself seemed to rise in wild concert with the cry of his tortured conscience. Thunderbolts struck down both the church in which he had abjured the Vicar of Christ and the adjacent palace in which the Emperor was residing.¹” Thus miserably perished the aged warrior-bishop of Utrecht, one of the most stalwart and loyal supporters of the Emperor Henry IV., one of the most determined opponents of Papal claims, and the implacable foe of the mighty Hildebrand.

Then followed Henry’s shameful and humiliating journey to Italy, the wanton indignities which the haughty Pope delighted to inflict on the prostrate prince, the retaliation which Henry was at length enabled to accomplish upon Hildebrand, who died in exile, A.D. 1086. His successors, Urban II. and Pascal II., carried on the same policy, the enhancement of the power of the Papacy and the chastisement of the

¹ “Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography,” by Sir James Stephen. Cf. “Essay on Hildebrand.”

Emperor. With the aid of the German bishops they tried to accomplish their purpose by intrigues and plots, instigating Henry's sons, Henry and Conrad, to rebel against their father. At length, wearied with conflict, after suffering many indignities, he was compelled to resign his throne to his son Henry V., and ended his days at Liége.

Pope Pascal did not content himself with intriguing against the Emperor, but carried on his plots against that sovereign's supporters. He urged the Count of Flanders to fight against the people of Cambray for their fidelity to the Emperor, but Henry protected his allies from the Count's attacks. Then the Pope stirred up the Count to fight against the people of Liége for assisting the Emperor; as if there was not sufficient strife in the Netherlands already without Papal sanction and approval of further contests!

The quarrels of the Emperor and Pope were not the only cause of confusion in the Church at this time. Hildebrand was determined to enforce celibacy upon the clergy, and his stringent orders created violent opposition on the part of many who had wives, and who were not aware of any precept of the Saviour or any law of the Church which forbade them from marrying. A strong anti-papal party was formed, which continued for many years; and when a See was vacant, there were often two bishops appointed, one by the Pope, and the other by the chapters and the Emperor, each contending by artifice or force of arms for the possession of the See. Thus at Cambray and Théroutanne there were several of these contests. The

canons of Cambray refused to recognise the law of celibacy, and many of the clergy retained their wives, but were forced to pay to their bishop an annual tax for the privilege.

Conrad, the successor of William of Utrecht, also supported the Emperor, and in 1085 addressed the assembly at Gerstungen in a wise and vigorous speech in favour of Henry IV. He was a great warrior-bishop and fought with the Emperor in the Italian war; he fell a victim to the sword of an assassin, A.D. 1099.

In the meantime, while the Popes and Henry were contending in arms, the flame of war continually burst forth, Counts and warrior-bishops fighting for bits of territory, and knowing no other law than the right of their own strong hands. In the north, Bishop William of Utrecht waged a perpetual warfare against the Counts of Holland. In 1045, taking advantage of a dispute between the Counts of Holland and Flanders, and perceiving the defenceless state of the country, Bishop William assembled his forces, quietly sailed down the river from Utrecht to Dordrecht, and captured that fortress together with other towns of Holland. The powerful Count Theodore IV. did not approve of the Bishop's mode of dealing with his possessions, and retaliated with vigour. With the help of Godfrey of Lorraine, he overran the territory of his ecclesiastical foe, and devastated the bishopric of Utrecht. A great flood occurred, which helped his victorious forces, and he regained his possessions. The same Theodore attended a grand tournament at Liège, and acciden-

tally wounded the brother of Herman, Archbishop of Cologne. This offended the ecclesiastical party, which was assembled in full force, and the followers of the Archbishop, together with those of the Bishop of Liége, fell upon the Hollanders and slew them. The Count contrived to escape, and took revenge by burning all the merchant-ships of Liége and Cologne, and forbidding any traffic through his territory. A confederation of bishops was formed to punish the rash offender, and the allied troops gained possession of Dordrecht, which was afterwards reconquered by Theodore, who was at length killed by a poisoned arrow. The war-loving Bishop William continued the conflict with Theodore's successor, Count Florence I. of Holland (A.D. 1049). He intrigued and fought with varied success; then waited his time, and during the rule of the infant Count Theodore V. achieved his purpose and gained possession of the whole of Holland.

After his tragic death the Hollanders desired the restoration of their rightful lord, and sought the aid of William the Conqueror of England, whose fleet attacked the Bishop's ships near Merwe and destroyed them. By the help of William the Count regained his possessions, and the Bishop was forced to retire from the property which had so unlawfully been obtained.

In other parts of the Netherlands war also raged. Flanders had become very prosperous, owing to the wise rule of the descendants of Baldwin *Bras-de-fer*. This state acquired a considerable superiority over all

other parts of the country, and was so well governed that in 1070 travellers could walk along the roads without arms and the inhabitants could leave their houses open. Baldwin the Pious furnished with men and ships his son-in-law, William of Normandy, when he conquered England, and increased his dominions by marrying his son to the famous Richelde, daughter of Reginald, and Countess of Hainault and Namur. After the death of this son troubles began. The king of France, who was nominally ruler of Flanders, appointed Richelde as governor during the minority of his son Arnold the Unhappy. To this interference on the part of the French king the people objected, and invited Robert the Frison, brother of the late Count, to rule over them. War was declared, and Robert with his brave people defeated the armies of Richelde and of France, aided by the forces of the Bishop of Liége. The unfortunate lady sold her countship to the Bishop and became his vassal. Robert became very powerful; he helped the Count of Holland to regain his possessions. About the same time the various cantons of Gueldres were united by Otho of Nassau; Louvain was joined to Brabant, and these divisions of the country remained for several centuries. The inhabitants of Friesland still maintained their independence, in spite of the frequent attempts of the Counts of Holland and the bishops of Utrecht to bring them into subjection. They would recognise no authority but that of their own national judges, who were elected by the voice of the people assembled beneath "the Trees of Upstal," their natural council-chamber.

In ecclesiastical matters they preserved their ideas of freedom. They would accept no law for the compulsory payment of tithe; they compelled their clergy to marry, on the principle that if a man has no wife he will seek the wife of another; nor would they accept any ecclesiastical decree unless it were passed by laymen as well as the clergy. They still preserved their title to the appellation "Free Frisians."

In Lorraine, disputes, strife, and bloodshed continued, and the whole province was filled with fighting. The election of the Abbot of S. Trond was the cause of fierce contests. This abbey had become exceedingly wealthy; some miracles, which were easily accepted in a superstitious age, were believed to have been wrought at the tomb of the saint. Pilgrims resorted thither in crowds, and the monks received so many donations that they built a church and monastery of royal magnificence. A hundred marks of silver were collected every Sunday, besides the offerings at the mass. This increased wealth had the usual result; discipline was relaxed; Abbot Adelard was smitten with frenzy; a conflagration arose which was regarded as a punishment, and the monastery was burnt. The monks elected Lupon as successor to Adelard; but the Bishop of Metz, in whose jurisdiction the abbey lay, appointed some one else. The former held his ground and prepared for war, but Bishop Henry of Liège, at the request of the Bishop of Metz, came with his forces to the town in which the abbey stood. The townspeople were prepared for the attack, but did not feel disposed to risk their lives and property for the good

pleasure of the abbot; so they opened their gates to admit the troops of Henry. But when the inhabitants of the neighbouring town of Brusthem, who were very envious of the wealth and prosperity which the rich abbey brought to S. Trond, saw the gates open, they rushed in together with the Bishop's troops, set fire to the houses and devastated the place. The Bishop became alarmed for his own safety and left the town in confusion. The inhabitants of S. Trond were so enraged that they resolved to avenge themselves; the flame of war was kindled, and the whole province was soon in a blaze. There was no one to interfere, as the Emperor was engaged in his own fierce contests. Moreover, Godfrey of Bouillon and the Bishop of Verdun were at war for the countship of Verdun, the right of presentation to which both claimed.

Such was the distracted state of the country, which was only slightly improved by the institution of the "Tribunal of Peace," when Peter the Hermit fired the imagination of the knights and warriors of Christendom by preaching the first Crusade for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre from the infidels. At the Council held at Clermont under Pope Urban II., he stirred the enthusiasm of the assembly. Urban, banished from Italy, where a rival Pope reigned, and wishing to be esteemed the real head of the Church, eagerly sanctioned the movement. The Crusade was proclaimed, and no country supplied braver or more enthusiastic soldiers of the Cross than the Netherlands. The Belgian nobles eagerly responded to the call; instead of fighting amongst themselves, they turned their arms

against the Saracens, and fought together side by side beneath the uplifted banner of the Cross. Godfrey of Bouillon, Duke of Lower Lorraine; Baldwin of Hainault, and Robert of Flanders, the son of Robert the Frison, were conspicuous amongst the princes of the army and performed prodigies of valour. Robert was called the "sword of the Christians," and by his side fought his warlike sister Gertrude, who feared not the hardships of the campaign. Two brothers, Lethalde and Englebert, knights of Tournay, were the first to throw themselves on the walls of the Holy City, and the valiant Godfrey and Robert followed them as they passed the walls. Godfrey was elected king of Jerusalem; but, animated by pious and reverential feeling, refused to wear a crown in that city where the King of kings had been treated as a slave. He died there, A.D. 1100, and was buried in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Bravely, too, did the knights and peasants fight in the holy war. Friesland sent her contingents of fierce warriors, who drove back the Saracens as bravely as they resisted the armed hosts of the Counts of Holland or bishops of Utrecht. The people of Holland were not fired with the same enthusiasm; they were less warlike, and loved mercantile pursuits more than their neighbours, and on account of their continual contests with the bishops of Utrecht, they did not regard the Church with very favourable eyes. At any rate, the enthusiasm was not so great as in Flanders and in the rest of Europe. Florence II., called the Fat, who was Count of Holland at this period, was of a pacific, indo-

lent disposition; under his rule Holland became very prosperous; arts and commerce flourished, and his subjects were more inclined to thrive at home than to hazard their lives in so hazardous a war.

That a wild enthusiasm and frenzied devotion inspired the hearts of the soldiers of the Cross cannot be denied; motives of policy and ambition, a savage love of fighting, craving for military glory and temporal advantages, doubtless influenced some of these hardy warriors to leave their homes and enlist beneath the banner of the Cross; but the movement was mainly a religious one, fanned by the superstitious beliefs of the age. Absolution from sin, eternal salvation, remission of penances, were some of the blessings which they believed would fall on every one who wore the Red Cross. Terrible were the crimes and fearful the miseries which accompanied the expedition, but on them we cannot enter. It will be enough to describe briefly the effect which the Crusades had upon the Church at home.

They increased largely the wealth and possessions of the hierarchy, already sufficiently rich. Before going to the Crusades, in order to raise money for their expedition, the nobles sold their estates to the bishops and abbots, who were ever ready to enlarge their dominions and increase their revenues. Godfrey of Bouillon sold his duchy to Bishop Obert of Liège for 300 marks of silver and three of gold. Baldwin of Hainault also sold his castle of Couvin to the same Bishop, on condition that his two sons should be appointed prebends. Estates were continually in the market, and were bought up by ecclesiastics. The

power of the nobles was enfeebled, their strength was wasted, and never regained its former ascendancy. By the alienation of the property they lost the basis of their power, and the Crusades struck a fatal blow at the whole feudal system.

The condition of the lower orders, and especially of the serfs, was considerably ameliorated. Those who went to the Crusades, on their return were entitled to their freedom. The slaves belonging to the nobles were sold to the abbots and bishops, and thus becoming Church slaves, improved their condition. The freemen of the towns learned to combine in order to resist the tyranny to which they had been so long subjected. They began to rely upon the central power of the sovereign, and in return for money payments received charters, privileges, and protection, while their arms were ever ready to support the central authority and to resist the tyranny of the lords. Thus public peace was secured, and respect began to be paid to authority and legislation. Counts Baldwin V. and VI. of Hainault, guided by these principles, built up the powers of the towns, and their example was followed in Brabant and Flanders.

The Crusades also furthered the progress of commerce, industry, and civilisation. They brought men into contact with other peoples, and gave them sounder ideas concerning the dignity of labour. They introduced new arts and industries. Literature, art, and science received a new impulse, which benefited society. Industries began to be regulated by legislative enactments, and contracts, written agreements, regulations

of markets, exchanges, money, rights of toll, &c., were introduced. Flanders especially began to increase in prosperity, and became the centre of the commerce in the north-west of Europe.

Thus the Crusades gave a new birth to the national life, and created a revolution the effects of which were felt in every department of social existence.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHURCH IN THE TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

Condition of the country and the Church at beginning of twelfth century—Charles the Good—His life, times, and martyrdom—S. Bernard—Cistercian monasteries in Belgium—Alexander, Bishop of Liége—Tournay and Noyon separated—Crusade—Premonstratensian order—Scandals in the Church—Heresy of Tanchelin—His imposture—Schism at Rome—Reflected in the Netherlands—Raoul, Bishop of Liége—Reforms of Lambert “le Begue”—Troubles concerning election of bishop at Liége—Martyrdom of S. Albert—Scandals at Utrecht—Rival bishops—Wilbrand—Thirteenth century an age of great men and great works—Great improvement—Crusade—Baldwin IX.—Increase of monastic orders—The Franciscans and Dominicans—Countess Jeanne of Flanders—Opposition of seculars—Dominicans opposed at University of Paris—Thomas de Cantipré—Mariolatry—Influence of the Schoolmen—Henry of Ghent, “the solemn doctor”—S. Boniface of Brussels.

AT the beginning of the twelfth century the country was still divided into numerous countships; during its progress Namur and Luxembourg were for a time united under Henry l’Aveugle, and subsequently Baldwin the Courageous ruled over Flanders, Hainault, and Namur. During this period many abbeys were founded; the wealth of the Church increased enormously, and the well-fed monks and lordly bishops thought more of their gains than of their piety and virtue.

Conspicuous among the zealous lay supporters of

the Church was Count Charles of Flanders, called "the Good." He is described by an historian as the "glory of the Church of Flanders." His history is remarkable. He was the son of King Canute of Denmark, the husband of Adèle, daughter of Robert the Frison. Canute being martyred in Denmark, the young Charles was brought to Flanders and gained the affections of Count Robert II., who gave him the countship of Amiens. When Robert died, Charles, after subduing some powerful rivals, became Count of Flanders. His glory and power excited the jealousy of the German Emperor, Henry V., who in 1124 invaded the country. Charles was completely victorious, and Henry died at Utrecht soon after his defeat. The Count was offered the imperial power and the crown of Jerusalem, but he refused both honours, loving his dear Flanders more than any other country. He made wise laws, loved justice, and promoted peace. The winter of the year 1125 was extremely severe; the country was almost covered with ice, violent rains followed, and a terrible famine set in, which caused universal distress. Charles the Good showed his noble and generous nature by taking active measures to relieve the distress. At Ypres with his own hand he distributed 7800 loaves in one day. He stopped the brewing of beer in order that more corn might be available for the supply of bread, and was very indignant with two brothers, Lambert and Bertulf, provost of the Abbey of S. Donatus, who had (to use a modern expression) established "a corner" in wheat, buying all the corn from several

monasteries and merchants, in order to store it and sell again at a raised price. Charles heard of this inhumane proceeding, and sent a councillor to examine the granaries of the brothers; he offered a good price for the corn in order to give bread to the poor, but this was refused.

The story of the lives of these men reflects the manners of their time, and also reveals the existence of a kind of *vendetta* amongst the Saxons. They were the sons of a Saxon named Erembald, who had been a serf, and served as men-at-arms under Baudrand, lord of a manor at Bruges, in a war in Germany. One dark and stormy night when accompanying his lord, he succeeded in throwing him into the Schelde. The wife of Baudrand was his accomplice, and gave her hand and treasures to the murderer of her husband. He purchased the manor-house at Bruges; his son Bertulf bought the provostship of S. Donatus dispossessing a good man named Liedbert; his other sons purchased estates, and became rich and powerful. The neighbouring lords were enraged at these upstarts and accused them of being slaves.¹ Charles was induced to make inquiries concerning their origin, and incurred their hatred, which was intensified by his action concerning their corn dealings. According to the Saxon custom, all the relations of the men espoused their quarrel.

¹ The laws relating to slavery were still severe. In 1120 a knight who married a woman of this class incurred the penalty of degradation and servitude (*Vita Caroli Boni*). After another hundred years scarcely a serf was to be found in Flanders.

Their wrath was further increased by a scene which took place at the Abbey of S. Bertin. Charles was staying there for the feast of the Epiphany, and the abbot complained to him of Lambert, who had retained for his own use the tithes due to the monastery. "Send me a messenger," exclaimed the Count; "it is my duty to defend you, and yours to pray for me." Lambert's brother, the provost of S. Donatus, was commanded to appear before the Count; he came gladly, imagining that he was invited to the banquet; but he was told that he would lose his provostship and his brother all his possessions if before evening the complaints of the abbot were not satisfied. "I swear by Baldwin, my predecessor," added Charles, "that if you provoke any new complaints, I will command you to be plunged into a cauldron of boiling water like him who robbed the poor widow."

This did not conciliate the Saxons. During the absence of Charles on an expedition with Louis VI. of France, they attempted to appropriate the property of a neighbour named Tangmar, a loyal supporter of the Count. Abominable crimes, murders, mutilations, orgies of vengeance followed. When Charles returned to Bruges in 1127, he determined to punish the guilty. A conspiracy was formed against him by Burchard and his friends. In the noble church of S. Donatus the clergy were chanting the service of Prime, and the good Count joined his voice with theirs in singing the 51st Psalm until he came to the verse, "Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Then the band of ruthless murderers rushed upon him and quickly killed him. The wretched men then raised a revolt, slew the chief men of the city, and established themselves in the citadel. For six weeks they were besieged by the barons; Louis himself marched an army against them, and after four days they were starved out. All the murderers of Charles miserably perished on the scaffold after enduring terrible tortures, and Louis treated the people of Bruges with incredible cruelty. Such was the sad story of the martyrdom of the good Count.

The Belgian Church was greatly benefited by the marvellous influence of the great S. Bernard, the re-founder of the Cistercian Order of monks. In 1098 the new Order was instituted at Citeaux (Latinised into Cisterium) by Robert de Thierry, but the fame of S. Bernard, who joined it A.D. 1113, made it so widely popular. He founded the abbey of Clairvaux,¹ of which he was the first abbot. Many monasteries of his Order were established in Belgium. In the diocese of Cambray, Vancelles and Cambron, near Mons; in that of Tournay, Marquette, Groeningen, and Wevelghen; in Namur, Villers, the mother of many others, Grand Pré near Namur, and twelve others; in Liége, Bishop Henry II. gave the abbey of Aulnes, Val-Dieu, and S. Remy, to the Order. There were eleven Cistercian communities in the diocese of Mechlin, at Louvain, Brussels and other chief towns. At Bruges the church of Furnes was devoted to the Order, and so great an effect did the followers of S. Bernard exercise that ancient quarrels and divisions

¹ Cf. Life of S. Bernard in *Acta Sanctorum*.

were healed, and both barons and serfs, young and old, flocked to hear the preaching of the new monks.

S. Bernard exercised a marvellous influence over every one. Popes, kings, and emperors, bishops and powerful barons, all yielded to the persuasions and influence of this remarkable man. During his life another schism arose at Rome, the rival Popes being Innocent II., who was supported by Bernard at the Council of Etampes and by the king of France, and Anacletus, elected by a strong clerical party. Many of the English bishops supported the latter, but King Henry II. was won over by S. Bernard. A grand assembly was held at Liége, attended by a vast concourse of bishops and abbots, where Pope Innocent met the Emperor Lothaire of Germany, who had espoused the cause of Anacletus. Again Bernard's influence prevailed; Lothaire was overcome, and casting aside his imperial dignity, humbly acted as the Pope's esquire, holding the bridle of the white steed on which Pope Innocent was mounted as he rode in the grand procession to the Church of S. Mark. The Emperor thought this a favourable opportunity for acquiring again the right of investiture which his predecessor had relinquished; but again Bernard interposed and caused him to abandon the project. Pope Innocent was established at Rome by the armed hosts of Lothaire, and ultimately the great peacemaker succeeded in healing the schism. In temporal affairs his mediation was equally effectual. He reconciled Lothaire and his rival Conrad, inducing the latter to abandon his claims. When the French king, Louis the Fat, refused to allow the French

bishops to attend the Council of Pisa in 1134, Bernard again interfered and promoted peace. To this Council, Alexander, Bishop of Liége, was summoned on a charge of simony, and was excommunicated; he died the same day. Bernard caused the separation of the dioceses of Tournay and Noyon, which had been held by one bishop. He aroused a grand enthusiasm throughout Christendom, and proclaimed another crusade against the infidels. Many gallant knights from the Netherlands flocked to the uplifted standard and fought bravely in the Holy Land. S. Bernard often traversed this country, and many miracles of healing were reported by eye-witnesses of the effect of his marvellous power. He possessed a fiery energy of soul which subdued emperors, nobles, priests, and the multitude to his purposes for the promotion of the Church of his Saviour. None could resist the noble enthusiasm which animated him, and caused him to sacrifice himself, his marvellous talents and energies, for the sake of the Church he so dearly loved, and his hymns and sermons breathe forth the deep piety and high-souled devotion for which he was so conspicuous. His influence, however, greatly strengthened the Papal power, and the Pope had ever in S. Bernard a faithful and devoted servant.

An important branch of the Augustinian Order was the Premonstratensian, founded by S. Norbert, who died in 1134. His first monastery was at Pré-montre, in Picardy, from which place the Order took its name. It spread rapidly in Belgium. Antwerp, which had been the headquarters of the impostor Tanchelin,

received the new monks, who won back the people to the faith, and several abbeys in the other dioceses were given to them.

Scandals in the Church during the twelfth century were unhappily numerous. A deplorable heresy manifested itself under the leadership of the wretch Tanchelin, who gained many followers in the northern provinces. To his views of the inefficacy of the sacraments and of ordination, he added the teaching of the most shameless immorality. He advocated "free love," seduced the women whom he attracted, and became a monster of profligacy and vice. Three thousand soldiers escorted the false prophet as he rode in royal state magnificently attired, dazzling the eyes of the simple folk by his gorgeous display of finery. He told them that he was equal to the Saviour, and ought to be recognised as God, giving his miserable dupes water to wash away the diseases of both body and soul. He extracted from them vast sums of money, and as his avarice was still unsatisfied, on one occasion he appeared before a crowd of his followers in splendid robes, and placed at his side an image of the Virgin. Holding the hand of the image, he exclaimed, "Virgin Mary, I take you to-day as my wife;" then turning to the people, he said, "See, I have espoused the Holy Virgin; it is your duty to furnish the cost of the betrothal and of the wedding." He then placed two chests, and directed the men to put their contributions into one chest and the women into the other, in order that he might know which sex had more regard for him and his spouse. The women were the more

liberal, and cast their ear-rings and bracelets into the chest.

The impostor succeeded well in Zealand, Utrecht, and in the towns of Flanders, especially at Antwerp, which, on account of the lax condition of the Church in that city, was more liable to his attack. A follower named Manassah, a locksmith, enrolled twelve companions whom he named apostles, and associated with them a female named Mary. A priest named Everwachère joined Tanchelin, who with his companions was captured by Frederick, Archbishop of Cologne, and confined in a dungeon. He contrived to effect his escape; but after preaching his impure doctrines at Bruges, he was assassinated in 1113, and his heresy died with him. S. Norbert restored a purer faith to the wretched followers of the false prophet at Antwerp, and on the pedestal of his statue were inscribed the words:—"That which Amand began, that which Eloi planted, that which Willibrord watered, that which Tanchelin destroyed, Norbert restored." A little later, at Cambray, Arras, Ivoi, Liége, and Cologne there were heretics, some of whom followed in the steps of the fanatic Tanchelin, while others held doctrines akin to the Manichæans.

The schism at Rome on the death of Pope Adrian in 1159 also added to the dissensions and scandals of the period. Pope Alexander III. received the support of the kings of England and France, who esteemed it an honour to hold the bridle of the Pontiff, while the Emperor Frederick's party at Rome elected Victor III. The divisions at Rome were reflected in the provinces,

the bishops of Flanders supporting the party of France, while the Bishop of Liége, Henry II., held with the Emperor and Pope Victor. He was succeeded by another "schismatic" bishop, Alexander II., who suffered the ecclesiastical affairs of the province to fall into a deplorable condition. When Raoul, a supporter of the rival Pope, became Bishop of Liége, he found that simony and incontinence had invaded the sanctuary, and the state of religion was at a very low ebb. A reformer arose in the person of Lambert, called *Le Begue*, or the stammerer, a man after God's own heart, who set himself to repair the disorders which disgraced the times. His reforming zeal, however, was not agreeable to the lax priests and monks, who loved their gains and their luxurious ease. Murmurs arose against him, and the malcontents complained to Bishop Raoul of Lambert's inconvenient earnestness, and to gratify his depraved clergy the Bishop confined him in the castle of Revogne, where he utilised his lonely hours by translating the Acts of the Apostles. Not content with silencing "the stammerer," they sent him to Rome to receive the censure of the Pope as a quarrelsome and senseless person. But Pope Alexander perceived the profound wisdom and earnestness of the accused; he knew too well the reason of the bitterness against him, and sent him back to Belgium with authority to preach. His death soon relieved his foes from his salutary counsels. Some have attributed to him the foundation of the Beguines,¹ which word they derive from his surname, "*le begue*;" but this

¹ Cf. p. 177.

is erroneous. The treatment he received shows the vehement opposition which any attempt at reform was bound to encounter at the hands of these mercenary priests and monks, who cared more for their worldly interests than for the welfare and purity of their Church.

Some improvement was, however, accomplished; simony did not flaunt itself so boldly; some of the base traffickers in benefices, provostships, &c., were driven out; but a new trouble arose, which caused much confusion and endless troubles. On the death of Raoul, the Chapter elected Albert of Louvain, brother of the Duke of Brabant, as Bishop of Liège; but the Emperor Henry VI. opposed the election, wishing to confer the See on Lothaire de Hoostrade. Albert appealed to Rome, while Lothaire established himself by force of arms. Pope Celestine III. supported Albert, made him a cardinal, and consecrated him Archbishop of Rheims in 1192; but Henry¹ refused to acknowledge him, and kept his favourite in possession of the See. Albert resided at Rheims in great poverty, but his existence was a constant annoyance to the Emperor. Then followed an event similar to the murder of our own Archbishop Beckett. Three German lords, at the instigation or with the connivance of Henry, visited Albert at Rheims. They pretended sympathy and friendship for him; they accompanied him riding and walking, and one day they suddenly fell upon the helpless bishop and killed him, adding insults to his lifeless body. He was canon-

¹ It was this same Emperor who detained our King Richard as a prisoner on his return from Palestine.

ised by the Pope; his murderers miserably perished; Lothaire was driven from his See, and Henry VI. profited nothing by the hateful deed which he had instigated. Indeed, the assassination of Albert was the last episode of the quarrel of investitures; at the beginning of the thirteenth century the stipulations of Pope Calixtus put an end to the dispute; the Emperor ceased to appoint to bishoprics and abbeys, and this order of procedure continued until the reigns of Charles V. and Philip II.

The enormous wealth attached to the mediæval bishoprics attracted the eager gaze of covetous princes and lords, who sought them by all manner of means for themselves, or for their favourites or relations. As at Liége, so at Utrecht scandals continually occurred, and seldom was there an election without bloodshed. On the death of Bishop Herebert in 1155, there was a division in the Chapter concerning the election of a successor, some voting for Frederick, son of Count Adolphus, and others for Herman of Cologne. The Count of Holland declared for the latter, and established him by force of arms. This kind of trouble was of frequent occurrence; and in the history of this period we find rival bishops defending themselves by spiritual and temporal powers, both parties mutually excommunicating each other, pronouncing interdicts, and craving the succour of powerful neighbouring princes, fighting, scheming, plotting, and counter-plotting, all for the sake of the power and emoluments attached to the ancient See.¹ High lineage, military

¹ "Batavia Sacra," 1st part, p. 156.

talents, statesmanship, these were the requirements for a bishop, and not learning and episcopal virtues. For example, of Bishop Wilbrand we are told "that he was *vir fortis et audacis animi*, and celebrated not as a pastor or bishop for his learning and ministerial care, but for the illustriousness of his family, and as a powerful prince and military leader." These men usually occupied themselves with political and temporal affairs; they contracted enormous debts, and, in spite of the vast income of the See, many were obliged to retire from their bishopric and take up their abode in some monastery, or retire to France, in order to recover their finances.

The thirteenth century was an age of great men and of great works. The Divine Spirit was breathed again into the decaying lifeless religion of the country. A great Christian movement was evident; Christian rulers for the most part governed the provinces; the true spirit of chivalry animated the hearts of the warriors of Christendom, and taught them to reverence the sanctity of the Church and holiness of life; above all, monasticism received a purifying and ennobling influence, which purged out much that was base and disgraceful. At this period, too, commenced that style of architecture which characterises most of the grand cathedrals of the Netherlands, witnessing to the liberality and religious earnestness of their pious founders.

The century began with a new Crusade, and, as on former occasions, the enthusiasm spread in Belgium, and inspired many to fight in the Holy War. Bald-

win IX. of Flanders took the Cross with great pomp in the Church of S. Donatus at Bruges; his two brothers, Eustace and Henry, followed his example; and his wife, Marie of Champagne, feared not the hardships of the expedition, as she fought by her husband's side. Many nobles of Flanders and Hainault flocked to the uplifted standard, and in 1202 the vast army set sail from Venice. We need not follow the course of that expedition, which sealed the fate of the gallant Baldwin, who became Emperor of Constantinople. To that precarious honour his brother succeeded. The Crusaders enriched their native churches with vast numbers of relics; and so numerous were these, that it is natural to suppose Levantine merchants and Greek traders found the traffic a lucrative one, and made the supply equal to the demand.

The increased piety of the nation prompted the spoilers of Church property to restore that which they had usurped. The reaction in favour of a due recognition of the unlawfulness of sacrilege had already set in in the twelfth century, and produced remarkable results in the thirteenth. Ecclesiastical tithes appropriated in former times by powerful laymen again became the patrimony of the Church. Ancient monasteries received again the lands of which they had been unlawfully deprived, and new monasteries were founded through the piety of Belgian Churchmen.

The Church also developed its organisation by increasing the number of archdeaconries, dividing them into deaneries, appointing ecclesiastical officers to help forward her work in the different dioceses. To this

period is assigned the appearance of vicar-generals and auxiliary bishops, who were appointed to assist the bishops; and many new parishes were created, and dioceses separated which had formerly been presided over by one prelate.

There was a great increase in the monastic orders at this time. The Order of the Holy Trinity was founded for the release of Christian prisoners in the power of the Turks. There were several houses in the Netherlands where slaves were protected, and in some cases restored to freedom, and in this work the Trinitarians joined. Count Montalembert says that "a great corruption of manners had pervaded society for a long period, caused by heresies of divers natures, and threatening the whole part. Fervour and piety were abated, which the great foundations of preceding ages, the Cistercians, the Premonstratensians, the Carthusians, had not sufficed to revivify. In the schools a dry logic too often parched the sources; a new and sovereign remedy was needed, and God, who had never forsaken His Spouse, who has sworn never to forsake her, sent her desired and needful succour." An Italian mendicant and a poor priest of Spain were the humble instruments in God's hands for the purpose of reforming society.

The introduction of the Franciscans into Belgium is remarkable. The Count of Flanders was confined as a prisoner by the king of France in the castle of Valenciennes, and was imprisoned in an iron cage. His Countess, Jeanne, the widow of Fernando of Portugal, endeavoured by every means in her power to comfort

him in his terrible confinement, and to obtain his release. Some followers of S. Francis had settled at Valenciennes, and were allowed to minister to the poor captives. The Countess frequently was enabled to communicate with her husband by their means, and by their influence with the king they subsequently obtained his release. The Count and Countess were ever grateful to the holy men for all that they had done, and on their return to Ghent founded a monastery of that Order. Bishop John of Liége also invited the Franciscans to his city in 1229; but their work was not altogether appreciated by the seculars, who fancied that their rights were being invaded. Complaints were made at the Synod of Cologne by one of the clerics, and to him Conrad of Villers replied, "And how many have you in your parish?" "Nine thousand," answered the aggrieved priest. "Oh, man of little sense," replied Conrad, "do you know that you must render an account to God for each single soul? and do you complain because you have this help given you free of cost? Go; you are not worthy of the charge which the Church has given you."

Not only in Belgium were the new Orders received with jealousy and mistrust. For a time both Orders progressed with unrivalled speed, and crowds of young men of noble birth and talents became subject to their influence; but after the death of their founders they degenerated, and the vows of poverty, purity, and discipline were seriously neglected. At the University of Paris a great dispute arose on account of the growing power of the Dominicans, and one, William of S. Amour,

wrote a work entitled "The Perils of the Last Age," which was mainly directed against the Mendicants. The book was condemned by the Pope in 1253. They did not lack champions. In France, S. Thomas Aquinas (a Dominican), Albertus Magnus, and Bonaventura (Franciscan) warmly defended them; and in Belgium, Thomas de Cantipée, the son of a follower of our King Richard, a disciple of S. Thomas, took the part of the abused monks. He wrote some biographies of saints, a hymn, and a curious book, "*Bonum Universale de Apibus*," containing some edifying histories of rather a legendary character. Amongst others, there is a "Life of Marie d'Oignies," who with her husband devoted herself to the care of the poor lepers at Welenbroeck, near Nivelles.

The Countess Jeanne of Flanders was a very religious woman, and on her husband's death took the veil. The mendicant friars increased the number of their houses and became very powerful. The citizens of Antwerp invited the Franciscans to settle amongst them, saying, "As Joseph's presence brought the blessings of Heaven on the land of Egypt, and Jacob's presence conferred a similar boon on the house of Laban, so your arrival would bring the favours of Heaven on Antwerp." Count Henry III. of Brabant and his pious wife also helped forward the movement, and improved the religious condition of the country.

There seems to have been at this time a considerable increase in the veneration paid to the Virgin Mary. We find evidences of it in the works of the great sculptors, in the hymns and other writings of the time, in

the illuminated MSS., &c. We find a new Order of monks called the Order of the Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel, who had houses at Brussels, Mechlin, Louvain, Ypres, and other places. We find it also set forth conspicuously in the theology of Bonaventura, who, in his rapturous worship of the Virgin, displays her as the ideal embodiment of purity and affection. It is well to note the time when this error began to develop.

The theology of the Netherlands was influenced by the teaching of the great schoolmen of the fourteenth century, many of whom visited the country. Albertus Magnus taught for a long time at Cologne, and as Bishop of Ratisbonne came to Antwerp in 1271 to consecrate a Dominican church; he also visited Louvain to consecrate two altars belonging to the same Order. Thomas Aquinas constantly came to Brabant, and the Netherlands had the honour of producing one schoolman who for his learning is ranked among such men as Thomas, Bonaventura, Alexander de Hales, Duns Scotus, and other distinguished scholars who added glory to the famous University of Paris. This was Henry Goethals, or Henry of Ghent, called "the Solemn Doctor" in a letter addressed to him by Pope Innocent IV. He began his career at Cologne and then migrated to the University of Paris, where, after the death of the Angelical Doctor, he presided over the theological teaching of the university. He composed a great number of works which enjoyed a high reputation, and took part in several Councils. In his conduct towards the Dominicans, who after their victory over the authorities of the university were very powerful,

he showed great tact and judgment, being strongly opposed to the monopoly of privileges which they claimed, but maintaining close friendship with the most learned of that Order. The Solemn Doctor died in 1293, and was interred under a marble tomb with great pomp in the cathedral church of Tournay.

Another holy man, S. Boniface, was born at Brussels about this period. After becoming a doctor of the University at Paris he went to Cologne, and was chosen Bishop of Lausanne, in Switzerland. After governing his diocese for ten years, he returned to his native land, and spent the last eighteen years of his life in the monastery of Cambre. He died in 1266.

Robert, Bishop of Liége, and Guy, Bishop of Cambrai, were good prelates and worthy men.¹ The former held a synod of the clergy of his diocese, chiefly for the purpose of establishing the Fête-Dieu in honour of the Blessed Sacrament. The good Bishop died before the Fête took place; but one of his clergy, James Pantaléon, Archdeacon of Liége, became Pope under the title of Urban IV., and used his influence in supporting the carrying out of the project. The festival was celebrated with great gladness at Liége, and the custom spread throughout the Church. On the death of the good Robert there were many competitors for the vacant bishopric; at length Henry of Gueldres succeeded, a man dissolute in his manners, devoted to pleasures, more of a warrior than a pastor, who brought great troubles upon the Church and people of Liége. His rivals stirred up factions and plots. A

¹ *Viri venerabiles et religiosi.*

cruel war ensued, and in 1252 the people, wearied with the troubles of that unhappy time, broke out into revolt. All classes suffered; houses were destroyed everywhere; the rich were despoiled of their goods; many were reduced to beggary, and robbery, fights, assassinations, violence, scandals, and calamities were of constant occurrence during many years of this disastrous period.

CHAPTER X.

THE POWER OF THE TOWNS.

Decline of feudal system—Rise of power of citizens—Aspect of towns—Bruges, Ghent, Ypres, Louvain, Amsterdam—Battle of Courtray—Bruges defies French king—Excommunicated—Scene at coronation of Philip of Valois—Battle of Cassel—Vengeance of French monarch—James Van Artevelde—Neutrality of Flanders proclaimed—Extortions of the Popes—James d'Oudshoorn, Bishop of Utrecht—Troubles of succession and election of bishops—Reforms of John d'Arkal, Bishop of Utrecht—Abuse of translations—Black death—Flagellants—Great schism at Rome—The Netherlanders Urbanists—People of Ghent resist tax imposed by Louis le Mal—Burghers of Bruges attempt to change course of Lys—Battle of Roosbeke—Crusade against Clementists—Bishop of Norwich in Flanders—Synod of Ghent—Persecution of Urbanists—People remain faithful—Attempts to end schism.

IN order to understand rightly the religious movements of the fourteenth century, it is necessary to study the social and political changes which occurred at the commencement of this period, and affected all Europe, and especially the Netherlands. The old order had completely changed, giving place to new. The feudal system had broken down; religious heroism, which inspired the Crusades, had died away; the power of the nobles and counts had dwindled; a new power had arisen, the power of the citizens, which acquired an importance and superiority far exceeding that which it displaced. By commerce the towns had increased enormously in wealth, population, and influence. The

rich burghers and their armies of workmen could sustain the weight of a war with France, and the battle of Courtray taught the nobles that they had now a power to deal with which could defy the authority which they had wielded so long.

It is interesting to note the aspect of some of these great cities of the Netherlands at the end of the thirteenth century, and we will first visit Bruges, the great port of all the commerce of Northern Europe. The city was full of splendour and magnificence, and still retains the evidences of its former greatness. Its position was such that it became the natural emporium of every trading community on the face of the earth. The Hanse, of which Bruges was the chief centre, extended from Novgorod to London. Russia, Bagdad, Norway, Spain, Egypt, all poured their merchandise and treasures into the Flanders city. Merchants of London, Hamburg, Cologne, Venice, Pisa, Cremona, had establishments for their commerce here. The commodious harbour of the Zwyn was crowded with vessels from the most distant seas, laden with the products of every clime. The princely luxury of the inhabitants astonished all visitors to Flanders. Gorgeous raiment and costly jewels set off the charms of the fair dames and damsels of Flanders. Sumptuous banquets, which often degenerated into orgies, drinking to excess, gambling, and immorality, were the vices bred in this school of luxury in which the wealthy burghers indulged freely.

As Bruges was the centre of commerce, Ghent was the centre of the industry of the country where thou-

sands of looms were ever busily employed manufacturing cloth from the rich fleeces procured from England. Never were the prospects of the burghers brighter or more prosperous than at this period. Stately buildings and monuments adorned the city. The inhabitants were great and powerful. The guilds had built up their power by the great force of union, and Froissart asserts that the burghers could summon an army of 80,000 men. Ypres also was a large and flourishing town; for in 1247 we find that the inhabitants petitioned the Pope to grant them more parishes on account of their population of 200,000. Poperinghe, Messines, Warneton, and Wervicq together equalled the number of the inhabitants of Ypres. Oudenarde and Ardenbourg belonged to the Hanse of London, which was a union of the principal trading guilds of Northern Europe. Louvain commenced its manufactures in 1317, and had 2400 manufactories and 44,000 inhabitants, but its prosperity was fleeting. The weavers, as in other towns, were very turbulent, and in 1378 made an insurrection against the nobles. From a window in the Hôtel de Ville they threw down thirteen magistrates of noble birth who were received by the populace below on the points of their spears. Duke Wenceslaus inflicted summary vengeance upon them; the aristocratic power was restored; thousands of artisans migrated to Holland and England, and the prosperity of Louvain speedily declined. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Brussels, Lierre, Tirlemont, Diest were all flourishing towns, and Mechlin owed its prosperity to the richest merchant of the time,

Berthout, whose family, like the Medicis of Florence, conferred great benefits on their town. Nor did the towns of Holland lag behind in the race for wealth and power. They began to maintain that maritime supremacy for which they were for centuries celebrated, and Amsterdam especially prospered.

Throughout the country the number of parish churches increased greatly, the rich merchants esteeming it an honour to give to God of the fruits of their industry. The people did not neglect their religious duties. The daily mass, the Sunday services were duly attended. All work on Sundays was forbidden. Charity and almsgiving were practised; and though superstition was mingled with their faith, religious feeling maintained its hold on the mass of the people in spite of the glaring vices of a luxurious age. Arts and letters flourished, and Brabant and Flanders rivalled each other in the art of poetry as in material prosperity and industry.

Stormy days soon tried the strength of these sturdy burghers. In 1301 the citizens of Bruges drove out the French garrison, and in the following year put to flight the flower of French chivalry at Courtray. In 1324, enraged at some high-handed act of their Count Louis, they fought against him, destroyed all the castles of the nobles in the province, and took them prisoners. Never was the power of Bruges so great. When Robert de Cassel was elected ruward on account of his insurrection against Count Louis, he was summoned to Paris to answer to the king for his conduct. This royal summons he totally defied, and Count Louis

remained a prisoner. Then ecclesiastical terrors were brought to bear on the refractory citizens, and sentences of excommunication were proclaimed at Tournay and Arras. The bishops were the obedient subjects of the French monarch, but the clergy sympathised with the popular movement. The burghers were worsted in the battle of Assenede, but as King Edward III. of England was threatening France, the French monarch made peace with the burghers in 1326 and the excommunication was taken off.

A dramatic scene took place at the coronation of Philip of Valois, which shows the waning power of the Counts. Louis of Nevers, Count of Flanders, went to the coronation at Rheims with eighty-six knights, but when his turn came to do homage, he refused to come forward, to the astonishment of the court. "Be not surprised," he said, "that I have not advanced, for the Count of Flanders was called, and not Louis of Nevers." "But are you not Count of Flanders?" asked the king. "Sire," he replied, "it is true that I bear the name, but I possess no authority. The burghers of Bruges and Ypres, of Poperinghe and Cassel, have deprived me of mine inheritance." Philip swore to return his authority, and summoned a great army, which, in spite of the stubborn resistance and bravery of the Flemings, entirely routed them at the disastrous battle of Cassel. Six thousand perished with their leader, Zannequin, and the Count was restored to his dominions. Then followed one of those hideous tales of vengeance which are frequent in mediæval history. Ten thousand victims were slaughtered in three months, and all the

shameless cruelties of the age were inflicted upon the unhappy people. The aged burgomaster of Bruges was handed over to the king of France and mercilessly tortured for days, his hands being cut off while he was suspended by the hairs of his head, until at last death ended his terrible sufferings.

The battle of Cassel taught the burghers the necessity of union. Hitherto Ghent and Bruges had been kept asunder by mutual jealousy. Then arose a remarkable man, the famous James Van Artevelde, commonly called the brewer of Ghent, and surnamed "the wise," who headed a powerful confederation of the chief towns of Flanders. He proved himself an able ally of England in the French war, and then proclaimed the neutrality of Flanders, which was recognised by both kings. This brought great prosperity to the allied towns, who thus possessed a monopoly of peace and industry. The Count struggled vainly against them, and finally lost his life on the plains of Crécy. Artevelde was appointed ruward; but the love of the populace is fickle, and he who had been their idol, who had preserved their liberties and devoted his life to their welfare, was slain by their hands in a popular rising in 1345. In spite of the death of their leader they preserved their rights, and were practically independent of all external control.

We will now glance at the ecclesiastical affairs of the northern province of Utrecht. There a great struggle was going on between the people and temporal power of the Bishop, whom they had on several occasions expelled from the city. The great exactions of the Pope for the confirmation of elections, for first-

fruits, &c., had increased enormously, and caused deplorable schisms throughout the Western Church. Utrecht was no exception to this system of extortion. James d'Oudshoorn, elected in 1321, a pious and learned man, could not obtain the confirmation of his election by the Pope without a large sum of money, which ruined his family, one of the leading ones in Holland. He died in the following year, not without suspicion of poison, and James de Sude, observing his illness, persuaded the Pope to reserve the appointment of the next bishop to the Apostolic Chamber, hoping to obtain the See for himself by the aid of his friends. The Chapter, however, elected John, baron of Bronkhorst, of an illustrious family in Gueldres. Pope John XXII. declared the election void, and the Duke of Brabant and the Count of Hainault asked the Pope to give it to John III. of Diest. The Pope was delighted to have his authority recognised; he readily granted their request, and John of Diest was placed in possession of the See by force of arms. After an inglorious career of eighteen years he died in 1341, leaving a legacy of debt to the Church.

On his decease, the Chapter was divided with regard to the appointment of a successor, the rival candidates being John of Bronkhorst and John d'Arkel. Pope Benedict XII., with an assumption of authority to which he had no right, rejected both and appointed an Italian, Nicholas de Caputiis; but he, finding that he would be obliged to reside in his diocese, resigned the See, and asked the Pope to appoint D'Arkel. The new prelate was a great warrior, but he ruled his diocese

well, and was a great contrast to many of the bishops of the time. He tried to relieve the Church from the heavy debts which his predecessors had contracted. He was learned in both sacred and profane literature, and made excellent rules for the guidance of his Church. He repressed the abuses of non-residence amongst his clergy, and of usury, and forbade any monks to preach or hear confessions, and thus to trespass on the rights of the seculars, or to take benefices without the examination and approval of the bishop. Six of his synodal letters are still preserved. He ordered the pastors to explain to the people in the vulgar tongue the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Seven Sacraments, and to administer the same without charge. If there had been a few more bishops of this character, the evils which soon threatened the Church might have been averted.

The abuse of translations was common at this time. Since the sums of money exacted by the Pope on confirmations were so enormous and so profitable to the Papal exchequer, it was found convenient frequently to translate bishops to other Sees. Thus John de Vernenburg, the forty-eighth bishop of Utrecht, was transferred to Munster in 1366; Florence de Wevelinchoven, the fiftieth bishop, was transferred in 1379; Frederick de Blanckenheim, the fifty-first bishop, was translated to Strasbourg, and all these translations were followed by great disorders. But in spite of the terrible abuses which reigned in the government of the Church, God preserved the spirit of piety in chosen souls, of whom we shall speak in the following chapter.

The terrible plague called the Black Death broke out in 1348, and was regarded by many as a judgment of God upon the disorders of the times. A profound terror seized the inhabitants. At Tournay alone 25,000 perished. The churches were crowded with people praying; the usual sounds of gaiety, of joyous dance and merry song, were hushed; old quarrels and feuds were abandoned, and gambling and vice vanished in the presence of the dread visitation. Then arose the strange sect of the Flagellants, who first appeared in Hungary and found a large body of adherents in the Netherlands. These fanatics pretended that they were the true interpreters of the Divine will, and declared that an angel had descended from heaven on the altar of S. Peter at Jerusalem in the sight of the patriarch and all the people, who chanted on their knees "Kyrie eleison," and there deposited a table of stone, similar to that given to Moses, written with the finger of God, containing a new law, that of expiation. Their discipline was of the most rigorous kind; they kept absolute silence and never slept on a bed; they swore never to take part in any war and to obey their lawful ruler. They wore long robes with a red cross on their hoods. Each day they received thirty-three stripes. During the silent watches of the night they marched in solemn procession, bearing torches and chanting litanies and hymns in honour of the Virgin. While the plague pursued its devastating course and men's hearts were touched with fear, this band of enthusiasts attracted many followers in Bruges, Tournay, and other places. High-born dames and the chief men of the

cities submitted themselves to the severe discipline of the Flagellants. But as the plague abated, their zeal became less sincere; disorders and scandals increased, and both the civil and ecclesiastical powers united in suppressing the sect. The Black Death was followed by other grievous calamities; a civil war broke out in 1356 between the Counts of Brabant and Flanders; a terrible storm burst upon the country in 1367 which caused fearful inundations, and at Bruges a great fire raged which destroyed four thousand houses.

Ecclesiastical affairs were not less stormy at the close of this fourteenth century. In 1378 the great schism at Rome broke out, which had a great effect upon the Netherlands. Two Popes contended for the throne of S. Peter, and the nations were divided into two camps. For sixty-six years the Popes had quitted the Eternal City and had resided at Avignon under the protection of the French monarchs, and generally subservient to their wishes; but at length Urban VI. was elected at Rome and strongly opposed the French cardinals. In the following year some of the cardinals elected Robert of Geneva as Pope under the title of Clement VII., who fled to Avignon. His supporters were France, Naples, Savoy, Castile and Aragon, Navarre, Scotland, and Lorraine, while England and other Christian countries supported Urban. The Netherlanders were strongly Urbanists, and at a meeting held at Ghent the clergy declared themselves very much opposed to him who was called Robert of Geneva, falsely styled Pope Clement. Count Louis le Mal, who bore no love for France, supported the Netherlanders in their attach-

ment to Urban, while the French king was enraged that those who were nominally his subjects should range themselves on the side opposed to him. It was not long before he found an opportunity for marching his army against them.

After the plague had vanished, the people were not slow in returning to their usual mode of life, and resumed the luxurious and pleasure-seeking existence which they found so congenial to their tastes. The nobles set the fashion, the people followed, and the clergy were ill-fitted to stem the tide of depravity. The hostility between the democracy of the towns and the aristocratic element was still in force. When Louis de Mal presided at a grand tournament at Ghent, to which all the knights of the neighbouring provinces were invited, he thought it a good opportunity for levying a new tax. To this the people offered vehement objection, and one loud-tongued democrat addressed them thus:—"It is not right that the goods of the people should be employed in the follies of princes for the purpose of entertaining actors and buffoons." The populace received the speech with a shout and refused to pay the tax. The Count indignantly retired to Bruges, and fanned the old flame of jealousy which existed between the rival cities. The burghers of Bruges were eager to join in any scheme of vengeance, and devised a plan of changing the course of the river Lys by cutting a canal which would make Bruges the market for the goods of Artois, and deprive Ghent of that part of its trade.

There was great excitement in the streets of Ghent

when a woman with disordered dress, returning from a pilgrimage to Notre Dame at Boulogne, rushed into the market-place and declared that she had seen five hundred Bruges workmen working day and night to change the course of the Lys. The people of Ghent were furious. The chief men met in the house of Yoens, whom they hailed as a second Artevelde. They declared the Count deposed; they marched on Bruges, wearing their white caps; but Yoens died suddenly, it was supposed by poison. They elected new leaders. Philip Van Artevelde, the son of James, a brave but inexperienced youth, was elected ruward, and had to encounter the powerful army of Charles VI. of France, who now found the opportunity he longed for. The battle of Roosebecke (1382) ended the hopes and the life of the heroic Artevelde; but Ghent held out against the whole army of the French king. Many of the other cities and towns were taken by the French and pillaged, not on account of any charge of insurrection or opposition to France, but on the plea that the inhabitants were Urbanists and not Clementists.

The Urbanists were not content to allow themselves to be thus treated by the rival faction. A religious crusade was preached against the supporters of Clement. In 1383 one Francis Ackerman drove out the French troops from Ardenbourg, and planted the banner of Urban on the citadel. Pope Urban issued a Bull which was published in England ordering all men to take up arms against the rival party. Henry Spencer, the warlike Bishop of Norwich, one of our few fighting prelates, was placed in charge of the expedition, and

all the vicars and chaplains in England were exhorted to furnish men and arms. An army formidable in numbers, but lacking good leadership, crossed over to the Netherlands to deliver the Urbanists from the Clementist Frenchmen. The expedition was not successful, the walls of Ypres offering a stubborn resistance to all attacks, and the strength of the English force was reduced considerably by this ineffectual siege. The death of Count Louis, and the treaty made by Philip the Hardy, son-in-law of his predecessor, put an end to the disastrous war in 1385.

Philip was a Clementist and his people Urbanists, but he did not attempt to force his own opinions on them, and suffered them to remain attached to the Pope of their choice. But the French bishops were not so indifferent and proceeded to excommunicate the people of Ghent and all other Urbanists. The inhabitants of Ghent were very indignant, and the clergy summoned a synod in order to consider their position. The acts of this synod have unfortunately been lost. Troubled on account of the unjust sentence which had been pronounced against them, they sent a deputation to the theologians of the great episcopal city on the banks of the Meuse, Liége, which was called the Rome of the North, in order to ask their advice. The canons of S. Lambert at Liége returned their answer to the synod, in which Duke Philip took part, pointing out the perfidious counsels of the authors of the schism, who had set up Clement in opposition to Urban, and expressing deep regret that they had found such powerful supporters.

The opinions of the theologians of Liége did not have any effect on Philip the Hardy, and the only result of the synod was the enforced payment of 60,000 francs by the people of Ghent for the liberty of holding their own views. In the meantime the Urbanists found that the doors of preferment were closed against them, and several deserted that party. Simon, Bishop of Thérouanne, was among the first to join the Clementist ranks. The people of Antwerp followed his example. A proselytising movement set in, and corruption and violence were freely used in order to gain converts. John of Bavaria, Bishop of Liége, received orders to persecute the followers of Clement. No words can describe the misery of the country brought about by this schism. A profound desolation reigned in Flanders; all village churches were closed. The people were furious when a Clementist priest tried to celebrate the Eucharist, and he was obliged to have the protection of a double line of trenches and battlements before he could accomplish his purpose. In the diocese of Liége the Urbanists could worship in peace, and many fled from Flanders to that province rather than be forced to recognise Clement. A vigorous persecution followed, and Peter de Roulers, a magistrate of Bruges, was beheaded on account of his Urbanist views. The door to wealth and honour was opened by Duke Philip to all Clementists, but persecution and death were in store for all followers of the opposite party.

The city of Ghent alone resisted openly the demands of the Duke, who found that nothing short of war and

conquest could force them to change their views. Thus Ghent became the centre of religious freedom, as it had been for years the home of political liberty. It afforded an asylum to all who were threatened on account of their opinions, and its crowded churches showed that the excommunication of the French bishops had little terror for them.

The other provinces enjoyed a freedom from persecution and remained faithful to Urban. John Serclaes, Bishop of Cambray in 1378, governed his diocese well and earned the title of "the good bishop." The Chapter of Liége refused to accept a Clementist bishop, and elected Arnould de Horner, who was confirmed by Urban and received with enthusiasm. The University of Paris endeavoured to heal the schism, and wrote to Clement begging him to end the deplorable quarrels. He died of grief in 1394. But the French cardinals elected Peter de Lune, who took the title of Benedict XIII., in spite of the opposition of the King and the University. Hence the schism continued, and though every one was wearied of the struggle, it was not ended until another century had dawned.

CHAPTER XI.

PRECURSORS OF THE REFORMATION.

Reformation movement gradual—Church reformed from within—Mystics—Succession of spiritual agencies—Beguines and Beghards—Lollards—Fratricelli—Brethren of the Free Spirit—John Ruysbrock, the “Ecstatic Doctor”—His life and teaching—His mysticism and its defects—Sad picture of the laxity of his times—Gerhard Groot—His life and preaching—Founded the Brethren of the Common Lot—Their rule and work—Florentius Radewin founded the monastery of Windesheim—School of famous preachers in Holland—Gerhard Zerbolt—Thomas-à-Kempis—His character, life, and works—Progress of the Brethren—Defended by Gerson at Council of Constance—Established printing-presses—Declined in sixteenth century—John of Goch—John Wessel—*Lux mundi*—Nominalists and Realists—Hegius—Rudolph Agricola and the famous scholars of Holland.

FROM the strife of contending Counts and war-loving prelates, from the general carelessness which characterised ecclesiastical affairs during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it is refreshing to turn to pious lives of devoted men and women who kept alive the lamp of truth in a dark and stormy period and heralded the dawn of the Reformation. As in other countries, so also in the Netherlands, the Reformation was not a movement which suddenly sprang into life in the sixteenth century; its seeds were sown long before in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries by earnest men, who, wearied with the depravity of the times and the corrupt condition of the Church, longed to restore its ancient

purity and to reform the manners of their countrymen. The movement originated in the bosom of the Church herself; it was implanted by her own faithful sons, by men of high intellectual culture, wisdom, and piety, who by their study of Holy Scripture, by their labours in teaching the young and in preaching to the people, sowed in the hearts of the nation the seed which was destined to produce so rich a harvest in after years. The Church was reformed from within far more than it was by any external influences; and happy would it have been if the hierarchy in the sixteenth century had recognised the value of truths which the more enlightened of her sons had taught, and had refrained from forcing out of the Church by their harshness and severity those who were seeking purer light and more scriptural doctrine.

Amongst the precursors of the Reformation were the Mystics, and none were so remarkable for their simple piety as those of the Netherlands. Such men as Gerard Groot, Thomas-à-Kempis, and others whose works will be referred to, are the most celebrated; and that remarkable institution called the Brethren of the Common Lot, with which their memory is connected, was the great instrument in educating the people, and preparing them for the great struggle of a later age. In the twelfth century, the breath of the Holy Spirit was felt in the heart of the Western Church; the stirrings of spiritual life began once more; and nowhere was its influence more evident than in the Netherlands. This was shown by the formation of a succession of spiritual associations, all of which aimed

at the spread of practical Christianity among the people.

First there arose the societies of Beguines and Beghards, of which the oldest was established in 1220 at Louvain. They consisted of male (Beghards) and female communities (Beguines), having separate houses, where the members lived in great simplicity, devoting themselves to visiting and relieving the sick, and supporting themselves by their own manual toil. The people loved these kind and simple benefactors, and they enjoyed the protection of the civil rulers and the sanction of several Popes. They took no life-vows, and although they lived in communities, their rule differed materially from that practised by monks and nuns. In course of time some of these establishments became large and wealthy, and especially so in Mechlin, where there were several thousand Beguines, who had a separate colony surrounded by a wall. The sisters elected a *magistra*, who presided over the community; they wore a coarse brown dress and a white veil, took their meals in common, and after joining together in prayer, spent the great part of the day in manual labour and in visiting the sick and poor. One of the sisters, who was called Martha, attended to the household wants of the community. The rule of the Beghards was very similar, but their communities were not so numerous or important as the Beguines. At Antwerp in 1300 arose the Lollards, who closely resembled the Beghards, and employed themselves in deeds of charity, visiting those who were dangerously ill, and burying the dead. The clergy did not approve

of their self-denying labours, and especially the mendicant monks were opposed to them; but they enjoyed for some time the approval of several Popes. Boniface IX. in a Bull of 1394 commended them for their charitable work, and in 1377 Gregory XI. stated that he would not hear of such obedient sons of the Church being subjected to annoyance.

But their fall was rapid. Some of them joined the fanatical Franciscans called *Fratricelli*, and launched forth virulent abuse of the Church; others became allied to the brethren of the Free Spirit, and abandoned themselves to indolence, mendicity, and vice. They held secret meetings in underground dwellings, called *Paradises*, where they put into practice their notions of innocence and primitive simplicity by free intercourse between the sexes, their preacher appearing in a state of nudity and exhorting his hearers to throw aside the restraints which the law of marriage had imposed. One of these *Paradises* was discovered at Cologne by a man who followed his wife thither, and informed the authorities, and many of the sect were burnt and drowned in the Rhine. Violent measures were taken to suppress these societies in other places, and soon the *Beghards* and *Beguines* for a time ceased to exist.

They were soon to be replaced by purer workers and a better agency. In the meantime the better sort of mysticism found an able exponent in the person of John Ruysbroek, the "Ecstatic Doctor." It was his mission to purify the mysticism of the Netherlands, and to purge it from the defects, corruptions, and excesses with which it had been associated. He

was born at a little village near Brussels, from which he took his name, A.D. 1293, and from early youth applied himself to the cultivation of piety and holy contemplation on spiritual things. He was ordained in his twenty-fourth year, and became vicar of S. Gudule, in Brussels; at the age of sixty years he was appointed prior of the monastery of Grünthal, two miles from the present capital of Belgium. He reformed the manners of the monks, and S. Severin, Rhynsberg, and Groenendael were also rescued by him from sloth and laxity of rule, which too often characterised monastic life at this time. He loved to retire into the recesses of the forest which surrounded his monastery and commune with God. The Holy Spirit seemed to guide his thoughts, which he noted on a tablet of wax, and afterwards expanded. Crowds flocked to hear the ecstatic teacher, and amongst the number came Gerhard Groot, the founder of the Brethren of the Common Lot, who was greatly influenced by the teaching of Ruysbroek. In the midst of wild and turbulent times the holy man lived a quiet uneventful life, enrapt in the contemplation of spiritual things, and recording his reflections, sometimes in Latin, sometimes in his native dialect of Brabant, for the benefit of posterity. He lived to an advanced age, and died A.D. 1381. The principal theme of his teaching was the amazing love of God for man, and how man may become one with God.¹ Man's will must be conformed to God's will; the work of God,

¹ Cf. *De Ornatu Spiritualium Nuptiarum*, one of Ruysbroek's chief works, and his *Life* by Engelhardt.

the Son, and the Holy Ghost upon man's soul is clearly brought out in his teaching. "He, the Eternal Son, is a common light, lighting every one according to his worth and want." The Holy Spirit is the constant illuminator of man's soul, leading him to hold communion with God, so that his spirit may become one spirit with God. He dwells often on the joys of the contemplative life; these are his words:—"Men of inward vision ought by contemplation to soar beyond language and distinction, and above their created natures, with a fixed and perpetual gaze and with the uncreated light. In this manner they will be transformed and made one with the light which is the object and medium of their vision. For in this contemplation a man remains free and self-possessed, in a spirituality which is above all virtue and all desert, for this is the crown and the reward which is now ours, for contemplative life is celestial life. This—the eternal repose—is the existence which has no mode, and which all deep spirits have chosen above all things. It is the dark silence, in which all loving hearts are lost."

Enrapt in such heavenly musings John Ruysbroek passed his simple life. On many points his teaching was defective; the presence of evil, the sense of sin, the need of salvation, find no place in his writings. His phantastic visions of the absorption of the human nature into the Divine by means of contemplation, retirement, and spiritual communings are a poor substitute for the practical Christianity which Holy Scripture teaches, and we are reminded of the saying

of De Wette, which certainly needs some qualification, that "all mysticism tends to a more refined species of lust, to a feasting upon feelings." But the holy life and deep spirituality of Ruysbroek had an immense influence on the age in which he lived, and raised the thoughts and aspirations of earnest men above the general worldliness of their surroundings, and paved the way for better things.

Although he loved contemplation, the holy recluse did not fail to inveigh against the depravity of his times. In burning words he rebuked the general sloth, gluttony, and debauchery of the monks—the Carthusians alone excepted. Monks and abbots don their armour and swords; they frequent not the chapel, but love to ride to the chase, and spend their time in infamous diversions. The mendicant monks pass their lives in idleness, pretending to be poor, yet amassing wealth and lands; discarding the simple coarse black and grey habit of their founders, they take to themselves fine woollen elegantly shaped clothes of varied colours; while the nuns have also cast aside their modest robes and sally forth gaily dressed, their girdles bright with silver plates and bells, and at home love to recline on costly bedsteads with embroidered cushions, pillows, and bolsters. With the priests it was just the same; most of them were eaten up with the love of riches, amassing to themselves benefices, engaging in secular business, and paying poor priests a small sum to do their work. As marriage was forbidden to the clergy, most of them had concubines, and paid a tax for the indulgence.

The bishops were also condemned for their cupidity and carelessness, although Ruysbroek acknowledges that there were some good men among them; and the Popes were included in his denunciation of existing vices, and accused of lust for wealth, worldliness, and arrogant pretensions, instead of being true *servi servorum*, as they were accustomed to style themselves. This heavy indictment against the laxity of his times shows the pious mystic in the light of a true reformer, whose burning words aroused in many hearts a desire for better things, and prepared the way for the practical workers who followed in his steps.

Amongst these, foremost stands Gerhard Groot, a disciple of Ruysbroek, a man to whom almost all the religious life in the Netherlands in the fifteenth century is owing. Deeply read in the study of the Scriptures and in the writings of the Fathers, an impressive preacher and orator, he kindled the desire for the full knowledge of the revealed Word in the hearts of the people, and founded a system of education which afterwards made Holland famous for its learning among the nations of Europe. Gerhard Groot was born at Deventer in 1340, which was a place of some importance, his father being the burgomaster of the town. He was educated in his early years at the school of his native town and at Aix-la-Chapelle, and then went to the most celebrated seminary of learning in Europe, the University of Paris. There he remained three years, and took his degree. There, too, he formed a friendship with Henry Œger, afterwards prior of the Carthusian monastery of Monckhuysen, near Arnheim, who exercised

a good influence over him. On his return from Paris, his family connections soon obtained him preferment; he was made Canon of Utrecht and of Aix; but, as his biographer, Thomas-à-Kempis, observes, "not as yet inspired by the Spirit of God, he walked along the broad ways of this world, until, through God's loving-kindness, he became changed into another man." His old college friend, Henry Æger, was the instrument in God's hands, who, by his loving admonitions, turned Gerhard's heart, and caused him to renounce the vanities which for a time he delighted in. He resigned his canonries, cast off his gay clothing and "cloak lined with the finest fur," clad himself in a long coarse garment of hair-cloth, and betook himself to the monastery at Monckhuysen, where his friend Æger was prior. There he spent his time in the study of Scripture and in exercises of deep penitence. He was ordained deacon, but declined the priesthood, saying, "I would not, for all the gold of Arabia, undertake the cure of souls even for a single night."

Having obtained a license to preach from a good Bishop of Utrecht, Florentius van Wevelinchoven, he visited all the towns and villages, preaching everywhere, exhorting the people to repentance and amendment of life. His mission somewhat resembled that of John Wesley. His voice was heard in the streets and churches of Utrecht, Deventer, Zwolle, Zutphen, Kampen, Amersfoort, Gouda, Amsterdam, Haarlem, Delft, and Leyden. He preached not in Latin, as the ordinary clergy did, but in Low Dutch, so that all could understand his utterances. Crowds flocked

everywhere to hear him ; they neglected their meals and ordinary business that they might not miss a word of his sermons, which often lasted three hours. Many were converted by his earnest preaching, and abandoned the vices which he so vehemently condemned.

Gerhard's popularity was so great that it soon excited the envy of the clergy and monks, who obtained from the reluctant Bishop of Utrecht a revocation of his license. Not wishing to agitate the people against the clergy, he yielded to the fury and malice of his enemies, and humbly said to his followers, indignant at the inhibition, "They are our superiors, and we wish, as we ought and are bound, to observe their edicts. For we seek not to hurt any, nor to excite scandal. The Lord knoweth from the beginning those that are His ; and He will call them as He pleases, without our means." Gerhard's eloquence was hushed, in spite of many a protest, but his energies were turned into another channel, and thus conferred greater good on subsequent ages.

Prevented from preaching, he turned to the work of educating the youth. He gathered together a number of young men who frequented the school at Deventer, and employed them in copying books, especially the Holy Scriptures, advising them and instructing them. The number increased rapidly ; and one of his students, named Florentius, suggested that they should live in a community and have a common fund. The plan was at once adopted ; similar associations were formed in other places, and the Brethren of the Common Lot soon became a large and important institution.

The brethren supported themselves partly by manual

toil, and partly by donations; they had a simple rule, uniformity of dress and living, constant spiritual exercises and devotional meetings, and their main object was the education of the young and the instruction of the people in practical Christianity. None of the brethren were bound by a vow; yet none were known to have deserted the brotherhood. Each house generally consisted of four priests, eight clerks, and a few laymen. All the branches met once a year at one of the principal houses, of which the chief were Deventer, Zwolle, and Hieronymusberg at Halten. The copying of the Scriptures and of the writings of the Fathers was their constant employment, and by this means they spread the knowledge of the Divine Word far and wide. In each house there was a *rubricator*, *ligator*, and a *scripturarius*. Their schools were open to all, wherein instruction was given gratuitously; and by them the foundation of that learning was laid for which Holland became so pre-eminent.

Gerhard died, as he lived, devoting his life for the good of others. The plague raged fearfully in his native town of Deventer in 1383. He hastened thither, and ministered fearlessly to the suffering people; at last he himself was smitten by the pestilence. He commended his followers to the care of Florentius, "the beloved disciple, in whom of a truth the Holy Ghost rests. Hold him in my place, and obey his counsel." Having commended his soul to Him "for whose cause he had laboured, written, and preached," after receiving the Sacrament of the Church, he passed away on the Feast of S. Bernard, 1384.

He was succeeded by Florentius Radewin, whose biography has been lovingly written by Thomas-à-Kempis, a man of great energy, noble manners, and endowed with the power of attracting and commanding others. He was not a great scholar, but his rules of Christian wisdom show sound common-sense and earnest practical piety and devotion. He extended the work of the society by founding a monastery of regular canons at Windesheim, in which undertaking he was assisted by the Bishop of Utrecht and the Duke of Gueldres. A similar one was established at Zwoll, called the monastery of Mount S. Agnes. Thus the society had two branches, one composed of those who took upon them monastic vows, like ordinary monks, the other of those who lived in communities, occupied themselves in good works, but were not bound by any life-long vow. The austerities and severe mortifications which the brethren practised seem to have shortened their lives. Florentius died after presiding over the institution sixteen years. His affectionate biographer has given us many details of his life. The numbers who flocked to him for advice were so great that he could not leave his room for hours together. His medical skill was considerable, and we read how he spent days in the fields, collecting herbs for the benefit of the poor. He used to take his turn in the kitchen with the rest of the brethren, and one day some one asked him why he undertook so menial an office, when it would be better for him to go to church and leave the cooking to some one else. Florentius replied humbly, "Ought I not rather to seek for the prayers

of others, than for my own? While I am in the kitchen, all will pray for me, and I hope that I shall obtain more benefit from the prayers of those who are in the Church than if I were to pray alone for myself."

The efforts of the brethren were soon rewarded, and the religious condition of the people improved greatly. Thomas-à-Kempis tells us that a famous school of preachers arose in Holland, who, fired by the example and teaching of Gerhard and Florentius, kindled the dying embers of religion in the heart of the people. At Utrecht laboured Wermbold, confessor to the convent of S. Cecilia; at Amersfoort, William Hendrickzoon, the founder of the regular canons in that place; at Zwoll, Henry Gronde, confessor of the Beguines;¹ at Haarlem, Hugo Aurifaber; at Amsterdam, Giesebert Dou; at Medenblik, a priest named Paul; and Deric Gruter at Doesbrouch.

The brethren also produced some remarkable preachers, of whom we may mention John Gronde, a native of Ootmarsum; he laboured chiefly at Amsterdam and Deventer; his sermons often lasted six hours, and his voice was so powerful, that it is recorded it filled the great church at Deventer. Also John Brinkerinck, the confessor of the sisters at Deventer, was celebrated as a powerful preacher. "He was once preaching on the Circumcision," says Thomas-à-Kempis, "and treating most pleasantly and sweetly the name of Jesus. At length he condescended to rebuke the

¹ "This convent," says Neale, "was the first reformed, and was the only one in that part of the country that was not notoriously and shamefully irregular."

irreverence and familiarity with which some foolish men of this world treated the name of Jesus. "Why," said he, "there are some who say, with a contemptuous sneer, 'Oho! Jesus the God of the Béguines!' Fools and miserable men! Jesus the God of the Béguines? Then, pray, who is your God? Truly it is the devil. Woe to you who have the devil in your mouths oftener than Jesus: He is too lowly and despised for you." Thus speedily he gladdened the lovers of Jesus, and confounded his deriders according to their deserts. The Beguinage flourished under his care, and he built a new convent. He died A.D. 1419.

Amongst others we may mention Gerhard Zerbolt, called also Gerhard of Zütphen, who was a great book-lover, and encouraged the brethren in their work of collecting and copying books. He furthered the cause of reformation by publishing a treatise upon the utility of reading the Bible in the mother tongue. "What sensible man will dare to say that the laity sin when they use Scripture for the purpose for which God gave it, viz., to teach them to discover, and heartily to repent and forsake their sins? The laity cannot with justice be excluded from this benefit and divine consolation, which imparts life and nourishment to the soul." He strongly advocated also the use of the mother tongue in prayer. Thus he anticipated the opinions of Luther by 130 years, and by his advocacy considerably advanced the cause of reformation.

But of all the brethren the name most honoured and widest known is that of Thomas-à-Kempis, the biographer of his associates, the reputed author of a

work which, next to the Bible, has probably been read more than any other, and has deepened the spiritual life and brought comfort to all its readers. The "Imitation" has been translated into the languages of almost every Christian nation, into English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Bohemian, Hungarian, and even the Turk, Arab, and Modern Greek can read in their own tongue the work of the holy monk of Holland. It was his mission to develop the inward and reflective life of the community, to produce the sweet flowers which bloom in solitude and contemplation, rather than to continue the active and practical work in which most of the brethren were engaged. His life was uneventful. Born in 1380, educated at the famous school at Deventer, he soon became acquainted with Florentius, and became an inmate of the brother-house, where he remained seven years. In his Life of that holy man, several passages occur which show his own piety and modesty. His affection and reverence for Florentius were immense. "Whenever I saw my good master Florentius standing in the choir, I was so awed in his presence by his venerable aspect, that I never dared to speak a word. On one occasion I stood close to him, and he turned to me, and sang from the same book. He even put his hand upon my shoulder, and then I stood as if rooted to the spot, afraid even to stir, so amazed was I at the honour done to me."

We cannot dwell on these simple and touching incidents which so clearly reveal the character of Thomas. At the suggestion of his friend, he entered the monastery of S. Agnes, near Zwoll, which had been recently

founded in connection with the brethren, and there he spent the rest of his life, which was prolonged to his ninety-second year. The transcription of books was his great delight, and he was most skilful in the arts of illuminating and writing. There is a Bible extant, in four volumes, which occupied him forty-two years, and bears this epigraph—"Finished and completed by the hands of Brother Thomas-à-Kempis." He also copied a missal and several works of S. Bernard. He was never idle; *otio, ut rei pestilentissimæ, nunquam indulsit*, was said of him. Besides transcribing, he wrote "The Valley of Lilies," "The Book of the Three Tabernacles," "Sermons to the Novices," and his immortal work, "The Imitation of Christ." How far this last was an original work, we cannot now discuss.¹ It had been the custom of many of the brethren to collect maxims and sayings for the guidance of the spiritual life. These and the traditional sayings of pious mystics were, I believe, woven by Thomas into a complete work. They were endowed with new life by the genius and devotion of the monk of S. Agnes, and have ever been a treasure-house of holy thought—a consolation for succeeding generations of Christians.

At this period of its history, the institute was remarkably prosperous and successful. It excited the opposition of the mendicant monks and the clergy who were not connected with the brethren. At the Council

¹ Neale, in his "History of the Church of Holland," gives six reasons against assigning the authorship to Thomas, which do not seem to be conclusive. He asserts that almost all modern ecclesiastical scholars agree with him; but the German historian Ullmann has not the "least doubt that the work proceeded from Thomas and from no one else."

of Constance, one Matthew Grabow accused them of heresy and rebellion against the Church ; but they were warmly defended by Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris, and their accuser was condemned for the doctrines expressed in his memorial against the brethren. They received the approval of the Pope, Martin V. ; and afterwards in 1437 Pope Eugene IV. and Sixtus IV. in 1474 recognised their good work. Their houses increased : in addition to those already mentioned, establishments were formed at Amersfoort, Horn, Delft, Hattem, Herzogenbusch, Groeningen, Gouda, Harderwijk, Utrecht, Brussels, Antwerp, Louvain, Ghent, Grammont, Nimwegen and Doesburg. They extended their work into Germany, Italy, and Portugal. Their schools educated an enormous number of scholars ; at Herzogenbusch there were as many as 1200 youths.

When printing was invented the brethren at once recognised its value in enabling them to multiply copies of the Scriptures and theological works. They procured printing-presses, and established them at Gouda, Louvain, Herzogenbusch, and at several other brother-houses. Some of the early specimens of printed works published by the brethren are much valued by collectors.

But the period of the decline and fall of the institution, which had conferred such benefits on the age, was at hand. In the sixteenth century it rapidly declined. It had prepared the way for the Reformation ; it was absorbed and lost in the mighty flood which overwhelmed the land when the Reformation came. No inward corruption brought about their decline ; no actual external assaults accomplished their

destruction. Their work had been done, and they passed away, leaving the task of educating and improving the moral condition of the people to other agencies. The general spread of knowledge and the great intellectual development of the age soon put into the shade the humbler efforts of the brethren; their printed books were but a small fraction of the numbers which were issued from the numerous presses established in Holland and Germany; and when the Reformation actually arrived, they were forced to espouse one side or the other. The Inquisition compelled some to declare themselves hostile to the opinions of the reformers, and to become regular monks; some embraced the principles of the Reformation, and their houses were dissolved. Luther speaks in words of highest praise of the brethren who existed in Germany, and secured protection for them from the burgomaster of Hurford on the ground that "they were the first to bring the Gospel to you and to teach and hold the pure Word. Such monasteries and brother-houses please me beyond measure." Again he says, "Your dress and your commendable usages do not injure the Gospel, but are rather of advantage to it, assailed as in these days it is by the reckless and unbridled spirits who know only how to destroy, but not to build up." A few of the brother-houses lingered on to the seventeenth century, the mournful ruins of the once vigorous institution.

Amongst the precursors of the Reformation in the Netherlands two theologians stand pre-eminent, John of Goch and John Wessel, who were both connected with the Brethren of the Common Lot. John of Goch

was born at the beginning of the fifteenth century in the Duchy of Cleves, and spent the greater part of his life at Mechlin, where he founded a priory of female canons in 1451 called Tabor, which became a large and flourishing convent. Here he lived as rector for twenty-four years, and died A.D. 1475. That is all we know about the life of Goch, but his writings were numerous, and by them he paved the way for the actual Reformers. One of them, Matthias Flacius, in his "Catalogue of the Witnesses to the Truth Prior to the Reformation" (Basle, 1556), thus speaks of him: "John Goch, a priest at Mechlin, flourished about 110 years ago. Upon the article of justification through grace, he held perfectly correct views, as he did on many other subjects. He maintained that the writings of Thomas, Albert, and other sophists, being derived from the muddy fountains of the philosophers, obscured the truth, contradicted canonical doctrine, and bore traces of the Pelagian heresy. The writings of the modern theologians, especially of the mendicant orders, were destitute of any solid foundation. We ought to follow Scripture, and to it must be subjected the decrees of Popes and Councils. Christianity has degenerated into Judaism and Pharisaism." Cave, in his "Historia Literaria," speaks of him as one of the most learned and evangelically enlightened men of his age, and as an excellent pioneer in the cause of Christian liberty. Foppens, a Roman Catholic writer, calls him "a friend of Wessel, a priest of some learning, but fond of innovation, and who preached, to a sickening extent, the necessity of a reformation in the Church. He also

wrote to the same effect, and the Tridentine Fathers have therefore condemned his works." At the Council of Trent Goch's works were placed amongst the prohibited books.

Perhaps the greatest of the precursors of the Reformation was John Wessel, a Frieslander, born at Groeningen, A.D. 1419, who possessed the natural independence and love of freedom characteristic of his race. He was named by his friends *Lux mundi*, and by his opponents *Magister contradictionum*. His youth was passed at Zwoll in the school of the Brethren of the Common Lot, where he was brought under the influence of Thomas-à-Kempis. He differed greatly in character from his teacher, and early manifested an inquiring, self-reliant spirit, which refused to accept anything about the truth of which he was not convinced. When Thomas was urging him to revere the Blessed Virgin, he replied, "Father, why do you not rather lead me to Christ, who so graciously invites those who labour and are heavy laden to come unto Him?" After remaining some years at Zwoll, he thirsted for knowledge, and went to the University at Cologne. Here he encountered the hard features of scholastic dogmatism and intolerant hatred of all reform in matters religious or intellectual. After taking his degree he became one of those roving students of the Middle Ages who wandered from one seat of learning to another, now a student, now a teacher, acquiring learning and knowledge wherever he went. Paris, Rome, Heidelberg, Louvain, and several others were visited by Wessel, who took an

active part in all the intellectual disputes which agitated the minds of the learned in those times.

At Paris the great contest was raging between the Nominalists and Realists, a contest which arose concerning certain metaphysical speculations as to whether so-called universals possessed actual objective existence, or were simply abstractions or mere words used to express man's thoughts. It is beyond our province to follow the various stages of the controversy which arose concerning the application of these principles to theological speculation. Let it suffice to say that until the fifteenth century the Realists held the upper hand, and means were adopted to suppress Nominalism; but in the end the latter triumphed, and marched shoulder to shoulder with the Reformation movement.

Wessel came to Paris imbued with Realistic notions, and, as a new champion of the cause, to convert two of his countrymen who were professors of the university at that time. He says, "This was unquestionably high presumption on my part. But having learned, in my encounter with abler men, to feel my own weakness, before the lapse of three months, I renounced my opinions." His mind was far from being a bigoted or intolerant one; for after having adopted the views which he came to oppose, he says, "I will candidly confess that were I persuaded of their doctrine being in any point contrary to the faith, I would even now be ready to recede, and once more join the Realists." In his religious views Wessel clung resolutely to the rock of Holy Scripture. The decrees

even of the Pope were not binding upon Christians unless they were in accordance with the revealed Word of God. Indulgences and the Roman doctrine of Purgatory he opposed strenuously.

His learning earned for him a great reputation, and he was a friend of Pope Sixtus IV., whom he had known as the Franciscan monk, Francis de Rovere. When the latter was raised to the Papacy, Wessel was at Rome, and was invited to ask a favour of the Pontiff. He replied, "Holy Father, you are aware that I have never aspired to great things. I desire that you may so administer your office, that when the Good Shepherd shall appear, He may say, 'Good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'" When pressed to name some gift which he desired, he asked for a Greek and Hebrew Bible from the Vatican Library. The Pope asked him why he had not requested a bishopric. "Because," said Wessel, "of that I have no need." This Bible was preserved for many years at the monastery at Groeningen, where he spent the remaining years of his life, devoting himself to theological study. His influence was immense, and the ablest Dutch scholars of his age, who made their country famous for learning and scholarship, were his friends or pupils. Amongst these were Alexander Hegius, one of the six celebrated scholars to whom the Netherlands are indebted for the revival of ancient literature, and who was then a teacher of the important school at Deventer; Rudolph Agricola, an accomplished student of classical scholarship, who succeeded Wessel as teacher at the University of Heidelberg, and founded

the famous library there; John Reuchlin, Hermann Torrentius, and Goswin, his most intimate pupil, who has preserved many incidents of his master's life. These he communicated to Melancthon, and they are recorded in "Melancthon's Declamations," which were really written by a pupil of the great reformer, one John Saxe, a Frieslander. Many others might be named of the friends of Wessel who were influenced by his teaching and disseminated his opinions far and wide.

The persecutions which attacked John of Wesel, his contemporary in Germany, at one time threatened him also, and he thought that "the flames already blazing" might soon envelope him; but the protection of his powerful friend David, Bishop of Utrecht, saved him from attack. He ended his days in peace at Groeningen, leaving behind him the memory of a brave man who had the courage of his opinions, who saw the abuses and clerical neglect of his time, and by his life and work laid the foundations of the Reformation.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHURCH IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Reign of the House of Burgundy—Character and craft of Philip “the Good”—Ecclesiastical troubles and degeneracy—John of Bavaria, Bishop of Liége, called “the Pitiless”—His wickedness and cruelty—Indulgences—Walenrode—Dissensions at Utrecht—Encroachments of Rome on privileges of the Chapter—Conduct of Bishop Swedérus—Victory of Rodolphe—Foundation of University of Louvain—Church architecture—Painting—Van Eyck—Roger Van der Weyden—Memlin—Rebellion of Ghent—Charles the Bold—Decline of the temporal power of the Church—David, Bishop of Utrecht—His despotic government and revolt of his people—His services to the Church and to literature—John of Heinsberg, Bishop of Liége—Conquered by Philip and resigns his See to Philip’s nephew—Revolt of Liége—Dinant “pacified”—Liége conquered—“Wild boar of the Ardennes”—Carthusians—Rule of the House of Austria—Revival of prosperity—Foundation of schools for poor scholars by John Standonck.

IN the fifteenth century, the civil history of the Netherlands enters upon a new phase, and the whole country is united under the sole sovereignty of the House of Burgundy. In 1384, Philip of Burgundy, son-in-law of the French king, Louis le Mal, became Count of Flanders, and made peace with the people of Ghent. A few years later he inherited the Duchy of Brabant in right of his wife, and ruled his possessions with wisdom, showing careful regard for the liberties and privileges of the proud burghers of Bruges and Ghent. On his death, his son, John the Fearless, became Count of Flanders, and his brother, Anthony,

Duke of Brabant, who occupied themselves with French wars and left the country to take care of itself. On the death of Anthony at the battle of Agincourt, John, nephew of "the Fearless," became Duke of Brabant and married the unfortunate Jacqueline, daughter and heiress of William IV., Count of Holland and Hainault.¹ Thus three of the most prosperous provinces of the Netherlands were united under the rule of one branch of the House of Burgundy, while Flanders, Artois, and the two Burgundies passed into the possession of the other branch of the same powerful family. John the Fearless was murdered, and his son Philip, who very unworthily bore the title of "the Good," entered upon his father's possessions, and by consummate craft and shameless deceit acquired the sovereignty of the whole of the Netherlands, with the exception of Friesland, Gueldres, and the bishoprics of Utrecht and Liége. By fanning the feelings of rivalry which existed between the powerful burghers of Ghent and Bruges, he succeeded in reducing both towns to submission, and craftily contrived to control the conflicting elements which composed his sovereignty. Although he trampled upon the liberties of the people, Philip was wise enough

¹ The old line of the Counts of Holland, which had lasted nearly 400 years, had passed away, and in 1299 the Countship with that of Zealand fell to the House of Avennes, Counts of Hainault, of which John II. was the representative. He was succeeded by William the Good, at whose court the friendless queen of our Edward II. found shelter, and whose daughter was married to Edward III. His son, William II., died childless (1345), and the two countships passed into the House of Bavaria, of which William, the son of the sister of William II., was the representative. His brother Albert succeeded, and then followed Albert's son, William, who married the daughter of Philip the Bold, and died A. D. 1417. Jacqueline was the daughter of this union.

to protect their commerce and manufactures, and showed considerable administrative capacity. He loved luxury and splendour, and his example led the rich and prosperous burghers into habits of extravagance and a parade of wealth. Increased riches produced vice and crime, and it is said that in one year in the city of Ghent there were no less than 1400 murders in gambling houses and other resorts of debauchery.

The condition of ecclesiastical affairs under the rule of the House of Burgundy grew worse and worse; court favour was the only road to a benefice, and the clergy fell into disrepute. The unepiscopal characters of the bishops of the period is abundantly evinced by the chronicles of Utrecht and of Liége; the See of Cambrai was alone fortunate in having John T. Serclaes, who, in contrast to his brethren, was called the Good Bishop. In 1400 there were troubles everywhere; the great schism still continued, Boniface IX. succeeding Urban VI. at Rome, and Benedict XIII. replacing the anti-Pope Clement VII. at Avignon; all Papal authority was weakened if not destroyed, and the Church was in a deplorable condition.

At Liége, John of Bavaria, the son of Albert, the Count of Holland and Hainault, was nominated to the bishopric. He was neither ordained nor consecrated, yet he held the See twenty-eight years, and by his barbarous and merciless conduct earned the title of "the Pitiless." Wars, ravagings, oppression, exactions, vindictive punishments, seem to have been his chief delight. Some of the nobles remonstrated with him, telling him that he ought to be a better

pastor to his people and to lead them kindly rather than to rule them with an iron hand. At last in 1406 the people revolted, and Thierry, the son of Henry of Horn, was invited to become Bishop of Liége. War was declared; in Liége great excitement prevailed; some of the nobles, canons, and sheriffs, refusing to acknowledge Thierry, were obliged to fly from the city. For two years hostilities continued, until at last the bishop by the aid of the Duke of Burgundy gained a decisive victory over his subjects at Othée, when 14,000 citizens of Liége perished. With remorseless cruelty "the Pitiless" bishop treated the survivors. The legate of Pope Benedict, some of the leaders, and helpless women he ordered to be drowned in the river. All the charters of the city were to be given up, all privileges destroyed, the standards of the guilds burnt, the estates of the rebels confiscated, and a vast sum of money exacted to defray the cost of the bishop's expedition. He made his power absolute, and almost reduced the city to ruins. The Emperor Sigismund was quite touched by the distresses and helplessness of the people, and endeavoured to restore their rights and privileges, but the bishop succeeded in thwarting his designs. At last the citizens heard with joy that John was willing to resign the See. He coveted the estates of his niece Jacqueline, ruled Holland for six years, and died 1423, leaving behind him the odious memory of his shameful deeds. During his rule in 1391 Pope Boniface sent the Bishop of Acre to Liége to proclaim indulgences to all those who would confess their sins to him or to his delegates. The

rival Popes were perfectly unscrupulous as regards the means they adopted to advance their interests, and it is astounding that any of the occupants of the Papal See should have supported such an odious usurper of episcopal functions as John the Pitiless.

For one short year the See was occupied by a worthy man, Walenrode, who resembled the bishops of the primitive Church, and always preferred the interests of his people to his own. In his short rule he accomplished much in restoring the prosperity of the city. He died in 1419, it was supposed by poison, overwhelmed with debts, the legacy of his predecessor.

Ecclesiastical affairs in the diocese of Utrecht were no better, and a deplorable schism arose on the death of the fifty-sixth bishop in 1423. The neighbouring princes desired the bishopric for either their fathers or their favourites; the Chapter was divided; various parties were formed, the rival candidates being Rodolphe de Diephold, Swedérus de Culembourg, and Valrave de Morsan. So vehement was the contest, that one of the burgomasters of Utrecht entered the chapter-house when the electors were sitting, and threatened his nephew, the Dean, with death if he did not vote for Rodolphe. On account of this menace the Chapter retired. At length Rodolphe was elected, and demanded his confirmation from the Pope. Martin V. refused, delayed the matter two years, and then nominated Raban, Bishop of Spire, to the vacant See. This new candidate, learning the difficulties which awaited him if he tried to enter upon the See, treated

with Swedérus, and resigned the bishopric to him in return for a deanery and other things which Swedérus gave him. Martin again delayed two years, but at last granted a Bull, and Swedérus entered upon his coveted possessions.

In these affairs the Papal See had made a formidable encroachment on the ancient prerogatives of the Church of Utrecht. This was never consented to by the Chapter except on the conditions which Swedérus promised. He undertook in the most solemn way to preserve without any alteration the rights of his church, that he would never violate or permit to be violated the liberty of election, and many other solemn engagements. But he speedily broke every promise, and violated the sacred privileges of the church of the province over which he ruled. On entering the city, he committed outrages, murders, and pillages on those who had favoured his rival Rodolphe. One burgo-master was massacred in his bed, another was condemned to death without being heard, contrary to the natural right and laws of the province. The anger of the citizens was aroused; the three Estates passed a public ordinance forbidding any one to obey the orders of the bishop or his officers. Again Swedérus renewed his promises; again he broke them, and murders and the burning of the houses of the partisans of Rodolphe followed. The privileges of the clergy were violated, and he attached to himself universal hatred and aversion. At length a follower of the rightful bishop, with forty followers disguised as monks with arms concealed beneath their cloaks, entered the palace of Swedérus, and

expelled the false prelate, who retreated to Arnheim, and laid the diocese under an interdict.

However, when Eugenius IV. became Pope, he confirmed Rodolphe, who governed the church with great prudence for twenty-two years. Swedérus died of a broken heart at Basle. The history of these troubles clearly shows the pernicious effect of the usurpation of the Papal court, and how the Papal power took advantage of the weakness caused by the strife of contending parties in order to increase its power; we notice that it met with lawful resistance on the part of the three estates of the province, and that Eugenius IV. justly recognised the errors of his predecessor and repaired the evils which he had done to the Church at Utrecht.

When the Bohemian rebellion broke out on account of the execution of Huss and Jerome of Prague, a crusade was proclaimed against the Hussites, and many warriors from the Netherlands joined the expedition, foremost among whom was Hinsberg, Bishop of Liége, the successor of Walenrode.

In 1426 the famous University of Louvain was founded by Duke John of Brabant, which afterwards became one of the most celebrated in Europe. Pope Martin V. was consulted, and gave the professors power to teach all the faculties except theology, and this subject was added by his successor, Eugenius IV. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this university was allied with that of Cologne in bitter hostility to the reform movement. Thirty-seven colleges were under its direction. In 1600 it is said that there were no less than 6000 students, and Louvain can boast of

many distinguished and learned professors. The same year which witnessed the foundation of the university saw the commencement of the noble Church of S. Peter, and a few years later the highly decorated Hôtel de Ville was built. Louvain was a very wealthy city at this period, with its 44,000 inhabitants, its prosperous manufactories and extensive trade in cloth, the abode of princes and nobles, against whom the burghers and turbulent weavers were often contending, insolent on account of their prosperity, and oppressed because they could afford to pay. Not many years before they seized thirteen of the chief magistrates and cast them from the windows of the Hôtel de Ville upon the points of the spears of the populace in the streets below. Such scenes were not uncommon in the Netherlands at this period.

The country had already become adorned with the magnificent cathedrals, churches, and public buildings for which it is still remarkable. Many of these stately edifices had already been erected, or were in course of being constructed. The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries constituted a great era for church-building, and architecture was sedulously cultivated. The grand cathedral of Antwerp, begun in 1502, was still in progress. At Bruges the curious church of the Holy Sepulchre was built in 1435 by a burgomaster of that city, who visited Jerusalem twice in order to ensure resemblance. The late Gothic church of S. Jacques belongs to this period, and many additions of choirs and aisles were made to the splendid edifices erected in the previous century. At Amsterdam the

principal church was built during this period, and numerous others might be mentioned. Under the patronage of Philip the Good painting sprang into a new existence owing to the genius of the two Van Eycks. The elder brother, Hubert, was credited with the discovery of painting in oils, but this does not appear to have been so. At any rate, he improved greatly upon all previous methods of using this medium; his altar-piece at Ghent Cathedral is a remarkable specimen of his art, and at Bruges there are several paintings of his younger brother, John. They were succeeded by two celebrated painters, Roger Van der Weyden and Memlin, whose collection of works at Bruges is well known. The art of all these early painters was consecrated to ecclesiastical purposes and devoted to sacred subjects. Philip founded the celebrated library at Brussels which contains about 22,000 MSS.

The proud burghers of Ghent had no cause to revere the memory of "the good" Philip. The city was at the height of its prosperity; it possessed flourishing manufactures and a vast trade, an army of 80,000 men, the guild of weavers alone supplying the formidable contingent of 18,000 fighting men. When Philip imposed a heavy tax on salt, the burghers resisted it. The great bell "Roland" summoned the companies together; vehement speeches were made, and war declared against the powerful Duke.

For five years the contest was carried on, but at last at the fatal battle of Gavre, A.D. 1453, the Ghenters were defeated and lost 16,000 men. Philip did not

spare the vanquished; he demanded vast sums of money, withdrew all their privileges and guild charters, and ordered the chief burghers to appear before him dressed only in their shirts with halters round their necks and humbly to kneel before him and crave pardon for their rebellion. Ghent did not recover from this blow for many years. The merciless conqueror died in 1467, and was succeeded by his rash and impetuous son, Charles, surnamed the Bold, a foolish though brave prince, whose adventurous career and perpetual struggling against the crafty devices of Louis XI. have been the theme of many a story and romance. His tragic death in 1477 while warring against his old enemy freed the Netherlands from an oppressive and arbitrary rule; his daughter Mary married Maxmilian of Austria, the son of the Emperor Frederick III., and thus the country passed under the sovereignty of the House of Austria.

In the meantime the affairs of the Church, both spiritual and temporal, had begun to decline in prosperity. Of the ecclesiastical abuses which had crept into the Church something has already been said, and more remains to be told; but as regards the temporalities of the Church its power had greatly diminished. The secular arm had waxed mightier, and the ecclesiastical power could no longer resist its vigorous blows. In 1459 the privilege of "sanctuary" was taken away by Philip the Good, and Charles the Bold did not scruple to tax heavily the Church in order to furnish himself with means to carry on his wars. When these taxes were not forthcoming, his soldiers were

ordered to enforce payment. The large revenues of the monasteries were always a tempting prize for rapacious rulers. Disputes and disastrous schisms diminished the power of the once all-powerful bishops. At Utrecht, Gisbert de Brederode, elected bishop 1455 A.D., was compelled to wage a cruel war against David, a natural son of Philip the Good, who foisted him into the bishopric in spite of the decision of the canons of Utrecht. The Pope, Calixtus III., as usual took the side of the most powerful party, and confirmed the appointment of David, although he had received 4000 ducats for the confirmation of Gisbert. But the latter, seeing how strong the opposing party was, gave up his right to David for a large sum of money, an annual pension, and the Deaneries of Utrecht and Bruges. Such were the disgraceful barterings which were not uncommon in these lax times. David was received with joy by the people of Utrecht at a great assembly of princes and lords, such as never had been seen before. He appears to have been liberal, magnanimous, a lover of literature, of justice and religion; but he lost the love of his subjects by his hard and despotic government, which he maintained by means of the strong arm of his brother, Charles the Bold.

The citizens, vexed by his cruelties, revolted, and on the death of Charles they began to contest the validity of David's transaction with Gisbert. They wished to appoint as their bishop a young man only sixteen years of age, Engelbert de Clève, who possessed neither the knowledge nor the qualifications for the episcopal office. The five Chapters, who had the right of elec-

tion refused to appoint him ; but the magistrates of the people placed him in possession of the palace, and did homage to him as though he were their bishop. Pope Sixtus IV. interfered and threatened excommunication, but David was not restored for many years, and then only by the arms of Maximilian. David, in spite of his despotic rule, is extolled by the writers of the time for his grave manners, learning, and wisdom, and for the eminent services which he rendered to the State and to literature. The ignorance of the clergy was disgraceful, and in order to remedy this deplorable state of things he himself examined the candidates for examination, and out of 300 who presented themselves he only passed three. When it was represented to him that a great dishonour would rest upon the rejected candidates for the ministry, he replied that it would be a still greater dishonour to the Church to admit so many asses into her service. The Bishop was a great friend and patron of Wessel, who doubtless advised him wisely in matters of reform. He delighted in the society of distinguished men, and sought to increase the splendour of his court by intellect and refinement. He greatly loved music, improved the services in the cathedral, and maintained a large choir of singers. He lived until 1496, when, enfeebled by age and by repeated attacks of gout, for which Wessel prescribed the curious remedy of baths of tepid milk, he died, after ruling his diocese forty years.

In the southern provinces ecclesiastical affairs were in a deplorable condition, and the episcopal power was forced to bend before the increasing might of the House

of Burgundy. John de Heinsberg, the successor of Walenrode, Bishop of Liége, having been forced by his turbulent subjects into a war with Philip, was compelled to bow the knee before the conqueror and humbly crave for pardon; and finding himself in a position of complete dependence upon the will of "the Good" Duke, resigned his See in favour of Louis de Bourbon, Philip's nephew. This prince was only eighteen years of age when he became Bishop of Liége in 1456; he had little inclination for the duties of his office, and spent most of his time revelling in the pleasures of the court and in long periods of absence from his diocese. His subjects resented the heavy exactions which he demanded from them to supply his needs, and all the towns in the principality united to drive him from his See (1465 A.D.). They nominated Mark de Bade, brother-in-law of the Emperor of Germany and of Louis XI., who was delighted to avail himself of the opportunity of intriguing against the Duke, and promised succour to the malcontents. His emissaries were constantly sent secretly to Liége to stir the minds of the easily aroused citizens. The disaffection spread rapidly in spite of the sentence of interdict pronounced by the Pope. A strange scene took place on the day of the procession of the Fête Dieu. Thousands of children formed themselves into companies, each carrying a banner with the arms of the House of Bade upon it; and amongst these little banners there was a large one with the figure of Mark de Bade and an angel placing a crown on the head of the popular favourite. The children marched through

the town shouting the name of Bade, and exciting the citizens against the ruling bishop. At length the burghers broke into revolt, but were defeated by the troops of Philip, who treated them with clemency, and used his victory in order to increase the power of the bishop over his refractory subjects.

But severer measures were necessary to suppress the revolt. The people of Dinant, which was one of the towns in the province of Liége, recommenced hostilities. But Philip's powerful artillery soon made a breach in the ramparts, and the citizens were forced to surrender. Then followed one of those piteous scenes of slaughter which were familiar to soldiers in the Middle Ages, but which fill us now with horror and amazement. The town was delivered up to the soldiers for four days' pillage, and afterwards burnt; murders, rapine, outrages on defenceless women and children continued during that four days' reign of savage greed and lust, and the conquerors cast eight hundred prisoners into the Meuse, bound together two by two. The severity of the punishment inflicted upon the unhappy people of Dinant was attributed to the vindictive nature of Charles, who a year later, upon the death of his father, commenced his impetuous and headstrong rule.

The people of Liége again took up arms; Charles marched against them and defeated the brave burghers at the battle of Brusthem. He entered the city in triumph with great pomp; as the avenger of the cause of the bishop, the clergy welcomed him and lined the streets bearing torches. Charles ordered the walls of

the city to be demolished, all artillery and arms to be given up, and confiscated all the charters, edicts, ordinances, and prerogatives of the city. He completely extinguished all the liberties of the people, and re-established the authority of his kinsman, Bishop Louis de Bourbon.

In the following year Louis XI. rashly placed himself in the power of the impetuous Charles by coming to an interview at Peronne unattended by an escort, while at the same time his emissaries were stirring up the people of Liége to a new revolt against their bishop. While the wily monarch was in the power of his inveterate foe, the news of the rebellion of burghers reached the court. Charles was furious; he made Louis a prisoner, and then compelled him to accompany the expedition against Liége. The unfortunate city was taken and delivered over to plunder and burning. Then followed a scene of wildest fury and debasing cruelty, which has seldom been equalled in the annals of history. The churches and houses were sacked by the savage soldiers, chalices seized from the hands of priests officiating at the altar, massacres, outrages, and deeds of darkness indescribable committed. The city was reduced to ruins, and heaps of slaughtered citizens covered the streets. Such was the piteous record of Charles' savage vengeance.

But Louis de Bourbon did not long enjoy the results of this vindication of his authority. He had a powerful enemy in Count William de la Marck, surnamed the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, who incited the people against him, and in 1482 slew the bishop with his own

hand. For two years the Wild Boar remained master of Liége; he armed the people and governed the city vigorously. But he did not escape the punishment due to his crimes; Maximilian of Austria caused him to be seized at Maestricht and beheaded in 1484. Charles the Bold, as we have already narrated, had perished seven years previously on the blood-stained field of Nancy. Such was the miserable end of the actors in this strange drama of savage greed and lawlessness.

It is refreshing to turn from these scenes of carnage, and to observe that even in these disastrous times the spirit of religion was not quite dead, and that God had reserved a remnant of faithful men who strove to preserve His honour in the world. Foremost among these were the Carthusian monks, whose proud boast is "Never reformed, because never deformed." They founded several new monasteries, and suffered not the manners of the brethren to be a cause of reproach to the Church. The most distinguished of the Order, not only in the Netherlands, but throughout Europe, was Denis the Carthusian, who, by the help of Arnold, Duke of Gueldres, founded in 1471 a convent at Eyckendonck near Bois-le-Duc, of which he was the first prior. Cardinal Bellarmine speaks of him as a very holy and learned man. The Carthusians also formed a settlement at Delft in 1469, and a new convent at Amersfoort in 1472. By the exertions of these pious monks, and by the zeal of the Brethren of the Common Lot, the light of religion was kept burning in this dark age.

When Charles died, the provinces passed into the feeble hands of his daughter Mary, who was scarcely able to cope with the intrigues and duplicity of Louis XI., who endeavoured to alienate the affection of her subjects. As we have already stated, Mary, beloved by the people, married Maximilian of Austria, the son of the Emperor Frederick III. The fruits of this union were a son, Philip the Fair, and Margaret of Austria. Unhappily Mary soon died (1482) from a fall from her horse. Maximilian acted as regent for a time, until 1493, when Philip the Fair was intrusted with the government of the provinces. He married the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile. His rule is remarkable for the successful revolt of the brave Charles of Egmont, who was elected duke by the people of Gueldres, who maintained the independence of that province; and also for the courageous action of the Frisians in preserving the privileges of their ancient race. Philip the Fair died in 1506, leaving a young son, afterwards known as the celebrated Charles V. His aunt, Margaret of Austria, acted as regent during his early years, which was a period of repose for the provinces. Prosperity dawned again upon the various cities; old feuds and causes of disorder had died out, and the hostile attempts of the king of France to acquire possession of the Belgian provinces were defeated at Guinegate, Th rouanne, and Tournay. Trade and industry throve rapidly; Antwerp rose speedily into prosperity and replaced Bruges as the centre of commerce with the North and with England, and materially the prosperity of the Netherlands was greatly improved.

Margaret resided chiefly at Mechlin, and made that city the most brilliant centre of the Renaissance in the Netherlands. Artists, poets, and learned men flocked to her court, and "the School of Mechlin" became famous. The most distinguished were the painters Quinten Matsys, Bernard van Orley, and Michael Coxie, the sculptor Conrad, and the writers John Lemaire, Adrian Boyens, and Erasmus.

With returning prosperity luxury and vice increased; the Belgian people forgot the laws of heaven, but in this respect they were not worse than other nations in that degenerate age. When Louis XII. obtained a divorce from his wife, one voice at least was raised in support of the injured princess. John Standonck, rector of the University of Paris, a native of Mechlin, courageously protested against the wickedness of the king, and was consequently expelled from France. But Belgium profited by his expulsion; his brave conduct was approved by Margaret and the Belgian people. At Mechlin he founded a school for poor scholars which bore his name, and established similar institutions at Cambray, Valenciennes, Louvain, and other towns. By his preaching and pious example he exercised a good influence among the people, and reformed some of the lax manners of the monks. Other examples of piety and devotion in a dark age are not wanting. One Thierry, a monk of Brussels, commonly called Brother Dierick of Munster, in the time of the great plague which devastated both Brussels and Louvain in 1489, obtained permission to minister to the dying sufferers. He pitched a tent in the

centre of the city and placed an altar. Fearless of the dread infection, which carried off his attendant, he administered the Sacrament to 32,000 persons. Such examples show that the Church was not destitute of faithful sons and religion was not dead.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REFORMATION.

Need of reform—Confession of Pope Adrian VI.—Indulgences—Effects of printing—Guilds of rhetoric—Maximilian and the Papacy—Luther—Effects of his teaching in Netherlands—Erasmus—Controversy between Luther and Erasmus concerning “free will”—Philip of Burgundy, Bishop of Utrecht, helps forward Reformation—“Bloody edict”—Calvin—See of Utrecht loses its temporal power—George of Egmont—Liége recovers—Inquisition—Tournay—Neglect of bishops—Disputes between reformers—Anabaptists—Bokelazoon—Their excuses—Severe punishment of heresy—Ghent conquered by Charles V.—He resigns his crown.

AT the beginning of the sixteenth century the Reformation fairly commenced. The need of reform was evident enough; and the confession of Pope Adrian VI., the son of a Netherland boatmaker, a poor scholar of Utrecht, afterwards tutor to the young Emperor Charles, is as conclusive as the vehement statements of the most zealous reformers. He said, “These disorders had sprung from the sins of men, more especially from the sins of priests and prelates. Even in the holy chair many visible crimes have been committed. The contagious disease, spreading from the head to the members, from the Pope to lesser prelates, has extended far and wide, so that scarcely any one is to be found who does right and who is free from infection.” Shameful abuses existed everywhere, and not the least was the abominable traffic in indulgences.

The Netherlands was divided into districts and farmed for the collection of this Papal revenue. Even the most notorious criminals could purchase absolution at a fixed tariff, graduated in accordance with the enormity of the offence they had committed or wished to commit. Poisoning, perjury, incest, parricide had each their special price, ranging from one to eleven ducats. Such was the disgraceful traffic which roused the fiery zeal of Luther and created in many minds an intense yearning for reform.

The dark ages of ignorance and superstition had passed away. Printing-presses had placed the Bible in the hands of the people, who could compare the teaching of Christ and His apostles with the shameless practices of their successors. The famous guilds of rhetoric, unchartered companies of craftsmen, by their farces and interludes, ridiculed the vices of the clergy, and exercised no little influence in spreading the ideas of reform among the people. The opposing forces were mustering for the fight, and it needed only the signal for the contest to begin; and when, on October 31st, 1517, Luther startled the world by affixing his propositions to the door of the church of the castle of Wittenberg, the trumpet had sounded and the battle commenced.

The Emperor Maximilian was no great lover of the Papacy, and, before Luther came to the front, wished to annex the Popedom, and to form a grand combination of the Church and Empire, of which he would be the visible head. Writing to his daughter Margaret, Regent of the Netherlands, he facetiously alludes to

this plan, and says, "We are sending Monsieur de Gurce to make an agreement with the Pope, that we may be taken as coadjutor, in order that, upon his death, we may be sure of the Papacy, and afterwards of becoming a saint. After my decease, therefore, you will be constrained to adore me, of which I shall be very proud. I am beginning to work upon the cardinals, in which affair two or three hundred thousand ducats will be of great service. From the hand of your good father, Maximilian, future Pope."

But Pope Julius died and Leo X. succeeded. "He has behaved to me like a knave," Maximilian wrote. "I can truly say that I have never met with sincerity or good faith in any Pope; but, with God's blessing, I trust this will be the last." He regarded Luther as a useful agent, for, writing to the minister of the Elector of Saxony, he said, "What your monk is doing is not to be regarded with contempt; the game is about to begin with the priests. Make much of him; it may be that we shall want him." To narrate the deeds of Luther, the proceedings of the Diet of Worms, the peasant wars, is beyond the scope of this history.¹ We have only to concern ourselves with the effects of his teaching on the people of the Netherlands.

The ninety-five propositions of Luther were scattered far and wide in every country of Europe. They were printed by thousands, circulated and hawked about; and Luther was grieved to see them printed in such numbers, as he thought he could have improved upon

¹ Cf. vol. i. of this series, "History of the Church in Germany," by Rev. S. Baring-Gould.

them. In no country did his works find more eager readers than in the Netherlands. His smallest pamphlets were bought up as fast as they appeared, and the printers printed his works with the greatest care, and often at their own expense; whereas in Germany the Catholics could only get their books printed at great cost, and even then they were printed carelessly and in a slovenly manner, so as to seem the production of illiterate men. And if any printer, more conscientious than the rest, did them more justice, he was jeered at in the market-places and at the fairs of Frankfort for a Papist and a slave to the priests.

The name most famous for learning in the Netherlands at this time was that of Erasmus, the celebrated scholar of Rotterdam. His keen observation of men and manners led him to see the corruption of the Church and the scandalous lives of the professors of Christianity, whom he satirised with caustic wit and with severe shrewdness. None knew better than he did the sore need there was for reform, and at first sympathised with Luther and encouraged him in his brave attack. "Luther's cause is considered odious," he wrote to the Elector of Saxony, "because he has at the same time attacked the bellies of the monks and the bulls of the Pope." "The priests talk of absolution in such terms that laymen cannot stomach it. Luther has been for nothing more censured than for making little of Thomas Aquinas; for wishing to diminish the absolution traffic; for having a low opinion of the mendicant orders, and for respecting scholastic opinions less than the Gospel. All this is considered intolerable

heresy." One of his "Colloquies" is an inquiry concerning Faith, in which an orthodox person and a Lutheran dispute; and the whole moral of the "Colloquy" is that they agree in the chief articles of the orthodox religion, although the last part of the argument is omitted "because of the malice of the times." Although Erasmus never espoused Lutheranism, no one was more severe than he was upon the abuses of the Catholics, reproving such as "have the Gospel in their mouth when nothing like the Gospel appears in their lives." In describing what a monk ought to be he adds, "There are not many such as I here describe." Impostures, superstitions, pilgrimages, benefice-hunting, all these find in him a stern censor and a severe critic. But he loved a quiet life, and confesses that "he was not of a mind to venture his life for the truth's sake; all men have not strength to endure a martyr's death."

A serious controversy concerning the freedom of the will separated the two men, in which Erasmus confuted the erroneous theory of Luther, and caused him to writhe and twist in his vain endeavours to extricate himself from the results of his own theory. Luther first propounded his dangerous doctrine *de servo arbitrio* in a sermon delivered at Leipsic in 1519, and many learned men were attracted by it. Erasmus alone perceived the consequences of the theory advanced by the zealous reformer, and emulating the Italian, Laurentius Valla, who had written a work *De libero arbitrio* in the fifteenth century, he wrote against Luther under the same title. Before the publication of

this book they had been friends, Erasmus encouraging Luther to proceed in the course he had undertaken, and the latter respecting the moderation and learning of the Dutchman while he deplored his weakness and want of energy. But when war was declared and the book published, bitter words followed each other fast. "Erasmus, Erasmus, it is difficult to accuse thee of ignorance, a man of thy years, living in the midst of a Christian people, and who has so long meditated upon the Scriptures. What! you, a theologian, you, a Christian doctor, not satisfied to abide by your ordinary scepticism, but you decide that those things are unnecessary without which there is no longer God, nor Christ, nor Gospel, nor faith; without which there remains nothing, I will not say of Christianity, but of Judaism!" Luther struggles with his powerful adversary, but in vain; and the more he struggles, the deeper he sinks into immorality and fatalism, writhing beneath the blows which Erasmus hesitates not to inflict. Long did Luther remember that bitter conflict. "I would not for a thousand florins find myself in God's presence in the danger in which Erasmus is." In one of his sermons, "I pray all of you to be the enemies of Erasmus. My dying prayers shall be, 'Scourge this serpent.' . . . It is true that crushing Erasmus is crushing a bug; but my Christ whom he mocks is dearer to me than Erasmus's danger." "Erasmus is a crafty, designing man, who has laughed at God and religion; he uses fine words, as dear Lord Christ, the word of salvation, the holy Sacraments, but holds the truth to be a matter of indifference. When he preaches,

it rings false, like a cracked pot. He has attacked the Papacy, and is now drawing his head out of the noose."

In the meantime, Charles, the youthful son of Philip the Fair, at the age of fifteen years became King of Spain, Duke of Brabant and Count of Flanders and Holland. He nominated Philip of Burgundy as Bishop of Utrecht, and this appointment helped forward the cause of the Reformation in the northern provinces. This bishop was a strong advocate of the Reformation, being much opposed to the superstitions which had crept into the Church, the sale of indulgences, and the celibacy of the clergy. His influence and example induced many in his diocese to embrace the new ideas.¹ In Friesland the tenets of Luther found congenial soil, and spread with amazing rapidity, while Count Edzard of Eastern Friesland openly adopted the Reformation.

The condition of political affairs also favoured its growth. Charles and Francis I. of France were rivals for the throne of Germany; and when in 1519 the former became emperor of a vast territory, upon which it was proudly said the sun never set, he was too much engaged in resisting his determined rival to attend to the extirpation of so-called heresy, and the greatness of his empire prevented him from accomplishing at once all his intentions.

However, in 1521, the "Bloody edict" was issued at Worms, which ran as follows:—"As it appears that

¹ It is to be noted that this prelate obtained a Bull from Leo X., called *Debitum Pastoralis*, which is of importance in the history of the Utrecht Church. It confirmed the inalienable right of the Church, that neither the bishop, clergy, nor laity should ever, in the first instance, have his cause evoked to any external tribunal.

this Martin is not a man, but a devil under the form of a man, and clothed in the dress of a priest, the better to bring the human race to hell and damnation, therefore all his disciples and converts are to be punished with death and forfeiture of all their goods." Forthwith functionaries were appointed in the Netherlands to carry out this edict; a modified form of the Inquisition was introduced, and the first victims were two Augustinian monks, who were burned at Brussels in 1523. Severe edicts followed in quick succession which made penal all reading of Holy Scripture whether in public or private, all devotional meetings or private discussions concerning religion; and the fires of persecution began to blaze with hideous pertinacity and the blood of the martyrs flowed incessantly. Such severity roused the spirit of a brave people; it fostered the growth of the beliefs which it was designed to kill, and laid the seeds of a mighty revolution which time developed.

The controversy between Erasmus and Luther alienated many of the learned in the Netherlands from the tenets of the great German reformer; but when in 1535 Calvin published his famous "Institutions," his doctrines were received with much favour in France; and by refugees from that country, by travelling merchants, by the Swiss soldiers who served in the army of the Emperor, Calvin's books and pamphlets were circulated largely in Holland, and Calvinism rather than Lutheranism found the greater favour among the people.

In the meantime the once powerful bishopric of Utrecht lost its temporal lordship through the base-

ness of its bishop, Henry of Bavaria. The people had expelled him from the city, and in order to regain his possessions he yielded his temporal sovereignty to Charles V. as Count of Holland, on condition that the imperial forces should reinstate him in his See. The inhabitants soon found out their mistake, as Charles took from them all their privileges, and erected a castle in order to suppress any signs of discontent. Thus the Church of Utrecht lost her temporal power which for centuries she had exercised, but she did not lose her ancient right of electing the bishop of the See which she had enjoyed so long. When Henry died in obscurity and contempt, he was succeeded by a pluralist, the Bishop of Tortosa, who never visited his See of Utrecht; but on his death in 1536, George of Egmont was appointed, who ruled his diocese wisely and well, and endeavoured to improve the condition of the clergy. The first of the famous windows of the Church of Gouda was given by him.

Whilst the prosperity and power of Utrecht declined, Liège had recovered from its severe chastisement by Charles the Bold. Its bishop was Erard de la Marck, nephew of the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, who by his politic measures repaired all the evils that his uncle had caused. He rebuilt the walls of the city, paid the debts which his predecessors had accumulated, restored the palace, and renewed the ancient splendour and outward magnificence of the See. He exercised great tact towards his refractory subjects, but he was a great opponent and persecutor of the Lutherans. He put into force the decrees of the Emperor against them,

and upon the banks of the Meuse burnt a French priest who had preached the new doctrines.

To this bishop Erasmus dedicated his Paraphrase on the Epistle to the Romans, and he wrote a strong letter against the Lutherans in Germany, condemning their doctrines. In 1532 one John Jamolet was made Apostolic Inquisitor, and the people were much enraged on account of the introduction of the Spanish Inquisition into their country. But the bishop listened not to their clamours; edicts more severe were passed; many were banished or executed, and their goods confiscated, still Lutheranism spread. Erard de la Marck died in 1553, and the Lutheran Sleidanus thus wrote of him: "Erard, Cardinal and Bishop of Liège, is dead, who hath so greatly tormented those who believe in the doctrines." This Roman Catholic authors regard as a testimony of his goodness and virtue.

Tournay had recently passed through many vicissitudes; in 1513 it was captured together with Théroutanne by the English; in 1518 it was sold back to the French; in 1521 it was besieged by the army of Charles V., became subject to the Emperor, and was united to the Countship of Flanders. The city being so near to the boundaries of the French kingdom, had suffered much from pillage and numerous sieges, and the people hailed with satisfaction their union with the Empire, and the prospect of peace and security. The "plague," as Roman Catholic writers speak of Lutheranism, spread quickly in this neighbourhood; it had no powerful foe, as at Liège, to check its pro-

gress ; for Louis Guillard (1519) preferred to reside in Paris rather than in his See, and when he resigned, a youthful bishop, Charles de Croy, was appointed, who lived in Italy, and did not enter Tournay until 1539. Is it surprising that when bishops never came near their Sees, and when, as was the case at the Abbey of S. Martin at Tournay, there were so many aspirants for the position of Abbot that soldiers had to guard the gates to prevent bloodshed, is it surprising that the Reformation should spread ?

Its onward course was, however, impeded by the disputes between the Reformers—between Erasmus and Luther, and between Luther and Zwingli ; and the rise of the Anabaptists, who knew neither order nor decency, tended further to confuse men's minds and hinder the progress of true reform. The founders of that sect of frenzied profligates and fanatics were two Germans, Muncer and Rottmann, who were succeeded by John Bokelszoon, a tailor of Leyden, and a baker of Haarlem named Matthiszoon. Munster was seized by the fanatics and called Sion ; Bokelszoon proclaimed himself king of Sion, and the baker his chief prophet. He sent out his followers to preach in the Netherlands, and many people in Holland and Hainault became infected with this madness. The "king" introduced polygamy and married seventeen wives. His followers pillaged the churches, killed all who opposed them or refused to join their company, violated women and seized property. From Hainault troops of fanatics marched naked to Munster in spite of the cold of winter. In Amsterdam the frenzy broke out, several

men and women casting off their clothes and rushing naked through the streets crying out, "Woe, woe, woe! the wrath of God!" One John van Gheele was their leader; they massacred the burgomaster and the guard of the Hotel de Ville, but at length were captured and put to death. The Bishop of Munster succeeded in rescuing his city from Bokelszoon's dominion, who was imprisoned in an iron cage and afterwards cruelly killed.

Charles and his inquisitors were not very discriminating concerning heretics, and under his rule thousands of well-disposed and peaceable citizens were butchered in the Netherlands during these disastrous times. Death was the punishment for all heretics; repentant males were executed with the sword, repentant females were buried alive, and the obstinate of both sexes were burnt. Mary, the Regent of the provinces, was of opinion that this was just and right, "care being only taken that the provinces were not entirely depopulated."

Charles was equally despotic and severe upon any questioning of his authority, and the powerful city of Ghent had to pay dearly for its opposition to his demands. All its privileges were withdrawn, twenty-seven principal citizens beheaded, and the great bell Roland, which for centuries had called the turbulent people to arms, and which seemed endowed with a living voice, was condemned and silenced for ever.

But the cares of state pressed heavily on the Emperor Charles, and, tired of sovereignty, he decided to resign his dominions to his son. On October 25, 1555, at

Brussels, before an august assembly, he resigned the empire to his brother Ferdinand, king of the Romans, and all the rest of his dominions to his son Philip, the husband of Mary of England, whose rule was fraught with disastrous consequences to the Netherlands.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE INQUISITION.

Causes of the revolt—Character of Philip II.—Anthony Perrenot—William of Orange—Inquisition—Van Hulst and other Inquisitors—Titelman—Tortures inflicted—New bishoprics—Spanish soldiers—Treaty between France and Spain—Philip's designs on the liberties of his subjects—William "the Silent"—Government of Granvelle—His avarice—Popular discontent—Sufferings of the people—Revolt at Valenciennes—Granvelle dismissed—Council of Trent—Decrees resisted—The "Compromise"—Emigrations to England—"The Beggars"—Field-preachings—Image-breakers—Inquisition abolished—Condition of the Church—Frederick Schenk, Archbishop of Utrecht—The new Sees.

WE have now arrived at the most troubled and disastrous period in the whole history of the Low Countries, when the land was deluged with blood, when wars incessant raged, and the world regards with pitying horror the fearful crimes which were wrought in religion's name. The causes of the troubles which led to the revolution were partly political, partly financial, but mainly religious. Of the first two causes we can speak but briefly; it is beyond the scope of this work to give a full and detailed account of all the events which occurred in this stormy period of the nation's history, and we shall endeavour to confine ourselves to those which mainly concern religion and the Church.

The character of Philip has been often drawn. A stranger to the Netherlands, unaccustomed to the ways

and manners of the people, a despot by nature, he could not understand the spirit of freedom which embued the national life of the rich burghers and industrious artisans. Ignorant, cunning, obstinate, treacherous, cruel, vindictive, he strove with all his art to inspire fear, and his zeal for the Church took the form of fanatical bigotry, and moved him to acts of savage cruelty almost unequalled in the world's annals. The other actors in this strange drama were Anthony Perrenot, Bishop of Arras, afterwards known as the famous Cardinal Granvelle, a man as unscrupulous, deceitful, and treacherous as his master; Egmont, the brave soldier, the hero of S. Quentin, the hasty and uncertain politician; Viglius, the crafty president of the Privy Council; Count Horn, brave soldier and loyal to his country; Berlaymont, Berghen, Montigny, and others, who took prominent parts in the tragic events which followed. Conspicuous above all was William of Orange, a man of immense power, a profound politician, the champion of religious liberty, the nation's hero, who was alone able to cope with the crafty and subtle devices of Philip, and to whom the provinces owed their freedom from the intolerable yoke of Spain.

One of Philip's earliest acts was to re-enact the severe and bloodthirsty edict of 1550. To uproot heresy and exterminate heretics was the main object which the monarch desired to accomplish, and no artifice was too mean, no measure too severe, for the carrying out of his great purpose. The Inquisition had already been established in the Netherlands, Francis Van der Hulst being the first inquisitor (1522).

At first the bishops acted as inquisitors in their own dioceses, but the powers of the Papal inquisitors were gradually increased; they were independent of all episcopal authority, and could even arrest and imprison the bishops themselves. Van Hulst was a worthless character, who, after burning men and women for their supposed heretical beliefs, was convicted of forgery and degraded from his office. Clement VII. appointed as his successors Olivier Bendens for Ypres, Nicholas Housean for Mons, John Coppin for Louvain, and amongst other worthies who occupied this honourable office were Tapper, Drutius, Barbier (Artois), Nicholas de Monte (Brabant), Campo de Zon (Holland), and the notorious Peter Titelman, the inquisitor of Flanders. So the system was fairly complete when Philip ascended the throne, and the judiciary power, both clerical and lay, was simply a vassal of the Inquisition.

This instrument was now placed in hands which would not fail to use it. The ruthless officers were ordered to ferret out all persons suspected of heresy and their protectors, and to deal with them according to the edicts, death by sword or fire being the punishment inflicted. The historian of the Dutch Republic¹ thus describes the infamous Titelman: "There was a kind of grim humour about the man. Contemporary chronicles give a picture of him as of some grotesque yet terrible goblin, careering through the country by night or day alone on horseback, smiting the trembling peasants on the head with a club, spreading dismay far and wide, dragging suspected persons from their

¹ Motley's "Rise of the Dutch Republic," p. 321.

firesides or their beds, and thrusting them into dungeons, arresting, torturing, strangling, burning, with hardly the shadow of warrant, information, or process." The sheriff asked him how he dared to go about alone arresting people, while he himself required a strong force to seize his prisoners, and the inquisitor replied, "Ah! you deal with bad people. I have nothing to fear, for I seize only the innocent and virtuous, who make no resistance, and let themselves be taken like lambs." "Mighty well," replied the sheriff, "but if you arrest all the good people and I all the bad, 'tis difficult to see who in the world is to escape chastisement."

Indescribable were the tortures which this wretch inflicted upon men and women suspected of heresy, and the historian would fain draw a veil over the fiendish and revolting cruelties which in the name of religion were devised with Satanic ingenuity to extort confession and convict of heresy. The people groaned under this terrible engine. The Spanish Inquisition was celebrated for its completeness, its far-reaching power, for the savage cruelty of its agents. The people in the Netherlands protested against the introduction of the "Inquisition of Spain" into their country; but Philip had no intention of making any change in his methods, for, as he wrote to Granvelle, "the Inquisition of the Netherlands is far more pitiless than that of Spain." Tapper and Titelman were quite as powerful as the famous Torquemada.

Another cause of the discontent among the people was the creation of the new bishoprics, upon which Philip had set his heart. This was regarded as a new

device for riveting the fetters of the Inquisition upon the oppressed country. However, in 1559, Francis Vandevelde, otherwise called Sonnius, doctor of Louvain, obtained a Bull from Pope Paul IV. authorising the creation of fourteen new bishoprics. Ever since the reign of Charlemagne there had been six dioceses in the Netherlands, viz., Arras, Cambray, Tournay, Th rouanne, Li ge, and Utrecht. These were now subdivided. Mechlin, Cambray, and Utrecht were constituted metropolitan sees, of which the first was the principal, and embraced the bishoprics of Antwerp, Bois-le-Duc, Ruremonde, Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres. The province of Cambray included the four dioceses of Tournay, Arras, S. Omer, and Namur; while the sees of Haarlem, Middleburg, Leeuwarden, Groningen, and Deventer formed the province of the archbishopric of Utrecht. That Philip intended to use these prelates for the purpose of completing the work of the Inquisition may be gathered from the arrangement "that each bishop should appoint nine additional prebendaries, who were to assist him in the matter of the Inquisition throughout his bishopric, two of whom were themselves to be inquisitors." In order to enforce submission to the monarch's injunctions and to thoroughly extinguish heresy, it was considered necessary to retain a regiment of four thousand Spanish soldiers in the provinces, whose excesses and oppressive acts were deeply resented by the Netherlanders, and nothing would content them until this band of foreign soldiery was withdrawn.

In their opposition to the Inquisition and the reten-

tion of the Spanish troops William of Orange was their champion, their leader, and wise councillor. When he went as ambassador to the French king, his eyes were opened to the compact and the cruel designs of Henry II. and Philip to massacre all the Protestants in their dominions. The "Silent One" earned his name by the reticence with which he received the unguarded utterances of the French king, and although a Catholic, he determined from that hour to protect his fellow-subjects from the horrible fate to which they were doomed by their relentless monarch. He guided their course *sævis tranquillus in undis*;¹ but the revolt was a democratic movement; it sprung from the people themselves, and was the "longest, the darkest, the bloodiest, the most important episode in the history of the religious reformation in Europe." The rich abbey lands may have tempted impoverished nobles in this as in other countries; ambition may have induced others to seek for power and authority; but it was the love of liberty, the horror of the stern persecution which raged rampant throughout the land, and the corrupt practices of the Church which caused the revolt and the reformation in the Low Countries.

In 1558 the treaty of Cateau Cambresis between France and Spain was signed, and universal joy reigned throughout the Netherlands; but it was short-lived, inasmuch as Philip, freed from the prosecution of foreign foes, proceeded without much delay to the congenial task of endeavouring to conquer and enslave his own subjects. He craftily framed a provisional

¹ This motto was engraved upon medals struck in his honour (Motley).

government, the composition of which was a masterpiece of political ingenuity, and by means of which despotic power was placed in the hands of the king's tools, while a semblance of authority was delegated to the general councils of the nation. The edicts against heresy placed the lives and fortunes of the people entirely at the mercy of the clergy and the inquisitors, and in order to enforce his will and to bring about the entire subjugation of the Netherlanders, the native troops were separated into small companies, and the German and Spanish mercenaries were kept in readiness to subdue any revolt.

These arrangements having been satisfactorily arranged, Philip determined to retire to Spain. He appointed Margaret of Parma as Regent, he summoned a meeting of the States-General at Ghent, and in a crafty address, delivered by his tool Granvelle, Bishop of Arras, he expressed his attachment to the people, and his royal affection for them, urged upon them the suppression of heresy, and requested three million florins. In spite of all Philip's subtlety, William the Silent fathomed his designs, and secretly pointed out to the other deputies the dangers which lurked beneath the King's cunningly devised words. Hence a remonstrance was drawn up urging the immediate withdrawal of the Spanish troops, the diminution of taxes, and the appointment of natives only to official positions.

These conditions enraged the King mightily. He knew whose eyes had been keen enough to see through his designs, and on the moment of his departure on board ship he turned fiercely on William of Orange

and accused him of thwarting his plans. "Sire," replied William, "it was the work of the national States." "No," exclaimed the monarch furiously; "not the States, but you, you, you!" So Philip departed, and on landing in Spain indulged his tastes in the grand spectacle of an *auto-da-fé*.

The whole government of the country now rested in the hands of Granvelle, who acted as Philip's deputy, daily reporting to his patron the state of affairs, and receiving from Spain most minute and careful orders and instructions. When the new bishops were appointed, he was made Archbishop of Mechlin, and shortly afterwards became a cardinal. He heaped up riches for himself, and obtained in addition to many other sources of revenue the rich Abbey of S. Armand. But popular discontent was growing fast. All classes united in showing their detestation of the new bishoprics. Abbeys were confiscated in order to furnish them with endowments, and the people objected very strongly to this mighty strengthening of the Inquisition. The excesses of the Spanish soldiers had become so intolerable that the Zealanders threatened to open the sluices of the dykes rather than to endure the outrages of these cruel mercenaries. At length, after much delay, in 1560, Philip was compelled to withdraw the troops.

Meanwhile, the savage work of burning heretics proceeded vigorously, and Granvelle encouraged the inquisitors in their "pious office." Volumes might be written of the sufferings of the martyrs of this period, of men, women, and children, who, for reading the

Scriptures, for praying alone, for not kneeling when the Host was carried through the streets, were tortured and burned, and the Archbishop goaded on the judges and executioners in their charitable work. The people were exasperated, and not convinced by the arguments of the faggot and the rack, and especially amongst the Walloons the cry was heard of mutiny and resistance. At the execution of two ministers, Faveau and Mallart, at Valenciennes in 1562, excited men broke down the barriers, scattered the faggots which had been lighted, and attempted to rescue the prisoners. In the evening they stormed the prison to which the victims had been conveyed, and released them from their chains. Faveau did not discontinue his preaching, and was afterwards "burned well and handsomely" (as an eye-witness states) in the market-place at Valenciennes. But dire vengeance was taken upon the insurgents. The prisons teemed with the miserable victims of Granvelle's rage, and hundreds were burned and beheaded to satisfy the awakened displeasure of the Inquisition. The exasperation of both the nobles and people against the Cardinal increased daily, and universal joy reigned when at last the King ordered, in 1564, his departure from the Netherlands.

The dismissal of Granvelle unhappily did not put an end to the persecution, to the horrible details of which Philip paid most minute attention; but there were ominous signs of a more determined resistance on the part of the people, and the swarming prisons and daily burnings exasperated both nobles and citizens beyond all endurance. At Antwerp they attempted to

rescue one Christopher Smith, commonly called Fabricius, who was condemned to the stake for preaching. They beat back the soldiers and executioners, but were too late to save the victim. The citizens of Bruges and of other cities of Flanders presented to the King and to the Regent a remonstrance against the iniquities of the inquisitor Titelman, who trampled upon all law, and killed and tortured whom he would. Their attempts to stem the tide of blood were ineffectual.

In 1564 the lengthy proceedings of the memorable Council of Trent were brought to a conclusion and its decrees promulgated. Philip sent a stringent order to the Regent that they should be rigorously enforced in the Netherlands, together with more severe directions for the punishment of heretics. The decrees were received with general reprobation; even some of the new bishops denounced them as unjust innovations, and William of Orange boldly proclaimed in the Council that the canons of Trent, spurned by the whole world, even by the Catholic princes of Germany, could never be enforced in the Netherlands, and that the whole system of religious persecution must be for ever abolished. This bold speech and the mission to Spain of Egmont were barren of results. At Cambray the decrees were nominally enforced, but the clergy of Utrecht, Mechlin, and Friesland strenuously opposed them. The popular rage increased daily. The secret execution of heretics by drowning them in their cells was ordered by the merciless monarch, and at last his madness culminated in the open proclamation of the Inquisition and the canons of Trent in every town and

village. The frenzy of the people was tremendous, and open revolt became inevitable.

A league was formed against the Inquisition at the commencement of the memorable year 1566, and the famous Compromise drawn up, in which the signers pledged themselves to resist it by every means in their power. Already fifty thousand persons had been massacred, and thirty thousand had left the country and found an asylum in England, which they enriched by their industry, intelligence, and skill; if the country was not to be entirely depopulated and ruined, it were time that some concerted action should be taken to avert its doom. A remarkable petition was presented to the Regent against the Inquisition by a large company of leading men, and at a banquet in the evening they assumed the famous title of "the Beggars" (*Gueux*). The Regent became alarmed by the tumult which the decrees had called forth, and tried to temporise and to await Philip's instructions. The judges and inquisitors were ordered to proceed moderately and carefully against heretics; hence a short period of comparative peace ensued, which was taken advantage of by the Reformers. Hitherto they had been obliged to meet stealthily by night, but now they marched in armed companies into the fields to hold their religious services. Thousands flocked to these field-preachings. Near Ghent, one Herman Strycher, an apostate monk, attracted immense crowds; in West Flanders, one Peter Dathenus, a violent and intemperate orator, addressed meetings at various places. During the summer months these field-preachings spread. At

Tournay a disciple of Calvin, one Ambrose Wille, and an enthusiastic Huguenot, Peregrine de la Grange, preached to vast assemblies armed with rude weapons to resist any attack on the part of the authorities. Through the Walloon provinces the fire of enthusiasm ran—through Flanders and then into the Northern provinces. Cities were deserted while the meetings were held, and in the neighbourhood of Haarlem, Amsterdam, Alkmaar, and other towns, sometimes as many as fifteen or twenty thousand persons were assembled. They were not all of one mind; some were Lutherans, some Calvinists, and others Anabaptists, but all were united in their hatred of Rome, the Inquisition, and the Spaniards.

It is not hard to determine why these people had drifted away from the National Church and joined sectarian bodies. When the Church had become corrupt in her teaching and practice, when she was represented by worthless ministers and bishops, and was allied to a system of government the most odious which ever existed; when the rights of a free people were trampled on and their bodies tortured and burned or buried alive, all in the name of religion and the Church, is it surprising that men and women should break away from her fold, and seek in other communities the peace and comfort which she denied them? The errors of Luther and Calvin and of the Anabaptists were not perhaps very clearly understood by them, nor were they learned in the doctrinal questions which separated them from the Church; but they found that in these open camp-meetings they could

worship God and sing His praise in their own language; they could learn something of God from the often wild words of their fiery preachers, and the Church having failed in her mission, they sought outside her fold the religion which they longed for. They set also the example of a purer life in a corrupt age, insomuch that good conduct and virtue were regarded as a proof of heresy. "He does not swear, he is therefore a Protestant; he is neither a fornicator nor a drunkard; he belongs to the new sect." We approve not the doctrines which their teachers held, but we cannot but admire their heroism, their zeal, their enthusiasm, their purity of life—while we mourn the cruel violence, the bigotry, the general corruption of the Church which drove out so many earnest Christians to seek in other pastures the food which she should have provided.

But more lawless scenes were about to be enacted than the field-preachings. In the autumn of 1566 a strange frenzy seized some of the lowest of the people, who began a shameful iconoclastic movement and ruthlessly destroyed most of the beautiful specimens of sacred art for which the country was famous. For generations the rich burghers had delighted to devote their wealth to the beautifying of the houses of God, and gilded shrines and altars, statues and figures of the Saviour, the Virgin, and other saints, pictures painted by great masters, stained-glass windows, and all that sacred art could devise, adorned the churches and cathedrals of the Netherlands. The madness and fanaticism of some lawless men destroyed in a few short weeks the

treasures which the art and skill and devotion of centuries had accumulated. The fury first broke out in the villages near St. Omer, where a body of about three hundred vagabonds broke into the churches, and with axes and hammers destroyed the images and relics of saints, the rood-screens and altars. The churches of Ypres, Lille, and throughout Flanders soon became a prey to furious multitudes of iconoclasts, and shortly afterwards the magnificent cathedral of Antwerp, one of the most splendid in Europe, was desecrated, pillaged, and despoiled by a mad crowd of wild and savage wretches. All the churches and monasteries and nunneries shared the same fate. Hardly a statue or a picture escaped destruction. The image-breakers visited Mechlin, Tournay, and Valenciennes, and the northern provinces of Utrecht and Zealand did not escape.

It must be noted that the iconoclasts were really few in number, and they belonged to the lowest and most lawless classes of the people. The image-breaking was not a general movement; it was condemned by the leaders, by William of Orange, by Egmont, and by the chief men of the Reformed religion, who regretted and mourned over the violence which had been committed. It aroused the fury of Philip, and dire was the vengeance which he swore to inflict upon his subjects. "It shall cost them dear!" he said, and the subsequent history of the Netherlands shows that in this matter at least he kept his word. But in the meantime it was necessary to assuage the popular feeling, and the Regent, in terror and distress, yielded to every

demand. The hateful Inquisition was abolished, the decrees against heresy repealed, the field-preachings were permitted to take place without molestation, and the nobles were exonerated from all responsibility with regard to the past proceedings. For a brief moment joy reigned throughout the Netherlands, but it was only a faint and feeble ray, which preceded a long day of tears.

Before entering upon the narrative of the revolt of the Netherlands from the Spanish yoke we will proceed to notice the condition of the Church in the different Sees, and to understand what efforts were being made to stem the tide of schism. The establishment of the new bishoprics might have proved a great benefit to the Church in the Netherlands if that measure had been adopted earlier. There are many reasons set forth in the Bull of Pope Paul IV. which seem urgent and conclusive, and if the confidence of the people could have been secured, if there had been no Inquisition, no persecution, if the bishops had understood the difficulties of the times in which they lived, the Church might have been saved; but from the first they were viewed with suspicion; they were the spies of Philip, not the pastors of the people; they were the appropriators of the abbeys and the cause of their destruction; hence they could never gain the love of the people, and hastened rather than delayed the downfall of the Church.

The new Archbishop of Utrecht was Frederick Schenk, Baron of Tautenberg, a stern overbearing man of noble rank. In 1565 he summoned a council of his

suffragans and clergy, who, after some deliberation, agreed to accept the decrees of the Council of Trent, provided that their own rights and privileges were not interfered with. There was some opposition to the decrees on the part of the canons and lower ecclesiastical dignitaries, but the bishops overruled their objections. Some of the Synodal statutes bear ample testimony to the laxity of church discipline at the time. The new See of Haarlem was a large and important one, embracing the towns of Amsterdam, Horn, Alkmaar, and Enkhuizen. Nicolas Nieulant was its first bishop, who had great trouble with the monks of Egmont on account of the endowment of the See. In accordance with the plan adopted by Philip to provide maintenance for the new bishops, the rich abbey of Egmont was assigned to the See. To this arrangement the monks objected; the people grumbled because they were deprived of the charity which flowed from the monastery; and the nobles were displeased, for they preferred a lazy yet tolerant abbot to sit with them at the Council rather than one of the new bishops, who were regarded as the creatures and spies of Philip. However, Nieulant proved himself an industrious and painstaking prelate. He inspected his diocese, summoned a diocesan council in 1564, but after eight stormy years was obliged to resign. John Knyff, first bishop of Groningen, by his kindness, gentleness, and devotion earned the praise of even the Calvinists. Of John Mahusius of Overysse, of Dirutius of Leeuwarden, and of Nicolas a Castro of Middleburg we have little to record. Liège was fortunate in its Bishop

Gerard de Groesbeck, who was a wise and virtuous prelate, although he retained the military propensities of his predecessors, and when the Protestant sectaries broke into revolt at Hasselt, he marched thither at the head of his troops and brought them to subjection. He showed, however, great mercy, and again at Maestricht he manifested much clemency to the insurgents. Had the same generosity been extended by wise rulers in other parts of the country, there would not have been the wide prevalence of schism; the page of history would not have been stained by the hideous chronicle of deeds of blood. The people of Liége loved their bishop, and heresy did not find there a congenial soil. The other Belgian bishops, especially those of Ypres, Namur, Ghent, and the Archbishop of Cambray, were stern supporters of the Inquisition and of the policy of Philip. The bearding of the Archbishop at a banquet in the citadel of his cathedral city by some of the nobles¹ is a curious example of the manners of the time. His letter to Granvelle clearly demonstrates the man's character: "I will say one thing, since the pot is uncovered and the whole cookery known; we had best push forward and make an end of all the principal heretics, whether rich or poor, without regarding whether the city will be entirely ruined by such a course. Such an opinion I should declare openly were it not that we of the ecclesiastical profession are accused of always crying out blood." Heretics found no mercy at the hands of such prelates.

¹*Cf.* Motley, "Dutch Republic."

CHAPTER XV.

THE REVOLT OF THE NETHERLANDS.

Religious toleration—Severity of the Regent—Commencement of civil war—Action of William of Orange—Emigration—Duke of Alva—“Council of blood”—Atrocities of Alva—Egmont beheaded—War—“The Beggars of the Sea”—Requesens—Siege of Leyden—Revolt of Spanish troops—“Pacification of Ghent”—Don John of Austria—Fickleness of the Walloons—The seven provinces throw off the Spanish yoke—State of the Church—Neutrality of Liége—William assassinated—His character—Prosperity of the United Provinces—Their maritime supremacy—Albert and Isabella, sovereigns of Spanish Netherlands—Prince Maurice—Independence of United Provinces.

THE revolt actually broke out in 1567, and it will be necessary to remind the reader of the leading facts of the war, although it is impossible to give more than a bare outline of the events of this disastrous period of the nation's history. While the Inquisition was abolished and partial religious liberty granted, the Calvinists proceeded to build wooden temples outside the walls of Antwerp, Tournay, and other towns, where only about one-sixth of the population remained true to the Catholic Church. At Antwerp, Utrecht, and Amsterdam, and other cities under the government of William of Orange, three of the churches were assigned to the different sects of Reformers, and religious toleration strongly enjoined.

But the calm did not last long. Margaret had levied

some troops, and her fears, which had induced her to make concessions to the Protestants, being allayed, she proceeded to treat them with severity. On the inhabitants of Tournay her vengeance first fell; the unscrupulous Noircarmes marched thither at the head of a strong body of soldiers, forced the citizens to open their gates and deliver up their arms. The siege of Valenciennes followed. Three thousand ill-armed seartries at Launoy and another band of twelve hundred rustics at Watrelots were cut to pieces by the disciplined troops of Noircarmes, and the civil war began, which raged for forty years and deluged the land with blood. The gallant but inexperienced Marnax fortified a camp at Osterweel, from which his brave but ill-disciplined troops were quickly dislodged and massacred. Valenciennes succumbed; the usual hangings and slaughterings took place, the Reformed religion was prohibited, and Bois-le-duc and other revolting towns were quickly subdued.

The tact and calmness of William of Orange were severely tried at Antwerp. There the Catholics, the Calvinists, and Lutherans were in a state of wild excitement, and ready to fly at each others' throats. Armed camps were formed in various parts of the city, but the resolution and determined action of the Taciturn quelled all disturbance. The confederation of the nobles in the provinces was, however, dissolved. Egmont and Horn rashly determined to trust themselves to their treacherous King, while William, seeing that the national cause was in a hopeless condition, withdrew to Germany to await his opportunity. The

tide of emigration flowed fast, and thousands fled to England and Germany, there to find the peace and safety denied to them in their own country.

In August 1567, the notorious Duke of Alva entered Brussels with fifteen thousand trained soldiers, whom he soon placed in strong detachments in Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent, and other important towns. He arrested Egmont, Horn, and other nobles who refused to fly, and, after re-establishing the Inquisition, he formed that terrible tribunal of twelve men, chiefly Spaniards, which is known by the well-deserved name, the Council of Blood. Before its dread decrees every subject was compelled to bow. It knew no mercy, for at its head sat Alva, the sole and pitiless director of its shameful proceedings. To gain the wealth of the rich citizens was Alva's chief object and delight. Them he mercilessly killed or exiled, and then proceeded to confiscate their property. To be rich was the only crime of which they were guilty, and this was quite sufficient to secure their condemnation. History offers no example of parallel horrors; for while party vengeance on other occasions has led to scenes of fury and terror, they arose in this instance from the vilest cupidity and the most cold-blooded cruelty.¹

Every village, town, and city yielded up its victims to this remorseless machine for execution. The groans of the suffering people filled the land; not a home was spared. They were condemned in gangs and batches; single trials were much too slow for this man-devour-

¹ Schiller, Grattan, Motley.

ing fiend. In one day eighty-four citizens of Valenciennes were doomed to death, on another ninety-five from another city. Hangings and burnings took place in every street; the whole country was a shambles, and above the heaps of slaughtered bodies which lay in the silent grass-grown streets were raised the hideous images of the hateful Alva and his vile attendant Vargas, scoffing at the miseries their inhuman cruelties had caused. In the great square at Brussels, where he had often tilted in happier days before the admiring gaze of eyes that loved the pride of chivalry, poor Egmont, with his friend Count Horn, was beheaded. His death was the signal for resistance, and the Prince of Orange, from his watch-tower beyond the Rhine, thought that the time had come for the deliverance of his country from the yoke of Spain. Aided by the Queen of England and the French Huguenots, he raised an army; a great battle was fought in Friesland, near the abbey of Heiligerlee, which ended favourably for the patriots; at Jemminghem, Duke Alva gained a victory, and William could obtain no advantage against him and was compelled to retire. Dreadful cruelties were again practised, but the patriots contrived to equip a fleet which preyed upon the Spanish vessels, and the "Beggars of the Sea" became a terror to the Spaniards. Commanded by William de la Marck, a descendant of the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, they captured Briel, and a general revolt took place in Holland and Zeeland. William of Orange entered Brabant at the head of twenty thousand men. Then followed a series of memorable

sieges and naval engagements. Haarlem yielded to the Spanish after a gallant stand, and the atrocious cruelties which were inflicted upon the half-starved citizens can hardly be credited. It is not to be wondered at that, when the wild "Beggars of the Seas," with De la Marck at their head, captured some Spaniards, they took summary vengeance on the persecutors of their country. At length Alva was recalled, and Requesens appointed governor of the Netherlands. He was a well-intentioned, conscientious man, who tried to win the favour of the people; but the exasperated patriots would not yield to the blandishments of Requesens that freedom which the cruelties of Alva had failed to deprive them of, and for which they had fought so vigorously. After some successful naval engagements, they were defeated at Mookerheyde, where the gallant Louis of Nassau, William's brother, was slain. Then followed the famous siege of Leyden, when the dykes were cut and the rising waves destroyed the Spanish camp and saved the city. The Spanish governor died suddenly in 1576, and a period of universal anarchy prevailed. The Spanish troops mutinied and fought amongst themselves; the nobles were divided, and pillage, violence, and crime were of daily occurrence. The excesses of the mutineers were frightful, especially at Alost, Ghent, Antwerp, and Maestricht, which they seized and sacked. Their three days' pillage of Antwerp for its ferocity and fury has never been equalled; seven thousand citizens were butchered, and the whole city became a scene of the wildest desolation and ruin.

The States-General met in 1576 at Ghent, assumed the government of the country, and the famous treaty called the Pacification of Ghent was drawn up and published. By it the provinces of Brabant, Flanders, Hainault, Artois, Holland, Zealand, and their associates were united for mutual defence and the expulsion of Spanish soldiers and foreigners. No one was allowed to injure or insult the exercise of the Catholic religion; edicts against heresy were suspended; the confiscation and unjust sentences of the previous years annulled, and the memorials of the hideous rule of Alva demolished. This famous charter was received with universal joy by the people in every part of the country, and for a moment it seemed that the cause of liberty had completely triumphed. But further troubles were in store for them, and war again broke out during the governorship of Don John of Austria, and afterwards of the Duke of Parma. These were enhanced by the jealousy of the nobles and the fickleness of the Walloons, who, with the usual characteristics of the Celtic race, were the first to embrace Reformation principles and the first to return to the Catholic fold. An attempt was made to negotiate between the King and the States, but the religious question rendered the attempt fruitless. Philip refused to grant liberty of conscience, and without this the Netherlanders refused to accept his terms. In 1580 the States-General finally threw off the Spanish yoke and declared the seven united provinces free and independent. The sovereignty was offered to the Duke of Alençon, and on December 30th the treaty was finally ratified at Delft.

During this stormy period, amid wars, confusion, and troubles of every kind, the Church fared ill. Well might the aged Archbishop Schenk of Utrecht exclaim on his death-bed, "Woe is me! wherefore was I born to see this misery of my people, and of the holy city, and to dwell there, when it was delivered into the hands of the enemy, and the sanctuary into the hands of strangers?" He died in the same year that the declaration of the independence of the United Provinces was signed and was buried in the cathedral. The history of the other Sees is one of desolation and ruin. After the siege of Haarlem, its bishop, Godfrey de Mierlo, who succeeded Nicolas Nieulant, retired to Bonn, and the See had no bishop for 164 years. Giles de Monte, Bishop of Deventer, died in 1577, and although the chapter continued to appoint grandvicars, there was no bishop. At Leeuwarden, Eunerus Petersen succeeded Remigius Dirutius, and seems to have been a vigorous prelate, upholding the Catholic cause until he was cast into prison and died at Cologne in 1580. The See of Groningen a Dominican, Arnold Nylen, ruled over, until the Calvinists captured the city in 1594, when he retired to Brussels. John van Stryen was Bishop of Middelburg in 1581, and was obliged to fly when the army of William captured the place. He was the only surviving bishop of the Church of Holland, and from his retreat at Louvain he watched over the remains of the once flourishing Church, ordaining priests to minister therein, until he died in 1594. The powerful Bishop of Liége, Gerard de Groesbeck, by his clemency to the Calvinists, pre-

vented the growth of heretical principles, and protected his city both from the armies of William and the Spanish garrison of Alva. The people of Liége were invited to join the confederate provinces at the Pacification of Ghent, but, acting on the advice of Gérard, they adopted a permanent neutrality, and perfect tranquillity was enjoyed by the principality until the death of Gérard in 1580. He was succeeded by Ernest, brother of the Emperor, a very different man, who preferred the pursuit of arms rather than the duties of the episcopate. He exercised jurisdiction also over the Sees of Munster and Cologne, whose bishops had embraced the Protestant cause. It is doubtful whether he was ever consecrated; he was entirely unsuited for the office which he held; his private life was not blameless, and he showed far more zeal for persecuting heretics than for providing for the welfare of his subjects. He remained Bishop of Liége until his death in 1612.

In the meantime, the hand which had so long guided the fortunes of the Netherlanders was removed. On the 10th of July 1584, William of Orange died by the hand of an assassin at Delft, whither he had gone to receive the sovereignty of the United Provinces from a grateful nation. Instigated by the reward offered by Philip, one Gaspar Anastro had previously attempted the foul murder of the Prince. The attempt had failed, and the assassin and his accomplices had been executed; their remains having been collected by the Jesuits some years later, were dignified as relics of holy martyrs. But Balthasar Gerard did his vile

work more successfully ; and the brave prince who had so long devoted his energies to his country's weal was slain by a pistol-shot discharged by the hand of this vile murderer. His last thoughts were for his country. "God pity me ! I am sadly wounded," he exclaimed ; "God have mercy on my soul, and on this unfortunate nation !" Feebly commending his soul to God, he expired. History does not narrate a sadder or more touching story of the death of a nation's hero, nor does it hold up as an example to subsequent ages the character of a wiser, nobler, or better man.

He has been accused of duplicity, treachery, cruelty, and other evils, but such charges have been brought against him somewhat recklessly by his enemies, who have striven to attach to the leader the responsibility for acts of which his followers were guilty, and for the prevention of which he strove with all the energy in his power. The Protestants, maddened by the terrible cruelties of Alva and by the hateful deeds of the myrmidons of Philip, were certainly guilty of many atrocious acts of cruelty and duplicity, such as the slaughter of the Catholics at Haarlem in 1577 on Corpus Christi Day ; but these deeds of darkness were done in spite of the wishes of William, and not with his concurrence. He endeavoured to promote religious toleration and to obtain equal rights for both Catholic and Protestant to worship with perfect liberty of conscience ; he tried by every means in his power to prevent the reprisals which men exasperated by persecution strove to inflict upon their former tyrants ;

and it were hard to hold him responsible for those acts which by word and deed he ever tried to prevent. That he did not always succeed in his endeavours was not due to his want of will or determination, but rather to the lawlessness of many of his followers, and the vengeful feelings which years of religious strife had gendered. He left behind him a son, the young Prince Maurice, upon whom the burden of sovereignty was soon to fall, his elder son being still kept as a prisoner in Spain by the treacherous Philip.

Alexander, Prince of Parma, profited by the death of William by making himself master of the whole of Flanders and of the provinces which comprise the modern Belgium. It is only possible for us to notice very briefly the repeated changes in the government and the endless fightings which ensued. The Duke of Parma was a wise and temperate ruler, and accorded to the towns in the Spanish Netherlands their ancient privileges. Philip ordered him to assemble in the harbours of Flanders as many vessels as he could collect for the purpose of invading England. The invincible Armada started on its disastrous mission, the results of which are too well known to require narrating, but it may be mentioned that the gallant sailors of the United Provinces, under the command of Justin of Nassau, an illegitimate son of the famous William, did good service to the English by preventing the ships of the Duke of Parma from putting to sea, and thus preventing a junction with the galleons of Spain.

On the death of the Duke (1592), while fighting

against Henry IV. and the French Protestants, Philip appointed his nephew Ernest, Archduke of Austria, as governor. This prince desired to promote peace with the United Provinces, but his proposals were rejected by Maurice, the courageous son of his undaunted father, under whose leadership the armies of the Hollanders seemed ever to prosper, and the United Provinces abound in prosperity, riches, and glory. On the seas they had no rival; their trade was enormous; each year two thousand ships were built, and the West and East Indies, America, Guinea, and other distant lands knew the fame of the Dutch sailors and yielded their produce to the merchants of Holland. The navies of Spain had often cause to dread the intrepidity of the Dutch sailors, who, a few years later, aroused the fears even of our native mariners. The ancient prosperity of Flanders had migrated northward, and Holland contained all the enterprise, the skill, and daring of the country.

On the death of Ernest, his brother, the Archduke Albert, was appointed governor. He married Isabella, the daughter of Philip II., and the bride and bridegroom were placed in possession of the Spanish Netherlands as sovereigns of the country. Thus the Netherlands were erected into a separate sovereignty, the United Provinces of the North being divided off into a distinct principality, the boundaries of which were specially defined. Albert and Isabella ruled wisely and well, and endeavoured to promote peace between the ever-contending states. A twelve years' truce was at length concluded in spite of the opposi-

tion of Prince Maurice, who loved the arts of war, and was well aware that his influence over his subjects was best maintained by the exercise of his unrivalled military skill. During this brief interval of peace the Northerners occupied themselves with internal strife and religious conflicts, to which we shall have occasion to refer later on; while the Southerners set themselves to repair their ruined towns, to rebuild their churches, to revive their industries, while art began to flourish again with the genius of Rubens.

The Archduke died, and the war broke out once more, to the advantage of the United Provinces. Prince Maurice captured several towns in spite of the energy and prudence of Isabella, who died 1633. Fighting continued during the governorship of Ferdinand, Cardinal and Archbishop of Toledo, and of his successor, Francisco de Mello, during whose rule the French invaded the southern provinces and threatened to conquer the country. Frederick Henry succeeded his brother Maurice as Stadtholder of Holland, and fearing the machinations of the French, he concluded a favourable treaty with Spain at the famous congress at Munster, whereby the United Provinces preserved their independence, maintained possession of all their conquests, and acquired rights of trade and navigation in the East and West Indies and other parts of the world.

Thus, after eighty years of hard fighting, the United Provinces acquired a full recognition of the independence which the brave people had striven so hard to gain. The new republic arose from its struggles a

free and independent state among the most powerful nations in Europe. It has been impossible to give more than a bare outline of the events which contributed to this grand result, and we will now turn to the ecclesiastical history of the country, with which we are more immediately concerned.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN HOLLAND AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPUBLIC.

Religious toleration—Edicts against the Catholics—Distinction made between the seculars and the Jesuits—Jesuits banished—Sasbold Vosmeer—Deplorable state of the Church—Sasbold consecrated Archbishop of Utrecht under the title of Philippi—Banished—Intrigues of Jesuits—Reply of Sasbold to their complaints—His pastoral—Statistics of Church—Reaction against Calvinism.

THE triumph of the patriots in Holland threw the affairs of the Church into the wildest confusion. At first several edicts were passed which accorded to the Protestant sectaries the free exercise of their religion, and forbade any interference with the Catholics or any attacks upon their churches, their persons, or their property. But this favourable condition of affairs did not last long. In 1580 the magistrates of Utrecht published a placard interdicting the exercise of the Catholic religion, the use of all clerical dress, and ordering the confiscation of the property of churchmen. Similar edicts were published in other places, and at Brussels, in 1581, the exercise of the Catholic religion was temporarily proscribed. At Haarlem, the Catholics were plundered, and fines and imprisonments were imposed upon all who remained faithful to the ancient religion. Nor were acts of violence and

shameful cruelty on the part of the Protestants wanting; and the deeds of the notorious Lumey, of Marin Brand, the martyrdoms of the faithful at Gorcum, for their atrocious cruelty and barbarous inhumanity may well be compared to the terrible proceedings of Alva and Vargas.

In the following years placards continued to be published against the Catholics, but we find that a very remarkable distinction was made between the secular clergy who were natives of the country and the foreign priests and monks, and especially the Jesuits, who began to pervade the land. The excesses of the latter, their seditious spirit, their greediness of wealth, the shameful practices which were attributed to them, were the main reasons for the promulgation of many of these edicts. So hateful were they to the authorities, that in 1622 the Jesuits were banished from the United Provinces as "a pernicious and murderous sect;" ten years previously the "*dannosa Jesuitarum secta*" had been driven from Holland and West Friesland. To this Order we shall often have occasion to refer in narrating the troubles of the struggling Church of Holland. *Ubi male, nemo pejus*, is certainly the legend of the Society of Jesus inscribed upon the records of its proceedings in the Low Countries, although in other parts of the world, in America, in China, and Japan, its members have shown the truth of the rest of the proverb, *Ubi bene, nemo melius*.

In the midst of the troubles which followed the revolt after the death of Archbishop Schenk, Sasbold

Vosmeer, a man of great learning and piety, was appointed Grand-Vicar during the vacancy of the See, and arrived at Utrecht in 1583. He found everything in a deplorable state. The churches were in a condition to be compared with those of the first ages.¹ The greater number of the religious were either apostate or had fled. Few remained faithful. Most of them were entirely ignorant, without manners, unruly; they had married and lived on the wealth which they had managed to save from the destruction of the monasteries. From the degeneracy of the regular clergy it is pleasant to turn to the examples of faithfulness exhibited by the seculars. Sasbold bears witness to their constancy and courage in perilous circumstances. At Haarlem there were a hundred priests, more than two hundred at Utrecht, and about twenty or thirty in the principal towns. They did not remain in the villages, but they visited the Catholics in the rural districts and received them secretly in the towns, whither the faithful came for the consolations of religion.

Historians compare the situation of the Catholic Church of Holland to that of the Churches in the first ages during the Pagan persecutions. Deprived of their temples, their goods, their revenues, and all the external glory which they once possessed in the days when kings delighted to bring their glory and honour into the Church of Christ, they possessed nothing but the spiritual gifts which Christ had committed to His Church for the grand work of the sanctification of the elect.

¹ Letter to P. Oliverius, Feb. 30, 1597.

Sasbold set himself at once to combat the enormous difficulties of the situation, and to face the dangers which threatened the Church not only from the Calvinists, but also from the Jesuits, who were strongly opposed to the preservation of episcopal authority, and pretended that they were independent of all such control. He vehemently urged the re-establishment of the archbishopric of Utrecht. Two candidates were elected, but were removed by death before consecration. It was suggested that he should be appointed Bishop of Haarlem, but the opposition of the Jesuits prevented the scheme from being carried out. The Papal nuncio at Brussels encouraged Sasbold in his attempt to revive the archbishopric, "Though I dare not," said he, "openly support the idea, for I have no mind to give the Jesuits a handle for calling me a Sasboldian."¹ Sasbold was constrained at last to go to Pope Clement VIII. at Rome, where he was consecrated Archbishop of Utrecht (1602); but, lest the title should give offence, he was named Archbishop of Philippi instead of Utrecht.

Sasbold was not permitted to exercise the duties of his office for any length of time; six weeks after his consecration he was banished by the States-General on a charge of treason through the machinations of his enemies the Jesuits. "This faction," wrote the Archbishop, "afflicts us more than the persecution of the Protestants. I think that it is more unbearable, and more injurious to the Church." Their plan seems

¹ "Nullus est episcopus vel pastor, qui possit cum illis convenire" was the statement of the Nuncio (*Trast. Hist.*, 5, 1598).

to have been to render themselves masters of the Church, to exclude from its government all the secular clergy and all the regulars who did not belong to their Order, and to rule with undisturbed authority. They refused to recognise the power of the bishops, pleading their special privileges; they used all the arts of deceit and trickery, promising to recognise their ecclesiastical superiors, but continuing to maintain their entire independence. Well might Sasbold declare that the Society was entirely opposed to the decrees of the Catholic Church. He tried to reason with them, but without any avail. They tried in vain by subtle means to alienate the affections of his clergy, and brought accusations against him before the Papal Court. They complained of the conduct of the secular clergy, of their own ministrations being hindered and their teaching maligned; they were regarded by the parish priests as intruders instead of being welcomed as fellow-labourers. The Nuncio brought their complaints before the Archbishop, who made inquiries, and the following is the reply of the Utrecht clergy to their accusers:—

“ We have never yet found that the Jesuits go and labour where they find the greatest destitution. Which of them was ever known to attend a case of plague? Which of them is in the habit of going forth and preaching in the villages, and enduring the labour and fasting consequent? The whole people, the whole province can testify that the parish priests are indefatigable in these things, and make no difference between the rich man’s mansion and the poor man’s cottage. If we

have done wrong, we submit ourselves humbly and are ready to amend. The scar has scarcely begun to heal, and here are new wounds." A concordat was at length drawn up between the Jesuits and the clergy, which allowed the former a large amount of liberty of action. During the twelve years' truce their numbers increased, their boldness waxed greater, and at length Sasbold published his celebrated pastoral against them, which ran as follows :—

“ Since the progress of the Church consists in the observation of the sacred canons, and all order is confounded if her pastors are hindered in their office, it is intolerable that certain religious who profess themselves sent for the assistance of the pastors, should not only violate their rights, but should also, at the solicitation of some few persons, presume to ordain fresh priests over those who have been rightly appointed by us, in contempt of us and of the Apostolic See, which we represent. We therefore, desirous to remedy the increasing schism, and to provide as we may for the quiet and profit of the faithful, do by the aforesaid apostolic authority, in those places which have their appointed pastors, suspend all seculars and religious, of whatever condition, even mendicants and Jesuits, from all administration of the Sacraments, and from preaching the Word of God. And since it is well known that at different times, and in this very year, many have come to these provinces from other parts with an offer of the ministrations of religion, and on that pretext collecting alms from the faithful—men who called themselves doctors or priests from the

mendicant Orders or from the Jesuits, although they had taken no degree and had received no orders, whence much evil and sacrilege necessarily followed; we, in order that we may betimes provide against such ills and impieties, and against the factions of unjust men, forbid all the faithful committed and entrusted to us, in virtue of holy obedience, and under the penalty of excommunication and other fitting animadversions, to receive, without consent from us, or of the pastors constituted by us, or to introduce into ecclesiastical functions, priests coming from other quarters, or to gather congregations, or in any other way make contributions to that end. Paternally admonishing and conjuring them that, mindful of the apostolic doctrine, they submit themselves with pious simplicity to their superiors, and obey them, and rest in their direction, knowing that those who hear them hear Christ, and those who reject them reject Christ, who hath promised to be with them even to the end of the world.

“Given from the place of our residence, the 16th day of December 1609.

“SASBOLD, ARCHBISHOP,
Vicar-Apostolic.”

This plain speaking made the Jesuits furious. They denounced the ordinance of the Archbishop, and declared that by publishing such a document he had *ipso facto* incurred the penalty of excommunication. They endeavoured to procure the suppression of the See, or the appointment of Arboreus, a Jesuit, as coadjutor of

Sasbold. But their machinations were not crowned with success; Arboreus was recalled from Holland, and his successor, P. Minden, promised dutiful obedience to the prelate (1611). Their influence was also crippled by the action of the States-General of Holland and West Friesland, which passed a decree against them in 1612.

During the time of the plague, which raged at Oldenzaal and at Lingen, the Archbishop exerted himself with his accustomed zeal in ministering to the sick, and at length, after thirty years of arduous government, which conferred incalculable benefits upon the struggling Church, Sasbold died at Brussels in 1614. The letter which he wrote just before his death to the Nuncio at Brussels gives us some idea of the state of the Church at this time. Of the hundred and forty canons who composed the five chapters of the Cathedral, there remained in 1614 only four, and five vicars at S. Martin's; the dean, treasurer, and six vicars at S. Saviour's; six canons and five vicars at S. Peter's; two canons and five vicars at S. John's; and eight canons and seven vicars at S. Mary's. There were about forty parish priests living in the town of Utrecht, who celebrated mass daily and held divine service on Sundays and saints' days in about a dozen oratories in the city. About five hundred priests resided in the province. In the other towns of the diocese there were forty-one at Rotterdam, eight at Leyden, six at Amersfoort, five at Gouda, three at Delft, &c. In Gueldres and Cleves, where the Catholic worship was permitted, there was a large

number of clergy, and the chapter of Emmerick was left undisturbed.

The Church flourished also in the diocese of Haarlem, having twenty priests in the episcopal city and four monks; six at Amsterdam and seven monks; seven at Alkmaar and two monks; eleven at Hoorn, &c. The Chapter at Deventer remained as before the Reformation, and also that of Oldenzaal with twenty-four priests. There were seventeen priests in Leeuwarden and Groningen, and in the diocese of Middelburg only one remained, the clergy of Utrecht supplying the deficiency and ministering to the few Catholics who resided there. Before the Reformation there were four hundred and forty monasteries, but these were almost entirely suppressed, and in 1614 only two remained. The secular clergy throughout the country were remarkable for their virtues, their labours, and their zeal and courage in perilous times. Some of their names have been handed down to us, and we may mention Martin Regius, who worked in Zealand, and nearly met his death at Flushing at the hands of a mob, who wished to drown him. "If I had five-and-twenty Martins," Sasbold once said, "Holland would be converted in six months." After an arduous life, sometimes suffering chains and imprisonment for the faith, he died in 1625. Silrand Sextius was the indefatigable Vicar-General of Haarlem, Groningen, and Leeuwarden, chaplain to the Béguines at Amsterdam, and continued his labours in spite of prohibition and persecution. He died 1631. Amongst other worthies of the Church appear the names of Francis de Dussel-

dorp, Urban Bolius, Theodore de Witt, and Nomius, Dean of the Haarlem Chapter. Sasbold estimates the number of the faithful laity in the diocese of Utrecht at 3000. This number was afterwards, during the time of Rovenius, the successor of Sasbold, considerably increased.

A reaction took place in favour of the old religion. There was manifest a strong aversion to Calvinism, because of the rigid and intolerant spirit displayed by its adherents. Religious toleration was a thing unknown, and the severe treatment which the Catholics received caused many to sympathise with them and to return to the Church. The ministers of the Reformed religion arrogated to themselves a direct influence in political affairs, which was strongly resented by the people; the old clergy, who had held a constitutional place in the Estates of Utrecht, were preferred to these noisy, self-asserting, and unscrupulous preachers who occupied the place of the ancient ecclesiastics, whose possessions they had seized. The new ministers manifested a greedy and covetous spirit, and actually demolished and sold at an auction for 12,300 florins the old cathedral of Utrecht, the earliest in the country, where S. Willibrod had ministered, and which was once the glory of the Netherlands. Such conduct disgusted many of the laity, and caused them to return to the Church; and this defection from Calvinism was greatly increased by the appalling results of the Arminian and Gomarist controversy, which culminated in the famous Synod of Dort, where "theology was mystified, religion disgraced, and Christianity

outraged.”¹ Although this dispute amongst Calvinists lies outside the domain of the history of the Church, yet inasmuch as it had a great influence on the religious life of the country, and opened men’s eyes to the true nature of Calvinism, and inasmuch as its effects were far-reaching and important, it will be necessary to give a brief account of the controversy.

¹ Grattan’s “Netherlands.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SYNOD OF DORT.

Arminius—*Supralapsarii* and *Infralapsarii*—Gomarus—Disputations—Death of Arminius—The strife continues—The remonstrance—Contra-remonstrance—Politics mingled with the religious dispute—Action of Prince Maurice—Synod of Dort—Foreign divines present at the Synod—Four English theologians sent by James I.—Unjust treatment of the Remonstrants—Episcopiüs—Bogermann—Withdrawal of the Remonstrants—Disgraceful scenes—Influence of English divines—Explanation of their position—Conclusion of Synod—Sentences pronounced on the Remonstrants—Arminianism survives.

THE famous dispute which distracted the Reformed party in Holland arose concerning the doctrine of Calvin with regard to predestination. In 1588 a learned and celebrated preacher named Arminius was appointed to one of the churches in Amsterdam, where he gained great respect and popularity. He was a native of Oudwater, and had studied at Basle and other universities. At Amsterdam one Theodore Roörnherth had declared that Calvin's doctrine made God the author of sin, and therefore could not be true, and Arminius was requested to refute the statements of so perverse a "heretic." The strict Calvinists believed that the eternal counsel of God necessitated even the Fall itself, but the Reformed clergy of Delft were of opinion that some degree of limitation should

be placed to Calvin's extreme views, and that predestination only applied to events subsequent to the Fall. Hence arose the two parties distinguished by the names *Supralapsarii* and *Infralapsarii*. Arminius at once set himself to examine the opinions of those whom he was called upon to oppose, and was gradually drawn away from that dark and dismal doctrine which dishonours God and shuts the gate of mercy on mankind. Whilst his opinions were being formed, the death of Franciscus Junius, a professor of Leyden University, occurred, and Arminius was appointed to the vacant chair of theology. Here he encountered Franciscus Gomarus, the champion of the strict Calvinist party, with whom the controversy raged continuously. Much popular feeling was shown against Arminius; his errors were vehemently denounced from the pulpits of the Gomarists, and yet throughout he manifested an admirable spirit of Christian charity, abstaining from giving offence or showing angry resentment, adhering to what he believed to be the truth in spite of the hatred and anathemas of his vehement opponents.

For a time at least comparative peace was established between Arminius and Gomarus, but the excitement spread; party spirit ran high, and men began to range themselves on one side or the other. Prince Maurice, for political reasons, announced himself a Gomarist; the patriotic Barneveldt, who did so much to secure the political welfare of his country, was a follower of Arminius. The University of Leyden was distracted, the students who attended the lectures of

Arminius were denounced by his opponents, and confusion reigned supreme. The States-General interfered, and at a meeting of the Synod the rival theologians argued and disputed, with the result that Arminius gained the day by his reasonable statements of doctrine and his gentle manner, while Gomarus raged and disputed, calling forth the remark of one of the spectators that he would rather appear before God with the faith of Arminius than with the charity of Gomarus.¹

There is something very attractive in the character, the modesty, and gentleness of Arminius. "There are those," he said, "who will speak perchance insultingly of me because I sometimes seem to answer doubtfully, when, as they imagine, a doctor and professor of theology, whose office it is to teach others, ought to be confident and not to fluctuate in his opinions. I answer to these suggestions, first, that the most learned and the most skilled in Scripture must still be ignorant of many things, and that he himself must ever be a scholar in the school of Christ and the Scriptures. But he who is ignorant of many things ought surely not to be expected to reply without a doubt to the various questions which necessity may create, or which may arise in controversy with numerous adversaries. For far better is it that when he has no certain knowledge of a subject he should speak doubtfully rather than confidently, and signify that he confesses the need of a daily progress, and is seeking instruction in common with others. I trust, indeed, that no one has advanced to such a height

¹ Limborch, *Relatio Historica*. Brantius.

of boldness as to pretend that, being a master, he is ignorant of nothing and doubtful in nothing."

Another disputation took place at the Hague without much apparent result, and shortly afterwards, worn out by his exertions and anxiety, Arminius died, surrounded by his friends, amongst whom were Witenbogat and Borries, in 1609. But the strife continued after the leader's departure, and the Gomarists endeavoured to expel from their parishes all ministers who were suspected of favouring the opinions of their opponents. These they required should testify their agreement to the Confession and Catechism of Heidelberg; they threatened with expulsion all who refused. This conduct called forth the famous Remonstrance which gave the name to the followers of the deceased leader, and contained a clear statement of their views. Whereas the doctrine of Calvin taught that from all eternity God predestinated a certain fixed number of individuals, irrespective of anything in them, to final salvation and glory, and that all others are either predestined to damnation, or at least so left out of God's decree to glory that they must inevitably perish; the Arminians, on the other hand, believed that, although God predestined a certain fixed number of individuals to glory, this decree was not arbitrary, but in consequence of God's foreknowledge that those so predestinated would make a good use of the grace given; and that, as God necessarily sees all things, so foreseeing the faith of individuals, He hath, in strict justice, ordered His decrees accordingly.¹

¹ Bishop Harold Browne's "Exposition of the XXXIX. Articles."

The Calvinist party replied to the Remonstrants by a contra-remonstrance and received the title of Contra-Remonstrants. Angry recriminations, deplorable contests, and even riots ensued. The election of a successor to Arminius at Leyden, who had nominated his pupil Vorstius, was the cause of much strife, and even the King of England, James I., a decided Gomarist, mingled in the war of words and advised the States-General to burn the new professor for heresy.

In the meantime politics were mingled with the religious dispute. Prince Maurice was striving after supreme power, and he made use of the controversy in order to gain adherents. The Gomarists became the supporters of the Prince and his policy; the Arminianists, Grotius, Barneveldt, and others, became the stern opponents of Maurice's attempt to trample upon the liberties of the states and to gain supreme power. At length the Prince seized Barneveldt, Grotius, Hoogerbeets, and Ledenberg and imprisoned them. The Gomarists clamoured for a meeting of a National Synod, and on 13th November 1618 the famous Synod of Dort held its first sitting. Its avowed object was the overthrow of Arminianism, and every device was adopted which could advance that desired end. Twenty-eight foreign divines were present, amongst whom were Bishop Hall, then Dean of Worcester, Dr. Davenant, professor of divinity at Cambridge, Carleton, Bishop of Llandaff, and Dr. Samuel Ward. It is a surprising and regrettable circumstance that representatives of the Church of England should have been officially present at such an assembly, but

this was owing to the will of the king, James; it was the action of the sovereign, and not of the Church of England; and political considerations rather than any declared agreement with the objects of the Synod caused English churchmen to be involved in proceedings which did little credit to any one concerned in them.

It is a tedious task to wade through the records of the Synod, and our space prevents us from giving even a *resumé* of the proceedings of its 152 sittings, which lasted during six months. From first to last the Remonstrants were treated with injustice and gross harshness; their demands for a fair and impartial hearing were pronounced "insolent, iniquitous, untimely, and hostile to their rulers." They had an able and eloquent leader in Episcopius, whose conduct during the Synod was a strong contrast to the violent and outrageous behaviour of Bogermann, the president, Gomarus, and their allies. It was evident from the beginning that the intention of the Contra-Remonstrants was not to investigate the truth of certain doctrines, but to pronounce a severe and predetermined sentence upon their opponents. After many sittings and endless wrangling, despairing of a fair and impartial inquiry into their doctrines, the Remonstrants withdrew from the Synod, the foreign theologians vainly endeavouring to promote harmony between the contending parties. The president dismissed them with a violent and indecent speech, accusing them of lying, fraud, equivocation, and deceit. Episcopius with dignity replied, "We make no answer

to these accusations, but keep silence with our Saviour Jesus Christ, who will one day determine respecting these our lies and deceit." Another of the party said, "We appeal to the judgment of God, at which they who now sit as judges will appear to be judged."

The Synod then proceeded to examine the writings of the Arminians in order to pronounce sentence upon them; the opinion of the foreigners was not always received with respect, unless it coincided with that of the Hollanders, and Bishop Hall withdrew from the Synod on the plea of ill-health. Many points of difference arose among the Gomarist faction, and lest their bickerings should create uneasiness to the whole body of Calvinists, many meetings were held in private. Disgraceful scenes constantly occurred, such as when Gomarus "delivered a speech which none but a madman would have uttered," with "sparkling eyes and fierceness of pronounciation," while Sibrandus "raved and fumed with wild and ungovernable passion."¹

This method of discussing religious questions was exceedingly distasteful to the English divines, and the Bishop of Llandaff gravely remonstrated, and urged the president "to look that the knot of unity were not broken." At length, on March 21st, the opinions of the members were collected, and the task of framing the canons was begun. In this work the English theologians were of great use in checking some of the wild statements which the extreme party strove to fashion into decrees. Some they caused to be

¹ Balcanqual's "Letters from the Synod of Dort."

struck out; some of the harsh expressions were modified; and when they were asked to declare that the decrees of the Synod ought to be esteemed the doctrines of the Reformed Churches, they absolutely refused. They said "that they were deputed to the Synod by their King, and not by their Church; that they were by no means empowered to explain the Confession of their Church, but had only delivered their own private opinions, as thinking them agreeable to the truth; and that they had agreed to many things in these canons of which there was not the least notice taken in the Articles of the Church of England, which they had done because they were not sensible that any of the matters therein contained were repugnant to the said Articles."

This public explanation of the position of the English divines is important, and shows that the Church of England was in no way compromised by the decrees of the Synod of Dort; that, although reformed, she was not as a mere company of Calvinistic sectaries; and that the private opinions of the English clergy at Dort did not pledge the Church of England to any acceptance of the views expressed. The English divines throughout the proceedings showed great tact and judgment, and when the decree of condemnation and deprivation of the Remonstrants was introduced, they refused to pass censure upon them, being subjects of another state and prince, and indeed objected to the severity of the judgment. "Never did any church of old, nor any reformed church, propose so many articles to be held *sub pœnâ excommunicationis*," one

of our countrymen declared, adding that it was hard for a man to be deposed who did not hold every particular. They boldly vindicated the advantage of episcopacy, maintaining that it had the authority of Scripture, and that the troubles in Holland might be attributed to the want of bishops, who, by their power and authority, would have restrained factious and seditious spirits and prevented contention. The Hollanders replied that they highly valued the good order and discipline of the Church of England, and that they wished with all their hearts that the same order existed amongst themselves. But this, they added, was not to be hoped for yet. All that they could do was to pray that God would assist them by His grace and favour, and to resolve that nothing in their own power should be left undone to secure such a blessing.¹ This is a somewhat remarkable statement for a company of Calvinists to have made, and was possibly due to the influence which the presence of the English clergy had produced during that strange six months' conclave.

At length the proceedings came to a close in May, and the foreign divines were dismissed with words of gratitude and respect. The president declared that a work had been accomplished truly miraculous, which caused hell to tremble, and amazed both their friends and enemies, neither of whom had expected to see such an end of their misfortunes and miseries.²

Such was the Synod of Dort. The triumphant party were not slow in putting into execution their

¹ Brandt, vol. iii. p. 288.

² Idem., vol. iii. p. 305.

resolutions against their opponents. They showed no mercy. Barneveldt was executed at the Hague ere a few days had passed. Grotius and Hoogerbeets were condemned to perpetual imprisonment. The escape of the former by the help of his daughter in a chest which was brought into his cell containing books is one of the most remarkable in history. He was one of the most famous writers of his age, and after his escape found a home and hearty welcome in the court of the French king. Episcopius and his colleagues were doomed to exile, and found a refuge in the duchy of Schleswig, where they lived under the protection of the Duke, Frederick IV., and founded a city which they named Frederickstadt, in honour of their patron.

The hopes of the Calvinists were doomed to disappointment. The opinions of the opposite party found favour with a large number of the people, who sympathised with the banished ministers. The Church of England was the first to reject the canons of Dort; the Protestants of France and Germany expressed themselves shocked and grieved, and even the Calvinists of Geneva declined to accept the decrees of the Synod. Arminianism refused to be slain by it, and eleven years after the Synod closed its memorable career, they were allowed to build a church at Amsterdam and to found a college, of which, in 1634, Episcopius became the first theological professor. Thus ended a controversy which for vehemence, bigotry, and intolerance is as remarkable as any which can be found in ecclesiastical history.

CHAPTER XVIII.

STATE OF THE CHURCH IN BELGIUM AFTER THE REFORMATION.

Revival of the Church—Archbishop Hauchin—Torrentius, Bishop of Antwerp—Success of the Church—William Lindanus of Ruremonde—Labours of the Jesuits—Improved condition of the country under Albert and Isabella—Synod held by Archbishop Hosius—His address—Great effect of the Synod—Activity of the Church—Bishopric of Liège—Revolt of the *Grignoux*—Revival at Tournay—John de Venduille, Bishop of Tournay—His reforms—James Boonen, Archbishop of Mechlin—John a Wachtendonck, Bishop of Namur—Rovenius, Archbishop of Utrecht—Surrender of Oldenzaal—Reforms the Chapter of Utrecht—Persecution of Catholics—Escape of Rovenius—Increase of the Church—*Klopjes*—Archbishop Kafenza's account of Church of Holland.

SEASONS of trial and trouble often confer lasting benefits upon churches as upon individuals; they purge away what is evil, arouse latent energies, and promote piety and zeal. During the last decade of the seventeenth century the Church in the Belgian provinces awoke from her listless state and displayed an energy which in previous years had only manifested itself in persecuting heretics. With the usual unsteadfastness of the Celtic mind, the Walloons had returned to the Catholic Church, which in the Belgian provinces was subservient to Rome. Under the leadership of some able and hard-working bishops the Church began to show signs of vigorous growth. Archbishop Hauchin at Brussels and Mechlin gained many adherents;

and Antwerp, having been deprived of a pastor for many years, received (1587) as its bishop the celebrated Liévin Vanderbeke, surnamed Torrentius. He worked wonders; more than eight thousand Protestants returned to the Church; the havoc wrought by fanatical iconoclasts and furious soldiers was repaired, and the metropolis of commerce became also that of the faith.¹ The Bishop of Bruges, Druitius, revived the Catholic religion in that city; and Ypres, Tournay, and Cambrai recovered themselves and forgot their misfortunes in their present blessings conferred upon them by wise and good prelates.

One of the most notable bishops of the time was William Lindanus of Ruremonde, who was driven from his See by the Calvinists, and resided chiefly at Maestricht; to him Breda, Bois-le-Duc, Grave, Venloo, Nimègue owe their reconversion to the Catholic faith by his reforming the clergy and establishing schools. At his death, in 1588, he was succeeded by Henry Cuick; and Clement Crabeels, a zealous man, was appointed to the See of Bois-le-Duc. During the rule of the Duke of Parma the Jesuits began to multiply. Hitherto they had two principal colleges, at St. Omer and at Louvain. Now most of the chief towns were invaded by *les enfants d'Ignace*. They were recalled to Douay, whence they had been expelled. Maestricht, Tournay, Courtrai, Ghent, Ypres, Mons, Luxembourg, and Brussels all received the members of the Society, who began to exercise great influence in the ecclesiastical affairs of the Belgian Church.

¹ Smet, *Belgique Catholique*, iii. 185.

Conspicuous among the Jesuits was De Sailly, a native of Brussels, who spent three years of his life in a mission to Russia. Compelled by the state of his health to return to his country, he was attached to the camp of the Duke, whose confessor he became. He laboured zealously among the soldiers, and with several of his colleagues shared the perils and hardships of the camp. Some of them also dared the dangers of shipwreck and naval warfare in the fleet of the Duke. The pioneers of the Order in Holland were William de Leeuw and Anthony Duyst.

Undoubtedly these men were devoted sons of the Church; they laboured hard in the prisons and hospitals, and in the Belgian provinces did good service to the cause of religion; but their success begat arrogance; the influence of their Society began to be their first aim, and in Holland at least they showed their worst side, as we have already seen, despising the authority of the secular clergy and bishops, whose influence they endeavoured to undermine and to supersede by their own.

Under the wise government of Albert and Isabella during the twelve years' truce the southern provinces began to recover from the terrible effects of continuous warfare. The state of the country was deplorable; emigration, caused by the cruelties of Alva and the Inquisition, had depopulated the villages; its commerce had been transferred to Holland; its industries to England; its agriculture was in abeyance. Wolves howled in regions once fertile amid the ruined abodes of its former inhabitants, and the terrible effects of war

and persecution were visible everywhere. When peace was proclaimed the people began to build the waste places; buildings and churches were raised from ruinous heaps. Encouraged by the sovereigns, Belgian art began to flourish once more. From the printing-presses of Plantin, at Antwerp, splendid specimens of typographical skill began again to be issued. Bollandus, a Jesuit of Belgium, commenced his famous work, *Acta Sanctorum*, and Rubens laid the foundations of that famous school of painters whose works are the admiration of the world. Nor was the Church behind-hand in this general improvement and revival. In 1607 a Synod was held, presided over by Archbishop Mathias Hosius, and attended by many worthy prelates, amongst whom were John le Mire of Antwerp, Charles Masius of Ypres, Henry Cuick of Ruremonde, Gisbert Masius of Bois-le-Duc, Peter Damant of Ghent, and Philip de Rodoan of Bruges.

The opening speech of the president displays the mournful condition of the Church in the Belgian provinces. "Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire; come and let us build up the walls, that we be no more a reproach." "Is not this," said the Archbishop, "a true picture of our own distress; our temples are defiled, our monasteries destroyed, our altars profaned. Not only have the storms desolated these monuments of stone, but the living temples of God have been shattered by the tempests, and are devoted to the shades of hell, in Holland, Zealand, Gueldres, Frisia, and to the borders of our provinces.

Is it not a reproach and a scandal? How has it come to pass that the ministers of Christ have deserted our churches in so great a number? Each village once had many pastors, now there is scarcely one in the towns, and many villages have not even a single clergyman. Others have abandoned their vows of virtue; our schools are, with few exceptions, deserted; our catechists have departed; our seminaries do not exist, or are deprived of their resources. To add to our sorrows, the holy things are benumbed, the ceremonies are neglected, the Word of God is forgotten, whilst impious books are circulated among the people, and the leaven of heresy deposited in many hearts ferments secretly. To us, my brethren, to us is the blame for these misfortunes due! Our charity is frozen; the love of the truth has deserted us; our soul is wearied of the holy manna, of the Word of God and the holy Sacraments! O Church of Belgium, how have you been disturbed through our faults! how has your heart been bruised! My brothers, let us restore the power of the Cross in the face of these so great miseries and necessities. Shall we not present a wall of brass to defend the house of Israel? Shall we be content to receive the homage of the faithful ones, and shall we not go and seek after the lost sheep? May God never address to us the reproof which the Lord spake to Zacharias, 'O shepherd, a true idol!' How can he who has eyes which never can detect scandals, ears which never hear the feet of the wolf, a throat without voice, and feet without movement, stir himself to defend the sacred fold? Come, it is time to build the walls of Zion.'

These eloquent and earnest words stirred the minds of the assembly, and resolutions were passed by the Synod which had a good effect in arousing the zeal of the bishops and in removing some of the causes of scandal which the Archbishop so earnestly deplored.

The effect of the Synod was marvellous. The bishops set an example which was eagerly followed by the other clergy and laity. Monasteries were rebuilt and new convents established; the Minims, one of the numerous branches of the Franciscans, displayed great activity, establishing themselves at Antwerp (1614), at Brussels (1615), at Lille and at Liége (1618), at Grammont, Douay, Louvain, and other places. The Carmelites, Dominicans, the Augustinian friars, the Capuchins, and other Orders also founded new houses; and the Church, still clinging to all its superstitions, showed an activity which possibly might have stemmed the torrent of reformation ideas if it had been displayed a hundred years before.

At Liége, Bishop Ernst still guided the fortunes of the Church in his diocese, and towards the end of his life ruled his diocese well; he founded two seminaries, at Liége and S. Trond, and built a large hospital called "La Maison de Bavière." Dying in 1612, he was succeeded by his nephew, Ferdinand of Bavaria, who, by his arbitrary conduct, renewed the quarrels with the burghers of Liége which were so frequent in former days. The Bishop claimed the power to elect the chief magistrate of the city, a right which had been always strongly disputed by the

turbulent citizens. They openly revolted against their prince under the leadership of William de Beeckman and Sebastian la Ruelle. They were called *Grignoux* or *Grognards* (the grumblers), and were assisted by the king of France, while Spain espoused the cause of the partisans of the Bishop, who were named *Chiroux*, or swallows. La Ruelle was assassinated, and this so enraged the people that they banished the leaders of the opposite party. The Bishop was not allowed to enter the city until the troops of Germany, under Maximilian Henry of Bavaria, marched to Liége and compelled the citizens to yield. Four of the Grignoux were beheaded and a tower was constructed to overawe the city and prevent any subsequent revolt. Ferdinand died in 1650, and was succeeded by Maximilian Henry.

These contentions did not advance the cause of the Church in the diocese of Liége, but in Tournay, under the leadership of some earnest prelates, the revival, which we noticed in the other parts of the provinces, progressed satisfactorily. Maximilian Morillon, consecrated in 1583, did not live long enough to accomplish much; but John de Venduille, doctor of Douay, who succeeded him in 1588, set an example of earnestness and piety which conferred great benefits on the Church. Before consecration he retired from Douay and spent six weeks in solitude, preparing his soul by prayer, meditation, and devotion for the high dignity of the episcopacy. He was consecrated on May 29, 1588, by S. de Berlaimont, Archbishop of Cambray, and Matthew Moulart, Bishop of Arras;

and he kept up the memory of that day by a yearly festival, imploring the grace of God to enable him to perform the duties of his high office, and to make his service more pleasing to God. He accomplished a thorough reform throughout his diocese, admonishing or suspending incapable or scandalous priests, calling together a synod and making a thorough diocesan visitation, exhorting the people, and confirming about sixteen thousand persons. He lived a simple and frugal life, dispensing with all outward magnificence, having no horses, servants, or retinue when he travelled, and only taking with him three or four priests. His palace was simply furnished; destitute of fine paintings, the walls were adorned with goodly sentences in letters of gold, amongst which were these, "Sint episcopi supellex, et mensa modesta, victus frugalis."—*Concil. Trident.*, sess. 25, cap. 1, *de Reformat.* The good Bishop was loved and venerated by all, and his example had a great effect upon the laity and endeared them to the Church. And not only for his own countrymen did he labour, but he recognised the duty of the Church with regard to missionary work, writing to Pope Gregory XIII. a letter concerning the conversion of infidels, pagans, and heretics, and founding seminaries for the clergy of the English or other nations. After a rule of only four years, during which he had done much good service, he died in 1592.¹

Michel d'Esne succeeded him in 1597, and during his rule a temperance movement was inaugurated to

¹ Cousin, *Histoire de Tournay*, iv. cap. 59.

stem the tide of drunkenness, which was very prevalent in the province; amongst other provisions, the sale of fiery wine or brandy was forbidden. No events of importance occurred during his rule, which lasted until 1614. This bishop consecrated David Keornay Archbishop of Cassel in Ireland, at the church of the Abbey of S. Martin at Tournay, in 1603.

After the death of Hosius, Archbishop of Mechlin, to whom the religious revival in his province was mainly due, James Boonen, Dean of the cathedral, was appointed to the vacant Metropolitan See (1620). He proved himself a worthy successor, and carried on the good work which had been so zealously begun. He called together a meeting of the bishops of his province, when many effectual and useful decrees were passed, and by his careful administration of the diocese made it conspicuous among the other Belgian Sees for its organisation and piety. When the royal treasury was well-nigh exhausted he gave largely to supply his country's needs, and his private charity was considerable. He loved to give alms to the poor with his own hands unknown to his domestics. On one occasion, needing money to bestow alms, he took the gem from his episcopal ring and sold it, substituting a sham one in its place. During the time of the troubles of the Church in Scotland, the banished bishops, priests, and laymen from that country found in the charitable Archbishop a friend and ready helper. He died in 1655, and was succeeded by Andrew Cruesen, Bishop of Ruremonde, whose ill-health did

not suffer him to occupy the See more than eight years.

The diocese of Namur was mainly reformed by the good Bishop John a Wachtendonck, who strove to restore the lapsed discipline and to eliminate the lax morals of the clergy in that part of the country. For that purpose he called together a synod, which passed some useful and salutary decrees and statutes. He was appointed Archbishop of Mechlin in 1667 in his old age, not to rule his See, but "to die in his nest."¹ He lived there only one year.

These examples which we have taken of Belgian bishops, and the brief account of their work, their synods, their zeal and piety, show the improvement which had taken place in the condition of the Church. With the exception of the Prince-Bishop of Liége, all the prelates were able, learned, and hard-working men, very different from the type of pre-Reformation bishops, whose incapacity and careless lives helped to bring about that great defection from the Church which occurred in the sixteenth century, and whose eagerness for persecuting and burning heretics was the only form of zeal known to them.

The struggling Church of Holland was blest with a devout and earnest archbishop. Philip Rovenius, who succeeded Vosmeer in 1620, after an interval of six years, occupied the See for forty memorable years, and by the help of God accomplished wonders for the

¹ "In nidulo meo moriar, inquit vere etenim nidulus ei erat Mechlinia, finis omnium votorum, ibi laborum requies, utique patris."—*Historia Mechliniensis*, Van Gestel.

Church in the province of Utrecht. He was continually beset by the intrigues of the Jesuits and by the persecutions of the Calvinists. To free himself from the former he appealed to Rome, and after much delay Pope Gregory XV. issued a Bull which assured to Rovenius all due authority over the clergy and monks in his diocese.¹ He was in the act of confirming the churches in Overyssel when the armies of the United Provinces under Frederick Henry attacked the province and conquered Grolle and Oldenzaal. On the evening before the surrender of the latter town, fearing that the Catholic religion would be suppressed by the victors, he assembled his faithful flock in the collegiate church and directed them reverently to remove the crosses, pictures, and the ornaments from the altar. "Your arms have been unfortunate," he said to his sorrowful hearers, "but in the heavenly warfare every one may win who chosés. Your means of grace will be uncertain, but God is not tied to means only. The crosses are removed from the church, but the cross of Christ must still be borne in your hearts; the images of the saints are taken down, but you must follow the example of the saints. A little while, and these interruptions to the service of God will be at an end for ever, and ye who have walked by faith will enter into the possession of all glory and need nothing but love." His hearers were much affected by these gentle words of love. On the

¹ For a full account of the dispute between Rovenius and the Jesuits, *vide* Bellegarde's *Histoire abrégée de l'Eglise métropolitaine d'Utrecht*, pp. 119-125.

following day the troops of the Prince of Orange entered the city, and the Catholic worship was suppressed.

Rovenius accomplished with great judgment the reformation of the Utrecht Chapter. This had not been suppressed by the Protestants, but they had introduced members of their own body into it, in order that they might enjoy the revenues attached to the canonries and prebendals. In 1614, out of the hundred and forty canons and a hundred and forty-five vicars who composed the five Chapters, there did not remain more than twenty-two canons and twenty-five vicars who were Catholics. It was therefore impossible for this mixed body to transact the spiritual affairs of the diocese, and Rovenius formed a new college or Chapter, composed of eleven clerics, to whom were committed those spiritual rights and duties which had previously been performed by the old Utrecht Chapters. This reform of the Archbishop was of immense importance to the welfare of the Church, and was found to work satisfactorily.

After the conclusion of the truce the persecution of the Catholics recommenced. This was mainly owing to the excesses of the Jesuits, who were denounced as "a pernicious sect and the enemies of the country;" and all ecclesiastics were required to give their names and addresses to the magistrates, and to conform to the edicts of the Provinces, otherwise they would be treated as though they were Jesuits. Rovenius was obliged to leave the country. In 1626 the States-General passed a new edict, forbidding the Catholics to hold divine service. Rovenius bravely visited Utrecht

and Holland in spite of the decree and of the great danger which he incurred. He ordained priests, administered confirmation, and encouraged the faithful in their time of trial. The edicts were renewed in later years and strenuously enforced; priests were banished and laymen were punished for taking part in the services of the Church. Rovenius incurred great personal danger. The house where he secretly lodged was attacked and searched on several occasions, but by the providence of God he always escaped from his pursuers. A noble lady, Mademoiselle Henriette de Duivenvoorde, in whose house the Archbishop and his clergy often resided, aided his escape. On one occasion, while he was engaged in dictating a letter to his secretary, Godfrey van Mook, the house was surprised, and he must have been taken had not a maid-servant rushed into the room, thrown her cloak over Rovenius, and conducted him out by the back door. His companions were captured and driven into exile.

Some of the Catholics suffered martyrdom during this persecution, amongst others Andrew de Cock at Utrecht in 1636, and Martin van Velde at Middelburg. The Archbishop was banished and his goods confiscated, but in spite of this decree he visited many of the towns and villages in his province, confirming and preaching. Edicts were passed against Catholics at Schoonhoven in 1641, in Zealand in 1642, in Friesland in 1643, in Utrecht in 1644, and every year seemed to bring fresh troubles upon the Church.

In spite of the violence employed against her, the Church grew stronger in this period of trial, which

seemed to resemble the first ages on account of the persecution which raged throughout the provinces. The number and earnestness of the Catholics increased greatly. From the year 1614 there was a steady increase in the number of clergy. In 1622 they had grown from 166 to 220 seculars and 66 regulars. In 1638 there were 350 seculars and 132 regulars. In 1656 the successor of Rovenius, James de la Torre, counted 400 seculars and 150 regulars. Sasbold had reckoned the faithful Catholics at 200,000; in 1639 they had increased to 300,000, and before the end of the century there were 500,000. These statistics show that the times of trial had not diminished the faithfulness and devotion of the Holland Catholics to the Church of their forefathers, and that, as in former days, their piety and zeal shone forth more conspicuously in times of persecution than in peace.

Conspicuous amongst them were the *Klopjes*, or knocking sisters, a faithful order of Christian women, who, by their devotion and pious labours, conferred vast benefits upon the Church. When the services were about to be held, the sisters went to the houses of the Catholics and knocked at the doors, summoning them to the secret assembly. Hence they derived their name, and also perhaps from the way in which they warned their comrades of danger; stationing themselves so as to command a view of all the passages which lead to the place of worship, when the officers of justice came in sight they used to give timely warning of their approach by knocking. The churches used by the Catholics at this time were in obscure

corners of the cities, amid nests of houses, in unfrequented districts, where they sought concealment to worship God after their accustomed manner. So completely hidden from sight are some of these sanctuaries that the writer had very great difficulty in discovering the Church of S. Gertrude at Utrecht, which was constructed so as to afford several passages with gates and doors to the Marieplaatz and the Vredenburg, in order to give the worshippers opportunities for escape when the soldiers came to take them. In a part of the building called "the corner," near the church, the Klopjes resided, and to each of them some article of church furniture or plate was committed, so that when the danger-signal was given, all vestiges of the services might be removed before the officers arrived. They taught children and old people; undistinguished by any distinctive dress, they passed their lives in good works and pious exercises. At Utrecht, towards the end of the century, there were as many as a hundred of these good sisters; at Haarlem three hundred, and a hundred at Amsterdam, where, in spite of decrees against them, they were allowed to continue their good works and to reside together in a *Béguinage*. The conduct of the sisters and of the other Catholics is well described in the account of the travels of Archbishop Kafenza, Papal Legate in Germany, who stayed two days with Abraham van Brienen, pastor of S. Gertrude, Utrecht, one of the principal priests in the country. He says: "The Catholics edified me so much, that I believed myself to be amongst the Christians of apostolic times.

Their modesty, their attention, their silence during mass, the sermon, and the prayers were such, that they appeared to be statues rather than living men, so attentive were they to the contemplation of heavenly things. One day at communion I was astonished to see a large number of virgins all veiled, like a choir of seraphs, who covered their faces in the presence of the Most High. I said to myself, 'Would to God that devotion flourished as much in the convents of Italy as it does amongst these sisters who live in the world and among Protestants.'"¹

Another very useful agency was organised by Rovenius, that of lay-controvertists. This body consisted of the better-instructed and more able men selected by the pastor in each parish for the purpose of disputing with the Protestants. Exercises in argument were given after service on Sundays and holy days, and advocates so trained were often able to do good service for the Church in contending for the faith.

Rovenius died at Utrecht in 1651, and was buried secretly in the house of Madle. du Duivenvoorde, where he had so long resided. To him the Church of Holland owes much, and even his enemies bore witness to his virtues and his zeal. He was a great friend and admirer of Bishop Jansen of Ypres, and expressed his approval of the famous "Augustinus," which work was destined to be the cause of so much dissension in future years. Of the rise of Jansenism we must proceed to treat in the next chapter.

¹ Bellegarde's "Utrecht," p. 145.

CHAPTER XIX.

RISE OF JANSENISM.

Jansen's "Augustinus"—Origin of Jansenism—Cornelius Jansen—S. Cyran—"Petrus Aurelius"—Outline of the "Augustinus"—Attacked by the Jesuits—Condemned by the Pope—University of Louvain refuses to publish Bull—Opposition of the clergy of Netherlands to the Bull—Antoine Arnauld and the establishment of Port Royal—The "Five Propositions"—French Jansenists take refuge in the Netherlands—Defeat of Jansenism.

IN the seventeenth century the peace of the Church was disturbed by that famous controversy which arose concerning the doctrine of divine grace and free will, and which mainly centred itself about the immortal work of Cornelius Jansen entitled "Augustinus."

According to Ultramontane writers, Jansenism was a mitigated form of Calvinism, but more dangerous because it was more subtle. "Never did a more supple reptile attach itself to the sides of Belgian Catholicism,"¹ says a Jesuit writer. It has been described as a species of Catholic puritanism;² and, however wise and holy its advocates were, however powerful their defence, inasmuch as in the opinion of its opponents Jansenism savoured of Calvinistic or Lutheran errors, it attracted the anathemas of the Jesuits, who from the first were its detested and unscrupulous

¹ Smet, *Belgique Catholique*, iii. 201.

² Reuclin, *Geschichte von Port Royal*.

foes. Its origin may be traced to the writings of Baius, professor of Holy Scripture at Louvain, whose work *De Libero Arbitrio* was condemned as heretical and its author compelled to publish a retraction of his opinions (1580). But the controversy concerning the perplexing questions of the providence of God and predestination having been once started, could not be suppressed. The professors of Louvain attacked the writings of the Jesuit Lessius and accused him of Semi-Pelagianism; a friend of Baius, Dr. Janson, was appointed to combat the errors of Lessius. The dispute was carried further still, and the work of the Spanish Jesuit, Molina, professor of theology at Evora in Portugal, "On the Concord of Grace with Free Will" (Lisbon, 1588), was vigorously attacked by the Universities of Louvain, Douay, and Salamanca.

At this period of religious controversy the celebrated Cornelius Jansen appeared upon the scene. Born at Acquoy, near Leerdam, in 1585, he was educated at Louvain and became a pupil of Dr. Janson. Here he formed a warm friendship with Hauranne, afterwards Abbot of S. Cyran, who was styled by the Jesuits the great heresiarch of the seventeenth century. After staying some time in Paris he returned to Louvain, became doctor of theology, the head of the College of S. Pulcheria, and in the year 1636 was consecrated Bishop of Ypres. He only occupied the See two years, being carried off by the plague in 1638.

Such was the short life of the good bishop, who, with his friend S. Cyran, endeavoured to restore the teaching of the Church to the doctrine of S. Augustine

with regard to the nature and working of divine grace, and to overthrow the fallacies of the Jesuits. It has been already noticed how eager the Society was to encroach upon the rights of native churches and to disregard all episcopal authority. Not only in Holland did they attempt to do this, but also in England and other countries; a Jesuit named Floyd published a work which was intended to subvert all episcopal jurisdiction. S. Cyran published his famous work, "Petrus Aurelius," upon the discipline of the Church, which entirely destroyed the theories and statements of the Jesuits, and was vigorously attacked by the Society. It, however, received the approval of the French clergy in 1642, and copies of the book were placed in all the cathedral libraries of France..

The vindication of the doctrine was left to Jansen, and he devoted twenty years of his life to his immortal work, the "Augustinus," in which he expounded the teaching of the saint, and showed that the Molinist dogmas were identical with Pelagian or Semi-Pelagian heresy. The work was not published before his death, and first saw the light at Louvain in 1640. It is necessary to give a brief outline of the work, which is divided into three parts.

The first volume begins with a long examination of Pelagianism, drawn principally from the writings of Augustine and Prosper; the use of reason and authority in theology is discussed in the second book, and the author treats of the limit of human reason and of the authority of Holy Scripture, the Councils, and the fathers of the Church in understanding the mysteries

of the faith. He proves that the teaching of Augustine with regard to grace has always been acknowledged by the Church. Love is the guide in studying divine mysteries, and not the understanding, which leads men into danger. Christianity cannot be examined like a system of philosophy, and the errors of the schoolmen may all be traced to a neglect of these principles. The four main truths established by Augustine are the oneness of the Head of the Church, that is, Christ; the oneness of His body, that is, the Church; the oneness of the sacrament of incorporation, that is, Baptism; and the oneness and truth of the life of grace procured through the cross of Christ.

He then proceeds to speak of human nature in its primal condition ere sin had left its mark upon it, and of the grace which Adam enjoyed. The state of man after the Fall, original sin, conflicts with sin, free will, the healing grace of Christ, and predestination of men and angels, all these great subjects are treated with elaborate detail, and the whole teaching of S. Augustine upon these themes is set forth. He contrasts the opinions of the Schoolmen with those of Augustine. "Will it be answered that the opinions of the Schoolmen, reprobated by Augustine, have now been common for the last five hundred years to almost the whole Church, which, if they be wrong, is thereby proved to be itself in error?"¹ I reply, that if it be a question of time, the opinions of Augustine and his disciples were acknowledged and approved by the Church and the common consent of Christians many hundred years

¹ "Augustinus," t. ii. c. 30.

before the notions of the Schoolmen were introduced. If, therefore, it should be feared that the Church might be accused of error in receiving opinions afterwards disproved, by how much more perniciously would it be said to have erred if it should abolish the doctrine of Augustine, received and approved through so many ages?" He concludes by showing that the Apostolic See had for centuries approved the arguments of Augustine against Pelagius, and endeavours to reconcile the differences between the bull of Pius V. and Gregory XIII. against Baius and the teaching of the Church in previous ages.

The publication of the "Augustinus" was the signal for the Jesuits' attack. Every device was adopted by them to discredit the author and procure the condemnation of the work. Pope Urban VIII. was informed by them that the authority of the Apostolic See, the glory of the Church and the purity of its faith were in danger, and he was induced, in 1642, to issue a Bull condemning the book. The clergy of the Netherlands and of France were forbidden to read it. But the old spirit of independence of Papal control showed itself, and the University of Louvain bravely declared that their rules forbade them to publish any decree of the Pope unless it was sanctioned by the King. The Archbishop of Mechlin, James Boonen, was a great admirer of Jansen, and Henry Coelen, Archdeacon and Canon of the Cathedral, formerly Rector of the University of Louvain, highly approved of the "Augustinus," and influenced the mind of the Archbishop in its favour. The Pope was informed that his Bull condemned not

only Jansen, but the very words of Augustine. At length, through the influence of the Archduke of Austria, governor of the Netherlands, the Jesuits succeeded in enforcing the Bull, which was received with undisguised indignation by the clergy and theologians of the Netherlands. The Louvain professors pertinently asked whether the bull condemned Jansen or Augustine? The Pope wrote to them and to the bishops to publish the Bull, which was issued at Brussels. But the Louvain professors declared that they could not acknowledge the Bull without condemning Augustine. The Archbishop of Mechlin, James Boonen, and the Bishop of Ghent, Antoine Triest, also opposed it, and presented to the Privy Council a written statement of their reasons for refusing to accept the Papal decree. Severe measures were taken to compel the Augustinians to obey. A formulary was drawn up which all candidates for ecclesiastical preferment were obliged to sign. The King of Spain issued an edict condemning the rebellious to a fine of 500 florins for the first offence, and to banishment for six years for a second. The Archbishop of Mechlin and the Bishop of Ghent stood firm, and sentence of suspension was pronounced against them. The Council of Brabant strove to protect their bishops, and were arrested by the Archduke. Finally, by a decree of the Chapters of Mechlin and Ghent the bishops were reduced to submission, and were compelled to accept the Bull. Antoine Arnauld, a disciple of S. Cyran, was the defender of the opinions of the Augustinians at Paris, against whom Habert, afterwards Bishop of Valres, contended. The

latter extracted eight propositions from the "Augustinus," which he declared were objectionable, and ought to be formally examined. To this proposal strong opposition was shown. In the meantime Arnould, Le Maistre, Pascal, Tillemont, and others retired to the famous convent of Port Royal, there to live a life of piety, devotion, and learning, and established a community of world-wide celebrity.

The eight propositions of Valres, purporting to contain the opinions of Jansen, were reduced to five, and are as follows:—

1. Some commandments of God are impossible to some righteous men, even when with all their might they are endeavouring to keep them according to the present strength which they have; also the grace by which they may become possible is wanting to them.

2. Internal grace in the state of fallen nature is never resisted.

3. To merit and demerit, in the state of fallen nature, liberty from necessity is not required in man, but only liberty from constraint.

4. The Semi-Pelagians admitted the necessity of internal prevenient grace for all good works, even for the commencement of faith; but it was in this that they were heretical, that they would have that grace to be such as the human will could either resist or obey.

5. It is Semi-Pelagian to affirm that Christ died or shed His blood absolutely for all men.¹

After much disputing, these articles were condemned

¹ Leydecker, *Vita Jansenii*, lib. ii. p. 126.

by Pope Innocent X. as impious, blasphemous, and heretical in a Bull issued in 1653. It was received not without opposition by the ecclesiastics of France and Holland, but the Augustinians contended that the five propositions condemned by the Bull were not contained in the work of Jansen. This question was at length decided by Alexander VII., the successor to Innocent X., who declared that the articles were to be found in Jansen's book, and issued an ordinance obliging the clergy to subscribe to the following:—

“I condemn with my heart and mouth the doctrine of the five propositions of Cornelius Jansenius contained in his book entitled ‘Augustinus,’ which the Popes and bishops have condemned: which doctrine is not that of S. Augustine, whom Jansenius has explained ill, against the sense of this holy father.”

This met with great opposition on the part of several of the French bishops, and in 1661 vehement persecution of the Jansenists raged on the part of the Jesuits, aided by the French monarch, Louis XIV. The progress of Jansenism in France, the devoted lives of the recluses of Port Royal, of Jacqueline Arnauld, La Mère Angelique, the persecutions they endured, belong to the domain of French ecclesiastical history, and will be treated of in another volume of this series. Arnauld, Quesnel, and others found a refuge in the Netherlands from the violence of the storm which raged against them in France, and enriched that country by their piety and virtues. Troubles were in store for the Church in Holland on account of the famous Bull *Unigenitus* of 1713, issued by Clement XI. against the

writings of Quesnel, which bull the ecclesiastics of Holland refused to acknowledge; but of this we shall speak presently.

After the decree of Alexander VII. the theologians of Louvain subscribed to the formulary, and swore to condemn the five propositions, and to piously render obedience to the Papal briefs (1660). The statue of Jansen in the cathedral of Ypres was broken down by order of the Bishop, and for a time Jansenism seemed to have fallen, together with the memorial of its illustrious founder.

CHAPTER XX.

HISTORY OF THE NETHERLANDS FROM THE PEACE OF MUNSTER (1648).

History of the United Provinces—Naval war with England—The Belgian Provinces—Louis XIV. of France—His conquests in the Netherlands—Despair of the inhabitants—William of Orange saves his country—Ambition of Louis—Endless wars—Treaty of Ryswick—“War of Succession”—Victories of Marlborough—Austrian Netherlands—James de la Torre, Archbishop of Utrecht—Baldwin Catz—John Van Neercassel confers great benefits on the See—Great increase of the Church—Conduct of Jesuits—The Archbishop goes to Rome—Catholic worship restored at Utrecht—*Amor Pœnitens*—Attacked by the Jesuits—Regulations with regard to mixed marriages and presentations to benefices—Edicts against Catholics—Progress of the Church under the wise rule of Neercassel.

THE civil history of the Netherlands during the last half of the seventeenth century contains many records of brave deeds, of wars both by sea and land, from which the Republic of the United Provinces emerged exhausted, but still retaining its place amongst the foremost European powers. After a brief and inglorious career, during which his restless ambition often brought him into conflict with his people, William II., Prince of Orange, died in 1650. His son, afterwards the famous William III. of Holland and King of England, was born a week after his father's death. A quarrel arose between Holland and England, resulting in a long naval war, in which the Dutch and English admirals distinguished themselves for their skill

and bravery. The names of Tromp, De Ruyter, De Witt, Opdam, of Blake, Sir George Ayscue, Monk, and many others, are renowned in the history of naval warfare. The fleet of Cromwell gained a crushing victory over the Dutch, and our English Republican exacted heavy conditions from his gallant foes. The valour of Dutch sailors restored their country's glory by a successful war against the Sweden monarch, Charles Gustavus, in defence of Denmark. For a time prosperity returned to the provinces under the able leadership of De Witt. The internal discussions and discontent, the results of national humiliation, vanished, and commerce flourished.

In the Belgian provinces, Archduke Leopold of Austria governed and carried on an unsuccessful war with France; nor was his successor (1656), Don Juan, a young and inexperienced officer, more fortunate. He lost a great battle near Dunkerque (1658), and part of Flanders was occupied by the enemy. In the following year Philip IV., King of Spain, gave his daughter in marriage to the young King of France, Louis XIV., ceding the countship of Artois and several towns in the other provinces to France as the dowry of the Princess. The treaty between the monarchs was called the "Peace of the Pyrenees" (1659). A patriotic Belgian writes, "Our sacrifices smoked in the cabinets of diplomatists as well as in the march of armies."

Startling events soon followed. Holland found itself at war with England, and several great naval battles were fought. The Republic was aided by the King

of France, and Charles II. showed base ingratitude to the gallant Dutch, who had given him a home and shelter during his exile. The taking of Sheerness, and the memorable appearance of a Dutch fleet in the Thames threatening London, forced the faithless king to sign the treaty of Breda (1667).

Then Louis XIV. began his memorable career of daring ambition. Unjustly laying claim to the Spanish Netherlands in right of his wife, he suddenly sent an army into, and took possession of, Brabant and Flanders. A league was formed against him by Holland, Sweden, and England ; but our monarch, Charles II., disgraced our national honour by basely deserting the confederation and espousing the cause of Louis. By the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1668), the French monarch gained possession of the towns which he had occupied. Four years later, at the head of an army, he marched into Holland, which was little prepared to receive him. Guelderland, Overysse, and Utrecht were conquered ; town after town surrendered, and in despair the inhabitants opened the sluice gates and saved Amsterdam. They sued for peace, but the intolerable demands of the English and French monarchs drove the nation to desperation. William of Orange was proclaimed stadtholder, and showed the courage for which his family was so famous in saving the country in times of imminent peril. They determined to abandon the country to the waves and migrate to the Indies rather than submit to such disgraceful demands. But the nation was saved ; William declared that he would "die in the last ditch" rather than yield. He took the field ;

reinforcements poured in from Germany and Spain; Louis was beaten back. Peace with England was concluded, and at length, when William married Mary, the future Queen of England, Louis thought it prudent to end hostilities, and the peace of Nymegen in 1678 was signed.

But the restless and ambitious spirit of Louis XIV. again urged him to war, and he conceived the grand design of making himself master of Europe. He began by seizing upon Flanders and Luxembourg. The League of Augsbourg was formed against him by the energy of William, in which most of the European nations joined. Several campaigns followed, in which the French were frequently victorious; towns were besieged, bloody battles fought, and the Belgian provinces suffered the terrible miseries of protracted war. At length all the combatants were becoming exhausted, France especially, and, wearied with war, the contending parties signed the treaty of Ryswick (1697), which was as short-lived as its predecessors.

Then followed the war of succession, undertaken by Louis to secure for his grandson the throne of Spain. William, King of England and Stadtholder of Holland, formed the grand alliance between England, Holland, and Austria to secure the Spanish crown for the Emperor. The death of William in 1701 was a severe blow to the confederation and raised the hopes of France; but the splendid victories of Marlborough and Eugene completely crushed the ambitious monarch, and the peace of Utrecht, signed in 1713, at length concluded the war. The Belgian provinces were

assigned to the new Emperor, Charles VI., and thus lost their old title of the Spanish Netherlands and acquired that of the Austrian Netherlands. Holland recovered its trade and prosperity, and for thirty years enjoyed the unaccustomed blessing of peace.

From these records of civil strife we will now turn to the religious history of a period so full of change and confusion. The See of Utrecht after the death of Rovenius was occupied by a weak prelate, James de la Torre (1651-1661), who was no match for the intriguing Jesuits. They multiplied their stations and increased their influence in spite of an appeal to Rome on the part of the Archbishop, who gained a temporary advantage over them. He weakly abandoned the title of Archbishop of Utrecht which his predecessors had borne, and contented himself with that of Archbishop of Ephesus, and yielded to the Jesuits because they promised to procure for him another bishopric less troubled than the See of Utrecht. He was indeed offered that of Ypres, but his reason became affected and he died in 1661. His occupancy of the See of Utrecht was disastrous to the welfare of the Church in that province. Zacharias de Metz is accounted by some writers as his successor, but he was never the lawfully elected coadjutor of James de la Torre, and indeed died before him. It is true that the Pope, Alexander VII., had nominated Zacharias, but without the election or consent of the clergy, and although he came to Holland and resided at Amsterdam as coadjutor-bishop, he never was acknowledged by the clergy, and [by his harshness and arbitrary conduct

gave great offence to both Catholics and Protestants. He died at Amsterdam in 1661.

John Van Neercassel was elected by the chapters to succeed James de la Torre in the archbishopric, but the clergy were astonished to learn that Pope Alexander VII. had nominated Baldwin Catz to the vacant See. He was Dean of Haarlem, and had refused to be nominated coadjutor of De la Torre six years previously, thinking that his nomination would not be in accordance with the wishes and rights of the clergy. But now he decided to accept the See, and Neercassel willingly consented to resign in his favour, advising his rival to reside at Amsterdam, the only town in Holland where a bishop could live in safety, and craving permission to retire into the rank of a simple priest. The clergy objected strongly to this violation of their rights, and after much negotiation Catz, for whom the Pope had an affectionate regard, was placed in charge of the diocese of Haarlem, while Neercassel presided over that of Utrecht. Catz was afflicted with lunacy shortly after his consecration, and on his death in 1661 John Van Neercassel became archbishop under the title of Bishop of Castoria.

The benefits which the new prelate conferred on the Church of Holland were incalculable. Wise, pious, zealous, and courageous, he was welcomed not only by the Catholics with acclamation but also by the Protestant magistrates. Old edicts against the Catholics were abolished, and a reign of comparative peace ensued between the opposing factions. Internal disputes were also settled, and jealousies between

the chapters of Haarlem and Utrecht removed. In an Act of April 22, 1664, the Archbishop recognised the capitular rights of the Haarlem chapter, enjoining the clergy to respect its authority and promising to accept its advice. The chapter promised on their part to render him due obedience as though he were bishop of their own diocese. He also vindicated the rights of the Utrecht chapter, in answer to a challenge from Rome, declaring it to be "*Columen Ecclesiæ Catholicæ in Fæderato Belgio.*"

This conduct of the Archbishop, and the feeling of unity which he promoted amongst both clergy and laity, had a great effect upon the Church. The number of Catholics increased daily, and for a time at least the various sections of the clergy experienced the blessings of "dwelling together in unity." Neercassel had the usual difficulties with the Jesuits, who had increased their numbers and were impatient of all episcopal control. They attacked him with abuse, and brought such charges against him that he exclaimed, "It is a disgrace to the human race to be obliged to declare that it had produced such impudent and rash liars who were able to utter such horrible calumnies." In 1669 he suppressed several of their stations, which act so enraged them that they retaliated by accusing the Archbishop of Jansenism, and, although exonerated by the Pontiff, he thought it necessary to go to Rome to put an end to the calumnies of the Jesuits and to their machinations. He was received with marks of honour by the Pope and his cardinals; but, amidst the intrigues of the Papal court, amidst

all the pomp of the great city, the northern prelate, with his solitary attendant, was not altogether comfortable, and excited the ridicule of the court. To his clergy at Utrecht he wrote, "I beseech you to offer to God prayers more frequent and urgent than usual that He may give me the prudence and courage necessary to defend our common cause against foes so cunning, who make use of such secret devices, and conduct the affair in a manner to which I am entirely unaccustomed. David clad in the armour of Saul was not more embarrassed than I am, when with my simplicity I am obliged to act and speak according to the manner of the country." His simplicity and earnestness, however, won the day. Several of the cardinals, amongst others Borroméo, Bona, and Caraffa, were indignant at the intrigues of the Jesuits, and the Archbishop returned to Holland armed with two decrees in support of his just claims.

It has already been recorded that in 1672 the armies of Louis XIV. overran the United Provinces and took possession of Guelderland, Overysse, and Utrecht. The Protestants were evicted from their churches and the Catholic worship restored. The grand cathedral of Utrecht was reconciled, and Neercassel officiated and preached to a vast congregation. When the people were reduced to such sad straits by the unjust demands of the French and English, Neercassel was selected by the States to plead the cause of the oppressed Hollanders at the court of Paris; but the progress of affairs, the brave assistance of the exasperated people, rendered his journey useless.

During the progress of the war he remained at Antwerp and at Huissen, where he established a kind of seminary, held a synod, and wrote several valuable works,¹ amongst others the famous *Amor Pœnitens*.

This noble work was intended to counteract the lax teaching of the Jesuits on the subject of confession and absolution, and to show forth the nature and character of true penitence. In clear, forcible language the author declares the necessity for a man to love God, to turn from his sins, to purge the heart from evil desires, before he can hope to gain remission of sin. The work was received with acclamations. Pope Innocent XI. said, "The work is good and its author is a saint." But the Jesuits were furious and denounced the book at Rome before the congregation, who passed a decree suspending the sale of the work "until it was corrected." This decree had little effect upon the distribution of copies; controversy raged and swelled; the French bishops and a large number of the ablest theologians, both in France and the Netherlands, amongst others Cardinals Grimaldi and Camus; Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux; Choiseul of Tournay, and Sève of Arras regarded it with approval. However able, learned, and devotional the book was, it was attacked with all the skill of Jesuit casuistry, and as we shall hereafter see, this noble work, approved of by the holiest and soundest theologians of the day and praised by the Pope, became a weapon for assault

¹ *Tractatus de cultu sanctorum: De lectione Scripturæ Sacræ*, "On the Validity of the Orders of the Church of England," "On the Validity of Civil Marriage," &c.

upon the Church of Holland, and was used to support a charge of Jansenism.

When the French were beaten back from the northern provinces the cathedral at Utrecht again was appropriated by the Protestants, but religious liberty was allowed to all Christians. The Archbishop showed great wisdom in his treatment of the question of mixed marriages, and of marriages contracted in the presence of a magistrate without any religious ceremony. He distinguished the natural and civil contract of marriage from the religious ceremony, and contended that all marriages performed according to the laws of the country were valid, obligatory, and indissoluble, but in order that the contracting parties should receive the grace and blessing of God it was necessary to conform to the laws of the Church. This arrangement was approved by the Roman court, by the bishops of France, and finally became the law of the Roman Church in 1741.

Another thorny question was skilfully handled by the great archbishop, that of the right of patronage to livings. Before the Reformation the lords of the manors had the right of presentation to benefices, but these endowments and churches had been appropriated by the Protestants; new churches had been built by voluntary offerings for the old Catholic worship, nevertheless the Catholic noblemen claimed the right to present to these new livings. This seemed unjust, and the Archbishop determined to submit the matter to the doctors of Louvain, who decided in his favour, and the Catholic lords were compelled to moderate their claims.

In 1685, on account of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, many Protestant refugees fled to Holland and excited their co-religionists to renewed hatred of all Catholics. The sword of persecution was again unsheathed. Throughout all Frisia the Catholic worship was prohibited, and the priests ordered to be imprisoned. In Groningen, Overyssel, Gueldres, Zeland, and Utrecht similar edicts were issued. In Groningen Catholic lawyers were forbidden to plead, Catholic nobles were deprived of all jurisdiction over their vassals, and merchants of their trade. A sister was sent to prison and fined 400 florins for procuring the baptism of her brother's child, and the brother of a priest of Leeuwarden was stoned by the populace. The magistrates contemplated the abolishing of the Catholic worship throughout the United Provinces. They heavily fined the professors of the old religion for the support of the refugees, but the liberality of the Catholics greatly impressed the magistrates in their favour.

But in spite of persecution the Church prospered. The Archbishop declared that the trial "exercised rather than afflicted the faith." The clergy were remarkable for their virtuous and pious lives. Many of them were entirely voluntary workers, living on their estates, and discharging their ministerial duties gratuitously. The Archbishop treated with proper severity any cases of lax discipline, on one occasion suspending two clergymen for drunkenness and impurity. He counted 500,000 Catholics in the United Provinces, 300 secular priests, and 120 regulars. The

diaries of Neercassel show his indefatigable labours in visiting the clergy of his diocese, and his minute observations on the spiritual condition of each parish. In 1686 he died at Zwolle, a victim to his zeal, leaving behind him the memory of an active and useful life, having guided the fortunes of the Church of Holland during a quarter of a century with infinite skill through many difficulties and dangers. Grievous troubles were in store for her ; the storm burst upon her during the rule of the successor of Van Neercassel, who was the last Archbishop of Utrecht who died in the communion of the Church of Rome.

CHAPTER XXI.

RESURRECTION OF JANSENISM AND THE TROUBLES OF THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND.

French Jansenists find refuge in Holland—Arnauld—His description of Dutch Church—Attacked by Jesuits—Resided at Brussels—Joined by Quesnel—*Réflexions Morales*—Quesnel leader of Augustinian 'party—Van Espen—De Berghes, Archbishop of Mechlin, succeeded by Humbert William—Instance of Papal assumption—Persecution of Jansenists—Quesnel escapes to Holland—Affairs of the Church of Holland—Van Heussen—Peter Codde consecrated archbishop—Statistics of the Church—Intrigues of Jesuits—Shameful device—Codde deposed—Indignation—Vehement opposition to Papal decree and to De Cock—The States support the Church—Codde's weakness—Continued persecution—The country flooded with foreign clergy—Van Erkel excommunicated—The See vacant for thirteen years—Bishop Fagan of Ireland ordains clergy—Bull *Unigenitus*—Submission of Belgian bishops—Opposition of the clergy—Dominique Varlet preserves episcopal succession of Church of Holland.

WHEN the Jansenists were driven from France they found a home in the Netherlands. The first was Antoine Arnauld, who had been unjustly condemned by the Sorbonne, through the influence of the Jesuits, for stating that the Five Propositions were not to be found in the writings of Jansen, and had never been held by any of their friends (1655). Being deprived of his doctor's decree he retired to end his days in the Netherlands, residing at Brussels, at Veen, near Leyden, and Louvain. Van Neercassel, the Archbishop of Utrecht, was his attached friend, and the clergy of

Holland, devoted to the teaching of À Kempis and Groote, sympathised with the followers of Jansen, having long held the Augustinian views of grace. Arnauld loved his quiet retreat on the shores of the Haarlemmer Meer, which has now been drained. He admired the streets so clean and dry, "the neat little canals," and considers himself an inhabitant of the Fortunate Isles. The dwellers in the little village are "the best people in the world, almost all Catholics, and regarded as the most devout of all the Church of Holland. They have two churches: one smaller, in the house of the priest, where they say mass every week-day at eight o'clock, and the other larger, for Sundays and festivals. The service was said here very solemnly on the Feast of Pentecost, with music and symphony—that is to say, organ and viols. There were a great number of communicants, not only on the festival, but also on the next day. The pastor gave the veil to four religious on the festival. There are seventy there. Is not this wonderful for a village? All that is necessary for the support of the priest, the church, and the poor is not drawn from any fund, nor from any tax, but comes simply from voluntary offerings; and, nevertheless, they have very rich ornaments and beautiful plate." In his retirement he is not free from the attacks of the Jesuits, and is warned on one occasion by the Archbishop not to travel by the Delft boat lest he should be attacked by Jesuit students who were returning to their classes. He took an active interest in the affair of the *Amor Pœnitens*, declaring that it would be "a very great scandal if a book so

pious and so solid, written by so holy a bishop, should be branded by a condemnation from Rome, at the solicitation of some religious who are known to be his declared enemies."

Of the condition of the Church in Holland, Arnauld speaks in the highest praise: "I do not think that in a country of the like extent there are so great a number of good pastors in any other part of Christendom." Arnauld often resided at Brussels, where in 1684 he was joined by Quesnel, upon whom his mantle fell as leader of the Augustinian party. Quesnel had written a useful work, *Pensées Chrétiennes sur les quatre Evangelistes*, and afterwards produced his famous *Réflexions Morales*, containing meditations on Holy Scripture, which was attacked by the Jesuits and declared to be a reproduction of all the errors of Jansen.¹ It was, however, approved by Antoine Noailles, Archbishop of Paris, and was subsequently the cause of many troubles to the Church of Holland.

Arnauld died at Brussels in the house of one of his disciples, Paul Ernest Ruthdans, a native of Verviers, in the province of Liége, and canon of the church of S. Gudule. He had many adherents in the diocese of Mechlin, and after his death Quesnel retired to Forest-lez-Bruxelles, which became the centre of the party. Here came Brigode, his secretary, who was very active in distributing the works of the Augustinians. Here Van Espen, the famous jurist and ablest expounder of canon law, came from the university at Louvain. Born at Louvain in 1646, Van Espen attained high

¹ Smet, iii. 117.

honours at the University, and lived there fifty-five years, until 1701. Holy Scripture and ecclesiastical history were his subjects of special study. He resided at the College of the Pope, famous for its learning, and led a studious, devout, and energetic life, lecturing to the students, preaching continually, and preserving through all his labours a happy and cheerful disposition. These were the leaders of the Augustinian party to which the University of Louvain had always been attached.

Alphonse de Berghes, Archbishop of Mechlin, a worthy prelate, but not remarkable for much learning, did not show much hostility to Quesnel and his friends. He left the management of his province in the hands of Van Vianen, President of the College of the Pope at Louvain. "I know that I have not the learning requisite for the due management of my flock, but at least my intentions are good, and I design to provide myself with the ablest counsellors," the humble-minded bishop once said. He is recorded as having been a careful guardian of the rights of the Church, a kind, charitable, and good man. His motto was characteristic of his manners, "*Descende ut ascendas.*" De Berghes was succeeded in 1689 by Humbert William a Precipiano, who proved himself no friend to Quesnel and his disciples. An instance of the encroachments of Rome upon the rights and privileges of the native churches occurred in connection with his election to the Deanery of the Cathedral. In accordance with their accustomed rights the canons of the Cathedral elected Humbert to the vacant Deanery, but

Pope Alexander declared that the right of election belonged to the Papal See.¹ Much excitement and tumult were created by this novel claim, which was in accordance with the policy of aggrandisement pursued by the Papacy under the guidance of the Jesuits. In this case further troubles were avoided by the submission of Humbert to the Pope's decree, and his entire renunciation of the Deanery.

Humbert did not suffer by his subservience. He was called to Madrid by King Charles II. to advise his Majesty concerning Belgian affairs. In 1683 he became Bishop of Bruges, and in 1690 was appointed Archbishop of Mechlin. Van Gestel speaks very highly of him, of his constant vindication of the authority of the Pope, of his many labours in restoring and preserving ecclesiastical jurisdiction and discipline in perilous times, when war raged everywhere, and the work of a bishop was beset with many difficulties. He brought out a new edition of the Catechism, drawn up by the Synod of Mechlin in 1607, and forbade the use of any other. "With the zeal of an apostle he always endeavoured to expel from his diocese the sons of iniquity and disturbers of the public peace, when he was not able to bring them under the sweet yoke of obedience."²

The "sons of iniquity" to whom the writer alludes were probably Quesnel and the Augustinian party, whose "errors Humbert opposed with a vigour worthy of an apostle."³ He published letters worthy of the

¹ Van Gestel, *Historia Archiepiscopatus Mechliniensis*, p. 64.

² *Ibid.*

³ Smet, iii. 218.

first ages, in which "he reduced the assertions of the Jansenists to powder."¹ He also called in the aid of the civil power. Quesnel's secretary, Brigode, was forbidden from distributing any Jansenist literature, and Peter Van Hamme, another member of the party, arrested in the palace of the Archbishop, and forced to subscribe to the formulary of Alexander VII.² Quesnel and his secretary retreated to their refuge at Forest, but the agents of the Archbishop pursued them. They knocked at the gate, which Brigode came to open, and when they demanded where his master was he refused to answer, but made so great a noise and spoke so loud that Quesnel was able to realise his danger, and had time to escape. Returning, however, to secure some of his papers his pursuers demanded his name. He assured them that he was called Rebeck; but he was taken to the palace of the Archbishop and put in prison, from which his friends succeeded in releasing him by making a hole in the wall which divided the prison from the stables of an adjoining tavern, and Quesnel found a safe asylum amongst his partisans in Holland. Archbishop Humbert passed sentence of excommunication upon him, and condemned him to a rigorous penance, which abundantly satisfied the sovereign pontiff.

The cause of the indignation against Quesnel was the heresy which was supposed to lurk in his *Réflexions Morales*, a work approved by the Archbishop of Paris, the Archbishop of Utrecht, and many French and Belgian bishops. He is also accused by Smet of

¹ Smet, iii. 218.

² Cf. p. 304.

nominating Peter Codde as Vicar-Apostolic of Utrecht, and of consecrating him at Brussels as Archbishop of Utrecht under the title of Archbishop of Sebaste (in Partibus). The whole statement is entirely devoid of truth, and in order to follow the course of events we must now return to Holland.

On the death of Van Neercassel the Chapters, assembled at Gouda, elected Van Heussen (1689), the friend and companion of the late Archbishop, an earnest and learned man, who afterwards wrote the famous *Batavia Sacra* and the *Historia Episcopatum Federati Belgii*. Peter Codde and John Lindeborn, the author of *Historia Episcopatus Davenriensis* were also nominated grand-vicars of the vacant See. The writings of Van Heussen were, however, regarded with suspicion by the congregation of cardinals at Rome, who considered that they savoured of Jansenist or of the new Gallican notions; more especially a treatise on Indulgences was attacked. Van Heussen bravely defended his book, but the consideration of the matter was postponed. In order to accord with the wishes of the Papal court the Chapters nominated three other priests for the vacancy, of whom Peter Codde stood first. The Jesuits, however, were moving heaven and earth to procure the appointment of one of their creatures, and had it not been for the exertions of an Englishman, Cardinal Howard, they would doubtless have succeeded in their designs of crushing out the Church of Holland. De Cock was sent by the Chapters to Rome to plead the cause of the Church, and at length, after much controversy, Peter Codde was consecrated

Archbishop at Brussels by the Archbishop of Mechlin and the Bishops of Antwerp and Namur (1689). Before consecration he was asked to sign the formulary against Jansenism, but he declined on the ground that he had not studied the question sufficiently, and the declaration was not enforced. He was a learned prelate, an able preacher, and a devout man. If he had lived in less troubled times, his episcopacy would doubtless have conferred great blessings on his Church; but he was scarcely strong enough to meet the insidious snares and strenuous attacks of the enemies who plotted the ruin of the National Church of Holland.

In 1701 he furnished a description of the state of the Church to Pope Clement XI., the details of which are full of interest.¹ The whole population of the United Provinces was 2,000,000, of which 1,500,000 were Calvinists, 80,000 Lutherans, 160,000 Mennonites or Anabaptists, 60,000 Arminians, 70,000 Socinians or Deists, 25,000 Jews, and about 330,000 Catholics. The Calvinists and Lutherans were in possession of the ancient churches. All the other sects, except the Socinians, who openly attacked the divinity of our Lord, were tolerated, and the edicts against the Catholics were in abeyance, although they found it necessary to give an annual sum to the bailiffs in each town in order to prevent any enforcement of the unrepealed edicts. In Amsterdam, however, this was no longer required. It was no longer necessary to hold their services in secret; they had permanent oratories, and were allowed to build new chapels.

¹ Bellegarde, *Histoire Abrégée d'Utrecht*, p. 208.

Catholicism made much progress during this time of peace, and Codde counted as many as 200 or 250 conversions each year, although few of the principal families returned to the old faith on account of their worldly interests, which attached them to Calvinism. He noticed with grief the apostasy of about 150 each year, who were induced for the sake of temporal advantage to leave the fold. They became Protestants in order to acquire some office, to contract some marriage, or to escape the loss of a heritage; whereas the conversions to the true faith were sincere, inasmuch as loss of employment, reproaches, and public sentence of excommunication pronounced from the pulpit by their ministers, were all cheerfully endured for the sake of their convictions.

The number of clergy increased. Codde founded in twelve years twenty new parishes. There were 470 clergy in the province, 340 seculars and 130 regulars. There were 266 parishes, 17 arch-presbyteries (6 for Utrecht, 5 for Haarlem, 3 for Deventer, and 1 each for Leeuwarden, Groningen, and Middelbourg). No parish priest in the country was allowed to discharge his office outside his parish without permission, except in case of necessity; but in the towns this rule was not adhered to. We have already noticed the testimony which Arnauld and others bear to the faithfulness and zeal of the clergy of the Church of Holland, and Codde declares that they were indefatigable in preaching and catechising, and that the Church of Holland could compare favourably with that of any other country where Catholicism was not the dominant religion.

The great weakness of the Church was caused by internal disputes, by the insubordination of the Jesuits, and the troubles they created by the repeated charges of Jansenism which they brought against the Archbishop and his principal clergy, Van Heussen, Van Erkel, Roos, and others. They began their nefarious practices in 1692, inducing the Spanish ambassador and others at the Hague to write to Rome and accuse Codde and his clergy of Jansenism and of professed agreement with the Gallican articles of 1682, which the doctors of Louvain had refused to censure; but the death of Pope Alexander VIII. put an end to the investigation of these charges. They renewed them, however, in the rule of Pope Innocent XII., who pronounced Codde innocent of all the charges brought against him. They then resorted to a shameful device; they published an infamous libel, which was printed without any author's or printer's name, entitled, "Abridged memorial, extracted from a larger one, concerning the state and progress of Jansenism in Holland." Codde declared that it was a "libel, full of lies and calumnies;" but it accomplished its purpose. Codde's letters of vindication were unanswered, and probably suppressed by the Jesuits at Rome, and in 1699 the congregation passed a secret resolution substituting Theodore de Cock instead of Codde, and commanding the latter to come to Rome and render an account of his conduct.

This daring and malicious act alarmed the perpetrators, and they had not the courage to make public and to put into force their resolution. To sus-

pend and practically to condemn and humiliate a great archbishop of a National Church on a charge of which he had been declared innocent by Papal lips seemed too daring an act. But Codde must be brought to Rome, and a courteous and flattering invitation is sent asking him to attend on the occasion of the jubilee of 1700. The Archbishop sets out for the eternal city. Pope Innocent XII. dies, and when the prelate arrives at Rome he finds Cardinal Albani, a favourer of the Jesuits, a vehement opponent of the rights of the Church of Holland, occupying the Papal See under the title of Clement XI.

It is unnecessary to follow the course of procedure, which could only eventuate in one way. In spite of five out of the ten cardinals supporting Codde, in spite of the apparent willingness of the Pope to acquit him, he was eventually condemned. In 1702 Clement XI. issued a brief, declaring De Cock pro-Vicar Apostolic of the United Provinces in the place of Codde, and deposing the latter from the exercise of all functions pertaining to that office.

It is impossible to find in ecclesiastical history a more scandalous and disgraceful decree on the part of any Pope. Even the cardinals and Ultramontanes were amazed and indignant. The Roman canonist, Hyacinth de Archangelis, pronounced the whole proceeding null and void, and Renardi, doctor of Louvain, the defender of the infallibility of the Pope, declared that the "decree was an eternal disgrace to the Court of Rome, and to the present occupier of the Holy See." The thirst for the power, the desire to crush the autho-

rity of a National Church, and to bring it into the entire subjection to the despotic ministers of the court of Rome, seem to have been the principal motives which prompted the actors in this strange drama. The subsequent events were in accordance with this beginning. The Nuncio wrote to order the Chapters to receive De Cock. They respectfully refused, and De Cock declared that this disobedience deprived them of all their power and authority. He proceeded to nominate seven new arch-priests, and to disregard the protesting clergy. The Chapters met to decide what was to be done in such perilous times, and issued an ordinance for the purpose of preventing the faithful from being drawn away from their loyalty to their own Archbishop by the arrogant pretensions of De Cock. But in spite of these endeavours to preserve the unity of the Church of Holland a schism began to show itself. Some recognised the Pope's nominee, and regarded his opponents with suspicion and distrust, others remained loyal to their own Church and Archbishop. Popular feeling became aroused, and showed itself in riots and tumults.

The States of Holland and West Friesland inquired from the clergy a true account of the affair; Van Erkel defended the Chapters, and a decree was passed in 1702 prohibiting De Cock from the exercise of any jurisdiction over the Catholics, declaring his intrusion unwarrantable, and pronouncing all that had been done by virtue of the new brief to be null and void. Cock pretended to recognise the edict. The clergy vainly addressed a spirited defence of their position to the

Pope and the Propaganda. The Papal Nuncio refused to acknowledge the existence of the Utrecht Chapter, and the very existence of the Church of Holland was disregarded by the Roman court.

After his condemnation Codde was treated with kindness and honour by both Pope and cardinals; but it was commonly reported in Holland that he was doomed to death. The people were enraged, and the States declared that if Codde was not set at liberty they would drive every Jesuit out of the country and make De Cock prisoner. Codde returned to Holland in 1703, and found everything in a state of the greatest confusion, and the divisions amongst the Catholics deplorable. He wrote to Rome imploring some remedy for this disastrous condition of affairs, and the only answer he received was that if he attempted to exercise any jurisdiction he would be *ipso facto* excommunicate, that De Cock was the representative of the Holy See, and that all who did not recognise his authority were schismatics.

The States of Utrecht supported the cause of their persecuted Church. The old national spirit of freedom and hatred of tyranny showed itself, and although most of the members of the council were not Churchmen, yet they were not going to allow their old National Church, governed by a worthy and devout prelate, to be treated with indignity and wrong by any sovereign pontiff whose rule they in no way recognised. They published an edict prohibiting De Cock from the exercise of any jurisdiction over the Catholics in Holland. He had the rashness to declare that this decree had

been procured from the magistrates through the payment of money by his adversaries. This so enraged the States that they offered a large sum for his apprehension, and banished him from the country.

If Codde had been a strong-minded and courageous man he might have lessened the troubles of his Church by resisting the usurpations of Rome, by rallying around him the faithful, relying upon the protection which the States were perfectly ready to afford him. This would have been the wisest course ; this Van Espen advised ; but the Archbishop sighed for peace, and thought that by sacrificing himself, by obeying the demands of his enemies, the Church he loved might have rest. Future events showed the fallacy of the idea and the mistake he made ; but it was the mistake of an earnest, unselfish, and peace-loving man. He bade an affecting farewell to the Church he loved in May 1704, and passed the rest of his life in retirement near Utrecht, where he died six years later.

The withdrawal of the Archbishop did not improve the state of affairs one whit. Four pro-vicars appointed by the Chapters were in authority, of whom the first was James Catz. He was suspended from all his functions, and in order to add ridicule to wrong his sentence of suspension was conveyed to him attached to the foot of a hare. The terrors of excommunication were threatened against all disobedient clerics, which so alarmed the Chapter of Haarlem that its members promised not to take any part in the government of the diocese, although they contended for their right to exist according to ancient usage. The Utrecht Chap-

ter, however, stood firm, and demanded the restoration of Codde. The States of Holland and West Friesland banished some arch-priests whom De Cock had introduced, and threatened to drive out the Jesuits. Bussi, the Nuncio at Brussels, endeavoured to promote peace, and recommended the appointment of Gérard Potchamp, pastor of Lingen, an excellent man, wise and moderate in his views, as Vicar-Apostolic. During his short tenure of office, which only lasted a few months, he consoled the Church by his recognition of the rights of the Chapters and of the pro-vicars, and died much regretted in 1706.

The climax of confusion was reached when in the following year Adam Daemen, a scandalous and drunken priest, was consecrated Vicar-Apostolic under the title of Archbishop of Adrianople, in direct opposition to the declared will of the Chapters. The magistrates again interfered to protect the rights of the National Church, and in 1708 passed a decree banishing the Jesuits from the provinces. This severe measure brought about some unsatisfactory negotiations. Censures upon the clergy were poured into Holland from the Nuncio's safe retreat at Cologne. All appointed by the Chapters were summoned to appear before the representative of the Pope at Cologne. The States published a decree prohibiting them from obeying any such unlawful command. The Jesuits flooded the country with letters exhorting the Catholics to refuse to communicate with the old clergy, "those obstinate rebels to the Holy See, those mercenaries, those blind leaders who had no power to exercise any religious office

without sacrilege, and were in short damned and excommunicate." A crowd of foreign clergy was poured into Holland to possess themselves of the pastorates of the native ecclesiastics, to increase the spirit of division, and to detach the affections of the people from their old pastors.

The clergy were driven to desperation and published a spirited protest; the States came to their assistance, and Daemen, who was not allowed to set foot in the provinces, seeing that he could gain no profit from his office, resigned in 1709. In the following year, the aged Archbishop Codde, worn out with all his sorrows, and distracted by the sad spectacle of his harassed Church, passed away into the silent land, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

For thirteen years the Church of Holland was deprived of its chief pastor, during which period its members showed remarkable courage and perseverance in the face of unparalleled difficulties. The brave defender of the Church, Van Erkel, was summoned to appear before the Papal Nuncio; he respectfully declined, and was thereupon excommunicated. The faithful were warned not to receive the sacraments at the hands of the old clergy, that sacraments administered by such men were not valid, and were indeed sacrilegious acts. Some negotiations were entered into without any satisfactory results. The country was flooded with young Jesuit priests, who scrupled not to establish themselves in the churches by force. One of the old clergy was insulted and assaulted in

his own church at the Hague by this rabble. Another was dragged away from the altar. The doors of another church were besieged, and all who wished to enter were stopped and insulted. They proclaimed that baptism administered by the old clergy did not take away original sin, that their communion was not a sacrament, that marriages celebrated by them were invalid, and that children born of such alliances were bastards. The uncertainty infused into men's minds by such teaching was appalling, and the iniquity of these agents of persecution can with difficulty be described. The distress of the Church was great. Many years had passed since any new clergy had been ordained. Death had removed several of the elder ones, and the Chapters determined to procure some new men, if only a bishop could be found who would have pity upon the widowhood of the Church of Holland, and brave the censures of Rome for her sake. To Ireland they turned their eyes, and at last Luke Fagan, Bishop of Meath, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin, secretly ordained twelve priests. This raised the hopes of the national party, and filled their enemies with fury.

At this time almost the whole Western Church was exercised by the promulgation in 1713 of the famous Bull of Clement XI., entitled *Unigenitus*, which condemned as heretical one hundred and one propositions extracted from the writings of Quesnel. This dogmatic constitution was the cause of many troubles. It received a strong opposition on the part of several of the French bishops headed by De Noailles, Arch-

bishop of Paris ; and after the death of Louis XIV., who had been one of the chief instigators of the obnoxious Bull, the number of the opposers increased mightily, and the Sorbonne joined in the protest which was sent to the Pope.

The Belgian bishops accepted the Bull with submission, and received a flattering letter from the Pope. The Metropolitan See of Mechlin was then occupied by Thomas Philip of Alsace, a man of low birth, a tool of the Jesuits, formerly Canon of S. Bavon at Ghent, vicar-general of the bishop, Philip Erard Van der Noot, and Bishop of Ypres. This prelate was very eager to crush out any opposition to the Bull in his province. He had a redoubtable opponent in Van Espen of Louvain, whose powerful writings against the Bull had a great effect not only in the Netherlands but in France. Many of the clergy of Brabant refused to accept the Bull, and implored the protection of the Council of Brabant against the threats of the Archbishop. "In the Catechism," they said, "which Archbishop Boonen gave us it is written that we ought to believe all that the Church decrees and not what the Pope decrees." The Archbishop cited one of the canons of his cathedral, Van Roost, to appear before his tribunal on the charge of disobedience to the Pope ; but Van Roost escaped to Holland. Several of the principal clergy were declared heretics and deprived of all their offices and dignities by the Ultramontane prelate ; amongst others two canons of S. Peter at Louvain, Francis Vivien and Antoine Cinck ; two canons of S. Gudule at Brussels, Charles

de Wynants and Francis Coppens ; two priests of the oratory ; a chaplain of Notre Dame ; and the confessor of S. Rombaud at Mechlin. The Bishop of Antwerp followed into the footsteps of his Metropolitan and excommunicated the Abbot of Vlierbeek. Thomas Philip was rewarded for his persecuting zeal with a cardinal's hat.

The clergy of Holland, in spite of their dangers, were not so subservient. They followed the example of the French protesting bishops, and in a masterly document appealed to the Future Council not only against the Bull *Unigenitus*, but also against the unjust treatment which the Church of Holland had received. Although this appeal had no effect upon the Court at Rome, it produced a good impression in France, and attracted the sympathy of the French bishops, one of whom consented to ordain four clergy for Holland.

By the good Providence of God, Dominique Varlet, Bishop of Babylon, came to Holland on his way to Russia, and stayed at Amsterdam with Krys, one of the faithful clergy. Moved by the pitiable state of the Church, he consented to confirm six hundred candidates. This act was never forgiven by the Propaganda, and when the good bishop was prosecuting his mission on the shores of the Caspian Sea, notice of his suspension was conveyed to him by a Jesuit emissary. No appeal, protest, or defence was of any avail ; and subsequently the Bishop of Babylon came to reside at Amsterdam, and became the instrument in God's hands for preserving the con-

tinuity and episcopal succession of the Church of Holland.

Wearied of waiting the Chapters determined to obtain an archbishop. They consulted the Universities of Louvain and Paris whether it was lawful for them to elect an archbishop without obtaining the Pope's assent, and having obtained a favourable reply they met in 1723. They elected Cornelius Steenoven Archbishop of Utrecht, who was consecrated by the Bishop of Babylon in the following year. To the great grief and loss of the Church he died two years later.

The valuable life of the Bishop of Babylon was happily preserved for many years. He consecrated no less than four Archbishops of Utrecht : Cornelius Steenoven (1723-25), Cornelius John Barchman Wuytiers (1725-33), Theodore Van der Croon (1733-38), and Peter John Meindaerts (1739-67). At each consecration notice was sent to the Pope, who replied by sentence of excommunication ; but in spite of the terrible troubles which the Church had to undergo, the ceaseless machinations of the Jesuits, who on two occasions planned the abduction of the Bishop of Babylon, in spite of Papal threats and Jesuit intrigues, the Church of Holland maintained her existence. In the midst of all her perils, the college at Amersfoort was founded for the education of her clergy, and she showed an example of faithfulness, of conscientious adherence to principles, of perseverance in spite of all obstacles, which has seldom been surpassed in all the annals of ecclesiastical history.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BELGIAN CHURCH IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Belgian discontent on account of Austrian government—Maria Elizabeth appointed governor—Louis XV. invades country—Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle—Good government of Maria Theresa—Religious toleration—History of bishopric of Liège—Cardinal de Furstemberg—John Louis of Elderen—Severity of Louis XV.—Joseph Clement, Archbishop of Cologne and Bishop of Liège—Accepts *Unigenitus*—George Louis de Bergue—His wise rule—Unwise reforms of Joseph II.—Religious liberty proclaimed—Decrees concerning Papal supremacy, marriages, minutæ of worship, dress of nuns, &c.—Louvain secularised—Suppression of episcopal seminaries—Violent opposition—Revolt of students at Louvain—Rebellion of the “patriots”—Independence of Belgian provinces proclaimed—Death of Joseph II.—Country reconquered by Leopold II.—“Statists” and “Vonckists”—Revolt of people of Liège—Death of Leopold II.

WE have already noticed that by the treaty of Utrecht the Belgian provinces were transferred to Austria and formed part of the empire of Charles VI. This arrangement was not agreeable to the people, and degrading to their sense of national honour. The rising discontent was increased by the action of the new government. Prince Eugène of Savoy, the governor, appointed the Marquis of Prié as his plenipotentiary, a man of haughty and imperious disposition, whose despotic rule kindled the slumbering embers of revolt. At Mechlin, Antwerp, and at Brussels furious riots

took place, which required the presence of the German troops to subdue them.

The Marquis of Prié was recalled in 1725, and the Archduchess Maria Elizabeth was appointed governor, whose wise administration restored peace and contentment to the people. In ecclesiastical matters she was mainly guided by the powerful Archbishop of Mechlin, Cardinal Thomas Philip of Alsace, whose persecution of the Jansenists we have already noticed. Archbishop Croon of Utrecht, harassed by the troubles of his See, wrote to the powerful prelate to ask his protection. The Cardinal replied in a letter which, for abuse and insult, has been rarely surpassed. Even the Pope was offended by his intemperate zeal, and admonished him to confine in future his endeavours to promote the welfare of the Church of Holland to his prayers.

On the death of Charles VI. his heroic daughter, Maria Theresa, was left to contend for her crown with many pretenders; Frederick the Great of Prussia, the Electors of Bavaria and Saxony, and the Kings of Spain and Sardinia were all eager to share the spoil of an unprotected empire. But the intrepid Empress was not without allies. England and Holland came to her defence. The Cardinal Archbishop was sent to Paris to secure the neutrality of Louis XV., but his efforts were in vain. Louis poured an army into the Netherlands, and by the battles of Fontenoy (1745) and Ran-cour (1747) made himself master of the country, and threatened Holland. William IV., another scion of the illustrious house of Orange, was elected stadtholder

to protect the provinces ; but happily in 1748 the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle put an end to the war, the Belgian provinces reverting to Austria.

The rule of Maria Theresa was a bright spot in a disastrous period of Belgian history, and her memory is still revered by the people. Her brother, Duke Charles of Lorraine, was appointed governor, and won the affections of all the inhabitants. He instituted many wise and useful reforms, and while applying a system of centralisation in the political administration of the country, he paid due respect to the privileges and institutions which prevailed under the old regime in each province. He authorised a free public exercise of all forms of religion, suppressed the censureship of books, abolished the barbarous practice of torturing criminals, and considerably improved the material prosperity of the country. Middle-class education had hitherto been mainly in the hands of the Jesuits. After the suppression of that order in 1773 the government created new colleges, called *thérésiens*, and also schools of art for teaching drawing, painting, and architecture.

The bishopric of Liége was also governed by wise and peace-loving bishops, who were a great contrast to many of their predecessors. We have traced the history of this principality to the advent of Maximilian Henry, who began his rule in 1650. He was as tyrannical as any of the preceding bishops, and trampled upon the rights of the citizens, levying heavy taxes and increasing their burdens. They rose in arms against him, and were punished with great severity. The province became a prey to the armies of Louis XIV.,

who paid little respect to the neutrality of the principality. The towns and villages were invaded, and money extorted from the luckless inhabitants "for the service of the King." The citadel of Liége was sold to the French by the treacherous governor, the Baron of Vierset, in 1675, and in the following year it was destroyed. During this disastrous time the Bishop had retired to Germany, and during his absence the populace revolted with their accustomed vigour. Maximilian Henry returned with some German troops, reduced the turbulent citizens, and established his famous Regulation or constitution of eighty-five articles, which considerably diminished the political rights of the people. He also built a citadel to keep them in subjection, and constructed a fort, called the Dardanelles, in the middle of the bridge which spanned the river connecting the two parts of the city, and thus maintained a firm hold on his subjects.

After the death of the Bishop (1688) the province became again the theatre of the war between Louis XIV. and the allied forces. Neither were the internal affairs of the Church in a better state. The same evils which produced the Reformation still existed. Powerful prelates, selected for their birth rather than their virtues, reigned as temporal lords rather than as Christian bishops, amassing wealth, levying taxes, waging war, holding two or three bishoprics at once, paying little attention to the spiritual wants of their flocks. Cardinal de Furstemberg, Bishop of Strasburg, who managed to get himself elected Coadjutor Bishop of Liége before the death of Maximilian Henry, was a

prelate of this character. When the latter died he possessed himself of the wealth which Maximilian had amassed, and which was bequeathed to Prince Joseph Clement, brother of the Elector of Bavaria, and endeavoured to procure the bishopric for himself, and also the archbishopric of Cologne. To the latter Prince Joseph Clement was elected, in spite of his youthful age of seventeen years, and in spite of his possession of two other bishoprics. Foiled in his attempts at Cologne, the Cardinal used every intrigue to procure Liége with the support of the French monarch. But the Chapter resisted all his attempts, and elected John Louis, Baron of Elderen. The choice gave great satisfaction to the people of Liége, who hated the Cardinal on account of the taxes which he had levied. The Pope confirmed the election, which so irritated Louis XIV. that he threatened to send an army into Italy, seized Avignon, and then prosecuted his relentless war in Germany, the results of which we have already noticed.

John Louis was a pious, gentle, and just bishop, but unable to cope with the powerful and unscrupulous Louis XV., who exacted vast subsidies from the principality, and destroyed the citadel of Liége. When the league was formed by England, Holland, and Germany against France, the people of Liége pleaded their defenceless state, their poverty, their distress, their want of troops, as powerful reasons for not engaging in another war; but when an army of Hollanders threatened to bombard the town, they consented to join the league against Louis. He punished them for their

desertion by pillaging Huy, Stavelot, Malmedy, with its church and monastery, and in 1691 his general, the Marquis of Boufflers, bombarded Liége for five days, causing a great destruction of churches and other buildings. The principality suffered with the rest of Belgium all the calamities of the protracted war.

John Louis ruled only six years and was succeeded in 1694 by Joseph Clement, Archbishop of Cologne. This prelate concluded a secret treaty with France, and when the victorious armies of the Duke of Marlborough carried all before them, he was forced to seek safety in flight, and Liége was obliged to capitulate. Although Joseph Clement was Archbishop of Cologne and Prince-Bishop of Liége, he does not seem to have taken holy orders until sometime after his election. The chronicles of Liége record that "on the first day of the year 1707, having taken holy orders, he celebrated mass at Lille in the presence of his brother."

The Bishop followed the lead of the other prelates in Belgium with regard to the Bull *Unigenitus*, and published an edict compelling the clergy in his diocese to accept it. The village priest of Grace, near Liége, named Hoffreumont, resisted the edict and was cited to appear before the Bishop. He appealed to the Emperor, and, assisted by the Jansenists, went to the court at Vienna and obtained an order granting protection to him, or to any other man who refused to accept the obnoxious Bull. Copies of this order were sent by the priest to the bishops of France and to other ecclesiastics, who were much strengthened in their resolution to resist the Papal decree. The Bishop

became alarmed, and by urgent representations obtained from the Emperor a revocation of the order. The priest refused to submit, abandoned his cure, and took refuge in Holland. Joseph Clement died in 1723, and was succeeded by George Louis de Bergue, a man of great piety, much beloved by the people, and it is recorded as a special proof of his justice, that he did not impose any charges upon his subjects for his own use, but contented himself with the revenues of the principality. He paid close attention to the spiritual wants of his See, especially taking care that only suitable and learned men should be admitted to holy orders. He required that all candidates for the ministry should pass three months at the seminaries of Liége or Louvain, and that they should be well instructed in theology and in the ceremonies of the Church. He ordered the parish clergy to preach and to catechise every Sunday and Festival, and threatened with severe censure any who failed to perform their duty. He forbade the clergy to enter taverns; he visited his diocese and confirmed; and with regard to the temporal wants of his subjects he was equally zealous and successful in causing improvement. A new era had dawned for the Church in Liége, and the old days of tyranny and revolt had for a time passed away.

The happy reign of Maria Theresa was followed in 1780 by that of her son, Joseph II., a well-intentioned but unwise ruler who, impressed by the philosophical ideas current in France, desired to remodel his vast empire and to construct a uniform system of govern-

ment and administration. To revise, reform, and reconstruct were objects dear to the heart of the new emperor. Local customs long cherished; chartered rights and privileges, purchased by the lives of heroic citizens on many a bloody field; laws, regulations, and constitutions handed down from happier and more prosperous days, and preserved with all the tenacity of a brave and conservative race, were all forced to bend before the stubborn will of the imperial reformer. He believed that he had power to fashion the people into any shape he pleased, just as the potter moulds clay. He found, however, that the material on which he worked was not quite so facile, and popular discontent soon manifested itself.

The state of religion in the Belgian provinces first attracted his attention. The bishops were warm adherents to the Papacy, as we have already seen, and the clergy, who were Catholic but not Roman, had found Holland a safer abode than any they could procure in the Austrian Netherlands. The Archbishop of Mechlin was John Henry de Franckenberg, who was the vehement opposer of the Emperor's reforms. Complete liberty of conscience was proclaimed in 1781. The Catholic remained the dominant religion, but Protestants were allowed to build churches on condition that their edifices did not resemble churches and had no clocks or bells, to enjoy all the rights of citizenship, to enter the academical course of arts, law, and medicine at the University of Louvain, and to be free from all restrictions with regard to their religion. To this measure the bishops strongly

objected, and the authorities of Louvain addressed certain remonstrances to the Emperor, stating that their University was founded for the preservation of the Catholic faith, that tolerance was the seed of dissensions and endless disputes, that the Catholic religion regarded all heretics, without distinction, as victims devoted to the horror of eternal punishment, and that on these grounds they objected to the Emperor's decree.

Another decree informed the magistrates that the Catholics were allowed to build a church and a school where there were one hundred families, that their funerals should be solemnised openly, that in the case of mixed marriages the children of a Catholic father and a Protestant mother should be educated as Catholics, and that the sons of a Protestant father and Catholic mother should be Protestants, the daughters Catholics.

All clergy belonging to religious orders were freed from their dependence upon all foreign ecclesiastical superiors, and it was forbidden to have recourse to Rome to obtain dispensations for marriages prohibited by law, and authority was given to the bishops to grant such dispensations. The Archbishop of Mechlin expressed his regret that he had not power to comply with the wishes of the Emperor in this respect. In 1782 the bishops were ordered to tolerate mixed marriages, and the Catholic clergy to publish the banns and assist in the celebration of such unions. In 1783 several useless convents were suppressed. Appeals to the Pope were forbidden, and episcopal

charges were to be submitted to the Emperor for his approval.

The minutiae of worship and rules of religious orders received the attention of the eager reformer, even the dress of the nuns did not escape him. They were ordered to wear black robes without mantles or veils. A new division of parishes, collation to benefices, modes of examination, the suppression of brotherhoods, processions, &c., all occupied the mind of the Emperor; and he secularised the ancient University of Louvain, converting it into a general seminary, and establishing a similar institution at Luxembourg. The episcopal seminaries were suppressed and converted into clerical schools, where the candidates for the ministry were obliged to retire after they had finished their course at the university to learn the duties of their calling. An ecclesiastical committee was formed to carry out the reforms inaugurated by the Emperor.

These measures created violent opposition throughout the Netherlands, and earnest remonstrances on the part of the Archbishop and clergy. The changes at Louvain caused considerable irritation. It is true that the course of instruction was too circumscribed. Scholasticism was still in favour, and the scholars were educated in theological subtleties, and were better able to sustain a thesis than to compose a good sermon. But that was no reason why the whole character and constitution of the university should be changed.

The students soon showed their discontent; they complained of the management of the schools, of their food, of the ignorance, immorality, and heterodoxy of

the professors, whom they treated with derision. At length they openly showed their discontent, and insulted the rector and professors. A scandalous tumult ensued—glasses, benches, and tables were broken, and the students abandoned themselves to wild excesses. When asked by a representative of the government what they wanted, they replied, *Sanam doctrinam et bonam disciplinam*; but the tumult was not assuaged before the arrival of a company of soldiers. Subsequently they stated their demands, that the bishops should be the judges of both doctrine and discipline in the school; that each professor should be approved by the bishops, and also the books used at the public lectures; and they added certain requests with regard to the hours of study, holidays, admission of friends, &c.

The Archbishop of Mechlin read the refractory youths a lesson and reprimanded them for their excesses, and by force of arms twenty-five ringleaders were transferred to the prisons of the university. Abbot Dufour, who had been appointed by the Emperor to preside over the theological faculty, delivered a long address in Latin, which was a mark for the wit and epigrams of the students. His scholarship was derided, and when he ventured to use the classical adjuration *me Hercule*, they declared the Abbot was far more familiar with Pagan authors and philosophers than with the fathers of the Church. Small matters mingle with great in all popular movements. Restrictions in the usual allowance of beer to the students greatly increased the discontent, and Louvain became nearly deserted.

The Emperor Joseph was not more successful with the other reforms which he attempted to impose upon his reluctant subjects, in spite of the remonstrances of the Archbishop and bishops, and of the States. The closing of the diocesan seminaries by military force was the signal for violent opposition on the part of the clergy and the patriots, as the party were called who were resolved to maintain the ancient institutions. Two lawyers, Van der Noot and Vonck, took the lead in the popular movement. An army of volunteers was formed, and in 1789 the patriots gained the important battle of Turnhout. Town after town fell into their hands, and only Luxembourg remained to the Emperor. In 1790 the independence of the Belgian provinces was proclaimed.

Disappointment and sorrow caused by the loss of Belgium, and distress on account of the sufferings of his daughter, the unhappy Marie Antoinette, who was then at the mercy of the refractory citizens of Paris, caused the death of Joseph II. in 1791. He was succeeded by his brother, Leopold II., who succeeded in reconquering the Belgian provinces. The ranks of the rebels were weakened by dissensions. One party, called *statists*, headed by Van der Noot, wished to restore the ancient institutions; the other, called *progressists* or *Vonckists*, from their leader Vonck, longed to introduce into the country that system of popular government which the French Revolution had inaugurated. This division weakened the new government, and paved the way for the advent of the forces of the new emperor.

The lessons of the French Revolution had been eagerly learnt by the people of Liége. In the time of Bishop Velbruck (1772-1784) popular feeling ran high against the government of the powerful ecclesiastic who exercised temporal and spiritual control over the people of the principality, and in 1789, in the time of his successor, Bishop de Hoensbroeck, the spirit of liberty and independence produced a determined revolt, and the Bishop was forced to take refuge in Germany. When the armies of the Emperor marched into Belgium to reduce his rebel subjects to submission, on their way they restored the Bishop of Liége to his principality and subdued the revolt. This restoration did not last long. Leopold II. died in 1792, and events were about to happen which produced vast changes, both ecclesiastical and civil, in the destinies of all the Netherland provinces.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, AND THE EFFECTS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN THE NETHERLANDS.

Decline of Dutch Republic—State of the Church—Archbishop Meindaerts—Council of Utrecht—Its acts received with applause by the Church—Through intrigues of Jesuits condemned at Rome—Suppression of Jesuits—Negotiations with Rome—French Republicans invade the Netherlands—Sovereignty of the people proclaimed—Reign of terror—French tyranny—Abolition of religion—The bishops fly—Confiscation of Church property—Monastic orders suppressed—Churches closed—Ineffectual opposition of Archbishop of Mechlin—Louvain closed—Feast of Reason—Wholesale transportations—Rise of Napoleon—Batavian Republic—French tyranny—Louis Bonaparte King of Holland—His treatment of Dutch Church—Murder of Archbishop of Utrecht—Deplorable state of country—Concordat of 1801—Alterations of dioceses—Resignation of the old bishops—Opposition—Stévenists—Religious worship restored.

FROM the grand position of importance among the great powers of Europe which she had held at the commencement of the century, Holland had gradually fallen. Wars with England, dissensions at home, a rebellion against the stadtholder, subdued by a powerful Prussian army led by the Duke of Brunswick, the loss of commerce and valuable colonial possessions, all contributed to the decline and fall of the once powerful Republic.

In the midst of these national troubles the Church of Holland maintained her existence, and continued

her gallant struggle against her powerful foes. Considerable hopes were excited during the time of Archbishop Meindaerts (1739–1769) of effecting a reconciliation with Rome. A statement of the doctrines of the Church was sent to Pope Benedict XIII., and very favourably received. The champions of the Church, Willibrord Kemp, Broedersen, Norbert, conducted the negotiations, but without any result. In order to preserve the succession two bishops were consecrated—Jerome de Bock to Haarlem, and Byeveld to Deventer. There were at this time fifty-two parishes—thirty-three in the diocese of Utrecht, seventeen in Haarlem, and one only in Leeuwarden. Time and opposition had terribly reduced the strength of the once flourishing Church.

It, however, showed remarkable activity during the archbishopric of Meindaerts; a provincial council was summoned in 1763, which, by its decrees and decisions, declared the orthodoxy of the Church, its adherence to the Catholic faith, but manifested a subservience and deference to Rome, which is certainly surprising. Considering the treatment which they had received from the successive occupants of the Papal chair, considering the bold stand which their predecessors had made against Papal pretensions, it is surprising to us to find the following among the decisions of the Council:—

“That the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, as successor of S. Peter, is not merely a primacy of honour, but also of ecclesiastical power and authority.

“That the Roman pontiff, as successor of S. Peter,

is *jure divino* the visible and ministerial head of the Church founded by Christ, who is its invisible and quickening Head, and therefore is the first vicar on earth of the same Christ, the care of the whole Church being committed to him."

The Council also unwisely expressed an opinion on the division between the Eastern and Western Church, assenting to the action of Pope Nicholas I. when he ventured to depose Photius, the patriarch of the Greek Church, from his episcopal dignity, and declaring the Greek Christians to be schismatics. It is possible that a strong desire to please the Pope and to heal the breach with Rome urged the Council to pass this resolution, and to show deference to their powerful persecutors.

The proceedings of the Council received the applause of Churchmen in all countries of Western Christendom. The writings of Le Clerc were condemned and their author excommunicated. The five articles of Jansen were discussed, and without passing an opinion upon the *Augustinus*, the Council declared "that the doctrine of grace handed down by Augustine and Thomas is agreeable to Holy Scripture, the decrees of pontiffs and councils, and the writings of the fathers." The works of two Jesuits, Berruyer and Hardouin, were condemned as impious and wicked, and an admirable declaration of faith drawn up in opposition to the errors denounced by the Council. Rules were formulated for the worthy receiving of Holy Communion, and canons of discipline relating to baptism, confirmation, marriage, &c.

At the close of the Council the acts were placed

for publication in the hands of the able historian of the Church of Holland, De Bellegarde, whose "History of the Church of Utrecht" has often been referred to in this work. At first these acts were received with applause; congratulations poured in from the bishops of France, Germany, and Italy; but by the intrigues of the Jesuits a condemnatory Bull was extorted from the Pope after an examination of the acts by a committee of cardinals, who were absolutely ignorant of theology, and did not even know their Catechism.¹ The Churchmen of Holland were denounced by this competent assembly as "impious, rebels, schismatics, children of iniquity." The Bishop of Liége followed suit, adding other agreeable phrases, such as "detestable masters of error and iniquity, thieves, ravening wolves."

The Assembly of the Church of France, at that time composed of Atheists, or partisans of the Jesuits, likewise condemned the acts of the Council without actually reading them, and by their conduct added fresh burdens to the Archbishop of Utrecht and his persecuted and unfortunate clergy. Meindaerts died in 1767, and was succeeded by Walter Michael van Nieuwenhuisen, who witnessed the overthrow of the foes who had so long troubled the peace of his Church. An outcry against the Jesuits was raised in every part of Europe, and when Clement XIV. ascended the throne of S. Peter their doom was sealed. In 1773, by the Bull *Dominus ac Redemptor*, he suppressed the whole order. If he had lived without doubt the

¹ Bottari, Librarian of the Vatican.

Church of Holland would have been reconciled to Rome. Powerful friends interceded for her; Maria Theresa pleaded her cause with the Pope; the Spanish Church showed much sympathy; deputies were to be sent to Rome to conduct the negotiations; but the untimely death of Clement XIV. destroyed the hopes of the Dutch clergy, as his successor Pius VI. did not show much affection for the distressed Church. When a new Bishop of Haarlem was consecrated in 1778 the usual sentence of excommunication was issued, and the usual polite terms employed, such as "schismatics," "heretics," "ravens wolves," &c. But the sympathy of many of the most devout and learned divines in Europe was with the Church, and their letters consoled the brave band in their conflict with the tyranny of Papacy. Archbishop van Nieuwenhuisen died in 1797, and was succeeded by John Jacob van Rhijn, a pastor of Utrecht.

During the rule of this prelate disastrous troubles beset the whole of the Netherlands, mainly brought about by the nation's folly, for which the unfortunate people had to pay dearly. When Francis II. became Emperor of Austria in 1792, republican France at once commenced a struggle for the possession of the Belgian provinces. The battle of Jemappes made Dumouriez and his French troops master of the country, including the principality of Liège, then ruled over by Francis Anthony of Méan. Some self-constituted deputies went to Paris to seek some share of the "liberty and equality" which the convention professed to have established. Paid French agents

were sent into Belgium on the pretence of ascertaining the wishes of the people, and instructed to report that the Netherlanders desired to become citizens of France. The comedy was performed, and the Belgian provinces, together with the diocese of Liége, were incorporated with the French Republic.

The sovereignty of the people was proclaimed. The provinces became subject to all the violences of the Reign of Terror, to the tyrannical power of the French deputies, to a system of pillage and exaction. In the following year (1793) the imperial forces gained the battle of Neerwinden, and the republicans fled; but in 1794 they returned with a large army, and the disastrous battle of Fleurus left them masters of the country. The French occupation lasted twenty years, during which time Belgium was compelled to submit to all the humiliations of a conquered province. The conquerors came to deliver the country from "the tyranny of despots, nobles, and priests," but they established a system of tyranny which has scarcely been equalled. The historic names of the old provinces, dear to the hearts of a patriotic people, were effaced from the map. The towns, monasteries, cathedrals, and colleges were heavily taxed, and in the name of liberty the whole country was despoiled.

The abolition of religion was part of the programme of French republicans, as one of the unfrocked priests of France graphically expressed it, while crushing beneath his foot a crucifix: "It is not sufficient to trample upon the tyrant of the body, but we must stamp on the tyrant of the soul." The authors of the

Feast of Reason did not fail to carry out their intentions with regard to the abolition of religious worship in their conquered provinces as in France. The bishops of Belgium fled. Brenart, Bishop of Bruges, retired to Westphalia and died 1794; De Lobkowitz of Ghent to Munster; De Nelis of Antwerp to Tuscany; Charles d'Arberg of Ypres and John Baptist de Melroy of Ruremonde followed the others; William of Salm-Salm, the last Bishop of Tournay, was transferred to Prague. The Archbishop of Mechlin, Cardinal de Franckenberg, and the Bishop of Namur, Albert Louis of Lichtervelde, courageously remained at their posts to weather the storm.

The first article of the republican creed declared that all ecclesiastical goods belonged to the nation, and could be disposed of according to the will of the people. All ecclesiastical corporations were required to furnish an account of their property within six days. All the religious houses or benefices deserted by the clergy were declared to be confiscated to the Republic, and this spoliation was subsequently extended to those which were not deserted. The secularisation of marriage was declared to be "one of the immortal principles of '89," and the celebration of marriage by a clergyman was forbidden. All monastic orders and religious establishments were suppressed; the wearing of any distinctive religious dress was forbidden. All ministers were required to subscribe to the formula: "I recognise the sovereignty of the citizens of France, and promise obedience to the laws of the Republic."

Against this decree the Archbishop of Mechlin and the clergy of his diocese, and also of Louvain, Brussels, Antwerp, and others, protested, but in vain. They refused to obey, and their churches were closed. Not content with this, the Directory issued another formula, which required every one to "swear hatred against royalty and tyranny, and to promise attachment to the constitution of the year III." Every clergyman was forbidden from discharging any ministerial duty unless he signed the decree, and took an oath swearing fidelity to the order of the Republic. The brave Archbishop was arrested for not complying with this iniquitous demand, and would have been transported to Cayenne or to Oléron had not the English navy prevented French ships from crossing the Atlantic. He was driven into exile across the Rhine. The times of Nero and Diocletian seemed to have returned, and the faithful were obliged to worship God in secret houses, or in lonely farmsteads, away from the haunts of the impious wretches.

But their rage and madness did not stop here. The University of Louvain was attacked, the libraries and schools closed, the colleges deserted, the professors despoiled of their dignities and their emoluments. The rector, John Havelange, was condemned to transportation. A festival of the Temple of Reason was proclaimed, and all members of the University were bidden to take part in the profane burlesque. They replied with true Christian fortitude, "We do not recognise any other lawful worship than that which Jesus Christ, very God and very man, hath deigned to

reveal, and that which the Catholic Church, Apostolic and Roman, recognises." The University was conformed to republican principles.

All the goods and churches of ecclesiastics who refused to swear hatred to royalty were confiscated. In 1797 no religious worship of any kind was allowed. In addition to the religious houses even the schools and hospitals were abolished. The observance of Sunday, "that ancient prejudice!" was abolished, and each tenth day was made a holiday. But the Belgian people, faithful to the custom of the Church, continued their ancient practice of observing the seventh day. All churches were ordered to be destroyed in 1799, but happily the decree was not completely executed in Belgium, as the beautiful cathedrals and other ancient ecclesiastical buildings, the glory of the country, testify. During this age of infamy ten thousand persons were transported; the clergy suffered severely, and no pity was shown to old age or weakness. To exterminate religion was one of the principal objects of the agents of the Republic.

But the end of this reign of terror was at hand. By the *coup d'état* of 1799 Napoleon Bonaparte became the practical ruler of France. All the clergy and public functionaries were required to swear fidelity to the Republic, founded on the sovereignty of the people. By the advice of the Archbishop of Mechlin and the Bishops of Ypres and Ruremonde the clergy refused, and the Bishop of Liége, Count de Méan, united with them in opposing the decree.

The inhabitants of the United Provinces experienced

similar treatment at the hands of the French. The people, discontented on account of the losses their country had received and the decline of their maritime supremacy, welcomed the republican troops as deliverers. They cast aside their old institutions; the Stadtholder resigned his office rather than involve his country in civil war; the Batavian Republic was erected on the ruins of the old form of government; but the unfortunate and headstrong people were obliged to pay dearly for fickleness and imaginary independence.

Universal misery followed. Enormous sums were demanded by the French, and the country was treated as a conquered province by the iniquitous agents of the French Republic. All freedom and independence were lost, and national glory, prosperity, and power were trampled down and crushed by their ruthless oppressors. The Church of Holland was not affected by this disastrous state of affairs, and was not interfered with by the Republic or by the French. The Chapters elected John Jacob van Rhijn, a pastor of Utrecht, to the archbishopric, and he was consecrated by the bishops of Haarlem and Deventer. After the *coup d'état* the Batavian Republic saw itself converted into a monarchy by Napoleon, in order to provide a kingdom and a title for his brother Louis, who proved himself to be a kind and gentle ruler; but although he supported both the Protestant and Roman Catholic party, he showed great hostility to the National Church. Archbishop van Rhijn was killed by poison in 1808: by whose hand the foul deed was accomplished it has never been ascertained. Owing to the opposition of

Louis the See remained vacant for six years. Overawed by the tyrannical will of his imperial brother, finding his position untenable, Louis resigned his throne, and Holland again was annexed to the French empire. The terrible oppression which ensued, the enormous taxes extorted from the people whose means of livelihood had been wrested from them, the intolerable conscription laws, the poverty to which they were reduced, drove the Dutch to such a pitch of desperation that they waited with feverish anxiety for an opportunity for throwing off the yoke, which had become insupportable.

Napoleon discovered the fact that religion was necessary for the welfare, peace, and prosperity of a country, and that without the blessings of Christianity nations can never achieve greatness or preserve their stability. The restoration of the Church in France and Belgium thus became a leading principle in the policy of the First Consul. Negotiations with Rome were opened, and the famous Concordat of 1801 was finally arranged.

The articles of the Concordat declared that the Roman Catholic religion should be freely exercised in France; that the Pope, in concert with the government, should make a new circumscription of dioceses; that all the "constitutional" bishops should resign their Sees; and that Napoleon should nominate to the new bishoprics. It will be observed that an entirely new order of affairs was thus inaugurated. There was no precedent for such an act of absolute authority as that of Pope Pius VII. in effecting an entire reconstruction of the Gallican Church. It is

true that the Church was in great confusion. There were the old dioceses, but many of the bishops had abandoned their Sees, married, and left the Church; some had fallen victims to the popular rage and suffered martyrdom. There were also the "constitutional" bishops, called schismatics by the Ultramon-
tanes, who were elected by the electors of the departments according to the decrees of the *Civil Constitution of the Clergy* of 1790. Of these there were at the time of the Concordat fifty-nine. They were ordered to resign "for the sake of the peace and unity of the Church," which would have been better preserved if the Pope had not taken upon himself to exercise absolute power over the Gallican Church, and had preserved its ancient constitution and laws. The act of 1790 was never promulgated in Belgium; there were no "constitutional" bishops in the Netherlands, but the article of the Concordat ordering the new circumscription of dioceses was put into force, and the ecclesiastical map of the country received many alterations. The new province of Mechlin embraced the following dioceses:—Mechlin, Tournay, Ghent, Namur, Liége, Aix-la-Chapelle, Tréves, and Mayence;¹ the dioceses of Antwerp, Bruges, Ypres, and Ruremonde were suppressed. The ancient dioceses of the province of Utrecht were not disturbed by the Concordat, and Napoleon promised to effect a reconciliation with Rome, but his mighty projects and unceasing wars prevented him from carrying out his intention.

¹ The last three are beyond the boundaries of Belgium.

The surviving Belgian bishops, Cardinal John Henry de Franckenberg of Mechlin, d'Arberg of Ypres, Van Velde de Melroy of Ruremonde, and de Méan of Liége, calmly resigned their Sees in obedience to the Pope, and were replaced by strangers. John Armand de Roquelaure, Bishop of Senlis, was appointed Archbishop of Mechlin; Hirn, Bishop of Tournay; Zaepffel, of Liége; Bexon, of Namur; and Fallot de Beaumont, of Ghént.

It was not possible that this high-minded method of re-establishing the Church should be received without some protest. One Cornelius Stévens, of the diocese of Namur, censured the old bishops for their subservience to the Pope and to Napoleon in resigning their Sees, and objected to the homage which the new prelates paid to the great Emperor, to the chanting of the *Te Deum* at each new French victory, and to the interference of Napoleon in ecclesiastical affairs. These objectors were called Stévenists, after their leader, and consisted of two parties—the moderates, who confined their complaints to the proceedings of the Emperor, and to the subservience rendered to him by the clergy; the anti-Concordat party, composed of those who declared that the Pope ought to have refused to accept the Concordat, that the new bishops had been unlawfully intruded upon them, that it was impossible to communicate with them, and that the ancient constitution of the Church ought to have been maintained. The moderates disappeared in 1814, when the star of Napoleon's glory set; but the latter party still exists. It flourished for some time in the diocese

of Namur, and although Stévenism has survived until the present day, it has not been able to hold its own against the powerful Roman Catholicism of Belgium. The people welcomed with acclamations of joy the restoration of religion which "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality" had deprived them of for five long years. Again the church bells sounded; again the church doors opened to an eager crowd; again the priests were seen at the altars, and the solemn music stirred the hearts of a religious and devout people, who welcomed with tumultuous gladness the worship of which they had been deprived so long.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BELGIAN CHURCH IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Oppression of the Church by Napoleon—The new Catechism—The “University”—Exasperation of the people—Reunion of Holland and Belgium—Causes of dissension—Treatment of the Catholics by William I.—Liberty of worship proclaimed—Opposition of Belgian bishops—Suppression of religious houses and of episcopal seminaries—Concordat of 1827—Formation of new Sees—Revolution of 1830—Independence of kingdom of Belgium—Church freed from State control—Complete religious toleration—Present condition of Church—Zeal of the bishops and clergy—Attachment to Rome—University of Louvain—Growth of monastic system—Popular attachment to the Church—Growth of liberalism—Future prospects.

ALTHOUGH Napoleon restored the Church to her throne, nevertheless, on the pretext of protecting the interests of the State, he placed upon her brow a crown of thorns which was well-nigh intolerable.¹ By various acts of tyranny and oppression the masterful Emperor made the ecclesiastical power entirely subservient to his own will. The rights of the Church were entirely disregarded. Regulations with regard to doctrine and discipline, the dress of the clergy, the fabric of the churches, were all issued by order of the Emperor without any recognition of the legislative authority of the Church in ecclesiastical affairs.

This conduct of the Emperor was especially mani-

¹ Claessens, *La Belgique Chrétienne*, i. 47.

fest when he forced upon the bishops and people of Belgium the new Catechism. He ordered two clerics to draw up this new Catechism, which was based on that of Bossuet published in 1686. Many alterations and additions were made in the latter, and the new work was considered defective and incomplete by the Belgian clergy. The Emperor did not forget to inculcate in a special chapter the obligations and homage due to himself and his successors by the people of France and Belgium. The Cardinal Legate, Caprara, approved of the work, and the bishops were compelled to introduce it into their dioceses. The clergy were not so willing to be coerced by the Emperor. Abbot Stévens boldly attacked the Catechism; and when Zaepffell, Fallot de Beaumont, and the other prelates tried to impose it upon their clergy, they were met with a determined opposition. The able historian of the modern ecclesiastical affairs in Belgium laconically observes: "Napoleon disappeared in 1814, and the Catechism with him."¹ His action with regard to education was no less displeasing to his subjects. He established a body which he called the University; to which the entire public education of the empire was assigned. Without the consent of the grand-master of the University no school could be opened; and no one was allowed to teach unless he was a member of the University. The professors of theology were obliged to take an oath pledging them to promote amongst their pupils loyalty to the Emperor and their country; and all who refused to comply with the

¹ Claessens, i. 42.

orders of Napoleon were compelled to close their schools. Many of them were converted into military academies, in order to furnish soldiers and officers for the imperial army.

In the Concordat nothing was said concerning religious houses. These were entirely suppressed, with the exception of hospitals and refuges, presided over by communities of sisters, who devoted their lives to the relief of suffering humanity, and were of great service in nursing the wounded soldiers, both French and English, struck down in the bloody battles of Waterloo and Quatre Bras.

The treatment which the Church received at the hands of Napoleon did not endear him to the hearts of the clergy, and the enormous contributions which he demanded from the people of both Holland and Belgium for the purpose of carrying on his ambitious and relentless wars, the cruel conscription laws, which robbed the country of its best and bravest men, and devoted them to death amid Russian snows, exasperated the people beyond all endurance. With the armies of the allies relief from this intolerable tyranny came in 1814. A provisional government was established, at the head of which was the Duke of Beaufort, who transferred the control of all ecclesiastical matters to the spiritual authorities, and released the Church from the fetters with which Napoleon had enslaved her.

By the treaties of Paris, London, and Vienna it was decided to unite the whole of the Netherlands, to convert it into a kingdom, and to place it under the sove-

reignty of the house of Orange. This reunion of the two countries, so closely allied by common interests, presented many apparent advantages; it seemed likely to produce a great increase of prosperity and power; to the agricultural and industrial resources of Belgium were added the maritime strength of Holland, its extensive commerce and rich colonies; and a united population of six millions seemed to promise stability to the nation, and a formidable barrier to French aggression. There were, however, formidable differences between the Belgians and the Dutch, which made the process of amalgamation difficult. The wishes of the former were not consulted; they found their country annexed to Holland as "an increase of territory"; they found themselves ruled over by a Dutch sovereign, in religion a Protestant, and belonging to a nation towards which they had always entertained feelings of jealousy and prejudice.

At first all went well, and by wise counsels William I. contrived to conciliate his new subjects and to promote some union between the two nationalities. A new era of prosperity and activity seemed to have dawned, but dissensions and difficulties arose which caused the old hostility and national rivalry to break forth once more. The Belgians objected to the composition of the States-General, because they sent only the same number of deputies as the Hollanders, and yet had nearly twice as many inhabitants. The vexed questions of protection or free trade caused great disputes, and also the preference shown to the Hollanders in the matter of civil appointments. The adoption of Dutch as the

official language was also objected to, but the chief cause of dissension was the difference in religion. The Catholics imagined that William desired to force Calvinism upon them, but this does not appear to have been so. He wished to free the Church from Roman dominion, and to construct a truly National Church independent of Papal authority. He proclaimed full liberty of worship to all religions; but the intolerant Belgian bishops signed a remonstrance, declaring that the Catholic Church could not exist under such conditions. William showed himself as obstinate as his clerical subjects, and condemned the Bishop of Ghent to transportation for contumacy, and another cleric, the Abbot of Foere, to two years' imprisonment. He would not allow any Papal Bulls for the institution of bishops to be issued in the realm without his consent.

His treatment of the religious houses was unjust and tyrannical. Against the wishes of the inhabitants, and for no adequate reason, he suppressed the community of poor sisters at Bruges, and adopted measures for the gradual extinction of all convents, the inmates of which did not perform any useful duties for the benefit of the public, such as nursing the sick.

He ordered the governors of the southern provinces to forbid the admission of novices, perpetual or life-long vows, and the acknowledgment of any other authority than that of the bishops of their own dioceses. He required a full catalogue of all monastic establishments, and declared that he wished to reduce considerably the number of the religious communities

which were devoted to spiritual exercises and contemplation.

The monarch's treatment of his Catholic subjects can scarcely be said to have been in accordance with the spirit of toleration and religious liberty. While he encouraged the Bible Society of the Protestants he suppressed two Catholic societies for the dissemination of religious literature. He arrogated to himself an absolute and tyrannical right over the entire education, both secular and religious, of his subjects, and excited the fears and the murmurs of the people, which culminated in a determined opposition on the part of the Catholics.¹ He established a philosophical college at Louvain; the episcopal seminaries were closed, and the candidates for the ministry were obliged to go elsewhere in order to read for ordination.

It was natural that these measures should arouse the hostility of the Catholics of Belgium, and, anticipating the storm which threatened to burst upon his kingdom, William entered into communication with the Pope in order to calm the angry feelings which his measures had excited. The result of the negotiations was the establishment in 1827 of a Concordat, which declared—

(1.) That the Concordat of 1801 between the Pope and Napoleon should apply to the northern provinces of the kingdom.

(2.) That each diocese should have a Chapter and a seminary.

(3.) That when a See was vacant the Chapter should

¹ Th. Juste, *La Révolution Belge de 1830*, i. 61.

present a list of selected names to the King, who should signify the candidates most agreeable to himself. From these names the Chapter selected the most suitable man, and having obtained the consent of the Pope the Chapter would proceed to elect him to the vacant See. Three new Sees were formed in the country, viz., Bruges for western Flanders, Bois-le-Duc for northern Brabant, Gueldres, and Zealand, and Amsterdam for the northern provinces. Thus the rights of the National Church of Holland were trespassed upon by the Concordat. It was only partially carried into effect. The cabinet at the Hague opposed it by continual delays, and for some years the Dutch Church was freed from an intrusive hierarchy.

Manifestations of discontent in Belgium soon showed themselves. A union was formed of both Catholics and liberals, on other questions vehemently opposed, for the purpose of throwing off the yoke of Holland. The King became alarmed and granted many concessions to his discontented subjects; but these wise measures came too late. The French revolution of 1830 found an echo in the Netherlands, and roused the spirits of the oppressed Belgians. An angry crowd of patriots issued from the Theatre de la Monnaie at Brussels on the night of August 24th, excited by the representation of revolutionary drama, and eager to emulate the deeds of actors whom they had been applauding. They sacked and pillaged the houses of the representatives of the government, of Van Mænen, the minister of justice, the offices of the *National*; the tricolour of Brabant was planted on

the Hotel de Ville, and the cocade adopted as the insurgents' badge.

Thus the revolution was commenced. The other towns, except Ghent and Antwerp, whose commercial interests were allied with Holland, joined in the movement. A provisional government was appointed, and the patriot bands defeated the Dutch army of 15,000 men led by the Prince of Holland. The independence of the Belgian provinces was proclaimed, and in the following year, with the consent of the chief European powers, Prince Leopold of Saxe-Cobourg was elected by the National Congress King of Belgium.

By the revolution the Church of Belgium was entirely emancipated from the control of the State. Complete religious toleration was proclaimed, and the Church began to enjoy a peace and entire freedom from oppression such as she had not experienced for many years. The bishops, headed by the Archbishop of Mechlin, Prince de Méan, were opposed to the bestowal of absolute religious liberty on all sects, but for the sake of the peace and security of the State they wisely determined not to offer any opposition to the decree of entire religious toleration, and contented themselves with the complete independence of State control which the decree of the Congress had granted to them. The Belgian Church had power to choose its own ministers without let or hindrance from the civil powers, to hold free intercourse with the Papal See, to publish its own laws and the Papal Bulls, to possess a common fund for the support of public

worship, and to be in all things free from the control of the State.

The present condition of the Belgian Church is as follows:—It has one archbishop and five bishops—Mechlin, Tournay, Ghent, Namur, Liége, and Bruges. The archbishop has three vicar-generals and a Chapter of twelve canons; each bishop has two vicar-generals and a Chapter of eight canons. The stipends of the bishops and clergy are paid by the State. The Church had been robbed of her ancient endowments; her property had been confiscated by the State, and this payment of her ministers is an act of restitution of a portion of the wealth which unjust men had deprived her of. The archbishop receives an income of £840, the bishops £640, the vicars-general £144, and the canons £96. Each bishop has a theological seminary attached to his diocese, which received until 1881 a yearly subsidy from the State of £320, but this has been discontinued. The clergy are divided into four classes, and receive annually a sum ranging from about £82 to £32.

The Belgian bishops of recent times are remarkable for their virtues and their zeal, their talents and their good works. The praise which M. Claessens bestows upon them is well deserved; he says that they are loved and venerated in their dioceses, true pastors of souls, ever eager to defend the interests of religion, the grandeur of Divine worship, the Christian education of the young, the progress of instruction, the maintenance of all good works, the honour of the priesthood, the virtue and piety of family life, the

sanctification and the health of the souls which God has committed to their charge. Their example is followed by their clergy, who are indefatigable in their ministerial work.

Attachment to Rome and to Roman errors is strong and unyielding. The Vatican decrees of 1854 and 1870, concerning the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin and the Papal Infallibility, were received with due submission by the Belgian clergy, and Archbishop Dechamps of Mechlin took an active part in defending the latter dogma.

The Catholic University of Louvain was founded by Archbishop Sterckx in 1835, of which M. de Ram was the first rector. To it were assigned some of the buildings of the old University,¹ which had played such a distinguished part in the annals of Belgian history, and was in the sixteenth century the most famous in Europe. Here Lipsius, Van Espen, Van Vianen, D'Aubremont, Huyghens, and other renowned scholars, lived and worked and taught. Six thousand students thronged the lecture-halls and the forty-three colleges. Changes and misfortunes had dimmed the glory of the once famous seat of learning. Joseph II. and the French Republicans had stamped out its existence, and it was left to the Church of the nineteenth century to build again the University of Louvain. It has five faculties—theology, law, medicine, philosophy and literature, and mathematics. There are about thirteen hundred students who reside in four colleges, viz., the College of the Holy Spirit for theological

¹ The State University, founded by William I., was suppressed in 1833.

students, the College of the Pope for the students of law and philosophy, that of Maria Teresa for science and medicine, and that of Justus Lipsius for the pupils of the philological institute. A technical academy for the study of arts and manufactures has recently been added. Its grand library of 70,000 volumes is one of the largest in the country.

The dioceses are divided into deaneries, the rural dean acting as the vicar of the bishop in superintending the pastoral work of the parishes in his deanery. There are 48 deaneries in the diocese of Mechlin, containing 654 parishes; in Tournay 32 deaneries, containing 654 parishes; in Namur, which now comprises the province of Luxembourg,¹ 21, containing 689 parishes; in Liége 37, containing 631 parishes; in Ghent 16, containing 335 parishes; in Bruges 15, containing 372 parishes.

The growth of the monastic system has been very rapid during recent years. Before the French occupation in 1794, there were 631 religious houses and 12,000 monks and nuns. In 1829 the number of houses had sunk to 280, having 4791 inhabitants. In 1880 there were 25,362 monks and nuns, and 1559 monasteries and convents. The chief orders are the Benedictines, the Bernardins, Trappists, Premontrés, Dominicans, Jesuits, Redemptorists, and various brotherhoods, such as the Brothers of the Love of Jesus and Mary at Ghent, the Brothers of our Lady of Pity, &c.

¹ The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was detached from the diocese of Metz and reunited with Namur in 1823.

The Church in Belgium is regarded with affection and reverence by the greater bulk of the inhabitants, especially by the poor and least educated. By their devoted lives and energy the clergy maintain a firm hold on a devout and simple-minded and somewhat superstitious people, who cling tenaciously to their ancient faith and care not to examine very deeply the reasonableness of their religion. The great strength of the Belgian Church rests in the affections of the poorer folk who throng her temples; and if universal suffrage were adopted, a political change which is earnestly desired by the Catholics, her position and power would be greater even than they are at present. Amongst the wealthier and more educated classes the spirit of liberalism has made a great advance during recent years. To yield a blind allegiance to Roman dogmas, to be obliged to accept without question each new decree which emanates from the Papal court, does not commend itself to the enlightened minds of many of the leaders of thought. And too often the love of freedom leads men, whose intellectual faculties and spiritual aspirations have been restrained by inexorable rules, to reject the faith altogether and take their places in the ranks of the atheists and agnostics. This liberalism is spreading, and some day the great struggle will commence between the power of the Church and the forces of infidelity and scepticism. In the meantime, while the Church retains her hold on the affections of her people, is it too much to hope that her clergy may be enabled by Divine grace to purge away the errors which Rome has

taught her, the novel doctrines forced upon her by external authority, the superstitions which mar her services, and to conform more closely to the primitive practices, to the faith and discipline of earlier times in which Belgian Churchmen set so bright and distinguished examples ?

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CHURCH OF HOLLAND IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Vacancy of the See of Utrecht—Napoleon's respect for Willibrord Van Os and his intentions with regard to the Dutch Church—Van Os, Archbishop—His character—Negotiations with Rome—Van Santen, Archbishop—His conference with the Papal Nuncio—Intrusion of Roman Catholic Hierarchy—Opposition to Papal decrees of 1854 and 1870—Present condition of the Church of Holland—College at Amersfoort—Connection with old Catholic movement of Switzerland and Germany—Future prospects.

HITHERTO the gallant little Church of Holland had struggled against powerful foes before the admiring and sympathetic gaze of all Europe ; but the course of events, the battle cries of contending armies, and the fall of empires had turned the attention of her friends into other channels, and the Church of Holland was left to fight her way unaided. From 1808 to 1814 the See remained vacant, owing to the tyrannical opposition of Louis. When Napoleon visited Utrecht he was impressed by the learning, the venerable appearance and address of Willibrord Van Os, the rector of the college at Amersfoort, vicar-general of the diocese during the vacancy of the See, and instead of carrying out his intention of confiscating the property of the Church he determined to protect it, and to bring about a reconciliation with Rome. The Emperor's defeat and the

revolt of Holland effectually prevented the carrying out of any such plan. Van Os was consecrated Archbishop of Utrecht in 1814, and ruled the little Church wisely for eleven years. His successor, Van Santen, thus speaks of him: "The earnestness of his faith, his zeal for truth, his courage in the maintenance of the rights of the Church, the edifying manner in which he performed the functions of his ministry, the rare prudence with which he governed that portion of the flock which the Divine Shepherd had committed to his charge, the kindness with which he directed the young ecclesiastics who were destined for the service of the altar, the purity of his character, his prudent and mortified life, the sweetness of his behaviour, the gentleness of his countenance, all won him universal love and esteem."¹

Again an attempt was made to bring about a Concordat with Rome; again the old difficulties appeared. Acceptance of the Bulls *Vineam Domini* and the *Unigenitus*, and the condemnation of the five propositions said to be contained in Jansen's "Augustinus," were required. The bishops replied that they accepted all the articles of the holy Catholic faith; they believed and taught all that the Church had decreed, and condemned all that the Church by her councils had condemned; they rejected the five propositions *which were stated to be* in Jansen's book, and promised fidelity and obedience to the Pope.

This declaration was not considered sufficient by

¹ Van Santen, *Appel des Evêques*, p. 43, quoted in Neale's "History of Utrecht Church."

the cardinal who conducted the negotiations on the part of the Pope, and this attempt at reconciliation fell through, as many previous ones had done.

On the death of De Jong, Bishop of Deventer, in 1824, the Archbishop informed Pope Leo XII. of his nomination of William Vet to the vacant See, and after protesting the loyalty of the Church of Holland proceeds to point out the true cause of the opposition of her enemies at Rome. It was not a question of doctrine nor of the primacy of the Roman See. "Our foes regard us with ill-will, and condemn us because we defend, like good shepherds, our sheep against those who would take them from us, and because we maintain the rights of our Church. The only point in question is this: Whether the Batavian Church, which has always maintained its hierarchical order, and which has made itself celebrated under the rule and government of its own pastors, should be at once turned into a simple mission at the good pleasure of the Curialists; so that, if I may thus speak, it should be deprived, by one stroke of the pen, of its bishops and cathedral Chapters."

Nothing could equal the loving tenderness which the words of the good Archbishop breathed, the strength of his arguments so delicately and respectfully presented to the Pope, the force of his reproaches hurled at the implacable and determined enemies and calumniators of his Church.

Van Os died before any reply could be received, and Van Santen was consecrated archbishop by the Bishop of Deventer in 1825, in the little church of S. Gertrude

at Utrecht. He proved himself worthy of his illustrious predecessor. A letter was sent to all the Catholic bishops showing forth the invariable faith of the Dutch Church, the unlawfulness of the sentence of excommunication pronounced against her, protesting against the appellation of "Jansenist," and appealing to the future council of the whole Church.

A remarkable conference took place between the Archbishop and Capaccini, the Papal Nuncio, who was sent into Holland to promote Ultramontane interests. With consummate skill, using all the arts of intrigue, flattery, and persuasion, the Nuncio tried to induce Van Santen to sign the formulary condemning the five propositions which were declared by the Bulls to be in Jansen's work. "It was only a mere form, a minute matter of trifling moment. Implicit obedience to authority was the bounden duty of all faithful sons of the Church, and if the Pope declared that the five propositions were contained in the "Augustinus" every loyal Churchman was bound to believe that they were there, no matter what his private opinion might be." This doctrine was new to the Archbishop, who demanded whether the Pope required him to swear that he believed what he did not believe, and whether Catholic unity was to be maintained by perjury. The Nuncio replied that when the Church instructs her children what to believe they are bound to silence all trifling scruples. Van Santen answered this sophistry in these words: "I cannot conceal my indignation at your endeavours to make me declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that I do believe a point that I do

not believe; my conscience is subject to Him, and by His aid I will act in His fear. I must continue to decline to put my name to a formulary which I reject; my hand must not contradict my heart." Thus the conference ended.

At this time the Roman Catholics in Holland were very numerous, amounting to 1,171,910 souls. They had 1094 churches and 1539 clergy. In 1853 a new Roman Catholic hierarchy was introduced with the permission of the government, but in strong opposition to the will of the people. In spite of the protest of the bishops of the National Church the intrusive prelates were established in their newly-created Sees.

When the Bull *Ineffabilis*, which propounded the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, was issued in 1854, it met with a forcible and firm protest on the part of Van Santen and his suffragans, Van Buerl of Haarlem, and Hermann Heykamp of Deventer. Again, in 1870, the Dutch Church protested against the dogma of Papal Infallibility, which caused so many Catholics to leave the communion of the Church of Rome, and called into being the "old Catholic movement" of Switzerland and Germany. To the old National Church of Holland the old Catholic Church of Switzerland and Germany owes its episcopal succession, Bishop Reinkens being consecrated in S. Lawrence's Church at Rotterdam in 1873 by Bishop Hermann Heykamp, then Bishop of Deventer.

I will conclude this history with a brief account of the present condition, tenets, and practice of the National Church of Holland, whose existence has been

preserved through so many years of danger by the devotion and steadfastness of her brave clergy. Prior to the last Lambeth conference of Anglican bishops the Archbishop of Canterbury despatched a mission, consisting of the Bishops of Salisbury and Newcastle, who were accompanied by the present writer, in order to obtain information concerning the condition of the Church, and to establish friendly relationship with the clergy of her communion. Conferences were held with the Archbishop of Utrecht and the Bishops of Haarlem and Deventer, who welcomed the representatives of the Anglican Church with brotherly cordiality, and imparted to us all the information we desired.

The Church has about thirty priests and 7000 laymen; its archbishop is Mgr. John Heykamp,¹ and the Bishops of Haarlem and Deventer are John Rinkel and Cornelius Dispendaal, the latter of whom resides at Schiedam. The Roman Catholics number about one million, and the Protestants about three millions. The clergy receive about £100 to £150 each, with a house; and this income is derived partly from old endowments, the Government contributing about £25 to each. The clergy are still under the law of celibacy. The churches are neat and clean, and in good order, with no great superfluity of ornament, with very few statues. No acts of worship or reverence are ever shown towards images or pictures. They reject the title "Jansenist," which the Roman Catholics have bestowed upon them. "We are no more Jansenists than we are Bossuetists

¹ Since the above was written the Church of Holland has mourned over the sudden death of this devout man and worthy prelate.

or Quesnelists. We defended Jansen when he was unjustly attacked; but we do not hold by any means all the opinions of Jansen, who, for instance, believed in the infallibility of the Pope, which we entirely reject; but we say that the teaching of Jansen on the doctrine of grace was wrongly condemned by the Court of Rome, which attributed to him opinions which he did not really hold."

With regard to the doctrine of grace they believe that the grace of God is necessary for all happiness, and for the beginning, progress, and end of all spiritual life. Men can resist grace, because the will is free. In baptism the child is purified from original sin and grace is given, because the Creator operates directly on the soul of His creature. Infants are incapable of resisting the flow of Divine grace.

The Church of Holland has always accepted and taught the dogmatic definitions of the Council of Trent as far as faith and doctrine are concerned, but not as regards discipline. They accept the creed of Pope Pius IV., with certain reservations according to the explanation of the Portuguese oratorian Pereira, which minimises its teaching as much as possible. Neither the bishops nor priests are required to sign this creed, nor is it cited in their Catechism.

They accept the three creeds; their office of Prime for Sundays contains the Athanasian Creed. The Roman Liturgy is used for the Holy Eucharist,¹ but the

¹ The Latin service is translated into Dutch, and both versions are arranged in parallel columns, in order that the people may be able to follow the service in their own language, although the Latin version is used.

breviary, containing the daily offices read by the clergy is the Parisian, with a few additional offices for local saints' days. The Catechisms in use are also chiefly adapted from French sources by writers of the School of Port Royal. They accept the Seven Sacraments, but admit that the two Sacraments of the Gospel stand higher than the rest. The rite of Confirmation is administered after the Roman use with outstretching of hands to the whole body, not with imposition of hands on each candidate. The Invocation of Saints they believe to be useful but not necessary. With regard to the Romish doctrine of Purgatory they do not consider that prayers and sacrifices can of themselves free souls from the pains of purgatory, but pray that God will shorten those pains. The merits of the saints cannot be used to dispense with the pains of purgatory. Indulgences have been entirely abolished, and no dispensations are paid for.

Holy Communion is celebrated on Sundays, and once or twice during the week. The laity are expected to communicate four times in the year, but may do so as often as they please. The Communion is administered in only one kind, but after it a chalice of unconsecrated wine is generally administered to the communicants. Their doctrine with regard to the Real Presence is similar to the Roman doctrine. The laity are encouraged to read and study the Holy Scriptures.

The college at Amersfoort, presided over by Van Thiel, has only sixteen students, of which number

four are theological students preparing for the ministry. It is an interesting building, containing a chapel, refectory, class-rooms, and studies for the students, a fine library, and a small room devoted to archives, the walls being lined with boxes of MSS. containing letters and papers in the handwriting of Van Espen, La Mère Angélique, the heroine of Port Royal, Pascal, and others whose names are connected with the history of the Dutch Church. Amongst the leading clergy we may mention Van Santen, who, with the learned rector of the college at Amersfoort, edits the monthly paper called *The Old Catholic*, and M. Deelder, the pastor of the historic church of S. Gertrude at Utrecht. The German and Dutch Old Catholics maintain communion with each other, but the former have made more rapid reforms than the latter, and are regarded by their elder brethren as too eager for change, if not almost revolutionary. It is to be hoped that the Church of Holland may live to exercise a greater influence in the country than she does at present. The Roman Catholics are active and aggressive, and have increased enormously since their intrusive hierarchy was forced upon an unwilling people. Amongst the Calvinists and numerous Protestant sects free thought and agnosticism are spreading. Let the old National Church awake to its responsibilities, let its members prove themselves worthy of their ancient lineage, and imitate the examples of their brave forefathers, who boldly contended for the faith against all the intrigues of implacable and powerful foes, and faced unflinchingly the fulminations of the Court of Rome. We

have remarked how wonderfully God has preserved her, when deprived of all human aid, through long years of apparently hopeless struggling; we have mourned over her distress, her loneliness, and bereavements; may it be our lot to rejoice with her in her joys, and to see her restored to her rightful place in the affections of the people of Holland.

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INDEX.

	PAGE		PAGE
ACCA, S.	52	BALDWIN, Bras-de-fer . . .	89
Adalard, S.	86	„ the Bald	95
Adelbord	111	„ IX.	153
Adrian VI., Pope, confes- sion of	217	Batavii	5, 7
Aduatici	5	Bavaria, John of	200
Age of saints	28	Bavon, S.	35
Agricola, Rudolph	196	“ Beggars, the ”	240
Aix-la-Chapelle	81, 340	Beguines and Beghards . .	177
Albert, S., martyrdom of .	150	Belgian bishops at Councils	18
Albert and Isabella	257, 283	Belgium and Holland united	367
Alcuin	58	Benedict, S.	83
Alexander, Bishop of Liége	146	Bergue, George Louis de	344
Alva, Duke of	249	Bernard, S.	144
Amand, S.	27, 34	Bertin, monastery of	39
Amersfoort, College at .	187, 191	Black Death	168
<i>Amor Penitens</i> , attacks on .	314	Blandinium	36
Amsterdam	163	“ Bloody Edict ”	223
Anabaptists	227	Bogermann	276
Ansker	86	Bokelszoon	227
Antimond, S.	39	Bonaparte, Louis	360
Architecture, ecclesiastical	205	Boniface, S.	53
Arkal, John d', Bp. of Utrecht	166	Boniface of Brussels	158
Arminianism, survival of .	280	Boonen, James, Bishop of Mechlin	289
Arminius	271	Bouillon, Godfrey of	136
Arnauld, Antoine	303, 318	Brethren of Common Lot .	184
Arnulph, S.	24	Bruges	96, 161, 163, 205
Arras and Cambray	40, 75	Bruno, S., of Cologne	101
Arteveldt, James van	165	Bull <i>Unigenitus</i>	334, 343
Athanasius, S., at Trèves .	18	Burges, de, Archbishop of Mechlin	321
<i>Augustinus</i> , attacks on . . .	301	Burgundy, House of Philip, Duke of	198
<i>Aurelius Petrus</i>	299	Burgundy, Philip of, Bishop of Utrecht	223
Austria, Rule of House of .	214		
„ Don John of	252		
Austrian Netherlands	310		

	PAGE		PAGE
CALVIN	224	Counts, powers of the	87
,, reaction against	269	Courtray, battle of	161
Cambray and Arras, diocese		Crusades	135, 146
of	40, 75	Cunibert, S.	29
Cambray, Gerard of	116	Cyran, S., Abbot of	298
Cantiprè, Thomas de	156		
Carthusians	213	DAVID, Bishop of Utrecht	208
Cassel, battle of	164	Débonnaire, Louis de, rule	
Catholics, edict against the	260	of	81
,, persecution of	316	Deventer	59
,, treatment of, by		Dinant "pacified"	211
William I.	370	Diocesan organisation	32, 233, 371
Catholic, old, movement in		Diocletian persecution	14
Switzerland and Germany.	386	Dominicans	155
Catz, Baldwin	311	Dominique Varlet	336
Charlemagne	63	Domitian, S.	33
Charles, Duke, at Brussels	101	Dort, Synod of	271
,, V. conquers Ghent	228	Druidism	7
,, the Bald	87	Dutch, love of liberty char-	
,, the Fat	91	acteristic of the	2
,, the Good	141	Dutch Republic, decline of	
,, the Simple	95	the	351
Christianity, progress of	17, 31		
Cistercian monasteries in		EBURONES	5
Belgium	144	Egmond, foundation of	
Civil wars	101, 132	monastery of	88
Clement, Joseph, Arch-		Egmont beheaded	249
bishop of Cologne and		Egmont, George of, Bishop	
Bishop of Liège	343	of Utrecht	225
Clementists, crusade against	171	Elderen, John Louis of	342
Cock, de, opposition to Papal		Elizabeth, Maria, appointed	
decree and to	329	governor	339
Codde, Peter, consecrated		Eloi, S.	24
Archbishop	324	Eleutherius, S.	37
Codde, Peter, deposed	328	English theologians sent to	
Cologne, Utrecht assigned to	62	Synod at Dort	275
"Compromise, the"	240	Epagatus	13
Concordat of 1801	361	Episcopius	276
,, of 1827	370	Eracle, Bishop of Liège	106
Conqueror, William the, aids		Erasmus, controversy be-	
Count of Holland	132	tween Luther and	220
Constance, Council of	190	Erkel, Van, excommunicated	333
Constantius and Constantine	16	Espen, Van	320
Constantine's vision	16		
"Council of Blood"	249		

	PAGE		PAGE
Eucharius, S.	3	Heinsberg, John of, Bishop of Liége	210
Extortions of the Popes . . .	167	Henry IV. and Hildebrand . . .	127
Eyck, Van, painter	206	Henry of Ghent	157
FAGAN, Bishop, of Ireland, ordains clergy	334	Héristal, Pépin of	45
Famine	118	Heussen, Van	324
Field-preachings	240	Hierarchy, intrusion of Roman Catholic	382
“Five Propositions” of Jansenism	303	Holland and Belgium united . . .	367
Flagellants	168	Hosius, Synod held by Arch- bishop	289
Flanders, Bishop of Norwich in	171	Hubert, S.	46
France, treaty between, and Spain	235	Hulst, Van, and other inquisi- tors	232
Franciscans	154	Humbert, William, Arch- bishop of Mechlin	321
Franks, rise of Salian	21	Huns, Progress of Christi- anity arrested by	21
Fratricelli	178	IMAGE-BREAKERS	242
Frederick, Bishop of Utrecht, martyrdom of	86	Independence of United Pro- vinces	258
French Jansenists take refuge in the Netherlands	304, 318	Indulgences	201, 217
French Republicans invade Netherlands	355	Inquisition	228, 232, 244
Frisia, early apostles of	49	Irregularities of election to bishoprics	105
Frisians	6, 133	Isabella and Albert	257
Furstenberg, Cardinal de	341	JANSEN, Cornelius	298
GÉRARD, S.	98	Jansenism	297, 318
Gérard of Cambray	116	Jeanne, Countess of Flanders . . .	154
Gerson, defends Brethren of Common Lot	191	Jesuits	261, 282, 319, 333, 354
Gerius, S.	40	Joseph II., unwise reforms of . . .	344
Ghent 35, 172, 173, 206, 228, 252		KAFENZA, Archbishop, ac- count of the Church in Holland	295
Goch, John of	192	Kempis, Thomas-à-	188
Gomarus	272	Klopjes	294
Granvelle, Cardinal	231	LAMBERT, S.	44
Gregory	56	Lebvinus at Deventer	58
Grignoux, revolt of	287		
Groot, Gerhard	176, 182		
HAUCHIN, Archbishop of	281		
Hegius	196		

- | | PAGE | | PAGE |
|---|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Legendary bishops | 11 | Napoleon, Louis | 360, 378 |
| Leopold II. | 349 | Neercassel, John van, Bishop
of Utrecht | 311 |
| Leyden, siege of | 251 | Nervii | 5 |
| Liège 32, 94, 106, 149, 200, 225,
253, 287, 340 | | Northmen | 89 |
| Lindanus, William, Bishop
of Ruremonde | 282 | Notger, Bishop of Liège | 107 |
| Livinus and his labours | 28 | Noyon | 38, 146 |
| Lobbe, monastery at | 106 | | |
| Lollards | 177 | OLDENZAAL, surrender of | 291 |
| Lothaire I., treatment of, by
Pope | 92 | Omer, S. | 29 |
| Louis XIV. of France 308, 341 | | Orange, William of | 231, 235,
248, 254 |
| Louis XV. invades Belgium | 342 | Os, Willibrord van, Arch-
bishop of Utrecht | 378 |
| Louis, John, of Elderen | 342 | Oudshoorn, James d', Bishop
of Utrecht | 166 |
| Louvain | 342 | | |
| „ University of 204, 301,
347, 374 | | PAINTING, art of | 206 |
| Ludger | 60 | Papal power, increase of 80, 93,
126, 129 | |
| Lupus de Sens | 24 | Paul, S., legend of | 3 |
| Luther | 218 | Peace of God | 119 |
| | | Peace, tribunal of | 120 |
| MAESTRICHT | 32, 42, 46 | Pépin of Héristal | 41 |
| Male, Louis de. | 170 | Perrenot, Anthony | 231 |
| Malmédi, monastery of | 42 | Persecutions. | 13, 14, 224, 237,
260 |
| Marlborough, victories of | 309 | | |
| Martin, S. | 16 | Philip of Burgundy, Bishop
of Utrecht | 223 |
| Maternus, S. | 11 | Philip of Burgundy, Count
of Flanders | 198 |
| Maurice, Prince | 256 | Philip II. of Spain | 231 |
| Maximilian, Emperor | 218 | Photinus | 13 |
| Mechlin | 79, 177, 193, 234 | Piatus, S. | 15 |
| Medardus, S. | 38 | Port Royal | 303 |
| Meindaerts, Archbishop of
Utrecht | 352 | Printing, effect of | 218 |
| Memlin | 206 | Prosper, S., poem of | 22 |
| Menapii | 5 | Provinces, the Seven | 252 |
| Mommolin, S. | 39 | | |
| Monasteries and monastic
orders | 31, 35, 154, 357, 375 | QUESNEL. | 304, 320 |
| Monulphus, S. | 33 | | |
| Mystics | 178 | | |
| | | | |
| NAPOLEON BONAPARTE | 359,
365, 378 | | |

	PAGE
RADBOD	29
Raoul (Ralph), Bp. of Liége	149
Rathere	105
Reformation, the	217
,, precursors of,	175
Reformers, disputes between	221
Reginald, Bishop of Liége . .	118
,, Count	106
Religious toleration	246, 260, 340, 346
Remaclus, S., Bishop of Maestricht	42
Remigius	23
Remonstrants	272, 276
Requesens	251
Revolt of Netherlands	247
Revolution of 1830	371
Richaire, Bishop of Liége . .	105
Richard, S.	123
Rovenius, Bishop of Utrecht	290
Ruysbroek	178
Rynswick, treaty of	309
SAINTS, age of	28
Sanctus	13
Santen, Van, Archbishop of Utrecht	381
Sasbold Vosmeer, Arch- bishop of Utrecht	263
Saxon missionaries	50
Schenck, Frederick, Arch- bishop of Utrecht	244
Schisms at Rome	121, 123, 148, 169
Schoolmen, influence of	157
Sens, Lupus de	24
Servatius, S., Bishop of Maestricht	32
Sigebert, evidence of	14
Slaves, Church	103
Spanish rule	229
Spanish soldiers revolt	251
Standonck, John	215
Statistics of Church	268, 375, 383

	PAGE
Stavelot	42, 122
Stevenists	363
Swedérus, Bishop of Utrecht	203
Synod of Dort	271
TANCHELIN, heresy of	147
Theban legion	14
Theodore, Count of Holland	131
Theresa Maria	339
Therouanne	22, 39
Titelman	232
Tongres	18
Torre, James de la, Arch- bishop of Utrecht	311
Torrentius, Bp. of Antwerp	282
Tournay	37, 226, 287
Trent, Council of	239
Treveri	5, 9
Trèves	11, 18
Tribunal of peace	120
Trond, S., abbey of	234
Trosli	97
“UNIVERSITY,” the	266
Urbanists	172
Ursula, S.	21
Utrecht	56, 62, 165, 203, 225, 378
VAAST, S.	23, 40
Valenciennes, revolt at	238
Valerius, S.	3
Valois, Philip of	164
Venduille, John de, Bishop of Tournay	287
Victricius	20, 39
Vonckists	349
Vosmeer, Sasbold, Arch- bishop of Utrecht	263
WACHTENDONCK, John a, Bishop of Namur	290

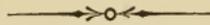
	PAGE		PAGE
Walenrode, Bishop of Liége	202	Willibrord, S.	50
Walloons, character of . . .	252	Windesheim, monastery	
Wazon, Bishop of Liége . .	120	of	186
Wessel, John	194	Wolbodon, Bishop of Liége	116
Weyden, Roger van der . . .	206		
Widukind	61	YPRES	162, 243
Wilbrand, Bishop of Liége .	152		
William of Orange 231, 235	248,	ZERBOLT, Gerhard	188
	253	Zwentibold	94
„ Bp. of Utrecht 127, 132			

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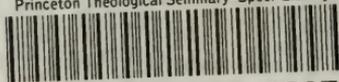
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