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ARTICLE I.—*The Kingdom of Christ.**

THE art and mystery of our religious life consists in the exercise of faith. The faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, has, by its nature, a claim to supreme authority in man, and always tends, like the conscience among the moral faculties, towards entire predominance. It proposes, as the most excellent of possible attainments on earth, that we shall walk by faith and not by sight, and becomes in us the power and the desire to live as seeing Him who is invisible.

It is the chief design of the things that are seen to help us in conceiving and enjoying the things that are not seen. Our Lord Jesus Christ appeared in the flesh to aid us in realizing that he lives in the Spirit. The imaginative powers which blend themselves so readily with our religious faith, are stimulated to conceive more vividly what is behind a visible veil, than what is described, as in its nature invisible. The mercy-seat in the Jewish tabernacle, which was veiled from the people,

* The following article is an enlarged form of the discourse of the Rev. Dr. Yeomans, at the opening of the late General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia.

ART. IV.—*The Rise of the Dutch Republic, a History.* By JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY. Three vols. New York: Harper and Brothers.

History of the United Netherlands; from the death of William the Silent to the Synod of Dort, &c. By JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, LL.D., D. C. L. Two vols. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1861.

IN these two works, which in substance are really one, there is bound up a most valuable chapter of ecclesiastical history. Deeply as the question of the Reformation agitated all the nations of Western Europe, to no other was it of such political importance as to the Dutch Republic, which not only derived its existence therefrom, but whose Constitution depended upon the liberality of Reformed doctrines. Hollanders had no original intention to break off their allegiance. They clung to it, indeed, almost beyond reason, after every plea for it had been prostrated again and again. And when finally compelled into the attitude of a separate nation, they shrunk from the task of governing themselves, even by a king from among themselves. A people of more tenacious loyalty it is difficult to find. Had they been granted freedom to worship God according to their reading of his word, they would have laid down their arms without hesitation; and peace they might have had at any time, by simply surrendering their faith. It was on this issue that the war was waged. The Hollanders held their religion dearer than life, and Philip would tolerate no creed but the Roman Catholic. He would consent to lay his finest provinces in desolation, and consign his loyal subjects to wholesale slaughter, rather than permit them to think on the subject of religion otherwise than he did himself. The prolonged war, of which the narrative is here presented, was mainly one for freedom of conscience—a great religious warfare, resulting in the establishment of a nation.

Prussia also owed her national existence to the Reformation, but after a very different manner. To secularize the property of an ecclesiastical order, and change the grand-master into a temporal sovereign, was a different kind of initiation from that

of a people wresting their religious liberties out of the hands of an unwilling despot.

As in England and Scotland, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so in Holland, the leading motives of all great movements sprung out of religion, and belonged to the conflict between the mediæval church and the Reformation—allied as the former was with political despotism, and the latter with freedom. To write the modern history of those nations, requires some experience of religious motives. A man who has never felt the power of religion in his own soul, must necessarily misapprehend the action of pious men. And when pious men are the leaders of a religious people, the measures of government will be moved by springs which, to an irreligious man, are a perfect mystery. He will not only fail to know, he will also impute such motives as are within the range of his knowledge, of course in many cases diametrically opposite to the true. The attempt of such a man as Hume to write the history of England, must be shallow in the very worst sense of shallowness. An easy and graceful diction, however admirable in itself, is a poor compensation for the exclusion or perversion of all the most valuable truths pertaining to the subject. It is deeply to be regretted, that Macaulay has also come short in this respect. The serious blemish in his otherwise great work, is the lack of a religious sense. Macaulay occasionally belittles his work by imputing petty and ridiculously inadequate motives, to fill the place of such as he could not understand.

Here we are happy to say, that Motley rises to the measure of his subject. Whatever his own experience in this matter may be, he estimates duly, and traces justly to its historic effects, the working of Christian piety. Without disqualifying himself to appreciate the merits of the zealous and honest Roman Catholic, he enters into genial sympathy with the pious patriots of Holland. He is impartial; but not one of those who, in order to balance the account between good and ill, are ready to conjure up the fairest excuses for a villain, and leave a corresponding amount of slander attaching to a good man, making it appear, as well as possible, that after all, the difference between them is not very great. His impartiality seems to be that of stating the truth honestly, as he finds it, of both the

good and evil, without any attempt to excuse the one or detract from the other. Nor does he shrink from a full exposure of certain mixed characters, whom in some respects he evidently admires. In the case, for example, of Alexander of Parma, while setting forth his heroism, military talent, and fidelity to his king, no effort is made to palliate either the cruelty or duplicity which have branded him with infamy.

An agreeable feature of the historian is his heartiness. There is no assumption of that air of lofty indifference, which some affect as dignity. It is clear that he loves his subject and its patriot heroes; and his success extends also to this, that he makes his readers love them too.

To the Presbyterian church these volumes are of especial interest. Heroic as much of her history has been, there is no part of it which exhibits a more exalted moral heroism than that which belongs to Holland. Under this head the historian himself remarks, that "The Lutheranism of Germany and the Calvinism of France had each its share in producing the Netherlands revolt; but a mistake is perhaps often made in estimating the relative proportion of these several influences. The Reformation first entered the provinces, not through the Augsburg, but the Huguenot gate. The fiery field-preachers from the South of France first inflamed the excitable hearts of the kindred population of the South-western Netherlands." "The Batavians, slower to be moved, but more steadfast, retained the impulse, which they received from the same source, which was already agitating their 'Welsh' compatriots." "Without undervaluing the influence of the German churches, and particularly of the garrison-preaching of the German military chaplains in the Netherlands, it may be safely asserted, that the early reformers of the provinces were mainly Huguenot in their belief. The Dutch church became, accordingly, not Lutheran, but Calvinistic." In another place, touching the general character of his subject, he says, that "it was a great episode—the longest, the darkest, the bloodiest, the most important episode in the history of the religious Reformation in Europe." His work is mainly concerned with those acts whereby the King of Spain goaded into insurrection, and

finally lost that small but most valuable group of dependencies.

The story is one of no common interest. The popular intelligence and prevailing licentiousness of the wealthy Netherlands, before the voice of the Reformation reached them, the fearful chastisement inflicted upon all, the ruin wrought upon the States which submitted to reject the Reformation, the fiery trial through which the Reformed had to pass, and the machinations of intolerance, falsehood, and almost unparalleled cruelty, persisted in for the length of a generation, whereby the king of Spain strove to reduce his refractory provinces, and succeeded in laying waste all that he did not alienate, with the exploits of military skill and daring exhibited on both sides, and the triumph over all of a sagacious and Christian statesmanship, go to form a chapter of history which, for the intensity of the feeling it excites, and the wealth of its moral instruction, has few equals in any age.

When Philip the Second ascended the throne of Spain, he put himself at the head of the mightiest monarchy then in the world. His dominions took hold on both hemispheres. In Europe they comprehended Spain, Naples, Sicily, the Milanese, Franche Compté, and the Netherlands; in Africa, Tunis, Oran, and various other places on the coast of Barbary, the Cape Verde Islands, and the Canaries; in Asia, the Philippines and the Spice islands; and the New World was almost entirely his own—the West Indies, Mexico, Central America, and Peru, in actual possession, and the recognized claim to all the still undiscovered regions of both North and South America. It was an empire upon which, for the first time, it could be said that the sun never set, and whose boundaries no exploration had yet determined.

Not less majestic was the magnitude of his alliances. Spain was the champion of the Papacy, and, though not always at peace with the Pope, the unswerving ally of that system which then ruled the consciences of three-fourths of civilized mankind. The sceptre of the German empire was laid down by Philip's father only to be handed over to his uncle. And a few months before he had become the husband of the queen of

England, and thereby titular king of the first of Protestant powers.

What benign and world-pervading influences might have been wielded in such circumstances by a wise and good man. The whole reign of Philip was a demonstration of the helplessness of a mean and narrow spirit, and its proclivity to mischief, though favoured with all the extraneous resources which fortune can confer. His incompetence as a ruler was manifested in the attempt to govern all his dominions on the same principle and method, and by his own single hand. What to a more comprehensive mind would have presented almost insuperable difficulties, and rendered the calling in of the coöperation of others imperative, was to him plain and easy. His ideas ran in a narrow channel, and were greatly simplified by obstinacy. It was only for him to order what he thought should be done, for his officers to carry out his orders, and for his people to obey. The whole process was simple and elementary, like arrangements on diagrams with puppets. Unfortunately some of the puppets were occasionally found to have a will of their own, and thereby to disarrange and spoil the whole play. For Mexico and Peru, where Spanish arms had destroyed all order save that effected by force, the method may have answered sufficiently well; even in Spain and Italy its effects, falling in, as they did, with other long standing evils of the same kind, were not so readily exposed nor felt as such by those on whom they pressed; but in the Netherlands, where some degree of liberty and liberal culture had previously belonged to the masses, such irrational despotism was resented as a grievous burden. The conflict which arose thereupon between an intelligent, spirited, and wealthy people, on the one hand, and the obstinacy of an inflexible and narrow-minded despot on the other, intensified on both sides by religious motives, and sustained by vast resources, was one which no man then living was to see the end of.

Inhabiting a country which needed to be continually defended against the incursions of the sea, the people of the Netherlands were from earliest times constrained to the exercise of watchfulness and industry. Much of their land was a conquest from the waters, which could be retained only by ever

active care in use of the means by which it was first acquired. Energy and enterprising industry were thus largely developed in the people by the very soil on which they lived. And as its extent was, after all, but scanty, and its capacity for agriculture limited, the devices of manufactures and commerce had to be added, in order to maintain its increasing population. To this end the waters, with which they had to contend for soil to stand on, were found an invaluable auxiliary. Its bays, rivers, and estuaries, became alive with commerce, the towns and villages upon the coast grew to large and prosperous cities, permeated with the streams of business, while their workshops resounded with the voice of prosperous industry. Canals and highways carried the activity to the inland towns, which naturally acquired most eminence in production. Ghent, Brussels, and Mechlin, were built up by their manufactures, as much as Antwerp and Amsterdam by the extent of their commerce.

The intellectual quickening usually connected with such pursuits, manifested itself not only in the schools, but also, and even more remarkably, in the associations of mechanics formed for their literary improvement. During the fifteenth century societies or guilds of rhetoric were formed, in greater or less number, in all the principal cities of the Netherlands. In these societies mechanics amused their leisure, and improved their minds with literary exercises of various kinds, poetical as well as rhetorical, with dramatic and musical exhibitions, theatrical processions, and other more or less intellectual recreations. Many of those effusions, perhaps most of them, may have been lacking in the requisites of good taste, and may not have merited the praise of lofty genius; it is not more than might be said of the great mass of literature as produced by their more learned contemporaries; they were, at least, exercises which went to train, refine, and liberalize the minds which pursued them.

A people whose amusements were of such a character, and whose business led to compare opinions from various quarters, were already prepared to recognize the necessity of a reform in the church, and to accept it with zeal when proposed. By the writings of Erasmus and others of their scholars, they were

still further, about the beginning of the sixteenth century, instructed to the same end. And attempts had originated among themselves before the successful movement which put Luther at its head. Perhaps in no other country of Europe did the evils of a corrupt church exhibit themselves more conspicuously in the morals of the people. Activity of intellect gave the greater prominence and enormity to profligacy. Intemperance, and the vices which usually attend thereupon, were lamentably prevalent. Popular intelligence recognized and may have condemned the evil; but mere intelligence was helpless to remove it. That was properly the work of the church. But the corrupt church, instead of so doing, lent its countenance and support to iniquity, by the example of its ecclesiastics, and the sale of indulgences, as well as by many other means less direct, but hardly less effective.

Accordingly, scarcely was the voice of the Great Reformation heard in Germany, when it was accepted by large numbers in the Netherlands. The system of doctrines, however, as already intimated, most generally adopted, was that which receives its name from the great Reformer of Geneva. Presbyterianism was early and heartily welcomed, especially in the states which afterwards became the United Netherlands.

Charles V. strenuously laboured to suppress the Reformation in all his dominions. His failure in Germany perhaps embittered his efforts within the provinces more completely under his control. As early as 1523, Henry Voes, and John Esch, sealed their testimony to the Reformation with their blood. The Council of Brabant was made a tribunal for the suppression of heresy, and the storm of persecution began. Thousands were put to death, or fled their native land. The emperor, however, was a man of worldly caution, and there was a boundary between zeal and expediency, between faith to the Pope, and the interests of his own exchequer, which he was too wise to disregard. Utterly without remorse as respecting human suffering, he was too sensitive to interfere seriously with the industry from which so large a portion of his revenue was drawn.

In 1553, Charles V. abdicated in favour of his son Philip. No relief was thereby furnished the oppressed Protestants.

Philip accepted his father's despotism and religious intolerance, without the capacity to comprehend his statesmanship. Attempting to rule his vast empire by his own single will, and to be everything in himself, everything in his hands narrowed down to the calibre of his own mean capacity, and bore the stamp of his own merciless bigotry. His father had chastised the Netherlands with whips, he was to chastise them with scorpions. Although among the smaller dependencies of his throne, those states were by far the wealthiest, and, if properly governed, were capable of rendering a revenue greater than all that was drawn annually from the mines of Mexico and Peru. Bloody as were the persecutions which had already raged for some years, they had not seriously impaired that stream of wealth which flowed through the great commercial veins of the Low Countries. "Within the little circle which enclosed the seventeen provinces, are 208 walled cities, many of them among the most stately in christendom, 150 chartered towns, 6,300 villages, besides numerous other more inconsiderable hamlets; the whole guarded by a belt of sixty fortresses of surpassing strength."

In the government of this valuable possession, whatever designs Philip may originally have had, were all soon swallowed up in one, namely, that of crushing out the Reformation, and compelling a uniform compliance with Rome. The simplicity of his method was of a piece with his purpose. It was all to be effected by the enginery of the Inquisition, and the force of Spanish arms. A Spaniard himself, he had no sympathy with the Netherlanders, and no apprehension of their character or motives. At the end of a few years he removed his residence from Brussels to Madrid, whence he never returned.

The states were first put under the vice-royalty of his sister Margaret, Dutchess of Parma. Her council consisted of the state and privy councils, and the council of finance, previously established by the emperor. In these councils were some of the men destined to act prominent parts on both sides of the conflict which ensued. Especially might be mentioned the Bishop of Arras, the Prince William of Orange, and Count Egmont. The last the most brilliant defender of the king's

interest, and doomed to be one of the most illustrious victims of his cruelty; the other two, leaders for a time of the opposing parties. The bishop, afterwards Cardinal Granvelle, by means of a direct and secret correspondence with the king, soon built up for himself an almost absolute authority in the council, and carried out the edicts of persecution with unrelenting energy. Philip's darling engine, the Inquisition, was set up, and all the enormities which had extinguished the Reformation in Spain, were repeated and multiplied in the Netherlands.

William of Orange, at that time a zealous Roman Catholic, was shocked by the cruelties perpetrated in the name of the government which he served. Nor was it only that he revolted from such a method of resisting religious convictions, and felt for his suffering countrymen, but also because he was fully aware that it was of determinate purpose to utterly destroy Protestantism within the king's dominions. When residing, as a hostage, at the court of France, he had made that discovery which was to decide the bearing of all his life afterwards. "While hunting with the king in the forest of Vincennes, the Prince and Henry found themselves alone together, and separated from the rest of the company. The French monarch's mind was full of the great scheme which had just secretly been formed by Philip and himself, to extirpate Protestantism by a general extirpation of Protestants. Philip had been most anxious to conclude the public treaty with France, that he might be the sooner able to negotiate that secret convention, by which he and his Most Christian Majesty were solemnly to bind themselves to massacre all the converts to the new religion in France and the Netherlands. This conspiracy of the two kings against their subjects was the matter nearest the hearts of both. The Duke of Alva, a fellow-hostage with William of Orange, was the plenipotentiary to conduct this more important arrangement. The French monarch, somewhat imprudently imagining that the prince was also a party to the plot, opened the whole subject to him without reserve. He complained of the constantly increasing numbers of sectaries in his kingdom, and protested that his conscience would never be easy, nor his state secure, until his realm should be delivered of 'that accursed vermin.' A civil revolution, under pretext of a reli-

gious reformation, was his constant apprehension, particularly since so many notable persons in the realm, and even princes of the blood, were already tainted with heresy. Nevertheless, with the favour of Heaven, and the assistance of his son and brother Philip, he hoped soon to be master of the rebels. The king then proceeded, with cynical minuteness, to lay before his discreet companion the particulars of the royal plot, and the manner in which all heretics, whether high or humble, were to be discovered and massacred at the most convenient season. For the furtherance of the scheme in the Netherlands, it was understood that the Spanish regiments would be exceedingly efficient. The prince, although horror-struck and indignant at the royal revelations, held his peace and kept his countenance. The king was not aware that in opening this delicate negotiation to Alva's colleague and Philip's plenipotentiary, he had given a warning of inestimable value to the man who had been born to resist the machinations of Philip and of Alva. William of Orange earned the surname of 'the Silent,' from the manner in which he received these communications of Henry, without revealing to the monarch, by word or look, the enormous blunder which he had committed. His purpose was fixed from that hour. A few days afterwards he obtained permission to visit the Netherlands, where he took measures to excite, with all his influence, the strongest and most general opposition to the continued presence of the Spanish troops—of which forces, much against his own will, he had been, in conjunction with Egmont, appointed chief. He already felt, in his own language, that 'an Inquisition for the Netherlands had been resolved upon, more cruel than that of Spain, since it would need but to look askance at an image, to be cast into the flames.' Although having, as yet, no spark of religious sympathy for the Reformers, he could not, he said, 'but feel compassion for so many virtuous men and women, thus devoted to massacre;' and he determined to save them if he could." At the council board, therefore, although he could not stay the measures of persecution, he penetrated their whole depth, and patiently awaited the occasion to defeat or restrain them.

Aware of the duplicity of Philip's character, and the inconsistency between his professions and his real designs, the Prince

of Orange found it necessary to institute the most cautious and thorough methods of inspection. At an early period in his patriotic career he adopted "that system of espionage upon Philip by which the champion of his country was so long able to circumvent its despot. The king left letters carefully locked in his desk at night, and unseen hands had forwarded copies of them to William of Orange before the morning. He left memoranda in his pockets on retiring to bed, and exact transcripts of those papers found their way, likewise, ere he rose, to the same watchman in the Netherlands. No doubt that an inclination for political intrigue was a prominent characteristic of the Prince, and a blemish upon the purity of his moral nature. Yet the dissimulating policy of his age he had mastered, only that he might accomplish the noblest purposes to which a great and good man can devote his life—the protection of the liberty and the religion of a whole people against foreign tyranny."

On the rest of the continent, from various causes, the conflict of the Reformation was for a time suspended. It was transferred to the Netherlands, there to rage for the rest of the century. There the power of the greatest monarchy in the world was to be put forth to compel the peasants and mechanics of a small country into conformity with the religion of Rome, or to extinguish their resistance in blood. The edict of 1550, which Philip re-enacted immediately after his accession, was designed to extirpate heresy and leave no escape for its adherents. A few extracts will be necessary to give a just idea of its severity.

"No one," it ordered, "shall print, write, copy, keep, conceal, sell, buy, or give, in churches, streets, or other places, any book or writing made by Martin Luther, John Ecolampadius, Ulrich Zwinglius, Martin Bucer, John Calvin, or other heretics reprobated by the Holy Church, . . . nor break or otherwise injure the images of the Holy Virgin, or canonized saints, . . . nor in his house hold conventicles or illegal gatherings, or be present at any such, in which the adherents of the above-mentioned heretics teach, baptize, and form conspiracies against the Holy Church and the general welfare. . . . Moreover, we forbid," continues the edict in the name of the

sovereign, "all lay persons to converse or dispute concerning the Holy Scriptures, openly or secretly, especially on any doubtful or difficult matter, or to read, teach, or expound the Scriptures, unless they have duly studied theology, and been approved by some renowned university, . . . or to preach secretly or openly, or to entertain any of the opinions of the above-mentioned heretics, . . . on pain, should any one be found to have contravened any of the points above-mentioned, as perturbators of our state and of the general quiet, to be punished in the following manner." From the array of penalties annexed we copy one or two specimens: "Such perturbators of the general quiet are to be executed, to wit: the men with the sword, and the women to be burned alive, if they *do not* persist in their errors; if they do persist in them, then they are to be executed with fire; all their property, in both cases, being confiscated to the crown." Again, "We forbid all persons to lodge, entertain, furnish with food, fire, or clothing, or otherwise to favour any one holden, or notoriously suspected of being a heretic; . . . and any one failing to denounce any such, we ordain, shall be liable to the above-mentioned punishments." And further, "That if any person, being not convicted of heresy or error, but greatly suspected thereof, and therefore condemned by the spiritual judge to abjure such heresy, or by the secular magistrate to make public fine and reparation, shall again become suspected or tainted with heresy—although it should not appear that he has contravened or violated any of our above-mentioned commands—nevertheless, we do will and ordain that such person shall be considered as relapsed, and as such be punished with loss of life and property, without any hope of moderation or mitigation of the above-mentioned penalties."

The edict, from which these quotations are extracts, was to be perpetual, "and, according to one of its clauses, was to be published for ever, once in every six months, in every city and village of the Netherlands." Under its sanctions the administration of the Duchess Margaret carried forward the work of conversion to Roman Catholicism with unrelenting zeal. The Cardinal Granvelle and the inquisitor Titelmann coöperated to the disregard equally of decency and humanity. It had

been "settled beyond peradventure that there was to be no compromise with heresy. The king had willed it. The theologians had advised it. The Duchess had proclaimed it. It was supposed that without the axe, the fire, and the rack, the Roman Catholic religion would be extinguished, and that the whole population of the Netherlands would embrace the reformed faith."

Persecution, however, even with such claims, and sustained by such authorities, did not run a course entirely smooth. A people previously accustomed to some degree of freedom could not succumb without a struggle. The progress of intolerance and the multitude of executions awaked both fear and indignation. "Nothing was talked of but the edicts and the inquisition. Nothing else entered into the minds of men. In the streets, in the shops, in the taverns, in the fields, at market, at church, at funerals, at weddings; in the noble's castle, at the farmer's fireside, in the mechanic's garret, upon the merchant's exchange, there was but one perpetual subject of shuddering conversation. It was better, men began to whisper to each other, to die at once than to live in perpetual slavery. It was better to fall with arms in hand than to be tortured and butchered by the inquisition. Who could expect to contend with such a foe in the dark?"

Notwithstanding their sufferings, the Netherlanders evinced their patience, or their sense of the power to be resisted, by the length of time to which they endured. Not until five years after the establishment of the inquisition among them did they initiate any organization of resistance. It was in the early part of the year 1566, that a few leading nobles set on foot a project of compromise, according to which they and all who subsequently "signed the document pledged themselves to oppose the inquisition, and to defend each other against all the consequences of such a resistance." "It was not so much a religious as a political league, and the language used was such that patriotic Roman Catholics could subscribe to it as honestly as Protestants, and was chiefly addressed against the foreign influence by which the country was exclusively ruled, and against the inquisition. It was a league of boisterous and imprudent nobles, and effected little except as an initiatory

step. The spies of Philip easily obtained knowledge of all their sayings and doings, and transmitted the record of them to Madrid. A more powerful and sagacious intellect, who had long been quietly biding his time, now saw it drawing near, and made his disposals with a view to a more decided, a broader and more enduring combination.

In the meanwhile, an insolent term applied to certain petitioners by a member of the council, was taken up and adopted as the watchword of resistance. "The Beggars" of the Netherlands became the most honourable epithet—the Shibboleth of patriotism. The word passed from mouth to mouth, and became itself a means of organization which no inquisition could follow nor detect in all its operations. The tide of popular indignation swelled so high that Cardinal Granvelle had to be withdrawn. The resignation of the Dutchess of Parma followed, but not before the arrival of her successor, the Duke of Alva, whose name was to be associated with enormities still more horrible.

Under the command of Alva, and as the executioners of his will, an army of ten thousand picked veterans was marched into the country. It was the purpose of Philip to make short work and thorough with his heretical subjects. By one sweeping sentence the whole population of the country were condemned to death, and thereby, even those against whom no charge could be proved, consigned to the mercy of their governor. "From this universal doom only a few persons, specially named, were excepted. A proclamation of the king, dated ten days later, confirmed this decree of the inquisition, and ordered it to be carried into instant execution, without regard to age, sex, or condition. This is probably the most concise death-warrant that was ever framed. Three millions of people, men, women, and children, were sentenced to the scaffold in three lines." "It was hardly the purpose of government to compel the absolute completion of the wholesale plan in all its length and breadth, yet in the horrible times upon which they had fallen, the Netherlanders might be excused for believing that no measure was too monstrous to be fulfilled. At any rate, it was certain that when all were

condemned, any might at a moment's warning be carried to the scaffold."

A council of corresponding character was formed by Alva in the beginning of his administration, which from its summary despatch of such business, and the number of executions ordered by it, was commonly spoken of as the "Blood Council." "Alva, in a single letter to Philip, coolly estimated the number of executions which were to take place immediately after the expiration of holy week, *at eight hundred heads.*"

Rapacity had perhaps as much to do with these acts as bigotry. "Alva was bent upon proving himself as accomplished a financier as he was indisputably a consummate commander, and he had promised his master an annual income of 500,000 ducats from the confiscations which were to accompany the executions." "It was necessary that the blood torrent should flow through the Netherlands, in order that the promised golden river, a yard deep, according to his vaunt, should begin to irrigate the thirsty soil of Spain." Consequently "the greatest crime was to be rich, and one which could be expiated by no virtues, however signal." "Many a citizen convicted of a hundred thousand florins, and of no other crime, saw himself suddenly tied to a horse's tail, with his hands fastened behind him, and so dragged to the gallows. But although wealth was an unpardonable sin, poverty proved rarely a protection." In these times, when the principles of the gospel more widely and deeply pervade society, it is difficult to credit the cruelties which were thus inflicted upon a loyal and unoffending people. "It is a wearisome and odious task," adds the historian, "to ransack the mouldy records of three centuries ago, in order to reproduce the obscure names of the thousands who were thus sacrificed. The dead have buried their dead and are forgotten. It is likewise hardly necessary to state, that the proceedings were all *ex parte*, and that an information was almost inevitably followed by a death-warrant." "Innocence was, in reality, impossible, according to the rules which had been laid down regarding treason. The practice was in accordance with the precept, and persons were daily executed with senseless pretexs, which was worse than execution with no pretexs at all. Thus Peter of Amster-

dam was beheaded, because at one of the tumults in that city, he had persuaded a rioter *not to fire* upon a magistrate. This was taken as sufficient proof that he was a man in authority among the rebels, and he was accordingly put to death. Madame Juriaen who, in 1566, had struck with her slipper a little wooden image of the Virgin, together with her maid-servant, who had witnessed without denouncing the crime, were both drowned by the hangman in a hogshead placed on the scaffold."

"The whole country became a charnel-house; the death-bell tolled hourly in every village; not a family but was called to mourn for its dearest relatives, while the survivors stalked listlessly about, the ghosts of their former selves, among the wrecks of their former homes. The spirit of the nation, within a few months after the arrival of Alva, seemed hopelessly broken. The blood of its best and bravest had already stained the scaffold; the men to whom it had been accustomed to look for guidance and protection, were dead, in prison, or in exile. Submission had ceased to be of any avail; flight was impossible, and the spirit of vengeance had alighted at every fireside. The mourners went daily about the streets, for there was hardly a house which had not been made desolate. The scaffold, the gallows, the funeral-piles, which had been sufficient in ordinary times, furnished now an entirely inadequate machinery for the incessant executions. Columns and stakes in every street, the door-posts of private houses, the fences in the fields, were laden with human carcasses, strangled, burned, beheaded. The orchards in the country bore on many a tree the hideous fruit of human bodies.

"Thus the Netherlands were crushed, and but for the stringency of the tyranny which had now closed their gates, would have been depopulated. The grass began to grow in the streets of those cities which had recently nourished so many artisans. In all those great manufacturing and industrial marts, where the tide of human life had throbbed so vigorously, there now reigned the silence and darkness of midnight."

In the beginning of this almost unparalleled reign of terror, the Prince of Orange had withdrawn into Germany. Forewarned of the king's designs, he resisted every means employed

to induce him to trust himself to the royal clemency. In the meanwhile his mind was passing through that most important change whereby he became, not merely by compassion, but from the convictions of the understanding and belief of the heart, the friend of the suffering cause. The form of doctrine which he adopted was Calvinism; his policy the broadest liberality—freedom of conscience alike to Roman Catholic and Reformed.

He now saw that the time had come for organized resistance to an unendurable oppression, and put himself at its head. With great exertions he succeeded in raising an army in Germany, with which he marched to the assistance of his suffering countrymen. His brother, Louis of Nassau, raised another in the northern States. They were doomed to encounter a long course of adversity, arrayed as they were with hastily raised levies, against the military skill of Alva and the firmness of long-experienced veterans. Both brothers were defeated. But resistance had now been set on foot, and an understanding established among the friends of the cause.

On the other side, instead of conciliation, measures of more stringent oppression were adopted. The weight of an enormous taxation was added to the cruelties of the inquisition. Roman Catholics and Protestants alike were driven to desperation. If even obedience to royal authority was not to protect them, what motive remained for loyalty? The new imposts would ruin them in a commercial point of view; to resist was to bring their necks to the block. What could now be lost by rebellion? Their only hope lay in an effective organization—a great national effort to defend themselves from the tyranny which they still imputed only to their governor. Their purpose was not to revolt from Philip, but to have Alva removed from power.

From the side of France, where the Huguenot influence was strong, and where it was reasonably expected that policy would have led to such a measure, coöperation was solicited. The application was met with favour. An army, under Coligny, was to sustain a movement from Germany and the internal action of the Netherland patriots. In full reliance upon this coöperation, the Prince of Orange raised a new army, with

which he again entered the country. His progress was entirely successful, and Alva seemed to be completely in his power. But disappointment fell upon him more deadly than before. The terrible day of St. Bartholomew broke the Huguenot influence in France, and paralyzed the Protestant world with horror. The Prince, unsustained from France, was unable to maintain his ground. "It has pleased God," he said, "to take away every hope which we could have founded upon man; the King (of France) has published that the massacre was by his orders, and has forbidden all his subjects, upon pain of death, to assist me; he has, moreover, sent succour to Alva. Had it not been for this, we had been masters of the Duke, and should have made him capitulate at pleasure."

"Yet even in this hour of distress and defeat, the Prince seemed more heroic than many a conqueror in his day of triumph. With all his hopes blasted, with the whole fabric of his country's fortunes shattered by the colossal crime of his royal ally, he never lost his confidence in himself nor his unflinching trust in God. All the cities which, but a few weeks before, had so eagerly raised his standard now fell off at once. He went to Holland, the only province which remained true, and which still looked up to him as its saviour, but he went thither expecting and prepared to perish. 'There will I make my sepulchre,' was his simple and sublime expression in a private letter to his brother."

Brabant and Flanders, the whole of the southern Netherlands, submitted to the royal yoke. But the northern States of Holland and Zealand prolonged their resistance. In that quarter, the work of Alva was no longer that of governing, but of conquering. Cities whose loyalty his own cruelty and oppression had alienated, were now to be besieged and taken. With well-disciplined troops, his arms were at first successful over the untrained valour of peasants and artisans. But the inhuman treatment inflicted upon every city which capitulated taught lessons of endurance, and led to the discipline of valour in the most effective school. The enormities perpetrated in Mons and Mechlin were repeated in Zutphen, and Naarden, and Haarlem; but while the southern and Celtic population were thereby bowed to the yoke, the hardier kinsmen of the

Saxon in the north were only maddened to more desperate resistance.

After a long and obstinate defence Haarlem fell; but it was the turning-point of the war in the north. For the first time the Spaniards found themselves face to face with their equals in firmness and order as well as valour. Only famine decided in their favour. The check received by the Spaniards was as humiliating as the encouragement to the patriots was great; and in the next conflict, at the siege of Alkmaar, victory declared for the liberal side. The besiegers were compelled to retire before the valour of the inhabitants and the waters of the ocean, admitted as an ally against their human foe. The subsequent career of Alva was one of declining authority and departing fortune. In 1573 he obtained permission to retire, which he ignominiously did between two days. His successor Requesseus attempted to carry forward the work of reducing the alienated States; but the fortune of the last days of Alva also attended him.

The relief and raising of the siege of Leyden, one of the most heroic achievements on record, confirmed the independent attitude of Holland. The death of Requesseus and the subsequent abandonment of Zierickzee did a similar service for Zeeland.

Meanwhile, the parsimony of the king had left his soldiers unpaid. The consequence of this, together with the late failures, was a mutiny of the army. The instrument of despotism now turned against its master, and, taking the reins into its own hand, seized upon peaceful towns for the sake of plunder. Among these depredations the most awful was their sack of Antwerp, known long afterwards as the "Spanish fury," in which that city was completely plundered, almost laid waste, and more people butchered than in Paris on the day of St. Bartholomew. All went to warn the now independent States against any steps towards reconciliation with Spain. "In Holland and Zeeland there was a warm and nearly universal adhesion to the reformed religion, a passionate attachment to the ancient political liberties." "On the other hand, in most of the other provinces, the Roman Catholic religion" was regaining its ascendancy. Attempts were made by the Prince

of Orange to unite all the seventeen States in a Confederacy independently of difference in religion, and on the basis of a true liberty of conscience; but the people were not yet advanced to the degree of his liberality. The brief administration of the brilliant and unfortunate Don John hastened the degeneracy of the Spanish cause, and afforded occasion for these attempts at internal harmony; but the results were only partial or temporary. At the close of that administration the Netherlands had really become two countries. The States to the north of the Scheldt adhered to the national cause; those to the south yielded the victory and made their submission to Spain. When Alexander of Parma came to power, only a few cities south of the great estuaries held for independence. To the reduction of these he immediately addressed himself. His most dangerous opponent was William of Orange, who never resigned his labours to extend union and independence to his whole country. Alexander and his master made no scruple of getting rid of him by any means. A reward was offered to any one who should murder him. After some failures in the attempt, that end was finally accomplished, and William the Silent fell by the hand of an assassin acting under the proclamation of the king of Spain. The miscreant was arrested and executed in Holland, but the reward was paid to his nearest of kin.

Upon the death of the Prince of Orange, all hopeful efforts for the union of the States came to an end. Under his leadership the Dutch Republic had taken its place as an independent nation, but the southern States had bowed their necks to the yoke, and were already suffering therefrom the stagnation of all business, and prostration of national energy, drained of their means, and their enterprise destroyed.

It is at this point that Dr. Motley's first work closes. The second continues the history of the United Provinces, in their labours to defend themselves against Spanish aggressions, and to establish a government for themselves. It opens with a view of the condition of Europe at that day, from which we extract the following specimen of the author's style of historical portraiture.

“A small, dull, elderly, imperfectly educated, patient,

plodding invalid, with white hair, and protruding under-jaw, and dreary visage, was sitting day after day, seldom speaking, never smiling, seven or eight hours out of every twenty-four, at a writing-table covered with heaps of interminable despatches, in a cabinet far away beyond the seas and mountains, in the very heart of Spain. A clerk or two, noiselessly opening and shutting the door, from time to time, fetching fresh bundles of letters, and taking away others—all written and composed by secretaries or high functionaries—and all to be scrawled over in the margin by the diligent old man, in a big schoolboy's hand and style—if ever schoolboy, even in the sixteenth century, could write so illegibly, or express himself so awkwardly; couriers in the court-yard arriving from or departing for the uttermost parts of the earth—Asia, Africa, America, Europe—to fetch and carry those interminable epistles, which contained the irresponsible commands of this one individual, and were freighted with the doom and destiny of countless millions of the world's inhabitants—such was the system of government against which the Netherlands had protested and revolted. It was a system under which their fields had been made desolate, their cities burned and pillaged, their men hanged, burned, drowned, or hacked to pieces; their women subjected to every outrage; and to an end to which they had been devoting their treasure and their blood for nearly the length of one generation. It was a system, too, which, among other results, had just brought about the death of the foremost statesman of Europe, and had nearly effected simultaneously the murder of the most eminent sovereign in the world. The industrious Philip, safe and tranquil in the depths of the Escorial, saying his prayers three times a day with exemplary regularity, had just sent three bullets through the body of William the Silent, at his dining-room door in Delft. 'Had it only been done two years earlier,' observed the patient old man, 'much trouble might have been spared me; but 'tis better late than never.' Sir Edward Stafford, English envoy at Paris, wrote to his government, so soon as the news of the murder reached him, that according to his information out of the Spanish minister's own house, 'the same practice that had been executed upon the Prince of Orange,

there were practisers more than two or three about to execute upon her Majesty, and that within two months.'

"Invisible as the Grand Lama of Thibet, clothed with power as extensive and absolute as had ever been wielded by the most imperial Cæsar, Philip the Prudent, as he grew older and feebler in mind and body, seemed to become more gluttonous of work, more ambitious to extend his sceptre over lands which he had never seen or dreamed of seeing, more fixed in his determination to annihilate that monster Protestantism, which it had been the business of his life to combat; more eager to put to death every human creature, whether anointed monarch or humble artizan, that defended heresy, or opposed his progress to universal empire.

"If this enormous power, this fabulous labour had been wielded or performed with a beneficent intention; if the man, who seriously regarded himself as the owner of a third of the globe, with the inhabitants thereof, had attempted to deal with those extensive estates, inherited from his ancestors, with the honest intention of a thrifty landlord, an intelligent slave-owner, it would have yet been possible for a little longer to smile at the delusion, and endure the practice.

"But there was another old man, who lived in another palace, in another remote land, who, in his capacity of representative of Saint Peter, claimed to dispose of all the kingdoms of the earth—and had been willing to bestow them upon the man who would go down and worship him. Philip stood enfeoffed, by Divine decree, of all America, the East Indies, the whole Spanish Peninsula, the better portion of Italy, the seventeen Netherlands, and many other possessions, far and near; and he contemplated annexing to this extensive property the kingdoms of France, of England, and Ireland. The Holy League, maintained by the sword of Guise, the Pope's ban, Spanish ducats, Italian condottieri, and German mercenaries, was to exterminate heresy, and establish the Spanish dominion in France. The same machinery, aided by the pistol or poniard of the assassin, was to substitute for English Protestantism and England's queen, the Roman Catholic religion and a foreign sovereign."

"The Netherland revolt had, therefore assumed world-wide

proportions. Had it been merely the rebellion of provinces against a sovereign, the importance of the struggle would have been more local and temporary. But the period was one in which the geographical land-marks of countries were almost removed. The dividing line ran through every state, city, and almost every family. There was a country which believed in the absolute power of the church to dictate the relations between man and his Maker, and to utterly exterminate all who disputed that position. There was another country which protested against that doctrine, and claimed, theoretically or practically, a liberty of conscience. The territory of these countries was mapped out by no visible lines, but the inhabitants of each, whether resident in France, Germany, England, or Flanders, recognized a relationship which took its root in deeper differences than those of race or language. It was not entirely a question of doctrine or dogma. A large portion of the world had become tired of the antiquated delusion of a papal supremacy over every land, and had recorded its determination, once for all, to have done with it. The transition to freedom of conscience became a necessary step, sooner or later to be taken. To establish the principle of toleration for all religions was an inevitable consequence of the Dutch revolt; although, thus far, perhaps only one conspicuous man, in advance of his age, had boldly announced that doctrine, and had died in its defence."

The necessities now imposed upon the independent States were twofold, that of defending their borders against foreign aggression, and that of establishing a government for themselves. The more difficult to meet was the latter. A republican organization had not yet been conceived of by them as either desirable or practicable. As long as the Prince of Orange lived, they relied upon him. He, it is true, refused to be their king, but they threw themselves upon his advice and his efforts on their behalf, as much as if he had consented. By his death they were for a time struck almost helpless. Few in number, and of scanty resources, they did not entertain the hope of standing by themselves, or of managing successfully their own affairs. It was their wish to receive the protection of a monarch from some

quarter. Application was made to France, but at the court of the feeble Henry III. the machinations of Spain succeeded in defeating their hopes. When they offered the sovereignty of their country to Elizabeth of England, they met a ruder rebuff from the obstinate refusal of the queen herself. Their cause was, however, so obviously that of England also, that she could not withhold from them assistance. It was given in both troops and money. But the parsimony with which the latter was furnished, interfered seriously with the efficiency of the former. Indirectly was the greater benefit conferred. Hollanders were constrained and provoked to rely upon their own resources, while the vanity and mismanagement of the Earl of Leicester roused against him a party which laid the foundation of a genuine native government. Notwithstanding, the cause received very substantial support at the hands of many brave Englishmen, and the coöperation of the two nations was thereby secured, at a juncture when it was of vital importance to both.

A project was on foot, concocted by Alexander of Parma and his master, to put forth the utmost might of Spain in an effort, by which both England and Holland were to be overwhelmed at a blow. It was to be matured in secrecy. From the preparations, which could not be concealed, the attention of the victims was to be diverted, and their suspicions allayed by whatever device might answer the purpose, irrespective of reality and truth. To this end, proposals of peace with Spain were secretly addressed to Elizabeth, and succeeded in distracting her attention from the Netherlands, and in making her chary of rendering them aid. Happily for both nations the discriminating Walsingham penetrated the secret correspondence in which his royal mistress and the Lord Treasurer Burghley were engaged. He also saw through the system of falsehood by which they had been deceived, and led almost to the verge of ruin. The brave naval guardians of the English coast were forewarned in time.

A vast navy had been prepared in several harbours on the coast of Spain. The Duke of Parma stood ready to coöperate from Belgium, with a large and well-trained army. The town of Sluys he had taken, and its harbour and estuary had put

in order, to subserve the purpose of the stupendous design. The invincible Armada, as the fleet was called, was to sail to the coast of the Netherlands, and there, in addition to its own vast outfit of troops, to receive Alexander and his army, then to strike across the channel and land the whole upon the shores of England, where it was expected that the queen, lulled with the story of peace, would be taken by surprise, and Alexander would conquer the country at a blow, and establish the dominion of Philip and the inquisition. The subjugation of Holland would follow beyond a doubt.

The invincible Armada, its magnitude, its magnificent array, the hopes and fears entertained of it, the series of battles, protracted through ten days, in which the mariners of England, under the command of Howard, Drake, Frobisher, and others, the founders of British naval dominion, defended the shores of their native land against it, the disasters which it encountered, the storms which finally shattered it helpless in the northern sea, are familiar to all, but though often repeated, have never been recounted in more animated narrative than that of Dr. Motley.

The Duke of Parma never joined the armament. Notwithstanding his masterly preparations, he could not bring his army to the sea. The sailors of Holland nobly coöperated with those of England, and while the latter harassed the Armada to death, the former so completely blockaded Parma in his estuaries, that he could do nothing but gnaw his heart for vexation.

The might of the autocrat had received a blow where he had intended to inflict one—a blow not less fatal to Spanish supremacy than Salamis and Plataea were to that of Persia. England and Holland were not only saved, they were put in a position of national importance which they had never occupied before. And under the constraint of the necessities of the conflict, the “new Dutch Republic was thoroughly organized.”

Events which in the main are already the possession of history, have received large additional elucidation from the work before us. The whole order and sequence of facts, but especially the motives and movements of the principal actors,

are set in a new and fuller light from manuscript documents, not hitherto employed in the service of history. As it now stands, the work closes with the state of things which issued from the defeat of the Armada, the consequent discomfiture of the designs of Parma against Holland, the revival of the Huguenots under Henry of Navarre, and the death of Henry III., which opened up the way of the Huguenot leader to the throne of France. It is thus complete within itself, although extending to only the first two acts of that protracted drama, which cannot be said to have closed before the peace of Westphalia. Most ardently will every reader wish that the hand, which has executed these scenes so well, may retain its cunning to perform a similar service for those which remain.

Among the valuable lessons of history, it has often been taught, but seldom so well as here, that oppression is not an evidence of power, but rather of incapacity to rule. If to quell the spirit of a nation and to hold them in sullen and stagnant obedience were enough, then it might answer to have merely a strong arm; but if the true aim of government is to promote national well-being, in confidence, industry, enterprise, and wealth, the best proof of capacity is the administration of even-handed justice, with firm, but such gentle and equable pressure, as to be felt less in the punishment of evil doers than in the protection of those who do well. Tyranny is the coarse method of incompetence—the refuge of a mind devoid of the adequate resources. A tyrant may be a man of talent in other respects, but a genius for government he has not.

Too long has the Christian world yielded to a pseudo-charity, which grants even to the bitterest persecutor an honest belief in the creed which he defends. * Bigotry is not so much a zeal for religion as a form of intense selfishness. A persecutor for religion's sake must certainly conceive that the objects of his wrath may be made to surrender their hopes of heaven by fear of suffering or loss of property, and can have no apprehension of that love of God and tenacity of doctrine, which is ready to give up every earthly gratification and even life itself therefor. Such a character is not one to make any sacrifice on his own part, for the religion under colour of which

he tramples on the rights of others; nor would it be inconsistent for him, in view of greater emolument, to forego his zeal and betray the faith which he professed to defend. None ever more directly aimed his blows at one religion, or offered his devotions more scrupulously according to the rubric of another than did Philip the Second; yet even he could enter into secret negotiation with the princes of the empire, and pledge himself, "if they would confer the crown upon him, that he would withdraw the Spaniards from the Netherlands; that he would tolerate in those provinces the exercise of the Reformed religion; that he would recognize their union with the rest of the German empire, and their consequent claim to the benefits of the Passau treaty; that he would restore the Prince of Orange 'and all his accomplices' to their former possessions, dignities, and conditions; and that he would cause to be observed, throughout every realm incorporated with the empire, all the edicts and ordinances which had been constructed to secure religious freedom in Germany. In brief, Philip was willing, in case the crown of Charlemagne should be promised him, to undo the work of his life, to reinstate the arch-rebel, whom he had hunted and proscribed, and to bow before that Reformation whose disciples he had so long burned and butchered. So much extent and no more had that religious conviction by which he had for years had the effrontery to excuse the enormities practised in the Netherlands."

That is a narrow policy which seeks to establish uniformity of opinion throughout a nation, or to create in the popular mind an uncomplaining and unaspiring content. To superficial view it appears the perfection of society to have everybody contented with his present condition, and it has much to recommend it, but a nation consisting of nothing but unaspiring contented subjects would scarcely be worthy of history. Individual aspiration and effort toward better things is doubtless attended with many evils, but it is the very genius of national activity, usefulness, and progress. The conflict of opinions and of parties, though troublesome to the ruler, is a real good, when compared with the insipid quiet of submission, which is always the aim of the tyrant. The former is the battle of life, the latter the inactivity of death. Never

was this more strikingly illustrated than in the contrast between the States which Philip succeeded in reducing to obedience, and those which maintained their independence. In the latter, though the war still continued which had been raging for a quarter of a century, "population was increasing, property rapidly advancing in value, labour in active demand. Famine was impossible to a State which commanded the ocean. No corn grew in Holland and Zealand, but their ports were the granary of the world. The fisheries were a mine of wealth almost equal to the famous Potosi, with which the commercial world was then ringing. Their commerce with the Baltic nations was enormous. In one month eight hundred vessels left their havens for the eastern ports alone." They also carried on a profitable trade with the Spanish colonies in spite of the revolutionary war. "There were more ships and sailors at that moment in Holland and Zealand than in the whole kingdom of England." The inland towns advanced as steadily as those on the coast. "The woollen manufacture, the tapestry, the embroideries of Gelderland, and Friesland, and Overijssel, were becoming as famous as had been those of Tournay, Ypres, Brussels, and Valenciennes. The emigration from the obedient provinces and from other countries was very great," and "new houses, new streets, new towns, were rising every day."

On the other hand, in the obedient provinces, all was now in peace and quiet. No jarring elements of reform nor troublesome aspirations for liberty remained. The will of the king was absolute. All was now his own. But the value of the possession was gone. "The Scheldt, which, till recently, had been the chief mercantile river in the world, had become as barren as if its fountains had suddenly dried up." "Antwerp was imprisoned and paralyzed. Its docks and basins where 2500 ships had once been counted, were empty, grass was growing in its streets, its industrious population had vanished, and the Jesuits had returned in swarms. And the same spectacle was presented by Ghent, Bruges, Valenciennes, Tournay, and those other fair cities, which had once been types of vigorous industry and tumultuous life." "Commerce, manufactures, agriculture, were dying lingering deaths. The

thrifty farms, orchards, and gardens, which had been a proverb and wonder of industry, were becoming wildernesses.”

So much, at least, of the democratic element is indispensable to national prosperity, that the enterprise of the industrial classes shall be more or less free to take its own course, and conscience shall be unconstrained. In these lie the springs of social well-being. Obedience even to an autocrat may not be inconsistent therewith, if the autocrat listens to the popular wants instead of attempting to silence them; but no greater calamity could befall a people under any form of government than that of having the aspirations of its working classes extinguished. Strength runs in the veins of labour. Without enterprise among those who work, and freedom to pursue it and enjoy its gains, the social system must perish for lack of root. And bad as the world is, that part of it which leads the march of civilization, will always value most highly the freedom of access to God in the manner of his own appointment. However worldly men may fail to perceive the fact, and godless rulers go on to disregard it, the Divine law of liberty revealed in the gospel is the spirit of dominion in the modern world, and no weapon formed against it can prosper.

ART. V.—*Annals of the American Pulpit*, (Methodist.) By WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D. Volume VII. New York: R. Carter & Brothers, 1859.

WHEN the first two volumes of this work appeared, we were delighted to find that it was to be published serially. The task which Dr. Sprague had undertaken seemed to be so immense, that, though we knew he was a man of no ordinary powers, we had serious fears of his being able to complete it, unless he should reach four-score, and retain his mental and physical force unabated. We are both surprised and gratified, when we think of the rapidity with which these stately volumes have followed each other; and all the more, when we consider