

port. William bade him return later. Gérard lurked under a dark archway beside the staircase, during the Prince's absence. The moment he returned, the assassin sprang upon him as he placed his foot upon the second step, and discharging a pistol containing three balls into his chest, hurried away. William at once cried out, "I am wounded; may God have mercy on me and on my poor people!" His last word was a whispered "Yes," in response to the question addressed to him by his sister, Catharine of Schwartzburg, "Do you recommend your soul to Jesus Christ?" Thus passed away from earth one of the most heroic and noble of men. Gérard was speedily captured. He not only acknowledged, but gloried in his deed. His execution was needlessly cruel, and was endured with a surprising contempt for pain and an unusual appearance of exaltation, born, we must believe, of an overmastering fanaticism and ambition.

Hard by the mausoleum of William the Silent is the modest tomb of Hugo Grotius, surnamed by Henry IV. of France "the miracle of Holland." Grotius wrote Latin verses when he was nine years of age, Greek odes at eleven, philosophic theses at fourteen; at seventeen won the title, just quoted, from the King of France, at whose court he appeared, accompanied by the illustrious Barneveldt; at eighteen he was a distinguished poet, theologian, commentator, and astronomer; at thirty he became Councillor of Rotterdam; was subsequently persecuted and condemned to perpetual imprisonment in the Castle of Loevestein, whence he escaped through the devotion and self-sacrifice of his wife, who remained a prisoner in his stead. Afterwards he became the guest of Louis XIII., and French Ambassador to Sweden, and died in 1645, regretted by his sorrowing countrymen, who have sought by *post mortem* honours to atone for the wrong done him while living.

While we are in Delft, let us use the eyes of a wide-awake Italian traveller, from whom I have already quoted more than once, Edmondo de Amicis, and visit a typical Dutch house:

"That house gave me a better idea of Holland than I could get from any book. The true house and home is in Holland, the personal house, distinct from others, modest, discreet, and precisely because it is distinct from others, inimical to mystery and intrigue; cheerful when the family that inhabits it is cheerful, and sad when they are sad. . . . The inside of the house corresponded perfectly with the outside; it seemed like the interior of a ship. A winding staircase of wood that shone like ebony led