

sadly illustrated in the American Republic, in the case of the slavery of the negro. So the commonwealth in the Low Countries incorporated in its basis, State religion; they claimed that the State should regulate the conscience, faith, and prayers of the people; the very thing that had just caused thousands to suffer and die. The Dutch United States committed the strange error, after having thrown off the Inquisition of Spain and its iron-heeled despotic ecclesiasticism, of prescribing the doctrines of the Genevan reformer, as the religion of the new Republic.

In 1582, about the time of the Declaration of Independence by the seven Netherlandic provinces and twenty-seven years before the Puritans came to Holland, a child was sleeping in his mother's arms in the town of Delft, in South Holland, midway between Rotterdam and the Hague. His parents named him Hugo; he afterwards filled the gaze of Europe by the name of Grotius, or Great. James Arminius was then twenty-two years of age, a student at Geneva, and when the *Mayflower* sailed for Plymouth, Grotius was thirty-eight years of age, and lying in the castle of Louvenstein under sentence of death.

Hugo Grotius early manifested a great love of knowledge, excellent taste, sound judgment, and tenacious memory. His parents instructed him in the catechism and the principles of morality and honour; the son responded with filial heart to all the educational efforts of the parents. At the age of eight he composed Latin verses, at eleven entered the University of Leyden, at fifteen had name and fame for scholarship beyond his years, a mental ripeness which, when accompanied with modesty, is attractive and impressive.

At this age of our subject, the Grand Pensionary, Barneveldt, then Chief Justice of the nation, invited the company of the young Hugo, as he went on a diplomatic errand to France, in the reign of Henry IV., to induce that monarch to continue an unfriendly relation to Philip II. of Spain, and not to leave the young Republic to contend alone with that supporter of Popery. The youthful Grotius was thus early introduced into the exercise of political interests, and his sympathies were enlisted in his country's independence and prosperity. King Henry IV. was pleased with the accomplished youth, and placed upon his neck a