

in Germany, France, England, and the Netherlands, and accomplished a wonderful work of emancipation, though imperfect in its development—not having the full gospel of Protestantism in its toleration and simplicity.

The Netherlands were an assemblage of provinces, each with its particular laws and usages and governor or “Stadtholder,” but subject to Philip II. of Spain. The new opinions of Luther and Calvin had made great progress in the Netherlands, which greatly disquieted narrow-minded Philip. He strangely sent the Duke of Alva (a man after his own heart), with twenty thousand men to convert them back to Rome, and they carried with them an abundant supply of instruments of torture, in order to administer physical remedies to special cases of spiritual need. The result was, that seven of the seventeen provinces, viz., Guelderland, Holland, Zealand, Friesland, Utrecht, Overysse, and Groningen, justly rebelled against Philip and formed the Dutch Republic.

This new Republic received encouragement from Elizabeth of England, and prospered, maintaining its independence as did the ancient Lacedemonians, by simplicity of manners, public frugality, and invincible courage—and its independence was formally acknowledged by Spain in 1648, after holding towards it a hostile attitude sixty-seven years. On the day when the independence of the Dutch Republic was recognized by France and England, one of the fairest of its jewels fell from the Spanish crown, and the Republic became one of the leading members of the European family; cruel Spain grew weak in her efforts to crush the innocent, and the ascendancy was transferred from Madrid to Paris. We now behold the seven united provinces, called “States General,” commencing a career of independence and self-government, and of happy deliverance from a cruel despotism as bloody as any in history.

If it is difficult to concentrate all good points in one character—so to combine all excellencies in one government, even though professing freedom and the just liberty and equality of the subjects, has been found practically impossible. Provinces that rebel in the interests of *liberty*, will sometimes, on becoming independent, strangely incorporate some abnormal principle that obstructs prosperity and endangers their perpetuity. This was