

of the Municipal Oligarchy, were Armenians, and were commonly regarded by the multitude as little better than Papists. The Princes of the House of Orange, had generally been the patrons of the Calvinistic divinity, and owed no small share of their popularity, to their zeal for the doctrines of election and final perseverance, a zeal not always enlightened by knowledge, or tempered by humanity. William had been carefully instructed from a child, in the theological system to which his Family had been attached, and regarded that system with even more than the partiality, which men generally feel for a hereditary Faith. He had ruminated on the great enigmas which had been discussed in the Synod of Dort, and had found in the austere and inflexible logic of the Genevese school, something which suited his intellect and his temper. That example of intolerance, indeed, which some of his predecessors had set, he never imitated. For all persecution he felt a fixed aversion, which he avowed, not only where the avowal was obviously politic, but on occasions when it seemed that his interest would have been promoted by dissimulation, or by silence. His theological opinions, however, were even more decided than those of his ancestors. The tenet of predestination was the key-stone of his religion. He even declared that if he were to abandon that tenet, he must abandon with it all belief in a Superintending Providence, and must become a mere Epicurean. Except in this single instance, all the sap of his vigor-

ous mind, was early drawn away from the speculative to the practical. The faculties which are necessary for the conduct of great affairs, ripened in him at a time of life when they have scarcely begun to blossom in ordinary men. Since Octavius, the world has seen no such instance of precocious statesmanship. Skilful diplomatists were surprised to hear the weighty observations, which, at seventeen, the Prince made on public affairs; and still more surprised to see the lad, in situations in which he might be expected to betray strong passion, preserve a composure as imperturbable as their own. At eighteen he sat among the Fathers of the Commonwealth; grave, discreet and judicious as the oldest among them. At twenty-one, in a day of gloom and terror, he was placed at the Head of the Administration. At twenty-three, he was renowned throughout Europe, as a soldier and a politician. He had put domestic factions under his feet; he was the soul of a mighty Coalition; and he had contended with honor in the field, against some of the greatest Generals of the age.

His personal tastes were those rather of a warrior than of a statesman; but he, like his great grandfather, the silent Prince, who founded the Batavian Commonwealth, occupies a far higher place among statesmen than among warriors. The event of battles, indeed, is not an unfailling test of the abilities of a Commander; and it would be peculiarly unjust to apply this test to William, for it was his fortune to be almost always opposed to Captains who were consummate