

observers saw tears more than once, arise in the eyes of the young State Prisoner. His health, naturally delicate, sank for a time, under the emotions which his desolate situation had produced. Such situations bewilder and unnerve the weak, but call forth all the strength of the strong. Surrounded by snares, in which an ordinary youth would have perished, William learned to tread warily and firmly. Long before he reached manhood, he knew how to keep secrets; how to baffle curiosity by dry and guarded answers; how to conceal all passions under the same show of grave tranquility. Meanwhile, he made little proficiency in fashionable or literary accomplishments. The manners of the Dutch Nobility of that age, wanted the grace, which was found in the highest perfection, among the gentlemen of France, and which, in an inferior degree, embellished the Court of England; and his manners were altogether Dutch. Even his countrymen thought him blunt. To foreigners he often seemed churlish. In his intercourse with the world in general, he appeared ignorant, or negligent, of those arts which double the value of a favor, and take away the sting of a refusal. He was little interested in letters or science. The discoveries of Newton and Leibnitz, the poems of Dryden and Boileau, were unknown to him. Dramatic performances tired him; and he was liable to turn away from the Stage, and to talk about public affairs, while *Orestes* was raving, or while *Tartuffe* was pressing *Elvira's* hand. He had indeed

some talent for sarcasm; and not seldom employed, quite unconsciously, a natural rhetoric, quaint indeed, but vigorous and original. He did not however, in the least affect the character of a wit, or of an orator. His attention had been confined to those studies, which form strenuous and sagacious men of business. From a child, he listened with interest, when high questions of alliance, finance, and war, were discussed. Of geometry, he learned as much as was necessary for the construction of a ravelin, or a horn work. Of languages, by the help of a memory singularly powerful, he learned as much as was necessary to enable him to comprehend and answer, without assistance, every thing that was said to him, and every letter which he received. The Dutch was his own tongue. He understood Latin, Italian, and Spanish. He spoke and wrote French, English, and German, inelegantly, it is true, and inexactly, but fluently and intelligibly. No qualification could be more important to a man, whose life was to be passed in organizing great alliances, and in commanding armies assembled from different countries.

One class of philosophical questions had been forced upon his attention by circumstances, and seems to have interested him more than might have been expected, from his general character. Among the Protestants of the United Provinces, as amongst the Protestants of the British Isles, there were two great Religious parties, which almost exactly coincided with two great Political parties. The Chiefs