

This employment, however, did not fill up his whole time; on the contrary, he found leisure to publish, the same year 1599, another work, which discovered as much knowledge of the abstract sciences in particular, as the former did of his learning in general. Stevin, a mathematician to prince Maurice of Nassau, composed a small treatise for the instruction of pilots in finding a ship's place at sea; in which he drew up a table of the variations of the needle, according to the observations of Plancius, a famous geographer, and added directions how to use it. Grotius translated into Latin this work, which prince Maurice had recommended to the college of admiralty, to be studied by all officers of the navy; and because it might be equally useful to Venice, he dedicated his translation to that republic. In 1600, he published his *Phænomena of Aratus*. This book discovers a great knowledge in physics, especially in astronomy. The corrections he made in the Greek are very judicious: the notes shew that he had reviewed several of the rabbies, and had some insight into the Arabic tongue; and the verses made to supply those of Cicero that were lost, have been thought equal to them. In the midst of these profound studies, this prodigy of a young man found time to cultivate the muses, and with such success, that he was esteemed one of the best poets in Europe. The *protopopœia*, in which he makes the city of Ostend speak, after having been three years besieged by the Spaniards, is reckoned a masterpiece. It was translated into French by Du Vaer, Rapin, Pasquier, and Malherbe; and Casaubon turned it into Greek. Nor did our youth content himself with writing small pieces of verse; he rose to tragedy. We have three written by him; the first, called *Adamus Exul*, was printed in Leyden, in 1601. He was indeed dissatisfied with this performance, and would not let it appear in the collection of his poems published by his brother. *Christus patiens*, was his second tragedy; it was printed at Leyden 1603, and much approved. Casaubon greatly admires its poetical fire. Sandys translated it into English verse, and dedicated it to Charles I. It was favourably received in England, and in Germany proposed as the model of perfect tragedy. His third was the story of Joseph, and its title *Sophomphanæus*, which, in the language of Egypt, signifies the Saviour of the World; he finished this in 1633, and the following year, at Hamburg.

But to return: in 1603, the glory which the United Provinces had obtained by their illustrious defence against the whole

power of Spain, after the peace of Vervins, determined them to transmit to posterity the signal exploits of that memorable war; and for this purpose they sought out a proper historian. Several made great interest for the place; among others Baudius, the professor of eloquence at Leyden. But the states thought young Grotius, who had taken no steps to obtain it, deserved the preference; and, what is still more singular, Baudius himself did not blame their choice, because he looked upon Grotius to be already a very great man. All this while his principal employment was that of a counsellor, and he acquired great honour therein. However, upon the whole, the profession did not please him, though the brilliant figure he made at the bar procured the place of advocate general of the fisc for Holland and Zealand, which becoming vacant, was immediately conferred on him by those provinces. He took possession of this important office in 1627, and filled it with so much reputation, that the states augmented his salary, and promised him a seat in the court of Holland. Upon this promotion, his father, began to think of a wife for him, and fixed upon Mary Reigesberg, a lady of a first family in Zealand, whose father had been a burgomaster of Veer. The marriage was solemnized in July 1608. — At the time of his marriage he was employed in writing his *Mare liberum, i. e. the Freedom of the Ocean, or the Right of the Dutch to trade to the Indies*. This work was printed in 1609, without his knowledge, and published without his consent. Indeed he appears not to have been quite satisfied with it; and though there came out several answers, particularly that of Selden, intitled *Mare clausum, seu de dominio maris*, yet being soon after disgusted with his country, he took no further concern in the controversy. The ensuing year, he published his piece, *De antiquitate Reipublicæ Batavæ*. His design is, to shew the original independence of Holland and Friesland, against the Spanish claim; he dedicated it to those states, March 16, 1610. They were extremely pleased with it, returned thanks to the author, and made him a present. However, his love to his country carried him into some mistakes, which he afterward owned.

Elias Olden Barnevelt, pensionary of Rotterdam, and brother to the grand pensionary of Holland, dying in 1613, the city of Rotterdam offered that important place to Grotius; but it was sometime before he accepted the offer. By the ferment of men's minds, he foresaw that great commotions would speedily shake the