

them ; and when in the order and course of Providence a member of the house settled in Holland, the sturdy proprietors of its oozy polders and rich pasture lands very rapidly fell in with his aims and aspirations. By a long and painful preparation the people of the Netherlands were gradually educated to know what liberty meant. The ancient Batavians, their remote ancestors, had struggled manfully with the Roman legions, and had often victoriously driven them over the two-forked Rhine, and, retiring within their dense Hyrcanian forests, defied the haughty Cæsars. Through the many slowly passing centuries the brave savages, by steady steps, rose with the rising lands to become one of the most industrious races in Europe. At first sight it strikes a cursory observer as strange that cultivated Italians should have envied so sad a swamp as Holland must have been at that pristine period. Yet so it was. The lust of conquest is insatiable : so, in the end, the "Low Countries"—fit appellation for the place—became in turn the hunting-grounds for Romans, Germans, Spaniards, and Frenchmen, who with restless energy tried to deprive the resolute inhabitants of their dearly-earned wealth and liberties. The story of the growth of this wealth and those liberties are interesting, but too long for the space at our disposal. Suffice it to say that, after centuries of continual trouble and suffering, the foundation of the future greatness of Holland was securely laid. From the hour when the Netherlands freed themselves from