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TRANSLATIONS.

KEY TO SCHILLER'S

WALL OF ANTWERP.

TORONTO,
SUTHERLANDS.
1892.

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SIEGE OF ANTWERP.

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THE SIEGE

— OF —

A N T W E R P .

INTRODUCTION.

Whilst it is an interesting spectacle to observe man's inventive genius engaged in a struggle against a powerful element, and to see how prudence, resolution and firmness of will overcome difficulties which are insurmountable to ordinary capacities, it is less interesting but so much the more instructive to witness the contrary spectacle, where the absence of those qualities neutralizes all efforts of genius, renders all favours of fortune unavailing, and destroys a success already achieved, because it does not understand to avail itself of that success. The celebrated blockade of the city of Antwerp by the Spaniards at the close of the sixteenth century, irretrievably robbed this blooming commercial town of its wealth, but gained for the general who undertook and carried it out an immortal name, gives examples of both.

The war had lasted already twelve years through which the northern provinces of Belgium at first merely strove to maintain their religious liberty and privileges belonging to the state against the attacks of the Spanish stadtholder, at last however the independence of their state from the Spanish crown. Weak in number still weaker in provisions, however inspired through a common interest, brought to despair through continuous ill-treatment and terrible in this despair they had deferred the results of the struggle so many years, which the superior power of their enemy did not seem to leave doubtful a minute.

Never entirely conquerors, however, never entirely conquered, they tried the Spanish bravery through lingering military operations on an unfavorable ground, and exhausted the lord of the two Indies whilst they themselves were called beggars and really were it in part. In sooth the treaty of Ghent was dissolved again which connected the whole the Catholic as well as the Protestant Netherlands in a common, and if it could have continued invincible

bo ly ; but instead of this unsafe and unnatural connection the northern provinces in the year 1579 had gone into a close union of Utrecht of which a longer continuance might be expected since they were bound and kept together through common political and religious interest.

What the Republic through this separation from the Catholic provinces had lost in extent, that it had gained in closeness of connection, in union of enterprises in energy of execution, and it was a luck for them to loose in time what with the employment of all their resources they could never have had kept. The largest part of the Wallonian provinces had gone back to the rule of the Spaniards partly voluntary, partly forced with arms in the year 1581, only in the northern parts they (the Spaniards) had not firm footing yet. Even a considerable part of Brabant and Glanber opposed yet obstinately the arms of the Duke Alexander of Parma, who superintended the interior government of the provinces and the chief command of the army with as much force as skill, and who had again raised the reputation of the Spanish name

through a succession of victories. The peculiar organisation of the country which favored the connection of the towns among each other and the sea through so many rivers and canals rendered every conquest difficult and the possession of a place could only be obtained through the possession of another. As long as this communication was not stopped Holland and Seeland could protect without trouble their allies, and by water as well as by land richly supply them with all necessaries, so that all bravery did not avail and the troops of the king through the long siege were worked up in vain.

CHAP. II.

Among all the towns in Brabant Antwerp was the most important, as well thro' its riches, its population, and its powers as through its position at the mouth of the Schelde. This large and populous city, which in this period counted over 8,000 in population, was one of the most active partners at the Netherland State Union and had distinguished itself from all towns in Belgium through its excessive spirit of lib-

erty. Since she harboured all the Christian churches in her precinct a large part of her wealth, she owed to this unlimited privilege of religion, and she had by far the greatest cause to fear the Spanish rule which threatened to take away the religious privilege, and through the terrors of the inquisition court scare all Protestant merchants from their markets. The brutality of the Spanish garrison they knew already out of a terrible, experience and it was easy to foresee that during the course of war they could not get rid of this intolerable yoke if they allowed it to be laid upon them. Powerful as were the motives of the city of Antwerp to keep the Spaniards out of their walls, equally important were the reasons of the Spanish general to obtain it, whatever the price might be. From the possession of this town depended to some measure the possession of the whole Brabant country, which provided itself mostly with grain from Seeland through this channel, and through its possession would have been secured the rule over the Schelde. The council of Brabant which kept its mee-

tings in this town would be deprived with the same of an important support; the dangerous influence of their examples, their advices, their money on the whole party would be checked and in the fortunes of the inhabitants would be opened up a rich spring for the military wants of the king. The fall of it (Antwerp) must sooner or later draw after it the down fall of Brabant and transfer in a decisive manner the preponderance of power in those regions to the king. Stirred up through the strength of those reasons the Duke of Parma collected his force in July 1584 and moved from Dornick where he stood in its (ANT.) neighborhood, with the intention to besiege it. The position as well as the fortification of this city seemed to brave every attack, surrounded from the Brabant side with unsurmountable works and deep moats and protected at the Glandric by the broad and rapid stream of the Schelde it could not be conquered by storm and to enclose a town of this circumference seemed to require a land power three times as large as the Duke had together and in addition to this a fleet, which he was entirely without.

Not sufficient that the river from Ghent supplies it with all necessaries in abundance the same river opened an easy connection with the adjacent Seeland, for since the tide of the north sea stretches far into the Schelde and changes the course of it periodically, Antwerp enjoys the particular advantages that the same river at different times flows in two opposite directions to it. Besides this the surrounding towns Brussels, Mecheln, Ghent, Dendermonde, and others were at this time all in the hands of the council; and also by land the importation could be made easy. It needed then two different armies on both sides of the river, in order to blockade the city by land and to cut off the connection with Glauder and Brabant it needed at the same time a sufficient number of ships to bar the Schelde and to be able to baffle all attempts which would come from Seeland for support. But this army of the Duke had been reduced through the war which he had still to lead in other districts and through the garrison which he had to leave back in the

towns and fortresses, to 10,000 men (infantry), and 1,700 cavalry, a much too small power to be sufficient for an undertaking of this extent. In addition to this the troops were without the most necessary supplies and the arrears in their pay had provoked them to a secret murmuring, which threatened to break out every hour in an open mutiny. If the siege should still be ventured upon in spite of all hindrances, they had to fear everything from the hostile fortresses which they left behind and to whom it would be an easy matter to destroy by vigorous lapses such a divided army, and to reduce the trouble by cutting off the supplies.

CHAP. III.

The council of war to whom the Duke of Parma had communicated his intention brought all these reasons forward as large as the confidence was which they placed in themselves and in the tried capacity of such a leader, so the most experienced generals made no secret out of it, how much they doubted a lucky issue. Two were expected, who, placed above all ap-

prehensions the boldness of their courage Capizucchi and Mondragon who advised all against such a doubtful risk, where one was in danger to lose all former victories and all gained military glory. But objections which he had made himself and also answered, could not waver the Duke of Parma in his intention. Not out of ignorance with the therewith connected dangers, nor of careless estimation of his forces, had he seized the bold plot. Great men are led with happy security by instinctive genius on that course upon which inferior men never enter, or which they do not complete, and it was that instinctive genius which raised the general above all those doubts which a cold and narrow prudence opposed to his views, and he recognized the correctness of his calculation, by a feeling which, though indistinct was never the less indubitable. A series of happy results had heightened his confidence and the look on his army, which had not its equal in Europe of those days in discipline, training and bravery and was commanded by a selection of the most superior officers did not allow him to give fear room a moment, Those who objected to his plan on account of the small number of his troops, he gave

for a reply that, however long the spike it was only the point that killed and that by military undertakings, the power that was moving was of grea'er importance than the crowd that was to be moved. He knew the discontent of the troops but he knew also their obedience and then he hoped to obviate their private grievances thereby that he occupied them by an important undertaking through the magnificence of the same arouse their desire for glory, and through the high price, which the siege of such a wealthy town promised their avarice. In the plan which he now projected he sought to meet all the different hinderances with rigor. The only power through which one could hope to force the town was famine; and in order to set this terrible enemy against it, all accesses by water or land must be closed. In the first instance to aggravate if not to cut off entirely, the arrival of any supplies from Seeland' they were going to seize all forts which the people of Antwerp had built on both shores of the Scheldt for protection of the shipping, and when it was possible to erect new forts from which the length of the

stream might be commanded. In order, however that the town might not draw the provisions from the interior of the country they endeavored to intercept the transmission by sea, so all the surrounding towns were also to be drawn in the plan of the siege and the downfall of Antwerp to be founded on the downfall of all these places. a bold, and if we think of the limited power of the duke, an extravagant resolution, which however, justified the genius of the originator, and which success crowned with a magnificent end. Since time, however was needful to accomplish (this end) a plan of this extent, they contented themselves for a while to build numerous forts on the canals and rivers which connected Antwerp with Dendermonde, Ghent, Mecheln, Brussels, and other places, and thereby aggravate the conveyance of provisions. At once there were billeted near these towns, and as it were at the gates of the same, Spanish garrisons, who laid the land waste, and through their cruise made the surrounding country unsafe. Thus there were billeted around Ghent alone about 30,000 men, and

around the others in proportion. Thus, and by means of maintaining a secret understanding with Roman Catholic inhabitants, the Duke hoped, without weakening himself, by and by to exhaust these towns, and through the miseries of a small but continued war, also without a formal siege, at last force them to surrender,

CHAP. IV.

Meanwhile the main force was directed towards Antwerp itself, which the Duke now had entirely surrounded with his troops. He, himself, took his position at Bevern, in Flanders, a few miles from Antwerp, where he pitched an entrenched camp. The Flandric shore of the Scheldt was given over to the Margrave of Rysburg, general of the cavalry; the Brabant to the Count Peter Ernest of Mansfield, whom another leader, Mondragon, joined. The two last passed the Scheldt luckily to position without the Antwerp Admiral-ship, which had been sent out to meet them, being able to hinder them, passed around by Antwerp, and took their position at Sta-

broek, in the State of Bergen. Singly detached corps dispersed themselves along the whole Brabant side, partly to protect the dams, partly to bar the passes by land. Several miles below Antwerp the Scheldt is defended by two strong forts, of which the one lies at Liefkenshoek, on the Isle of Doel, in Flanders; the other at Lillo, directly opposite the Brabant coast. The latter, Mondragon himself had built, according to the command of the Duke of Alba, when he was still master of Antwerp, and for this reason the attack of the same was now trusted to him by the Duke of Parma. The whole success of the siege seemed to depend on the possession of these two forts, because all the ships which sailed from Seeland to Antwerp had to pass under the cannon of the same. Both forts the people of Antwerp had shortly before fortified, and the former was not yet quite finished when the Margrave of Rysburg attacked it. The swiftness with which he went to work surprised the enemies before they were sufficiently prepared for defence, and a charge which they risked on Liefken-

shoek brought this fortress in Spanish hands. This loss happened to the confederates the same unlucky day when the Prince of Oranien was assassinated at Delft. Also the other entrenchments which had been erected on the Isle of Doel, were left, partly voluntary by their defendants, partly taken by invasion, so that, in short, the whole Flandric coast was cleared by enemies. But the fort at Lillo, on the Brabant coast, rendered a more lively opposition, because the people of Antwerp had time to fortify it, and to have it supplied with a brave garrison. Angry attacks of the besieged, under the leadership of Odets of Feligny, spoiled, supported by the canons of the fortress, all works of the Spanish; and a flood, which was effected through the opening of the sluices, chased them at last from the place, after an eight weeks' siege, and a loss of almost 2,000 dead. They drew back to their safe camp at Stabroek, and were contented to take possession of the dams which cut through the low lands of Bergen, and to expose an entrenchment to the penetrating Easter-Scheldt.

CHAP. V.

The failed attempt on the fort Liefkenshoek changed the tactics of the Duke of Parma. Since it could not succeed thus to hinder the traffic over the Scheldt, on which the whole success of the siege depended, he determined to bar the entire stream by means of a bridge. The thought was a bold one, and there were many who considered him extravagant. The width of the river—which in this part of the country measured 1,200 spaces—as well as the violent torrent of the same, which was strengthened by the flood of the near ocean, seemed to make every attempt of this kind impracticable; added to this was the scarcity of timber, ships, and workmen, and then the dangerous position between the Antwerp and Seeland fleet, to which it must be an easy task, in connection with a strong element, to disturb such a lengthy work. But the Duke of Parma knew his strength, and his determined courage could only conquer the impossible. After he had had the breadth as well as the depth of the stream measured, and consulted with two

of his clever engineers, Barocci and Plato, about it, the conclusion was arrived at to build the bridge between Kalloo, in Flanders, and Ordam, in Brabant. The reason they chose this spot was, that the stream had the least width here, and bent a little to the right, which detained the ships and compelled them to tack. For protection of the bridge, strong citadels were built on both sides of the same, of which the one on the Flandric coast was called Fort St. Mary, and the other on the Brabant St. Philip, in honor of the King. Whilst in the Spanish camp they were making the liveliest preparation for the execution of the project, and the whole attention of the enemy was directed there, the Duke made an unexpected attack on Dendermonde, a strongly fortified place between Ghent and Antwerp, where the Dender joins with the Scheldt. As long as this important place was still in the hands of the enemy the cities of Ghent and Antwerp could help each other, and by easy communication spoil all troubles of the besiegers. The capture of the same gave the Duke a free

scope towards both towns, and could decide for the whole fortune of his undertaking. The swiftness with which the Duke attacked them left the inhabitants no time to open their sluices, and to place the land around under water. The principal bastion of the town from the Brussel gate was shot at at once violently, but the firing of the besieged made a great havoc among the Spanish. Instead of being frightened away they became more eager; and the scorn of the garrison, which maimed before their eyes the statue of a saint, and threw it down amidst scornful illtreatments, from the bulwark, put them entirely in rage. They urged with vehemence to be led towards the bastion before their fire had made a sufficient breach; and the Duke, in order to increase this first ardor, allowed the attack. After a two-hour violent fight, the bulwark was climbed, and all those whom the first fury of the Spanish did not sacrifice, cast themselves into the town. This was now more exposed to the fire of the enemy, which was directed to them from the conquered walls; but its strong

walls, and its broad ditches well filled with water which surrounded it, gave sufficient reasons to fear a long opposition. The enterprising genius of the Duke of Parma conquered shortly also this difficulty. Whilst the bombardment was continued day and night, the troops had to work without cessation to lead the Dender out of its bed, from which the town ditch received its water; and despair took hold of the besieged when they saw the water of their ditch disappear by degrees, this only remaining protection of the town. They hurried to surrender, and received, in August, 1584, a Spanish garrison. In a period of not more than eleven days this undertaking was carried out, at which—according to the verdict of the expert—just as many weeks seemed needful.

CHAP. VI.

The town of Ghent—now cut off from Antwerp and the sea, crowded more and more by the troops of the King, who camped in its neighborhood, and without all hope of a near relief—gave up their rescue, and

saw the famine, with its whole retinue, approach with terrible swiftness. She sent, therefore, a deputy into the Spanish camp at Bevern, in order to submit to the King under the same conditions which the Duke some time ago had offered in vain. They told the deputy that the time of treaties was past, and that only an unlimited submission could quiet the angry monarch. Yes, they even let them fear that they would require the same humiliations from them to which their rebel ancestors under Charles V. were obliged to submit, viz., half naked and with a rope around the neck ask for mercy. Comfortless the deputy traveled back; but already on the third day appeared another embassy, which, at last, on the intercession of a friend of the Duke of Parma, who was a prisoner in Ghent, brought about peace under tolerable conditions. The town must pay a fine of twice a hundred florins, call the chased Catholics back, and chase the Protestant inhabitants; yet the latter were granted a time of two years in order to arrange their business. All inhabitants but six, who were marked out for

capital punishment, yet afterwards reprieved, received amnesty; and the garrison, which consisted of 2,000 men, were granted to evacuate with military honors. This agreement was arranged in September in the same year in the principal quarters in Bergen, and shortly afterwards 2,000 men of Spanish troops moved in for garrison. More through fear of his name and the terrors of hunger, than by his armed force, had the Duke of Parma conquered this town, the largest and strongest fortified in the Netherlands, which is not inferior to the city of Paris in circumference, counts 37,000 houses, and consists of thirty Isles, which are connected by 98 stone bridges. Brilliant privileges which this town for centuries had known to obtain from its rulers, nourished in its citizens the spirit of independence, which not seldom broke out in defiance and impertinence, and began a very natural quarrel with the maxims of the Austriar-Spanish rule. It was this brave spirit of independence which brought the Reformation a quick and extended success in this town, and incentives connected

Jed about to those stormy scenes by which the same had distinguished herself to her misfortune during the war in the Netherlands. Beside the sum of money which the Duke of Parma now raised from the town, he found in its walls yet a rich supply of arms, wagons, ships, and tools for building, along with the requisite amount of workmen and sailors, with which in his undertaking against Antwerp he was not a little promoted. Before Ghent surrendered to the King, the towns of Vilvorden and Herentals had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards, also the log houses near the village of Willebroeck were garrisoned by them, by which means Antwerp was cut off from Brussels and Mecheln. The loss of all these places, which followed in so short a time, took away from the people of Antwerp every hope of success from Brabant and Flanders, and confined all its prospects on the assistance which was expected from Seeland, and which to hinder, the Duke of Parma now made earnest preparations.

CHAP. VII.

The citizens of Antwerp had looked on the first movement of the enemy towards their town with a proud surety which a view of their unconquerable stream infused in them. This confidence was to a certain degree justified through the opinion of the Prince of Oranien, who at the first news of this siege, expressed his opinion that the Spanish power would break down at the walls of Antwerp. In order not to waste anything that might serve for the preservation of the town, he called to himself a short time before his assassination, the Mayor of Antwerp, Philipp Marnix, of St Aldegonde, his intimate friend, where he conferred with him about the defence of Antwerp. His advice was to the effect to have the large dam between Sanvliet and Lillo called Blaauwgarendyk, dragged at once, in order to pour the waters of the Easter-Scheldt as soon as it was necessary over the lowland of Bergen, and to open a way through the flooded fields to the town for the Seeland ships, if perhaps the Scheldt were

barred. Aldegonde had really, after his return, stirred the magistrate and the largest part of citizens to consent to this proposal, when the club of butchers opposed it, and complained that there would be taken away by means of it their means of subsistence; for a field which they were going to put under water was a large piece of grass land, where yearly about 12,000 oxen were fattened. The club of butchers kept their superiority, and managed to detain the execution of this whole one proposal so long, till the enemy had taken the dams and the grass land in possession. On the strong recommendation of the Mayor, St. Aldegonde, who himself, a member of the States of Brabant, and was a man of great consequence by the same, they had repaired, just before the arrival of the Spaniards, the fortress on both sides of the Scheldt, and had built around the town many new fortifications. They had pierced the dams at Safting, and spread the water of the West Scheldt almost over the whole land of Waas. In the neighbouring margraviate, Bergen troops were canvassed by the Count

Hohenlohe, and a regiment of Scotch, under the leadership of the Colonel Morgan, was already in the pay of the Republic, whilst they expected new forces from England and France. Above all the States of subsidies, Holland and Seeland were asked to render immediate aid. After the enemy had got firm footing on both sides of the shore, and through the firing from their fortresses had made sailing dangerous, a few in Brabant, one place after another fell in their hands, and the cavalry barred all intercourse from the country, there arose at last *severe* care by the inhabitants of Antwerp on account of the future. The town counted at that time 80,000 souls, and, according to the made estimation, there was required for the maintenance of the same every year three times hundred quarters or cwt. To store in such a supply it did not want at the beginning of the siege for either supplies or money, for in spite of the hostile arms, the Seeland provision-ships knew to make their way, when the tide was rising. All that was requisite was to prevent that not some of these rich citizens would buy

the supplies, and then rule the market when scarcity would commence. A certain Gianibelli, from Mantua, who had settled in the town, and rendered it great services during this siege, made for this purpose the proposal to levy a tax on the hundredth penny, and form a company of reliable men, who were to buy grain and deliver it every week. The rich should at first advance the money, and as security for it, keep the bought supplies in their magazines, and also receive their share of the grain. However, this proposal did by no means suit the rich inhabitants, who had made up their mind to draw profit from the general oppression. They were rather of the opinion that they should command every one to supply himself for his want with the necessary provision for two years. In making this proposal they provided well for themselves, but very poorly for the poor inhabitants who could not supply themselves for so many months. They arrived by means of it at the intention either to chase the latter out of town, or to make them independent of them; but when they after-

wards reflected that in time of trouble their property would not be respected, they found it advisable not to hurry in making their own purchases.

CHAP. VIII.

The Mayor of the town, in order to prevent a misfortune that would have pressed individuals, chose, therefore, another, which was dangerous to the whole community. Seeland speculators had laden a considerable fleet with provisions, which succeeded in passing the cannons of the enemies, and landed in Antwerp. The hope of a higher gain had encouraged the merchants to this risky speculation; in this expectation, however, they found themselves disappointed when they arrived, since the Mayor of Antwerp about this time issued an edict whereby the price of all provisions was put down considerably; at the same time to prevent that individuals did not buy the load in order to dispose of it dearer, and put it in their magazines, he commanded that the corn should be sold directly to any retail purchasers who might present themselves

at the ship. The undertakers, cheated by this arrangement out of the whole gain of their sail, put up their sails quickly, and left Antwerp with the larger part of their load, which would have lasted to support the whole town several months. This neglect of the most immediate and natural remedy, is only comprehensible through the circumstances that they seemed to think a complete barring of the Scheldt far impossible, and thus did not fear the exterior case in earnest. When, therefore, the news came in that the Duke had the intention to throw a bridge over the Scheldt, they in general mocked this chimeric fancy in Antwerp. They made a proud comparison between the Republic and the stream, and thought that the one as well as the other would not suffer the Spanish yoke. A stream that is 2,400 feet wide, and if it has only its own water, 60 feet deep, which, however, if the tide rises, it raises still 12 feet; such a stream it was said should be curbed under the yoke of a miserable piece of paling. Where were they going to get timber, high enough to touch the ground,

and still to project over the plain? And a work of this kind should be done in winter, where the flood would drive whole islands and mountains of ice, which hardly stone walls would hold, on to the weak timber, and split it like glass. Or did the Duke intend to build a bridge of ships, where did he wish to get them, and how take them in his fortress? They were obliged to pass Antwerp, where a fleet was standing either to catch them or sink them. But whilst in the town they were proving the absurdity of his undertaking, the Duke of Parma had finished. As soon as the bastion of St. Mary and St. Philipp were built, which protect the workmen and the build by their arms, from both sides of the opposite shores. frameworks were built into the stream, to which they used the masts of the largest ships. Through the artificial arrangement of the beam, they knew to give the whole such a solidity that it, as the success afterwards proved, could withstand the powerful pressure of the ice.

This scaffold, which rested firmly and securely on the water and projected out of

it in good height, was covered with planks, which formed a comfortable street. It was so wide that eight men abreast had room on it, and a parapet that ran along both sides protected it from the musket-fire of the enemy's ships. This stockade, as they called it, ran from both opposite shores so far into the stream as the increasing depth and power of the stream allowed. It narrowed the stream 1,100 feet; since, however, the entire and real stream did not suffer them, there remained open between the two stockades a space of more than 600 feet, through which a ship laden with provisions could sail comfortably. This space the Duke thought to fill out by means of a bridge made from ships, to which the vessels should be fetched from Dunkirk. But besides that there was a scarcity, it was difficult to bring such past Antwerp without great loss. He had, therefore, to content himself for the frost to have narrowed the river one-half of its width, and to make the passage of the hostile much more difficult. For there were the stockade ended in the centre of the stream, they spread out

into a parallelogram, which was fully provided with cannons, and served for a sort of fort in the middle of the water. From here out, on all the vessels which risked themselves through the passage, a terrible firing was kept up, which, however, did not prevent whole fleets and single ships from passing this dangerous stream safely.

CHAP. IX.

Meanwhile Ghent surrendered, and this unexpected conquest extricated the Duke at once out of his perplexity. He found ready in this town all necessaries in order to finish his bridge of ships, and the only difficulty was to transport them safely. To this the enemies themselves opened a natural way. By the opening of the dams at Saftingen, a large portion of the land waes to the village Borght was put under water, so that it was not difficult to sail on the fields with flat barges. The Duke let his ships run out from Ghent, and ordered them, as soon as they had passed the Dendermonde and Ruppelmonde, to pierce the left dam of the Scheldt, let Ant-

werp lie to the right, and to sail in the flooded fields towards Borcht. For the security of this sail, a bastion was erected at the village Borcht, which could keep the enemy in check. Everything went off as they wished, not, however, without a lively fight with the hostile fleet, which had been sent out to obstruct this enemy. After they had pierced several dams on the way, they reached the Spanish quarters at Kalloo, and ran luckily into the Scheldt. The rejoicing of the army was the greater after they had heard of the first great danger which the ships had just escaped. For they had hardly got rid of the hostile ships when reinforcement of the latter from Antwerp was on the road, which the brave defender of Lillo, Odet of Feligny, led. When he saw that the affair was over, and the enemy escaped, he took possession of the dam where they had passed, and built a bastion on the spot, in order to bar a passage of the Ghent ships which might follow yet. Through this the Duke of Parma was again thrown into embarrassment. He did not have ships enough by far, neither

for his bridge, nor for defence of the same, and the way the former were brought hither was barred through the fort of Feligny. Whilst he now surveyed the country with the intention to find out a new way for his fleet, a thought occurred to him that did not only end his present embarrassment, but gave the whole undertaking at once a brisk impulse. Not far from the village of Stecken, in the land waes, from which place they were about 5,000 steps from the beginning of the flood, flows the Moer, a little water, that flows at Ghent into the Scheldt. From this river he now let a canal be dug as far as that part of the country where the flood took its beginning, and because the water was not high enough all over, the canal was continued between Bevern and Verrebroek to Kalloo, where the Scheldt took it up. Five hundred persons worked without ceasing at this work, and in order to brighten the discontent of the soldiers, the Duke himself helped. He renewed thus the example of two noted Romans, Drusus and Corbulo, who, through similar works, connected the Rhine with

the Seudersee, and the Maas with the Rhine.

This canal, which the army, in honor of its originator, called the canal of Parma, stretched 14,000 feet in length, and had a comparative depth and width in order to carry ships of a considerable burden. He procured for the ships from Ghent not only a surer, but also a much shorter, road to the Spanish quarters, because it was not necessary for them to follow the distant bends of the Scheldt, but went at Ghent at once into the Moer, and from there around by Stecken through the canal, and through the flooded land at Kalloo. Since in the town of Ghent the productions of all Flanders came together, this canal put the Spanish camp in connection with the whole Province. From all places the abundance came forward, so that during the siege they knew no more want. But the most important profit which the Duke got out of this work was a sufficient supply of flat barges with which he was put in the position to finish the build of his bridge.

The winter had arrived during these pre-

parations, which, whilst the Scheldt was covered with drift-ice, caused a pretty long rest in the build of the bridge. With impatience the Duke had watched the arrival of this time of the year, which could be very destructive to his commenced work, and could be very favorable to the enemy by a severe attack on the same. But the skill of his architect pulled him out of the one danger, and the inconsistency of the enemy forced him from the other. It happened several times that, with the beginning of the ocean tides, strong masses of ice were caught in the stockade, and shook the frame-work with much power; but it stood, and the attack of the wild element only made its firmness visible.

CHAP. X.

Meanwhile, a precious time was being wasted in Antwerp with fruitless deliberations, and over the quarrels of the parties the general best was neglected. The government of this town was divided into too many parties, and the mob given a much too large share, so that one could consider

with peace, choose with insight, and act with firmness. Besides the ordinary municipal magistracy, in which the Mayor only had a single voice, there were still in the town a number of corporations, who were entrusted with the inner and outer safety, the provisioning, the fortification of the town, the marine, the commerce, etc., and which would not consent to being passed over by any important conferences. By means of so many orators, who, as often as it pleased them, ran into the council, and what they could not do by argument, knew to obtain by means of clamor and their large number, the people became a dangerous influence in the public council, and the natural opposition of such opposite interests kept back the completion of every wholesome measure. The government was both vacillating and powerless, and it could therefore not make itself respected by refractory sailors and by an arrogant and lawless soldiery; therefore the commands of the State found poor obedience, and through the carelessness, if not actual open mutiny, of the troops and the sailors, more

them once the deciding moment went lost. The few agreements in the choice of the means through which they wished to conquer the enemy would not have hurt so much by far if they had agreed in the aim. But just over this the rich citizens and the common populace were divided in two opposite parties; while the first did, not without cause, fear if things came to extremities, and were, therefore, much inclined to enter into treaties with the Duke of Parma. These sentiments they did not hide any longer till th : Fort Liefkenshoek had fallen in the hands of the enemy, and they began now to entertain serious fears for the shipping on the Scheldt. Some of them moved away entirely, and left the place in the prosperity of which they had participated, but the adversity of which they would not share. Sixty or seventy of the remaining of this class presented a petition to the Council, wherein they expressed the wish to negotiate with the King. As soon, however, as the people heard of this, they fell into an angry commotion, which one could hardly quiet through imprisonment of the

supplicants and an imposed fine on the same. It was not tranquilized until an edict was made which put on every secret or public attempt for peace the penalty of death.

None of these movements escaped the notice of the Duke of Parma, who, in Antwerp, as well as the other towns of Brabant and Flanders, kept up secret intelligence, was served well by his spy, and did not tarry to draw profit by it. Although he was enough advanced in his preparations to frighten the town, there were still many steps to be done before he could really be made master of the same, and a single unfortunate movement might spoil the work of many months. Without neglecting any of his military arrangements, he made an earnest attempt if he could not gain the town by kindness. He despatched, therefore, at the end of this year, a writing to the large Council of Antwerp, where all artifices were employed to persuade the citizens either to surrender the town or to enlarge the division among them. He treated them in this letter as people that

had been led astray, and threw the whole fault of their fall off, and their stubbornness up to the present time, on the intriguing genius of the Prince of Oranien, of whom the retribution of heaven had delivered them shortly. Now, he said, it was in their power to waken out of their long illusion, and to go back to a King who was willing for reconciliation. For this purpose he said he would willingly offer himself as mediator, since he had never ceased to love a country wherein he had been born and spent the gayest part of his youth. He urged them, therefore, to send agents with whom he could negotiate the peace; gave them hope of the most reasonable conditions if they submitted in time; but at the same time he threatened them with the severest measures if they let it come to the worst.

CHAP. XI.

This writing, in which with pleasure one misses the language which the Duke of Alba employed ten years ago in similar cases, the inhabitants answered in a proper

and humble tone, whilst they did justice to the personal character of the Duke, and mentioned with thankfulness his well-wishing sentiments; they complained of the hardness of the times, which did not allow them to act according to his character and his inclination. In his hands they said they would with pleasure place their fate, if he were absolute master of his actions, and did not have to serve the will of another, which his own justice could impossibly countenance. Only too well known was the unchanging decision of the King of Spain, and the vow that he had given the Pope; from this side all their hope was lost. They defended with noble warmth the memory of the Prince of Oranien, their protector and benefactor, whilst they mentioned the true causes which had caused this sad war, and caused the Provinces to revolt from the Spanish Crown. At the same time they did not conceal that they had hope now to find a new and kind master in the King of France, and for this reason alone could not come to an agreement with the Spanish monarch without

being guilty of the most punishable carelessness and unthankfulness. The united Provinces, made despondent through a succession of misfortunes, had at last formed the resolution to place themselves under the sovereignty of France, and through sacrificing of their independence to save their existence and their old privileges. With this commission a deputy had gone for not such a long time back to Paris, and the prospect of this powerful assistance it was principally that strengthened the courage of the people of Antwerp. Henry III., King of France, was himself not unwilling to make use of this offer, but the troubles which the intrigues of the Spanish knew to cause in his kingdom, compelled him against his will to leave off from it. The people of the Netherlands turned now with their petitions to Queen Elizabeth, of England, who gave them assistance, but too late for Antwerp's succor. Whilst they waited in this town the result of this treaty, and looked for foreign help abroad, they had wasted the most natural and nearest means to a help, and lost the whole winter, which the enemy

knew to use the better. The Mayor of Antwerp, St. Aldegonde, did not fail to urge repeatedly the Seeland fleet to an attack on the hostile works, whilst from Antwerp they would support this expedition. The long, and often stormy, nights would favor these attempts, and if at the same time the garrison at Lillo would risk an attack it would be hardly possible for the enemy to oppose this triple attack. But an unlucky misunderstanding had risen between the leader of that fleet, William of Blois, from Treslong, and the Admiral of Seeland, which were causes that the equipment of the fleet was put off an inconceivable way. To hurry the equipment of the fleet, Teligny himself went to Middleburg, where the States from Seeland were assembled, but while all passes were watched this attempt cost him his liberty, and with him the Republic lost its bravest defender. Meanwhile, there was no lack of undertaking ships, which made their way in favor of night and by rising tide, in spite of the firing of the enemy, through the then yet open bridge, threw the provisions into town

and came back again with the flood. Because, however, several such vessels fell in the hands of the enemy, the Council ordered that in future the ships should never venture out below a certain number, which had the consequence that all remained undone, while the requisite number was never completed. The people of Antwerp made also some not unlucky attempts on the ships of the enemy ; some of the latter were conquered, others sunk, and it only needed to continue such attempts at large. However eagerly St. Aldegonde urged this, still no sailor could be found to go on a vessel.

CHAP. XII.

Under these delays the winter passed, and as soon as the besiegers observed that the ice was disappearing, they proceeded now in earnest with the build of the bridge of ships. Between both stockades remained to be filled still a space of more than 600 feet, which was done the following way: They took thirty-two flat-bottomed vessels, each 66 feet long and 20 feet broad, and

these they fastened in the prow and stern with strong cable, yet so that they were distant from each other about 20 feet, and granted the stream a free passage. Every barge hung still together on two cables, as well up the stream as down, which, however, as the water rose with the flood or sunk with the ebb could be slackened and tightened respectively. Over the ships were placed large masts, which reached from one to the other, and, covered with planks, formed a decent street, especially as the stockades were protected by a railing. These ship-bridges, of which both stockades only formed a continuation, had taken together, including the latter, a distance of 2,400 steps. In addition to this, this terrible machine was so skillfully organized and so richly supplied with machines of death, that it, like a living being, could defend itself; on the command, discharge flames and pour forth destruction on every thing that came near her. Besides the two forts, St. Mary and St. Philipp, which bounded the bridges on both sides, and beside the two wooden bastions on the bridge itself, which was

filled with soldiers and occupied with cannons in all four corners, every one of the thirty-two ships contained yet 30 armed men, besides four sailors, for its protection, and showed the enemy, whether he was sailing from Seeland or from Antwerp, the mouth of a cannon. They had in all 97 cannons, which were divided as well above as below the bridge; and more than 15,000 men, who were garrisoned partly in the in the bastions and partly in the ships, and if necessary, could maintain a desperate musket fire on the enemy. But by means of this the Duke did not consider his work safe against all accidents. It was to be expected that the enemy would not let anything remain untried to blow up the centre and weakest part of the bridge by the power of its machines. To prevent this he created a special bulwark along side the ship and bridge and a little away from it, which was to break the power which might be directed against the bridge. This work consisted of thirty-two barges of considerable size, which were placed in a row across the stream, and in threes fastened together

with masts, so that they formed eleven different groups. Every one of them stretched forth like a file of pikemen, in horizontal directions, fourteen long wooden sticks, which presented to the approaching enemy an iron point. These barges were only filled with ballast, and each of them was anchored by a double, but loose, cable, in order to pursue the rising stream ; since they were in constant motion they became the name of swimmers. The whole bridge made of ships, and a part of the stockade, was covered by the swimmers, which were brought on above as well as beneath the bridge. To all these preparations of defence was added forty military ships, which remained on both shores, and served the whole works for protection. This wonderful work was finished in March, in the year 1585, the seventh month of the siege, and the day when it was finished was a day of rejoicing for the troops. By a boisterous firing the whole occurrence was made known to the besieged town ; and the army, as if to make sure of their triumph in a thoroughly practicable manner, spread

themselves out along side of the whole frame in order to see the proud stream, upon which the yoke had been imposed, flow peacefully and obediently underneath them. All the troubles which they had undergone were forgotten by this sight, and no one whose hand had worked at this was so insignificant and mean that he did not take to himself a part of the honor. Nothing, however, was equal to the confusion of the citizens of Antwerp, when the news was brought to them that the Scheldt was now really barred, and all connection with Seeland cut off. And to increase their terror, they must hear at the same time of the loss of the town of Brussels, which was at last forced by famine to surrender. An attempt which the Count of Hohenlohe had made in just these days on Herzogenbusch, either to take this town or to make a diversion for the enemy, was also unlucky, and thus Antwerp lost at the same time all hope of a supply by land or sea.

CHAP. XIII.

Through some escaped, who darted into the town by the Spanish outpost, this unfortunate news was spread there, and a spy whom the Mayor had sent in order to view the hostile works, enlarged by his report still the confusion. He was caught and brought before the Duke of Parma, who gave orders to lead him all over, and especially to examine the construction of the bridge most carefully. After this was done, and he was brought again before the general, this one sent him back with the words, "Go," said he, "and tell those who sent you what you have seen. Tell them, at the same time, that it is my firm resolution either to be buried under the ruins of this bridge, or by means of this bridge move into your town."

But the certainty of the danger also enlivened the energy of the confederates, and it was not the fault of their preparation if the first part of that vow was not accomplished. For a considerable time the Duke had watched the movements which were made for the relief of the town with unrest.

It was not unknown to him that he had to fear the most dangerous blow from there, and that not much could be accomplished with all his works if the united power of the Seeland and Antwerp fleets at the same time and in the right moment should press upon him. For a long time the tarrying of the Seeland fleet, which he took great pains to prolong by all sorts of means, had given him surety; now the necessity hurried at once the preparation, and without watching longer for the Admiral, the States at Middleburg sent the Count of Nassau, with as many ships as they could gather, for help of the besieged. This fleet anchored before the Fort Liefkenshoek, which had in possession, and shot at the same, supported by some ships from the opposite Fort Lillo, with so much luck that the walls were destroyed and climbed with storming hands. The Wallons, which formed a garrison in it, did not show the firmness which one could expect from soldiers of the Duke of Parma: they cowardly left the fortress in the hands of the enemy, which soon took the whole Island Doel, with the thereon

situated for'resses. The loss of these places, which were, however, soon taken again, grieved the Duke so much that he arraigned the commanders before a court-martial, and had the most guilty one beheaded. Meanwhile this important siege opened for the people of Seeland a free pass to the bridge, and consequently the moment had come, after having concerted with the people of Antwerp, to lead a deciding blow against that work. They agreed that whilst the bridge of ships was blown up from the Antwerp side, by means of ready kept machines, the Seeland fleet, with a sufficient amount of provisions, should be near, in order to sail at once through the made opening to the town. For before the Duke of Parma was finished with his bridge, inside the walls of Antwerp an engineer was working at its destruction. Frederick Gianibelli was the name of this man, whom fate had ordered to be the Archimede of this town, and to waste an equal skill with the same ineffectual result, to its defence. He was born in Mantua, and had made his appearance formerly in Madrid, in order, as

some persons assert, to offer his services to the King Philipp in the Netherland war. But tired out by long waiting, the insulted artist left the court with the intention to make known to the King of Spain in a perceptible way, a service that he had known to value so little. He looked for service from Queen Elizabeth, the declared enemy of Spain, who sent him, after they had seen some proof of his skill, to Antwerp. In this town he settled, and devoted to the same in its present extremity his whole knowledge and liveliest energy.

CHAP. XIV.

As soon as the artist had found out that the bridge was taken up in good earnest, and that the whole was nearing its end, he asked from the magistrate three large ships, 150 to 1500 tons, in which he proposed to place mines. Besides this, he asked for sixty barges, which were fastened together with cable and chain, and provided with grappling irons, which were set in motion when the water was on the ebb, and in order to finish the action of the mine, ships

should run in wedge-shaped direction towards the bridge. But he had turned with his petition to people who were entirely useless to grasp an extraordinary thought, and even then, when their fatherland was at stake, could not overcome their mean trading spirit. They found his proposal too expensive, and only with trouble was he granted two little ships of 70 and 80 tons each, beside a number of flat barges.

With these two ships, of which the one he called "The Luck," and the other "The Hope," he dealt as follows: He had built a hollow chamber of stones on the floor of the same, which was five feet broad, three feet high and forty feet long. This box he filled with sixty cwt. of the finest gunpowder of his own invention, and covered the same with large tomb or mill-stones, as heavy as the ship could carry them. Over that he made also a roof of the same kind of stones, which ended in a point and towered six feet above the edge of the ship. The roof itself was filled with hooks and iron chains, with metal and marble balk, with nails, knives, and other destructible

tools ; also the other room of the ship, which the box did not fill, was occupied with stones, and the whole covered with boards. In the box itself were left several little openings for the fuse which were to kindle the mine. For greater security there was fixed a work inside, which emitted sparks after a certain time, and if the fuse would perish, still set fire to the ship. In order to make the enemy believe as if these ships were merely intended to set fire on the bridge, on the top of the same a fine work of sulphur and pitch was kept, which could burn a whole hour. Yes, in order to draw the attention of the same still more from the real seat of danger, he got ready thirty-two flat-bottomed boats, on which only fireworks were burning, and which had no other purpose as to practice a deception on the enemy. These fire-ships should run down to the bridge in four different divisions, at intervals of half an hour each, and keep the enemy at work for two hours, so that at last exhausted from choking, and tired by vain waiting, their attention would be left off when the real

volcanoes came. He sent in advance of these, for security, some ships in which powder was hidden, to blast the flowing work of the bridge, and to make room for the main ships. At the same time he hoped to give the enemy work through the preliminary skirmish, to coax them, and to expose them to the entirely fatal work of the volcano. The night between the 4th and 5th of April was settled for the execution of this great undertaking. A faint rumor of it had spread in the Spanish camp, especially since from Antwerp they had seen several divers, who were wanting to cut the cables on the ships. They were, therefore, prepared for a severe attack, only they were mistaken in the real nature of the same, and were counting more on fighting with people than with the elements. The Duke for this purpose had the watchers doubled along the whole shore, and drew the best part of his troops near the bridge, where he himself was present; the nearer the danger the more he sought to escape the same. It was hardly dark when they saw from the town three burning

ships float, then three others, and soon just as many. They called to arms in the Spanish camp, and the whole length of the bridge was covered with armed men. Meanwhile the fire-ships grew more numerous, and moved partly by twos, partly by threes, down the stream in a certain order, because at the beginning they were steered by sailors. The Admiral of the Antwerp fleet, Jacob Jacobson, had made the mistake, they did not know out of neglect or with intention, that he let the four squadrons follow too quickly after each other, and let the main ships follow these too quickly, by which order was disturbed.

CHAP. XV.

Meanwhile the procession came nearer and nearer, and the darkness of the night heightened the extraordinary view. As far as the eye could follow the tree all was fire, and the fire-ships threw out such long flames as if they themselves were consumed in fire. For a long distance the surface of the water was radiant with light; the dykes and the bastions along the shore, the

flags, arms, armors of the soldiers, who were posted here as well as on the bridge, shone in the reflection. With a mixed feeling of terror and pleasure the soldiers watched the rare spectacle, that resembled more a fete than a hostile appearance; but just on account of the peculiar contrast between the outward appearance with the real hidden destination of the fire-ships the minds were filled with a mysterious awe. When the burning fleet had come about 2,000 feet near the bridge, the leaders lit the fuse, drove the two mine-ships into the centre of the stream, and left the others over to the sports of the waves, whilst they themselves made their escape quickly in ready kept boats. Now the procession got into disorder, and the ships, which were without a steersman, arrived singly, and separated at the swimming works, where they were caught or dashed sideways against the shore. The foremost powder ships, whose object it was to set fire to the swimming works, were thrown by the power of the storm-wind, which arose in this moment, on the Flandric shore;

even the one of the fire-ships which was called "The Luck" ground on the road before it reached the bridge, and killed in exploding several Spanish soldiers who worked in a near fortress. Little was wanting that the other and larger fire-ship, "Hope," did not have a similar fate. The stream threw it on the swimming work on the Flandric side, where it remained suspended, and if it had lit in this moment the best part of its work was lost. Fooled by the flames which this machine, like the other vessels, emitted, they considered it a common fire-ship, which was destined to set fire to the bridge. And as they now saw one ship after another extinguish without any work being done, the fear left them at last and they began to make fun over the preparations of the enemy, who had announced themselves so boastingly, and now took such a laughable end. Some of the boldest threw themselves into the stream, in order to see the fire-ship near by, and to extinguish it, when the same broke through by means of its heaviness the swimming bridge which had kept it, burst,

and with a force which might excite the worst fear, it sailed to the bridge of ships. Suddenly all the soldiers on the bridge get in commotion, and the Duke calls the sailors to take hold of the machines with a pike, and to extinguish the flames before they get hold of the timber. He was at this critical moment at the extreme end of the left frame, where the same formed a bastion in the water, and ended in the bridge of ships. Beside him stood the Margrave of Rysburg, general of cavalry, and Governor of the Province of Artois, who had formerly served the State, but from a defender of the Republic had become its worst enemy; the Baron of Billy, Governor of Friesland, and commander of the German regiments; the Generals Cajetan and Guasto, beside several others of the most distinguished officers: forgetting all their special danger, and only occupied with the turning off of the general misfortune. Then a Spanish ensign came to the Duke and begged him to go away from a place where apparent danger was threatening his life. He repeated this request more forc-

ible still when the Duke did not wish to pay any attention to it, and begged him at last on his knees to take advice from his servant in this case. Whilst he had said this he laid hold of the Duke's coat, as if he wished to draw him away with force, and he, more surprised by the boldness of this man than by his reasons, drew back to the shore at last, accompanied by Cajetan and Guasto. He had hardly had time to reach Fort St. Mary, on the extreme end of the bridge, when a report was heard behind him, just as if the earth exploded and as if the heavens were falling. The Duke fell down as if he were dead, the whole army with him, and it lasted several minutes before they gained their consciousness.

CHAP. XVI.

But what a sight when they again recovered! From the explosion of the ignited volcano the Scheldt was divided in her lowest depths, and driven with a towering swell over the dyke which surrounded it, so that all fortifications on the shore stood several feet in the water. The earth

shook for three miles round. Almost the whole left frame where the fire-ships caught was, with a part of bridge of ships, divided, ruined, and blown with all that was on it, masts, cannons, and people. Even the enormous stones which covered the mine, the force of the volcano had thrown on the neighboring fields, so that afterwards several of them were dug out of the ground 1,000 steps from the bridge. Six ships were burst, several gone to pieces; but more terrible than this was the destruction which the deadly tool had caused among the people. Five hundred, according to other reports even eight hundred, were the victims of its rage; not even those counted who escaped with cut off or otherwise injured limbs, and the contrary deaths were combined in this terrible moment. Some were burnt by the flames of the volcano, others by the boiling water of the stream, others smothered by the vapors of brimstone: those were buried in the waves, these under the hills of stones which had been thrown into the air, many torn by knives or hooks, or crushed by the balls

which came from the interior of the machine. Some, which were found dead without any visible hurt, must have been killed by the concussion of the air. Some were wedged between the posts of the bridge, others struggled forth from beneath the masses of rocks, others still had remained hanging in the riggings of the ships; from all places and ends there arose a heartrending cry for help, which, however, was answered—because everyone had enough to do with himself—by a faint groan. Of the living many found themselves saved through an almost miraculous fate. An officer called Tucci, the whirling blast lifted in the air like a feather, held him suspended, and let him gradually sink in the stream, where he saved himself by swimming. Another, the force of an explosion from the Flandric shore took hold of and placed him on the Brabant shore, where he got up again with a slight sprain on the shoulder; he had actually the feeling, he said, in this quick journey through the air, as if he were shot out of the cannon. The Duke of Parma himself had never been so near death

as in this moment, for only the difference of half a minute decided over his life. He had hardly placed his foot on the Fort St. Mary when he was lifted up by a whirling blast, and a beam which struck his head and shoulder threw him to the ground unconsciously. For a time they believed him to be really dead, because many remembered to have seen him a few minutes before the deadly blow on the bridge. At last they found him with his hand on his sword, raising himself between his two companions Cajetan and Guasto, a news which brought to life the whole army. But it would be in vain to describe his feelings when he saw the ruin which a single moment had caused with works of so many months. The bridge was torn, on which his hope rested, destroyed a large part of his army, another crippled and made useless for many days, many of his officers killed, and as if it were not sufficient, with this public misfortune he had to hear the smarting news that the Margrave of Rysburg, whom he preferred to all his officers, was to be found nowhere. And yet the worst

was still to come, for every moment they must expect the hostile fleet from Antwerp and Lillo, who, by this desperate state of the army, would have found no resistance. The bridge was divided, and nothing prevented the Seeland ships to sail through with full sails : in addition to this the confusion of the troops was so large and common that it would have been impossible to give commands and to obey, since many corps had lost their commander, and many commanders their corps, and even the port where they had stood was hardly to be known in this general ruin. Added to this was, that all forts on the shore stood in the water, that several cannons were sunk, that the fuses were damp, and that the powder was spoiled by water. What a moment for the enemies if they had known to use it!

CHAP. XVII.

People will hardly believe the historians that this, over all expectations, happy success merely was lost for Antwerp, because they did not know anything of it. St. Aldegonde sent, as soon as he heard the

report of the volcano in the city, several galleys towards the bridge, with the command to send up balls of fire and burning arrows as soon as they had passed luckily through it, and then to sail with the news to Lillo, in order to set the auxiliary fleet at once in motion. At the same time the Admiral of Antwerp was ordered as soon as the signal was given to start with his ships, and in the first confusion attack the enemy. But although the ships sent to reconnoitre were promised a considerable reward, they did not risk themselves near the enemy, but came back without effecting their purpose, with the news that the bridge of ships was unhurt, and the fire-ships had been without result. Also the next day no better preparations were made to find out the real condition of the bridge, and since the fleet at Lillo, in spite of the favorable wind, did not make any movement, they were confirmed in the conjecture that the fire-ship had not effected anything. Nobody thought of it that it was this inaction of the confederates which had mislead the Antwérps, and also kept back the people of

Seeland at Lillo, which really was the fact. Such an enormous consequence a Government could only be guilty of which, without all authority and independence, took counsel with the populace over which it should reign. The longer they remained inactive towards the enemy the more they wreaked their rage upon Gianibelli, whom the raging mob wished to tear to pieces. For two days this artist was in imminent danger of his life, till at last the third day a messenger came from Lillo, who had swam under the bridge, gave a report of the real destruction of the bridge, but at the same time of the complete rebuilding of the same.

This quick reparation of the bridge was a miraculous work of the Duke of Parma. He had hardly recovered from the blow which seemed to throw down all his plans when he knew to obviate all bad consequences by his admirable presence of mind. The staying away of the fleet at this critical moment revived his hope anew. Still it seemed as if the bad condition of the bridge was a secret to his enemies, and although it was not possible to restore the

work of so many months in a few hours. Much was won if they could do so at least in appearance. Everybody had, therefore, to set to work to get away the ruins, to lift up the fallen down timbers, to replace the broken, to fill out the holes with ships. The Duke himself did not shun the work, and the officers followed his example. The common soldier, fired on by this condescending behavior, did his best; the work was continued the whole night under the continued noise of trumpets and arms, which were divided along the shore in order to deafen the noise of the workmen. At break of day few traces were to be seen of the destruction of the night, and although the bridge was only repaired, apparently this sight misled the spy, and the attack did not take place. Meanwhile the Duke gained time to make the repairs thoroughly, yes, even to make alterations in the construction of the bridge. In order to protect them from future misfortunes of the same kind, a part of the ship was made movable, so that the same in time of trouble could be taken away, and a passage be opened for

the fire-ships. The loss which he had suffered on soldiers the Duke replaced by garrisons out of the neighboring places, and through a German regiment that was brought to him at the right time from Geldern, he filled the places of the remaining officers, at which the Spanish ensign who saved his life was not forgotten.

CHAP. XVIII.

The people of Antwerp, after they heard of the lucky issue of the mine-ship, paid homage now to the inventor of the same as passionately as a short time ago they had ill-treated him, and urged his genius for new attempts. Gianibelli received now really a number of flat barges as he had asked for at first in vain, and these he equipped in such a manner that they beat with irresistible power against the bridge, and burst the same really apart for the second time. This time, however, the wind was unfavorable for the Seeland fleet, that they could not put out, and thus for the second time the Duke had the needed time to repair the damage. The Archi-

mede of Antwerp was by no means discouraged. He equipped again two large vessels, which were laden with iron hooks and similar instruments, in order to break through the bridge with force. When the moment arrived that they should set sail no one was found to mount them. The artist must, therefore, consider how to provide his machines with such an automatic movement that they remained without a steersman in the centre of the water, and were not driven to the shore as the former. One of his workmen hit on a peculiar invention, if we may repeat Strała's account of it. He attached a sail under the ship, which would be swelled by the water as the common sails by the wind, and which could thus impel the ship with the whole force of the stream. The result taught, also, that he had calculated rightly, for this ship with the reversed sails did not only follow with perfect exactness the centre of the stream, but ran with such force against the bridge that it did not leave the enemy time to open it, and it really burst asunder. But all these results were of no use to the town,

because they were undertaken at random, and were not supported by a sufficient power. From a new mine-ship which Gianibelli had constructed like the first that had succeeded so well, and which he had filled with 4,000 pounds of gunpowder, no use was made, because it occurred to the people of Antwerp to seek their help another way.

CHAP. XIX.

Frightened by so many failed attempts to free with force the sailing of the stream, they thought at last to lay the stream entirely bare. They thought of the example of the town of Leyden, which, ten years ago, had been besieged by the Spaniards, and found their help in an at-the-right-time-formed flood of the fields; and this example they determined to copy. Between Lillo and Stabroek, in the land Bergen, stretches a large and independent plain to Antwerp, which is only protected by numerous dykes and cross-dykes against the encroaching waters of the East-Scheldt. Nothing more was required but to level these dykes, and the whole plain would be

turned into sea, and they could sail with flat ships almost under the walls of Antwerp. If this attempt succeeded, the Duke might as long as he liked guard the Scheldt with the bridge of ships; they had made on the spur of the occasion a new stream, which in time of trouble served the same purpose. It was this that the Prince of Oranien had advised at the beginning of the siege, but without success, because some citizens were not to be moved to give up their fields. To this last means of escape they came back in their present trouble; but the circumstances had meanwhile changed considerable.

A broad and high dyke cuts through that plain, which from the adjacent castle Cowenstein has its name, and which stretches from the village Stabroek in Bergen for three miles to the Scheldt, with which larger dyke it unites near Ordam. Over this dam no ships could go, no matter how high the tide was, and it would be in vain to draw the sea in the fields as long as such a dyke was in the road, which prevented the Seeland vessels to go down the plain of

Antwerp. The fate of this town was, therefore, dependent on the razing and cutting through of this Cowenstein dam; but, just because the Duke of Parma had thought of this, he had at the opening of the blockade taken this in possession, and saved no trouble to defend it to the extreme. At the village of Stabroek the Duke of Mansfield was encamped with the largest part of the army, and kept up communication through this Cowenstein dam with the bridge, the headquarters, and the Spanish magazine at Kalloo. Thus the army formed, from Stabroek in Brabant to Bevern in Flanders, a connecting line, which was cut through by the Scheldt, but not discontinued, and could not be torn asunder without a bloody fight. On the dam itself were erected five different bastions, within proper distances, and the bravest officers of the army had the command of the same. Yes, because the Duke could not doubt that now the whole force of the war would be transferred there, he let the Count of Mansfield have the watch over the bridge, and determined to defend the important post

himself. Now one saw an entirely new war on another scene. The Netherlands had pierced the dam on several spots below and above Lillo, and where there were a short time ago green fields there appeared now a new element; there one saw vessels move and masts rise in the air. A Seeland fleet, commanded by the Count of Hohenlohe, sailed in these flooded fields, and made movements towards the Cowenstein dam, without attacking it in earnest though, while another showed itself in the Scheldt, and threatened now this shore with a firing and now this bridge with a storm. They carried on this game with the enemy for several days, who, uncertain where the attack was to be expected, through continual watching had become tired, and felt gradually safe through so many false alarms. The Antwerps had promised the Count of Hohenlohe to support the attack on the dam from the town by means of a squadron. Three rockets from the main tower should be the signal that it was on the road. When now in a dark night these signals really went up from Antwerp, the

Count of Hohenlohe caused at once 500 of his troops to scale the dams between the hostile redoubts, surprised part of the Spanish sentinels sleeping, and a part who defended themselves they killed. In a short time they had got firm footing on the dam, and were going to fetch the other soldiers, consisting of 2,000 men, when the Spaniards in the next redoubts were moving, and favored by the narrow ground they made a desperate attack on the enemy. And since they at once started to fire from the next battery on the nearing fleet, and made the landing of the other troops impossible; from the town, however, no assistance was to be seen; the Seelanders were conquered after a short struggle, and forced from the already conquered dyke. The victorious Spaniards chased them through the middle of the water to the ships, sank several of them, and the others had to draw back with a large loss. Count Hohenlohe threw the whole blame of his defeat on the people of Antwerp, who, through a false signal, had deceived him; and certainly it was only owing to the want

of agreement between their respective operations that this attempt had no better ending.

CHAP. XX.

At last, however, they were determined to make a planned attack with united powers on the enemy, and through a general assault on the dam, as well as on the bridge, end the siege. The 16th of May, 1585, was destined for the completion of this attack, and from both sides the utmost efforts were made to make this day decide. The people of Holland and Seeland brought together in union with Antwerp over 200 ships, which, to man, they stripped their towns and citadels of troops, and with this force they wished to assault the Cowenstein dam from two opposite directions. At the same time the Scheldt bridge should again be attacked by the new machine of Giansibelli's invention, and thus the Duke be prevented to relieve the dyke. Alexander, informed of the him threatening danger, did not save anything on his part to meet the same forcibly. He had, immediately after

the taking of the dam, built redoubts on five different places of the same, and given the command of them to the most experienced officers of the army. The first of the same, called Cross Battery, was built on the spot where the Cowenstein dam enters the large rampart of the Scheldt, and with this forms the shape of a cross: over this the Spaniard, Mondragon, was put for commander. One thousand steps from the same, near the Castle Cowenstein, was erected the St. Jacob's Battery, and the command of the same was given to Camillo of Monte. On these followed in equal distance the St. George Battery, and 1,000 steps from this Palisade Battery, which derived its name from the palisades on which it rested, and over which Gamboa had the command. On the extreme end of the dam, near Stabroek, was lying a fifth bastion, of which the Count of Mansfield, with the Italian Capizucchi, had the command. All these forts the Duke had strengthened by additional artilleries and people, and in addition to this on both sides of the dam and along the whole direction, let posts be driven in,

in order to make the rampart firmer, as well as to make the work harder for the pioneers to dig the ditches.

Early in the morning, on the 16th of May, the hostile fleet put itself in motion. At once at the break of day there came swimming from Lillo through the flooded land, four burning ships; at which the sentinels on the dam, who remembered those terrible volcanoes, were frightened so much that they quickly drew back in the next fortress. It was just this that the enemy had intended. In these ships that looked like fire ships, but were it not in reality, there lay concealed soldiers, who suddenly jumped ashore, and luckily scaled the dam on the not defended spot between the St. George and Palisade Batteries. Soon the whole Seeland fleet came with numerous military ships, provisions, and a number of small ships, which were laden with bags of earth, wool, fascines, gabions, etc., in order to throw up breast works as soon as necessary. The military ships were furnished with a strong artillery, and a large number of brave soldiers. A large army of pioneers

was with them, in order to dig through the dam as soon as they had possession of it.

CHAP. XXI.

Hardly had the people of Seeland begun on the one side to scale the dam, when the Antwerp fleet came from Osterweel, and stormed it on the other. Quickly they threw up between the two next hostile redoubts a high breastwork, to cut off the enemies from each other, and to protect the pioneers. These, several hundred of them, began at the dam from both sides with their spades, and dug in the same with such eagerness that they were in hope to soon see the two seas connected to each other. But meanwhile the Spaniards had had time to hurry from the two nearest redoubts and to make a brave attack, while the arms were continually fired on the fleet from the St. George Battery. A terrible battle began to rage now in the part where they were piercing the dam and throwing the breastworks. The people of Seeland had formed a dense cordon around the pioneers, so that the enemy would not disturb their

work. In this din of battle, among the rain of hostile balls, between the dead and the dying, the pioneers continued the work, under the continual urging of the merchants, who waited patiently to see the dam pierced and their ships in safety. The importance of this result, which to a certain extent depended on their spades, seemed to fill these common laborers with heroic courage. Solely bent on the task of their hands, they saw not, did not hear death, which was surrounding them; and if the front rows fell the back rows would crowd forward. The driven down posts kept them back from their work, however; still more the attacks of the Spanish, who cut their way through the hostile crowd with desperate courage, pierced the pioneers in their pits, filled the openings which the living had dug again with the dead bodies. At last, however, when the most efficient were partly dead and partly wounded, and always fresh pioneers came in place of the dead, the courage failed these brave troops, and they considered it advisable to retire to their batteries. Now the Sceland-

ers and Antwerps saw themselves master of the whole dam, which stretched from St. George to Palisade Battery. Since it lasted too long to await the piercing of the dam, they unloaded in a hurry a Seeland provision ship, brought the load of the same over the dam and into an Antwerp ship, which the Count of Hohenlohe now brought to Antwerp in triumph. This view filled the distressed town at once with the gladdest hope, and as if the victory had been won they yielded up to a wild exultation. They rang all bells, shot all cannons, and the enraptured inhabitants ran impatiently to the Osterwell gate, in order to receive the provision ships which were supposed to be on the road. Really the luck of the besieged had never been so favorable as in this moment. The enemies had thrown themselves discouraged and exhausted in their batteries, and far from being able to contest the victorious ones the conquered posts, they saw themselves now besieged in their places of refuge. A company of Scotch, under the leadership of their brave leader Balfour, attacked St George Battery

which Camillo, of Monte, who hurried from St. Jacob's, did not relieve without a great loss of men. In a much worse condition was the Palisade Battery, which was shot at mainly from the ships, and which threatened every moment to fall in ruins. Camboa, who commanded it, was lying wounded in it, and unluckily it failed on artillery to keep the hostile ships in the distance. In addition to this, the rampart which the Seelanders had built and St. George Battery cut off all assistance from the Scheldt. If they (the Antwerps) had used this exhaustion and inactiveness of the enemy to continue with zeal and perseverance in the piercing of the dam, there is no doubt but that they would have opened a passage, and by it most likely the whole siege would have been ended. But here, also, was seen the want of obedience, which we must lay to the charge of Antwerp during this event. Soon they found it far too tedious and troublesome to dig through the dyke; they considered it to be better to unload the large provision ships into the smaller, which they were going to take to the town by rising

tide. St. Aldegonde and Hohenlohe instead to urge on the diligence of the workmen by their presence, left just at the deciding moment the scene of the action, in order to sail to the town with a provision ship, and receive praise on account of their wisdom and bravery.

CHAP. XXII.

Whilst they were fighting from the dam on both sides with obstinate heat, they had stormed the bridge of ships from Antwerp with new machines, in order to keep the attention of the Duke on this side. But the report of arms from the dyke told him soon what was happening there, and he hurried as soon as he saw the bridge free to relieve the dyke. Accompanied by 200 Spanish pickeneers he hurried to the place of attack, and appeared yet in time on the scene of fight to prevent the entire defeat of his troops. Quickly he flung two cannons, which he had brought along, in the two next redoubts, and made them (his troops) fire with force on the hostile ships from there. He placed himself at the head

of his soldiers with one hand on his sword and in the other the shield, he led them towards the enemy. The news of his arrival, which spread quickly from one end of the dam to the other, refreshed the fallen courage of his troops, and with new violence the contest raged now, which made the ground appear more death-like. Almost 5,000 men fought on the narrow ledge of the dam, which was at parts only nine feet wide ; on such a narrow space was concentrated the power of both parties, depended the result of the siege. With the Antwerps was at stake the last fore-wall of their city ; with the Spanish, the whole luck of their undertaking. Both parties fought with a despair which courage could only infuse. From both ends of the dam the tide of war moved towards the centre, where the Seelanders and Antwerps were the masters, and where their whole force was gathered. From Stabroek pressed on the Italians and Spanish, whom on this day a noble rivalry of bravery animated ; and from the Scheldt the Wallons and Spanish, their general leading them. Whilst those sought to free

the Palisade Battery, which the enemy attacked strongly by land and water, these forced their way, with a vehemence which carried everything before it, to the breastwork which the enemy had thrown up between St. George and the Palisade Battery. Here fought the best part of the Netherland soldiers, behind a well fortified rampart, and the arms of the fleet covered this important post. Already the Duke made preparation with his little troop to attack this terrible rampart, when news was brought to him that the Italians and Spaniards under Capizucchi and Aquila had assaulted the Palisade Battery, had become master of it, and were now also in advance on the hostile breastwork. The force of both armies came together before this last barricade, and both tried their best to conquer as well as defend this bastion. The Netherlands jumped on to the land out of their ships in order not to be mere idle spectators of the war. Alexander stormed the breastwork from the one side, Mansfield from the other; five attacks were made and five times they were beaten back. The Nether-

lands excelled themselves in this deciding moment; never during the whole war had they fought with such perseverance. Especially, however, was it the Scotch and English who, by their brave opposition, baffled the attempts of the enemy. Whilst there where the Scotch fought nobody wished to attack; the Duke threw himself up to his breast in water, with a spear in his hand, in order to show his own the way. At last, after a long fight, the Mansfields succeeded with halberds and pikes to make a hole in the rampart, and whilst the one stepped on the back of the other succeeded to climb the height of the rampart. Bartholemi Toralva, a Spanish General, was the first one who showed himself on the top, and almost at the same time the Italian Capizucchi showed himself at the rim of the breastwork, and so the rivalry of bravery for both nations was decided with the same honor. It is worthy of how the the Duke of Parma, whom they had made judge of this rivalry, used to treat the tender sense of honor of his soldiers. He embraced the Italian, Capizucchi, before

the eyes of his troops, and acknowledged loudly that it was the bravery of this officer especially whom he had to thank for the taking of the breastwork. The Spanish General, Toralva, who was fatally wounded, he let bring in his own camp at Stabroek, had his wounds dressed on his own bed, and covered him with the coat which he himself had worn the day before the combat.

CHAP. XX II.

After the taking of the breastworks the victory did not seem doubtful for any length of time. The Holland and Seeland troops who had jumped out of the ships in order to fight with the enemy, lost at once their courage when they looked around and saw the ships, which were their last refuge, push from shore. For the tide began to sink, and the leaders of the fleet, for fear of stranding on the shore with their heavy vessels, and in case of an unlucky issue of the war to become a prey to the enemy, drew back from the dam and sought to gain the high sea. Alexander hardly saw this

when he showed his troops the fleeing ships, and urged them to make an end with an enemy who had resigned himself. The Holland relief troops, who gave in, and soon the Seelands followed their example. They threw themselves quickly down the dam to reach the ships by wading or swimming, but since their flight was carried on too tumultuously, they hindered each other, and fell in heaps under the swords of the following victors. Even by the ships many found their grave, since everyone wished to get ahead of the other, and several vessels sank through the load of those who threw themselves in. The Antwerps, who fought for their freedom, their hearth, and their belief, were the last who drew back, but even this circumstance made their fate worse. Many of their ships were caught by the ebb and grounded, so that they were reached by the hostile cannons and destroyed, along with their soldiers. The other vessels, which had sailed off before them, the fleeing crowd sought to reach by swimming, but the rage and despair of the Spanish went so far that they, with the

sword between the teeth, swam after the enemy and fetched many out of the centre of the ships. The victory of the Spanish troops was complete, but bloody. Of the Spaniards some 800 had died, and of the Netherlands (not counting the drowned) some 1,000; and on both sides many of the nobles were lost. More than thirty ships, which were filled with provisions and destined for Antwerp, with 150 cannons and other military stores, fell in the hands of the victorious. The dam, whose possession had been paid for so dearly, was pierced in thirteen different places, and the dead bodies of those who had put it in this state were now used to close up those openings. The next day there fell into the hands of the royal a vessel of enormous size and peculiar construction, which represented a swimming fortress, and was to have been used against the Cowenstein fortress. The Antwerps had built the same with immense pomp, at the same time when they refused the wholesome proposals of the engineer Gianibelli, on account of the large expense, and gave this ridiculous monstrum

the proud name of "End of the War," which it exchanged afterwards with the more suitable one "Lost Money." When they launched this ship it turned out, as every sensible one had said before, that it could not possibly be steered on account of its size, and could hardly float on the highest tide. With large trouble it was dragged to Ordam, where it, left by the tide, was stranded, and became a victim of the enemy's.

The undertaking of the Cowenstein dyke was the last attempt which they risked for the succor of Antwerp. From this time courage failed the besieged, and the magistrate of the city troubled himself in vain to console the common populace, which felt the pressure of the presence. Up to now the supply of bread was maintained at a tolerable price, although the quality became always worse by and by the provision of grain diminished so much that a famine was near. But they hoped to hold the town so long at least till they would gather in the grain between the town and outer batteries, which stood in ears; but before it happened the enemy

had taken the last works of the town, and taken the whole harvest for themselves. At last, also, the neighboring and confederate town of Mecheln fell into the enemy's power, and with it disappeared the last hope to get provisions out of Brabant. Since they did not see the possibility to increase the provisions, nothing remained but have less eaters. All useless people, all strange people, yes, even women and children, should be brought out of the town; but this proposal was too much against humanity that it could have been carried out. Another proposal to chase the Catholic inhabitants, angered these so that it almost came to rebellion. And thus Aldegonde saw himself obliged to give in to the stormy impatience of the people, and the 17th of August, 1585, treated with the Duke of Parma on account of the surrender of the town.

FINIS.





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