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dissension between them and the Prince of Orange, as in their union consists their safety.—Blois, 27 Nov. 1576.
Copy. Endd. Fr. P. 1.

Nov. 27. 1033. The DUKE OF ALENÇON to the CITIZENS of BRUSSELS.

Assures them of his willingness to assist them in expelling the Spaniards, and of his readiness to employ all the means in his power for that purpose, and desires them to credit the bearer, M. Beauvais.—Blois, 27 Nov. 1576. *Signed.*
Copy. Endd. Fr. P. 1.

Nov. 30. 1034. The PRINCE OF ORANGE to the ESTATES of FLANDERS.

1. They may perceive by two former writings, which he has sent to them, what his opinion is touching the negotiations with Don John, and as they might imagine that it proceeded from some private interest, he calls God to witness that his only object is to see the country governed by the States General, consisting of the three estates of the clergy, nobles, and towns, under the lawful obedience of their natural Prince. They should, therefore, in their assembly, take steps for the restitution of their legitimate authority, according to their ancient privileges, thereby putting a stop to all inconveniences, oppressions, and tyrannies, and restoring the country to peace and tranquillity, as they have already commenced, whereby his Majesty may perceive that the assembly of the States, which they have always humbly desired, is the sole means to re-establish affairs. Seeing, however, that they are lending their ears to the fine words and proposals of Don John, he cannot conceal his fear lest they should fall into the designs of their sworn enemies the Spaniards, who have always laboured to prevent the assembly of the States General.

2. Those lords and councillors of the Low Countries whom Don John has been recommended to take into his council will only serve for a colour to his actions, as all his determinations will be taken after consultation with some of his favourites, as was always done by the Duchess of Parma. If his instructions and demands are carefully examined, it will be seen that his intention is to assume the sovereign government, and utterly extinguish them and their authority; cannot, therefore, forbear from warning them to be careful how they proceed in this negotiation, considering how they hold the lives and liberties of so many of their fellow countrymen in their hands. Doubts not but that they will have many allurements offered to desist from this sacred enterprise, but the more they resist, the greater will be the honour due to them, and the obligation of posterity to their memory. His advice, therefore, is that they should not enter into any negotiations with Don John until all the Spaniards and other foreigners are withdrawn, and they have distinctly declared

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their opposition to the former government; and that they will not suffer any forces to be levied from those over whom they have power, for this would be to put a knife in his hands to cut their own throats. This advice agrees entirely with their ancient privileges, as he proves by quoting examples, and therefore they need not use long discussions in treating with Don John, which may prove their ruin, and all they need do is to send a list of their complaints and a copy of their privileges and require him to govern the country according to them, and in case of refusal, to protest that they are not to be accounted rebels if they endeavour to maintain their rights with all their power. By speaking thus openly they will the sooner obtain a decided answer, which will be more profitable than by protracting discussion without providing for their affairs and giving him time to set his own in order. This plain manner of speaking was the sole cause that induced the King formerly to promise to withdraw the Spaniards. In addition, it is to be considered that he who comes as Governor comes armed, and wishes to have the assurance of the States in the first instance, which is against the custom of princes who have always come unarmed and given their oath to the States before taking theirs. Besides, they ought to consider what will be their reputation with other nations if they are seen to be so ready to satisfy Don John, looking at the violence perpetrated on those of Maestricht and on Antwerp, formerly so powerful and flourishing, but now the most desolate town in Christendom, and that by those who wish to be considered subjects of the country equally with those who are native born. Besides, what an example this will be to all the other towns who will have cause to blame them for not demolishing the citadels, from whose building have proceeded most of their calamities. They are not to imagine that the King will hold for a slight offence the expulsion of his Spanish soldiers from the said citadels, for princes only forget such things whilst they lack the means of vengeance, dissimulating in the meanwhile until they find their opportunity, as is shown by the recent example of the slaughter of Counts Egmont and Horn, and many other gentlemen and good citizens, notwithstanding the fine words given to them, and there is scarcely any doubt but that the same fate menaces themselves.

3. It is a trick which nature herself teaches those who cannot attain their ends by force to endeavour to do so by cunning, as little children pipe to birds in order to catch them, whilst even the brute beasts use stratagems to capture their prey; in like manner the Spaniards will spare no manner of subtlety to cause them to fall into their nets. Any person of discernment must know how heart-breaking it must be to a prince wishing to rule absolutely to see his commands without authority, and his impotency towards his subjects exposed to all the world, and that his thoughts day and night will be turned towards the recovery of his

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power, for it is in the nature of sovereign power not to suffer any contradiction. Any promise to withdraw the Spaniards will be as little kept as that of the King, who at his departure said they should retire within three months, and yet they stayed about a year and a half, and would never have gone had it not been for the overthrow at Gerbes. In conclusion, he prays them to understand that this matter is no play, but that they have irritated to the last extremity a mighty enemy, and that there is no middle course in this business, but that they must either surrender or else heroically use those means that God has given them for their preservation. If by necessity Don John goes so far as to agree to the withdrawal of the Spaniards and the recognition of their privileges, they must insist in addition that the States should provide his council both of state and finance, and to have liberty assemble two or three times in the course of the year to advise on the administration of affairs, and take such order therein as may seem convenient; also that all the citadels shall be demolished, and no troops raised without the consent of the States General, who should also have the placing of all the garrisons. If they negotiate on any other terms than these, in hopes of pleasing Don John and restoring tranquillity to the country, he fears that they will be deceived, and fall into greater division than ever, for there are many who will never trust the promises of the King or Don John. Esteems this matter of such great weight and consequence that he writes again to them more at large his opinion, which he hopes they will take in good part, as that of one who will risk everything he has, to the last drop of his blood for the safety and repose of their common country.—Middleburg, 30 Nov. 1576. *Signed.*

Copy. Endd. by Burghley. Fr. Pp. 54.

[Nov.] 1035. INSTRUCTIONS for DR. WILSON.

Understanding of the coming of Don John to Louvain, her Majesty directs Dr. Wilson to repair thither to congratulate the peace, exhorting him to have a care to continue the same as a matter most profitable for the King and honourable for himself. Nevertheless beholding his actions at his first entrance into the government of those countries, she finds small occasion of joy and as little reason of congratulation. She complains of the entertaining of her rebels contrary to ancient treaties, and the excluding of her servant Horsey from the treaty of the peace at Hove to her great dishonour, when the ministers of other princes of less quality were admitted. If a just account were made of the friendly offices performed by her for the preservation of the Low Countries under the King's subjection it may seem to the world that he has (as it were) held them at her hands, and if he go on to recompense her with such an unfriendly and strange manner of proceedings she may justly be moved to take some other way of counsel. After these compliments