

A.D. 1577.

his good direction; letting them understand that all who oppose him (though they may pretend religion), are to be held suspected persons.

You shall seek to inform yourself what forts and towns Don John has, what are his and the States' forces, what noblemen join him and them, and who are neutral.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pp. [*Holl. and Fland. II. 3.*]

Aug. 2. 73. *Draft of the above with corrections by Walsingham. Endd.*  
 $4\frac{1}{4}$  pp. [*Ibid. II. 4.*]

Aug. 2. 74. LETTER of the PRINCE OF ORANGE to the ESTATES since the last Troubles of the Year 1577.

Having heard that upon the advertisements which I sent you lately by M. de Sainte-Aidegonde, Don John had accused me to you of divers infractions of the peace, even as though upon my advice his life had been attempted, covering under this protest his seizure of the Castle of Namur, and seeking to persuade you that you ought to make common cause with him and declare war upon me and those of Holland and Zealand, I have thought good to send to you M. Jacques Tatin, formerly Receiver-general of Cassel, that, in conjunction with the said M. de Sainte-Aidegonde, he may on my behalf pray you to be mindful of the strict and solemn obligation by which we are respectively bound to maintain in all its points the pacification made at Ghent; and not to allow yourselves to be carried away by feigned protests by which they seek to lead you astray from the sole means of restoring our country to its ancient repose and true prosperity. For I think there is none of you, who, if he will truly balance all my actions, and consider on what foot I have always walked, and confront it with the behaviour of Don John, may not easily perceive that all my happiness, both as regards myself and my country, lies in a peaceable enjoyment of union, repose, and tranquillity, with that lawful restoration of our rights and liberties to which all good patriots aspire. Similarly all my thoughts and labours aim only at this, as may be seen in all I say or do. On the other hand, the whole greatness of his Highness lies in waging war and in gaining credit by arms, as he has himself always avowed, abhorring nothing so much as the idleness and repose of this government. Thus all his proceedings both before and since the pacification of Marche-en-Famine, within the country, as towards other princes and peoples of Christendom, testify clearly that he has never aimed at anything save to entangle us and our neighbours of England and Scotland in new storms of civil war, as may be seen from his letters, his threats, and all his actions. Thus it ought to be clear to each of you that the accusations brought by him against me are only colours borrowed to hide his desire of war, and gradually to rekindle the appetite of vengeance which he has conceived not only against me and those of this country, but especially against you, Sirs, by whom he thinks he has been even more unworthily treated than by me, in order to ruin us all together, and, as Escovedo says, to get the better of all by chastising one through the means of the other. To this effect he has, as those same letters of Escovedo show, since his arrival tried in every way to hatch the fire of individual

A.D. 1577.

pretensions by artificially stimulated jealousies, as in regard to the change of Governments in Artois, Tournay, the Castle of Antwerp, and elsewhere, as well as in Holland and Zealand. And now, pouring upon me the rest of his anger, under the cloak of the Catholic religion and the obedience due to the King, he hopes to separate you from us, and procure your and our general ruin.

For this reason, Sirs, I pray and exhort you most seriously to take heed to yourselves, and form a settled judgement on matters of such importance; so that when you have examined all closely, and understood in what fashion I have always comported myself on the matters whereof I am accused,—as M.M. Tatin and Sainte-Aldegonde will set forth to you,—and have compared them with the behaviour of his Highness, and seen the truth, you may finally take a firm and virtuous resolution, suitable to the rank which you hold and to your obligation towards the whole body of the people, of whom you have been chosen by God and man to be the chiefs and protectors; to wit, to lay aside all that may dazzle your eyes or hinder a right judgement, and manfully to maintain by all means the safety of yourselves, your wives, children, goods, liberties, and rights, taking heed that this poor people that looks to you do not perish nor fall a prey to those who would make themselves great at your cost, under a yoke of miserable servitude. Let not our posterity lament that by our cowardice it has lost the rights which our ancestors so well acquired and bequeathed, and has been brought under the tyranny of strangers.

*Copy. Fr. 4 pp. [Holl. and Fland. II. 5.]*

Aug. 2. 75. Another copy of the same.

*Fr. 3½ pp. Endd. as at the head of the last. [Ibid. II. 6.]*

Aug. 3. 76. THE VISCOUNT OF GHENT to the QUEEN.  
K. d. L. ix.  
446.

I have not been able to communicate with your Majesty on the matter you wrote of, owing to the sudden change which soon after my return I found here, Don John with certain lords and gentlemen having separated from the Estates. He has set secret intelligences in several places in Brabant, under the false plea of his personal safety, among others in the citadel of Antwerp, where M. de Treslong has gone so far as to corrupt the Duke of Aerschot's company, thinking to admit the Germans, and thus get the command of the two other companies, belonging to my regiment, which were in the place. They were however virtuous enough to make themselves masters of the place yesterday, taking Treslong prisoner, and cutting the rest to pieces. The Germans have left the town. Your Majesty may imagine how much these tidings have rejoiced the poor people, and especially the merchants. We do not know what Don John will think of it. However, there is quite enough to water his wine for him, and check his designs. The Estates have sent to ask if he will join them again. If he does not, I see, to my great regret, that things are ready for a cruel war, from which may God preserve us.—Brussels, 3 Aug. 1577.

*Copy. Endd. Fr. 1 p. [Ibid. II. 7.]*