

A.D. 1578.

embassy of the Marquis of Havrech, who has returned with some good satisfaction. But I fear the rooted disease of this state will not be cured with any easy medicines.

The States General have by a new contract entertained the ambitious hope of Alençon to become prince of these countries, if within 3 or 4 months they cannot compound with the king. What ever their pretence be, the success I fear will be dangerous for the union of the country. You see the broken state and condition of things here, where I hope no betterment, if fear or compassion do not move the king to peace.—Antwerp, 15 Dec. 1578.

Draft. Endd. 1 p. [Holl. and Fl. X. 78.]

Dec. 15. **446.** The PRINCE OF ORANGE to DAVISON.

Though I had many reasons for writing to thank you as well for the good advertisements you have given me as for the copies of the intercepted letters, which have been of much use to me in verifying what I had heard by another channel, namely the close intelligence that was growing between them of Artois and the Spaniards, I have nevertheless put it off till now. The cause of the delay was my desire to see what would be the issue of my coming to this town, and whether *Messieurs de Gand* would have any wish to let themselves be persuaded to reason and led to what is necessary for them; besides such hope as I might have for the future as regards the regulation of affairs both in this town and in the whole county of Flanders. Now, thank God, I see that whatever changes have taken place here the goodwill of the burghers of Ghent towards me is in no way diminished. As regards the three Members in general, having well weighed everything by their "*collaces*" they have unanimously resolved to comply with the demand of the States on the three points. I know that what you did to prepare the way has been of such service to us in this matter that nothing has done so much to soften the hearts of those who were otherwise difficult to handle. I feel that the whole country is obliged to you and myself in particular, as the Estates chose that I should undertake this journey. To tell you now what will ensue is out of my power, for God alone knows it; but if I can foresee anything I hope that the end will be good for this country. The three Members of this town and the Aldermen of both benches have deputed certain of their number to communicate with us touching the execution of the agreement. I find them in such disposition as to make me hope that the difficulties will not be insuperable. Similarly the four members of Flanders being here, I hope by their means to take order for this whole county, and put affairs in a better way than hitherto.—Ghent, 15 Dec. 1578.

P.S.—I return the copies of the letters sent me. (*Signed*) Guille de Nassau.

Add. Fr. 1 p. [Holl. and Fl. X. 79.]

Dec. 15. **447.** ADVICES from BRUGES [by T. STOKES].

The Viscount of Ghent came to the meeting of the States of Artois at Arras, unlooked-for by M. de Capres and the rest of that