would at leaſt give him leave to write in his favour to the two great miniſters, Clarendon then lord chancellor, and the earl of Arlington, who was ſecretary of ſtate. This the duke did in ſuch ſtrong terms, as procured him the friendſhip of theſe two noblemen, as well as the good opi­nion of the king. Mr Temple, however, made no other uſe of this advantage than to tell lord Arlington, that if his majeſty had any employment abroad, which he was fit for, he ſhould be happy to undertake it ; but, at the ſame time, he requested that he might not be ſent into any of the northern climates, to which he had a very great averſion. Lord Ar­lington replied, he was very ſorry he had made ſuch an ob­jection, as there was no other employment then undispoſed of except that of going envoy to Sweden. However, in 1665, about the beginning of the firſt Dutch war, lord Ar­lington ſent a messenger to acquaint him that he muſt im­mediately come to his houſe; which he did, and found that his lordſhip's buſiness was to tell him, that the king had oc­caſion to send ſome perſon abroad upon an affair of the utmoſt importance, and that he had resolved to make him the firſt offer ; but that he muſt know, without delay, and with­out telling him what it was, whether he would accept of it, and that he muſt be ready to ſet out in two or three days, with­out mentioning it to any of his friends. After a little conſideration, Mr Temple told his lordſhip, that, as he took him to be his friend, and as he had adviſed him not to refuſe, as it would be an entrance into his majeſty’s ſervice, he ſhould con­sult no farther. This buſineſs was to carry a ſecret commiſſion to the biſhop of Munſter; which he ſet out with on the ſecond of Auguſt, and executed ſo much to the satisfaction of Charles II. that, on his return to Brussels, his majeſty ap­pointed him reſident there, and created him a baronet. As Brussels was a place which he had long wiſhed to reſide at, in April 1666 he ſent for his family ; but, before their ar­rival, he had been again obliged to depart upon buſineſs to the prelate’s court : for the biſhop having liſtened to terms of accommodation with France, Sir William wrote two let­ters to dissuade him from that alliance; and theſe not having the desired effect, he went in disguiſe to Munſter, where, though he arrived too late to ſecure the prince in his firſt engagement, yet he prevailed on him to permit five or six thousand of his beſt troops to enter into the Spaniſh ſervice. In this journey he paſſed for a Spaniſh envoy, having twenty Spaniſh guards to attend him. In this manner he firſt went to Dusseldorp, where the duke of Newburgh, though in the French intereſt, gave him a guard to Dortmund ; but when he reached that place, finding the gates ſhut, he was forced to proceed to a village, at the diſtance of a league, which, being full of Brandenburg troops, he was under the necessity of lodging in a barn, upon a ſtraw bed, with his page for a pillow. Next day he was entertained at a caſtle belonging to the biſhop of Munſter, by one Gorges a Scotch lieutenant-general in that prelate’s ſervice, with what he calls a very epiſcopal way of drinking. The general coming to the large hall, in which stood a great many flaggons ready charged, he called for wine to drink the king’s health. A ſilver bell, that might hold about two quarts, was upon this brought him ; and, as ſoon as he received it, he pulled out the clapper, and giving it to Sir William, to whom he intended to drink, ordered the bell to be filled. When this was done, he drank off the contents to his majeſty’s health ; and aſking Sir William for the clapper put it on, and turning down the bell, rang it, to ſhew that he had drank fair, and left nothing in it. He then took out the clapper, deſired Sir William to give it to whomsoever he pleaſed ; and, ordering the bell to be filled again, preſented it to Sir William ; but as the latter ſeldom uſed to drink, he had generally ſome gentleman with him to ſupply his place in this reſpect whenever it might be neceſſary. Ha­ving finiſhed his buſineſs at Munſter, he returned to Brussels, where he paſſed a year with great pleasure and ſatisfaction.

Two months after the concluſion of the peace with the Dutch at Breda, Sir William’s sister, who resided with him at Brussels, being very deſirous of ſeeing Holland, he went thither incognito to gratify her desire : but while he was at the Hague, he paid a private visit to Mr De Witt, in which he laid the foundation of that cloſe intimacy which afterwards ſubſiſted between them.

In the ſpring of 1667, a new war breaking out between France and Spain, which expoſed Brussels to the danger of falling into the hands of the former, Sir William ſent his lady and family to England ; but he himſelf remained there with his sister till the Chriſtmas following, when he was or­dered by the king to come over privately to London. Ta­king the Hague in his way, he paid another visit to De Witt, and, purſuant to his inſtructions, propoſed thoſe over­tures to him which produced the triple alliance. Soon after his arrival at the Britiſh court, he returned, on the 16th of January 1668, with the character of envoy extraordi­nary and plenipotentiary to Holland ; where a conference being opened, he brought that treaty to a perfect concluſion in the ſhort ſpace of five days. The ratifications of this al­liance being exchanged on the 15th of February, he re­paired to Brussels ; and a treaty being ſet on loot between France and Spain at Aix-la-Chapelle, he ſet out for that place on the 24th of April in quality of his majeſty’s ambaſſador extraordinary and mediator. Here he arrived on the 27th : and it was chiefly owing to his aſſiſtance that the Spaniards were brought to sign the articles of that peace on the ſecond of May. This ſervice being completed, he re­turned to Brussels, with a view of remaining there in his former ſtation of reſident ; but he received letters from the earl of Arlington, with the king’s order to continue as ambaſſador, and to ſerve his country in that quality in Hol­land, as, on account of the late alliances, his majeſty was reſolved to renew a character which the crown of England had diſcontinued there ſince the time of king James. Sir William being now left at liberty to return to England, em­braced the opportunity ; and upon his arrival at London, he was received with every poſſible demonſtration of favour both by the king and the court.

Setting out again for Holland, with his new character of the king’s ambassador, he arrived at the Hague in the end of Auguſt 1668. Here he enjoyed the confidence of that great miniſter DeWitt, and lived in great intimacy with the prince of Orange, who was then only eighteen years of age ; but, in September 1669, he was hurried back to Eng­land by lord Arlington, who ordered him to put his foot in the ſtirrup as ſoon as he ſhould receive his letter. When Sir William waited on the earl, he found that he had not one word to ſay to him ; for, after making him attend a long time, he only aſked him a few indifferent questions reſpecting his journey. Next day he was received as coolly by the king ; but the ſecret ſoon came out, and he was pressed to return to the Hague, and pave the way for a war with Hol­land. This, however, he excuſed himſelf from having any hand in ; which ſo much provoked the lord treaſurer Clif­ford, that he refuſed to pay him an arrear of two thouſand pounds due from his embassy. Diſguſted with Arlington’s behaviour, which was so unlike the friendſhip he had former­ly professed, Sir William now retired to his houſe at Sheen near Richmond, in Surry ; and in this retreat, when free from the hurry of buſineſs, he wrote his Obſervations on the United Provinces, and one part of his Miſcellanies, in the