thren, and the very limited powers of their biſhops ; and have to add, that, in their opinion, epiſcopal conſecration does not confer any power to preſide over one or more con­gregations ; and that a biſhop can diſcharge no office but by the appointment of a ſynod, or of the Elder’s confe­rence at the Unity. Preſbyters among them can perform every function of the biſhop except ordination ; for if we underſtand the manuſcript before us, he confirms by the laying on of hands young persons when they firſt become candidates for the communion. Deacons are aſſiſtants to the preſbyters much in the same way as in the church of England ; and in the Brethren’s churches deaconesses are re­tained, for the purpoſe of privately admoniſhing their own ſex, and viſiting them in their ſickneſs: but though they are solemnly bleſſed to this office, they are not permitted to teach in public, and far less to adminiſter the ſacraments. They have likewiſe *ſeniores civiles,* or lay-elders, in contradiſtinction to ſpiritual elders or biſhops, who are appointed to watch over the conſtitution and discipline of the Unity of the Brethren ; over the obſervance of the laws of the country in which congregations or miſſions are eſtabliſhed ; and over the privileges granted to the Brethren by the governments under which they live. They do not conſider a regular courſe of literary education as at all necessary to qualify perſons for admiſſion into orders, provided they posseſs a thorough knowledge of the word of God, what they call *ſolid Christian experience,* and a well regulated zeal to serve God and their neighbours.

We have mentioned elſewhere (Herrnhut) their daily meetings in church for worſhip and edification. On Sun­day, beſides the public prayers, which are either read from a liturgy or pronounced extempore by the miniſter, one or two sermons are preached in every church or chapel ; and after the morning ſervice an exhortation is given to the children. Previous to the holy communion, which is adminiſtered on some Sunday once a month, and likewiſe on *Maunday Thurſday,* each perſon who intends to commu­nicate converſes with one of the elders on the ſtate of his soul, expreſſing his deſire to partake of the ſacrament. The celebration of the communion is generally preceded by a *love-feast,* which is alſo kept on other ſolemn occaſions. On Maunday Thursday, before communion, the Brethren have **a** ſolemn f*oot-waſhing ;* and at this, and we ſuppoſe at other times, they greet one another with *the kiss of charity.* Theſe ceremonies they conſider as religious rites, authoriſed thro’ all ages of the church by our Saviour himself and his two apoſtles St Peter and St Paul@@\*.

Our limits will not permit us to give a ſyſtematic view of the doctrinal tenets of the Brethren. Though they ac­knowledge no other ſtandard of truth than the ſacred Scrip­tures, they adhere to the Augſburg Confeſſion, and ſpeak reſpectfully of the 39 articles of the church of England. They profeſs to believe that the kingdom of Chriſt is not confined to any particular party, community, or church ; and they conſider themſelves, though united in one body or visible church, as ſpiritually joined in the bond of Chriſtian love to all who are taught of God, and belong to the univerſal church of Chriſt, however much they may differ in forms, which they deem non-essentials. But the reader who wiſhes to have a fuller account of this ſociety of Chriſtians, we muſt refer to *Cranz's Ancient and Modern History of the Proteſtant Church of the United Brethren,* printed in Lon­don, 1780 ; and to a work entitled *An Exposition of Christian Doctrine as taught in the Protestant Church of the United Brethren,* London, 1784.

UNITED Provinces, or *United Netherlands,* otherwiſe called the *Republic of Holland,* conſiſt of the seven, pro­vinces of Holland, Zealand, Frieſland, Groningen, Overyssel, Zutphen, and Utrecht. They are bounded on the weſt by the German Ocean ; on the eaſt by the circle of Weſtphalia ; and on the ſouth by Flanders, Brabant, and the duchy of Cleves. They compose the greateſt part of the ancient Batavia, whoſe inhabitants were formerly ſo much renowned for their valour. Under the Romans they were exempt from impoſts and taxes, in conſequence of bearing the honourable title of *Allies of the Republic.*

The Netherlands came into the posseſſion of the houſe of Auſtria by the marriage of Mary of Burgundy with the emperor Maximilian : but on that prince’s reſigning the im­perial crown, the 17 provinces of the Netherlands devolved of right on Don John of Spain ; but he and his successorPhilip le Beau dying in a ſhort time after, they, in 1505, fell under the dominion of Charles V. at that time a mi­nor.

At this period the ſeven provinces, which now compoſe the Republic of Holland, enjoyed a kind oſ independence ; but the policy and warlike diſpoſition of Charles ſoon re­duced them to obedience. When he reſigned the ſceptre to his ſon Philip, the Low Countries were in a most flouriſhing condition. In this, ſmall tract of country were reckoned no fewer than 350 large cities incloſed with walls, and 6300 conſiderable towns, all become rich by their application to the arts and to commerce. At the same time, the love of liberty was very prevalent among the inhabi­tants, and they were jealous of every invaſion of their rights and privileges. The arbitrary government of Philip was therefore very diſagreeable to his ſubjects in the Low Coun­tries, and the partiality ſhown on all occaſions to the Spani­ards ſoon loſt their affections altogether,

The extreme ſuperſtition, however, and cruel bigotry of Philip, proved the greateſt ſource of diſcontent. The doctrines of the reformers had been preached and received withavidity in the Low Countries. A cruel perſecution of the reformed had been commenced by Charles V. insomuch that he is ſaid to have deſtroyed no fewer than 100,000 perſons on account of religion. This cruelty had no effect except to increaſe the number of heretics ; which being obſerved by Mary queen of Hungary, ſiſter to the emperor, ſhe in­vited him to the Low Countries, that he might perſonally behold the bad effects of his cruelty. On this the empe­ror granted a toleration, but Philip was altogether infle­xible. In order to proceed more effectually againſt the re­formed, a court of inquiſition was inſtituted ; and under pretence that the three biſhoprics, which at that time com­prehended the whole country, were too large, 17 of theſe dignitaries were erected, three with the title of archbiſhops. To afford ſufficient revenues for theſe, it became necessary to ſuppreſs ſeveral abbeys, which of itſelf produced great diſcontent. But what gave the finiſhing ſtroke to the whole was, Philip’s announcing his intention of reſiding conſtantly in Spain; his appointing the ducheſs of Parma, his na­tural ſiſter, to be regent of the Netherlands ; and giving her for a counſellor cardinal Granvele, a bloody perſecutor of the reformed ; at the ſame time that the provinces were oppreſſed by the violences of foreign troops, for the payment of whom they were alſo oppressed by taxes. Three coun­cils were eſtabliſhed at Brussels ; one to preſide over the laws and courts of juſtice ; a ſecond to direct every thing respecting peace or war ; and the third to manage the revenues : but ſtill the ducheſs of Parma was ordered to conſult Granvele in every matter, and make him at all times her chief con­fidant.

The ducheſs took upon her the government of the Low Countries in the year 1560 ; and was no ſooner arrived at Bruſſels, than complaints poured in from all quarters againſt the inquisition, cardinal Granvele, and the new biſhoprics.

@@@[m]\* John xiii. 14. 1 Peter v. 14. Rom. xvi. 16.