if old, be fortified at the expence of the provinces ; if new, at the joint expence of the union. The public imposts and duties ſhall be farmed for three months to the higheſt bidder, and employed with the king’s taxes in the public ſervice. No province, city, or member of the union, ſhall contract an alliance with any foreign prince or power, without the concurrence of all the other members. Foreign powers ſhall be admitted into the alliance, only by conſent of all the con­tracting parties. As to religion, the provinces of Holland and Zealand ſhall act in that particular as they think adviſable ; the reſt ſhall adhere to the purport of the edict publiſhed by the archduke Matthias, which preſcribed that no man ſhould be oppressed on the account of conſcience. All the inhabitants, from the age of 18 to 60, ſhall be trained and diſciplined to war. Peace and war ſhall be declared by the unanimous voice of all the provinces, other matters that con­cern the internal policy ſhall be regulated by a majority. The ſtates ſhall be held in the uſual conſtitutional manner, and coinage ſhall be deferred to future determination. Fi­nally, the parties agree, that the interpretation of theſe arti­cles ſhall remain in the States-general ; but in case of their failing to decide, in the stadtholder.

This alliance was ſo univerſally approved, that in a ſhort time the cities of Ghent, Nimeguen, Arnheim, Leewarden, Venlo, Ypres, Antwerp, Breda, Bruges, with ſeveral other towns, besides a great number of noblemen and perſons of diſtinction, embraced and ſigned the union. Thus the foun­dation of a commonwealth was laid, but in a fluctuating and uncertain ſtate of affairs, when men were actuated by dif­ferent paſſions, views, and intereſts ; intimidated by the great ſtrength of the Spaniſh monarchy, and ſupported chiefly by a zealous adherence to liberty, and firm reſolution to periſh in defence of freedom. The firſt coin ſtruck after this alliance is expreſſive of the ſituation of the infant repu­blic. Here was represented a ſhip labouring amidſt the waves, unaſſiſted by sails or oars, with this motto, *Incertum quo fata ſerant.*

It was expected, that the important object of this alliance would have attracted the attention of the Walloons, and in­deed of all the Catholic inhabitants of the Netherlands : it in fact did ſo, but in a different manner from what was ima­gined. The Walloons not only refuſed to accede to the union, but they made the ſtrongeſt remcnſtrances to the States- general upon the danger, impropriety and illegality of ſuch a confederacy. It appears from Strada and Bentivoglio, that the duke of Parma was at the bottom of their intrigues. He ſtimulated and prompted their meaſures, inſpiring them with a jealouſy of the Proteſtant deſigns on the Catholic re­ligion. In the end, he contracted an alliance with them ; and thereby confirmed by his own example the legality and neceſſity of the union of Utrecht. Immediately they began levying an army ; but ſtill kept up appearances with the confederated provinces, though it was obvious that hoſtilities muſt ſoon commence. To prevent the effuſion of blood, the emperor, as mediator, ſet on foot another negociation ; but Philip would allow no reaſonable terms of accommoda­tion, and give no ſecurity for liberty of religion. Inſtead of granting equitable conditions, he laboured to detach the prince of Orange from the union ; made him extraordinary propoſals ; offered to reſtore him to all his eſtates, indemnify his loſſes, raiſe him to the height of power, and give him the firſt place in his eſteem and favour. But William was too wiſe to rely on the promiſes of a king who had ſhown himſelf perfidious. He determined to ſhare the fate of the United Provinces, to fulfil his engagements, and the hope conceived of his conduct.

While the prince of Orange was buſied in conciliating factions, forming alliances, and ſtrengthening the union, the duke of Parma was taking meaſures to disconcert his projects, and reduce the provinces to the king’s obedience. He diſpatched Gonzaga and Mondragon with 8000 men to lay siege to Marſien. The town was taken by assault ; the governor hanged; and 47 of the chief inhabitants were tortured to death, for having valiantly defended themſelves, and faithfully discharged their duty. It is ſaid the duke of Parma diſavowed this bloody proceeding, ſo inconſiſtent with the character of a hero. After ſome farther inconſiderable advantages obtained in the neighbourhood of Ruremonde, the king’s army inſulted Antwerp, where the archduke and the prince of Orange then reſided. The States army was intrenched near Borgerhont, a poſt attacked with­out ſucceſs by the duke of Parma, after a briſk ſkirmiſhing of two hours between the armies La Noue, how­ever, the general of the ſtates army, not chooſing to expose himſelf to continual alarms from the enemy’s cavalry, reti­red under the cannon of Antwerp.

On La Noue’s retreat, the duke of Parma inveſted Maeſtricht. The siege began on the 8th of March, and conti­nued without remiſſion to the 29th of June. This defence was deemed very extraordinary, as the fortifications were inbad order, the garriſon ſlender, and the place but poorly provided with the necessaries of a siege. One Sebaſtian Tappin, an engineer by profeſſion, a Proteſtant, and a brave and alert ſoldier, by his indefatigable vigilance raised conti­nual obſtructions to the duke’s approaches. The garriſon had ſuſtained frequent assaults, and made divers bloody ſallies, by which they were ſo much fatigued, that during a parley the town was ſurpriſed and a great many ſoldiers were put to the ſword ; but Tappin was ſaved by favour of the duke of Parma, who gave ſtrict orders that he ſhould have quarter. For three days Maeſtricht was a ſcene of the utmoſt deſolation and horror, the Spaniſh ſoldiers committing every exceſs and enormity, in deſpite of all the endeavours of the general to reſtrain their licentiousneſs, and maintain diſcipline. With ſuch diligence did the duke apply himſelf to this siege, that, unable to ſupport the fatigue, he was ſeized with a fever, which had near proved fatal. His ſitua­tion inſpired the enemy with freſh courage. They ventured to appear in the field; reduced Aloft, and ſome other places of little conſequence ; but could not prevent the loſs of Menin taken by assault, though it was ſoon after retaken by the prince of Orange. In Brabant the ſtates likewiſe ob­tained ſome advantages, though of too unimportant a nature to merit attention. The truth is, all the United Provinces were in a deplorable ſituation ; and their trifling ſuccesses were owing entirely to accident, or the duke of Parma’s illneſs. Several provinces contributed nothing to the common cauſe ; others furniſhed but a ſmall proportion of the taxes agreed upon at the union. The army had large arrears due, and lived at diſcretion ; in a manner more oppreſſive to the people than taxes to the amount of their regular pay. The people clamoured againſt the ſtates ; they threw the blame on the officers for relaxing in the point of diſcipline ; and the officers recriminated, alleging, that the fault was in the ſtates, who failed in performing their engagements to the army. All was in confuſion ; but as no perſon would ac­knowledge his error, there appeared little hopes or amend­ment. In a word, nothing besides the ſame diſtreſs in the Spaniſh army could have prevented the duke of Parma from reducing the revolted provinces to accept any terms he ſhould think fit to preſcribe. He was equally in want of money ; and his late treaty with the Walloons required that he ſhould diſmiſs all his foreign troops in the ſpace of six weeks after the publication of the treaty. His ſituation indeed was ſo deplorable, that he requested leave to reſign his command, and retire with the foreign ſoldiers to Italy: ;