DUKE CHARLES OF BURGUNDY AND
THE LOW COUNTRIES: 1467-1477

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

Chairman: Professor H. Mitchell.

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Examiners:
This thesis investigates the position of Duke Charles of Burgundy in the Low Countries. The heart of this thesis is found in the three chapters dealing with the life and work of Duke Charles and his significance for the Low Countries. His role in the political and economic spheres cannot be subordinated to the Franco-Burgundian conflict which came to the foreground during his lifetime. Charles' attitude towards the economy and the position of the towns and counties was based on the needs and interests of the Low Countries.

To understand the attitude of Duke Charles, the preliminary chapters give a brief analysis of the available historiography and of the heritage of Duke Charles. The succeeding chapters deal with the various aspects of his reign in an attempt to assess his position in the Low Countries and in Europe. Duke Charles' attitude towards the towns and institutions are also examined to illustrate his activity as a state-builder. These two chapters reveal that Duke Charles was consistent in his aims and that his activity was beneficial for the Low Countries.

The conclusion of this thesis is that the traditional view of Duke Charles must be modified. It becomes quite clear that he was not a destructive force in the political development of the Low Countries but that he brought into focus the needs of the 'state'. Charles provided political stability and the opportunity for economic expansion which contributed to the growth of the Low Countries.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Charles, Duke of Burgundy, ruled the Burgundian state created by his predecessors from 1467 to 1477. These ten short years, though crucial in Burgundian history, have been dismissed or stereotyped by modern historiography. Few historians attempt to assess Charles' role in the Low Countries with historical objectivity since most of them come to this period of history with preconceived notions and assumptions, which form the basis for an interpretation of Duke Charles and his career. Naturally such an approach leads to possible distortion and misrepresentation of the events. In fact, many historians simply deal with Charles' foreign ventures and subordinate his domestic rule to territorial expansion. Why is it that this caricature of Charles and his reign has become a standard interpretation in Burgundian history? Is it not because history holds Duke Charles responsible for the failure of the Burgundian dream? Commines, a contemporary chronicler, was the first to see Charles as the destroyer of peace and prosperity. This judgement greatly influenced successive generations of historians so that by the twentieth century no one questioned its validity at all.

In twentieth century historiography we often find the search for a national identity or a national justification
for deeds of times past. In general we may say that most Belgian historians belong to the former category while French historians tend to lean to the latter one. However, both groups are unanimous in their analysis of Duke Charles of Burgundy. Both accuse Charles of irrational and impetuous behavior which led to the destruction of the Burgundian state and posed a serious threat to the French position in Europe.

Why this basic unanimity of interpretation, though motivated by different historical viewpoints? Belgian and French historians interpret the actions of Duke Charles as constituting a threat to the political and social development in northwestern Europe. They see Charles as a disruptive force destroying the work of his predecessors and that of his overlord. One of the greatest Belgian exponents of this opinion is Pirenne. In his major work, *Histoire de Belgique*, Pirenne states that he will especially concern himself with events in those provinces which today constitute Belgium. Such an approach is quite legitimate but then care must be taken to draw conclusions only on this restricted basis and not make them applicable to the Low Countries. If we are to study "Belgian" history how is it possible to discover the profound causes which aroused the Low Countries against Spain? Are the Low Countries and Belgium then to be equated? It would seem so for Pirenne does not hesitate to interchange the terms quite freely. Pirenne speaks of 'our' history and his desire to bring out the 'character of unity' of the history of Belgium.
This nationalistic point of view is the basis of Pirenne's judgement of Duke Charles of Burgundy. In Pirenne's eyes Charles was a man who "n'a jamais su exactement ce qu'il voulait" and whose conduct "apparaît en contradiction flagrante avec les traditions et les besoins du pays". Charles was the man who freely sacrificed his subjects for the glory of the House of Burgundy; the man who lacked the political astuteness of his father. This continual reference to Philip the Good forms an integral part of the narrative so that the reader accepts the conclusion that Duke Philip excelled where Charles failed. This would imply the supposition that the circumstances remained relatively unchanged for more than fifty years. Pirenne avoids discussing this hypothesis by simply stating that, even though Charles in certain of his ventures did no more than carry on the traditions, he aggravated international tensions by his continual belligerence. Pirenne grants the fact that France was hostile towards Burgundy but does not take into account the change in her attitude towards the existence of a Burgundian state. Thus he overlooks the impact of the changed international situation after Louis XI began to exert his claims to Burgundian lands.

The picture of Charles as a bellicose prince is further delineated by drawing striking contrasts to his predecessor. The tranquil reign of Philip the Good is contrasted to the perpetual wars waged by Charles. Pirenne makes the contrast seem politically relevant to the Low Countries by ignoring the fact that before 1475 there was no open hostility towards
Charles' 'foreign ventures'. Pirenne neatly equates peace with economic prosperity which Charles is supposed to have destroyed by continual warfare. However, in fact, Charles did not ask for troops before 1476 and the Estates uttered no complaints about economic loss or suffering.

Pirenne does not account for this silence but continues his interpretive narrative by emphasizing the despotism of Charles who used violence and terror as means of government. Unfortunately, there are no specific examples proving the despotism of his government. Pirenne states that Philip had managed to acclimatize centralized institutions in the Low Countries which became instruments of despotism under Charles. Charles merely delineated the functions and authority of the existing bodies and introduced the Parlement of Malines. If we ascribe absolutist motives to Charles' centralization we must assume that the institutions received new powers in addition to those granted by Duke Philip. A comparison between the institutions and their functions during the two reigns would dispel any lack of continuity in the political development. In fact, Charles simply formalized the governing bodies of Duke Philip and circumscribed their powers. One factor, not present under Duke Philip, was the recognized independence of Charles by France. This new position necessitated institutions to fill the vacuum left by France; thus the Parlement of Malines was called into being. Philip still regarded himself as the first peer of
France which automatically limited his centralizing policy. Duke Charles, on the other hand, rejected his father's view because he became increasingly aware of Louis' plans. The respective positions of father and son vis-à-vis France is minimized by Pirenne so that it seems that Charles acted out of wilfullness whereas Philip was cautious and restrained and more in harmony with the needs of his subjects.

Pirenne seems to have come to his conclusions primarily on the basis of Charles' foreign policy. He wants to prove that Charles lost the ability to distinguish between reality and fancy, stating that the Duke "s'abandonne à un rêve confus de domination universelle". Pirenne argues that Charles' sole aim was the destruction of Louis XI and to that end he formed the Bien Public. If Charles took the initiative in 1465 how is it that Louis' brother invited the Duke of Burgundy to join this protest movement? Why was the Estates-General consulted before the war was declared on France? Pirenne does not take these factors into account because of his concern to prove that Charles was only interested in the destruction of France. Neither does Pirenne explain the fact that after 1468 no major battles were fought between France and Burgundy or that Charles never pressed for the total defeat of Louis but willingly signed treaties and truces.

The victory over France, according to Pirenne, whetted Charles' appetite for glory and therefore he turned to the weak Empire. Pirenne sees Charles' activities in the Empire merely as that of an insatiable ruler seeking territorial
aggrandizement. Again, Pirenne contrasts father and son to illustrate the political greed and immoderate ambitions of Charles. Duke Charles abandoned his father's policies because he wanted all his territories elevated to a united kingdom. To this end Charles sought the election of the King of the Romans. Pirenne emphasizes Charles' abandonment of his father's policies in pursuit of other schemes in order to prove his point that Duke Charles acted as a political opportunist whose actions awakened national sentiment in France and in Germany. Repeatedly Pirenne returns to this theme of brutality, despotism and cruelty to underline Charles' incompetence to deal with this increasing national resistance. According to Pirenne, it was Charles' inability to assess the consequences of his acts which led him from one defeat to another in diplomacy and in war. It was his obstinacy and his confused state of mind which led to his defeat in Germany as well as in diplomacy. Charles lacked the political realism and flexibility of Louis XI because of his blind faith in the traditions of his dynasty.

This sharp delineation of the character and activities of Duke Charles is essential to Pirenne's assumption that the last Duke of Burgundy caused the rupture in the unity of the 'State' by his foreign and domestic policies. "Despote par caractère, il le fut peut-être davantage encore par conviction". This observation forms the basis of Pirenne's narrative and analysis. Repeatedly, Pirenne emphasizes the negative aspects of Duke Charles' reign. The friction between the duke and
the towns is emphasized and examples of implacable justice are given to substantiate Pirenne's thesis. The positive actions by Charles to prevent economic decay in Flanders is ignored in order to illustrate that Charles worked against the wishes of the cities. The fact that his opposition to outmoded economic structures might be beneficial to the Low Countries is not even discussed; instead, Pirenne implies that Charles was more concerned with second-rate cities than with the illustrious Members of Flanders. In discussing the rural industry Pirenne does not describe the positive actions taken by Charles to regulate and guide it but concentrates on the attitude of the Flemish cities towards it. The dismissal, by Pirenne, of a close examination of Charles' domestic policy must be regarded as a serious shortcoming of his narrative.

However, Pirenne is not the only historian to concern himself exclusively with Charles' foreign policies. Bartier wrote a biographical study of Duke Charles following in its major outlines Pirenne's position. Bartier also regards Duke Charles as a failure but he is willing to grant the fact that by 1467 the international situation had changed appreciably. He recognizes that the House of Burgundy no longer had its influential position at the French court and that France, having survived the Hundred Years War, hoped to revenge herself on the Duke of the West. However, Charles' domestic policy is described as tyrannical. Everything was subordinated to finance his wars and civil freedoms were
suppressed. Fortunately, French diplomacy kept Charles' despotism in check to a certain degree. Charles could not afford to alienate his subjects and therefore, according to Bartier, he failed to destroy all the freedoms. In spite of some positive actions the sum total of Charles' work is described as a complete failure because his only concern was glory which he could not have achieved due to the fatal flaws in his character. His violent temper, which hurt friend and foe alike, led to his ultimate defeat on the battlefield. In short, Bartier argues that Charles was incapable of executing the Burgundian plans and dream.

The position of both Bartier and Pirenne is emphatically rejected by Hommel in his study on the Burgundian rulers. Hommel sees in Charles a far-sighted ruler who was intuitively aware of a potentially viable state. Charles must be seen as the modern diplomat in contrast to Duke Philip whose policies were still tinged with a medieval outlook. However, Hommel emphasizes that it was the contributions of these two dukes who established 'our' patrimony and greatly enriched 'our' heritage. What makes this study fascinating reading is its strident nationalism. The circumstances of the writing of the book, published in 1945 just after World War II, probably influenced the author's nationalistic approach. Both periods in Belgian history were one of crisis. In each instance it faced a powerful and hostile enemy and survived the ordeal because "Belgium" had great leaders who through their personal defeats brought victory because they worked
for the common good of the state.

Hommel follows Pirenne's nationalistic views but rejects his condemnation of Charles because he sees Charles as the defender of his kingdom. Hommel also rejects Pirenne's charge of absolutism and argues that Charles continued the work of centralization begun by his father. It was not absolutism which motivated Charles, according to Hommel; rather the particularist outlook of the reactionary cities provoked the Duke to anger and retaliation. Hommel summarizes his views of Charles by stating that it was the Duke's misfortune "d'avoir été en avance non sur temps, mais, hélas! sur ses sujets". He argues that Charles and the towns were hostile to one another because the latter looked to the past whereas the Duke and his councillors worked to build a state. Hommel underlines his rejection of Pirenne's accusation of despotism by arguing that each region and county retained its own forms of administration.

The fact that local government remained strong under Duke Charles does not seem to impair Hommel's argument for a growing state. He sees 1446 as the year in which the Burgundian state was born because the establishment of the Great Council marked the first step to monarchical rule. The second institution of monarchical rule was the meeting of the Estates-General of 1465. Hommel maintains that in this session the Duke appeared as a national sovereign. He attempted to infuse a national spirit into it by discussing affairs of state. The failure on the part of the Duke must be
attributed to the communes and local Estates who emasculated the nationality of future Belgium. Hommel points to the Parlement of Malines as the third institution of monarchy. The establishment of this judicial body clearly illustrates that Duke Charles had a much higher sense of 'state' than Philip. In making such a generalization Hommel is ignoring the fact that, since the Parlement of Paris no longer had any control, Charles had to establish a body with similar powers. The major weakness of Hommel is his concern to date the emergence of the Burgundian state much too early. It is only from 1477 onwards that one can speak of the existence of a Burgundian state even though the direct line of the dukes disappeared. The existence of central institutions by themselves does not necessarily imply statehood. The Estates-General was simply the voice of the local Estates who, in reality, controlled financial disbursements. The Parlement of Malines, though a central body, seems to have been more important for its financial duties than for justice. Hommel interprets the existence of these institutions in such a way that they seem to have powers which they only gained in future centuries.

Hommel deals only with the state and its institutions in the introductory chapter of his book. His chapter on Duke Charles is mainly concerned with foreign policies prefaced by a discussion of Burgundian surnames. He traces the development and use of the term "le Téméraire" and argues that the only legitimate way of using the term is in the sense it applied
to his predecessors. To Hommel the terms "le Hardi", "le Téméraire", and "sans Peur" are interchangeable and cannot be interpreted as meaning rash or foolhardy. Hommel insists that history must reject the pejorative meanings of these surnames and accept only the positive aspects of the definitions. Nowhere does he intimate that history ought to abandon the use of surnames because he is too involved in his attack on French historians whom he accuses of having made "le Temeraire" current in historiography. Hommel's concern with the surname of Duke Charles is based on his view of the Franco-Burgundian relations.

Hommel's view of the Franco-Burgundian conflict is wholly at variance with Pirenne and the French historians. He rejects Pirenne's allegation that Charles never knew what he wanted. Hommel argues that Charles was not a man of thought but a man of action whose ends were very coherent and systematic. In seeking justification for Charles, Hommel points to the fact that in order to build a state and to survive the Duke had to expand the "natural" Burgundian frontiers. Louis XI of France continually blocked Charles' efforts towards territorial integrity and set out to destroy the House of Burgundy. The necessity for territorial unity is sufficient cause for Hommel to interpret Duke Charles as a defender of his rights when fighting in 1465. Hommel refuses to accept the image of Charles as a warmonger but describes him as a dedicated prince; restrained in war but working to the ultimate goal of statehood.

The major weaknesses in Hommel's work are all the result
of his national bias. His concern with the "national rule" of the dukes causes him to condemn all opposition as bad regardless of its motivation. This theme of national development colours the narrative and is used as a screen to hide the errors made by the Burgundian Dukes. Hommel minimizes regional differences and interests and tends to dismiss them as particularistic manifestations. Hommel ignores the legal powers of the local Estates and other institutions so that we are led to believe that it was the Burgundian Dukes who gave form and substance to government in the Low Countries. Hommel makes the same error as Pirenne in that he is concerned with Belgian history which, again, is equated to include the Low Countries. The role of the northern counties is dismissed as being minimal in importance in foreign and domestic affairs. Hommel's nationalistic interpretation is a confrontation with French historiography which is diametrically opposed to the claims made for Burgundian legitimacy.

French historiography, on the whole, is only concerned to analyze Duke Charles' relations with France. French historians are more concerned with portraying Louis XI in a favourable light and to emphasize the enlightened rule. All of them tend to contrast Duke Charles and Louis XI stressing the latter's virtues and political acumen while Charles is depicted as an incompetent and obsessed ruler who is always wrong. One of the harshest judgements passed on Charles is that of Calmette. This historian states that Charles was "dur à lui - même et aux autres, impatient et brutal, vindicatif
et emporté, Charles ne savait ni sérier les problèmes ni proportionner ses visées à ses moyens". Charles hoped to build a Burgundian kingdom on the ruins of France. Calmette takes this position because he is primarily concerned to show the development of modern France to which Duke Charles posed a very serious threat. To strengthen Louis' position in his narrative Calmette stresses the French origins of the House of Burgundy thus implying that Charles was a rebellious vassal. Champion, in his study of Louis XI, reiterates Calmette's interpretation by stating that "le premier acte important du roi est la revocation des alienations du domaine de la couronne".

French historiography is unanimous in its decision concerning Charles' legal position. He is a vassal of the king of France and any act of hostility is rebellion against his sovereign. However, both Calmette and Petit-Dutaillis recognize the complexity of the Franco-Burgundian relations and do not classify it simply as a feudal conflict. Champion, in his attempt to praise Louis, reduces the whole situation by arguing that "les princes apanages sont du sang royal; ils sont de la famille". Calmette judges correctly when he states that Louis XI will never gain the sympathy of history because of his political actions in spite of Champion's defense which sounds hollow.

Many modern historians make use of the contemporary chroniclers such as Commines, Basin, Chastellain and Olivier de la Marche. The single one most used by historians is the Mémoires of Philippe de Commines. A detailed examination of
the validity of this narrative is out of place here since 61 this task has been done. Dufournet, the critic of Comines, is the only one who seems to question the interpretations of the chronicler. Most of the historians discussed above accept Comines judgements and use the memoirs to substantiate their own narrative and analysis. Present day historians forget that Comines wrote his memoirs many years after the events described. As it is to be expected, given the normal frailties of man, the memoirs reflect a Comines who seeks justification for himself as well as for the events described. Champion, lauding Comines' objectivity, reverses himself by stating that Comines left "son maître stupide, féodal d'un autre âge, et si brutal". How is objectivity possible if we impute such a view to Comines? For Champion this presents no problem because he ignores the obvious conflict inherent in such statements.

What is often dismissed or misinterpreted by history is the act of 'treason'. Calmette dismisses Comines' defection by pointing out the many similar cases. He does not ask why Comines mentions with regularity the changes of loyalty. Comines probably cited many examples to hide his own act; however, it is extremely difficult to find the reason without making several assumptions. We cannot say that the servants of Burgundy left a sinking ship to divide the spoils with the victor. It seems more likely that Comines lists so many that we are led to believe and assume a basis of legality for these acts of treason; at least, such seems to be the consensus among the historians.
Bearing in mind that Commines changed sides in 1472, how must we then evaluate his memoirs? Without a doubt it is one of the best narrative descriptions of the time. Commines' memoirs are filled with ambiguities and contrasts whose purposes are to reveal the general incapacity of Duke Charles. Commines continually reminds his reader of the care taken by Charles' predecessors and their ability to rule. Slowly as Commines continues the narrative a picture of a cruel prince emerges who has drawn upon himself the vengeance of God. Commines also goes out of his way to describe Charles demented, disloyal and avaricious. Throughout the memoirs, implicitly or otherwise, runs a constant comparison between the two rivals, Charles and Louis. Charles is described as inept in the Liège affair in 1468 which forces Louis to take command of the situation. Commines continually emphasizes the shortcomings and flaws in Charles' character, while, minimizing the defects of Louis XI. The King of France is the most perfect prince lacking any and all vice. The wise Louis eager to learn, quick to comprehend and most subtle. This contrast between king and duke colours the whole narrative and therefore the conclusions arrived at by Commines are always favourable towards Louis. The implicit accusations heaped upon Duke Charles are meant to justify Commines' desertion. In other words the memoirs are an apology of the author. The apologetic nature of the work in no way diminishes the value of the chronicle but forces the reader to read between the lines and strip away the ambiguities. Commines
has narrated the events in such a way that his desertion seemed to be the only logical act arising out of this conflict of good and evil.

Commines' memoirs are extremely valuable in the detailed description of diplomacy and intrigue. Through the memoirs we become aware of the detailed negotiations carried on as well as the diplomatic manipulations of Louis. His deep knowledge of foreign affairs and his close involvement necessarily makes Commines much more valuable than many of the other chroniclers. True, his bias is obviously present but the mechanics of negotiations and diplomacy are quite factual. It is only in his many digressions that we must take care not to accept his word without question. The complexity of the memoirs and the nuances so characteristic of this work make it one of the most difficult documents to deal with or to understand.

Commines' contemporary writers seem shallow and dull in comparison. The only other writers who deserve mention are Chastellain and Basin. The other chroniclers such as Wavrin, la Marche and de Croye deal only with factual knowledge without being directly involved themselves. They write as observers simply narrating the events with the occasional judgment or rumours added for interest.

Thomas Basin was the most anti-French writer of his day. Many French historians dismiss Basin as a pamphleteer with a personal grudge against Louis XI. The Belgian historians use this chronicle sparingly probably because it sides with
Duke Charles. There can be no doubt that Basin disliked Louis XI because he does not hesitate to accuse Louis as being inhuman and a warmonger. But because of his obvious sentiments we may not dismiss him as a venomous reactionary hoping to see feudal reaction triumph. Basin proposes an entirely different view of the events than Commines does. For example, he sees validity for the claims made by the Bien Public but he is not so foolish as to accept the high motives unquestioningly. He argues that the state of the nation demanded drastic action which, if not acted upon by the king, then it was the duty of the princes to intervene. Basin maintains that Duke Charles was not hostile or warlike towards France but hoped to improve the social conditions. Perhaps a naive thought but Basin was aware that feudalism and its claims played only an incidental role. The general impression of the chronicle is the conflict between two rulers whose goals were the same. This conflict was resolved through the errors made by Charles but not because of flaws in his character. To discuss the mistakes made by Charles seems historically more valid than to emphasize flaws of character as Commines does. Basin sees Charles as the defender of his territories and rights encroached upon by Louis and therefore his anti-French attitude cannot be equated with an anarchical feudal principle as grounds for dismissing him as a disillusioned and bitter man. Why should his conclusions be more argumentative and unhistorical than Commines' judgements? Is it because of national pride and bias or because so many of Basin's views contain as much truth as
those of Commines? The truth is that if we eliminate the prej udices and dislikes of the two chroniclers then their narratives complement one another and enrich our knowledge of the last decades of the fifteenth century.

The descriptions of the men and events left to us by the chroniclers and perpetuated by historiography have done very little to delineate the character and work of Duke Charles. The only serious historical work on Duke Charles is a biography written by Kirk in 1863. However, this study leaves much to be desired. Kirk is supposedly giving us a detailed description and analysis of Duke Charles; instead, we get to know much more about Louis XI than about Charles. The biography is that of a rebellious vassal who dares to oppose the sacrosanct monarchical institutions. Charles sowed the seeds which led to wars and unrest in the sixteenth century. He was the disturber of peace. Louis was the foe of anarchy and feudalism and therefore battled to save the unity of France by his superior intellect. Kirk's impatience with the claims and position of Burgundy is continually revealed in his admiration for Louis who, through reason and the strength of his intellect, crushed the rebellious vassals. The kind of generalizations stated by Kirk do very little to delineate Duke Charles and his work. It is impossible to write a definitive work on a man without discussing all the aspects of his character and rule.

The necessity for a re-assessment of Duke Charles seems obvious in light of the one-sided position taken by history.
since the situation during Charles reign is much more complex than we are led to believe. The need to study the motives, aims and dreams of Charles must be seen in the overall context of his Burgundian heritage. It is naive to assume that he was simply a rebellious vassal and a troublemaker. Instead, to what extent did Charles work towards the realization of the Burgundian dream? Was failure inevitable under the circumstances? And, above all, what were the long-term results of his stormy reign? Before such questions can be answered we must examine his activities in the various phases of government as well as his policies. Even before a study of Charles can become meaningful we must know the essentials of his predecessor's government and policies since they tend to condition the political attitude of Charles in foreign and domestic affairs. Naturally great emphasis will be placed on Charles' foreign policy since its aims constituted the building of a state. The interest in this aspect also stems from the fact that it resulted in one of the might-have-beens of history. Can the influence of Burgundian diplomacy under Duke Charles be dismissed as that of an overweening and ambitious man? If we do, are we not rejecting the cultural environment in which Charles grew up?

A second and equally important part of his reign was his domestic policy. What was his attitude towards the counties and towns? How did he show an interest in the commercial welfare of the Low Countries? Or, was he simply a tyrant intent on destroying liberties and local autonomy? Charles'
position vis-à-vis his possessions becomes only clear if we contrast it to that of his predecessors. The contrast makes it very clear that Charles' reign proved to be very important and beneficial for the future development of the Low Countries as is best illustrated in the events immediately following his death in 1477. The meeting of the Estates-General and the decisions reached revealed the extent of the state-building realized by Duke Charles of Burgundy.
CHAPTER II

THE HERITAGE OF DUKE CHARLES OF BURGUNDY

The Treaty of Arras, signed in 1435, between France and Duke Philip of Burgundy proved to be one of the most decisive events in Burgundian history. It not only swung the diplomatic balance in favour of Charles VII and doomed English continental ventures to defeat, but it also symbolized the birth of a third European power. Philip of Burgundy had reached the apogee of power but failed to realize that his triumph was illusory. The treaty contained all the necessary ingredients which could destroy the very foundations of the infant Burgundian State. By the treaty, Philip had managed to alienate both France and England. Charles VII had been forced to grant Philip the Somme towns and freedom from the right of feudal homage. England had been alienated by Burgundy's rejection of the Treaty of Troyes. Philip, unaware of the implications, hoped to play the role of mediator in international diplomacy. However, the Duke of Burgundy failed to realize that his position as a sovereign power was untenable to England and France and also as based on feudal law. Fortunately, for Burgundy, neither France nor England deemed it opportune to crush the upstart, the former being too concerned with internal unrest while the latter realized that a frontal attack on Burgundy would not resolve the issue. The English followed an old maxim —
divide and conquer. This policy, especially through the use of economic sanctions and pressure, greatly undermined Burgundian pretensions to sovereignty.

The thirty years following the Treaty of Arras clearly illustrates the working out of English and French hostility to Burgundian claims and position in international affairs. Thielemans, who recently published her research on Anglo-Burgundian relations, feels that the Treaty of Arras symbolized a reconciliation between Burgundy and France. A rather strange way of looking at things because it seems more likely that Charles VII acceded to the conditions of the treaty to buy time. As soon as French internal unrest was settled Charles was busily engaged in fermenting riots and unrest in Burgundian lands. While Charles VII was concerned with France, Henry VI of England went on the offensive. He continued to regard the territories of the Burgundian rulers as individual entities and treated with them accordingly. Henry sent letters to the cities of Holland and Zeeland, in December 1435, regarding the "old privileges and friendship between the crown of England and the county of Holland". Munro, in an unpublished article, claims that, because the Holland-Zeeland towns turned the letters over to Duke Philip, the attempted subversion by the English failed. Yet he continues by stating that the counties of Holland and Zeeland refused aid to Philip for the Calais venture and continued to trade with England. It seems more likely that the Duke received the letters as a warning from these two counties
especially if one considers the events of 1436. Tensions increased to such an extent that the citizens of Zierikzee and Middelburg, both wholly dependent on English trade, revolted openly. Middelburg released all English prisoners and goods held and killed the ducal representative. Zierikzee attacked Overschie, a village sympathetic to the duke. The English rewarded the county of Zeeland by immediately freeing Zeeland ships and allowing them to trade between England and the Hanse towns. Other cities of Holland-Zeeland also continued to trade with and in English goods even though special ducal representatives went from town to town proclaiming the ban of 1434.

The hostility of the counties of Holland and Zeeland also spilled over into Flanders, a county much more vulnerable to fluctuations in the international economy than Holland and Zeeland because it lacked industrial diversification. Flanders, that is, the urban industries, was wholly dependent on English Staple wool. Consequently by the end of 1436 and beginning of 1437 the Flemish towns, Ghent, Ypres and Bruges began to agitate for a relaxation of the ban and permission to get wool from Calais. The Flemish towns were joined in the demands by representatives of the Court of Holland under the leadership of Jacob Bossaert. The Court of Holland sent Henry Utenhove, one of its secretaries, to the ducal court to petition Philip to grant freedom of trade between England and the counties of Holland and Zeeland because they were so hard-pressed economically. Duke Philip was asked at the same
time to deal with the many letters received from the king of England. The representative probably used this latter point to convince Philip that his position was being undermined in the northern Low Countries.

The combined actions of the three counties and their opposition to the commercial ban of 1434 revealed the diplomatic intrigue of the king of England who realized only too well the necessity of keeping the Low Countries hostile to ducal policy. Henry VI was also aware that England and the Low Countries were economically interdependent; a fact clearly evident at a time of the Anglo-Hanseatic crisis which lasted until 1437. England needed the shipping trade to counterbalance the intermittent boycotts of the Hanse. England's eagerness for the support of the Holland-Zeeland towns is reflected in the granting of safe-conducts allowing English merchants to use Zeeland and Holland ships.

The hostility of the three Counties and the diplomacy of England forced Philip to reconsider his position. However, this in no way implied that he had become aware of the necessity for close economic relationship with England or that he had realized that the present course of action, on his part, could only lead to a disintegration of the Burgundian State. Philip concerned himself only with international diplomacy and left the negotiation of economic matters in the hands of representatives of the counties and cities. His concern with diplomacy, in preference to economic matters, was revealed openly at the Calais conferences. Separate commissions
were established in London and The Hague to deal with economic relations while the main body of conferees at Calais concerned itself with the ransom of the Duke of Orleans, English claims in France and a general peace between France and England.

Philip's intractable position vis-à-vis England and his seeming unconcern of the economic consequences forced the counties of Holland and Zeeland to take matters into their own hands. Unofficial meetings were arranged with English merchants who probably also acted as intermediaries with England since the same merchant's names are often repeated in the accounts. Thielemans, on the other hand, feels that Duke Philip bowed to internal pressure and sent a secret emissary to England to obtain safe-conducts for Burgundian envoys. It is true that Philip was forced to give way but that he initiated negotiations is not so certain. The English merchants had met in Middelburg during December of 1437 with representatives of Zeeland and in March, 1438, Hugh de Lannoy, governor of Holland, received a safe-conduct. Duke Philip was ignored in these negotiations for a safe-conduct since it was addressed to Hugh de Lannoy as a leader of Holland, not as a ducal representative. An embassy, headed by Hugh de Lannoy, landed in England on May 12, 1438, to open discussions on better economic relations. The Flemish towns, left out of the discussions, continued to pressure the duke into granting permission for a renewal of Anglo-Flemish trade. Ghent refused to wait for the duke's permission and applied directly
to Lannoy who was in England at the time. Philip, realizing that in order to maintain his sovereign position in the Low Countries, granted English merchants the right to sue for damages received at the hands of Burgundian subjects and issued safe-conducts to them. Philip also promised a review of ducal policy regarding the cloth trade at the next Estates-General to be held in Ghent in 1438.

The attempted political bribery of Philip was a complete failure because during the conferences held in the summer of 1438 the Flemish interests were not mentioned at all. It seems most likely that the Estates representatives realized that the Duke was playing politics with the economic welfare of the Low Countries. The promised Estates-General of 1438 met, not in Ghent, but in Malines, Brussels and Antwerp successively. Only financial reforms were discussed; no mention was made of the cloth ban or of the total ban issued in retaliation by the English. The counties of Holland and Zeeland absented themselves from the second meeting. They probably felt that, since the Duke was not going to deal with economic matters pertaining to trade, it was necessary to act. It is not unlikely that the Holland-Zeeland towns contacted Henry Utenhove who was still in England in September, 1438. In November of the same year, Henry VI formed a commission to deal directly with the towns of Holland and Zeeland and ordered them to meet the Holland-Zeeland envoys wherever suitable.
The main discussion at this conference dealt with reparations resulting from acts of piracy on both sides. The discussions continued, almost uninterruptedly, until September 1439. However, in January of that year it was already decided to allow free trade between England and Holland and Zeeland. The matter of reparation was settled between the merchants and shippers on both sides and lists of damages were compared, the deficit being paid to the victims.

Meanwhile, the Duchess of Burgundy was also involved in negotiations with England on other matters. Flemish interests were discussed in regards to Staple rights and privileges at Calais. Out of long and protracted discussions came the principle of access to the Calais Staple if the bearer carried a safe-conduct. In other words, the duke gave his tacit consent to the economic necessity of the Low Countries. The English king was only too willing to issue safe-conducts since he derived direct benefit from a flourishing staple. One can hardly say that Philip, at all times, advanced the well-being of his subjects.

The concrete results from the year long conference was a three year truce between England on the one side and Brabant and Flanders on the other side. The counties of Holland and Zeeland did not sign a commercial truce with England until 1445. This three year truce, in effect, forced an open-door policy on Duke Philip. The English were allowed free access to Flemish and Brabant markets. The treaty was much
more favourable for the English merchants than for the Flemish towns. The English cloth merchant only had to contend with a two percent tax on his product whereas a Staple merchant had to pay approximately thirty-three percent on wool which was passed on to the buyer. Comparing these figures it is not unreasonable to assume that it would be cheaper to import the finished product rather than to buy the raw materials. The Staple of Calais created artificial prices by virtue of its monopolistic structure while an equally monopolistic structure in Flanders had to compete with the relatively open cloth industry in England.

The dissatisfaction with the truce of 1439 was soon evident as Philip the Good renewed the ban on cloth in December of the same year. However, this time it was only applied to Flanders. Implicitly the Duke gave consent for English trade to resume in its former Low Countries' markets. As a result of trade restoration both wool and cloth exports jumped significantly after 1439. Although the wool exports never again attained its pre-1430 level, the cloth export reached its highest peak during the early 1440's.

The truce of 1439 was continually renewed for the remainder of Philip's reign. In 1446 the commercial truce was renewed for a period of twelve years. Immediately after the renewal of the trade agreement Philip issued a ban on English cloth applicable throughout the Low Countries. The promulgation of this ban was the direct result of agitation on the part of the urban industrial centres. In December 1446,
the Estates-General had met to discuss the cloth trade but the meeting was very unsuccessful because of internal quarrels.

The Flemish industrial towns refused to accept the economic realities of the fifteenth century. They refused to accept the fact that English cloth, being produced much more cheaply and being of the same quality as their own, had come to stay and that its supremacy was inevitable. The established Flemish centres refused to experiment with new wools and to open the corporative structure of their industries. Other rising industrial cities in Holland and in Flanders had no desire to see the cloth ban implemented even though they produced cloth. It was these new centres, sprung up during the fifteenth century, which perfected the Nouvelle draperie. These centres did not depend exclusively on English wool but employed any type of wool available. Even the city of Leyden, dependent on English wool, willingly accepted any kind of English wool and wool fells. In effect, what took place in the Low Countries was increasing tension between the old and the new economic order caught up in a conflict of international economic interests. The counties of Holland and Zeeland could only survive, in a large measure, on free trade involving diverse products. Flanders, on the other hand, felt that it depended for its survival on protectionism and in a monolithic economic structure. These hostile tendencies, in the two parts of the Low Countries, were repeatedly brought to the surface and intensified by the
political activities of Duke Philip. The duke, generally portrayed as the originator of Burgundian institutional forms of government, refused to employ existing institutions in settling internal disputes. Philip ruled the Low Countries in relative peace because he continually sided with the Flemish cities and helped them to destroy any competition. Thus cloth bans were repeatedly issued and the countryside was prohibited from manufacturing any cloth. The Duke did not even restrain the Flemish cities from taking the law into their own hands to prevent rural cloth production; in fact, when the case came before the Council Philip ruled in favour of the cities. Philip also furthered the interests of the urban centres in other ways. The cities retained their political autonomy and their charters which gave the Members of Flanders an extremely influential position in ducal government.

It was this relationship between Philip and the Four Members of Flanders which governed the economic policy of the Low Countries. The ban of 1447 had already been promised to the cities even before new trade agreements were signed in 1446. Philip did not explain his action to the Estates-General, which did not even meet as was promised, because Bruges and Antwerp were hostile to one another. Holland and Zeeland rejected ducal economic attitudes and decided, on their own initiative, to study the ban and to formulate their own views. The Calais Conference, still in session since 1446, was therefore attended by representatives of the northern counties who
expressed their views and opened negotiations with England. The representatives had been sent by order of the Estates of Holland which had met to discuss the economic problems.

The conferences at Calais, during these years, served one function for Philip and another for the three counties. The latter sought ways and means to promote commercial relations beneficial to both sides. Duke Philip on the other hand, seemed more concerned with diplomatic matters and the search for lasting peace between France and England. At Calais minor officials dealt with economic problems whereas the chief negotiators concerned themselves with the ransom of French noblemen and Anglo-French relations; matters which were completely outside the real interests of the Low Countries.

This conflict of interests between the Duke and his subjects was never resolved in his lifetime. At Calais the Holland representatives negotiated with the English envoys who agreed to rectify the misunderstandings. Captured Holland and Zeeland ships were released even at a time when Philip continued to arrest English ships and confiscate English goods found in his lands. The economic tensions caused by Philip in 1447 did not begin to ease until the middle of 1452 when the duke allowed English cloth access to the Low Countries' markets. It is difficult to state unequivocally why there was a change in Burgundian policy but it seems that the influence of Isabel of Portugal, the Duchess of Burgundy, played a very important role in this case. She was continually in close contact with the English leaders such as the
Duke of York, an important leader of a court faction.

The sympathy of Isabel of Portugal towards the Yorkist faction remained constant throughout the reign of Philip the Good. However, it was not her support and insistence on an alliance that brought about, from the mid-1450's onwards, the desire to return to a more permanent Anglo-Burgundian relationship. Two events took place which forced a realignment of international diplomacy causing increased economic tensions. Philip failed to take advantage of this opportunity to harmonize his views with that of his subjects. The one event was the flight of the dauphin Louis to the court of Burgundy; the second was that Henry VI regained his sanity and returned to personal rule under the close tutelage of the Queen, Margaret of Anjou.

The political scene was tense because the three rulers realized the many potential alliances possible to the detriment of their own political and economic position. Henry VI probably feared a Franco-Burgundian alliance, hostile towards England. France on the other hand, feared an Anglo-Burgundian alliance with the support of the dauphin. The duke of Burgundy, having the most delicate position, feared an Anglo-French alliance to punish him for harboring Louis. These possibilities, circulating during this period, is best expressed in the fact that the Duke did not hesitate to sacrifice the economic interests of the Low Countries in favour of a diplomatic entente with the Earl of Warwick, the kingmaker, who was in control of Calais and hostile to Henry VI.
The political tensions were compounded when, in 1456, a bitter pirate war was fought between France and England placing Burgundy in an awkward position. Duke Philip warned his subjects to steer clear of any entanglements in a letter written to the Court of Holland and advised them not to place any trust in the safe-conducts granted by the English king. He ignored to mention the matter of French safe-conducts which these subjects also had from Charles VII. Only Flemish ships were attacked by the English. However, when the king ordered Warwick to command the war, the latter was not above mixing the Holland-Zeeland ships in with the Flemish and French. Duke Philip registered no complaint but it was the king of England who returned the ships and stolen goods. The Hollanders and Zeelanders turned a deaf ear to the advise of the duke and continued their commercial activities. They put more trust in the safe-conducts of Philip's enemies than in the truces signed by the duke. The towns of Zeeland were even willing to act as intermediaries between France and England to which both sides agreed.

While piracy continued the diplomats met to discuss future conferences dealing with reparations for damages done on both sides. The first real important conference opened in May, 1458. Ostensibly, the conference was to deal with the matter of a truce and the regulation of damages, at a time when piracy and seizure of ships and goods continued. In reality the conference was more concerned with political
intrigue even though the economic situation worsened. Economically, all that was decided here was to establish two smaller committees in Bruges and in London to deal with Anglo-Burgundian commercial relations. The main body of envoys continued to meet for the rest of the year to deal with political matters. This division of labour indicates the relative unimportance of economic activity in the mind of Philip as well as a refusal to accept the close union of politics and economic welfare. One of the main items on the agenda of the conference was a Yorkist proposal to Philip for a closer alliance based on marriage. Philip, already sympathetic to the Yorkist cause since the beginning of the decade, did not commit himself because he feared French reaction.

The proposals for a closer alliance came to nothing for in the following year, 1459, England was caught up in a fierce civil war which lasted until 1462, leaving Philip in an awkward position vis-à-vis Charles VII. The French king, during the last five years, had made many indirect attacks on Philip's position in the Low Countries, especially in such territories as Liège and Luxemburg. In 1459 Charles had bought the hereditary rights to Luxemburg from Ladislas of Habsburg. He did not dare to attack Philip with arms because of Burgundy's alliances and also probably because France had just ended a war with England. France had suffered too much during the Hundred Years War to be able to withstand a second conflict. In addition, the presence
of Louis at the Burgundian court would open new wounds drawing all dissident elements to Duke Philip's side.

While the English civil war dragged on and France hostile to Burgundy, Charles VII died, leaving the throne of France to Louis XI. It was during the early part of Louis XI's reign, from 1461 to 1465 that Philip felt that his dream of acting as mediator would be realized. When Edward IV sent an embassy to Philip the Good to discuss a marriage alliance, the duke countered by setting up a future conference to meet at Bruges, St. Omer or at Lille. Philip told Louis XI of his decision who concurred with it. Both agreed to the proposal on the basis of the Treaty of Arras which explicitly stated that no alliance could be made without the consent of the king of France. Neither one accepted the reason as valid because they were not ready to reveal the real purpose for delaying the conference. Louis wanted to consolidate his position at home before going on the offensive whereas Philip saw the opportunity to expand the negotiations to include an Anglo-French treaty. Philip also wanted to wait until the new English king, Edward IV, had secured the throne.

During 1461 Edward was far from securing his throne. Margaret of Anjou had fled to Scotland and opened negotiations with the Queen Regent, niece of Philip the Good. Edward appealed to Philip to intervene on his behalf thus forcing the Duke of Burgundy's hand and disqualifying himself as the impartial mediator of European affairs. Philip sent an
embassy to Scotland to pressure the Queen of Scotland into breaking off any relations with Margaret of Anjou. The action on the part of Philip virtually sealed an alliance between England and Burgundy and revealed that Burgundian power was the mainstay of the Yorkist regime during its first years.

By the beginning of 1462 Louis also declared his intentions since Philip was able to discuss Louis' hostility with the Milanese ambassador. In June, 1462, Louis openly espoused the cause of Margaret of Anjou. Margaret signed a document by which she handed over to Louis XI all English claims to Calais in exchange for £20,000 tournois. It was actually a loan repayable within one year. Both, Margaret and Louis, realized that repayment was an impossibility and consequently Louis had the deed to the city. Louis also signed a treaty of peace with Margaret lasting for one hundred years and a declaration of war was proclaimed against Edward.

Louis knew that the realization of these signed documents needed Philip's support. He also knew that Philip would not grant the aid because it would place the duke in an impossible position vis-à-vis his subjects. In other words, Louis had begun his offensive attack on Burgundy. He demanded that Charles of Charolais, son of Duke Philip, be placed at the head of an army to capture Calais; that Holland-Zeeland ships be used; and that French troops could cross Burgundian lands. Thielemans states that Philip refused compliance because the project was adverse to his interests. She is
quite right but she fails to emphasize that in this case only political interests were paramount. Economically Calais was no longer wholly essential for the welfare of the Low Countries since the industries used other wools and because English wool exports were decreasing steadily. The inferior English wools were shipped to Bruges and Middelburg thus bypassing the Calais Staple entirely. Philip feared to have Louis so close to the Flemish border because it might upset the delicate political balance achieved in the late 1450's.

Philip's refusal, on grounds of a previous pledge to England, did not deter Louis insofar as he went ahead and promulgated an ordinance prohibiting any of his subjects from having commercial or political relations with England. Louis had no intention of enforcing his ordinance as is clearly evident in the granting of safe-conducts and privileges to merchants from Holland, Zeeland and England. Thielemans ignores these documents and seems to assume that the ban went into effect. However, Louis' declaration must simply be regarded as a necessary commitment as part of the treaty with Margaret of Anjou. He had no intentions of attacking England; rather, he sought to conclude a truce or treaty with Edward IV so that he might freely concentrate on Burgundy. Louis granted a token force of about 800 men to Margaret of Anjou which was barely enough to act as an escort for a royal personage. Louis realized that to support Lancaster would result in a united and hostile country.

Louis realizing that brute force was not the answer
turned to diplomatic intrigue in which he became an expert. He bought men to serve him. When Louis had issued the ban in June, 1462, Philip had sent Jean de Croy, a favourite counselor, along with other envoys to France to discuss related matters with Louis. On his return Jean de Croy convinced Philip that the time was now opportune to act as mediator.

In February, 1463, Jean de Lannoy, a relative of de Croy, left for England to propose meetings between England and France but while he was there he privately encouraged the cause of France. After many preliminary discussions Edward finally sent an embassy to meet with the French king which landed on August 23, 1463. After protracted discussions a truce was signed, lasting one year, which stated that neither one would support the enemies of the other. It seems that Louis was already laying the trap to which Philip was the accomplice and victim because if Louis declared war on Burgundy, England could not intervene according to this truce.

Towards the end of 1464 (September) Louis felt secure enough to move against the Duke of Burgundy. Louis sent letters to Edward IV, declaring that Charles of Charolais was conspiring against the king of England and therefore he asked Edward to make peace so that he could use his forces to suppress the threat from the heir of Burgundy and the Duke of Brittany. Edward, no longer interested in negotiations with France, made the contents of the letters known to Duke Philip who was extremely indignant and demanded an explanation. Louis replied that the letters referred only to
Brittany and that Charles' name had slipped in inadvertently.

Philip seemed satisfied with Louis' answer because at the same time he was too involved in internal matters in the Low Countries. On October, 1464, Philip had renewed the ban of 1434 and made it applicable throughout his territories. The ban was, in part, a result from increasing protectionism in England and in retaliation for the English ban on Burgundian products. The effect of these bans was drastic. Consumption of English wool by the Leyden industry was reduced to one-half used the previous year. On January 2, 1465, a meeting of the Estates-General was opened to deal with the question of English cloth but only representatives of Holland appeared. Another meeting was called for March 25, 1465, in Brussels at which most members were present. Nothing was decided. At a third meeting held in Brussels during April, 1465, Philip asked aids for the war against Louis without settling the economic problems. The representatives refused to commit themselves, probably because Philip refused to lift the ban on English cloth. Once again, Philip had managed to introduce a troublesome question which awakened mutual hostility in the Low Countries. Even by this time the duke refused to accept the fact that the structure of the economy had changed so much that any interference would destroy the balance of trade.

For the remainder of Philip's reign the economic problems, war and hostility within and outside the Burgundian
lands, shaped ducal policy. It would be unfair to attribute the failings, or for that matter successes, to Philip from 1465 onwards since Charles of Charolais was the acting regent. It was Charles who led the Burgundian forces in the war against Louis. The count of Charolais was also very active in the internal affairs of the Low Countries and was diligently searching for a solution to the Anglo-Burgundian problems. He realized that Louis XI was his mortal enemy and a threat to the existence of the Burgundian State.

Philip had governed the Burgundian lands for approximately forty-five years. He had witnessed economic stagnation and political paralysis in the Low Countries. As Europe slowly passed through the great depression, Charles inherited policies and a government which had not grown and developed to keep pace with a new and relatively unstructured economy. The legacy of protectionist policies, periodically expressed in bans and increased tolls, had aroused internal conflicts making a mockery of the infant Burgundian institutions. Consequently the inheritance of Charles lacked identity with the various counties. Philip's policies had always tended to polarize views as expressed in the economic demands of his subjects. It was left to Charles to cope with these divergent views and subordinate them to the needs of the Low Countries. By the middle of the fifteenth century the House of Burgundy had succeeded in raising itself to the rank of a great power. What Philip had failed to realize was
that his position was brilliant rather than secure. Charles, on the other hand, was aware of the need for a legal basis. A weak German Emperor was no match for Burgundian might but this did not prevent Frederick III from refusing to sanction the territorial gains through investiture. But, more important still, was the position of France. After 1450 Charles VII began to move against Burgundy who, in his eyes, was only a traitor vassal. The hostile attitude of Charles VII became much more pronounced in his son, Louis XI, who succeeded to the throne in 1461 with the avowed intention to end the Burgundian hegemony in northwestern Europe.
CHAPTER III

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF DUKE CHARLES

The reign of Duke Charles, from 1467 to 1477, was one of the most crucial periods in Burgundian history. Unfortunately, this view is not held by most historians who accept the general condemnation handed down to them by their predecessors. A generalized view of Duke Charles and his career minimizes the complexity of the fifteenth century at a time when states initiated the drive for "natural" frontiers and international status. If we accept the thesis that these ten years of Charles' reign were simply that of a man seeking glory and territorial aggrandizement a serious mistake is made. For in so doing, we neglect to see the true motivation of Duke Charles. He hoped to bring to fruition the dream of his predecessors. The emphasis on the negative aspect of the reign of Charles and on his failures is to forget the consistent theme reiterated in the treaties signed with France. These documents continually reveal the desire for legal recognition of a de facto situation.

The repeated claims made by Charles during the peace conferences with France and his negotiations with Frederick III are often overlooked in order to strengthen the image of an incapable ruler who never knew what he really wanted. As early as 1464 Charles knew what his objectives would be,
as is clearly indicated in his reaction to the return of the Somme towns to France. The bitter quarrel with his father and the councillors was not that of a foolish man but that of a farsighted ruler who recognized the strategic importance of those cities. In order to regain these lost possessions Charles persuaded his father to join the Ligue du Bien Public which was composed of the disaffected French nobles.

A close scrutiny of the league and of the war is necessary since this was the preliminary episode of a continuing drama which came to a conclusion in 1482. The events of 1465 also brought out into the open the inherent anachronism in the Franco-Burgundian situation. Feudal law held that Charles, as his father before him, was a vassal of France and of the Empire. The latter could not enforce its claims because of internal disunity and because of the independent stand and tradition of the Low Countries. In fact, certain territories were held by the Burgundians for which they had not paid homage to the Emperor. Louis XI, on the other hand, realized the necessity of French control over the Somme towns and the Duchy of Burgundy. Louis wanted to extend France to its "natural frontiers" as a defensive and unifying measure. He felt that his claims could best be served by basing them on feudal law, and therefore returned the Somme towns with letters patent. Thus Louis did not make an outright gift since he could recall the letters patent and declare them null and void through the agency of the Parlement of Paris.
Charles, however, knew that his only recourse was to arms since the Burgundian position lacked the legal sanction of feudal law. His only defense was to utilize the political realities of his day to gain international sanction and respect. Did not history reveal that states just did not exist but that they grew and developed under the impetus of powerful men? The study of history during the fifteenth century was basically to "rendre ung homme saige" and "apprendre à se conuyre et garder et entreprendre saigement par les hystoires et exemples de noz predecesseurs". In other words, history teaches the student to avoid the pitfalls and errors and to explain the reasons for events and their causes. Charles was fascinated by the history of the Greeks, Romans and other great leaders and "voulu ressembler à ces anciens princes". This close identification with past greatness must not be interpreted as causing political blindness in Duke Charles; rather, it offered the basis of future activity. This close study of the past revealed the fact that the right to rule was not simply a God-given right, exclusive to all but a few elect. Did not Caesar and Alexander, living before the Christian era, create states without the interference or help of Law? And what of the Italian city states? The close commercial ties between the Low Countries and Italy also formed the basis for the exchange of ideas. The rise of the Sforzas and the Medicis was not unknown to Charles. The theory of politics, as practised in Italy, separated
politics and ethics even though it was expressed in the traditional way. Politics was increasingly becoming a rationalized autonomous activity answerable only to the results it achieved. Naturally it is impossible to speak of a sophisticated political philosophy but that these ideas were circulated and adopted is evident in the contrast between the act and the justification of Duke Charles.

The war of the Bien Public, in 1465, illustrates the political philosophy of Charles. Ostensibly, he and his father supported the league because of "désordre et piteux gouvernement qui par tout icelui a cours, par le conseil des gens estans à l'entour de monseigneur, plains de toutte malveseté et iniquité". This traditional reason, given to the Estates-General, was used as an excuse to regain the Somme towns since that was the only major demand of Charles during the negotiations.

The battles and the skirmishes fought, during 1465, resulted in negotiation from strength on the part of the league. What Commines and most other chroniclers neglect to discuss is an examination of the aims, motives and positions of the hostile princes. Commines' attitude towards the princes is best revealed in one of his chapter headings where he referred to them and the undertaking as the "L'entreprinse qu'ilz appelloient le bien publicque". Basin, on the other hand, felt a greater need to ask himself why these princes rose up in opposition to the King.
of France. This little known and little used chronicler makes some very shrewd observations. He realized that one could not generalize about the motives of the princes. He knew only too well that some men were motivated by selfish interests but, he asks, is it not possible that there were also those who felt that reform was imperative? Basin, himself, realized the necessity of reform and saw the avowed aims of the league as a cure for France's ills. Because of the evils of Louis' government it was the duty of the princes to constrain the king and to make him listen to wiser council. Thus we are faced with two sides of the issue, Commines as a French supporter and Basin as the enemy of Louis. What makes Basin's account more plausible is his attempt to explain and justify the events of 1465.

What is of more importance for us is the judgement passed on the Count of Charolais by his contemporaries. Here again the two major chroniclers part ways. Commines is constantly comparing Charles to his predecessors in an attempt to bolster his thesis that it was Charles' inconsistencies and impetuous decisions which brought ruin to his House. To Commines the battle of Montlhery was the first step on the road to destruction. Commines does not mention Charles' motives but simply attributes them to a general dissatisfaction and disappointment of the princes for being rejected by Louis XI. Basin refuses to follow Commines' simplistic view of the events of 1465 and the judgement passed on the men involved. He argues that Charles did not want
to fight or that he was hostile to Louis but he merely wanted to see justice done. Charles hoped to bring Louis to Paris where an Estates-General would be called to correct government abuses. According to Basin, this action would also explain why the Burgundian army was disciplined and forced to pay its way without pillage.

It is only too easy to accept the cynicism of Commines. However, one must also guard himself against the assertions put forward by Basin in regards to Charles. The truth lies in between. Charles was a very conscientious man who believed in justice and order. From this point of view he had no difficulty siding with the confederates' motives while at the same time retrieving the Somme towns which he regarded as lands stolen from him. He made no claims to France itself but simply used the opportunities made available by the discontent of the nobility and towns. For the Burgundian House, the events of 1465 marked the first steps to strengthening its territorial base and the beginning of implementing independence from France.

The negotiations which began in September, 1465, are very important in that Burgundy and France stood face to face as equals and bargained accordingly. It was not the vassal begging forgiveness from his overlord but a ruler demanding reparations for wrongs committed against his state. The detailed negotiations dragged on interminably. However, two events occurred which forced Louis' hand. In the first place, the revolt of Liège with which he had just signed
a treaty of friendship and support. The unrest created played into Charles' hands because he knew who had instigated the rebellion. The second event was the action of Rouen, promptly followed by other towns. All claimed that Louis had acted in bad faith. Louis could no longer stall the negotiations in the hope that a falling out among the princes would take place and as a result the Treaty of Conflans was signed on October 29, 1465. The treaty only dealt with French matters such as the grievances of the nobility and governmental reform. Charles did pay homage for the Somme towns and letters patent were issued on October 5th and ratified by the Parlement of Paris on October 12th.

The Treaty of Conflans remained a dead letter. Commines did not even bother to list the clauses contained in it. He probably felt, in keeping with his general view, that the treaty was simply a cover on the part of Charolais, to regain the southern towns and therefore refused to accept the treaty as having any importance. Basin devoted much more attention to the treaty because he realized its potential good. Yet he was enough of a realist to know that once the league was disbanded that the commission for reform would fail because of the arbitrary will of the ruler. Basin recognized the importance of Burgundy to the cause of justice and noted with what care Louis tried to neutralize Charles of Charolais. The chronicler knew the reasons for Louis' overtures because the king saw power and rule as ends in themselves. Because of Louis' character and Charles
rejection of the French domestic scene the reform died. Charles' concern with Burgundian matters, exclusive of France, showed the extent to which the two states had parted ways. Duke Philip claimed himself to be the first peer of France whereas Charles rejected this concept by turning his back on the aims and objectives of the treaty. Charles was only concerned to see that France could never again threaten the Burgundian position in Europe. That is the reason why the treaty was not signed immediately even though Louis returned the Somme towns. Charles insisted that Normandy be given to the king's brother but Louis "ne vouloit entendre pour nulle chose". This demand in no way implied that Charles was interested in internal affairs but he simply wanted to establish a buffer zone between France and the Low Countries. When Louis acceded to the last demand Charles immediately agreed to peace. Basin makes very clear Charles' attitude because "nous ne savons pas exactement ce qu'il fit pour les autres princes de la faction ni ce qu'il obtint du roi pour eux". According to Basin, Charles received all that he wanted and then left to suppress the revolt in Liège.

The second encounter between Charles and Louis XI was not on the battlefield but in the world of diplomacy. Both men looked across the English Channel to England for diplomatic support and recognition. Several factors conditioned Charles' attitude towards England, the least of them being his Lancastrian sentiments exaggerated out of all proportion.
by historians. His decision to approach England was greatly influenced by the realization that his French allies were not dependable. He saw with what ease Louis had taken Normandy away from Charles of France in December, 1465. The loss of Normandy also put Charles' ally, the Duke of Brittany, in a vulnerable position and, in short, neutralized any threat of a new league. The second major factor which influenced Charles' decision was the recognition of the economic interdependence. Charles had spent much of his youth in the Low Countries, particularly in the county of Holland, and saw its dependence on English raw materials and trade. Louis was very much aware of these close ties and tried to loosen them at any cost. Louis hoped to capture the English trade and, in so doing, deal a crippling blow to the commercial basis of the Low Countries who were the main beneficiaries of England's economic activity.

The Anglo-Burgundian negotiations during the years from 1465 to 1467 culminated in the treaty signed on January 5, 1467, almost a half year before Charles became Duke of Burgundy. Charles could not afford to wait because he realized that action was necessary before Louis could secure English support. Much more was at stake then simply to use the alliance as a club against France. The treaty was a recognition of the economic realities and an assertion of independence. Charles had formally rejected his father's policy of neutrality because he realized the impossibility of it at a time when Burgundian independence was threatened.
by France. The Anglo-French wars seemed to have come to an end forcing Burgundy to re-assess its international position, especially since France laid claims to its lands. A new equilibrium had to be established and, from the Low Countries’ point of view, the obvious choice was England.

During the two years, prior to Duke Philip’s death, Charles became increasingly aware of Louis’ motives concerning England. The several meetings held between Louis and Warwick during 1466 and early part of 1467 seemed to confirm in Charles’ mind that swift action was necessary. Charles sent a high-powered embassy to England under the leadership of Seigneur de la Gruuthuuse, president of the Court of Holland and a close advisor of the duke of Burgundy. His task was to work out the details of the friendship treaty signed October 23, 1466. This embassy remained at London for more than one half year because progress in negotiations was extremely slow. The major stumbling-block was the cloth ban passed by Duke Philip in 1464. Though largely ineffectual it remained on the statute books. No headway was made until after the death of Duke Philip and even then the edict on the cloth was not formally revoked. However, the fact that the treaty of 1466 was renewed on July 15, 1467, and that in September of the same year the English prohibition on trade to the Low Countries was lifted, seems to indicate that the cloth ban would no longer be enforced. The action on the part of Edward would seem to indicate that Gruuthuuse’s embassy had promised the king to allow the
cloth ban to lapse and in no way enforce it in the Low Countries. This seems to be substantiated by the mercantile treaty signed on November 24, 1467. The importance of this treaty cannot be emphasized enough because it represents the new approach of the Burgundian ruler towards England. Duke Charles recognized the economic position of the Low Countries vis-à-vis England. The emphasis on total freedom of commercial exchange implicitly acknowledged the importance of England, especially since the English merchants received the privileges and freedoms they had had under the Treaty of Troyes in 1420.

The diplomatic success of Duke Charles forced Louis to search for alternative means to isolate the Burgundian state. Louis had come to realize that a frontal attack on Charles would end in failure because of the many alliances which had isolated France diplomatically. Consequently, Louis set about to systematically destroy Charles' continental alliances and to keep England occupied with domestic unrest. During the month of August, 1467, Louis managed to keep England and Burgundy occupied with domestic problems while he disposed of Brittany. Louis aided the invasion of Wales by Jasper Tudor, the exiled Earl of Pembroke, which prevented Edward from sending the promised soldiers to Brittany. Charles was occupied with a new revolt in Liège which lasted till the end of October, 1467. By the time Charles or Edward could come to the aid of Francis II of Brittany, Louis had forced the Duke to sign the Treaty of Ancenis in September 10, 1467. The English threat subsided but Duke Charles
marched his troops from Liège to the frontiers of France, near the city of Peronne. Louis, faced with this formidable foe, dared not to gamble the outcome on a pitched battle and therefore hurriedly went to Charles at Peronne to negotiate their differences. This celebrated interview clearly delineated the rivals and their respective claims. The resulting treaty was actually a dictated peace because of another revolt of Liège at the instigation of Louis.

Duke Charles, in his demands at Peronne, was also motivated by a decree issued by the French Estates-General. Louis convoked the assembly in the second week of April, 1468, to deal with the Franco–Burgundian problem. The decree issued intended to put an end to the troubles and divisions between Louis and the French nobility. What made the decree a threat to Charles' position was the personal care devoted to it by Louis. Either the king or his representative guided its passing and therefore in Burgundian eyes it was simply a propaganda measure to gain the full support of the French people. Several of the clauses were chiefly aimed against the claims made by Duke Charles. One of the clauses stated that no domain of the crown could by alienated from France. Thus an implicit claim was made on the duchy of Burgundy since it was an apanage given to a royal prince. However, the sixth clause was a direct attack on Charles' independence since in it Louis asserted that the Duke must "garder les droits de la couronne, et s'employer au bien du royaume". This statement implied that Duke Charles was
only a prince of the realm. Louis' aim was probably no more than an attempt to weaken Charles' international position and dependability. It was also an indirect warning to England that the Duke had no legal right to treat with foreign powers as an independent prince. Duke Philip, at the Treaty of Arras in 1435, had promised France that no treaties would be made that would be detrimental to the French state. On the basis of this agreement Duke Charles was legally obliged to notify the King of France of any impending treaty and was forced to obtain the latter's ratification.

Duke Charles' rejection of these claims of Louis was made very plain during the negotiations at Peronne. The Treaty consisted of two separate documents. The principle of French jurisdiction in Flanders was dealt with as a separate problem. Louis rejected all claims of jurisdiction of the Parlement of Paris over Flanders and Hainault. It is significant to note that the duchy of Burgundy was not removed from French jurisdiction. Had Charles, by the summer of 1468, come to the realization that the duchy of Burgundy could not be part of a unified state? His future activities in Germany seems to demand a forceful negative answer and yet a close reading of the treaty seems to indicate uncertainty in his mind. The agreement reached at Peronne seems to point to an almost exclusive concern for the Low Countries. Why was Charles concerned to eliminate French control in Flanders but not in the duchy of Burgundy? It is not unlikely that
Charles, acting in the traditions of his predecessors, hoped to establish a northern kingdom only. He probably regarded the duchy of Burgundy and Franche Comté as separate and distinct regions. Charles recognized that the institutions of the Low Countries "sont differens aux autres pays". This lack of identity between the two regions created a certain amount of ambivalence in Charles' political thinking. He hoped that by his German ventures he could form a united state. The entry of Charles into German affairs marked his departure from the Burgundian dream. His predecessors sought a monarchy in the Low Countries whereas Charles wanted to bridge the disparate character of his lands through territorial extension. However, this second choice had not yet clarified itself in Charles' thinking because he probably felt that the Treaty of Peronne would open the way for sovereign independence.

The treaty refutes the arguments of modern historians who state that it was Charles' vanity and foolhardiness which drove him on. This document makes quite evident a different perspective on Charles' character. It must be borne in mind that it was a dictated peace and therefore probably written by Charles' advisors. Since it was written by Charles it is safe to assume that the political ideas enunciated emanated from the Duke and his counsellors. The document reveals a deep awareness of the social fabric and of the differences existing between France and Charles' possessions.
The opening argument of the declaration states that because Flemish interests do not coincide with France that they must be treated separately and governed in such a way as to benefit Flanders. Since Flemish commerce, social life, and language are distinct from France it cannot be regarded as a French province but must be acknowledged as an independent entity.

Both documents were signed on October 14, 1468. Much has been made of the fact that Louis was forced to sign the treaty if he valued his life. It is conveniently forgotten that the declaration was not registered in Paris until March 2, 1469, and the treaty on May 18th of the same year. Louis was no longer in the power of Duke Charles and could have neglected to register the treaty but the fact that he registered the treaty and declaration more than a half year later seems to imply that the Duke's claim had some validity. This is not to say that Louis acquiesced to the claims since he simply waited for an opportune time to attack Charles again in 1470. The significance of the treaty is overshadowed by Commines' account of Duke Charles venting his fury on Louis and his duplicity in the Liege affair. Duke Charles is portrayed as a 'raving madman' pacing up and down in his room deciding what to do while the reasonable Commines attempts to calm the furious prince. However, the treaty cannot be ignored if Duke Charles is to be viewed in a proper perspective. The consequences alone were such that Louis found himself in the same position as in the summer
of 1465 prior to the Treaty of Conflans. The Duke of Brittany took courage again and Charles of France reappeared on the scene and received Champagne and Brie as a replacement for Normandy.

The treaty also stated that all former treaties signed between Burgundy and France were to remain in force. Louis also agreed that the Anglo-Burgundian treaties were valid and could be maintained. Duke Charles, in return, promised not to aid or encourage an English invasion of France to which he readily agreed because he was probably very much aware of the increasing troubles of Edward and that an invasion certainly did not have top priority in the councils of the king. Intrigue, civil unrest and Warwick's increasing opposition to royal policy were enough to occupy all the efforts of Edward. Margaret of York had friends who fell victim to the intrigues and her close connection with the English court made her an ideal person to keep Duke Charles well-informed on English events. Charles did not need or desire active English support but simply its friendship. The Duke had achieved most of his goals; France was neutralized, civil unrest had ended, and the Low Countries steadily increased in wealth. There was no need for him to destroy the existing European equilibrium and therefore made no overt moves to heighten Frances hostilities and suspicions.

The treaty of Peronne proved to be the turning point in Franco-Burgundian relations. Louis finally came to realize
that a frontal assault, whether diplomatically or militarily, would inevitably fail. The only way left open to the king of France was to isolate Burgundy in international affairs and to discredit Duke Charles in the eyes of his allies. The next two years bore fruit of Louis' machinations against the independence of Duke Charles.

One of Louis' first aims was to render the French princes permanently harmless and to break their territorial stranglehold on France. As long as Charles of France held Champagne and Brie, Louis was faced with a real threat of unified attack on the part of his brother, Brittany and Burgundy since their lands were contiguous to one another. Louis' political acumen saw that the weak link in this alliance was his brother, Charles of France. Whoever could influence Charles also controlled Champagne and Brie. French and Burgundian envoys intrigued to sway Charles of France but Louis won this round and was able to persuade his brother to accept Guyenne in exchange for Champagne and Brie. Thus by the fall of 1469, the territorial bloc imposed on Louis by Duke Charles, was broken and placed Brittany in a much more weakened position.

The second means to isolate Duke Charles was Louis' use of the Earl of Warwick, the kingmaker. The relation between Warwick and Edward steadily grew worse after the latter's marriage and the elevation of many of his wife's kinsmen to high political positions. Warwick's pro-French sentiments
and Edward's resentment towards the kingmaker did much to influence the king's choice of Burgundian friendship. Commercial ties also played a very important part in the king's choice while they had only a minor role in Warwick's scheme of things. By July, 1469, events came to a head. Warwick and the Duke of Clarence, Edward's brother, openly revolted and took Edward prisoner. Warwick found it a simple matter to capture the king but quite another to keep him under control. He did not want the return of the imprisoned Henry VI or to put the Duke of Clarence on the throne but merely a more obedient and grateful king. However, by the end of 1469 Edward was a free man again and not one bit changed in his policies and attitudes.

Warwick's first attempt to guide the destiny of England, in line with French interests, failed miserably but a local quarrel gave the kingmaker a second chance to gain control. Edward had taken an interest in the quarrel and rumours began to fly that the king intended to come and dispense justice with an army. By spring of 1470 all malcontents and those who despised Edward rallied to Warwick's banners. By May of the same year Edward had successfully defeated the rebels and Warwick and Clarence fled to France. Warwick's flight did much to open the old wounds of the Franco-Burgundian hostilities. The Earl had no compunction about capturing ships from the Low Countries as he crossed the Channel. Warwick was received by the admiral of France and accorded
high honours. Louis must have been aware of the implications of his acts because he continually urged Warwick to send the captured vessels to safer ports. Duke Charles complained vehemently, but to no avail, because Louis was too wrapped up in his plans to reconcile Warwick and Margaret of Anjou, the wife of Henry VI. Since Louis failed to return the pirated vessels, Duke Charles retaliated by confiscating all French merchandise found in the Low Countries. The seizure was legitimate under the Treaty of Peronne which stated that neither party would harbour the other's enemies. Louis was no longer concerned with legal niceties because at this moment he felt too secure to worry about Burgundian threats. By the end of June of 1470 a reconciliation had taken place between Warwick and Margaret of Anjou. All that was needed was a favourable wind to send England into a renewed conflict, leaving Duke Charles practically isolated.

During July, 1470, Warwick prepared his fleet for the invasion of England and in September the proper opportunity presented itself. Warwick successfully invaded England and by October 1, Edward had fled to Holland. Now the roles of international diplomacy were reversed; for the first time Louis succeeded in isolating Duke Charles. A friendly Lancastrian England, a subservient brother and a neutralized Brittany allowed Louis to begin undoing the treaties signed in 1465 and in 1468. But was the threat to Burgundy that great that an Anglo-French invasion was possible? It
seems very unlikely that the English people would voluntarily destroy their commercial markets to please the king of France. A puppet king was not something to get very enthusiastic about or to shed blood for on foreign battlefields. England had had enough of war and desired peace. She had no quarrel with Duke Charles. The Duke might not be loved but he was the lesser of two evils. Warwick was forced to reckon with the desires of the staple merchants who paid the Calais garrison. These men would never consent to a war which could only result in misery for themselves and England as a whole. The early 1470's was a time when England and the Hanse were at war and consequently the entire Baltic trade route was cut off. The merchants of Holland and Zeeland still had access to the Scandinavian markets which made them excellent intermediaries for English products. This was especially important to the Calais staple which wholly relied on the Low Countries for its buyers. Thus English hostilities towards Duke Charles might close the last remaining market in Western Europe.

Warwick, becoming increasingly aware of a general dislike for Anglo-French alliance failed to inform his partner. Louis proceeded to plan the dismemberment of the Burgundian lands and laid out military strategy to defeat Duke Charles. Louis failed to understand the mood of apathy in England. He did not take into account that neither Warwick nor Henry VI declared the Anglo-Burgundian treaty of 1467 as null and
void. It remained in force and in so doing lent credence to Duke Charles' claim that the treaty was signed not with the head of a faction but with England. Louis ignored these warnings of future danger but proceeded by passing an edict prohibiting all commercial exchange with the Low Countries. Charles had not proceeded to this step as yet. However, after considering the balance sheet it was decided to retaliate and all French trade was banned.

Louis' trade bans had no noticeable effects since France was primarily an agricultural base and was in competition with German products on the same markets. The bans were only a preliminary step towards a declaration of war. Suddenly Louis became extremely aware of legalities and called the assembly of Tours to test the validity of the Franco-Burgundian treaties. The assembly met in November, 1470, to hear Louis' grievances concerning Duke Charles. The assembly was asked to pass its judgement on the Treaty of Peronne and to find it not binding on the king of France. It took Louis two years to discover that his oath could be broken legally by arguing that it was an imposed peace even though the treaty had been ratified while he was in Paris and no Burgundian present to force Louis to send it to the Parlement of Paris. Neither Basin nor Commines attach much importance to the meeting. Their silence speaks plainly of the esteem in which the assembly was held. All those close to the court knew that the whole procedure was a sham to provoke Duke Charles
which Basin underlines by emphasizing Louis' faithlessness and foolhardiness.

The declaration passed by the assembly was purposely opposed to the Treaty of Peronne. Duke Charles was accused of ravaging Normandy and harboring the Earl of March. Charles was also found guilty of signing treaties with foreign powers not permitted by the Treaty of Peronne. The assembly also held Charles responsible for the confiscation of French merchandise in the Low Countries. The assembly found Duke Charles guilty on all counts and proclaimed his lands confiscated. The assembly and its judgement is of little importance since it was only a means to attack Duke Charles but what is of greater importance is what was left unsaid. The declaration did not mention the position of the county of Flanders at all. Even when Louis put the judgement into action he was not concerned about the county but attacked the Somme towns. Implicitly, it seems that Louis acknowledged the separation of Flanders from France. No claim of French jurisdiction over the county was made. When Charles was described as a vassal he was called the Duke of Burgundy and no reference was made to his position as the count of Flanders. The fact that the edict of the assembly was not an unilateral rejection of the Treaty of Peronne seems to substantiate the weak legal basis of the judgement passed.

With the law and public opinion on his side Louis acted immediately. He ordered his lieutenants to seize all
Burgundian lands. The king referred primarily to the Somme towns which he attempted to capture by fraud, deceit and persuasion. Louis did not declare war on the Duke of Burgundy but rather tried through subterfuge and treason to gain the victory. Louis' armies captured several of the Somme towns without any trouble but the rest refused to open the gates and Louis dared not gamble on a battle across the Somme. A few skirmishes were fought and some towns in French hands, were put under siege by the Burgundian army. However, all in all, very little fighting took place. Louis' caution paid off since Warwick had been unable to deliver the promised soldiers because of a hostile nation.

When Charles realized that Louis would not launch a full-scale attack on his lands he decided to support Edward and destroy the Anglo-French alliance. Charles did not care who ruled England as long as its king favoured the interests of the Low Countries. Warwick, ruling through a puppet king, would always be a problem so that the easiest way to resolve the issue would be to re-establish the House of York. On January 2, 1471, Edward and Charles met to discuss the return of Edward to England. Charles gave Edward 50,000 florins, several ships and, in addition, Edward hired fourteen Hanseatic ships. Undoubtedly, commercial pressure had also been put on Duke Charles to aid the exiled king since many of the Low Countries' towns dealt directly with the Calais Staple. Charles also took Louis as an example. England, embroiled in
domestic problems, could hardly be relied upon as an effective ally. By March 10, 1471, all was in readiness and Edward landed in England to begin his march on London. Charles could now devote full attention to the French invasion.

The Franco-Burgundian war took on a new turn after Charles had retreated in February, 1471. Charles knew that he lacked the strength to fight a pitched battle and protect the Somme towns at the same time. He allowed Louis to overextend himself and hoped to outwait the king of France. Charles was aware of the plots and counter-plots among the French princes and probably hoped that they would arouse sufficient hostility towards Louis so that the French army would be considerably weakened. The Count of Saint-Pol, constable of the French and a former comrade-in-arms of Charles, played a double role. As commander of Saint-Quentin, the strongest fortified town, the Count hoped to play both sides off against each other and seize control over the ultimate outcome. All would have gone well if Duke Charles had not decided to sign a truce with Louis in the beginning of April. Charles hoped by this truce to stall for time because if Edward was successful in England then Louis' position would be precarious since the plots hatched at the court were destined for the overthrow of Louis.

Discontent was widespread among the French nobles who rallied again around Charles of France whose claim on the
throne was weakened by the birth of a male heir. Brittany was also restless and refused to obey the royal commands. The aim of this new league was to gain Duke Charles' support by a marriage of his daughter and Charles of France. Duke Charles did not reject the proposal out of hand but allowed it to die a lingering death. He had no intention of getting involved in French affairs but desired a return to the political and diplomatic equilibrium prior to 1470. Charles had planned well because on May 4, 1471, Edward fought his last battle. No longer did Edward and Charles have to worry about the Anglo-French threat since the very symbols of English discontent had vanished. Louis' attempt to destroy the alliance system of Charles had failed. In fact, Louis had become the victim of his own trap because a series of alliances of Western powers and the great vassals placed Louis in great peril. He, who had wanted to dismember Burgundy, was now faced with a possible dismemberment of France.

Louis managed to postpone an immediate invasion by signing overlapping truces with the various powers. At no time did all the truces expire at once thus keeping the allies off-balance. One event which brought this balancing act to an end was the death of Charles of France. Duke Charles claimed foul play and declared war on France, forcing Louis to go on the offensive. He attacked Brittany first and the Duke of Brittany was forced to surrender. Duke
Charles assembled his troops and began to move on June 4, 1472. He managed to penetrate deeply into France but was unable to make contact with his allies and England moved too slowly to be of any help. Charles was forced to retreat because he feared that he might be attacked from the rear. The war ended indecisively and a truce was signed on November 3, 1472.

It is difficult to understand Duke Charles' attitude during the summer of 1472 considering that it does not seem to be consistent with the general policy which he had followed for most of his reign. The explanation lies in the diplomatic intrigues of Louis. During the nine months' truce, signed in November, 1471, Charles and Louis were negotiating a full peace treaty. Louis promised to return the towns of Saint-Quentin and Amiens which were still in French hands. During May, 1472 Charles had signed the treaty as did the royal representatives. All that was now needed was Louis' pledge. The death of Charles of France, Duke of Guyenne, changed the diplomatic scene drastically in that his death robbed the malcontents of a symbol to unite under. The duchy, a royal appanage, reverted to the crown. Brittany was once more isolated from the confederates thus offering Louis the opportunity to force its surrender. The return of the duchy ended the threat of a new league and Louis could afford to reject the proposed peace treaty. Louis' rejection was interpreted by Charles as a declaration
of war because he knew that the king of France would move on him as soon as possible. Therefore Charles felt that the best preventive measure was to go on the offensive and force Louis to negotiate. The death of Charles of France was blamed on Louis in the hope that a popular rebellion would follow. This hope failed to materialize probably because France was also tired of the continual wars fought on its soil. After some brutal campaigns both sides decided to sign a truce on November 3, 1472, which declared a stalemate. Charles had gained nothing. Louis had gained much more since his vassals had been weakened to such an extent that they no longer posed a threat to the crown.

The truce between Charles and Louis was never transformed into a treaty but it was continually renewed year after year. The conditions of the truce stated that the towns still in French hands would be returned to Duke Charles and in return Charles would abandon his French allies. The Duke dragged his feet for a while but actually he was quite willing to sign the truce. Charles resented being used by his allies and then find that they were totally unreliable. Consequently, he broke the remaining links with France in his determination never to become embroiled in France's problems again. For the remainder of his reign there was peace between France and Burgundy. Louis had given up and conceded defeat and yet he came out the victor for during the campaign the French towns had sided with Louis, partly, in reaction
to Charles' war tactics, and because by common consensus they regarded the Duke as a foreign invader. The feeling that was present during 1465, namely, a war of nobility, had changed into a "national" war on the part of France.

It was on this note that the direct conflict between Charles and Louis eased. Louis finally accepted the independence of the Duke and no longer regarded him as a vassal. This in no way implied that Louis willingly acquiesced to the situation. He had no choice but to acknowledge the northern territories as a distinct entity from France. Louis never gave up in his attempts to destroy the Burgundian strength but revised his tactics in keeping with the new situation.

The implicit and tacit acceptance of the independent position by Louis caused Charles to seek a legal basis for his rule. The only man who had the power to legalize Charles' position was Frederick III, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. The search for legality was not a novel idea. Philip the Good had also contacted the German Emperor in the hope of being elevated to royal status. Nothing came of it, however, and it was left to Charles to force the issue. The ambiguity of double vassalage became unbearable to Charles, especially since the conflicts with France gave him complete freedom. Another factor which drew Charles eastward was his possession of the County of Ferrette since 1469. The peace with France allowed Duke Charles to concentrate on the problem of
creating a unified state out of the Low Countries and the two Burgundies by gaining the lands between his domains, namely, the duchy of Lorraine. Men began to fear Charles' ambitions and designs on their possessions. Hostility was prevalent everywhere. The Swiss cantons feared Burgundian expansion; Lorraine was afraid to lose its autonomy; and Louis XI refused to accept the proposition of a powerful and independent kingdom on the eastern and northern borders of France. Frederick III did not look too kindly on Charles' desires for a kingdom even though it meant an alliance with the most powerful and wealthiest House in Europe. In fact, he did not even confirm Charles in his Low Countries' fiefs at the Trier meeting in 1473. The following year the League of Constance was formed with the avowed aim to end Burgundian rule in the Rhinelands. Charles was faced for the first time by the whole power structure in northern Europe, excepting England which proved to be of little help anyway. The hostility of the German princes and the revolt of Alsace in 1474 drew Charles deeper and deeper into the German question.

Until about 1473 Charles maintained a proper perspective on the political possibilities in the Low Countries as is evident by the support and cooperation he received from his subjects. During the last five years, no longer living under a French threat, Charles felt the time was right to unite the Low Countries and the Burgundies. However, he underestimated
the resistance in Germany. His decision to enter into German politics marked the beginning of the end because through his actions, he brought his enemies into a common alliance which, in turn, ensured defeat. Charles was too impatient and ambitious to wait for an opportune time to strike, in part, because of the continual hostilities of France. It was only in Charles' time that the Duke faced a rival state on equal terms and was forced to fight for the survival of his inheritance. But, in no way, can he be called rash since he was only continuing the work of his predecessors. In a sense, Charles acted as a catalyst on the political situation in Europe and, in so doing, resolved many of the anomalous claims of European rulers. Charles' seeming defeat made it possible for a Low Countries' state to emerge even though it remained part of a larger empire for another century.
The domestic development of the Low Countries during the time of Duke Charles is generally ignored or dismissed in a single paragraph by modern economic historians. Economic historians are too concerned with the conflicts and changes during Philip's time to take any notice of the position of Duke Charles and the relative internal stability from 1467 onwards. Unquestionably, the type of commercial trade remained constant for the whole of the fifteenth century making no distinction between individual rulers. The type of commerce is overshadowed, under Duke Charles, by the fact that it was this ten year period which enabled the structural changes in the economy to become permanent and to be the foundation for the rapid growth during the sixteenth century. However, Duke Charles rejected his father's economic position because he knew that the economic strength of the Low Countries had slipped out of the hands of the towns of Flanders. He refused to continue the policy of appeasement to Flemish industrial interests but based his economic attitude on the needs of the Low Countries as a unit and consequently favoured and encouraged the economic growth of the counties of Holland and Zeeland. He rejected
the assumption that Flemish municipal interests be upheld to the detriment of the growing rural cloth industry because he accepted the change in the structure of this industry. It was these factors which motivated Charles to deal with the Low Countries in a radically new way. Charles, unlike his father, refused to fight English competition or to subject territorial interests to particularistic tendencies of Flemish corporate institutions. In order to evaluate Charles' attitude it is necessary to examine his relations with the towns, England, and areas of economic interest.

Duke Charles' attitude towards the towns has been grossly misrepresented by many historians. It is quite true that Charles sought to centralize his ducal powers but that he sought to destroy the towns in the process is an oversimplification. During the fifteenth century many rulers had to deal with overmighty subjects and are praised for their actions. Duke Charles was faced with the same situation, the difference being that he had to deal with corporate bodies instead of individual men. Yet, in essence, the task of the 'modern' ruler remained the same.

During their period of economic prosperity the Flemish cloth towns had accrued many rights and privileges in exchange for political support and cooperation. By the middle of the fifteenth century their political position had become untenable due to a changing economy hastened by English competition. The economic changes were the essential causes
for civil unrest in Flanders. Open revolt broke out in Ghent which lasted from 1451 to 1455. The basic issue at stake was the power of Ghent in Flanders. Did it have the right to act independently of its ruler and, if so, to what extent? One would be inclined to dismiss the conflict as merely political in nature but to do so would overlook a very important point. The power structure of Ghent was controlled, in part, by the guilds who were disenchanted with Philip's policies. No doubt, English economic activity also put great pressure on the city, especially, if one remembers that the English export of wool from 1450 to 1451 had declined by as much as fifty percent. Approximately 7000 sacks of wool could hardly employ all the Flemish cloth workers. In fact, from 1450's onwards English export of wool fluctuated between 7000 to 10,000 sacks, greatly affecting the towns and the industries in Flanders so that by 1462 the urban cloth industries were forced to accept defeat. Philip attempted various approaches to remedy the economic decline through the use of cloth bans and financial relief but it was to no avail. Populations declined, famine lived in the cities and slowly the houses fell into ruins. It is against a background of decay, protected by ancient privileges that Charles' actions must be seen and evaluated.

The conflict between Duke Charles and the Flemish towns is best symbolized in his confrontation with Ghent. In 1453 Duke Philip had forced Ghent to surrender its dominant
position in Flanders after he had crushed the two year old revolt. All traditions contrary to the letter of its charters were revoked which eliminated the participation of the workers in civic elections and reinstated the authority of the bailli in urban affairs. The privileges of extending citizenship were curtailed and control over the rural villages and its people was abolished. Philip had succeeded in reducing Ghent to the level of the other towns. It was under these conditions that Charles made his Joyous Entry into Ghent in 1467. His investiture, as count of Flanders, was marred by the troubles which followed a religious festival held at the same time. The city tax office was destroyed by mob violence who then turned their anger on Duke Charles. The mob demanded that Duke Philip's actions of 1455 be set aside and that city government be re-instituted as it was before 1450. Because of his perilous position Charles was forced to give his consent. This signalled the beginning of more civic unrest in other towns. With the suppression of Liège in 1468 the other cities were brought back under control in keeping with the consistent policy of Duke Charles.

Duke Charles refused to accept the quasi-independence of towns because he recognized that a new economic order had come to stay and that the rights and privileges were detrimental to the general economic interests of Flanders. There can be little doubt that Charles was influenced and supported by Holland, Zeeland, Antwerp and the Flemish countryside who
still remembered the trade ban of 1464. The economic philosophy embodied in the Flemish industrial institutions could never be endorsed by those dependent on international trade and open markets. Charles, who had spent much of his time in the county of Holland, was aware of the need for new economic structures and therefore did not hesitate to annul charters which would impede trade. The emphasis placed on Charles' confrontation with Ghent tends to minimize the fact that it was the only city with which he encountered enduring hostility.

The only other major conflict that Charles faced lay in the bishopric of Liège which was not part of the Burgundian domains. The Liège affair, described vividly by Commines, has forged the interpretation of Charles as the man who destroyed freedom and oppressed the cities, a ruler incapable of mercy. This judgement which modern history has accepted would be justified if the events prior to 1467 are forgotten. The Burgundian entry into the affairs of Liège began under Duke Philip who engineered the election of his nephew, Louis de Bourbon, to the episcopal throne of Liège in 1456. The election marked the beginning of the tragedy. Liège became a pawn in the hands of Burgundy and France; each fighting for political control. Philip had installed several of his servants as advisors to Louis de Bourbon while French agents were active among the people. By 1465 the battle lines between Liège and Burgundy were drawn. The Guerre du Bien Public
offered Liège the opportunity to strike back at Duke Philip and on August 28, 1465, Liège sent a letter of defiance to Philip charging him with cruelty and oppression. The city had just signed an alliance with France on June 17th which included a joint battle plan against Burgundy. Liège would attack Brabant and Limburg while Louis invaded Hainault but the French failed miserably whereas Liège managed to penetrate some distance into Burgundian territory. The Franco-Burgundian negotiations leading to the treaty of Conflans, 1465, left Liège completely isolated. Liège was forced to negotiate with Duke Philip and on December 22, 1465, a truce was signed. The people did not have much choice since the defeats inflicted on them spread destruction everywhere. The Burgundian victory marked the beginning of further inroads into Liège affairs. The bishopric could no longer sign treaties without the consent of the Burgundian duke. It was forced to pay for the war and also accept the duke as regent in secular matters. Liège had become occupied territory whose privileges were infringed upon and whose liberties were curtailed. Philip had created a puppet regime to rule a hostile and restless people.

The second important phase in the Liège affair took place in 1468 when a new revolt broke out while Charles was involved with Louis XI at Peronne. The city had fallen into the hands of the revolutionaries whose aim was the eradication of Burgundy from Liège soil. The resentment and hatred
born under Duke Philip continued to motivate the people of Liège, especially, since the Burgundian representative, Louis de Bourbon, was totally inept and corrupt. By the end of October, 1468 the rebellion was completely crushed.

Charles was a victim of circumstance because by the time he became duke the Burgundian–Liège relations had already reached a point of no return. Even before Charles' expedition left for Liège civil unrest ruled the city. Opponents were executed and the power fell to irresponsible leaders who imprisoned the bishop and several ducal envoys. Peace could only be restored by force of arms. The severity of Liège's punishment has captured the critical eye of the historians. Charles probably reacted to, what he felt, was the repeated interference of his diplomatic manoeuvres by the restless city and hoped to end it. Charles was cruel but no more than his father who ordered the destruction of the city of Dinant and watched its downfall with great satisfaction. An element of exaggeration seems obvious if one takes into account that five years later, by 1473, the number of houses equalled that of pre-1468 days. This would seem to indicate that the destruction was not completely carried out nor the heavy fines rigidly enforced.

To judge Charles' attitude towards towns and cities on the basis of his relations with Ghent and Liège is totally invalid. In so doing, every ruler of the fifteenth century stands condemned. Louis XI had to suppress the Norman towns
in 1465, whereas Edward had to contend with the shifting loyalties of English towns from 1469 to 1471. Yet of the three, Charles is judged guilty while forgetting that many other towns under his control flourished and had friendly relations with the Duke. There seems to be no evidence indicating arbitrary rule; rather, we see Duke Charles systematically carrying out municipal reform and defining the powers of the towns, a task initiated by Philip. From about 1450 onwards the ordinances and charters issued by Philip indicate a steady progression towards a re-evaluation of the cities. In January, 1451, Philip granted the right to the municipal council of the Hague to exercise justice, criminal and civil, to all who desired it. The act of granting this privilege implicitly re-affirmed the source of authority which was emphasized by an ordinance issued three months later regulating and controlling the elections to the city council. The stadhouder of Holland and his council were to nominate thirty-two people who in turn would elect fourteen representatives. From this last number the stadhouder was to appoint seven aldermen who would form the executive body, leaving the other appointees to act as an advisory body to the city government.

The regulation of city government forced Philip to examine citizenship which he also began to control. The elections in the city of Goes were carefully regulated by Philip in a new charter issued in 1455. This charter was
an obvious attempt to maintain ducal influence in the town. A more blatant interference in municipal affairs took place in 1456 in the city of Middelburg. Ducal representatives received clearly defined powers which enabled them to intervene in municipal affairs because they received the right to arrest criminals thus taking the judicial functions out of local hands. Many offices dealing with the regulation of trade were also taken from the city and placed in ducal hands to be used for Philip's profit.

The examples cited clearly illustrate that Philip was centralizing his powers for which history has given him the accolade of state-builder. Yet strangely enough, Charles stands condemned because he had a systematic policy in contrast to his father's sometime random control. A closer scrutiny of Charles' reign would clear him of this judgement and declare him a better state-builder than his father. A study of Charles from the time that he was active in government until his death reveal a concern for central control in conjunction with the welfare of the cities. The ordinances and charters issued by Charles indicate a desire of local authority, carefully regulated, but without taking away local initiative in political and economic affairs.

Charles' concern in local affairs dates back to the time when he was stadhouder in Holland during the early 1450's. In 1454 he had granted the city of Goes a new election charter which would reduce ducal influence but not impair it.
charter stated that the eleven incumbent aldermen could nominate twenty citizens. Out of these two groups a new city council would be chosen, namely, two mayors and nine aldermen. Only five of the incumbents could be re-elected and none could serve for more than two years consecutively. Duke Philip annulled this charter the following year and re-instituted an early fifteenth century document which tended to oligarchical rule and direct central control. In 1468, Charles reversed his father's position and gave Goes the charter initially given in 1454. It seems most likely that Charles returned this charter because of popular demand as well as a desire for uniform municipal government.

Many of the other Low Countries' cities were also friendly towards Charles. He gained the support of the Holland cities in his quarrel with Philip in 1464, on the condition that he maintain the local privileges. That he kept his word is evident from the lack of complaints and hostility in Holland for much of his reign. Throughout his reign no charters were issued modifying or curtailing the privileges of the cities of Holland. The charters issued by Charles and his pledges to maintain existing privileges in no way implied an antipathy or indifference to local affairs. On the contrary, in 1469, he ordered his court to examine the rights and privileges of the cities concerning their claim on various administrative offices. He had already renewed the civic charters in the previous year but he wanted
certainty that there was no infringement on his prerogatives. Many of the offices examined were concerned with the regulation and control of the trade which Charles turned over to the cities. Philip had taken these offices for his own revenue but Charles felt that efficiency and the nature of the economy would be better served at the local level. Charles who had spent much time in Holland, knew that a strong central control would endanger economic initiative and wealth. He had seen the effect of ducal policy in Flanders which indirectly destroyed the urban cloth industry. He recognized that a relatively unstructured economy required local initiative and control in order to compete successfully on the international markets. Trading cities could no longer afford protectionism or entertain central directives which ignored their welfare. Charles was aware of this fact for, throughout his reign, no ordinances were issued which could be interpreted as detrimental to a growing industry.

The active interest in local affairs is further illustrated by the continual presence of the cities in the meeting of the Estates-General. Out of the ten meetings held at least three of them were composed of civic representatives. Had Charles wanted to undermine the autonomy of the cities he could have dealt directly with the individual Estates. Instead, he invited cities to the assemblies dealing with such matters as finance, regulation of currency and trade. During Charles' reign the flexible representation continued, allowing the
cities an influential position in the policy-making of the Low Countries. Even Ypres, a dying city, retained its position in the Estates-General. By 1465, it was already evident that Ypres' industry was decaying rapidly forcing the city fathers to find ways and means to relieve the growing poverty. The economic situation continued to deteriorate to such an extent that Ypres had to ask Duke Charles for tax exemption in 1474. Charles reduced the taxes by as much as thirty percent instead of crushing the dominant position of this decadent town.

Duke Charles continued the policy of his father towards the Flemish cities in that he relieved taxation and maintained the Burgundian institutions established there by his father. However, Charles did not continue the economic bans on the countryside for the convenience of the Members of Flanders. In fact, many charters were issued to relatively new towns and villages. Charles was obviously emphasizing the fact that the subjects stood in direct relation to their sovereign and not to a corporate body. The Duke sought to counterbalance the hostility of the Flemish towns by building a solid base in the countryside and in the north. It was these two areas which received much ducal attention and many economic privileges.

The growing rural villages in Flanders and Brabant had been in continual conflict with the large towns who demanded a monopoly of the cloth industry. The fifteenth century witnessed a conflict between the urban and the rural cloth
industry which bedevilled Burgundian domestic politics. Duke Philip, as far back as 1428, had sided with the towns and had issued an ordinance prohibiting the manufacture of cloth in the countryside. This ban failed and the rural villages continued to produce cloth causing civil unrest among Ypres' artisans who accused the city government of failing to enforce the ban on the countryside. The prohibitions failed because it was based on an outmoded economic policy. Economic protectionism had had its day because of increasing prices of the raw materials and a refusal to adopt new markets. The rural industry lacked detailed regulations and control which allowed them to work for smaller wages since the artisan still depended on agriculture for a livelihood. The Flemish towns used only English wool which was becoming increasingly scarce by the middle of the fifteenth century whereas the rural industry turned to other types of wool coming from Spain, Scotland and Burgundy. This wool industry produced cloth mainly for the Hanse merchants and for the Italian markets. These markets no longer desired the luxury cloth partly because of the rising costs as well as the mass production of English cloth which deflated the market and destroyed the supremacy of the Flemish urban industry. By 1462, the cloth industry was completely destroyed causing a migration of artisans to the rural industry.

The political implications of this conflict remained
unresolved in Philip's time. He issued several ineffectual bans and, in general, sided with the protectionist policies of the towns in Flanders and Holland. He felt that he needed urban support to stabilize domestic rule and fend off social unrest. Charles, on the other hand, realized the futility of such a policy. As early as 1460, as Count of Charolais, Charles granted the village of Nieppe the right to use a seal for its cloth industry. By 1469 Nieppe asked Duke Charles to issue a charter regulating the appointment of those who attached the seals to the cloth. The fact that the village asked for at least three appointees would indicate a growing industry, especially since they would be paid for their duties. The people of Nieppe had taken the initiative and it seems that Charles acquiesced to their wishes.

That Charles tended to act on the advise and desires of the local people is also evident in his dealings with Neuve-Eglise. In 1462, Charles, as its hereditary lord, issued a general charter regulating the cloth industry. This charter was motivated by a completely different spirit than that of Nieppe. While the latter was going through a period of prosperity, Neuve-Eglise experienced a depression. The charter stated that an artisan could have only one job and could not work at night. Individual production was limited and it had to be sold collectively. These rules illustrate beyond much doubt the concern of Charles in contrast to his indifference to the decadent urban industries.
The examples of Nieppe and Neuve-Eglise reveal a flexible economic policy on the part of Charles. He took an active interest in the domestic economy which broadened under his personal rule to include the international markets and commercial relations. The international economic activities of Charles are relatively unknown because they have been dismissed as insignificant or are included as part of the aberration of Charles' reign. This kind of attitude fails to understand that Charles brought some realism to the economic necessities of his day, especially, in the relations with England.

Charles' attitude towards English trade and commerce was much more consistent than that of his father. In 1448, Duke Philip had issued a ban on English cloth in the Low Countries and as late as 1454 English cloth was still seized in Middelburg. Charles, as stadhouder, sent one of his servants to investigate the seizure and also to assure the city of his friendship. Charles had recognized the dependence of Middelburg on English trade, especially since the citizens had concentrated on the transit trade to the detriment of native industries. To force adherence to an outmoded edict was tantamount to economic catastrophe which Charles had no intention of bringing about. As the ducal representative in Holland and Zeeland, Charles was supposed to enforce the law and the cloth bans. The crucial situation in Middelburg in 1454 and the repeated complaints of the toll collectors
seem to indicate that Charles did not bother to adhere to ducal policy. He placed the economic interests of the northern Low Countries above the narrow interests of the Flemish towns and allowed the presence of English cloth in Holland and Zeeland.

The Middelburg situation was not the only time that Charles opposed Flemish interests formulated in edicts by his father. The second major confrontation had its roots in the wool trade. In December, 1458, Duke Philip and Henry VI made an agreement that the only wool allowed entry into the Low Countries would be that coming from Calais. Henry VI entered into the bargain because he needed money which the Calais Staple would grant on the condition that it receive the wool monopoly. Philip, pressured by the Flemish towns, hoped to starve the competition coming from Holland and give a new initiative to the Flemish industries. However, Henry did not keep his part of the agreement because a month later he issued licenses to merchants from Holland to trade freely in all goods. The official ban posed some problems for the toll collectors in the succeeding four years. The ducal officers argued that the wool was subject to the customary taxes as stated in the ducal edict. The Court of Holland refused to accept this reasoning and forced the officials to return all the seized goods and to allow free transit. The Court ruled that since the ordinance was not officially proclaimed no merchant could be held liable to the taxes.
The complete confusion created by Philip's policy towards England was finally resolved in September, 1462. Charles acting in an unofficial capacity clarified the situation. He granted freedom from tolls as long as the ships sailed directly from England to their destinations. If they did so they could safely ignore the Duke's ban on wool trade. Charles was probably motivated in his desire for the general welfare of the counties as well as a personal concern. Since 1459 he had received many lands in Holland which directly or indirectly would benefit from the state of economy. Charles recognized the destructive potential of the Anglo-Burgundian agreement of 1458 and sought to neutralize its effects, especially, after the cities of Holland and Zeeland had appealed to him to intervene. Charles' actions ended the growing hostility especially, after he ordered the toll officials to assess only the customary tolls. The effectiveness of Charles in this crisis is evident in that no more complaints were heard and that the conflict ended on a very quiet note.

Charles' attitude towards England remained the same for the rest of his life. Even before his father's death he took an increasingly active part in the formulation of policy and direction. In March, 1466, Edward IV sent an embassy to negotiate a treaty of friendship and trade with Burgundy. The embassy was instructed to deal directly with Charles, indicating the influential position of the heir of Burgundy.
Edward knew that Charles was much more amenable to friendly negotiations than his father who had been dominated by an anti-English faction. The negotiations took place at St. Omer but progress was extremely slow. The Earl of Warwick, the English spokesman, did not favour an Anglo-Burgundian alliance but sought France's friendship. In spite of Warwick's opposition a friendship treaty was signed in October, 1466, which was immediately followed by an exchange of embassies to deal with economic matters. The energetic activity of Charles hardly substantiates the image of a warmonger and a destroyer of nations; rather, that of a man vitally concerned with the welfare of his possessions. He remembered the drastic consequences of the ban of 1464 and it taught him never to compromise on the welfare of the Low Countries to satisfy special groups. His concern for economic growth and expansion brought with it a genuine desire for a close alliance with England regardless of his personal sentiments.

The treaty of friendship was the first step on the road to a new economic alliance with England. Immediately after Philip's death the treaty was renewed while negotiations on economic matters continued. On January 5, 1468, a treaty was ratified by Edward and was proclaimed by Duke Charles during the following month. The treaty allowed a free exchange of goods subject to the customary tolls and gave free access to the fishing grounds in the North Sea. The treaty, in
effect, granted total freedom and protection to trade and commerce. England insisted on one clause to protect itself from a shifting policy and a renewal of the cloth bans. It stipulated that Flanders could not violate any clause in the treaty.

Much has been made of the fact that the cloth ban of 1464 was never officially revoked by Duke Charles. What, in fact, was the real situation? Superficially it would seem that Charles had gained a complete victory since Edward had already revoked the bans on the import of Burgundian goods. One could conclude that Edward had been out-smarted but the facts and statistics do not substantiate this argument. From 1466 to 1469 England exported approximately 40,000 cloths annually, more than twice that in 1464. The sharp increase would indicate that the cloth ban of 1464 was no longer in force. Charles did not officially revoke the ban because he feared the consequences of such an action in Flanders. He left it to the initiative of the Flemish towns to deal with the problem. The lack of unity in Flanders prevented it from being enforced since the very same people responsible for the ban, dressed themselves in English cloth. Reaction to the treaty had set in already because England sent an embassy to Bruges to discuss the difficulties. Nothing was resolved nor were any serious attempts made to do so since no further mention is made by England or Duke Charles. For the remainder of the fifteenth century the
economic relations between the Low Countries and England were no longer subject to the whims of a ruler or of a particular group. Both profited from a free exchange of goods brought about by the planning and foresight of a "rash" man.

Charles was not only active and concerned with English trade but also with France. In this case we see that politics and economy were intricately bound together. One would assume that any economic activity would be negligible due to the continual hostilities. Yet from 1467 to 1470 trade was fairly regular and extensive between the Low Countries and France. No attempt was made to use economic blockades or prohibitions as weapons in diplomacy. Politics and economy were regarded as two separate spheres of interest which seemingly did not overlap. One example of this concept of separation was Louis XI and his relations with the city of Vere. While in conflict with Duke Charles, the city of Vere received commercial licenses from Louis granting them freedom to trade in France stipulating that the merchants could not trade with Brittany or England. This proved to be no hardship since most of the trade concerned foodstuffs for local consumption. The Treaty of Peronne, in 1468, strengthened freedom of trade and prevented any French obstruction of the Low Countries in their economic pursuits. Charles acting on behalf of the economic interests of the Low Countries, also forced Louis to reimburse the merchants for
acts of piracy committed during the hostilities. Charles was concerned for the welfare of the Low Countries because he recognized its dependence on French agriculture for trade and domestic use. That this fear was very real is evident in the next series of confrontations between Charles and Louis.

The year 1470 marked a drastic change in Franco-Burgundian economic relations. The flight of Warwick from England and his acts of piracy on the way to France brought out the latent hostilities. Warwick's booty was sold openly in France and therefore Louis' plea of innocence seemed incongruous to Charles. After complaining to France, Charles retaliated by seizing all French goods found in the Low Countries. Charles' action could not have happened at a worse time for France considering that the Antwerp fairs had just opened at which many French merchants were present. The purpose of the seizure was to compensate the merchants whose goods had been stolen by Warwick. In addition, Charles also issued a ban on November 8, 1470, which prohibited all export of goods to France. He was careful enough not to make it an offence to import goods from France since this would have placed unnecessary pressure on the Low Countries.

Charles refused to act unilaterally during the controversy and called the Estates-General to aid and advise him. The assembly met on November 13, 1470, and after four days' deliberation decided to support and strengthen Charles'
previous ban. Consequently on November 18th Charles issued a new ban prohibiting all trade with France. Charles waited for almost two weeks before the ban was issued, probably hoping that more favourable circumstances would make it unnecessary. The ease with which the assembly passed the resolution tends to indicate that the Low Countries' dependence on French food products had been exaggerated by the contemporary leaders. The Low Countries had access to other sources of food in the Rhineland, Baltic, and England. The ban did not harm the Low Countries because individual French cities had already suspended Franco-Burgundian trade due to warfare and a resulting shortage. This action took place back in 1468 without any appreciable harm to the Low Countries and probably influenced the assembly decision as well.

Louis failed to understand the motivation of the Low Countries during this conflict. Louis, feeling himself secure, proceeded on the assumption that he could starve the Low Countries to civil revolts and the eventual takeover by France. In October, 1470, an assembly of merchants was held in Tours at the behest of Louis. In spite of opposition, Louis forced the merchants to accept his embargo on the shipment of grains and wines to the Low Countries. Louis argued that "des pays de Hollande, Zelande et Flandres ont ties grant necessité de bléz" and therefore must blockade them to gain a victory. The French merchants were opposed to Louis' plans and felt that such actions would harm France much more than its enemies. They realized what Louis refused-
to see, namely, that the economic diversity and complexity of the Low Countries allowed Charles' subjects to seek the necessities elsewhere. Louis' ban proved ineffectual because in succeeding months French merchants continued to trade and hire Low Countries ships. The king of France faced the same stubborn opposition that Duke Philip had also discovered in the Low Countries whenever unpopular economic measures were introduced. Charles by-passed these pitfalls by making the economic sector of the society a force of influence in the governing of his territories.

The unsettled economic situation existing between the Low Countries and France continued until October 5, 1471. By this time Louis had lost his dominant international position and again faced an Anglo-Burgundian alliance. He deemed it wise to seek a compromise with Charles resulting in a truce containing several clauses concerned with economic matters. The truce lifted all restrictions on trade and allowed freedom of movement for the merchants. The mercantile interests of the Low Countries and of France benefited from the new arrangement. The French merchants needed the Low Countries markets and ships to distribute their goods; the Low Countries' merchants could now export cloth and other manufactured goods to a largely agricultural society.

For the rest of Charles' reign there were no major economic conflicts with France. Louis no longer sought to interfere in the international commerce because he had come
to the realization that a successful foreign policy depended on neutral or friendly subjects. No war was acceptable which would cause destruction of the wealth of a state. For that reason no hostility was found in the Low Countries prior to 1474. After this date hostility grew because Charles interfered in commerce through his German policy. Interfering in the Cologne dispute harmed trade since this city was a major German trading centre whose merchants regularly came to the Low Countries' fairs to exchange goods. The independence of the Low Countries' cities and their international connections made it imperative that free access to the markets be maintained, especially, in the Baltic area and the German territories.

Charles' economic policy towards the Baltic and Germany can only be understood in relation to the peculiar position of the towns of the Low Countries. Nowhere else in Europe do we find a similar situation of a ruler vis-à-vis the towns. No English or French city had rights and privileges in international affairs comparable to the average Low Countries' town. Cities such as Middelburg, Kampen, Deventer, Amsterdam acted as independent bodies totally separated from ducal policy and made agreements and commercial arrangements on their own initiatives. A casual survey of the activities of the towns would quickly dispel the image of oppressive rule under Charles. The cities of Holland and Zeeland treated with foreign powers and with other cities with impunity which seems to indicate the approval of Duke Charles.
charters were ever issued directing or controlling the international commercial activity of the towns. The only times that Charles interfered in the international economy were on the initiative of the individual towns. The Duke was the court of last resort in a disagreement between cities and acted as the arbiter of the dispute. Whenever conflicts or misunderstandings arose between a foreign power and a town, Charles always insisted that the interested parties from his territories be present. At no time did Charles make any unilateral trade agreement or formulate policies without the advise and consent of the towns, principally those of Holland, Zeeland and Brabant. The only concern of Charles was that the cities did not, in any way, violate previous agreements signed. His subjects could not take an active part in the Anglo-Hanseatic quarrels of the early 1470's because by taking sides the Low Countries' economy might be endangered. Charles ordered his subjects to maintain strict neutrality and stated that all pirated goods be returned to the rightful owners.

The commercial policy of the cities seldom came into conflict with Duke Charles' political fight for survival against France. The towns took the initiative in opening negotiations and in dealing with other cities. One of the best examples of economic freedom under Duke Charles was the city of Middelburg in its attempts to get the Scottish Staple. In April, 1467, the city opened negotiations with Scotland.
whose merchants objected to the infringement on their privileges in Bruges. James III contacted the city directly without notifying Duke Charles, and by the end of 1468 the negotiations were completed and the staple was transferred to Middelburg. Throughout the negotiations no representatives from the Duke were present. The absence was the rule rather than the exception during Charles' reign. The city of Leyden also negotiated independently from the Duke with the Calais Staple in order to obtain a favourable economic position in the wool market. A third example were the Yssel towns who negotiated individually with the Baltic territories for trading privileges but tended to present a united front in the face of complaints from the Baltic cities.

The unity displayed by the Low Countries' cities was generally only possible under the guidance of ducal representatives who aided the cities to settle external disputes. However, on the domestic scene there tended to be a complete lack of unity. Nothing seems to indicate that the towns were in any way aware of a "national" economy; each sought to profit from the other's mistakes and inertia. The inability of Bruges to re-assess its economic and political situation resulted in the loss of the Scottish staple to Middelburg. Antwerp continually faced the hostility of Middelburg who fought a rearguard action to maintain its importance in the English trade. The city used persuasion and harassment to draw trade away from Antwerp but it failed because the Brabant fairs were ideally located for inter-
All the cities devised ways to improve their economic position regardless of the effect on other towns or the countryside. Rural industry was suppressed or regulated for the benefit of a particular town. Suppression was the rule in Flanders while in Holland the tendency was to control rural industry and to make it an integral part of the urban industry. Spinning was ideal to send to the countryside since it was primarily a home industry done by women which also made it automatically cheaper. Cities such as Amsterdam guarded their control carefully and imposed heavy fines on those who worked for other cities.

The internal conflict disappeared before the threats to the economic welfare in which the cities had a vested interest. The best example is the cities of Holland and their difficulties in the Baltic area. The main problem was the Hanse's insistence that its staple at Bruges be the only means of trade with and to the Baltic area. The non-Hanseatic cities such as Amsterdam refused to follow this policy as did many of its members who felt that only Lubeck would benefit from this monopoly. Other German cities such as Hamburg and Danzig sought ways to accommodate the intrusion of Holland ships in the Baltic. The conflict came to a head during 1470 at a meeting of the Hanse in Lubeck. The resolutions passed were aimed at Holland in that at least fifty clauses dealt with the Holland shipping indicating that the Hanse faced strong competition. The following year the
same resolutions were passed again with the added provision that the Hanseatic staple at Bruges receive the monopoly on the Baltic trade. It is noteworthy that no cities from Holland were present even though some were members of the Hanse. It is not unlikely that the Holland cities recognized the untenable position of the Hanse as well as a potential retaliation on the part of other Holland cities. The tone of these resolutions was much too strong because now the Hanse insisted that all cloth be sent to Bruges before it could be sold in the Baltic lands. Considering the geographical locations of many of the Holland cities it is no wonder that they rejected the Hanse's claims. They realized that it was much cheaper and more profitable to ship directly to the appointed destinations. Many of the German cities also ignored the resolutions and continued trading in a competitive market.

The conflict remained unresolved until the summer of 1473. Meanwhile Duke Charles had not remained idle. Already in August, 1471, Charles had asked the Hanse to reconsider its staple policy but it had refused to do so arguing that the Duke ought to remember that its policy could only benefit the Flemish cloth industry. There is no doubt that cities such as Leyden had put pressure on Duke Charles to intervene in the dispute because in May of the same year Leyden resolved to fight the Hanseatic policy by any means the city had at its disposal and had appealed to the Duke
Charles had tried to mediate but the situation continued to deteriorate especially after the truce ended in 1471. In the spring of 1472 the Hanse had issued resolutions aimed at preventing all Holland trade in the Baltic area. This action only aggravated an explosive situation which could lead to open warfare. Neither side wishing to go to that extreme opened negotiations in Utrecht in July, 1473. The first session resolved nothing since the Holland cities made progress conditional on the removal of the staple policy. Charles had empowered the civic representatives to open the negotiations but by December the Duke decided to take an active part in the deliberations. Ducal commissioners were appointed to lead the embassy in the discussions. The negotiations were slowed down by such questions as tolls, seizure of goods and access to markets. Finally on April 29, 1474, an agreement was reached. The staple was lifted allowing free access to the Baltic lands. Other grievances were also ironed out and regulations were issued governing diverse aspects of commerce. Charles had intervened to end the conflict but only after the cities themselves had reached an impasse and had asked for his help. Charles' representatives worked in close consultation with the cities to ensure that the economic interests of the ducal territories were not infringed upon.

Charles' interest and concern in the Baltic was consistent with his economic policy. He saw the general welfare of his territories rather than the local interests of individual
towards. He refused to placate hostilities by granting economic privileges or to salvage a decadent industry by suppressing a competitive one. Charles, who was faced with continual destruction by Louis, recognized the need of a strong economic base, broad enough to include the vital areas. The constant pressure put on the Low Countries helped to shape Charles' views to such an extent that he saw the Low Countries as a unit rather than as individual territories owing simple dynastic allegiance. His policies cut across territorial lines and enabled him to bring cities together to work for a common interest. There were no complaints of economic poverty caused by endless wars nor was any open hostility displayed towards Charles because of his foreign policy.

The ability to work together without any overt signs of hostility was possible so long as a French invasion seemed imminent. It was only when Duke Charles revealed his ambitions in Germany with their drastic consequences that he met opposition from the towns and the ruling bodies. The Low Countries refused to accept the expansionist schemes of Charles and opposition to ducal policy was already evident by spring of 1473. At the Estates-General meeting held from January to the end of March, 1473, it became increasingly clear to Charles that the true source of power was in the hands of the Estates. Whenever Charles demanded aid the representatives returned to their local Estates for a decision which was
then brought to the assembly of the Estates-General. Charles needed the permission of the Estates to levy troops and taxes. The extent of the control over finances is evident in the Estates-General of 1473. Charles had asked for 600,000 crowns per year for ten years which was reduced by the Estates-General to 500,000 crowns per year for six years. Charles had no alternative but to accept this settlement. The control of the local Estates, expressed in the Estates-General, clearly illustrates that despotism in the Low Countries was a myth.

The levy of troops was also a matter of concern for the Estates-General, particularly, after the defeats in 1476. In the session of 1476, Charles asked for arms since he could not ask for aids which he had already received in 1473. Again, the representatives returned to their local Estates for a decision. When the meeting reopened, Holland and Zeeland registered formal refusals while some of the other regions were willing to make a nominal contribution. The Estates-General was asked to regard their decision as an opinion and not as an irrevocable one. The assembly argued that it had been called to decide and that, according to its institutional powers, it could not act as an advisory body. The finality of these decisions seem to indicate that the Estates-General was more than just a repository of financial wealth. Indirectly, through its decision, it could influence the policies of the Duke and to a certain
extent direct them.

The central institutions, aside from the Estates-General, have not been studied by historians except, in so far as to say, that they were a means to despotic rule. The only central institutions in existence by 1477 were the Estates-General, Parlement of Malines and a treasury. We have seen that the Estates-General was not simply a rubber-stamp assembly but that it could make unalterable decisions. However, much more criticism is aimed at the last two institutions, especially the parlement. The Parlement of Malines grew out of the ducal Great Council (Groote Raad) and became the sovereign judicial body of the Low Countries. Its primary function was "à deduire et determiner grandes sentences et affaires, et prend la paire d'ouyr toutes les opinions". In the absence of the Duke the chancellor was to preside at all the meetings. The parlement held daily sessions throughout the year except for the summer months. The objection raised to the establishment of this institution is based on the assumption that it was a foreign novelty introduced by Charles. However, it would be more accurate to say that Charles adopted a foreign term for certain functions already carried out by the cumbersome Great Council.

The desire for efficient and equitable justice also caused Charles to appoint a provost-marshall whose duties were "à faire les executions criminelles, et par tous les pays du duc a jurisdiction et pouvoir". Charles refused
to condone the situation in which a criminal could flee from one county to another and be protected by law. This action in no way implied that territorial laws were replaced but it was intended to strengthen the laws. That this was a welcome innovation is evident in the fact that no complaints were registered by the Estates-General during the reign of Charles. Even when Mary, in 1477, met a hostile assembly no mention was made to have this law removed nor did anyone object to the weekly audiences given by Duke Charles to dispense justice to the poor. Charles' actions in this respect carried the approval of the contemporary chroniclers who seemed to be impressed by the kind of justice handed out by the Duke of Burgundy.

The popularity of justice stands in sharp contrast to the financial reforms of Duke Charles. However, he cannot be accused of innovation because his father had already begun the process of financial centralization by abolishing the chamber of finance in Holland in 1463 and uniting it to that of Brussels. Local officials were required since 1465 to bring their accounts before ducal representatives in each territory instead of travelling to Brussels. Charles continued in the tradition of his father. He combined the chambers of account of Lille and Brussels and established this new institution in Malines. Charles also regulated other sources of income such as those of tolls, seals, and justice. The unpopularity of these measures
was largely caused by the officials who all came from the duchy of Burgundy and was reinforced by the Burgundian intervention in Germany. The emphasis on financial administration, vested in Malines, awakened the fear that it was simply a means to extort funds not obtainable through legal channels. Charles had brought in a "foreign" institution instead of using the existing ones and invest them with powers to create efficient government.

The functions of the various institutions increased in importance due to ducal foreign policy and to an increasingly complex society. Charles' attempt to centralize government was a response to the many diverse problems in the Low Countries. A single chamber of finance, a Parlement at Malines, and the increasing use of the Estates-General reflected the Duke's desire to eliminate unwieldy administrative procedures and to reduce the size of a growing civil service. The hostility expressed in 1477 was not primarily aimed at the institutional reforms but it was a reaction to the increasing use of "foreigners" at the ducal court.
CHAPTER V

THE AFTERMATH

The reign of Duke Charles has generally been minimized or misinterpreted because the five years following his death have been regarded as a period of reaction. Though not entirely invalid, such a generalization tends to simplify the complexity of the situation as Mary of Burgundy and her contemporaries saw it. The effect of such a sweeping generalization is that it ignores the interwovenness of a society whose component parts, whether economic, social or political, made demands on the ruler to satisfy particular interests. Just because demands were made for administrative and constitutional reforms in no way implies the corollary of political regression or destruction. If we accept the thesis that the five years following the Duke's death were reactionary in spirit then a grave mistake is made. In so doing we attach more importance to the demands and grievances with the resulting "Great Privilege" than did the contemporaries. The representatives from Holland and Zeeland did not even bother to make a copy of it but merely asked for, and received, individual privileges relating to their demands. The attitude of the northern counties would seem to indicate that there was no concerted effort, on the part of the Estates-General or its representatives, to destroy the
From the kinds of demands and grievances known it seems that the time following the death of Duke Charles was an attempt to assess and adopt the policies begun under Duke Philip in the late 1450’s and systematically worked out by his son. The counties and cities protested the iniquities and shortcomings of the Burgundian institutions but there is no real evidence indicating a desire to turn the clock back a century. However, it is true that the Flemish cities, primarily Ghent, cast their eyes to the past, hoping to re-capture the glory and wealth of bygone days. But, on the whole, most of the cities and regions demanded a continued voice in civic and territorial affairs. All desired an affirmation of the existing privileges and wanted additional ones in an attempt to safeguard their economic and political position. The voice of dissent was strong, emanating from Ghent, but the threat of an external enemy made unified action still possible in spite of internal conflicts.

The whole conflict of 1477 and the subsequent events have caused the historians to overlook the durability of Charles' work. Was the change in these years so radical as to destroy the political foundations laid by the last Duke? To answer in the affirmative would only perpetuate the historical fallacy of the rash rule of Duke Charles. This judgement implicitly denies a continuity in the growth of the political state which is evident in much of the documen-
tary material available. To accept such a hypothesis forces the historian to use the particular events in Ghent and generalize for the whole Burgundian state, making this Flemish city simply an example of wide-spread discontent and civil unrest. If we accept this generalization then we can safely argue that the reaction was completely successful in forcing the Burgundian ruler to abdicate many of his prerogatives causing the destruction of central authority and the loss of ducal initiative. However, this whole argument of modern historiography is based on the assumption that the various counties and regions forged a common bond in their confrontation with Mary of Burgundy. Nothing could be further from the truth. Each region made direct application to the Duchess for privileges indicating an overwhelming support given to dynastic rule rather than territorial allegiance.

The position of Mary of Burgundy vis-à-vis the territories and the counties is best illustrated in the events of the Estates-General meeting held in the spring of 1477. Ostensibly, the session was called to regulate the succession and to deal with the threat of invasion; but, in fact, the assembly ranged over a wide variety of topics. The discussion held and the meeting itself, though misinterpreted by history, best reveal the successes and failures of Duke Charles' reign.

A proper understanding of the Estates-General of 1477
demands that we realize the social and political background in which it opened. The rumour of Charles' death swept like wildfire through the Low Countries, making county governments and cities apprehensive about the future. They realized the gravity of the situation, namely, that of a nineteen year old girl facing the hostile and subtle Louis XI. No wonder that town councils and other governing bodies passed ordinances to keep the peace. What increased their fear was the volatile situation in Flanders, particularly in Ghent. Once more this Flemish city was in an uproar demanding "leurs anciens privileges qui leurs avoient este ostez par la paix de Gavre faicte ledict duc Philippe, et autres par le duc Charles". It seems that this city made a tradition out of revolt. Throughout Burgundian history Ghent was always in the forefront of civil unrest and each time the same complaints were uttered. This time it was no different. The city seized the opportunity to regain the outmoded privileges and rights suppressed by Philip and Charles, especially since Mary was in desperate straits and had no alternative but to concede defeat. What in effect happened was that the guilds again controlled the town as they had done prior to 1450. The incumbent magistracy and town council were replaced and forced to flee or face certain death. To argue that the activities in Ghent were a reaction to Charles' personal rule is to simplify the situation. The rebels turned to the past not because of the political structure as such but because it
was based on economic prosperity. It does not seem unlikely that newly instituted government was intended to counteract a decaying economy with the hope that the new rule would automatically bring back the wealth and industry of decades ago. It was the naive understanding of economic forces with its interdependence on political and social structures which brought out this reactionary element in the citizenry of Ghent; especially, considering that it was the workers who hoped to benefit from this change. The workers hoped to eliminate the centralized control instituted by Duke Charles because the ducal policy was not in keeping with their interests. Control of civic administration would bring them into closer contact with the economic resources necessary for the industries. Local autonomy would also ensure control over the countryside, thus eliminating any competition and economic threats to the city.

It was in such a hostile atmosphere that the Estates-General opened on January 26, 1477, in Ghent. There can be no doubt that the revolutionaries exerted great pressure on the representatives from other cities and regions to present a united front in their demands on Mary of Burgundy. It is at this point that many historians argue from false assumptions that all the representatives banded together in a common cause; adding great weight to the thesis that it was a reaction against Charles. However, the facts are slightly different. The representatives of Holland and Zeeland did
not leave for Ghent until February 19th, after having received several letters insisting on their presence. By the time that they had arrived most of the decisions had been made by the Flemish majority. The attitude of Holland and Zeeland to the events was basically one of indifference. Matters of concern had already been discussed and decided by the cities in a meeting held in The Hague on January 14th. That meeting was called when the death of Charles became known in order to take the necessary measures for the maintenance of the peace. The major complaints of the cities of Holland and Zeeland were not directed against the policies of the late duke but were aimed at administrative and political abuse. There was resentment towards "foreign" ducal representatives who held lucrative and influential posts but were unable to communicate with the people in their native language. The level of taxation was also a matter of great concern to the northern counties because of its effect on the economy. In addition, the cities also wanted more of the powers already given to them by Duke Charles in order to eliminate the control of the nobility in civic affairs.

The grievances of the cities of Holland could not be acted upon until a formal meeting of the local Estates was held on February 12th, by Mary's representatives. The fact that the Estates of Holland met separately and did not send representatives to Ghent immediately would seem to indicate the lack of a common bond and of concern. Once the
meeting opened in the Hague the representatives took the initiative and declared that all the "foreign" officials could no longer hold office. This was, in part, in defiance to the decree issued by Mary that the servants of her father retain their offices temporarily. It was not an attack on the central authority but a reaction to the heavy-handed rule of the ducal representatives. The grievances and demands of Holland and Zeeland can hardly be described as contributing to the destruction of central authority; it was a revolt against abuses which must be corrected through legal channels. No attempt was made to use armed force to gain the desired ends; instead, political pressure was brought to bear on Mary to rectify the situation.

It was in this mood of defiance that the representatives from Holland and Zeeland set out for Ghent and the Estates-General meeting already in progress. On their arrival the representatives faced an entirely new situation. They had been called to deliberate with the other regions on matters of mutual concern but found that all the major decisions had been reached. On February 16th the Estates-General had promised Mary military aid against French threats of invasion and agreed on the contributions to be levied from each region. Holland and Zeeland refused to go along with this decision but promised to contribute towards the defense of the sea. The northern counties were totally indifferent to the threat of an invasion by France because their only concern was the stability and welfare of the north. The
Indifference of Holland also extended to international affairs. The Estates embassy sent to negotiate with Louis XI was composed solely of Flemish representatives. Ghent, Ypres and Bruges played a dominant role in these affairs indicating that they had no wish to return under French legal jurisdiction. The north had no such fears because its overlord was distant and without any military strength. This difference of positions was also very relevant in domestic affairs. The north wanted to prevent ducal interference in civic affairs while Flanders hoped to join the interests of the ruler with those of the cities as was the case under Duke Philip.

The lack of unity among the counties and regions in the Estates-General marked the inevitable failure of the reactionary movement. The lack of support given to the Great Privilege robbed the document of any of its constructive potential towards the building of a national state. It failed because not all the representatives were present when it was signed by Mary on February 11th; Holland came more than a week later. That the document was held in slight esteem can be deduced from the fact that many privileges were granted to particular towns and counties. These two factors in themselves would be sufficient to reject the claim that the Great Privilege was the first common charter for all the Low Countries. The common consensus seems to be that the Great Privilege destroyed any hope of centralized
government and doomed the Burgundian dream to failure. In so doing the historian is guilty of attaching too much importance to the success of the reactionary elements and accepting the demands at face value.

What then were the demands that "destroyed" the central government of the Burgundian rulers and cause the historian to blame Duke Charles? The grievances can be classified as those pertaining to administrative abuses and those concerning the recognition of de facto situations. In the latter category we find that the demands were based on recognized precedents. The Estates-General demanded to be consulted on war and peace. Legally the people had no claim on international affairs but in reality they controlled the purse strings which made consultation essential for the success of any venture. This concept was not foreign to the Low Countries because in 1465, Duke Philip also consulted the Estates-General before declaring war on France. Charles also called the assembly in 1470 to deal with French hostilities. The fact that the Estates-General wanted a formal affirmation of their role in international affairs in no way implied that they claimed the right to initiate war or peace. It wanted recognition of its position vis-à-vis the ruler.

The other claims relating to existing situations were military service and the right to meet without ducal approval. In both instances precedents had been set. In the case of military service Charles had tried to gain the consent of
the Estates-General to allow troops from the Low Countries to serve in foreign wars. The assembly refused the request and no further attempt was made to circumvent the decision. Again, the Estates-General simply wanted this existing situation confirmed, especially since there was no enthusiasm for another Franco-Burgundian war.

The right to meet with or without the consent of the ruler was not a novel idea at all. In 1464, during the quarrel between Philip and Charles, the cities and representatives met to discuss an end to the family conflict. Philip argued that they had no right to meet without ducal approval but he did not reprimand the Estates of Flanders when it met to discuss problems to be submitted to the Estates-General. What probably motivated the representatives to make the demand in 1477 was the uncertain future of the Low Countries ruled by an inexperienced and young woman. There was probably the desire to establish precedents which could be used at times of crises to prevent a total collapse of power. Again, to assume that this claim led to the destruction of the central government is a distortion of the reality. If there was a real desire to destroy ducal authority why were the necessary steps not taken to fill the so-called vacuum left by the retreat of Mary? How is it that no new governing bodies were called into being to exercise the initiative of rule? Are we to assume that the people of that day were so naive as to be incapable of realizing
the consequences of their demands? The answer to these questions obviously is that the Estates-General had no intention to destroy ducal initiative or control. It seems rather odd that it is possible to destroy a centralized state which did not exist in reality! Duchess Mary, as did her predecessors, ruled a heterogeneous group of territories who owed a simple dynastic allegiance.

Why is it then that modern historiography emphasizes the destruction of a central government which existed, if at all, only in embryonic form? Many historians point to the abolition of the Parlement of Malines in support of their argument. The reasons for the abolition of the parlement were varied but they had basically the same motivation. The act as a conciliatory gesture towards France could hardly measure up to the growth of a territorial "nationality". There was a growing awareness of linguistic differences and a corresponding insistence on its use. The representatives demanded that the chancellor be fluent in Latin, French and Flemish and that the secretaries know at least two of these languages. The resentment towards the Parlement of Malines was not so much its centralized character as the "foreign" overtones attached to it. It was a French institution imported in 1473 and operated by Burgundian lawyers rather then by men from the Low Countries. It is true that the Estates-General was also an imported institution but the essential factor to consider here was its
composition. This institution belonged to the representatives of the Low Countries only, whereas the parlement was in the hands of "foreigners" in which the Low Countries had no voice.

The Estates-General sought to rectify its position vis-à-vis the central government by replacing the parlement with the Great Council. The institution of this new organ of central government cannot be explained as merely being a front to allow local autonomy to rule supreme. The Great Council was an attempt by the representatives to bring centralized rule in line with the political structure of the Low Countries. Each county had its own judicial structure through which appeals moved culminating in the court of the ruler in the form of the Parlement of Malines. Only disputes which could not be solved at the municipal or county level were sent to Malines. The Great Council assumed the role played by the parlement but with one major difference. The Burgundian membership would be the minority while the majority of posts would go to the Low Countries and princes of the blood. The Council continued to concern itself with matters outside the jurisdiction of the counties as the parlement had done before.

The Great Council was not the organ of reaction but a statement of the political reality of the fifteenth century Low Countries. It has been mentioned before that the regions only owed dynastic allegiance thus implying
the "federalist" nature of the Burgundian state. The emphasis on local language rights and the continued existence of local customary law added strength to the "federal" concept of government.

In addition the representatives desired that the regional councils and treasuries be re-established in order to safeguard local privileges and rights. This demand must be seen in relation to the foreign policy of the late Duke. The many years of war needed to be financed with funds coming from the Low Countries. The regional treasuries, being too cumbersome in collecting taxes, were abolished in favour of a central body established at Malines and staffed with men from the Duchy of Burgundy. Consequently, on the death of Duke Charles the Estates-General demanded a return to the structures prior to 1473. The representatives probably objected to the financial centralization because it tended to conflict with the existing rights of the counties. From time immemorial the local Estates had had the right to vote on financial matters pertaining to their region. A central authority, staffed by "foreigners", might not be amenable to regional interests and might attempt to devise ways to get funds illegally. The Estates-General sought means to safeguard their rights in a time when the future of the Low Countries looked grim indeed.

The fact that the Estates-General was not as reactionary as it is generally assumed may be further illustrated by the
other demands made during the session of 1477. These grievances also go far to reject the notion that medieval politics triumphed over the modern rule; that destruction, not reform, was the motivating force. The assumption that the movement was destructive is based on the mistaken idea that the representatives were incapable of distinguishing between the principle of rule and administrative abuse. This argument is further bolstered by stating that the tone of the Privilege was negative and therefore by its very nature destructive. This interpretation of the events seem rather peculiar considering that the Low Countries had a forum for discussion since the 1420's in which to present their views and bargain for rights and privileges. Were these fifty years not sufficient to teach one of the most advanced regions of the fifteenth century some political skill? Are we to assume that by 1477 these representatives were politically so naive that they could not differentiate between the principle of rule and the need for reform? From the debates and demands it is obvious that the Estates-General had matured sufficiently to cope with this problem. Its first order of business was to declare Mary of Burgundy as its natural ruler and to state its wish to remain united under her. The restructuring of the administration in no way implied regression but it was motivated by economic and social needs of the various counties which had suffered somewhat during Charles' German venture which was very
unpopular in the Low Countries.

The grievances formulated at the assembly dealt with administrative abuses which had crept in during the last 45 years of Duke Charles' reign. The representatives objected strenuously to the existing military structure and demanded certain changes. They wanted the abolition of feudal military service and a guarantee that the soldiers of the Low Countries would only be used in a defensive war. The insistence on these changes was predicated on economic needs. Any kind of warfare could harm trade and commerce because it deprived the industries of able-bodied men, raised the level of taxation and closed markets. To counteract the effects of a necessary war, the representatives also stipulated that economic sanctions could not be used as a military weapon in the hands of the ruler. Was this demand a return to Philip's days? It was rather the reverse. The Estates-General probably still remembered the consultation with Charles on economic warfare and wanted to see this method embodied in the administrative tradition to prevent a willful ruler from destroying the prosperity of the Low Countries. This demand was also in keeping with the rejection of feudal service. In so doing, the representatives hoped to neutralize the influence of the nobility and to maintain the economic initiative of the towns. They probably wanted to prevent, at any cost, interference from the nobility in civic or economic affairs.
The position of the nobles had been emphasized in 1476, when Charles was in desperate need for troops. Since the Estates-General refused, Charles was forced to rely on the feudal structure exclusively and consequently brought this untenable situation into focus, forcing the representatives to act. The Estates-General did not act without precedent. The principle of military service in defensive warfare only, had already been emphasized and stated unequivocally in 1476 based on the existing charters of the counties. That this claim was reiterated in 1477 was due to the French invasion of the Duchy of Burgundy, Artois and Picardy. The Low Countries, lacking any identity with these areas, refused to become embroiled in the hostilities but were willing to levy troops and money to prevent an invasion of the Low Countries and to keep the seas free. The military grievances indirectly point towards the spirit of the Low Countries. There was a vague sense of kinship, best expressed in their common affirmation in recognizing Mary as their ruler. The willingness to defend the Low Countries against invasion would also seem to indicate the presence of a common bond; a very vague glimmering of nationhood.

The common concern expressed in the Estates-General is further demonstrated in the economic grievances. The representatives wanted internal trade freed from municipal and other local tolls. During the reign of Charles the toll system had led to much abuse and friction. The Toll of
Iersekeroord, in Zeeland, is a case in point. Charles expanded the authority of this toll to cover all the channels leading in and out of the county in spite of the opposition of Zeeland. Once the Toll was established it was not uncommon for Charles to grant other cities exceptions in exchange for certain services. In 1470, Charles sold this Toll to the highest bidder who was then forced to recuperate his losses by increasing the level of the tolls. The situation deteriorated more because individual towns used the toll system to attract trade and to harass the competition. By 1477 the situation had become so intolerable that by general consensus it was decided to abolish all internal tolls completely. It was further stipulated that no tolls could be levied without the consent of the county involved. This reaction set in, not to abrogate ducal powers, but to prevent the economy from falling into the hands of greedy toll collectors and to circumvent the whims of an ambitious ruler. Too many cities depended on trade to allow the existing abuses to continue. Antwerp, as one of the great centres of exchange needed the relatively free access to encourage merchants to come. It was simply good economic sense to ensure the safety of the mercantile interests and to increase the access to other markets. The economic attitude of the Estates-General can hardly be described as reactionary and as leading to the destruction of the Burgundian state. The abolition of the toll system and its corresponding free access to markets
would tend to draw the various regions together into a closer economic unity giving a basis for the development of a national state. Thus we can already discern the drive for an inner economic unity in the Low Countries.

Having examined the role of the Estates-General during the spring of 1477 can we still say that the whole affair was simply reactionary bent on the destruction of Charles' work? The answer is not as simple as it may seem from the vantage point of modern historiography. The claims of the reactionary elements, appearing with regular monotony since 1302, have been overemphasized to the detriment of the basic motives which had unanimous support of the representatives. The reaction, mainly in Flanders and Brabant, was one of economic discontent and dislocation. While the poverty level in Antwerp was decreasing steadily under Philip and Charles; that of cities such as Louvain more than doubled. The immigration of unemployed craftsmen and other people to England, Holland and Antwerp increased significantly during this same period. The smaller towns, facing economic hardships, tended to be extremely critical of ducal policy and assumed that once the work of princes was undone all would be well. The cities who suffered the most economically from English and native competition may be classified as the carriers of the reactionary movement during the assembly of 1477, the most vocal being Ghent, Ypres and Bruges. All three of them had suffered irreparable damage from the English
and rural competition. Wool, the basic raw material, had become scarce and markets were shifting northward leaving the Three Members of Flanders to decay. In reaction they looked to the past for solutions and guidelines. Bruges suppressed Franc de Bruges, fourth member of Flanders, prohibited rural industry, and reinforced a staple policy. Similar policies were enacted in other major cities. A reconstruction of the past, in spite of its artificiality demanded a return to a form of central government which allowed the existence of semi-independent states owing simple allegiance to a weakened prince.

In contrast to the rabid particularism of decaying towns there was the more moderate attitude of the prosperous towns to the north. These towns had no wish to return to the political patchwork of the past but sought to define ducal prerogatives and to limit the absolutist tendencies inherent in the Burgundian bureaucracy. This moderate attitude was reflected in many of the demands made on Mary of Burgundy. The dissociation of the north from the extreme position of the Flemish reactionaries indicated that it had no desire to see Flanders dominating the economic scene. Its commercial connections with England and the Baltic opened up a great future which could not be jeopardized by an outmoded staple policy and economic suppression. Holland and Zeeland did not concern themselves with Flemish internal affairs because, whatever the results, there would be no
repercussions from them outside Flanders.

It was these two diametrically opposed forces which were very much present during the sessions held in 1477. To minimize either one leads to misinterpretation. The Estates-General cannot be described as having a "national" identity for, in so doing, we attribute a deeper motive than is evident. Instead, we must see this meeting as the occasion for the articulation of economic and political problems and the search for solutions based on local interests. This provincial attitude was not a novelty in 1477, but had always existed and continued to do so afterwards. The Burgundian form of government was a superimposition on local customs and traditions. The programme of centralization, begun under Philip, was bound to result in open conflict regardless who the ruler might be. Adaptation and transformation of the new political structure was necessary before it could hope to function efficiently and be adopted by the Low Countries as was the Estates-General itself, which was absorbed into the political life of the Low Countries. It was in 1477, after a series of military setbacks and increased taxation that the opportunity came to tackle this problem.

The privileges granted by Mary to the various counties indicates the strength of the reform movement on a regional basis whereas those given to individual cities and towns, particularly in Flanders, were reactionary. The cities of Holland also received privileges but these tended to continue
the policy of Duke Charles. New charters concerning civic government and jurisdiction were issued while the existing ones were confirmed and, occasionally, enlarged. The concessions made and the privileges given by Mary seen in their overall context negate the overwhelming support given by historians to the revolutionary and reactionary elements. The success of the Flemish towns was of short duration because by the end of the fifteenth century, Antwerp had replaced Bruges as the major trading centre of Northwestern Europe. The growth of Antwerp, the penetration of Holland into the Baltic, and the loss of staple products made the victory, gained in 1477, an extremely hollow one. The moderate faction benefited from the privileges received since the demands were based on the realistic needs of the particular counties.

On the basis of the demands articulated and the privileges granted can we still speak of Charles the Rash or the Bold, used in the pejorative sense? Hardly, because whatever his motivations may have been, Charles contributed to the growth of the Low Countries as a political unit. Some of his innovations were rejected as "foreign" while other institutions were transformed; but, the essence and strength of the central government remained.

Charles' contribution towards the development of the Low Countries as a political entity is much more evident in the foreign policy of Mary and Maximilian of Austria and in
the attitude of the counties towards France. It is an easy matter to relate the events chronologically and to place all guilt on the reactionary Estates-General. History, as in a court of law, tends to sympathise with the helpless young girl surrounded by greedy and selfish men. The effrontery of such men to dictate policy to a politically innocent woman! The judgement being unanimous, the case is closed and with great eagerness Maximilian is welcomed by the historian, the man who will destroy this evil malignancy.

Why is it that the Estates-General stands condemned in the eyes of history concerning its activities in foreign affairs? The facts in themselves are quite straightforward. The assembly decided to send an embassy to the king of France on February 22th to negotiate a truce which would lead to eventual peace. A short truce was agreed upon and at its expiration a new embassy, composed of assembly representatives, went to Louis again. The king of France had no intention of treating with the Estates-General as is evident in the vagueness of the report given by the second embassy to the Estates-General.

These negotiations and embassies are seen by history as being revolutionary in that there were no precedents for such behaviour. Before passing judgement on the claims and actions of the Estates-General we must first examine the composition of the embassies and the underlying motives for sending them. If we begin our analysis from that point we come face to
face with the Members of Flanders once more. Even in their capacity as observers the Flemish cities were represented by the first échevin of Ghent, the grand bailli of Ypres and the mayor of Bruges. The two embassies which followed were composed entirely of Flemish representatives.

Holland, Zeeland, Friesland and Namur were not represented at all and even refused to pay for the expenses. With these facts in mind we can hardly speak of the negotiation with France as the expression of unanimity of the Estates-General. Instead, the events must be seen as the actions of a vociferous minority who hoped to come to terms with France and salvage their political position. Duke Charles' wars had probably weighed heavier on Flanders since it was facing economic decline to such an extent that they sought release from taxation. Hopefully, a peace with France would end taxation and, with the regained privileges, open up a new era of prosperity. From this point of view the legality of the embassies is very much in doubt. Commines did not regard the embassy as the voice of the Estates-General but as the representative of the three Estates, clergy, noble, lay, dominated by Ghent. Louis' manipulation of the embassies against the Burgundian state indicate that they were not regarded as the representatives of the Low Countries.

If we, as did their contemporaries, reject the notion that the embassies were sent by the Estates-General, then we may assume that it was the voice of the reactionary elements in the assembly. The obvious conclusion is then that there
was no political revolution but a repetition of civil revolt as the traditional expression of the Members of Flanders. They fought a rearguard action not knowing that it was an exercise in futility and that balance of power had already shifted in favour of a centralized government based on the recognition of local law and tradition.

In contrast to the dismal failure of rebellious Flanders, the Duke and Duchess continued the basic policies of their predecessor. However, from 1477 to 1482 a new and very significant factor entered into the situation. Under Duke Charles we continually see a certain ambivalence in aims and objectives which faded away during this five year period. Charles was unable to reconcile the existence of the Low Countries and the two Burgundies, politically, or geographically. The Low Countries and the Burgundies were regarded as two separate entities without any form of common institution except that of the dynasty. The decrees and charters issued pertained to the Low Countries apart from the Burgundies. No representatives were ever present from the Burgundies at the Estates-General or used the Parlement of Malines as the court of justice. Charles had sought to bridge this political and geographical gap through his military venture but that ended on the battlefield before Nancy because he had miscalculated his ability to unite the two dissimilar regions. But his failure cannot be used to condemn the whole of his reign for, then, success becomes the sole
criterion of historical interpretation. He dreamed the
Burgundian dream of a viable political and national state
as did his forefathers. Are we to condemn him because he
was unable to conceive of its geographical form? If so,
then all European rulers who were "successful" must also
be condemned. Edward IV still claimed the French Crown
while Louis continued to expand France's "natural" frontiers.
In all these instances the political reality of the state
was forced upon these various rulers. None willingly de-
lineated his boundaries without the hope of territorial
expansion. Mary and Maximilian were also faced with this
situation. Louis XI had invaded the Burgundies, Artois
and Picardy ostensibly to keep them for the rightful owner.
Mary made a feeble attempt to prevent Louis' intervention
while Maximilian was simply fighting a defensive war to
prevent further inroads into the Low Countries.

The defensive position of Mary and Maximilian was under-
scored by the reaction of the Low Countries to the Franco-
Burgundian war. The Estates-General in 1477 made it very
clear that it had no wish to continue any future aggrandize-
ment but was willing to defend the Low Countries from in-
vansion. There can be little doubt that this attitude im-
plicitly rejected any kinship with the Burgundies or any
obligations towards them. Were these not the regions that
produced the hated "foreigners" who filled the lucrative
and influential offices in the Low Countries? The only
concern was the welfare and safety of the Low Countries, not that this implied any "national" consciousness. Duke Charles had instituted a political framework which offered the opportunity for local interests to cross territorial lines and deal with the Low Countries as a unit. The various counties, working basically from self-interest, operated within this framework and consequently indirectly contributed towards the development of a political consciousness that enabled them to act on common problems as well. In a sense, we can say that the conflict of interests, inherent in the Burgundian dream, was transferred after 1477 to the counties. The conflict of interests, based on territorial and dynastic allegiance, was intensified by the hostile posture of Louis. France's attitude temporarily tilted the balance in favour of "national" interests and consequently aided the beginning of the tradition of concerted action on problems of mutual concern and interests, already evident in the proceedings of 1477.

The Treaty of Arras, signed in December, 1482, formally ended the Franco-Burgundian hostilities which had lasted for almost two decades. It also marked the end of the Burgundian dream of the old Lotharingian kingdom between France and Germany. Charles had failed to realize the Burgundian State but was this failure of such magnitude as to convict the Duke of rashness and foolishness? Are we then not forgetting the fact that the Burgundian State,
as envisaged by its Dukes, had at no time been a reality? We must at all times remember the ambivalent attitude in Charles' political career. The political institutions and laws were never applicable to all the territories. The Low Countries were treated separately from the two Burgundies in all matters of government. The Burgundian dream failed, not because of military catastrophe but because there was a complete lack of identity between these two regions. Duke Charles' failure was a blessing in disguise. His death marked the beginning of a Burgundian State not dreamed of by the Dukes. By 1477, the heritage of Duke Charles had become a foreign state whose national sentiments were primarily based on its anti-French attitude. Charles' reign cannot be regarded as minimal considering that it was during these ten years that many governing bodies were strengthened and called into existence. The lasting quality of his work is evident in the few years immediately following his death. No one seriously objected to a central government but simply wanted to shape it to their own liking. Charles had laid the foundations for the inner stability of the Low Countries which prevented regional interests from dominating "national" interests. The hybrid Burgundian State, shaped and formed by Duke Charles, gave political expression to the interests of the Low Countries. Charles sought to provide the framework necessary for a growing and increasingly complex society which demanded the
maximum freedom from outmoded institutions and foreign control. Duke Charles began the fight for legal international status which was finally achieved by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I


4. Ibid., pp. XI-XII.

5. Ibid., vol. II, p. 320; From a Belgian point of view Charles' conduct was detrimental to the traditions of the country. p. 325; Belgium was separated from the Duchy of Burgundy. cf. P. Gely, *History of the Low Countries*, London, Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1964, p. 19.


8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p. 321.

11. Ibid., "son absolutisme grandit dans la même mesure que ses appétits de conquête. Il adopt à la violence et la terreur comme procédés de gouvernement".

12. Ibid.

14 Ibid., p. 322.

15 Ibid., p. 323.

16 Ibid., p. 324.


19 Ibid., pp. 327, 328, 334, 335, etc.

20 Ibid., pp. 335, 339.

21 Ibid., p. 369.

22 Ibid., pp. 367-369.

23 Ibid., p. 419.

24 Ibid., pp. 426-427.


26 Ibid., p. 298.

27 Ibid., pp. 292-293.

28 Ibid., p. 273.
29
L. Hommel, Marie de Bourgogne, Brussels, Ad. Goemaere, 1945.

30
Ibid., p. 239.

31
Ibid., p. 54.

32
Ibid., p. 55.

33
Ibid., p. 16.

34
Ibid., p. 197.

35
Ibid., p. 34.

36
Ibid., pp. 17, 194.

37
Ibid., p. 239.

38
Ibid., p. 32.

39
Ibid., p. 31.

40
Ibid., p. 34.

41
Ibid., p. 36.

42
Ibid., p. 37.

43
Ibid., p. 54.

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45
Hommel, pp. 185-187.
46  Hommel, p. 157.

47  Ibid., p. 190.

48  Ibid., p. 189.

49  Ibid., p. 190.

50  Ibid., p. 193.


53  Ibid., p. 234.


55  Ibid., pp. 43-44; Calmette, Les Grands Ducs, p. 235.


59  Champion, Louis XI, p. 22.
60 Calmette, Le Grand Règne, p. 25.


65 Dufournet, p. 98.

66 Ibid., p. 105.


68 Ibid., p. 2.

69 Ibid., pp. 67, 68; vol. II, pp. 48, 171.

70 Dufournet, pp. 697-700.


2. The chief importance of the Somme towns was that collectively they formed a barrier to French national expansions. Philip had to pay homage to the French king for the County of Flanders and the Duchy of Burgundy. The other territories were part of the Holy Roman Empire.

3. Treaty of Troyes, signed in 1420, put Burgundy in alliance with England. The treaty was signed, partly, in retaliation for the murder of John the Fearless by the French, as well as, a reaction to Armagnac strength in French Court. cf. Thielemans, Bourgogne et Angleterre, p. 49.


6. Thielemans, p. 56.

7. J. Bartier, "Filips de Goede en de vestiging van de Bourgondische Staat", Algemeene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden, Utrecht, W. De Haan, 1951, vol. III, p. 255. The riots in Ghent (1452), the complications in succession question of Luxemburg and the riots in Liege were all instigated by Charles VII.
8  Smit, Bronnen, vol. II, no. 1078, 1093. Safe-conducts were granted with the expressed condition that the merchants had no contact with Flanders. Nowhere, did the Holland and Zeeland merchants ever complain about the stipulation.


10  Munro, p. 9.

11  Ibid., p. 10.


16  Ibid., no. 1110, fol. 101. "met eenige van de gedeputeerden van enigen goeden steden uut Hollant" Jacob Bossaert was the secretary of lord de Santes, president of the Court of Holland.

17  Ibid., no. 1110, fol. 98. "om him te kennen te geven die aermoede van den vorseiden lande van Hollant ende van Zeelant....dat zijne ondersaten van Hollant ende van Zeelant voornoemt coopmanscippe zouden mogen doen mitten Engelschen."


20 Smit, *Bronnen*, vol. II, no. 1143, fol. 25. "van deser stede wegh te treckene mitten heere van Santes ende meer anderen heeren van den Raide ende mitten ghedeputeerden van den steden van Hollant ende van Zeelant, om mit mallicander te treckene in Enghelant". This statement implied initiative on the part of the Court of Holland, of which lord de Santes was president, to come to terms with England.

21 Thielemans, pp. 120-128; Smit, *Bronnen*, vol. II, nos. 1144, 1147.


28 Smit, *Bronnen*, vol. II, no. 1141, fol. 82.


Thielemans, p. 443, no. 4.


Thielemans, p. 429. A table showing the periodic renewals along with the source reference.


Bartier, "Filips de Goede", pp. 268-269.

43 Diegerick, *Ypres*, p. 130.


45 Thielemans, p. 151, n. 222.


47 Unger, *Bronnen*, vol. II, no. 234; Smit, *Bronnen*, vol. II, no. 1336. "waeren burgemeester ende scepenen vergadert, omme een mandement van de Ingelsche lakenen te visiteren... want die steden van Zeelant aldair vergadert waeren, omme te spreken van der Ingelsche lakenen".

48 Ibid., "geschecht te treckene ter dachvaert te Calays, want dair een dachvaert was tusschen den Ingelschen ende desen lande".


50 Ibid., no. 1354. Dec. 26, 1449 the council of Middelburg met to discuss "den Ingelschen goede ende scepen, die voir Aernemuiden gearresteert waeren", nos. 1355 and 1356.

51 Ibid., nos. 1382, 1386 and 1389. "dat si Enghelsche lakene souden moeghen brengen te Berghene ende moghen vercopen".

52 Thielemans, p. 152, n. 229.

53 Ibid., p. 367.


55 Ibid., p. 931, n. 1.
56 Smit, Bronnen, vol. II, no. 1457, "ende dat zij geen geloff een zetten up die geelyden end soufcunduiten, voirtijs bij den Englesen gegeven".

57 Ibid., no. 1468.


59 Jehan de Wavrin, Croniques et Anchiennes Istories de la Grant Bretagne, à Present Nomme Engleterre, London, Queen's Printer, 1891, vol. V, p. 381. For a list of the representatives see Thielemans, p. 369, no. 17.

60 Smit, Bronnen, vol. II, no. 1492.

61 Ibid., nos. 1480, 1489.


66 Calmette & Perinelle, Louis XI et L'Angleterre, p. 10. The authors describe the English embassy sent by Edward to Burgundy and France.

67 Wavrin, p. 414.
Lord Gruuthuse became Earl of Winchester in 1472. He was a favourite advisor of Philip and Charles.

Thielemans, p. 387.


Ibid., p. 282, no. 8.

Thielemans, p. 392.


Thielemans, p. 394; Wavrin, pp. 416-417.


Thielemans, p. 411; Wavrin, p. 464.

Wavrin, p. 453.

W. Hawkins, Statutes at Large, London, King's Printer, pp. 605-611.

Posthumus, Geschiedenis, vol. I, pp. 421-422. The number of sacks of wool in 1463 used was 1458; in 1464, 758 and in 1476, 979.

Cuvelier, États Généraux, pp. 105-112.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III


2 Bartier, "Karel de Stoute", p. 298.


8 Cuvelier, *États Généraux*, p. 120, no. 15.


12 Ibid., p. 169.

13 Ibid., pp. 171, 173.

14 Ibid., pp. 179, 183. "C'est pourquoi nous estimons que des sujets peuvent raisonnablement s'associer pour combattre l'impiété ou la tyrannie d'un roi".

16 Ibid., vol. II, p. 156.

17 Ibid., vol. I, p. 40. "le roy avoit desapointez et difficaitz de leurs estatz, quant il vint à la couronne".


19 Ibid., p. 191.

20 Kirk, History of Charles the Bold, p. 215. "They were suffering ennui, the consequence of the king's prohibition of the chase." Thus the validity of the league is dismissed.

21 Somme towns were: Saint-Quentin, Corbie, Amiens, Daulten, Montreuil, Rue, Saint-Valery, Le Crotoy, Saint-Requier, Mortagne.


23 Isambert et Decrucy, Recueil, vol. X, no. 84.


30 Ibid., p. 223. "Le roi faisant semblant d'avoir et de vauloir lier avec le comte une très grande amitié".

31 Ibid., p. 167. "le caractère intraitable et même inhumaîn de Louis XI".


37 Calmette et Perinelle, Louis XI et l'Angleterre, p. 85; cf. Gandilhon, p. 370. Louis was willing to sacrifice native merchant class and grant complete freedom to the English!


40 Scofield, Edward IV, p. 403. The author argues that since the Ligue de Bien Public was a failure Charles recognized the necessity of forming a new league.

42 Limburg Brouwer, Boergoensche Charters, p. 133.


47 Ibid., p. 102, n. 4.


49 Commines, Mémoires, vol. I, p. 144. The treaty was signed on October 14, 1468.

50 Isambert et Decrusy, Recueil, vol. X, no. 114. The editors argue that the decree was issued in April 1467, and not in 1468, as is found in the collections on the Estates-General. For our purpose it is not as important as the content of the document. In any case, the decree was issued before the Treaty of Peronne.

51 Ibid., no. 114, articles 4, 6, 7, 3.

52 Ibid., p. 556.

53 Ibid., p. 118.

54 Ibid., p. 117.

55 Ibid., p. 562.
56 Commines, Mémoires, vol. I, p. 144. "qui (the treaty) avoit este escript et accorde et si ainsi le vouloit jurer".


58 Ibid., pp. 561, 564.

59 Defournet, p. 192.


61 Stein, p. 471.


65 Ibid., p. 403.

66 Ibid., p. 405.

67 Ibid., p. 501.

68 Ibid., p. 513.


70 Wavrin, p. 604.

Ibid., p. 17, Burgundian fleet placed a blockade on French ports in the hope of recapturing their vessels.

Ibid., p. 15.

Calmette et Perinelle, Louis XI et l'Angleterre, p. 121. "À craindre que la conjonction des forces anglaises et françaises se format contre elle". Plans for the division of spoils had already been made, Holland, Zeeland and Brabant to go to Warwick and the rest to Louis. p. 82.


Wavrin, p. 606; Isambert et Decrusy, Recueil, vol. X, no. 156; p. 616, n. 2.

Sneller & Unger, Bronnen, no. 247.


88 Edward IV, one of the titles of the leader of York House was Earl of March.


92 Ibid., pp. 53-55.

93 Ibid., p. 53.


97 Ibid., p. 187.

98 Ibid., p. 189.

100 Stein, p. 449; May 24, 1472.


103 Ibid., p. 124.


106 Stein, p. 464.


109 Toutey, Charles le Temeraire, pp. 9–11.

110 Ibid., Author deals with Charles' German affairs and his defeat in 1477.


112 Toutey, Charles le Teméraire, p. 125 ff.
FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

1 Keriing, Commercial Relations, p. 80.


5 Ibid., pp. 402-404.


8 Ibid., p. 252; vol. IV, p. 301.


12 Ibid., p. 420.


16 Ibid., p. 305, no. 14.


19 Fairon, vol. IV, nos. 964, 965.


22 Fairon, vol. IV, no. 1053.

23 Ibid., no. 1058.


26 Bartier, "Luik", p. 312.

28 Limburg Brouwer, Boergoensche Charters, p. 100.
29 Ibid., p. 100, 107.
30 Ibid., p. 110.
31 Ibid., p. 114.
32 Ibid., p. 110.
33 Ibid., p. 111.
34 Ibid., p. 137.
35 The charter of Goes was very similar to the one issued to The Hague in 1451, even though the mechanics of the elections varied.
36 Limburg Brouwer, Boergoensche Charters, p. 132.
37 Ibid., p. 141.
38 Ibid., p. 138.
39 Ibid., p. 139.
40 Cuvelier, Etats Généraux, pp. 139, 161, 221.
42 Ibid., vol. IV, p. 13.

46  Ibid., pp. 4, 434.


50  Ibid., p. 236.

51  Ibid., p. 112.

52  Smit, *Bronnen*, vol. I, no. 1430, fol. 5. "Item 19 dage in Julio was alhier meester Roelant Pipe, ontvanger van minen heere van Chairlois, die hie gesenden was, omme to vernemen van desn Ingelsche goeden, die gerasteert woeren; hen gegeven voir huurscheit ende dot hij den stede vrient woure in haer recht."

53  Ibid., nos. 1401, 1412, 1414.

54  Ibid., no. 1488.


57  Ibid., no. 1504.

58  Ibid., no 957, n. 1.
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75 Ibid., no. 245.

76 Gandilhon, p. 374


78 Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 161.


82 Gandilhon, p. 377.

83 Ibid., p. 431, no. 13.

84 Ibid., "Le roy ne veult point que isse subjetz vendent ne mennent pour vendre es pays de monseigneur de Bourgoigne blëz ne vins".

85 Ibid., p. 432.


87 Ibid., no. 255.


97  Ibid., nos. 262, 447; p. 239, n. 2.


99  Ibid., pp. 564-565.

100  Ketner, p. 121.


102  Ibid., no. 2420.

Ibid., no. 2425, art. 7. "nene lakene in de hense-stede bringen schall, id en zij dat de tom stapele gewesen zen".

Ibid., no. 2431. "unde vercoopen in de grote vornichtinghe des erschreven recesses unde verstuyringhe des stapels". no. 2437.

Ibid., nos. 2435, 2436.

Ibid., nos. 2435, 2436, 2491.

Posthumus, Bronnen, vol. I, no. 423. "herop is eer-drachterlic overdragen ende eendracht elic gesloten, alsdat men dit mitten andere steden, die men willich dairtoe crigen mach, dat ment wederstaen sol mit rechte off mit crafte.... dat dit ofgedoen is by ijnen genadigen heere of anders, alst behoiren sel."


Ibid., no. 2454.

Ibid., no. 2491.

Ibid., no. 2498.

Ibid., no. 2514; Posthumus, Bronnen, vol. I, no. 462.

Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 174 ff.

Ibid., p. 176–178; p. 250.

Ibid., p. 224.

Ibid., pp. 252–254.

Ibid., p. 230.


123 La Marche, *Mémoires*, p. 482.


FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER V


2  Bartier, "Filips de Goede", p. 270.


4  Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 174.

5  Limburg Brouwer, Boergoensche Charters, p. 151.


12 Ibid., p. 207.

13 Ibid., pp. 207-208, "ruste, vrede ende onderhoudenisse van den lande".
14  
Unger, Bronnen, vol. II, p. 363. During the last several years these were repeated complaints about the tolls in the channels of Zeeland. Poelman, Bronnen, vol. I, nos. 2594, 2599.

15  
Meilink, "De Dagvaarten", p. 208.

16  
Ibid.

17  
Ibid., p. 209.

18  
Hugenholtz, "Crisis en herstel", p. 2.

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Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 276.

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27  
Ibid., p. 161 ff.


30 Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, vol. III, p. 11. "il abolit purement et simplement le Parlement de Malines, cette grande cour de justice que donne aux Pays-Bas l'attribut le plus essentiel de l'État, la souveraineté et l'unité judiciaires".

31 Hugenholtz, "Crisis en herstel", p. 3.


37 (Quoted by Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique*, vol. III, p. 11, The Great Council's concern related only to matters over which "les conseils particuliers des divers pays et leurs lois locales ne peuvent prendre connaissance conformément à leurs privileges".


Limburg Brouwer, Boergoensche Charters, p. 148. In 1474 all cities, towns and villages were ordered to register their charters with the treasury at Malines, on pain of penalties and confiscation.


Ibid., p. 13.

Hugenholtz, "Crisis en herstel", p. 3.

Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 276.


Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 278.

Meilink, "De Dagvaarten", pp. 210-211.

Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 224.

Ibid., pp. 252-254; Limburg Brouwer, Boergoensche Charters, p. 145.


Limburg Brouwer, Boergoensche Charters, pp. 144, 148, 150.

Ibid., p. 142.


58  Ibid., pp. 66, 69.


60  Diegerick, Ypres, vol. IV, p. 33.


62  Ibid., p. 94.

63  Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 273. In this documentation we are led to believe that reaction dominated exclusively because the editor neglects the counties of Holland and Zeeland in his supporting evidence. Hommel, p. 265, n. 1. This author is guilty of the same error as Cuvelier and sees the north as acting passively.

64  Hommel, p. 260, n. 1.


66  Unger, Bronnen, vol. I, no. 35.

Commines, Mémoires, vol. II, pp. 158-176. The chronicler narrates the events of the various negotiations, French invasions and the king's attitude. All secondary sources contain a description of the events during the years following Charles death. Therefore, no attempt will be made to relate the events chronologically, rather, an analysis of motivation and behaviour.


Cuvelier, États Généraux, p. 280. The first embassy sent by Mary included assembly representatives acting as observers. (p. 276).

Ibid., pp. 294-303; no. 5.

Ibid., p. 276.

Ibid., pp. 280-281; cf. Hommel, p. 266.

Hommel, p. 265, n. 1.


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