

THE COMMERCIAL POLICY OF  
WILLIAM CECIL LORD BURGHLEY

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THE COMMERCIAL POLICY OF WILLIAM CECIL LORD BURGHLEY

by

Reynold Richardson Jeltema

AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the College of Science and Arts  
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Approved

Thayne Keene

The commercial activities of the English people in Elizabethan times have been labeled "mercantilist" by most economic historians. As William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Secretary in the Privy Council and later Treasurer, was the chief architect of Elizabethan commercial policy, he has been called a "mercantilist" by these same historians. To have done so is to have erred, for in calling Cecil a "mercantilist" these historians have not paid close attention to Cecil's motives for his activities. They explain his means but they miss his ends. In so doing they do not see the true purpose of his activities. They have given scant attention to the social and political forces which were the considerations that shaped Cecil's policy.

It is the purpose of this essay to demonstrate that Cecil was not a "mercantilist." This will be accomplished by close examination of the international political events between the years 1568 and 1574 which impinged upon England's commercial activities. It will be shown that as Cecil exercised great influence and control over these activities he often subordinated them to political considerations of a more pressing nature.

This was a time when England was threatened by the internal revolt of forces allied with nations hostile to her; when the champion of the Counter Reformation, Philip II

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of Spain, with his intrigues and tortuous diplomacy attempted to bring England back into the fold of the Roman Catholic Church. Much of the duplicity charged to Philip was actually produced by the over-active imaginations of his aides and ambassadors, but the abortive Ridolfi and Stuckeley plots were quite real.

This was also a period of transition in the social structure of England as the last vestiges of feudalism were being eliminated and the new middle class was emerging. Cecil was himself a member of this new middle class. If the cynic claims that Cecil had a vested interest in seeing this class wax fat at the expense of the other economic groups in the realm, let him read what Cecil said about many of the middle class being unfit for government service.

Another charge which should be leveled at the economic historians who write of this period is that they have not spent sufficient time in studying the Elizabethan office of the Secretary in the Privy Council. The breadth and scope of this office was so great as to be practically limitless. Two things account for this: Cecil's indefatigability in the performance of his work; the structure of Tudor government. Modern political scientists would view as a fault the failure to define the limits of the office. But structured as the office was, Cecil perforce

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discharged his duties therein concerned with much more than the piling up of wealth for the realm.

Cecil was no original thinker in the field of international commercial relations. There was little in his program for strengthening the realm which had not been tried in reigns previous to Elizabeth's. Regulation of trade through statute law had been accomplished by English sovereigns since Edward III. Many aspects of these earlier statutes were revived in Elizabeth's reign and Cecil was in accord with them.

Knowing that the enemies of the realm would strike their first blows on the high seas, Cecil was meticulous in seeing that England's commerce was protected by force when necessary. The stakes were high. Defeat of England would not only mean that that kingdom would know the horrors of the Inquisition but it would also become the political appendage of Rome.

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Because of the plan of this essay the use of chapter headings would be only an artificial device to indicate the three parts. Instead of such headings the end of each section is separated from the beginning of the next by quadruple spacing.

The reader's attention is directed to the fact that the author has erroneously italicized the second and ensuing citations of work of individual authors. For example, footnote two on page one:

William Cunningham, The Growth of English Industry and Commerce in Modern Times, Vol. II: The Mercantile System, 4th ed. (London, 1907),

should have been cited on the following pages as

Cunningham, not Cunningham.

R. J.

I give you this charge that you shall be of my Privy Council and content to take pains for me and my realm. This judgement I have of you that you will not be corrupted by any manner of gift and that you will be faithful to the state; and that without respect of my private will you will give me that counsel which you think best, and if you shall know anything necessary to be declared to me of secrecy you shall show it to myself only. And assure yourself I will not fail to keep taciturnity therein and therefore herewith I charge you.<sup>1</sup>

With these words Queen Elizabeth I vested William Cecil with the office of Secretary in her Privy Council. In the long period of service given to his sovereign William Cecil was not known to have violated this charge.

Cecil was not a newcomer to high office having served as Secretary of State under Edward VI. During the reign of Mary I he served as a member of her Privy Council and was one of the three commissioners appointed to go to Brussels for the purpose of meeting Cardinal Pole, the Papal legate. He was chosen to represent the county of Lincoln in the Parliament of 1555. He had also acted as Elizabeth's factor and helped her manage her private property. This last position had caused Elizabeth to put him in her trust.<sup>2</sup> As evidence of his seemingly boundless

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<sup>1</sup>Cited in Conyers Read, Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth (London, 1955), p. 119. Hereafter: Read.

<sup>2</sup>William Cunningham, The Growth of English Industry and Commerce In Modern Times, Vol. II: The Mercantile System, 4th ed. (London, 1907), p. 53. Hereafter: Cunningham. The information on Cecil is taken from the Dictionary

energies there are the many thousands of state papers endorsed, annotated, or drafted by him. Nothing was too trivial to receive his attention.

The duties of the Secretary "defied definition."<sup>3</sup> Among his duties he was expected to have a thorough knowledge of the supply of munitions, the condition of the Navy Royal both as to ships and personnel, aliens within the realm, matters of royal revenue, the Royal Mint, all foreign relations, and corporations and companies engaged in overseas trade.

The England of Cecil and Elizabeth in 1558 was weak both militarily and economically. The loss of Calais had deprived the English of their principal arsenal for munitions of war and there was imminent danger of attack by the Catholic powers. The inept governments of Edward VI and Mary I had caused English commerce and military strength to be held in low repute throughout the whole of Europe. Edward and Mary cannot be wholly saddled with the blame for this sorry state of affairs. Their father, Henry VIII, had, through debasement of the coinage, caused the value of English money to decline on the world market.

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of National Biography. The standard work on Cecil is still Martin A. S. Hume's The Great Lord Burghley (London, 1898). In addition to Read there is a brief account of Cecil's life in Gravenscroft Dennis' The House of Cecil (London, 1914) and a very short account by Hilare Belloc in The Great Tudors, ed. Katherine Garvin (London, 1956).

<sup>3</sup>Read, p. 119.

In fact, during Edward's reign a plan to restore the value of the coinage had been drawn up but never put into effect.<sup>4</sup> During Mary's reign it was impossible to accomplish as the nation was distracted by the religious question. It was left to William Cecil and Elizabeth to achieve it.

Shortly after his elevation to office, Cecil had introduced the Queen to Thomas Gresham.<sup>5</sup> Recognized as one of the foremost financiers and theoreticians on financial matters, Gresham was an Englishman of unbounded loyalty to the Crown. Thoroughly conversant with governmental financial matters, he had gained a reputation for honesty and great intellect throughout Europe. It was said that he delayed for a year the sailing of the Spanish Armada by cornering the bills of the bank in Genoa. This action prevented the Spanish government from victualing the fleet for that period.<sup>6</sup> Writing to Elizabeth on matters of public finance soon after the introduction by Cecil, he concluded his letter thus:

Finally, and it please Your Majesty, to restore this your realm in such estate as heretofore it hath been, first, Your Highness hath none other

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<sup>4</sup>Cunningham, p. 129.

<sup>5</sup>John W. Burgon, The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham, 2 vols. (London, 1839). I, 217. Hereafter: Burgon.

<sup>6</sup>Cunningham, p. 146.

ways, but when time and opportunity serveth, to  
bring your base money into fine of XI ounces fine  
. . . .<sup>7</sup>

Evidence of the declining purchasing power of the English shilling is shown by the fact that where in 1520 twenty English shillings were worth thirty-two Flemish shillings, in 1551 they were worth only sixteen.<sup>8</sup>

At the urging of Cecil and Gresham the Queen appointed a commission to investigate and bring forth a plan for re-coinage. Cecil served as a member of the commission which worked so speedily and efficiently that on September 27, 1560 a royal proclamation, drafted by Cecil, was issued.<sup>9</sup> A pamphlet entitled The Summary of Certain Reasons which hath made the Queen's Majesty to Proceed with the Reformation of base moneys was published two days later. This, too, was Cecil's work. In the pamphlet Cecil justified re-coinage on the grounds that inflated prices would thus drop, that counterfeiting would cease, that English money would command a better rate of exchange in overseas markets, that pensioners and those living on fixed stipends would

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<sup>7</sup>Burgh, I, 234.

<sup>8</sup>A. L. Rowse, The England of Elizabeth: the Structure of Society (New York, 1951), p. 117. Hereafter: Rowse.

<sup>9</sup>A Booke containing all such Proclamations as were published during the Raigne of the late Queene Elizabeth, ed. H. Dyson (1618) given in full in Tudor Economic Documents, ed. R. H. Tawney and Eileen Power, 3 vols. (London, 1924). II, 195ff. Hereafter: Tawney and Power.

receive their customary incomes in sound rather than debased money. He explained that it was the Queen's desire to restore the integrity of the coinage at great expense to herself and that her subjects would be expected to bear their small share of the burden cheerfully.<sup>10</sup>

Two assumptions of Cecil and the rest of the commission turned out to be wrong. The Queen did make a substantial profit out of the conversion and prices do not seem to have fallen though it is quite likely that the steady rise in prices, due primarily to the influx of gold and silver from the New World, was somewhat retarded by the substitution of good money for bad.

It was necessary for Elizabeth to borrow 75,000 pounds from the Antwerp exchange in order to finance the re-coinage project.<sup>11</sup> She even had difficulty raising money on the joint credit of the city of London. But punctuality of repayment created good credit with the English merchants and by 1588 the Queen could borrow easily from her own subjects as well as from merchant strangers.<sup>12</sup>

Another major item on Cecil's agenda was the re-arming of England so as to prevent successful invasion by any

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<sup>10</sup>Read, pp 196f.

<sup>11</sup>Burgon, I, 364.

<sup>12</sup>Cunningham, p. 148.

power or possible combination of powers.<sup>13</sup> He would buy arms where he could. But better still, he thought, was to build up native production of armaments and supplies so as to free England from dependency on European sources. Buying on the European market was conducted through Thomas Gresham. Gresham headquartered in Antwerp and from this vantage point was able to locate arms and munitions which he promptly bought up and had shipped to England. Working through an elaborate system of personal spies Gresham was able to keep abreast of the machinations of his customers and the political forces opposed to England.<sup>14</sup> "There is not one word spoken by the customers, and what they intend to do but I have perfect intelligence [of it]."<sup>15</sup> He boasted that "it will not be a little spoken of through the world that her Majesty, in her wars, doth make payment of her debts, when neither King Philip, the French King, nor the King of Portugal in peace time payeth nothing, who oweth no small sums of money."<sup>16</sup> The demands of state finance were such that the Antwerp money market was on the way to ruin.

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<sup>13</sup>A Collection of State Papers Relating to Affairs in the Reigns of King Henry VIII, Edward VI, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth, eds. Samuel Haynes and William Murdin, 2 vols. (London, 1740), I, 579ff. Hereafter: Haynes and Murdin.

<sup>14</sup>Burgon, I, 360ff.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 364.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 344f.

Cecil's plan to increase native production of armaments and consumer goods called for investments far beyond the ability of the government. Patents were issued which gave the issuee the virtual rights of monopoly.<sup>17</sup> In this manner foreign as well as domestic capital was attracted to England. The resulting products enabled England to expand her export trade taking payment in cash, credit, or goods not obtainable at home. A company formed in 1561 to work the Northumberland mines was also given permission to search for copper at Keswick.<sup>18</sup> German laborers were imported to work in the mines and Thomas Gresham gave the Fuggers a bond for their expenses.<sup>19</sup>

In 1565 William Humphrey, Assay Master at the Mint wrote to Cecil that Hans Loner, the best German brass manufacturer, had refused to bring the art of battery into England in spite of his, Humphrey's, efforts.<sup>20</sup> In his

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<sup>17</sup>The use of letters patent for the introduction and protection of new industries was not exclusively a Tudor device. In 1336 Edward III granted protection to Brabantine weavers at York (Cal. Patent Rolls, 10 Ed. III, pt. 2, mem. 11). For an essay that treats of the evolution of the patent system see E. H. Hulme's "History of the Patent System Under the Perogative and at Common Law," Law Quarterly Review, XII, 141ff.

<sup>18</sup>Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series of the Reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580, [ed. Robert Lemon] (London, 1856), XVIII, no. 18. Hereafter: Cal. Dom. Eliz.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., XL, no. 73. Steinburg, the German mine expert, refused to allow engines and equipment constructed by the Germans to be left in England at the dissolution of the company (Rowse, p. 125).

<sup>20</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXXVII, no. 21, given in full in Tawney and Power, I, 242f.

letter Humphrey outlined a plan whereby he hoped to outwit Loner and bring the secrets to England in spite of him.

Fearing casualty of death in this man I have secretly prepared such Englishmen as shall more suddenly learn than he suspects; that is to say of young men goldsmiths that are of the best hammer men for one part. . I have provided for geometricians skillful in metals, for speedy conveyancing [of] how to make the missels and engines for forging and drawing.

The Company of Royal Mines was established in 1568 and while those who invested in it did not receive a large return, it did accomplish the political end of providing iron and copper for the ordnance.<sup>21</sup> Cecil's work in aiding the investors received great praise in a letter from Daniel Hochstetter to Alderman Duckett.

It is joyful news to understand that Master Secretary hath shown himself so friendly and forward in our work of our Mineral and that his money hath been so ready with the first, and also so willing for the next payment, praying you to call earnestly upon the rest that payment may be made, and if they will not for you, then we pray you desire the help of Master Secretary in that behalf for in the works of the mines there must be no want of money.<sup>22</sup>

As governor of the Royal Mines, Cecil continued an active interest in procuring a native supply of useful minerals. The Mineral and Battery Company, an enterprise undertaken by William Humphrey, received Cecil's personal financial backing.<sup>23</sup> The company dug for calamine stone,

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<sup>21</sup>Cunningham, pp. 59f.

<sup>22</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXXIX, no. 57 cited in Cunningham, p. 57.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., XXXVI, no. 86; XXXVII, no. 30, 43, 44; XL, no. 3.

essential for the making of brass. Iron, tin, and lead were recovered by them also and a mill for the drawing of wire was set up at Tintern.<sup>24</sup>

The condition of the merchant marine received Cecil's attention. Here again Cecil drew upon the energies and resources of the people rather than exhaust those of the government. Bounties were regularly paid to private individuals for building ships.<sup>25</sup> Restrictions on the use of timber necessary in the construction of ships were enacted in 1558. Wastage of wood was prohibited by forbidding the export of clapboards and barrels from London.<sup>26</sup>

In a document entitled Arguments to prove that it is necessary for the restoring of the Navy of England to have more fish eaten and therefore one day more in the week ordained to be a fish day and that it be Wednesday rather than any other, Cecil outlined a speech he delivered in the Commons of 1563.<sup>27</sup> In his speech he analyzed why English commerce had fallen off. Reference was made to the decline of the Mediterranean trade, the Irish trade,

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., XLVIII, no. 43.

<sup>25</sup>Cunningham, p. 64.

<sup>26</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., CLXXXVI, no. 6, 8, 9, 22 cited in Cunningham, p. 65.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., XXVII, no. 71 given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 104ff.

and the Baltic trade. The Spanish navigation laws which gave preference to Spanish ships in trade with Spain were condemned. He listed as other causes of decay the larger portion of carrying trade to England in the hands of foreign carriers, the restraints imposed upon the export of fish by English fishermen. He proposed that a new law forbid the import of wine or woad except in English bottoms and remove restraints upon the export of fish. His points were incorporated into the bill. But with the usual Cecilian thoroughness and attention to detail he took his arguments one step further and suggested that provisions be made for increase in the number of mariners.

Some other thing must be provided to increase the navy and multiply mariners. . .and thereby, by God's grace, be able to defend the realm against all foreign power. . . .The very ground that serveth to breed [mariners] is the trade and conversation upon the sea, which is divided into two parts; the one to carry and recarry merchandise; the other is to take fish; for the third which is piracy, is detestable and cannot last.

He argued that there was no hope of increasing the sale of fish to foreign countries so there must be more eating of fish at home. Wednesdays became known as "Cecil's Fast."<sup>28</sup> Disliked as it was on gastronomic and religious grounds, the Commons of 1571 was unable to repeal it and it stood until it expired in 1585.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>J. E. Neale, Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments, 1559-1581 (London, 1953), p. 116. Hereafter: Neale.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

Although attempts had been made to increase the number of English ships engaged in the wine trade<sup>30</sup> Cecil did not give his full support to these. He saw disadvantages in other ways and contrasted them with his scheme for promoting the fishing trades. In a paper entitled The Inconveniences of enlarging any power to bring any more wine into the realm he expressed the fear that such enlargement would only work to the benefit of England's enemy, France.<sup>31</sup> He held that nothing ". . . is more hurtful to the realm than wine" and this for four reasons: First, the wine trade "enricheth France"; second, wines from Bordeaux and Rouen must be paid for with money "for in Bordeaux they have an ordinance forbidding bartering with any Englishman for wines" so that the gold brought home by merchants from "Spain or the Low Countries. . . is conveyed into France"; third, drinking of wine by the laboring class causes them to squander their wages; fourth, drinking of wine reduces the use of beer and ale thereby in turn reducing the acreage of grain causing farming to decline "which of all labors in the realm would be favored."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>1 Eliz. c. 13 provided for discriminating duties against the lading of foreign ships.

<sup>31</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XLI, no. 58 cited in Cunningham, pp. 70ff.

<sup>32</sup>The statute 5 Eliz. c. 5 which gave "Cecil's Fast" legal status covered many items all designed to strengthen

Political and religious conditions in mid-sixteenth century Europe caused many aliens to seek refuge in England. For the most part these refugees were highly skilled workers of Protestant faith. With the accession of Elizabeth their numbers increased as the religious climate of England became more moderate. These were the types of people Cecil would attract to England for their various skills were needed if England were to become self-sufficient in the production of the many and varied types of finished goods. It was Cecil's hope and desire that these foreign workers would teach the native English their skills.<sup>33</sup> Colonies of aliens were often planted in English towns and regulations drawn up governing trading and policing. Such plans for colonies were often submitted to Cecil and the details supervised by him. A notable success was achieved in the town of Colchester where in 1570 eleven households arrived from Flanders.<sup>34</sup> These people wished to make needles and parchment and weave sackcloth.

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and maintain the navy. Export of herring and other ocean fish was permitted without payment of "Customes, Subsidie, or Pondage Money." Import of fish by English subjects was toll free except at Kingston-on-Hull where the mayor and burgesses took tolls as granted by 33 Henry 8. Coastal shipping by foreigners was forbidden. French wine was to be imported in English ships. Owners of ships were granted the right to take one or more apprentices. Exportation of various grains was permitted under certain conditions. 5 Eliz. c. 5 is given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 110ff.

<sup>33</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XLIII, no. 39 cited in Cunningham, p. 79. Cecil was especially interested in the manufacture of sailcloth for the navy and established a colony of linen weavers at Stamford for that purpose (ibid., XLIII, no. 11).

<sup>34</sup>Cunningham, pp. 82f.

In one instance aliens were invited to settle in the town of Norwich in order to revitalize the manufacture of woolens.<sup>35</sup> Apparently many of the native English craftsmen had been attracted to other trades and locations. Since "dyverse strangers of the Low Countries are now come to London and Sandwich" for the purpose of making wool under patent, an effort on the part of the mayor and other citizens to obtain Flemish settlers to revive the Norwich trade resulted in thirty master workmen settling there.

Extracts from a letter written by these refugee strangers at Norwich to relatives and friends in Ypres have a homesteading flavor.

Send any money and the three children. Come at once and do not be anxious; I and my brother will supply you with what you require here as a weaver, for there is great trade doing. . .; When you come to Norwich you shall have gold; It is very dear to hear the word of God peacefully.<sup>36</sup>

The city of Norwich gained much by permitting these Flemish craftsmen to settle there.<sup>37</sup> They not only taught

<sup>35</sup>Records of the City of Norwich, [ed. W. Hudson and J. T. Tingley] II, 332, given in full in Tawney and Power, I, 298f.

<sup>36</sup>Trans. from H. Q. Janssen, De Hervormde vlugtelingen van Yperen in Engeland (Middleb., 1857) in W. J. C. Moens' Register of Baptisms in the Dutch Church at Colchester (1905), pp 220ff et passim, reprinted in Tawney and Power, I, 299ff.

<sup>37</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XX, no. 49; CXXVII, no. 8 given in full in Tawney and Power, I, 315ff.

the English the art of making types of cloth never before made in England, but because of their industry many of the city's poor were put to gainful employment. The wealth created by their labor permitted the repair of decayed dwellings. They made a substantial contribution to the local tax rolls and curbed juvenile delinquency by creating jobs for youths.

Relations between England and Spain worsened with the accession of Elizabeth I. This deterioration grew apace over a thirty year period and culminated in the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Until actual hostilities broke out between the two countries each took measures to cripple the other's commerce. The area of struggle on land was the Spanish Netherlands. It was here that the political and military force of the Protestant Netherlands was pitted against that of Catholic Spain. Geographically England could have remained a bystander and let the two antagonists fight it out. However, she had much to lose by letting Spain quash the Netherland's revolt. Intellectually Cecil, Elizabeth, and the majority of the English body politic had had their fill of Catholicism a la Espagne. They knew that a Spanish victory in the Netherlands would be the prelude to invasion of England.

While direct trade with Spain was important to England it was being surpassed in value by that with the Netherlands. Having established a reputation for the production of wool

cloth, England needed the Netherlands as a vent. For political purposes Margaret of Parma, regent of the Netherlands (1559-1567), closed the ports to shipping from November of 1563 to February 2, 1564.<sup>38</sup> The Privy Council in turn ordered all shipments of wool to the Netherlands held up until such time as a group of impartial merchants could be consulted.<sup>39</sup>

Cecil issued his own memorandum on the subject in which he set forth the reasons for not resuming the trade.<sup>40</sup> He cited three reasons for this: It was foolish for England to do the bulk of her trading through the port of Antwerp as it was too vulnerable to attack; the present balance of trade was favorable to Antwerp and not to England; the

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<sup>38</sup>England had been at war with France primarily over the Huguenot question since 1561. The disturbance of trade was really a by-product of this war. English privateers preyed on shipping in the Channel without regard to nationality. Protestantism in the Netherlands was being championed by the Prince of Orange. Margaret of Parma aided by her advisor, Cardinal Granville, attempted to crush this incipient force and at the same time reduce the favor in which the Protestant Netherlands held the schismatic English. She sent Christopher d'Assonleville to England as her special envoy to present a list of grievances to Elizabeth. Receiving no satisfaction from Elizabeth's ministers, d'Assonleville reported back to Margaret and the resultant was the order closing the ports.

<sup>39</sup>The Acts of the Privy Council, 32 vols., [ed. John Roch Dasent] (London, 1890-1907), VII, 147f. Hereafter: Dasent.

<sup>40</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXXV, no. 3 given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 45ff.

increased cloth trade had caused a decline in English agriculture, had created a laboring class difficult to govern, and had created a shortage of skilled help for other types of manufacture. Cecil discussed the quality of the cloth, the inconveniences created by stoppage of production, and the reduction in royal revenue by the loss of customs on the export of cloth. He was of the opinion that the royal revenue would increase for the rate of export duty was higher on raw wool than on finished cloths. That some merchants would be forced out of business because of the stoppage was foreseen by Cecil. He thought, however, that it was better to concentrate the business in the hands of merchants who were strong financially rather than spread it among many merchants, some of whom were in weak financial positions. As to the stoppage of production Cecil felt that this would affect only those engaged in producing white cloths since all other types would find their way into the market by devious routes. He suggested that legislation be passed forcing the people engaged in the production of white cloth to take up other pursuits. Barring any such possibility he would have them rounded up and shipped to Ireland as colonists.

Cecil suggested to Margaret of Parma that the questions regarding restraint of trade be settled by a conference at Bruges.<sup>41</sup> This suggestion did not meet with

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<sup>41</sup>Read, p. 293.

Margaret's approval. Her prime desire was the elimination of the Navigation Acts passed in the first and second parliaments of Elizabeth.<sup>42</sup>

Cecil favored the farmer and others who gained their livelihood by working the soil. Indeed, the one great fear by which he seemed possessed was that England would not have sufficient food if too many people were to leave the farms for the cities. He did not favor the expansion of the cloth trade at the expense of farm production. On the other hand, he encouraged aliens to come to England for the purpose of teaching the art of cloth making to the English. His main object for doing this was to accumulate money which would be used to strengthen the defense of the realm. His secondary aims were to check the flow from England of money which went to pay for exports and to restore stability to town life by providing employment for the poor and increasing the amount of taxable property.

Cecil expressed his commercial viewpoint in terms of a morality which condemned any practices which he felt would weaken the realm economically. He knew that only an England which was more nearly self-sufficient economically could successfully oppose the military strength of France and Spain.

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<sup>42</sup>1 Eliz. c. 11 aimed primarily at smugglers permitted the unloading of ships only in daylight; 5 Eliz. c. 5 the famous "Cecil's Fast" laid restrictions on shipping of wine and wool; 5 Eliz. c. 6 forbade those with less than 3000 pounds income from buying on credit; 5 Eliz. c. 7 forbade the importation of girdles, harnesses, rapiers, daggers, knives, belts, and pummels which were among the chief exports of the Low Countries.

The year 1569 was a year of crisis for Cecil, for Elizabeth, and for the realm. Cecil had cautioned against the use of Antwerp as the port through which the major share of English trade was conducted with the Low Countries.<sup>43</sup> His argument that this vent was too vulnerable to attack from hostile powers was proven correct when Philip of Spain directed the Duke of Alva to proceed to the Netherlands as regent and crush the revolt which was being waged against Spanish rule.<sup>44</sup> Through Cecil's statesmanship and Elizabeth's feminine guile England was able to acquire the commercial leadership that had been Spain's.

Cecil summarized the problems facing England in 1569 in a paper entitled A Short Memorial on the State of the Realm.<sup>45</sup> He deplored conditions within and without

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<sup>43</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXXV, no. 3 given in full in Tawney and Power, II, p. 45ff.

<sup>44</sup>Alva was given this task by Philip in 1567 and went about it with a thoroughness which aroused English sympathies and fears for the Netherlanders. Because of Alva's methods the number of immigrants to England took a sharp upswing.

<sup>45</sup>Calendar of Manuscripts of the Most Honorable The Marquis of Salisbury, KG., Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, 11 vols. (London, 1883-1906), I, no. 1452. Hereafter: Hatfield MSS.

Haynes, p. 579ff. Cecil summarized the weaknesses of the "Queens Majesty's Estate" as lack of marriage, foreign alliance by reason of long peace, weak frontiers, ignorance of martial knowledge, lack of captains and trained soldiers,

the realm which tended toward weakness. The ever present fear that Spanish operations in the Low Countries were the prelude to invasion of England colored his estimate of the situation, not unjustifiably. Cecil named Spain and France as the two enemies of England and gave three reasons why it was best for England's interests that she give aid to the

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the Irish rebels, government grown soft and remiss, subjects grown overbold, tension between England and France and England and Spain. Other imperfections cited were the lack of treasure, poverty of the nobility, "wealth being in the meaner sort, which are unfit for service [to the Crown]." Certainly he could not object to commoners amassing wealth from business or trade, nor could he object to their being employed by the Crown for he and many of his contemporaries, the Walsinghams and the Cromwells had sprung, not from the old feudal classes, but from the new middle class. Cecil charged that France and Spain "have offended the Queen" by staying traffic in time of plague, used the Queen's ambassadors dishonorably, refused to confirm the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis and had denied justice to the merchants. Margaret of Parma had closed the Netherlands' ports ostensibly because of the plague but in reality to bring pressure to bear on England as the plague was then past its peak. Dr. Man, the English ambassador to the Spanish court, received cavalier treatment at the hands of Philip's ministers. Forbidden to hold religious services in his own house (Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs, Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas, Vol. II, 1568-1579 [Martin A. S. Hume, ed., London, 1894], p. 9 no. 8 [Hereafter: Cal. Span. 1568-1579]), and charged with saying that the Pope was "a canting little monk" (*ibid.*, p. 29, no. 20) he wrote to Elizabeth that Philip had denied him audience nineteen times (*ibid.*, p. 45, no. 35). Cateau-Cambresis terminated the war between France and Spain in which England under Mary I had supported Spain. By terms of the treaty Calais, which had fallen to France, was to be returned to England by 1566. This was not carried out. The Privy Council received many complaints from the merchants of the slow handling of their cases by Margaret of Parma and d'Assonleville (Dasent, VII, 23, 329) and in one instance directed the judge of the Admiralty Court to hear the case.

Low Countries: Their present (warlike) state prevented France and Spain from establishing Romish power; they were already assembled, armed, and engaged in the quarrel; it cost less to the Low Countries than it would to England were she to equip and send an army out of the realm. In a letter to Philip dated May 1, 1568, de Silva, the Spanish ambassador to England, reported Cecil as saying that Spain wished to rule the world and conquer England.<sup>46</sup> Writing to Elizabeth on July 14, 1568, de Silva protested her allowing persons to embark to the Low Countries with arms.<sup>47</sup> He stated his displeasure because Cecil would not issue the official proclamation against the exportation of arms which Elizabeth had already promised. Writing again to Philip on July 17, de Silva reported that Cecil had shown him a copy of the proclamation but that he doubted Cecil's sincerity.<sup>48</sup>

Tension was heightened between England and Spain at this time for in November of 1568 several Spanish ships laden with money, supposedly for the duke of Alva, took refuge from Channel pirates in the ports of Plymouth and

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<sup>46</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 27, no. 18.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., pp. 52ff, no. 38.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 54ff, no. 39.

Southampton.<sup>49</sup> When it became obvious that Cecil and Elizabeth had no intention of immediately releasing the money, de Spes,<sup>50</sup> in high dudgeon, asked Alva to seize English property in the Netherlands.<sup>51</sup> He hoped that this action would pressure Cecil and Elizabeth into doing that which polite diplomacy had failed to do. "If the Queen restores the money. . . it will be easy to return the English property to its owners," wrote de Spes to Alva.<sup>52</sup> But Elizabeth was adamant in her contention that the money belonged to private parties and not to Philip. "By aid of this money they will equip themselves to harass the

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., pp. 83ff, no. 62; pp. 88ff, no. 64. He wrote that "Cecil, whenever he can, favors the pirates, both on account of religious partiality and the great profit he derives from it." cf. Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXVII, no. 87 given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 104ff.

<sup>50</sup>de Spes had replaced de Silva as ambassador to England.

<sup>51</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 90. no. 65; pp. 90f, no. 66. Giovanni Correr, Venetian ambassador to France writing to the Signory: "It is reported that the Queen of England had detained a Spanish vessel and seized 300,000 silver crowns . . . and in consequence [Alva] had detained all English subjects in Flanders." (Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and Other Libraries of Northern Italy, Vol. VII, 1558-1580 [Rawdon Brown and Rt. Hon. G. Cavendish Bentinck, eds., London, 1890], p. 428ff. no. 48.) Hereafter: Cal. Ven. 1558-1580.

<sup>52</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 92, no. 67.

States by troubling us at sea, and preventing, so far as they can, commerce with Spain," was the opinion de Spes expressed in a letter to Alva.<sup>53</sup>

In retaliation for these seizures by Alva, Elizabeth had issued a proclamation on January 6, 1569, ordering seizure of all Spanish goods, ships, and money within the realm, and a forbearance of the trade with Spain and the Netherlands "until the intentions and designs of the King are known."<sup>54</sup> Having determined that the money was the property of some merchants and having prevented its falling into the hands of pirates, she decided she should "negotiate with the owners thereof. . .for borrowing from them all or part of it [as she] has frequently raised loans from merchants subject to the King of Spain." Philip in turn issued a proclamation on April 6, 1569, which not only forbade trade with England but also restricted the sailing of ships from the Low Countries to ports other than those in England.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Idem., p. 93.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp 99ff, no. 71A.

<sup>55</sup>The details of Philip's proclamation were contained in a newsletter from Antwerp (Cal. Rome, I, p. 302, no. 581). "No ship is to quit these ports unless provided with men, artillery, and other munitions for defense against corsairs pursuant to the order of his Majesty's Vice-Admiral. . .any person may fit out ships for war against corsairs upon security given that he will attack none other than said corsairs under pain of body and goods if he should

de Spes took a jaundiced view of Cecil's activities when it became apparent that he could not expect to recover the money for Philip. "These heretic knaves of the Council are going headlong to perdition, incited by Cecil," he wrote to Philip.<sup>56</sup> To Alva he wrote that while "Cecil rules [sic] I do not believe that there will be lasting peace."<sup>57</sup> de Spes believed that by choking off England's commerce she could be humbled. "Whenever Flemish matters are calm your Majesty [may] choose to stop English commerce without even drawing the sword."<sup>58</sup> On English trade with France he wrote, "it is true that it would be greatly to the Christian King's advantage to stop English trade."<sup>59</sup>

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do. . .contrariwise. . .no insurance is henceforth to be made upon any sort of vessel till further orders of his Majesty, pending which time other means will be found of enabling navigators to proceed upon their voyages in safety . . .no person whether a subject of his Majesty or a foreigner is to do any manner of business in his Majesty's dominions with Englishmen or their factors, or to export or import goods to or from any dominions in which Englishmen, dwelling here or elsewhere, may have any manner of dealings with his Majesty's subjects, on pain of confiscation of the merchandise or value thereof, and the ships, carts, or horses, and forfeiture of his Majesty's favor, etc."

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 95, no. 70.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 99, no. 71. de Spes did not understand Cecil's position in the Council otherwise he would not have made such an ignorant statement.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 85, no. 62.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 95, no. 70.

de Spes viewed the solution to Spain's problem as embargo against England. To Cecil, who was in a position which gave him a broader view of the total picture, there was no simple solution but only a need for a mixture of calculated caution and bold action. It was necessary for England to maintain trade with the Low Countries. If this were temporarily impossible then necessity dictated that through bold action new outlets would have to be found. So with the major port of Antwerp closed to English traders, the bulk of the trade was switched to Hamburg, "the most friendly to England of all the Hanse towns."<sup>60</sup> de Spes reported to Philip that the English were prepared to ship 20,000 pieces of cloth through this port.<sup>61</sup> He advised that it would be best to stop imports of oil and alum into England because without them "they cannot carry on their

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<sup>60</sup>Calendar of State Papers Foreign Series of the Reign of Elizabeth, Preserved in the Public Record Office, Vol. XIX, August 1584--August 1584 (Sophie Crawford Lomas, ed., London, 1916), p. 617. Hatfield MSS., I, no. 1029. The merchant Adventurers had traded with Hamburg prior to 1569. They petitioned the Council in 1564 to support them and the Merchants of the Staple in a monopoly of the trade and requested either a loan from the government or remission of customs for one year.

<sup>61</sup>Cal. Span., 1568-1579, p. 107, no. 78. Cal. Dom. Eliz., LXVII, no. 18, 32. Ships of the Royal Navy were assigned to convoy the Hamburg fleet. Newsletters from Antwerp in February and March of 1569 reported that Elizabeth was ordering armed escorts for ships of the Hamburg fleet (Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs Preserved Principally at Rome in the Vatican Archives and Library, 2 vols. [J. M. Rigg, ed., London, 1916, 1926], I, 301.) Hereafter: Cal. Rome.

cloth manufacture."<sup>62</sup> The shortage of the necessary oil and alum did not deter the English in their cloth production for later that year de Spes wrote Philip that oil was to be obtained from "rape seed to dress their wool, and they say that they can manage with it."<sup>63</sup>

de Spes persisted in his belief that with one stroke by Spain, England could be felled. He wrote Philip in April of 1569, "to take this [Hamburg] fleet would be to take all England."<sup>64</sup> But Philip would not move and Alva's problems in the Netherlands would not permit him to take decisive action against the English on the sea.

If de Spes and Philip were concerned about England's trade with Hamburg and the Low Countries, certain Spanish merchants were even more concerned about their trade with the same area. In a memorial to Philip they complained of the detention in English ports of Spanish ships bound for the Netherlands and charged that the cargoes were

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<sup>62</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 113, no. 83.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 186, no. 130.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 142, no. 93. de Spes was counting on an internal revolt headed by the dukes of Norfolk and Arundel to be carried out in concert with action by Philip. This attempt to overthrow Elizabeth's government was later known as the "Ridolfi Plot." Cecil and Elizabeth were aware of it almost from its inception. Gathering evidence bit by bit Cecil moved quickly to quash it in 1572. Until then he and Elizabeth stalled all negotiations for the resumption of trade.

seized and sold in England.<sup>65</sup> Since "the Queen of England has declared she will not treat with the duke of Alva on the matter nor with your Majesty's ambassador," the merchants asked that a member of the treasury be sent to treat with Elizabeth on the matter. Philip's merchants knew that which both he and Alva in their blind rush to crush heresy could not know until it was too late; that freedom to traverse the Channel was necessary if Spain were to maintain its leadership in the western world. Alva had effectively smashed the Netherlands markets and unwittingly created conditions for the close cooperation between England and the Low Countries which was to end Spanish domination in that area.

Many of the Netherlanders who escaped the wrath of Alva fled to English seaports. Operating out of these ports as rebels against Alva, they preyed on Spanish and French shipping in the Channel much to the discomfort and dismay of both Alva and Philip. Intelligence reaching Cecil in May of 1569 informed him that many ships sailing from Zealand to Spain and Portugal were taking the long route around the coast of Scotland rather than run the risk of falling prey to the rebels in the Channel.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, pp. 143f, no. 94.

<sup>66</sup>Hatfield MSS, I, no. 1302.

"Piratical rebels" who used the English ports as havens of safety were the subject of a complaint from de Spes to Cecil.<sup>67</sup> de Spes reported to Philip that "there is a great fair of spice, wines, wool, saffron, oil, soap, woad. . .stolen from your Majesty's subjects," at Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight.<sup>68</sup> Elizabeth issued proclamations against the harboring and maintaining of pirates.<sup>69</sup> The judge of the Admiralty court was ordered to investigate all cases of piracy brought before him.<sup>70</sup>

As early as 1563-1564 instructions were given to the vice admirals and commissioners appointed for the suppression of piracy for the purpose of "carrying out her Majesty's intention" to curb pirates in the Channel who were not then rebels against Alva but whose actions would embarrass England with Spain.<sup>71</sup> Specifically these officers were directed to apprehend anyone suspected of "plundering any subject of the King of Spain or of any friendly power." The timorous tenor of this proclamation was due to the inferior position in which England found herself with

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<sup>67</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 244, no. 182.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 245, no. 189.

<sup>69</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXXIII, no. 21; XLIX, no. 79; LVIII, no. 3; LXIX, no. 28; LXXIV, no. 33.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., LVIII, no. 20.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., XXXV, no. 17. Hatfield MSS, I, no. 949.

respect to Spain in 1563. Elizabeth could not yet afford to offend Philip for he was in a position to retaliate severely and swiftly if he chose to do so. In this pre-Alvan period Cecil and Elizabeth had to placate Philip until their commercial policy and external events would place them in a position of greater strength.

The severity of Alva's policy in the Netherlands with its negative effects on commerce coupled with the positive results of Cecil's program for increasing England's military potential did permit Cecil and Elizabeth to move from a position of strength in 1569.<sup>72</sup> It is a little difficult to believe that Elizabeth was entirely sincere in her efforts to curb piracy as it was a most effective weapon against Philip and Alva. As piracy in the Channel was on the increase, de Spes wrote Philip complaining that profits realized from goods taken and sold in England were strengthening the country's economy.<sup>73</sup>

Cecil had voiced his detestation of piracy in the Commons of 1563.<sup>74</sup> His fear that it would dislocate

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., no. 1247. In a memo to de Spes, the Lord Admiral and Cecil stated their belief that Alva's proceedings in the Netherlands had the approval of Philip and that England in retaliation would arrest Spanish subjects. They further informed him that ships had been ordered to the Downs to stay shipping from Spain to the Netherlands. Cecil and Elizabeth could not have taken this attitude toward Spain in 1563.

<sup>73</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 157, no. 102.

<sup>74</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXVII, no. 71 given in full in Tawney and Power, II, p. 104ff.

legitimate trade was well founded.<sup>75</sup> As England's commerce expanded the merchants became more insistent upon protection by the government from depredations by the pirates. The numerous proclamations against piracy issued by Elizabeth's government represented the official position, albeit the topographical nature of England made enforcement of these proclamations difficult. The Privy Council, with Cecil in regular attendance,<sup>76</sup> continued to issue orders to the vice admirals of the various ports to bend every effort in apprehending pirates. In February of 1570 the Council directed English and foreign merchants residing in England to take care of goods belonging to those Spanish subjects who took refuge in English ports from Channel pirates.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>Complaints of the depredations by pirates were constantly sent to Cecil and Elizabeth not only from the Spanish ambassador but also from the English merchants.

<sup>76</sup>A listing of the meetings at which each member of the Council was present is provided at the end of each volume of Dasent. Of all the members Cecil had by far the greatest percentage of attendance.

<sup>77</sup>Dasent, VIII, 15. There were important international political as well as economic motives for issuance of this particular proclamation. The relations of Elizabeth's government to that of France was dependent upon the rise and fall of the Catholic and Protestant factions in the French court. As the French Protestants were in the ascendancy in 1570 there was less possibility of a united French and Spanish attack upon England. Taking advantage of this respite from pressure, Cecil, Elizabeth, and the Council attempted through issuance of the proclamation to mollify Philip who was still bitter over the seizure of the money. This could be considered the first step leading to the convention at Nimwegen in 1573 which called for a resumption of the trade with the Netherlands.

As the revolt of the Netherlands, which broke out afresh in 1572, was being effectively led by the Prince of Orange on land, pirate-patriots were working havoc on commerce in the Channel waters. Unfortunately for neutrals, they did not distinguish between them and Spanish merchantmen, and often as not English ships fell prey to them. In addition to these privateers who operated under letters of marque from Orange, there were so-called "Frebutters" [sic] who claimed to be rebels against Spain.<sup>78</sup> A series of letters was sent by the Council to Lord Cobham, Vice Admiral of the Cinque Ports, and to various harbor officials in September and October of 1571 enjoining them to re-double their efforts in apprehending these "Frebutters."<sup>79</sup>

Elizabeth's government was subjected to no end of embarrassment by the open way in which the Channel pirates disposed of their stolen goods. The Council, writing to Sir Henry Crips and the commissioners of the Cinque Ports, said that the pirates' activities were such that "not only

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., pp. 27f, 46f. In a letter to Sir Henry Ratcliffe, Captain of Portsmouth, the Council expressed its thanks for his diligence in searching for a "Captain Jacques" who pretended to be operating under a letter of marque from the Prince of Orange.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., pp. 44ff; 49. The losses of the Steelyard to pirates were so great that it petitioned the Council to order more protection (ibid., p. 46f).

the government at home is sclaundered [sic]but also trafic [sic] from all ports [is] much hindered and decayed."<sup>80</sup>

Enforcement of Elizabeth's decrees did not always have the desired effect of maintaining the official peace with Spain. In 1572 de Guaras<sup>81</sup> reported to Philip that Brille on the island of Flushing had fallen to pirate-patriots under the leadership of one de Lumy.<sup>82</sup> The Council had decreed the expulsion of de Lumy from England for his piratical activities.<sup>83</sup> He in turn gathered his men and resources and launched the successful attack against Brille.

The trade which the English merchants enjoyed with Hamburg was eminently successful. Intelligence from Antwerp to the Vatican reported in June of 1569 that "there is no news from England save that on the whole they would fain arrange matters and restore the trade [with Antwerp]."<sup>84</sup> The informer despaired that the problem of restoring the trade would come about "because things take their wonted [sic] course, the more so that the fleet has set sail for

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>81</sup>de Guaras was the "unofficial ambassador" to England appointed by Philip after the expulsion of de Spes.

<sup>82</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, pp. 385f, no. 322; no. 323.

<sup>83</sup>Dasent, VIII, 67.

<sup>84</sup>Cal. Rome, I, 309, no. 594.

the new port at Hamburg." The note of despair here would tend to show the foreign merchants' realization that England's commercial position was strong and would grow even stronger until something was done to restore Antwerp to its previous position of dominance.<sup>85</sup>

In March of 1570 intelligence reached the Vatican that negotiations were under way between Alva and England for restoration of the trade.<sup>86</sup> Three commissioners were appointed by Alva, "Gasparo Sez, Treasurer of the Court, d'Assonleville, and the Giustineto, for criminal causes; and it is believed that they will arbitrate to good purpose . . . Alva directed that all merchants interested are to furnish a list of goods taken."<sup>87</sup> Five Flemish merchants were chosen to go to England "to do the same office there."<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>Kervyn de Lettenhove, Baron, Relations Politiques des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre Sous Le Regne de Philippe II, 8 vols. (Brussels, 1882-1888), V, 588. Hereafter: Lettenhove. A memorial on the commerce of Antwerp published, it is thought, in 1570 said the commerce enjoyed by Antwerp was founded on the relations among the English, the Portuguese, and the Italians, and that negotiations were under way between the English and the Portuguese to have the Portuguese trade transferred to some English port.

<sup>86</sup>Cal. Rome, I, p. 330, no. 654.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 332, no. 656.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., pp. 332f, no. 658. Intelligence to the Vatican was in error stating that on April 10, 1570, an accord had been established as a result of the negotiations.

On May 4, Alva received from John Marsh, governor of the Merchant Adventurers at Antwerp, a request in the name of all the merchants and citizens of England "qui ont fréquenté et traffique au Pays-Bas et en toute aultres dominions et signories apertenant au Roy Catholique" to have inserted in any treaty which might result, clauses pertaining to the merchants, their goods, and facilities.<sup>89</sup> On all points Alva was willing to acquiesce provided Elizabeth took reciprocal action towards the Spanish merchants and their goods.<sup>90</sup>

The dispute was not as speedily settled as the hopes of the merchants indicated. In April intelligence sources in Antwerp were advising the Vatican that "there is not much hope of the accord with the English because they claim to have the goods restored to them and be exempt from restoring that which they have detained in England."<sup>91</sup>

Cecil received a letter dated June 8 from John Fitz-William<sup>92</sup> in which the agitation of the merchants was made known:

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<sup>89</sup>Lettenhove, V, 646ff.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 646 and note.

<sup>91</sup>Cal. Rome, I, 335, no. 667. Alva informed Elizabeth that a large Fleet sailing from Nimwegen for Spain was collected solely to escort the Spanish queen and that Elizabeth "need have no fear [the fleet] will do any harm to her countries" (ibid., p. 342, no. 686).

<sup>92</sup>One of the three English commissioners sent to the Low Countries to negotiate settlement.

Here is great desire to understand what answer may come from the Queens Majesty touching our suits of the merchants. . . .If it should stand long on these terms, they should be forced to change their trades and plant themselves in some other place where they might find more liberty.<sup>93</sup>

The merchants appointed by Alva to go to England were in no great hurry to get there as information from Antwerp dated June 24 reported:

They make no haste for in the lyme [sic] of intreaty they have left no time in sending to and from Spain of ships so that now there is now a great mass of all manner of commodities come out of Spain and other places, and also many ships laden from hence into Spain and therefore much doubted the treaty will go forward.<sup>94</sup>

Through Fitz-William, Elizabeth directed complaints to Alva against the activities of de Spes, charging him with inciting the rebels of the North, and stating her belief that his, Alva's, gathering of the armed ships to escort the queen of Spain was really a pretext for amassing a fleet to be used for invasion of England.<sup>95</sup> But the ever "politique" Elizabeth left ajar the door to further negotiation by stating that she would negotiate peace if that were the duke's desire. Alva answered Elizabeth through Fitz-William on July 25 that he would advise Philip

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<sup>93</sup>Lettenhove, V., 661.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., p. 671.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., p. 675. Henry Cobham was instructed by Elizabeth to go to the Low Countries for the purpose of coming "to certainty of knowledge what the duke's intention is in his preparation of so great a navy (ibid., p. 691).

of Elizabeth's complaints against de Spes, at the same time glossed over any actions involving de Spes which had caused Elizabeth's displeasure.<sup>96</sup> He indicated to Henry Cobham during the latter's mission to the Low Countries that "as touching the ambassador of Spain resident in England, there should be done so much therein as may content the Queen; but of this. . .he would confer with one perhaps wiser than himself."<sup>97</sup>

Because the merchandise seized by Elizabeth had been dispersed throughout the realm, the task of determining its value lasted well into September of 1570. In September de Spes wrote d'Assonleville "me samble qu'il seroit que très-prouffitable pour nous s'ils se vouloyent auculnement renger à la raison et l'accepter comme Son Excellence le leur a offert."<sup>98</sup>

Alva was determined to undermine the English staple at Hamburg for it was quite evident that this vent was proving very profitable to the merchants there. In an attempt to accomplish this and at the same time drive a wedge between the English Crown and the merchants, he licensed certain persons to bring English cloths into the

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 678. Alva, knowing full well what de Spes was doing, wrote him on July 27 to cease his intrigues for fear of upsetting the commercial negotiations (ibid., p. 680).

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 700.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., p. 711.

Low Countries. News of this reached London from Hamburg by letter dated November 23, 1570:

The Duke of Alva has granted a certain license to sundry persons to bring English cloths into the Low Countries, whereby it seems that such persons make account to have them nearer [at] hand than this place for the better cheap and less charges, as either by license out of England directly or by way of France as to Calais or other port there about. . .so we shall not be able to utter the great mass of cloth and other commodities presently lying on our hands.<sup>99</sup>

A rumor to the effect that the restitution of goods had been effected early in December of 1570 was transmitted in a letter from Antwerp to London.<sup>100</sup> Subsequent events proved the rumor to be false as on the 20th of the same month John Marsh petitioned Cecil to obtain passports for himself ". . .John Fitz-William, Richard Saltconstall, and John Aldersey and their servant, also to procure [Elizabeth's] commission to consent to release of the arrest here, if the duke do[es] the like there first."<sup>101</sup>

From Antwerp on January 3, 1571, Fitz-William reported to Cecil of preliminary arrangements to have Thomas Fieschi, "the principle merchant in Antwerp," come to London for talks with Cecil and other Council members in order to speed negotiations.<sup>102</sup> Fitz-William hinted to Cecil that d'Assonleville had fallen in Alva's favor as a negotiator

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<sup>99</sup>Ibid., VI, 15.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

for his "articles last sent were well considered by the duke be not so well liked, nor thought to be in so good order as they might have been." On the other hand, "the duke has had divers conferences with M. Fieschi touching the same, and by that I can conceive the duke has [ordered] M. Fieschi to set it in some good way. . .having thoroughly considered the best and surest way to bring the points of difference in such order as they may well be liked of by the Queens Majesty and [Council]."

Fitz-William wrote again to Cecil on the 27th reporting on a conference with Fieschi and an audience with Alva.<sup>103</sup> He stated that he and Fieschi had worked out minor points of difference relative to piracy and the valuation of cloth seized from the English merchants. He told Cecil that Alva had chosen to ignore all differences except the price of cloth and in so doing caused Fieschi to be not a "little abashed and much grieved in his mind."

There seems to have been a bit of jealousy between d'Assonleville and Albornoz, Alva's secretary, through whom it was necessary to go in order to reach Alva. As Fitz-William reported to Cecil on February 1:

M. d'Assonleville sent for me. . .and [said] that [he] had orders from the duke to talk with me touching that [which] I had been to his Excellency for and how to [d'Assonleville] I declared I had proceeded with the secretary, Albornoz, from the beginning, and [he] seemed not to like well of the manner of his dealings.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup>Ibid., pp. 39ff.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

In a second interview with d'Assonleville which he reported to Cecil on February 6, it was hinted by d'Assonleville that Alva had chosen another person to represent his interests in the forthcoming negotiations in London.<sup>105</sup> "I would have had the name of the person at [sic] M. d'Assonleville but he would not declare it," reported Fitz-William, "but parting from him I met one who had understood [he] is M. de Zwevegham."

On February 11 Fitz-William wrote Cecil, "I understand M. Fieschi has been commissioned with all to come with [de Zwevegham] and has alleged certain excuses not to come, yet it is thought in the end that he will accomplish the duke's request."<sup>106</sup> Fitz-William also told Cecil that Alva had relaxed the requirement of passports for merchants in the Low Countries.

The duke is contented that the Queens Majesty's subjects shall pass without any passports through these Low Countries. There has been made suit for passports, and the duke's answer has been that they shall need none. . . at Dunkirk there are divers English merchants passed without passport[s].

Fitz-William's hope that Fieschi would come received a filip as he reported to Cecil from Bruges on February 25:

The duke has sent for M. Fieschi and had declared unto him that he must in any way prepare himself to go to England to end the matter which he has so well begun to set in good way, and that the going of M. de Zwevegham be not lett [sic] unto him, whose commission did not extend so far, but that he must be directed by M. Fieschi.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

On May 9 Alva wrote de Spes that Fieschi was coming to London.<sup>108</sup> de Zwevegham had preceeded Fieschi to London, arriving there in March. At that time information was had at the Vatican that the "commissaries had crossed to England to settle the question of trade, of which there is great hope."<sup>109</sup>

In letters to Philip on July 14, 1571, de Spes reported that Fieschi had nearly reached agreement with the English merchants dealing in Flanders but was having difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory agreement with those dealing direct with Spain, "for they are asking for a great deal more than was taken from them."<sup>110</sup> Agreement was reached on the valuation of the property but "all these are difficult points when dealt with by English commissioners and councillors [who are] naturally greedy." de Spes was now completely disillusioned by the Council's tactics in dealing with Fieschi.

These people are very impertinent [and] almost dismissed [Fieschi] for good, rejecting the settlement he thought he had made. They threatened him and told him the Queen did not mean to return [the money] for 7 years to come, so that [his] intention of preserving the settlement of the points still pending. . . must fall through. They dismissed Fieschi telling him he must prove that the Queen

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<sup>108</sup>Ibid., p. 129. In the same letter Alva advised de Spes not to meddle in the internal affairs of England, i.e. Mary Stuart and the Catholic faction.

<sup>109</sup>Cal. Rome, I, 392, no. 759.

<sup>110</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 324, no. 266.

took the money in cash. Her officers refused to give any [more] information. I have now less hope of these people than ever. . . .<sup>111</sup>

In order to strengthen Spain's bargaining position de Spes suggested that attempts be made to capture the ships sailing for Hamburg, as he expressed it, "so as to equalize the advantage these people now have in the value of the goods detained."<sup>112</sup> But de Spes hopes were completely chilled by a letter from Philip in August in which he said, "I do not believe the English have any attention [sic] of bringing restitution about." de Spes' despair plummeted to the lowest depths as he wrote Philip in September that there was not only a possibility of his being "expelled" from England but that he had filed protests against the piratical activities in the Channel with the Court. "Lord Cobham has been ordered in the future to provide against such disorders. It will all be in vain, however, as it hitherto has been."<sup>114</sup>

From Brussels on September 17 came a letter to the Vatican which explained in part why the negotiations were so protracted:

From England is returned the Genoese Thomas Raggio Fieschi, the principal merchant in Antwerp, who was sent to England to adjust the differences; he says he finds little there to stand in the way of

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<sup>111</sup>Ibid., pp. 330ff, no. 273.

<sup>112</sup>Idem., p. 331.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., p. 334, no. 275.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., p. 339, no. 280.

an arrangement, and that as to the marriage of the Queen with M. de Anjou, that matter will go no further, for he says that the negotiation is but a pretense on the part of the English to enable them to condescend the more readily to an adjustment of the differences with these countries to their advantage.<sup>115</sup>

On November 5 de Zwevegham wrote Alva that Elizabeth had announced she was going to sell the merchandise and that he was able to obtain a delay of only ten days pending the return of Fieschi.<sup>116</sup> Alva answered de Zwevegham on November 10 in conciliatory terms:

Il a samble convenir [pour mettre une fois fin à cest affaire] d'accepter ce pourgect des Anglois en y changeant altérant et corrigeant aucuns poincts qui ont semblé totalement nécessaires pour mettre les choses en égalité en tous poincts.<sup>117</sup>

Alva also advised Elizabeth that he was supplying Fieschi with credentials which would authorize him to negotiate with

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<sup>115</sup>Cal. Rome, I, 459, no. 834. Lettenhove, VI, 178. Fieschi left de Zwevegham in London on September 9 and returned to Alva with a proposed treaty and to get further instructions. The negotiations for the marriage of Elizabeth to the Count of Anjou, brother to the King of France, while an important part of England's foreign policy, are not relevant here. They may be followed in Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 288, et passim.

<sup>116</sup>Lettenhove, VI, 207. de Spes wrote Philip on November 29 that Leicester had told de Zwevegham "they would wait 3 days longer for Thomas Fieschi and, after that, would at once proceed to sell the merchandise." (Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 350, no. 290.)

<sup>117</sup>Lettenhove, VI, 211. A letter dated November 8 from the Merchant Adventurers at Hamburg discloses their anxiety at the length of the negotiations: "I am sorry the conclusion of agreement betwixt the Low Countries and us does so slakly proceed. I doubt the Company shall as yet have no traffic hither, wherefore I could gladly understand your opinion whether it were good to remove to Emden."

full authority on the question of restitution.<sup>118</sup> de Spes advised Alva on November 16 that the arrival of Fieschi was awaited with great impatience.<sup>119</sup> On November 22 Antonio Fogozo wrote Prince Ruy Gomez de Silva that "on the day the goods were to be sold news came that Fieschi was at Calais."<sup>120</sup> In the meantime, Alva instructed de Zwevegham to negotiate for restitution of those goods seized since December 22, 1568, "usant par avant de toutes raisons et persuasions que pourrez."<sup>121</sup>

The meeting of Alva and Fieschi had brought forth proposals which Cecil and the Council did not view as satisfactory for, as de Spes wrote Philip on December 21, "they are keeping Fieschi in suspense without giving him a reply and indeed hardly take time to discuss the matter."<sup>122</sup> "Both he and de Zwevegham are now suspicious that they are being deceived," wrote de Spes to Alva.<sup>123</sup> Alva in turn replied, "as regards the negotiations of de Zwevegham and Fieschi I have written [to them] telling

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<sup>118</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>120</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 353, no. 291.

<sup>121</sup>Lettenhove, VI, 234.

<sup>122</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, pp. 357ff, no. 296.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., p. 361, no. 298.

them to await the document which these people are going to give them because. . .it is His Majesty's wish to settle the matter as well as possible and close this incident of the seizure."<sup>124</sup>

With the expulsion of de Spes<sup>125</sup> the negotiations were once again in a state of suspension. Cecil informed the Merchant Adventurers, the Staplers, and the Steelyard on January 7, 1572, that negotiations with de Zwevegham and Fieschi had fallen through and as a consequence of Alva's having sold the seized English goods for the past two years Elizabeth would proceed to sell the Spanish goods in her possession.<sup>126</sup>

Fieschi wrote to Secretary Albornoz<sup>127</sup> that since negotiations were in suspension they be given permission

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<sup>124</sup>Ibid., p. 326. no. 300.

<sup>125</sup>de Spes was called to the Council on December 14, 1571 (Cal. Span. 1568-1579, pp. 356f, no. 295). Cecil, acting as spokesman, charged de Spes with encouraging the Northern rebels and urging Philip and Alva to make war on England, and ordered him to leave within three days. de Spes refused to leave without orders from Alva or Philip. Despite his protests he was put in the custody of Sir Henry Knollys and conducted to Dover. He arrived in Calais on January 28.

<sup>126</sup>Calendar of State Papers Foreign Series of the Reign of Elizabeth 1572-1574 Preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office, ed. Allan James Crosby (London, 1876), No. 16. Hereafter: Cal. Foreign 1572-1574.

<sup>127</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 372, no. 306. These letters, extracts only of which are published, are dated 7th, 8th, 18th, 21st January, and 4th and 6th February, 1572.

to leave with de Spes as they could do nothing further. Fieschi also told Albornoze that he had been approached by a "Secretary" to the Council who informed him that Elizabeth had ordered the sale of the detained goods and had given four reasons for doing so: First, so as not to damage them further; second, to follow Alva's example; third, to pay the claims to her subjects resulting from Alva's actions; fourth, because neither he, Fieschi, nor de Zwevegham "had powers to arrange." But if Philip should think it fit to re-open trade, Elizabeth must cease aiding the rebels, in which case it would be well to ignore the sale of the goods since there were English goods over 300,000 crowns in value detained within Spain and Flanders and from the sale of these goods Philip's subjects could be recompensed for their losses.<sup>128</sup>

Alva directed de Zwevegham on February 8 to ask audience with Elizabeth in order to find out what her intentions were.<sup>129</sup> Elizabeth willingly granted the audience on the 16th, a summary of which de Zwevegham reported to Alva on the 19th.<sup>130</sup> Elizabeth "répéta la chanson

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<sup>128</sup>cf Calendar of State Papers Foreign Series of the Reign of Elizabeth 1571-1572 Preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office, ed. Allan James Crosby (London, 1874), No. 124. de Zwevegham wrote Elizabeth on February 18, 1572, that whereas Philip was holding English goods to the value of 300,000 crowns, she was holding Spanish goods to the value of 800,000 crowns. Hereafter: Cal. Foreign 1571-1572.

<sup>129</sup>Lettenhove, VI, 311.      <sup>130</sup>Ibid., p. 317.

ancienne pour excuser la vente des biens des subjects de sa Majesté."

On February 22 de Zwevegham was summoned to the Council and told that his staying in England was contingent upon his not ". . . following in the crooked footsteps of de Spes."<sup>131</sup> The Council further informed him that all points under discussion would be reduced to two; pirates and the alleged aid given to them by the English, and troubles growing out of the arrests of goods and persons. de Zwevegham was reminded that the Queen had issued sundry proclamations against pirates in which she warned her subjects against buying from them, victualing them, or otherwise aiding them in any way.

In March Antonio de Guaras, the merchant acting as unofficial Spanish ambassador,<sup>132</sup> was approached by an agent from Cecil's office who informed him that the Queen and Council were quite willing to come to an agreement, and if de Guaras were to inform either Philip or Alva, the way would be opened whereby de Guaras and Burghley could work out the basis for settlement. This offer and an ensuing interview with Burghley were reported by de Guaras to Philip.

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<sup>131</sup>Cal. Foreign 1571-1572, No. 128.

<sup>132</sup>From the expulsion of de Spes to the coming of Don Bernardo de Mendoza in 1578 there was no resident Spanish ambassador in England (Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 376 and note).

I said in your Court, in Flanders and here, he, Cecil, was much looked up to in affairs, and consequently was the more bound to conduct them to a good end, as he could if he pleased, whereupon he answered me with an oath that if it had not been for him the late suspension of relations would have ended in an open rupture, and Flanders would have felt the effects in acts rather than words [and] if the business came to an open rupture the Queen of England would display an amount of strength that would surprise some people, but he answered me that the Queen and Council being desirous of quietude if I conveyed this good feeling to your Majesty and the duke of Alva, I should find that I had not acted lightly, but with all the weight his word would give me. . . everything tends to the belief that Burghley's declaration is sincere.<sup>133</sup>

Philip's and Alva's reactions to Burghley's offer were satisfactory as de Guaras in a letter dated April 8 to Alva reported Burghley seemed pleased at the good will expressed by Philip and Alva.

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<sup>133</sup>Ibid., pp. 376ff, no. 314. de Guaras also wrote in the same letter "two months ago a third person came to speak to me. . . saying that it would be a [benefit to Philip] if some agreement could be arrived at respecting the present dissension." This would indicate that de Guaras had been approached sometime in January and that the negotiations conducted by Cecil and Elizabeth with Fieschi and de Zwevegham since then had been a mere sham. In a second letter dated April 7 (ibid., pp. 379f, no. 317) de Guaras informed Alva of a sudden illness that had overtaken Cecil and of his fears for Cecil's life: "If this man dies, it will be very unfortunate for the purpose which he has declared to me. It is true that hitherto he has undoubtedly been the enemy of peace and tranquillity for his own bad ends, but I am convinced [that] he is now well disposed, which means the Queen and the Council are so, because he and no one else rules the whole of the affairs of state. God grant that if it be for His service he may live. I will advise your Excellency if he does so." As did de Spes, de Guaras put the cart before the horse. Elizabeth ruled. In the final analysis Cecil bowed to his sovereign's will.

I could assure him that neither his Majesty nor your Excellency ever thought of any thing but concord. He replied that it was certainly quite natural for friendship to exist between England, Spain, and Flanders, and, entering more into detail on the question of the origins of the dissension and the remedies therefor, he spoke of this much to be desired concord being established after the most just possible restitution had been made. . . the opening of the trade and the restitution of all things to their previous position.<sup>134</sup>

While Cecil continued to treat with de Guaras secretly, he and Elizabeth maintained the facade of officially treating with de Zwevegham. Finally on April 19, 1572, the Council told de Zwevegham that his commission from Philip was not sufficient for him to treat of the arrests, the restitution of goods, and the restoration of intercourse.<sup>135</sup> The Council further charged that Fieschi, "a Genoese and no subject of [Philip]" had inserted, with de Zwevegham's permission, articles into the proposed treaty "concerning certain moneys pretended to belong to certain merchants of Genoa" which had no bearing on the treaty. de Zwevegham was wasting his and the Council's time, it was charged, for to treat with his present commission "cannot be but frivolous and vain" as

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<sup>134</sup>Ibid., p. 381, no. 318.

<sup>135</sup>Lettenhove, VII, 387. Animosity was growing between de Zwevegham and de Guaras as the former felt his efforts were not being appreciated. de Zwevegham wrote Alva on April 11 that he considered de Guaras to be "imprudent" in his conduct of the negotiations (ibid., p. 370). de Guaras wrote Alva that he did not believe de Zwevegham should be told of his, de guaras', talks with Cecil (ibid., p. 374).

the two sovereigns concerned would not be obliged to observe that which they had not authorized. de Zwevegham was also told by the Council that it had been directed by Elizabeth to say that if any commissioner were sent by Philip to negotiate on the points outlined, for a two month period no Spanish ship that put into an English port by reason of "tempest, contrary winds, or for manifest lack of victuals [would be] stayed or arrested." This was to be provisional upon Philip's offering reciprocal privileges for English merchants in his dominions. de Zwevegham was also told that he had permission to quit the realm whenever he chose to do so.<sup>136</sup>

A possible shift in the balance of power between Spain and France was the reason for the sudden change from an attitude of hostility to one of conciliation and compromise on the part of England. In a memorial of June 3, 1572, the "politique" Burghley set down his thoughts on the topic.

If it appears that [Alva] is not able to defend his master's countries from the French and that they begin to possess any part of them especially the maritime parts, then it is likely the French. . .may be to[o] potent neighbors for us. If the French proceed to possess the maritime coasts and the frontiers it seems to be good that. . .the duke of Alva were informed secretly of the Queens Majesty's disposition to assist the King, his master by all honorable means she might. . .so as it appear[s]

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<sup>136</sup>de Zwevegham applied to Cecil for his passport on April 25 (Cal. Foreign 1571-1572, no. 397) and took the occasion to congratulate him on being created Lord Burghley.

to her that he will discharge his subjects of their intolerable oppressions. . .and continue with Her Majesty the ancient league for amity and traffic.<sup>137</sup>

As summer gave way to fall, de Guaras carried on negotiations with Burghley, Elizabeth, and the Council firmly convinced in his own mind that Elizabeth and Burghley desired peace. On October 6 he sent Alva the details of two interviews which he had with Burghley.<sup>138</sup> He reported that Burghley "seemed pleased" when told that Alva wished to settle the differences. "I delivered all my message and he, with great delight, said he hoped God would pardon those who had been the cause of this dissension, and that the Queen was most willing to come to a settlement."<sup>139</sup> de Guaras quoted Burghley as saying in the second interview:

As the Queen greatly desires this accord as well as my self and others. . .I must tell you in a friendly way that the Queen and ourselves cannot help suspecting that your King is not moved by the same goodwill to a friendly settlement but rather leans toward dissension.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup>Lettenhove, VI, 420. de Guaras reported to Alva on June 30 that Elizabeth had been offered Flushing by the Guise but said she would take it only to return it to Philip (ibid., p. 434).

<sup>138</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 417. Burghley told de Guaras that the Queen and Council were receiving many complaints from English who fell victim to the Inquisition. "I told him. . .there was no tribunal in existence more just and merciful than the Inquisition," was the reply.

<sup>139</sup>Ibid., pp. 417ff, no. 351.

<sup>140</sup>Idem., p. 418.

When de Guaras assured Burghley of Philip's sincerity Burghley replied that "such suspicion ought not to be entertained and [that] the commerce of this country with Spain and Flanders should be to the advantage of all."<sup>141</sup>

On October 12 de Guaras wrote Alva that he believed Elizabeth sincerely wanted to carry out the treaty which was important to the state and to the common people of England.<sup>142</sup> He noted dissension in the Council over whether England should favor Spain or France, but "the best councilor of them all is Lord Burghley as he follows the will and tendency of the Queen which is toward concord."<sup>143</sup>

de Guaras again wrote Alva on November 4<sup>144</sup> reporting on an interview with Burghley in which the latter expressed his opinion that the ports could be opened on the 29th of December if agreed to by Alva and Philip, adding that Elizabeth and the earl of Leicester were in favor of this. "It may be supposed that these folks wish for peace more than ever, although they want to settle it with great consideration and honor for themselves," wrote de Guaras to Alva on November 9, "but as they have no letters from your

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<sup>141</sup>Idem., p. 419.

<sup>142</sup>Lettenhove, VII, p. 548.

<sup>143</sup>Idem.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., p. 570.

Majesty [sic] which they so much desire they are still suspicious that they will not be received into your friendship."<sup>145</sup>

On November 18 de Guaras wrote Alva that Elizabeth not having received a reply from Philip to her proposal for opening the ports, was in despair for fear that the negotiations would again be disrupted.<sup>146</sup>

On January 1, 1573, Alva wrote to de Guaras in reply to Elizabeth's proposition.<sup>147</sup> Alva would establish a protocol for a two year period during which negotiations to resolve all differences would be carried on. He proposed both parties agree to a status quo ante December 1568, except that no asylum would be granted to those who had taken up arms or plotted against either government. In other words, Elizabeth, if she agreed, would put herself on record as being officially against extending aid to the rebellious Netherlands. Further, Alva suggested, the commission be established with power not only to settle all points of difference but also to "cite articles besides those here" in order to provide that differences would never again arise.

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<sup>145</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 438, no. 364.

<sup>146</sup>Lettenhove, VI, 585.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid., p. 615. There is some question as to the correct date of this document.

Burghley answered de Guaras in February.<sup>148</sup> "I am not fully satisfied by your words [you] being but a private man without authority from the King," he wrote, but perceiving that de Guaras was negotiating in good faith, added "I have thought having considered of your speeches and your writing, to note unto you my opinion." Burghley indicated his approval of opening the ports on a certain day but suggested postponing the opening to the first of December so that everyone concerned could be apprised.

The convention concluded at Nimwegen on March 15, 1573, settled the question of trade resumption for a two

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<sup>148</sup>Ibid., p. 642. Burghley suggested the inclusion of an article which would permit freedom of religion for citizens of each country trading and living within the other. He would have provision made for extradition of those who "have committed any crime which is punishable by death in their native country." He was concerned, too, over the conduct of ambassadors. The points are summarized by Burghley with "my opinion added to same" (ibid., p. 647) and conclude: "Finally, considering both the said Prince are far [apart] as such expedition cannot be used, as it is known by their former mutual messages and letters, they are both disposed to have no time [lost] for the restoration of their ancient amity and for the intercourse of merchandise betwixt their subjects, it has been found good that the contents of these former articles should be reduced into writing as they are here above expressed, and that, for either place, some such as are of counsel and credit with either of them should for more expedition sign, subscribe and seal the same, for which purpose I, William Lord Burghley, Knight of the Order of the Garter, Master of the Court of war, etc. with the knowledge, consent, and allowance of my sovereign Lady and Queen, Elizabeth, and by the grace etc., do subscribe and seal the same promising on the faith that I bear to Almighty God, and the duty to my said Lady and Queen that I will to the utmost of my power, further and advance the due observation of all the contents of the former article in all parts."

year period.<sup>149</sup> The only remaining question was the reckoning of losses sustained by both Spanish and English merchants.<sup>150</sup> This was settled by the Treaty of Bristol on August 30, 1574.<sup>151</sup> The Spanish were awarded 100,076 pounds, 17 shillings, 11 pence less 11,000 pounds for

<sup>149</sup>Ibid., p. 680. "L'entrecours est retabli pour un deux années, afin de régler tous les anciens différends. Aussi longtemps que dureront les negociations, le roi d'Espagne et la reine d'Angleterre s'engagent mutuellement a ne point soutenir les rebelles et a reprimer les corsaires."

<sup>150</sup>The negotiations may be traced in Lettenhove, VII, 700, et passim. On April 15 Alva wrote to Elizabeth from Nimwegen, "j'ay reçu. . . les articles signés et séeclés par Milord Burghley, de l'accord que, par commandement du Roy. . . j'ay faiet negocier avec ledit Milord entre Vos Majestés, dont je me suis infiniment resjouy" (ibid., p. 710).

The power to negotiate the settlement was conferred upon de Zwevegham and Jean de Boisschot, "conseillier et advocat fiscal de vostre conseil en Brabant" (ibid., p. 11). They were cautioned not to haggle over who was the first to arrest "pour ne perdre temps en choise vaine et de piéca disputée et monstrée au contraire" (ibid., pp. 13ff).

The papal nuncio in France wrote to the Cardinal of Como on April 24 that there were rumors of an accord between Spain and England, but "nevertheless many are of the opinion that [Elizabeth] dallies with these negotiations to gain time and shape her policy as in view of the course of events in France and Flanders she shall deem expedient" (Cal. Rome, II, p. 106, no. 185).

Elizabeth's formal proclamation of the renewal of commercial intercourse was given on April 30, 1573 (Cal. For. 1572-1574, No. 936).

Philip's confirmation of the protocol between Burghley and Alva was issued on June 8 (ibid., no. 1021).

<sup>151</sup>The Privy Council met at Bristol on August 15, 19, and 20 of 1574 (Dasent, VIII, 282ff). There is no reference in the minutes to the settlement.

Elizabeth was also at Bristol on the 20th. (Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, ed. John Nichols, 3 vols. [London, 1823], I, 408). Again there is no reference to the treaty. There is a notation by Burghley in Haynes and Murdin, II, p. 776 of the treaty but nothing further.

expenses due Philip, while the English received 85,096 pounds, 17 shillings, 11 pence less 17,000 pounds for expenses due Elizabeth.<sup>152</sup>

William Cecil was not a mercantilist despite his seemingly pro-mercantilist speeches in Commons, his memoranda on trade, and his support of sumptuary legislation. His whole philosophy and action were conditioned by the political events of his time. He aimed at a policy of potency at sea in order to preserve the realm.<sup>153</sup> If his support was given to those expedients which seemed to be mercantilist it was because they seemed to him to be the best for the time.

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<sup>152</sup>Hatfield MSS, II, 81, no. 217. Not all the Netherlanders welcomed the resumption of trade with unalloyed joy. The Merchant Adventurers reported on May 19, 1573, that Jacques Taffyn, treasurer of Flushing, had said that "all the kindness [the English] ever showed [us] was in respect of [their] own private gain." (Lettenhove, VI, 738.) Taffyn charged that Elizabeth had cut off military supplies to the Flushingens so as to force them to "submit themselves unto [her] protection" and would have used her soldiers "to have rendered [Flushing] unto the hands of the duke of Alva" so she could make peace with Philip. "The common talk among them of Flushing is that the Queen has made this accord of traffic with the King of Spain of purpose so that they thereby might be overthrown," wrote the Merchant Adventurers. But the Flushingens and the other Netherlanders appreciated the quality of the now obtainable English cloths as "in every town. . .we found plenty of English cloth. . .which came directly out of England," admittedly hidden in barrels so as to avoid English export taxes.

<sup>153</sup>Sir John A. Clapham, A Concise Economic History of Britain (Cambridge, 1951), p. 279. A. V. Judges, "The Idea of a Mercantile State," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, XXI (Fourth Series), p. 41ff.

In order to keep the realm inviolate it was necessary to pacify the Scottish border and, insofar as possible, maintain the balance of power between France and Spain. The ancient enmity between England and Scotland took on new dimensions while Mary Stuart was on the Scottish throne for religion was thrown into the arena of English-Scottish relations. Mary Stuart connived with Philip to keep England's northern border in a state of unrest.<sup>154</sup> This action taxed both the material and financial resources of an England which was already weakened by the excesses of the reign of Henry VIII and which had been governed ineptly in the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I.

The reign of Mary I with Philip II of Spain as her husband had cost England Calais. By his marital connection Philip was able to enlist English troops in his war against France. The loss of Calais still rankled with the English as Cecil in his memorial of 1569 expressed it thus:

As for the amity of the house of Burgundy, or Spain, towards the Queen's Majesty, or to the Crown of England, the special thing of great moment is to be considered, that when for the King's [Philip] sake England was brought into war with France and Scotland in which wars France got away the town of Calais, the king of Spain would enter into no war with Scotland, though he were many times thereto solicited. And at the making of the peace at [Cateau-Cambresis]

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<sup>154</sup>The attempt by Roberto Ridolfi to foment rebellion and place Mary Stuart on the throne of England may be traced by correspondence in Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 111, no. 82, et passim. That of Thomas Stuckeley in Ireland may be traced ibid., p. 159, no. 102 et passim.

where he recovered for himself all manner of things . . .neverthe less [he] would not employ his labors nor his greatness at that time to recover Calais for England.<sup>155</sup>

Because of the proximity of England's shores to both France and the Netherlands and the facility with which England could be invaded by either nation, it behooved England to see that neither one grew strong at the expense of the other. This factor accounts for the shift in diplomacy in 1572 on the part of Cecil when he sent for de Guaras to reopen negotiations for the resumption of trade.<sup>156</sup> Elizabeth announced her intention to aid Spain by returning Flushing to Alva for the sole purpose of off-setting the strength of France.<sup>157</sup>

Philip's policy which caused alarm in England was the ruthless pacification of the Netherlands under Alva with the use not only of military force but also the office of the Inquisition.<sup>158</sup> This was abhorrent to Cecil not only on grounds of human decency but also on grounds of religion and politics.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>155</sup>Haynes and Murdin, I, p. 583.

<sup>156</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 376.

<sup>157</sup>Lettenhove, VI, 420.

<sup>158</sup>For a portrait of Philip and his policy see Martin A. S. Hume's Philip II of Spain (London, 1899).

<sup>159</sup>Cecil referred to the Catholic Church as "the tyranny of Rome" (Haynes and Murdin, I, 580).

This was the field of sixteenth century international politics on which Cecil and his contemporaries had to ensure protection for England from the internal and external forces arrayed against her. Cecil's commercial program which was designed to accumulate wealth to protect the realm was not original in any sense of the word. He had many precedents in the field of statutory law to draw from. It cannot be said that he personally had anything to do with the passage of each statute during the period of his service to the Crown, but so marked with his work is this period that unless evidence shows his open disapproval of certain legislation he must have given at least tacit consent to most of it.

It is impossible to give a simple definition of mercantilism.<sup>160</sup> There are, however, some fundamental tenets and ideas which can be stated and examined. First, exports must be greater than imports because money is to be valued for itself. Cecil supported the idea of exporting more than importing but for vastly different reasons than merely gaining wealth for the realm. He decried the importation of more wine because "wine enricheth France" was his argument. Long before Cecil presented his argument Henry VI was cognizant of the same thing. In the statute

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<sup>160</sup>Eli Heckesher, "Mercantilism," Economic History Review, November 1936, p. 44ff.

4 & 5 Henry VII c.10<sup>161</sup> entitled An Act Against Bringing Into This Realm Wine In Foreign Ships, it was expressed in these terms:

That where great [de]minishing and decay has been now of late time of the navy of this realm of England, and idleness of mariners within the same. . . this noble realm within short process of time, without reformation be had therein, shall not be of ability nor of power and strength to defend itself.

The statute specified that wine was to be imported only in English, Irish, Welsh, or Berwick ships manned by crews from those places. This statute was confirmed by 23 Henry VIII c.7<sup>162</sup> and revived again by 32 Henry VIII c.14; 4 & 5 Henry VII c.10 was repealed during the reign of Edward VI by the enactment of 5 & 6 Edward VI c.18<sup>164</sup> for the express purpose of having "wines at more easy prices" since "wine. . .be daily sold at such excessive prices as has not before been seen in this realm and the navy of the realm thereby never the better maintained."

Cecil's concern with the effect that drinking of wine would have upon the economic stability of the laboring class was preceeded by that of Parliament in the seventh year of Edward VI's reign. There was enacted that year

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<sup>161</sup>The Statutes at Large of England and of Great Britain, 104 vols. (London, 1762-1865), II, 745f. Hereafter: Statutes.

<sup>162</sup>Ibid., III, 115.

<sup>163</sup>Ibid., III, 305.

<sup>164</sup>Ibid., III, 592f.

7 Edward VI c.5<sup>165</sup> entitled An Act to Avoid Great Prices and Excess of Wine. As stated in the act a great many new taverns were appearing in the "backlanes, corners, and suspicious places within the city of London." Price ceilings were established on French wines and no one was permitted to have more than ten gallons on his premises unless he met with certain property qualifications or was of the nobility.

Decay and decrease of the navy was a problem which beset every English monarch from Richard II to Elizabeth I. Cecil's proposal in the Commons of 1563<sup>166</sup> to make Wednesday an additional fish day was simply a new device to solve an old problem. The navy in time of war was dependent upon the merchant and fishing fleets for personnel and ships.<sup>167</sup> 5 Eliz. c.5,<sup>168</sup> which became known as "Cecil's Fast," forced an increase in the domestic consumption of fish and limited the importation of fish from foreign countries. It caused the size of the fishing fleet and the number of men engaged in fishing to increase.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup>Ibid., III, 612ff.

<sup>166</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXVII, no. 71 given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 104ff.

<sup>167</sup>Michael Lewis, The History of the British Navy (Penguin Series, 1957), Ch. V.

<sup>168</sup>Statutes, IV, 207f.

<sup>169</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., CVII, no. 67.

In 1381 Richard II had had the problem of how to increase the navy. His effort was the passage of 5 Richard II st. 1 c.2<sup>170</sup> which forbade the importing or exporting of merchandise by English subjects in foreign ships. A later statute, 14 Richard II c.6<sup>171</sup> required English merchants to use only English ships "so that the owners of said ships do take reasonable gains for freight of same." 3 Edward IV c.1<sup>172</sup> permitted only aliens in England to use alien ships.

The protection of infant industries by law and government franchise is a second tenet of mercantilism. The patent issued through Cecil's office to the operators of the copper mine at Keswick<sup>173</sup> was granted not so that more copper could be exported but so that England could develop her own arms manufacture and thereby counterbalance the threat of invasion which was constantly poised by Spain and France.

Examination of the statutes enacted in reigns previous to Elizabeth's show that restrictions were placed on export of metals essential to war, not to create a scarcity and

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<sup>170</sup>Statutes, II, 45f. This was relaxed somewhat by 6 Rich. II c.8 (*ibid.*, 65f) which permitted the use of foreign ships if English ships were not available.

<sup>171</sup>*Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>172</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 610.

<sup>173</sup>*Cal. Dom. Eliz.*, XVIII, no. 18.

thereby increase their price, but to make certain that England had them in sufficient quantity in the event of hostilities. As far back as the reign of Edward III restrictions were placed on the export of iron. 28 Edward III c.5<sup>174</sup> forbade this under penalty of double the price of the iron so shipped. 2 Henry V St. 2 c.6<sup>175</sup> forbade the shipping of tin to places other than the English staple at Calais. Charges were made in the statute that tin was being transported to Flanders, Holland, Zealand, and ports in France. The statute forbade this without license. 28 Henry VIII c.8<sup>176</sup> forbade the shipping of brass, latten, and copper, and 33 Henry VIII c.7<sup>177</sup> specifically mentioned that licensing had resulted in the countries of Europe obtaining artillery. The penalties incurred by violation of 33 Henry VIII c.7 were increased by 2 & 3 Edward VI c.37.<sup>178</sup>

Despite the vigilance of the customs officers guns cast in England found their way into hostile hands as Ralph Hogg, Elizabeth's iron foundryman, reported to the Privy Council on January 2, 1574:

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<sup>174</sup>Statutes, I, 644.

<sup>175</sup>Ibid., II, 332.

<sup>176</sup>Ibid., III, 262.

<sup>177</sup>Ibid., p. 346f.

<sup>178</sup>Ibid., III, 555.

The names of furnaces that cast guns and shot of iron [is] in a paper hereto annexed. There is above [400] tons cast yearly and this will not be sold or bought to remain within the realm, and if there be not order taken there is more about to set up works to cast guns both here and in Wales, and they being cast will make sail one way or another, either by lawful means or by stealth.<sup>179</sup>

In his memorial of 1569 on the state of the realm Cecil listed "lack of treasure"<sup>180</sup> as one of the secondary imperfections. Were he a mercantilist this would have appeared near the top of his list for to a mercantilist the having of gold and silver is the end to be desired. There was no statute enacted during Elizabeth's reign forbidding the transport of bullion out of the realm, but there were many statutes passed forbidding the export of bullion prior to Elizabeth's reign. None of these were passed for reasons which could be called "mercantilist." 9 Edward III St. 2 c.1<sup>181</sup> forbade the export of bullion without the king's license "because we have learned that divers people beyond the sea do endeavor themselves to counterfeit our sterling money of England." 5 Richard II St.1 c.2<sup>182</sup> permitted export only by license as "gold and silver [are] carried out of said realm so that in

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<sup>179</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XCV, no. 16 given in full in Tawney and Power, I, 262f.

<sup>180</sup>Haynes and Murdin, I, 580ff.

<sup>181</sup>Statutes, I, 471

<sup>182</sup>Ibid., II, 43f.

effect there is scarce any thereof left." 2 Henry IV c.5<sup>183</sup> permitted merchant strangers to export only half of the gold they obtained by trade while 2 Henry IV c.6<sup>184</sup> forbade the circulation in the realm of Flemish and Scottish coin "to avoid deciet." 2 Henry VI c.6<sup>185</sup> restricted export because as stated in the statute much bullion had gone to Bourdeaux and Flanders enriching England's enemies. 4 and 5 Henry VII c.23<sup>186</sup> revived 17 Edward c.13<sup>187</sup> and. Both of these were revived once by 1 Henry VIII c.13<sup>188</sup> and again by 7 Edward VI c.6.<sup>189</sup>

Social and economic stability of the body politic was part of Cecil's program for with the passing of feudalism there was greater freedom of choice on the part of the individual Englishman as to how he would earn his living and where he would place his allegiance. Elizabeth had no standing army with which to coerce her subjects. The feudal levy was a thing of the past.

To achieve stability in part 5 Eliz. c.6<sup>190</sup> which forbade those with less than 3000 pounds income from buying

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<sup>183</sup>Ibid., pp. 224f.

<sup>184</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>185</sup>Ibid., pp. 379f.

<sup>186</sup>Ibid., p. 752.

<sup>187</sup>Ibid., pp. 661f.

<sup>188</sup>Ibid., III, 8.

<sup>189</sup>Ibid., p. 616.

<sup>190</sup>Ibid., IV, 217.

on credit was enacted. The act precluded the majority from engaging in overseas trade and literally forced them to make a choice between being fishermen, tradesmen, or tillers of the soil. In his paper against the importation of more wine<sup>191</sup> Cecil pointed out that tillage "which should be favored above all labor in the realm" would be reduced as more wine and less beer and ale were consumed. 5 Eliz. c. 2<sup>192</sup> provided that all lands tilled for four years successively since 20 Henry 7 should be kept in tillage. 13 Eliz. c. 13<sup>193</sup> entitled An Act For the Increase of Tillage and Maintenance of the Navy permitted the export of wheat, rye, barley, malt, peas, and beans. It was hoped that the increase in exports of foodstuffs would increase the size of the navy.

The greatest monopolies of this period were the overseas trading companies: the Staplers, the Steelyard, and the Merchant Adventurers. The last seems to have been especially favored by Cecil as the correspondence from John Marsh, head of the corporation, to Cecil is voluminous<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>191</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XLI, no. 58 given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 124ff.

<sup>192</sup>Statutes, IV, 129.

<sup>193</sup>Ibid., pp. 312ff.

<sup>194</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXXIII et passim. Hatfield MSS, I, no. 1014. A petition from the Merchant Adventurers to the Council requesting restraint of trade with the Low Countries has Cecil's notation on the margin "this stay to be reiterated" (ibid., no. 1031).

and indicates that Cecil on more than <sup>one</sup> occasion did a favor for them. With their staple at Antwerp the Merchant Adventurers not only aided the government in the solution of fiscal problems but also assisted it in solving administrative ones as well.<sup>195</sup>

In 1568 the Merchant Adventurers were requested by the government to promote lotteries established by royal proclamation for the purpose of raising funds to repair harbors.<sup>196</sup> They served as paymasters for Elizabeth's troops in the Low Countries in 1587 as they were directed to pay the troops on a warrant from Leicester.<sup>197</sup> Repayment of loans such as these were made directly from the royal treasury or, as was done in one instance, by the government's granting the Merchant Adventurers the right to collect the customs on cloths which they exported.<sup>198</sup> As the amount of cloth exported by them in this case was insufficient to pay the debt they petitioned the Privy Council to have the balance paid in cash. The petition was denied.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>195</sup>G. Unwin, "The Merchant Adventurers Company in the Reign of Elizabeth," Economic History Review, (1927), pp. 35ff.

<sup>196</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XLVII, no. 13, 48.

<sup>197</sup>The Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series of the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I, Addenda 1580-1625, ed. Mary Anne Everett Greene (London, 1872), XXX, no. 1, 23.

<sup>198</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXXI, no. 9.

<sup>199</sup>Ibid., LXXXI, no. 11.

By its very nature the grant of a monopoly forbade others to infringe upon the privilege. As a monopoly had been granted to certain merchants to trade with Spain the Privy Council directed on August 10, 1577, that the artificers and retailers of Bristol who had been and still were engaged in the Spanish trade, were to cease such activity.<sup>200</sup> When in the same month it was brought to the attention of the Council that some of the Bristol merchants had applied for writs to have the charges of infringement heard in the Queen's courts, the Council ordered the writs to be denied and directed the Spanish company to deal out punishment as it saw fit.<sup>201</sup> Here again the government used a company organized under a patent of monopoly to solve an administrative problem.

These actions on the part of the Privy Council had the net effect of limiting the volume of overseas trade conducted by Englishmen. By restricting the trade to companies formed under patents of monopoly, some of which companies further restricted the operation of their own members,<sup>202</sup> the volume of return in the form of cash was

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<sup>200</sup>Dasent, X, 16.

<sup>201</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>202</sup>G. Unwin, "The Merchant Advenurers and the Cloth Industry," Economic History Review, (1927), pp. 50ff.  
E. Lipson, The Economic History of England, 3 vols (London, 1931), II, 214ff.

less than it would have been had the government permitted everyone who desired to do so to engage in the trade.

Elizabeth I's predecessors had protected the Calais Staple by statute and had even ordered its "removal" to England.<sup>203</sup> 14 Richard II c.1<sup>204</sup> provided that aliens were to purchase English goods to the amount of one-half the value of the goods imported by them. 14 Richard II c.2<sup>205</sup> provided that aliens should take their profits from the realm in the form of staple commodities, i.e., wool, leather, woolfells, lead, tin, butter, cheese, cloth, et cetera. 8 Henry V c.2<sup>206</sup> protected the Calais Staple by causing every "merchant stranger" having wool shipped from England to elsewhere than Calais to pay for each sack so shipped either one ounce of gold or its equivalent in silver into the Mint. 8 Henry VI c.17<sup>207</sup> provided that no wool, woolfells, leather, lead, or tin should be exported to any place other than Calais. Exception to this was made in the cases for the merchants of the Italian trading towns and the Burgesses of Berwick-on-Tweed.

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<sup>203</sup>Statutes, I, pp. 711f. The statute reproduced here, 43 Ed. III c.1, provided for the "removal" of the Staple to Kingston-on-Hull, St. Botolph, Yarmouth, Queensborough, Westminster, Exeter, Winchester, and Bristol. Since the Calais Staple was not lost by England until 1558 it meant that the Staplers were to hold markets in these English towns as well.

<sup>204</sup>Ibid., II, 148.

<sup>205</sup>Ibid., II, 148f.

<sup>206</sup>Ibid., II, 356.

<sup>207</sup>Ibid., II, 428.



By the twenty-seventh year of Henry VI's reign so many special licenses had been issued that the Crown's revenue from the Calais Staple had decreased from 68,000 pounds to 12,000 pounds. 27 Henry VI c.2<sup>208</sup> cancelled all special licenses for five years from 1448-1449.

So powerful became some of the English merchants trading in the London area during the reign of Henry VII that they charged merchants desiring to join their fellowship some twenty pounds sterling as an entry fee. On petition of merchants outside London 12 Henry VII c.6<sup>209</sup> which curtailed the power of the London merchants was enacted. The effects on trade of the uncontrolled activities of the London merchants were recited in the statute. Since the cloth industry was that by which "poor people have most universally their living" and the London merchants had undersold the non-London merchants by driving down prices causing lessened production, the decay of towns, along with which the "Navy of the land [is] greatly decreased and [de]minished," the London merchants were ordered by the terms of the statute to charge no more than ten marks sterling as a fee of admission.

The activities of Sir Thomas Gresham on behalf of the government in this period lend validity to the thesis that Cecil's aims and policy were not mercantilist.

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid., II, 542.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., II, 788ff.

Gresham's assignment as Elizabeth's agent in the Low Countries had a three-fold purpose: To borrow money for the realm and maintain the Queen's credit; to obtain arms and munitions for defense; to transmit to Cecil intelligence of military activities in the Low Countries.<sup>210</sup> He was instructed to communicate only with Cecil or in his absence, Sir Thomas Parry.<sup>211</sup>

Gresham found that Elizabeth's credit with the Antwerp merchants fluctuated as rumors circulated of English military setbacks at the hands of the Scots assisted by the French and Spanish. Writing to Cecil on June 16, 1560,<sup>212</sup> he said, "I have talked with [many] of the Queen's Majesty's creditors; and to be plain with you, every man seeks to be paid. Whereunto I made answer. . .if this [aid from Philip] had not chanced everyone should have been paid." Gresham told the creditors to wait six months longer and they would be paid either in Antwerp or in Hamburg where, as he continued his letter to Cecil, he wrote, "I gave them to understand that the Queen's Majesty would send so many cloths and kersies as should answer her highness whole debts."

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<sup>210</sup>Burghon reprints much of the correspondence from Gresham to Cecil taken from the Flanders Correspondence State Paper Office which is not available. Gresham took the opportunity presented to deter the Spanish by spreading false rumors as to the strength of the English navy in 1560 as he wrote to Cecil on May 7, "I have given abroad that [Elizabeth] has 200 ships in readiness, well armed" (ibid, I, 295).

<sup>211</sup>Ibid., p. 327.

<sup>212</sup>Flanders Correspondence in Burghon, I, 299.



He had described to Cecil on March 1, 1559 an involved scheme for forcing a loan from the Merchant Adventurers at Antwerp.<sup>213</sup> As a result Elizabeth obtained 30,000 pounds. The Merchant Adventurers asked only freedom to use their ships "to make money for the Queen's service."<sup>214</sup>

The success which attended Gresham's efforts in raising money for the realm is shown by a letter to Cecil on October 3, 1563, in which he said he had raised over 830,000 pounds.<sup>215</sup> Where Edward VI and Mary I had been accustomed to pay fourteen per cent interest Gresham had by his efforts reduced the rate to twelve per cent for Elizabeth.<sup>216</sup> By September of 1566 Gresham had raised a total of 1,100,000 pounds.<sup>217</sup>

Gresham had to resort to smuggling and falsification of bills of lading in order to get arms and munitions out

<sup>213</sup>Ibid., pp. 257ff. This also is in Cal. Dom. Eliz., XIX, no. 8, given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 150ff.

<sup>214</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XIV, no. 19. Through the negligence of some port official the merchants put to sea in August without loaning the money. In Burgon, I, 348f is printed a letter from Elizabeth to Gresham explaining the situation. She obtained her loan later in the year.

<sup>215</sup>Flanders Correspondence in Burgon, II, 31.

<sup>216</sup>Idem., pp. 32ff.

<sup>217</sup>Gresham to Cecil, September 8, 1566 in Burgon, II, 159.

of the Low Countries.<sup>218</sup> He asked Cecil in October of 1559 to have a shipment of four barrels of gunpowder weighed in secret at the Tower "for verily if it be known here [Antwerp] the [smuggler] is in danger of his life."<sup>219</sup>

Gresham knew the value of his work to the realm and was not loath to put it in writing to Cecil. In August of 1562 he wrote concerning the purchase of munitions, "I will not enlarge any further in the matter [by pointing out] what treasure and strength it is to her majesty and her realm; because I have been the doer thereof."<sup>220</sup>

The possession of the money taken from Philip and Alva in 1568<sup>221</sup> posed a problem for Cecil. To give it back would only strengthen Spain. To hold it in the Tower would serve no purpose. Gresham supplied the answer when he wrote to Cecil on August 14, 1569, "I would wish the Queen's Majesty to put it to use of some profit; as to mint it in her own coin."<sup>222</sup> Gresham's servant, Henry Clough,

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<sup>218</sup>Gresham used a code to signify the various types of arms and munitions. In Burgon, I, 319ff is a description of his code and a letter to Cecil dated May, 1560, taken from the Flanders Correspondence, in which he uses the code.

<sup>219</sup>Gresham to Cecil, October 1559, in Burgon, I, 318f.

<sup>220</sup>Flanders Correspondence, August 9, 1562, in Burgon, II, 10.

<sup>221</sup>Cal. Span. 1568-1579, p. 88, no. 64 et passim.

<sup>222</sup>Landsdowne MSS, XII, art. 8 in Burgon, II, 303f.

delivered five bags of Spanish rials to the Mint on September 13, 1569, to be made into English coin.<sup>223</sup> On February 15, 1570, Gresham, himself, delivered "62 bags of Spanish rials into the hands of Mr. Thomas Stanley, Treasurer of the Mint; with redelivery of the same from the Mint in [English] money."<sup>224</sup>

Cecil had no long range, comprehensive commercial policy in this period, 1568-1574, which could be labeled "mercantilist." Certain aspects of his policy such as those set forth in his memorandum of 1564 on the export trade in cloth and wool,<sup>225</sup> his arguments in favor of establishing Wednesday as an additional fish day,<sup>226</sup> and his arguments against the importing of more wine<sup>227</sup> have in themselves certain tenets which are attributed to the classical mercantilists of a later period. But examination of the political conditions of period 1568-1574 renders nugatory the thesis that they were mercantilist in origin because of Cecil's alleged adherence to this

<sup>223</sup>Gresham to Cecil, September 15, 1569, from Landsdowne MSS, XII, art. 11 in Burton, II, 304ff.

<sup>224</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., LXVI, no. 44. Oddly enough there was no great haste on the part of Cecil to convert all of the Spanish money into English coin. On March 7, 1571, Gresham again urged Cecil to convert the balance which he estimated to be between 25 and 30,000 pounds sterling (ibid., LXXVII, no. 30).

<sup>225</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XXXV, no. 33 given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 45ff.

<sup>226</sup>Ibid., XXVII, no. 71, p. 104ff.

<sup>227</sup>Ibid., XLI, no. 58, p. 124ff.

policy. Cecil used these commercial weapons, some of which were hoary with age, to gain peace and strength for England.

Cecil was not a theoretician in commercial matters. What was done by him or received his support in commercial matters was based on empiricism. In 1563 he could see that England lacked ships and mariners with which to defend herself.<sup>228</sup> Citing that England customarily drew upon the fishing fleets for crews to man vessels, he argued for the increase in consumption of fish which would cause the employment of more sailors. By 1580 there was noted a decided increase in the number of mariners in the fishing trade as a result of 5 Eliz. c.5.<sup>229</sup>

In arguing against the importation of more wine from France,<sup>230</sup> Cecil did not theorize that France stood to gain by the then present policy. It was obvious that money was going into France to pay for the wine and should be stopped or lessened for fear France would use the money to wage war against England. Cecil said as much.

To view the commercial policy of Cecil in this period without taking into consideration the international political conditions is to lose the true motive for his actions.

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<sup>228</sup>Ibid., XXVII, no. 71, pp. 104ff.

<sup>229</sup>Ibid., CXLVII, no. 21. Statutes, IV, 207f.

<sup>230</sup>Cal. Dom. Eliz., XLI, no. 58, given in full in Tawney and Power, II, 124ff.

It has been convenient for most economic historians to label the whole Elizabethan period "mercantilist" as it is quite difficult to assign with accuracy a specific date when the concept of mercantilism arose. That certain aspects of Cecil's policy were seized upon by the classical mercantilists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and embellished and refined by them is quite true. But an examination of classical mercantilism is beyond the scope of this essay.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

Conyers Read's Bibliography of British History: The Tudor Period, 1485-1605 (Oxford, 1933) is the standard bibliography for the history of Elizabeth's reign. Read's systematic arrangement of materials on the period permits the rapid location of the desired items.

Two sources of original documents and manuscripts from which it was necessary to draw rather heavily are the Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs Preserved Principally in the Archives of Simancas, Vol. II, ed. Martin A. S. Hume (London, 1894) and Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove's Relations Politique des Pays-Bas et de la Angleterre Sous la Regne de Philippe II, 11 vols. (Brussels, 1882-1900). The title of the latter work is rather misleading for it is actually a collection of original documents and manuscripts from both the Simancas and Brussels archives and is not a secondary account. The Spanish calendar is deficient in material pertaining to the years 1572-1574. Happily this lack is not attendant in the Lettenhove work. There is some duplication by each of the other's material but for the most part the materials in each tend to complement the other's so that taken together they give a wealth of materials arranged in chronological order.

The Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series of the Reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580, ed. Robert Lemon (London, 1856) is rendered less valuable than the

preceding works cited as it contains only the briefest description of the contents of each document. The user of this work must be cautioned against inaccuracies in the index which while infrequent, are, nevertheless, aggravating and misleading.

The Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series of the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I, Addenda, 1580-1625, ed. Mary Anne Everett Greene (London, 1872), unlike its companion work contains more complete descriptions of the contents of the documents. In some instances the documents have been included verbatim. Anyone using both the Lemon and Greene editions should be cautioned that there is an overlapping of volume numbers in these two works. Where Lemon terminated his edition in the year 1580 with Vol. CXLVI, Greene began hers at 1580 with Vol. XXVII.

Many of the documents which have been given only the briefest of descriptions in the Domestic Calendar are printed in full in Tudor Economic Documents, 3 vols., ed. R. H. Tawney and Eileen Power (London, 1924). The indexing of the material under topical headings renders this work of greater value for research in this period than the title implies for it precludes the spending of tedious hours classifying the materials for one's own purpose.

If the Burghley State Papers, 2 vols., ed. Samuel Haynes and William Murrin (London, 1740, 1759) contained only Cecil's memorial of 1569 on the state of the realm

this would be sufficient reason for their use by anyone desiring to gain an insight into the political and economic problems which were England's and therefore were of concern to Burghley. Volume I contains documents and letters on miscellaneous matters but their varied topics gives one an excellent view of the breadth and range of Cecil's interests in the affairs of state. Letters and documents relative to the Northern Rebellion and the part played therein by Mary Stuart comprise the greater part of the material in Volume II.

Were one hoping to gain a picture of Cecil's work in the Privy Council by studying the Council minutes he would meet with great disappointment for these minutes as set down by the various clerks and compiled in The Acts of the Privy Council, 32 vols., ed. John Roch Dasent (London, 1890-1907), are stilted and impersonal to the nth degree. As Secretary, Cecil was the presiding officer and again one marvels at the range of his interests and accomplishments in serving the realm. Dasent has very conveniently included a tabulation of attendance of each Council member at the end of every volume. Cecil had by far the best record here.

Whenever the members of the Tudor parliaments and their predecessors enacted statute law they were a wonderfully wordy people. If the statute were designed to correct an abuse or to improve the machinery of government a history

of the abuse or the malfunctioning of the government was recited in the statute. All statutes cited in this paper may be found in The Statutes At Large of England and of Great Britain, 105 vols. (Cambridge, 1762-1865).

The Calendar of Manuscripts of the Most Honorable The Marquis of Salisbury, KG., Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, 11 vols. (London, 1883-1906), has the only reference to the Treaty of Bristol which contains some of its terms. Like certain other sources of original documents and manuscripts the edition of the Hatfield MSS suffers from an editing and pruning which leaves in many instances only a brief description of the material cited.

Other primary sources used, but of lesser value to this essay than any of the foregoing have been the Calendar of State Papers Foreign Series of the Reign of Elizabeth Preserved in the Public Record Office, Vol. XIX, ed. Sophie Crawford Lomas (London, 1916); the Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs Preserved Principally at Rome in the Vatican Archives and Library, 2 vols., ed. J. M. Riggs (London, 1916, 1926); the Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and Other Libraries of Northern Italy, Vol. VII, eds. Rawdon Brown and the Right Hon. G. Cavendish Bentinck (London, 1890); the Calendar of State Papers Foreign Series of the Reign of Elizabeth 1569-1571 Preserved in the State Paper Department of Her

Majesty's Public Record Office, ed. Allan James Crosby (London, 1874); and the Calendar of State Papers Foreign Series of the Reign of Elizabeth 1572-1574 Preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office, ed. Allan James Crosby (London, 1876). The value of these sources has not been lessened by the scholarship exhibited in their collection but only in that they have been used primarily as sources of citations to buttress others more pertinent.

The most important secondary source for this essay has been W. R. Cunningham's The Growth of English Industry and Commerce In Modern Times, Vol. II: The Mercantile System, 4th ed. (London, 1907). While the conclusions presented in this essay on Cecil's commercial policy are diametrically opposed to those expressed by Cunningham, it was his resume of Cecil's activities in the whole field of commerce which gave the original stimulus to the conception of this essay.

Another work with which the conclusions in this essay are at odds but which has been useful is E. Lipson's The Economic History of England, 3 vols. (London, 1931). It is most comforting to read in Lipson's work that because the term "mercantilism" was not used by the sixteenth and seventeenth century writers we should be warned against giving "mercantilism" a formal shape and substance. But a dash of cold water is tossed this way by Lipson as he

writes "nevertheless, the Mercantile System serves as a convenient phrase to express a trend of thought" (Vol. III, p. 1) and proceeds to place Cecil in the same position as the classical mercantilists.

Conyers Read's Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth (London, 1955) is a scholarly therefore well documented work which covers Cecil's life from his youth to the Northern Rebellion. Read has drawn upon original sources with few exceptions. Unfortunately he, too, gives the mercantilist label to Cecil's activities in the commercial sphere.

An English economic historian who did not hold with the idea that Cecil was a mercantilist was Sir John Clapham. His A Concise Economic History of Britain From the Earliest Times to A.D. 1750 (London, 1951) is so comprehensive that only a short space is devoted to refuting the allegation that Cecil was a mercantilist.

J. W. Burgon's Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham, 2 vols. (London, 1839), does not contain any great compilation of statistics on Tudor governmental finance. It does give a very vivid picture of Elizabeth's chief financial agent in the Low Countries and Cecil's devoted friend. Burgon made use of the Flanders Correspondence and the Lansdowne MSS throughout his work. Much correspondence between Cecil and Gresham is thus made available without need for resorting to the original sources.

A "portrait" is the word used in the preface of A. L. Rowse's The England of Elizabeth: The Structure of Society (New York, 1951) to describe this work. The style is such that the general reader of history will enjoy it. There is sufficient documentation to satisfy the most scholarly.

J. E. Neale's Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments, 1558-1581 (London, 1953) is a scholarly study of the acts and activities of Parliament to 1581.

A small book which serves to whet one's appetite for more information on the topic is Michael Lewis' A History of the British Navy (Penguin Series, 1957).

Other books consulted and found to be of value in preparing this essay were The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, ed. J. W. Nichols, 3 vols. (London, 1823); J. B. Black's The Reign of Elizabeth 1558-1603 (Oxford, 1936); Conyers Read's Sir Francis Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth, Vol. I (Cambridge, 1925); John Strype's Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion and Other Various Occurrences in the Church of England During Queen Elizabeth's Happy Reign, Vol. II, pt. 1 (Oxford, 1824); William Cobbett's Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England, Vol. I (London, 1806); James A. Williamson's The Tudor Age (London, 1953); Florence M. Grier Evans' The Principal Secretary of State: A Survey of the Office From 1558 to 1680 (London, 1923); English Economic History: Select Documents, eds. A. E. Bland, P. A. Brown, R. H. Tawney

(London, 1921); Martin A. S. Hume's Two English Queens and Philip (London, 1908); and A. H. Johnson's Europe in the Sixteenth Century, 1494-1598 (London, 1898). Chapters VII and VIII of the Johnson work were especially useful as they present the political problems of Spain and the Netherlands from the viewpoint of a scholar whose primary interest was European history.

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