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HISTORY
OF
THE UNITED STATES,

FROM
THE DISCOVERY OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENT TO
THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

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IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

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COLONIAL HISTORY.

CHAPTER XV.

NEW NETHERLANDS.

THE spirit of the age was present when the foundations of New York were laid. Every great European event affected the fortunes of America. Did a state prosper, it sought an increase of wealth by plantations in the west. Was a sect persecuted, it escaped to the New World. The reformation, followed by collisions between English dissenters and the Anglican hierarchy, colonized New England; the reformation, emancipating the United Provinces, led to European settlements on the Hudson. The Netherlands divide with England the glory of having planted the first colonies in the United States; they also divide the glory of having set the examples of public freedom. If England gave our fathers the idea of a popular representation, Holland originated for them the principle of federal union.

At the discovery of America, the Netherlands were in possession of the municipal institutions which had been saved from the wreck of the Roman world, and of the feudal liberties which the middle ages had bequeathed. The power of the people was unknown to the laws; but the landed aristocracy, the hierarchy, and the municipalities, possessed political franchises. The municipal officers, in part appointed by the sovereign, in part perpetuating themselves, had common interests with the industrious citizens, from whom they were selected; and the nobles, cherishing the feudal right of resisting arbitrary taxation, joined the citizens in defending national liberty against encroachments.

1517- The urgencies of war, the reformation, perhaps also
1559. the arrogance of power, often tempted Charles V. to violate the liberties of the states; Philip II., on his acces-