

**COLLECTANEA ADAMANTEA.-
XXIV. MEMOIRS OF
EARL OF LEICESTER; IN
FOUR VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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Collectanea Adamantea.-XXIV. Memoirs of Earl of Leicester; In Four Volumes, Vol. I by Robert Dudley

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ROBERT DUDLEY

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**Secret Memoirs of Robert
Hudley, Earl of Leicester.**

[COLLECTANEA ADAMANTÆA.—XXIV.]

MEMOIRS

OF

Robert Dudley,

EARL OF LEICESTER.

Written during his Life, and now
published from an old Manuscript
never printed.



LONDON.

—
1706.

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.  
VOL. I.  
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and 75 large-paper copies.*

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THE
Epistle Prefatory.

TO

R————— S————— Esq ;

SIR,

ALL the Account that I can give of these
Memoirs, I send you here. That the following
Sheets were written during the Life of Queen
Elizabeth and the Earl of Leicester appears from
the tenour of the whole History, which concludes
before his coming to be Governour of the Low
Countreys, whither he was sent by Queen
Elizabeth, as General of the Auxiliary Forces,
which she sent to the Relief of the Estates
of the Confederate Provinces. No higher Title
did the Queen bestow upon him ; but the States
(as both Grotius and Strada informs) knowing or
believing his Power to be irresistible with Queen
Elizabeth, and hoping by his means to draw her
intirely into the War, resolv'd to be a sufficient
Bait for his Ambition, and to offer him that

Sovereignty, with a Title somewhat lower than that which his Mistress had refus'd, and made him Supream Governor, or Stat-holder of the United Provinces, with a Power much Superior to any that has been exercis'd by the succeeding Stat-holders.

This was the last Scene of his Ambition, in which how dexterously he acted his part, is hard to say. For our own Historians have reported little of his Transactions abroad, and Grotius and Strada, who have given the largest Accounts, are so manifestly partial and unjust, both to the Queen, and the whole English Nation, that we may reasonably suspect their Relations of him, whom his Country-men in his time more immediately fear'd and hated.

The Partiality of the first of these, springs manifestly from a desire to cover the notorious Ingratitude of his Country-men to Queen Elizabeth, and the English Nation, to whose generous and disinterested assistance, they entirely owe the Establishment of their Liberty and Religion, and the Excussion of the Spanish Yoke. For this Reason, he not only gives a very unjust Character of the English in general, but wherever the course of this History obliges him to Record their Actions, and to acknowledge the Obligations the Dutch had to them, he always mixes some oblique sinister Insinuation, which may either tarnish the

Glory of the Action, or at least by loading it with some foul under-hand Design, may lighten the obligation thereby laid upon the Dutch.

The latter was an Italian Jesuit, employ'd by, and in the Pay of Spain, and consequently the English, upon a double score, could expect no fair Representation from him, who hated them both as Hereticks accounted, and as Enemies to Spain. But besides the Disadvantages the Earl of Leicester lies under with these two Historians, upon the score of his Nation, they had each of them their particular piques to him; The first because he exercis'd the invidious Power of a Stat-holder, to which Grotius never was a hearty friend, and the latter, because he was sent in opposition to the Prince of Parma, whom in his History he flatters immoderately, and to raise his Character (which was really great enough not to want such Arts) depresses the Merits of all others. However, they both agree that he was Master of very great Vertues, or at least, seem'd to be. *Exregius virtutum simulator, et qui invidios, atque infelices, Dudleia Gentis Spiritus haud ingratis Comitatus velaret*; an exquisite Hypocrite, that was able to cover the odious unhappy temper of the Dudley Family, with good Manners and Affability, says Grotius. *Ver sapientis viri solertia, qua erat Histrio multorum partium, facile ad aliorum mores et vota factitium, ingenium circumflectebat*, He was, says

Strada, such an absolute Master of his own Temper, that he could as he pleas'd, adapt it to any Man's Humour or Designs. Agreeable to this Mezeray calls him *adroit et rusé Courtisan*, a subtle dexterous Courtier, all which argues him to have been a Man of great Abilities, tho' perhaps the use he made of them, contracted such a general Hatred and Envy, as made People suppress his real Vertues, or impute them to Artifice and Design, which might however spring from a generous Disposition.

What ever the Reason was, both Grotius and Strada, by the large elaborate Character, which each gives of him, prepare us for greater things, then they afterwards recount of him, which gives us just ground to suspect, that they have partially and invidiously suppress that part of his Administration of the Low-Countrys, which might tend most to the advantage of his Character. In this Conjecture we are confirm'd by our Observation, that both these Historians, after having described him such both for Person and Parts, for Accomplishments natural and acquir'd, as might justly raise great Expectations of him, are more solicitous to publish his Crimes done out of the Sphere of their History, (which whether truly or falsely the Malice of his Country-men had furnish'd them with) and to display his Ambition, than to Register any actions of his there, worthy the