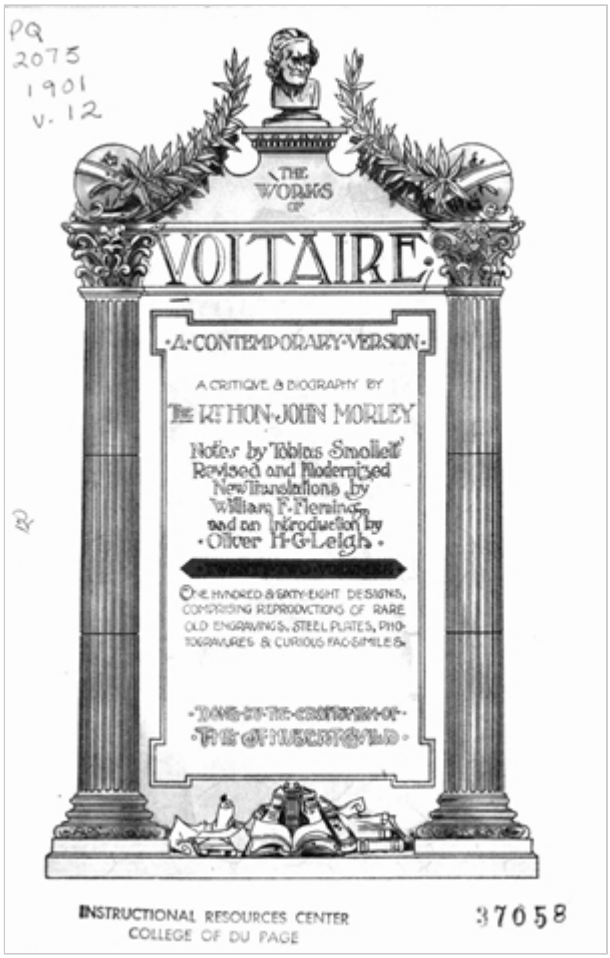
The Online Library of Liberty

A Project Of Liberty Fund, Inc.

Voltaire, ***The Works of Voltaire, Vol. XII (Age of Louis XIV)*** [1751]



Edition Used:

The Works of Voltaire. A Contemporary Version. A Critique and Biography by John Morley, notes by Tobias Smollett, trans. William F. Fleming (New York: E.R. DuMont, 1901). In 21 vols. Vol. XII.

Author: Voltaire
Translator: William F. Fleming

About This Title:

Taken from the 21 volume 1901 edition of the Complete Works, this is one of Voltaire's pioneering works of history.

About Liberty Fund:

Liberty Fund, Inc. is a private, educational foundation established to encourage the study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals.

Copyright Information:

Fair Use Statement:

CONTENTS

AGE OF LOUIS XIV.

Table Of Contents

[Back to Table of Contents]

The WORKS Of VOLTAIRE

"*Between two servants of Humanity, who appeared eighteen hundred years apart, there is a mysterious relation. * * * * Let us say it with a sentiment of profound respect: JESUS WEPT: VOLTAIRE SMILED. Of that divine tear and of that human smile is composed the sweetness of the present civilization.*"

VICTOR HUGO.

[Back to Table of Contents]

Voltaire Age Of Louis XIV. Vol. XII—Part I

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV.

It is not only the life of Louis XIV. that we propose to write; we have a greater object in view. We mean to set before posterity not only the portrait of one man's actions but that of the spirit of mankind in general, in the most enlightened of all ages.

Every age has produced heroes and politicians; all nations have experienced revolutions, and all histories are nearly alike to those who seek only to furnish their memories with facts; but whosoever thinks, or, what is still more rare, whosoever has taste, will find but four ages in the history of the world. These four happy ages are those in which the arts were carried to perfection, and which, by serving as the era of the greatness of the human mind, are examples for posterity.

The first of these ages to which true glory is annexed is that of Philip and Alexander, or that of a Pericles, a Demosthenes, an Aristotle, a Plato, an Apelles, a Phidias, and a Praxiteles; and this honor has been confined within the limits of ancient Greece; the rest of the known world was then in a state of barbarism.

The second age is that of Cæsar and Augustus, distinguished by the names of Lucretius, Cicero, Titus, Livius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Varro, and Vitruvius.

The third is that which followed the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet II. Then a family of private citizens was seen to do that which the kings of Europe should have undertaken. The Medici invited to Florence the learned, who had been driven out of Greece by the Turks; this was the age of Italy's glory. The polite arts had already recovered a new life in that country; the Italians honored them with the title of *"Vertu,"* as the first Greeks had distinguished them by the name of Wisdom. Everything tended toward perfection; a Michelangelo, a Raphael, a Titian, a Tasso, and an Ariosto flourished. The art of engraving was invented; elegant architecture appeared again as admirable as in the most triumphant ages of Rome; and the Gothic barbarism, which had disfigured Europe in every kind of production, was driven from Italy to make way for good taste.

The arts, always transplanted from Greece to Italy, found themselves in a favorable soil, where they instantly produced fruit. France, England, Germany, and Spain aimed in their turn to gather these fruits; but either they could not live in those climates, or else they degenerated very rapidly.

Francis I. encouraged learned men, but such as were merely learned men; he had architects, but he had no Michelangelo, nor Palladio; he endeavored in vain to establish schools for painting; the Italian masters, whom he invited to France, raised no pupils there. Some epigrams and a few loose tales made the whole of our poetry. Rabelais was the only prose writer in vogue in the time of Henry II.

In a word, the Italians were in possession of everything that was beautiful, excepting music, which was then in but a rude state, and experimental philosophy, which was everywhere equally unknown.

Lastly, the fourth age is that known by the name of the age of Louis XIV., and is perhaps that which approaches the nearest to perfection of all the four; enriched by the discoveries of the three former ones, it has done greater things in certain kinds than those three together. All the arts indeed were not carried farther than under the Medici, Augustus, and Alexander; but human reason in general was more improved. In this age we first became acquainted with sound philosophy; it may truly be said that from the last years of Cardinal Richelieu's administration, till those which followed the death of Louis XIV. there has happened such a general revolution in our arts, our genius, our manners, and even in our government, as will serve as an immortal mark to the true glory of our country. This happy influence has not been confined to France; it has communicated itself to England, where it has stirred up an emulation, which that ingenious and deeply learned nation stood in need of at that time; it has introduced taste into Germany, and the sciences into Russia; it has even re-animated Italy, which was languishing; and Europe is indebted for its politeness and spirit of society to the court of Louis XIV.

Before this time the Italians called all the people on this side of the Alps by the name of Barbarians; it must be owned that the French in some degree deserved this reproachful epithet. Our forefathers joined the romantic gallantry of the Moors with the Gothic rudeness: they had hardly any of the agreeable arts among them, which is a proof that the useful arts were likewise neglected; for when once the things of use are carried to perfection, the transition is quickly made to the elegant and agreeable; and it is not at all astonishing that painting, sculpture, poetry, eloquence, and philosophy should be in a manner unknown to a nation who, though possessed of harbors on the Western Ocean, and the Mediterranean Sea, were without ships; and who, though fond of luxury to an excess, were hardly provided with the most common manufactures.

The Jews, the Genoese, the Venetians, the Portuguese, the Flemish, the Dutch, and the English carried on in their turn the trade of France, which was ignorant even of the first principles of commerce. Louis XIII., on his accession to the crown, had not a single ship; the city of Paris contained not quite four hundred thousand men, and had not above four fine public edifices; the other cities of the kingdom resembled those pitiful villages which we see on the other side of the Loire. The nobility, who were all stationed in the country, in dungeons surrounded with deep ditches, oppressed the peasants who cultivated the land. The high roads were almost impassable; the towns were destitute of police, and the government had hardly ever any credit among foreign nations.

We must acknowledge that, ever since the decline of the Carlovingian family, France had languished more or less in this infirm state, merely for want of the benefit of a good administration.

For a state to be powerful, the people must either enjoy a liberty founded upon laws, or the royal authority must be fixed beyond all opposition. In France the people were slaves till the reign of Philip Augustus; the noblemen were tyrants till Louis XI., and the kings, always employed in maintaining their authority against their vassals, had neither leisure to think about the happiness of their subjects nor the power of making them happy.

Louis XI. did a great deal for the regal power, but nothing for the happiness or the glory of the nation. Francis I. gave birth to trade, navigation, and all the arts; but he was too unfortunate to make them take root in the nation during his time, so that they all perished with him. Henry the Great was on the point of raising France from the calamities and barbarisms in which she had been plunged by thirty years of discord, when he was assassinated in his capital in the midst of a people whom he had begun to make happy. The cardinal de Richelieu, busied in humbling the house of Austria, the Calvinists, and the grandees, did not enjoy a power sufficiently undisturbed to reform the nation; but he had at least the honor of beginning this happy work.

Thus, for the space of nine hundred years, our genius has been almost always restrained under a Gothic government, in the midst of divisions and civil wars; destitute of any laws or fixed customs; changing every second century a language which still continued rude and unformed; the nobles were without discipline, and strangers to everything but war and idleness. The clergy lived in disorder and ignorance, and the common people without industry, and stupefied in their wretchedness. The French had no share either in the great discoveries or admirable inventions of other nations: they have no title to the discoveries of painting, gunpowder, glasses, the telescope, the sector, compass, the air-pump, or the true system of the universe; they were making tournaments while the Portuguese and Spaniards were discovering and conquering new countries from the east to the west of the known world. Charles V. had already scattered the treasures of Mexico over Europe, before the subjects of Francis I. had discovered the uncultivated country of Canada; but, by the little which the French did in the beginning of the sixteenth century, we may see what they are capable of when properly conducted.

I propose in this place to show what they have been under Louis XIV., and it is to be wished that the posterity of this monarch, and that of his subjects, equally animated with a happy emulation, may use their endeavors to surpass their ancestors.

It must not be expected to meet here with a minute detail of the wars carried on in this age: this would be an endless task; we are obliged to leave to the compilers of annals the care of collecting, with exactness, all these small facts, which would only serve to divert the attention from the principal object. It is their province to point out the marches and countermarches of armies, and the particular days on which the trenches were opened before towns which were taken and retaken again by force of arms, or ceded and restored by treaties. A thousand circumstances which are interesting to those who live at the time are lost to the eyes of posterity, and disappear, to make room for the great events which have determined the fate of empires. Every transaction is not worthy of being committed to writing. In this history we shall confine ourselves only to what is deserving of the attention of all ages, what paints the

genius and manners of mankind, contributes to instruction, and prompts to the love of virtue, of the arts, and of our country.

We have already seen what France and the other kingdoms of Europe were, before the birth of Louis XIV.; we shall now describe the great political and military events of his reign. The interior government of the kingdom, as being an object of more importance to the people, shall be treated of by itself. The private life of Louis XIV. and the particular anecdotes of his court and reign shall hold a principal place in this account. There shall be other articles for the arts and sciences, and for the progress of the human mind in this age. Lastly we shall speak of the Church, which has been so long connected with the government, has sometimes disturbed its peace, and at others been its defence; and which, though instituted for the inculcating of morality, too frequently gives itself up to politics and the impulse of the human passions.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER I.

THE STATES OF EUROPE BEFORE LOUIS XIV.

For a long time past the Christian part of Europe—Russia excepted—might be considered as a great republic divided into several states, some of which were monarchial, others mixed, some aristocratic, and others popular; but all corresponding with one another; all having the same basis of religion, though divided into several sects, and acknowledging the same principles of public and political equity, which were unknown to the other parts of the world. It is from these principles that the European nations do not make slaves of their prisoners; that they respect the persons of their enemies' ambassadors; that they agree together concerning the pre-eminence, and some other rights belonging to certain princes; such as the emperor, kings, and other lesser potentates: and particularly in the prudent policy of preserving, as far as they are able, an equal balance of power among themselves; by continually carrying on negotiations, even in the midst of war, and keeping ambassadors, or less honorable spies, at one another's courts, to give notice to the rest of the designs of any single one, to sound the alarm at once over all Europe, and to prevent the weaker side from being invaded by the stronger, which is always ready to attempt it.

After the death of Charles V. the balance of power inclined too much on the side of the house of Austria. This powerful house was, in the year 1630, possessor of Spain, Portugal, and the riches of America; the Netherlands, the duchy of Milan, the kingdoms of Naples, Bohemia, Hungary, and even Germany—if we may say so—were a part of its patrimony: and had all these states been united under one single head of this house, it is reasonable to believe that he would, at length, have become master of all Europe.

GERMANY.

The Empire of Germany is the most powerful neighbor which France has; it is nearly of the same extent; there is not, perhaps, so much money in it, but it abounds more with sturdy men inured to labor. The Germanic nation is governed, with but little difference, as France was under the first kings of the Capetian race, who were chiefs of several great vassals. by whom they were frequently ill obeyed, and of a great number of lesser ones. There are sixty free cities, called imperial; about as many secular princes; nearly forty ecclesiastical ones, as well abbots as bishops, nine electors, among whom we may reckon four kings; and lastly, the emperor, who is head of all these potentates: these at present compose this great Germanic body, which, by the phlegmatic disposition of its members, is maintained in as much order and regularity as there was formerly confusion in the French government.

Each member of the empire has his particular rights, privileges, and obligations; and the knowledge of such a number of laws, which are frequently disputed, makes what is called in Germany "the study of the public law," for which that nation is so famous.

The emperor should not in fact be much more powerful or rich than a doge of Venice. Germany being divided into cities and principalities, nothing is left for the chief of such a number of states, but the pre-eminence, accompanied with the supreme honors, without either demesnes or money, and consequently without power. He does not possess a single village in virtue of his title of emperor. Nevertheless this dignity, often as vain as supreme, has become so powerful in the hands of the Austrians that it has frequently been feared that they would convert this republic of princes into an absolute monarchy.

The Christian part of Europe, especially Germany, was then, and still is, divided into two parties or sects. The first is that of the Catholics who are all more or less subject to the authority of the pope; the other is that of the enemies to the spiritual and temporal power of the pontiff, and the prelates of the Church of Rome. These latter are called by the general name of Protestants, though divided into Lutherans, Calvinists, and other sects, who all hate one another as much as they do the Church of Rome.

In Germany, the states of Saxony, Brandenburg, the Palatinate, a part of Bohemia and Hungary, the houses of Brunswick and Würtemberg followed the Lutheran religion, which is by them called the evangelical. All the free cities of the empire have likewise embraced this sect, as seemingly more agreeable to a people jealous of their liberty than the religion of the Church of Rome.

The Calvinists, who are scattered among the Lutherans, form but an inconsiderable party. The Roman Catholics constitute the rest of the empire; and, having at their head the house of Austria, they are without doubt the most powerful.

Not only Germany but all the Christian states were still bleeding with the wounds of the many religious wars in which they had been engaged; a madness peculiar to Christians, and unknown to idolaters, and which was the fatal consequence of that dogmatic turn, which had for so long a time been introduced among all ranks of people. Almost every point of controversy occasioned a civil war; and foreign nations—nay perhaps our own posterity—will one day be at a loss to comprehend how their ancestors could have thus butchered one another, while they were preaching the doctrine of patience.

I have already shown how near Ferdinand II. was to changing the German aristocracy into an absolute monarchy. and how he was on the point of being dethroned by Gustavus Vasa. His son, Ferdinand III., who inherited his politics, and like him made war from his cabinet, swayed the imperial sceptre during the minority of Louis XIV.

Germany was not then so flourishing as it has since become. Not only was every kind of luxury wholly unknown there, but even the conveniences of life were very scarce in the houses of the greatest noblemen, till the year 1686, when they were introduced by the French refugees who retired thither and set up their manufactories. This fruitful and well-peopled country was destitute of trade and money: the gravity of manners and the slowness peculiar to the Germans deprived them of those pleasures and agreeable arts which the more penetrating Italians had cultivated for many years, and

which the French industry began now to carry to perfection. The Germans, though rich at home, were poor everywhere else; and this poverty, added to the difficulty of uniting in a short time so many different peoples under one standard, made it then, nearly as at this day, impossible for them to carry the war into their neighbor's dominions, or support it there for any time. Accordingly, we almost always find the French carrying on a war against the empire within the empire. The difference of government and genius makes the French more proper for attacking, and the Germans for acting on the defensive.

SPAIN.

The Spanish nation, governed by the elder branch of the house of Austria, after the death of Charles V., made itself more formidable to Europe than the Germanic Empire. The kings of Spain were infinitely more absolute and rich than the emperors: and the mines of Mexico and Peru furnished them with treasures sufficient to purchase the liberties of Europe. You have already seen the project of universal monarchy, or rather universal superiority on the Christian continent, begun by Charles V. and carried on by Philip II.

The Spanish greatness under Philip II. became a vast body without substance, which had more reputation than real strength.

Philip IV., who inherited his father's weakness, lost Portugal by his neglect; Roussillon by the inferiority of his arms; and Catalonia by the abuse of his absolute authority. Such princes could not long continue successful in their wars against France. If our errors and divisions gave them some few advantages, they soon lost the fruits of them by their own want of capacity. Besides, they had a people to command whose privileges gave them a right to serve ill. The Castilians, for instance, had a privilege by which they were exempted from serving out of their own country. The Aragonese were continually opposing their liberties to the orders of the king's council; and the Catalans, who looked upon their kings as their enemies, would not even suffer them to raise militia in their provinces.

Notwithstanding all these disadvantages, Spain, by being united to the empire, threw a very formidable weight into the balance of Europe.

PORTUGAL.

At this time Portugal was again made a kingdom. John, duke of Braganza, who passed for a weak prince, had wrested this province from a king who was weaker than himself. The Portuguese, through necessity, cultivated trade, which the Spaniards, through pride, neglected, and had, in 1641, entered into a league with the French and Dutch against Spain. France gained more by the revolution in Portugal than she could have done by the most signal victories. The French ministry, without having in the least contributed to this event, reaped without any trouble the greatest advantage that can be wished for over an enemy; that of seeing him attacked by an irreconcilable power.

Portugal, which thus threw off the Spanish yoke, extended its trade, and augmented its power, puts us in mind of Holland, which enjoyed the same advantages, though in a very different manner.

THE UNITED PROVINCES.

This small state, composed of seven united provinces, a country abounding in excellent pasturage, but destitute of all kinds of grain, unhealthy, and in a manner buried in the sea, was for about half a century almost the only example in the world of what may be done by the love of liberty and unwearied labor. These poor people, few in number and inferior in military discipline to the meanest of the Spanish militia, and of no account in the rest of Europe, made head against the whole collected force of their master and tyrant, Philip II., eluded the designs of several princes who offered to assist them, in hopes of enslaving them, and founded a power which we have seen counterbalancing that of Spain itself. The desperation which tyranny inspires first armed these people; liberty raised their courage, and the princes of the house of Orange made them excellent soldiers. No sooner did they become conquerors of their masters than they established a form of government which preserves, as far as possible, equality, the most natural right of mankind.

This state was soon from its first foundation intimately attached to France: they were united by interest, and had the same enemies. Henry the Great and Louis XIII. had been its allies and protectors.

ENGLAND.

England, a far more powerful state, arrogated to itself the sovereignty of the seas, and pretended to preserve a balance between the powers of Europe; but Charles I., who began his reign in 1625, was so far from being able to support the weight of this balance, that he found the sceptre already falling through his hands: he had attempted to render his power independent of the laws of England, and to make a change in the religion of Scotland. He was too headstrong to be diverted from his projects, and too weak to carry them into execution. He was a good husband, a good master, a good father, and an honest man, but an ill-advised prince; he engaged in a civil war which lost him his throne and made him end his life on a scaffold, by an unparalleled revolution.

This civil war, which was begun in the minority of Louis XIV., prevented England for some time from taking part in her neighbor’s concerns: she lost her credit in Europe, with her quiet at home; her trade was obstructed, and other nations looked upon her as buried beneath her own ruins, till the time that she at once became more formidable than ever, under the rule of Cromwell, who had enslaved her with the gospel in one hand, the sword in the other, and the mask of religion on his face; and who in his administration concealed, under the qualities of a great king, all the crimes of a usurper.

ROME.

The balance which England had so long flattered herself with the hope of keeping up by her superior power, Rome endeavored to maintain by her politics. Italy was divided, as she now is, into several sovereignties; that which is possessed by the pope is sufficiently great to render him respectable as a prince, and too small to make him formidable. The nature of the government does not contribute to the peopling of his country, which also has very little trade or money. His spiritual authority, which is always mixed with something of the temporal, is slighted and abhorred by one-half of Christendom: and though he is considered as a father by the other half, yet he has some children who resist his will at times with reason and success. It is the maxim of the French government to look upon him as a sacred and enterprising person whose hands must sometimes be tied, though they kiss his feet. We still see in all the Catholic countries the traces of those steps which the court of Rome has frequently made toward universal monarchy. All the princes of the Romish religion, upon their accession, send an embassy to the pope, which is termed the embassy of obedience. Every crowned head has a cardinal at his court, who takes the name of protector. The pope grants bulls for filling up all vacant bishoprics, and expresses himself in these bulls as if he conferred these dignities by his own pure authority. All the Italian, Spanish, Flemish, and even some of the French bishops, style themselves bishops by divine permission, and that of the holy see. There is no kingdom in which the pope has not several benefices in his nomination; and he receives as a tribute the first year's revenue of consistorial benefices.

The religious orders, whose principals reside at Rome, are again so many immediate subjects to the pontiff, scattered over all states. Custom, which does everything, and which occasions the world to be governed by abuses as by laws, has not always permitted princes to put an entire stop to this danger, which in other respects is connected with things useful and sacred. To swear allegiance to any other than the sovereign is a crime of high treason, in a layman; but in a convent it is a religious act. The difficulty of knowing how far we are to carry our obedience to this foreign sovereign, the ease with which we suffer ourselves to be seduced, the pleasure there is in throwing off a natural yoke for a voluntary one, the spirit of discord and the unhappiness of the times, have but too often prevailed on whole bodies of religious orders to serve the cause of Rome against their own country.

The enlightened spirit which has reigned in France for this past century, and which has communicated itself to people of all ranks, has proved the most effectual remedy against this abuse. The excellent books which have been written on this subject have done real service both to kings and people; and one of the great changes which was wrought by this means in our manners, under the reign of Louis XIV., is that the religious of all kinds begin now to be persuaded that they should be subject to their king, before they are servants to the pope. The juridical power, which is the essential mark of sovereignty, still remains with the Roman pontiff; and even the French government, notwithstanding all the liberties of the Gallican Church, allows a final appeal to the pope in all ecclesiastical causes.

If anyone is desirous of obtaining a divorce, of marrying a near relation, or of being released from his vows, application is to be made to the court of Rome, and not to the bishop of the diocese; there all indulgences are rated, and the individuals of all states may there purchase dispensations at all prices.

These advantages, which are by many people looked upon as the consequences of the greatest abuse, and by others as the remains of the most sacred rights, are always artfully preserved; and modern Rome employs as much policy in keeping up its credit as the ancient republic did in conquering one-half of the known world.

No court ever knew better how to act agreeably to men and times. The popes are almost always Italians, grown gray in public affairs, and divested of those passions which make men blind to their interest; their council is composed of cardinals, who resemble them, and who are all animated with the same spirit. This council issues mandates which reach as far as China and the extremes of America, in which sense it may be said to take in the whole universe; and we may say of it as a stranger formerly said of the Roman senate: “I have beheld an assembly of kings.” Most of our writers have with reason inveighed against the ambition of this court; but I do not find one who has done sufficient justice to its prudence, neither do I know if any other nation could have so long maintained itself in the possession of so many privileges continually contested; any other court might probably have lost them, either by its haughtiness, its effeminacy, its sloth, or its vivacity; but that of Rome, by an almost constant proper use of resolution and concession, has preserved all that was humanly possible for her to preserve. We have seen her submissive to Charles V.; terrible to our king, Henry III.; by turns the friend and foe of Henry IV.; acting cunningly with Louis XIII.; openly opposing Louis XIV. at a time when he was to be feared; and frequently a private enemy to the emperors, of whom she was more distrustful than even of the Turkish sultan.

Some rights, many pretensions, patience and politics are all that Rome has left now of that ancient power which six centuries ago attempted to subject the empire and all Europe to the triple crown.

Naples is still an existing proof of that right which the popes formerly assumed with so much art and parade, of creating and bestowing kingdoms; but the king of Spain, who is the present possessor of that kingdom, has only left the court of Rome the dangerous honor of having an overpowerful vassal.

THE REST OF ITALY.

As for the rest, the pope’s dominions were situated in a peaceable country, which had never been disturbed but by a trifling war, of which I have already spoken, between the cardinals Barberini, nephews to Urban VIII., and the duke of Parma.

The other provinces of Italy were biassed by various interests. Venice had the Turks and the emperor to fear, and could hardly defend its dominions on the continent against the pretensions of Germany, and the invasion of the Grand Seignior. It was no longer that city which was formerly the mistress of the trade of the whole world, and

which one hundred and fifty years before had excited the jealousy of so many crowned heads. The wisdom of its administration continued the same as formerly; but the destruction of its great trade deprived it of almost all its strength, and the city of Venice was by its situation incapable of being conquered, and by its weakness incapable of making conquests.

The state of Florence enjoyed tranquillity and abundance under the government of the Medici; and literature, arts, and politeness, which they had first introduced, still flourished there. Tuscany was then to Italy what Athens had been to Greece.

Savoy, after having been rent by a civil war, and desolated by the French and Spanish armies, was at length wholly united in favor of France, and contributed to weaken the Austrian power in Italy.

The Swiss nation preserved, as at this day, its own liberty, without seeking to oppress its neighbors. They sold the service of their troops to nations richer than themselves: they were poor and ignorant of the sciences, and of all the arts which are begotten by luxury; but they were wise, and they were happy.

THE NORTHERN KINGDOMS.

The Northern nations of Europe, viz.: Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and Russia, were like the other powers, always distrustful of and at war with one another. In Poland, both the manners and government were, as they now are, nearly the same as those of the ancient Goths and Franks. The crown was elective; the nobles had a share in the supreme authority; the people were slaves; the infantry was weak; and the cavalry was wholly composed of nobles; there were no fortified towns, and scarcely any trade. These people were attacked at one time by the Swedes, or the Muscovites, and at others by the Turks.

The Swedes, who were a freer nation by their constitution which admits even the lowest class of the people into the assembly of the general estates, but who were at that time more subject to their kings than the Poles, were almost everywhere victorious. Denmark, which had formerly been so formidable to Sweden, was no longer so to any power; and Muscovy had not yet emerged from barbarism.

THE TURKS.

The Turks were not what they had been under their Selims, their Mahomets, and their Solymans. The seraglio, though corrupted by effeminacy, still retained its cruelty. The sultans were at the same time the most despotic of sovereigns, and the least secure of their throne and life. Osman and Ibrahim had lately been strangled, and Mustapha had been twice deposed. The Ottoman Empire, tottering from these repeated shocks, was also attacked by the Persians; but when it had enjoyed a little respite from them, and the revolutions of the seraglio were at an end, this empire became again formidable to Christendom, and spread its conquests from the mouth of the Boristhenes to the Adriatic Sea. Muscovy, Hungary, Greece, and the Archipelago fell alternately a prey

to the Turkish arms; and from the year 1644 they had constantly carried on the war of Candia, which proved so fatal to the Christians.

Such, then, were the situation, strength, and interests of the principal European nations, about the time that Louis XIII. of France departed this life.

THE SITUATION OF FRANCE.

France, who was in alliance with Sweden, Holland, Savoy, and Portugal, and had the favorable wishes of the other nations who remained inactive, was engaged in a war against the empire and Spain, which proved ruinous to both sides, and particularly fatal to the house of Austria. This war was like all those which have been carried on for so many centuries between Christian princes, in which millions of men have been sacrificed, and whole provinces laid waste to obtain a few frontier towns, the possession of which is seldom worth the expense of conquering them.

The generals of Louis XIII. had taken Roussillon; and the Catalans had given their province to France, as the protectress of that liberty which they defended against their kings; but all these successes had not prevented the enemy from making themselves masters of Corbie, in the year 1637, and advancing as far as Pontoise. Fear had driven one-half of the inhabitants out of Paris; and Cardinal de Richelieu, in the midst of his mighty projects for humbling the Austrian power, had been reduced to lay a tax upon the houses with great gates in the city of Paris; every one of which was obliged to furnish a footman armed, to drive the enemy from the gates of the metropolis.

The French there had done the Spaniards and Germans a great deal of mischief, and had suffered as much themselves.

THE MANNERS OF THE AGE.

The wars had produced several illustrious generals, such as a Gustavus Adolphus, a Wallenstein, a duke of Saxe-Weimar, a Piccolomini, a John de Werth, the marshal de Guébriant, the princes of Orange, and the count d'Harcourt; nor was this age less famous for ministers of state. Chancellor Oxenstiern, the famous duke Olivarez, and especially the cardinal duke de Richelieu, had drawn the attention of all Europe upon them. There never was an age which had not some famous statesmen and soldiers: politics and arms seem unhappily to be the two professions most natural to man, who must always be either negotiating or fighting. The most fortunate is accounted the greatest, and the public frequently attributes to merit what is only the effect of a happy success.

War was then carried on differently from what it afterward was in the time of Louis XIV. There were not such numerous armies; since the siege of Metz by Charles V., no general had been at the head of fifty thousand men. They did not make use of so many cannon in besieging and defending places as at present. The art of fortification itself was then in its infancy. Spears and short guns were then in use, as well as the sword, which is now entirely laid aside. One of the old laws of nations was still in force, namely, that of declaring war by a herald. Louis XIII. was the last who observed this

custom: he sent a herald at arms to Brussels to declare war against Spain, in the year 1635.

Nothing was more common at that time than to see armies commanded by priests: The cardinal Infante, the cardinals of Savoy, Richelieu, and la Valette, and Sourdis, archbishop of Bordeaux, had put on the cuirass and waged war in person. A bishop of Mendes had been frequently intendant of the army. The popes sometimes threatened these military prelates with excommunication. Pope Urban III., being incensed against France, sent word to Cardinal la Valette, that he would strip him of the purple if he did not lay down the sword; but when the pontiff came afterward to be reconciled to France, he loaded him with benedictions.

Ambassadors, who are equally the ministers of peace with churchmen, made no difficulty of serving in the armies of the allied powers, to whom they were sent. Charnacé, who was envoy from the court of France to Holland, commanded a regiment there in 1637; and some time afterward, even the ambassador d'Estrades was a colonel in the Dutch service.

France had not in all more than eighty thousand effective men on foot. Its marine, which had for some centuries fallen to decay, and had afterward been a little restored by Cardinal de Richelieu, was ruined under Mazarin. Louis XIII. had not more than forty-five millions of real ordinary revenue; but money was then at twenty-six livres the mark, consequently these forty-five millions amounted to nearly eighty-five millions of the present currency, when the arbitrary value of the silver mark is carried to forty-nine and a half livres—an exorbitant numerical value, which justice and the interest of the public forbid ever to be increased.

Trade, which is so universal at present, was then in a very few hands; the police of the kingdom was entirely neglected, a certain sign of a bad administration. Cardinal de Richelieu, wholly taken up with his own greatness, which was linked with that of the state, had begun to render France formidable outside its borders, but had not been able to make it flourishing within. The roads were neither kept in repair nor properly guarded; they were infested by troops of robbers. The streets of Paris, which were narrow, badly paved, and covered with disagreeable filth, swarmed with thieves. It is proved by the registers of parliament that the city watch was at that time reduced to forty-five men, badly paid, and who frequently did no duty at all.

Ever since the death of Francis I., France had been continually rent by civil wars, or disturbed by factions. The people never wore the yoke in a voluntary or peaceable manner. The nobles were trained up from their youth in conspiracies; it was the court art, the same as that of pleasing the sovereign has since been.

This spirit of discord and faction spread itself from the court into the smallest towns, and took possession of all public societies in the kingdom; everything was disputed, because there was no general rule; the very parishes in Paris used to come to blows with one another; and processions have fought together about the honor of their banners. The canons of Notre Dame were frequently seen engaged with those of the Holy Chapel; the parliament and the chamber of accounts battled for the upper hand

in the church of Notre Dame, the very day that Louis XIII. put his kingdom under the protection of the Virgin Mary.

Almost all the public corporations of the kingdom were in arms, and almost every individual was inflamed with the fury of duelling. This Gothic barbarism, which was formerly authorized by kings themselves, and had become the distinguishing character of the nation, contributed as much as the foreign and domestic wars to depopulate the country. It is not saying too much, to aver that in the course of twenty years, of which ten had been troubled by war, more French gentlemen died by the hands of Frenchmen than by those of the enemy.

We shall not take any notice of the manner in which the arts and sciences were cultivated: this part of the history of our manners will be found in its proper place. We shall only remark that the French nation was plunged in ignorance, without excepting even those who look upon themselves as removed above the common people.

Astrologers were much consulted, and greatly confided in. All the memoirs of this age, to begin with the history of the president de Thou, are full of predictions: even the grave and rigid duke of Sully himself, very seriously relates those which were made to Henry IV. This credulity, which is the most infallible mark of ignorance, prevailed so much at that time that care was taken to keep an astrologer concealed in Queen Anne of Austria's chamber, while she was in labor of Louis the XIV.

It is hardly credible, though we find it related by the abbot, Vittorio Siri, a contemporary writer of great authority, that Louis XIII. had the surname of Just given him from his childhood, because he was born under the sign Libra, or the balance.

The same weakness that first brought this absurd chimera of judicial astrology into vogue occasioned a belief in fascinations and witchcrafts; it was even made a point of religion, and nothing was to be seen but priests driving out devils from those who were said to be possessed. The courts of justice, composed of magistrates who should have had more understanding than the vulgar, were employed in trying witches and sorcerers. The death of the famous curate of Loudun, Urbain Grandier, will ever be a stain on the memory of Cardinal de Richelieu. This man was condemned to the stake as a magician, by commissioners appointed by the council of state. We cannot without indignation reflect that the minister and the judges should have been so weak as to believe in the devils of Loudun, and so barbarous as to condemn an innocent man to the flames; and it will be remembered with astonishment by posterity that the wife of Marshal d'Ancre was burnt in the Place de la Grève for a witch.

There is still to be seen, in a copy of some registers of the Châtelet, a trial which was begun in the year 1601, on account of a horse, which his master had with great pains taught to perform tricks, as we now see some every day at our fairs. They wanted to burn both master and horse.

We have already said enough to give an idea of the manners and spirit of the age which preceded that of Louis XIV.

This want of understanding in all orders of the state did not a little to encourage, even among the best people, certain superstitious practices, which were a disgrace to religion. The Protestants, confounding the reasonable worship of the Catholics with the abuses introduced into that worship, were more firmly fixed in their hatred to our Church; to our popular superstitions, frequently intermingled with debaucheries, they opposed a brutal sternness and a ferocity of manners, the character of almost all reformers. Thus was France rent and debased by a party spirit, while that social disposition, for which the nation is now so deservedly famous and esteemed, was unknown among us. There were then no houses where men of merit might meet in order to communicate their ideas to one another; no academies, no theatres. In a word, our manners, laws, arts, society, religion, peace, and war had no resemblance to what was afterward seen in that age known by the name of The Age of Louis XIV.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER II.

MINORITY OF LOUIS XIV.—THE VICTORIES OF THE FRENCH UNDER THE GREAT CONDE, THEN DUKE OF ENGHIEN.

Cardinal de Richelieu and Louis XIII. were lately dead, the one admired and hated, the other already forgotten. They had left the French, who were at that time a restless people, in a fixed aversion to the very name of a ministry, and with very little respect for the throne. Louis XIII. had, by his will, settled a council of regency. This monarch, so ill obeyed when he was living, flattered himself with meeting with more observance after his death; but the first step taken by his widow, Anne of Austria, was to procure an arret of the Parliament of Paris for setting aside her husband's will. This body, which had been so long in opposition to the court, and which under Louis had with difficulty preserved its right of making remonstrances, now annulled its monarch's will with the same ease as it would have determined the cause of a private citizen. Anne of Austria applied to this assembly to have the regency unlimited, because Mary de Medici had made use of the same court after the death of Henry IV., and Mary de Medici had set this example because any other method would have been tedious and uncertain; because the parliament being surrounded by her guards, could not dispute her will; and that an arret issued by the parliament and the peers seemed to confer an incontestable right.

The custom which always confers the regency on the king's mother appeared to the French at that time as fundamental a law as that by which women are excluded from the crown. The Parliament of Paris having twice settled this point, that is to say, having by its own authority decreed the regency vested in the queen-mothers, seemed in fact to have conferred the regency; it considered itself, not without some show of reason, as the guardian of our kings, and every counsellor thought he had a part in the sovereign authority. By the same arret, Gaston, duke of Orleans, brother of the late king, had the vain title given him of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, under the queen-regent, who was absolute.

Anne of Austria was, upon her first assuming the reins of government, obliged to continue the war against her brother, Philip IV., king of Spain, whom she affectionately loved. It is difficult to assign any positive reason for the French having undertaken this war; they claimed nothing from Spain, not even Navarre, which should have been the patrimony of the kings of France. They had continued at war ever since the year 1634, because Cardinal de Richelieu would have it so, and it is to be supposed that he was desirous of it in order to make himself necessary. He had engaged in a league against the emperor with the Swedes and Duke Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, one of those generals whom the Italians called condottieri, who sold the service of their troops. He also attacked the Austrian Spanish branch in those ten provinces which we now call by the general name of Flanders; and he had divided this country with the Dutch, at that time our allies, though it was not yet conquered.

The stress of the war lay on the side of Flanders; the Spanish troops marched from the frontiers of Hainault to the number of twenty-six thousand men, under the command of an old experienced general, whose name was Don Francisco de Mello, fell upon and ravaged the borders of Champagne, and attacked Rocroi, and thought soon to advance to the very gates of Paris, as they had done eight years before. The death of Louis XIII., and the weakness of a minority, raised their hopes, and when they saw only an inconsiderable army opposed to them, and that commanded by a young man of only twenty-one years of age, these hopes were changed into full security.

This inexperienced young man, whom they so much despised, was Louis of Bourbon, then duke of Enghien, known since by the name of the great Condé. Most great generals have become so by degrees, but this prince was born a general. The art of war seemed in him a natural instinct. There were only he and the Swede, Torstenson, who, at twenty years of age were possessed of this talent which can dispense with experience.

The duke of Enghien had received, together with the news of Louis XIII.'s death, orders not to risk a battle; Marshal de L'Hôpital, who had been given him as counsellor and guide, backed these timid orders by his own caution; but the prince heeded neither the court nor the marshal: he intrusted his design to no one but Field-Marshal Gassion, a person worthy of being consulted by him. They together obliged the marshal to give his assent to the battle.

It is observed of the prince that, having made all the necessary dispositions the evening before the battle, he slept so soundly that night that the people were obliged to wake him to begin the engagement. The same thing is related of Alexander. It is very natural for a young man, exhausted with the fatigue which must attend the preparations for such a day, to fall into a sound sleep; it is likewise as natural that a genius formed for war, and acting without confusion, should leave the body sufficiently calm for sleep. The prince gained the battle himself, by a quickness of sight, which at once made him discern the danger, and the means of preventing it; and by a cool activity, which carried him to every place at the time his presence was wanted. In person, at the head of the cavalry, he fell upon the Spanish infantry, till then deemed invincible, which were as strong and compact as the ancient phalanx, so greatly esteemed, and could open much more quickly than the phalanx could, in order to give room for the discharge of eighteen pieces of cannon which were placed in its centre. The prince surrounded this body, and charged it three times successively; at length he broke it, and no sooner was he assured of the victory, than he gave orders to put a stop to the slaughter. The Spanish officers threw themselves at his feet for protection against the fury of the victorious soldiery. The duke of Enghien was as assiduous in securing them as he had been in conquering them.

The old count de Fuentes, who commanded this body of foot, was slain on the field of battle; on hearing which, Condé said he should have wished to die like him, if he had not conquered.

The high esteem in which the Spanish arms had till then been held by all Europe was now lost, and those of the French began to gain repute. They had not for a century

past gained so great a victory; for the bloody day of Melegnano, which was rather disputed than gained by Francis I. over the Swiss, was as much owing to the black bands of Germany as to the French.

The battles of Pavia and St. Quentin were again two fatal eras to the reputation of France. Henry IV. had the misfortune to gain great advantages only over his own nation. In the reign of Louis XIII., Marshal de Guébriant had had some inconsiderable successes, but they were always counterbalanced by losses. Gustavus Adolphus was the only one at that time who fought those great battles which shake a state, and remain forever in the memory of posterity.

The battle of Rocroi became the era of the French glory, and of the great Condé's. This general knew how to conquer, and to make the most of conquest. The letters he wrote made the court resolve on the siege of Thionville, which Cardinal Richelieu had not dared to hazard; and when his couriers returned they found everything ready for the expedition.

The prince of Condé marched through the enemy's country, eluded the vigilance of General Beck, and at length took Thionville; from there he hastened and laid siege to Cirq, which he also reduced. He obliged the Germans to repass the Rhine, followed them over that river, and came upon the frontiers, where he repaired all the defeats and losses which the French had sustained after the death of their commander de Guébriant. He found the town of Freiburg in the enemy's possession, and General Mercy under its walls, with an army superior to his own. Condé had under him two marshals of France, Gramont and Turenne, the latter of whom had been made marshal about a month before, in consideration of the services he had rendered against the Spaniards at Piedmont, where he laid the foundation of that great reputation which he afterward acquired. The prince with these two generals attacked Mercy's camp, August 31, 1644, which was intrenched upon two eminences. The fight was renewed three times on three successive days. It is said that the duke of Enghien threw his commander's staff into the enemy's trenches, and marched to retake it, sword in hand, at the head of the regiment of Conti. There may sometimes be a necessity for such bold actions in leading on troops to attacks of so dangerous a nature. This battle of Freiburg, rather bloody than decisive, was the second victory the prince had gained. Mercy decamped four days afterward; and the surrender of Philippsburg and Mentz were at once the proofs and fruits of this victory.

The duke of Enghien then returned to Paris, where he was received amidst the acclamations of the people, and demanded of the court the rewards due to his services; he left the command of his army to Marshal Turenne; but this general, notwithstanding his great military skill, was defeated at Marienthal, in April, 1645. Upon this the prince hastens back to his army, resumes the command, and to the glory of commanding the great Turenne, added that of repairing his defeat. He attacked Mercy in the plains of Nördlingen, August 3, 1645, and gained a complete victory. Marshal Gramont was taken; and General Glen, the second in command to Mercy, was also made prisoner, while Mercy himself was among the number of the slain. This general, who was esteemed one of the greatest captains of his age, was interred

on the field of battle with this inscription on his tomb: "*Sta, viator, heroem calcas"*—"Stop, traveller, thou treadest on a hero."

The name of the duke of Enghien now eclipsed all others. He afterward laid siege to Dunkirk, October 7, 1646, in sight of the Spanish army, and was the first who added that place to the French territories.

These many successes and services, which were looked upon with a suspicious eye by the court, rather than properly rewarded, made him as much feared by the ministry as by his enemies. He was therefore recalled from his theatre of conquest and glory, and sent into Catalonia with a handful of bad troops, as badly paid; then he besieged the town of Lérida, but was obliged to quit the siege. He is accused by several writers of a foolish bravado, in having opened the trenches to the sound of musical instruments. They do not know that this was the custom in Spain.

It was not long, however, before the ticklish situation of affairs obliged the court to recall him to Flanders. Archduke Leopold, the emperor's brother, was then besieging the town of Lens in Artois. Condé, as soon as he was restored to those troops who had always conquered under his command, led them directly against the Archduke Leopold. This was the third time he had given battle with the advantage of numbers against him. He addressed his soldiers in this short speech: "My friends, remember Rocroi, Freiburg, and Nördlingen." This battle of Lens put the finishing touch to his reputation.

In person he succored Marshal Gramont, who was giving way with the left wing, and took General Beck prisoner. The archduke with great difficulty saved himself, with the count of Fruensaldagna. The enemy's army, which was composed of the imperialists and Spaniards, was totally routed, August 20, 1648. They lost upward of a hundred stands of colors and thirty-eight pieces of cannon, which at that time was a considerable number; there were five thousand men taken prisoners, and three thousand slain; the rest deserted, and the archduke was left without an army.

While the prince of Condé was thus numbering the years of his youth by victories, and while the duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIII., maintained the reputation of a son of Henry IV. and that of his country by the taking of Gravelines, Courtray, and Mardyke, the viscount of Turenne reduced Landau, drove the Spaniards out of Trier, and restored the elector.

He gained the battles of Lavingen and Sommerhausen with the Swedes, and obliged the duke of Bavaria to fly out of his dominions, when almost eighty years old. The count d'Harcourt took Balaguier, and beat the Spaniards. They lost Portolongone in Italy, and their fleet was defeated on that coast by twenty ships of war and as many galleys, which was the whole of the French navy, then newly restored by Cardinal de Richelieu.

This was not all; the French army took Lorraine from Duke Charles IV., a warlike, but fickle, imprudent, and unfortunate prince, who at the same time saw his dominions seized on by the French, and himself a prisoner of the Spaniards. The Austrian power

was hard pressed by the allies of France in the north and the south. The duke of Albuquerque, the Portuguese general, gained the battle of Badajoz against the Spaniards. Torstenson defeated the imperialists near Tabor, and gained a complete victory; and the prince of Orange, at the head of his Hollanders, penetrated as far as the province of Brabant in Flanders.

The Spanish king was beaten on all sides, and saw Roussillon and Catalonia in the hands of the French. Naples had lately revolted against him, and thrown itself into the hands of the duke de Guise, the last prince of that branch of a house which had teemed with so many illustrious and dangerous men. This prince, who was deemed only a rash and bold adventurer, because he did not succeed, had however the glory of passing alone in a boat through the midst of the Spanish fleet, landing in Naples, and defending it without any other assistance than his own valor.

At the view of so many misfortunes pouring upon the house of Austria, and such a train of victories gained by the French, and seconded by the successes of their allies, one would imagine that Vienna and Madrid only waited the moment when they should be obliged to throw open their gates, and that the emperor and the king of Spain must shortly be almost destitute of dominions; nevertheless, five years of excessive good fortune, hardly chequered by one disappointment, produced but very few real advantages, cost an infinite deal of blood, and brought about no change; or if there was one to be apprehended, it was rather on the side of France, which was bordering upon its ruin, in the midst of so many apparent successes.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER III.

THE CIVIL WAR.

Queen Anne of Austria, the absolute regent, had made Cardinal Mazarin master of the kingdom and of herself. He had that power over her, which every artful man must have over a woman weak enough to be governed, and resolute enough to persist in the choice she has made of a favorite.

We read in some of the memoirs of those times that the queen made choice of Mazarin for her confidant only because of the inability of Potier, bishop of Beauvais, whom she had at first chosen for her minister, and who is represented as a man of no mean capacity. This might possibly have been the case, and the queen might have made use of this man for some time as a cipher not to exasperate the nation by the choice of another cardinal, and he a foreigner: but we can never believe that Potier began his short administration by declaring to the Dutch that they must become Catholics if they were desirous of continuing in alliance with France; he might as well have made the same proposal to the Swedes. We find this piece of absurdity related by almost all our historians, because they have read it in the memoirs of some of the courtiers and those concerned in the civil war; there are, however, but too many passages in these memoirs either falsified by prejudice, or related on the authority of popular rumor. Puerilities should never be quoted, and absurdities can never be believed.

Mazarin exercised his power with moderation at the beginning. It is necessary to have lived a long time with a minister to be able to draw his character, to determine what degree of courage or weakness there was in his mind, or how far he was prudent or knavish; therefore, without pretending to guess at what Mazarin really was, we shall only say what he did. In the first days of his greatness he affected as much humility as Richelieu had displayed haughtiness. Instead of taking a guard for his person, and appearing in public with royal pomp, he had at first a very modest retinue, and substituted an air of affability, and even of softness, in all things where his predecessor had shown an inflexible pride. The queen was desirous to make the court and the people fond of her person and authority, in which she succeeded. Gaston, duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIII., and the prince of Condé supported her power, and had no emulation but that of serving the state.

It was found necessary to levy taxes in order to maintain the war with Spain and the empire; some were accordingly imposed, which were in fact very moderate, compared with those which we have since paid, and very insufficient to the wants of the crown.

The parliament, who had the power of authenticating the edicts for these taxes, strongly opposed that of the tariff, and gained the confidence of the people by continually thwarting the schemes of the ministry.

In short, the creation of twelve new places of masters of requests, and the withholding of about eight thousand crowns from the salaries of the superior companies, caused an insurrection among all the people of the long robe, and with them of all Paris; and what at this time would hardly be of consequence enough to make a paragraph in a newspaper, then stirred up a civil war.

Broussel, counsellor-clerk of the upper chamber, a man of no capacity, and whose only merit was that of being the foremost to open all arguments against the court, having been put under arrest, the people expressed more concern than they had ever shown at the death of a good king. The barricades of the league were now revived, the flame of sedition burst out in an instant, and raged so fiercely as hardly to be quenched, being industriously fed by the coadjutor, afterward Cardinal de Retz; this was the first bishop who had ever excited a civil war without a religious pretext. This extraordinary man has given us his own portrait in his memoirs which are written with an air of greatness, an impetuosity of genius, and an inequality, which form a perfect image of his conduct. He was a man who, in the midst of the most debauched course of life, and still languishing with the consequences it produces, had the art of haranguing the people with success, and making himself idolized by them; he breathed nothing but faction and conspiracy. At the age of twenty-three he had been at the head of a conspiracy which was hatched against the life of Cardinal de Richelieu; he was the contriver of the barricades; he always urged the parliament on to cabals, and the people to seditions. What is most extraordinary is that the parliament, wholly guided by him, set up their standard against the court, even before they had the countenance or assistance of any prince.

This assembly had for a long time been looked upon in a different light by the court and the people. According to the declaration of all the ministers of state, and of the court itself, the Parliament of Paris was a court of justice set apart for trying causes between the subjects: this prerogative it held purely from the will of our kings, and had no other pre-eminence over the other parliaments of the kingdom than that of seniority. It was a court of peers only because the court generally resided at Paris: it had no greater right to make remonstrances than the other bodies in the state, and this right was a matter of pure indulgence. It had succeeded those parliaments which heretofore represented the French nation, but it retained nothing more of those ancient assemblies than the bare name; an incontestable proof of which is, that the general estates were actually substituted in the place of the national assemblies; and the Parliament of Paris no more resembled the ancient parliaments held by our first kings, than a consul of Smyrna or Aleppo resembles a Roman consul.

This single mistake in the name served as a pretext to the ambitious pretensions of a body of men in the long robe, all of whom, by having purchased their seats, looked upon themselves as entitled to fill the places of the conquerors of the Gauls, and the lords of crown fiefs. This body has at all times abused the power which a chief tribunal, always existing in a capital, necessarily arrogates to itself. It had the boldness to issue an arret against Charles VII., and to banish him from his kingdom. It began a criminal process against Henry III. It always, to the utmost of its power, opposed its sovereigns; and in this minority of Louis XIV., under the most mild of governments, and the most indulgent of queens, it attempted to raise a civil war against its prince,

after the example of the English Parliament, which at that time kept its king a prisoner, and condemned him to lose his head. Such was the manner of speaking, and the thoughts of the cabinet!

But the citizens of Paris, and all those connected with the long robe, looked upon the Parliament of Paris as an august body, that dispensed justice with a laudable integrity; that had the good of the state only at heart, which it cherished at the hazard of its own fortune; that confined its ambition to the glory of curbing the aspiring designs of favorites; that preserved an equal conduct between the prince and the people; and the people, without inquiring into the origin of its rights or authority, supposed it possessed of the most sacred privileges and indisputable authority; and when they saw it maintaining the public cause against ministers whom they hated, gave it the title of "The Father of the State;" and placed a very small difference between the right by which the kings hold their crowns, and that which gives the parliament a power to lay a restriction upon the wills of kings.

It was impossible then to hit upon a medium between these two very opposite extremes, for in short there was no other fixed law but that of time and circumstances. Under a vigorous administration the parliament was nothing; under a weak king it was all-powerful; and that is very applicable which was said by M. de Guimené, when this body, in the reign of Louis XIII., complained of the deputies of the noblesse for having taken precedence of it: "Gentlemen, you will have ample revenge in the minority."

We shall not repeat in this place all that has been written concerning these troubles, nor copy whole volumes to recall to observation the numerous circumstances which were then thought so important and dear and are now almost buried in oblivion; it is our business to speak of what characterizes the spirit of the nation, and not dwell so much upon what relates to the civil wars in general as to what particularly distinguishes that of the Fronde, as it was called.

Two powers, which were instituted wholly for the maintenance of peace and harmony amongst mankind, namely, an archbishop and a parliament, having begun these troubles, the people looked upon themselves as justified in the greatest extravagances. The queen could no longer appear abroad without being insulted in the grossest manner; she was called by no other name than that of Dame Anne, or if any other title was added, it was generally an injurious one. The populace reproached her in the most virulent terms with her fondness for Mazarin; and, what was yet more insufferable, her ears were filled in all places where she went with ballads and lampoons, the monuments of low ribaldry and malice, which seemed calculated to convey a lasting suspicion of her virtue.

She was now obliged to fly—Jan. 6, 1649—from Paris with her children, her minister, the duke of Orleans, and even the great Condé himself, and to retire to St. Germain, and reduced to pawn the crown jewels for subsistence; the king was frequently in want of necessaries, the pages of his bedchamber were dismissed, because they could no longer be maintained. At that time even Louis XIV.'s aunt, the daughter of Henry the Great, and consort to the king of England, who had taken refuge in Paris after

having been expelled from her own kingdom, was then reduced to the utmost extremities of poverty; and her daughter, who was afterward married to the brother of Louis XIV., lay in bed for want of clothes to keep her warm, while the people of Paris, blinded with their mad rage, paid not the least attention to the sufferings of so many royal personages.

The queen, with tears in her eyes, besought the great Condé to protect the young king. The conqueror of Rocroi, Freiburg, Lens, and Nördlingen could not belie those great services. He found himself agreeably flattered with the honor of defending a court which had been ungrateful to his merits, against rebels who sought his assistance. The parliament then had the great Condé to encounter, and yet dared to carry on the war.

The prince of Conti, brother to the great Condé, who was as jealous of his elder brother as he was incapable of equalling him, the dukes of Longueville, Bouillon, and Beaufort, all animated with the same restless spirit as the coadjutor, all fond of novelties, full of the hopes of aggrandizing themselves on the ruins of the state, and of making the blind motions of parliament subservient to their own private interests, went in a body and offered their services to that prelate. The high chamber then proceeded to appoint generals for an army which was not yet raised. Everyone taxed himself to raise troops. There were twenty counsellors possessed of new posts, which had been created by Cardinal de Richelieu; their brethren, by a meanness of spirit of which every society is susceptible, seemed to wreak their vengeance against the memory of Cardinal Richelieu upon them. They gave them a thousand mortifications, would hardly look upon them as members of the parliament, and obliged each of them to pay fifteen thousand livres toward the expense of the war, and to purchase the forbearance of those of their own body.

The high chancellor, the courts of inquests and requests, the chamber of accounts, and the court of aids, who had so loudly inveighed against a trifling and necessary tax which did not exceed a hundred thousand crowns, now furnished a sum amounting nearly to ten millions of our present money, for the subversion of their country. Twelve thousand men were raised by an arret of parliament; every house with a great gate furnished a man and a horse, whence this body of horse got the name of “The Great-Gate Cavalry.” The coadjutor had a regiment of his own, which was called the regiment of Corinth, because he was titular archbishop of Corinth.

Had it not been for the names of the king of France, the great Condé, and the capital of the kingdom, this war of the Fronde would have been as ridiculous as that of the Barberini; no one knew for what he was in arms. The prince of Condé besieged five hundred thousand citizens with eight thousand soldiers. The Parisians came out into the field dressed in ribbons and plumes of feathers, and their evolutions were the sport of the military people; they took to their heels at the sight of two hundred men of the king’s army. All this was made a subject of raillery; the regiment of Corinth having been beaten by a small party of the king’s troops, this little repulse was called “The first of the Corinthians.”

The twenty counsellors who had furnished fifteen thousand livres apiece, had no other distinction than that of being called the Twenty Fifteens.

The duke of Beaufort, who was the idol of the people, and the instrument made use of in stirring them up to sedition, though a popular prince, had but a narrow understanding, and was a public object of raillery both with the court and those of his own party. He was never mentioned but by the name of the "King of the Mob." The Parisian troops, after sallying out of the city, and always coming back beaten, were received with peals of laughter. They repaired the repulses they met with by sonnets and epigrams; the taverns and brothels were the tents where they held their councils of war, in the midst of singing, laughing, and the most disolute pleasures. The general licentiousness was carried to such a height that one night some of the principal officers of the malcontents, having met the holy sacrament, which was being carried through the streets to a sick person whom they suspected of being a Mazarinian, they drove the priest back again with the flat of their swords.

In short, the coadjutor, coming to take his seat in parliament as archbishop of Paris, the handle of a poniard was seen sticking out of his pocket; upon which some one cried out, "Behold our archbishop's breviary."

In the midst of all these troubles, the nobility assembled in a body at the convent of the Augustine friars, appointed syndics, and held public sessions. It might have been supposed this was to remodel the government and convoke the general estates, but it was only to settle a claim to the tabouret, which the queen had granted to Madame de Pons. Perhaps there never was a stronger proof of that levity of mind of which the French were then accused.

The civil discords under which England groaned at the very same time may serve to show the character of the two nations. There was a gloomy desperation and a sort of national rage in the civil wars of the English. Everything was decided by the sword; scaffolds were erected for the vanquished; and their king, who was taken prisoner in a battle, was brought as a culprit before a court of justice, examined concerning the abuse he was said to have made of his power, condemned to lose his head, and executed in sight of all his subjects with as much regularity and with the same forms of justice as if he had been a private man condemned for a crime; while, during the course of these dreadful troubles, the city of London was not even for a moment affected with the calamities incident to a civil war.

The French, on the contrary, ran headlong into seditions through caprice, laughing all the time. Women were at the head of factions, and love made and broke cabals. The duchess of Longueville, in 1649, prevailed on Turenne, lately made a marshal of France, to persuade the army which he commanded for the king to revolt. Turenne failed, and quitted like a fugitive the army of which he was general, to please a woman who made a jest of his passion. From general of France, he descended to be the lieutenant of Don Estevan de Gamara, with whom he was defeated at Rethel by the king's troops. Everyone knows this billet of Marshal d'Hoquincourt to the duchess of Montbazon: "Perrone belongs to the fairest of the fair;" and the following verses, which the duke of Rochefoucauld wrote on the duchess of Longueville, when he received a wound by a musket at the battle of St. Anthony, by which he was for some time deprived of sight:

Pour mériter son cœur, pour plaire à ses beaux yeux,
J'ai fait la guerre aux rois, & l'aurais faite aux Dieux.

The war ended and was renewed again at several different times; and there was not a person who had not frequently changed sides. The prince of Condé, having brought the court back in triumph to Paris, indulged himself in the satisfaction of despising those he had defended; and thinking the rewards bestowed on him unequal to his reputation and the services he had done, he was the first to turn Mazarin into ridicule, to brave the queen, and insult a government which he had disdained. He is said to have written in this style to the cardinal: "To the most illustrious scoundrel;" and that, taking his leave of him one day he said, "Farewell, Mars." He encouraged the marquis of Jarsai to make a declaration of love to the queen, and pretended to be angry that she was affronted with it. He joined with his brother, the prince of Conti, and the duke of Longueville, who quitted the party of the malcontents. The party formed by the duke of Beaufort at the beginning of the regency had been nicknamed "the Self-Sufficients;" Condé's faction was called "the Petits-Maîtres," because they wanted to be masters of the state. There are no other traces left of all these terms except the name of "petit-maître," which is nowadays applied to young men of agreeable persons, but badly educated, and that of "frondeurs," or "grumblers," which is given to those who censure the government.

The coadjutor, who had declared himself an implacable enemy to the adminstration, was privately reconciled to the court, in order to obtain a cardinal's hat, and sacrificed Condé to the minister's resentment. In a word, this prince who had defended the state against its enemies, and the court against the rebels; Condé, at the summit of his glory, and who always acted more like the hero than the man of prudence, saw himself arrested, together with the prince of Conti and the duke of Longueville. He might have governed the state, if he would only have endeavored to please; but he was contented with being admired. The people of Paris, who had made barricades for a counsellor-clerk, hardly a degree removed from a fool, made public rejoicings when the hero and defender of France was hurried away to the dungeon of Vincennes.

A year afterward the very men who had sold the great Condé and the other princes to the dastardly revenge of Mazarin, obliged the queen to open the gates of their prisons, and drive her prime minister out of the kingdom. Condé now returned amidst the acclamations of that very people who had shown such hatred to him, and by his presence occasioned new cabals and dissensions.

The kingdom remained for some years longer in this tumultuous situation. The government, always the dupe of weak and uncertain councils, seemed now on the point of ruin; but dissension, which had always prevailed among the rebels, saved the court. The coadjutor, who was sometimes a friend, and at others an enemy, to the prince of Condé, stirred up a part of the parliament and people against him, and boldly undertook at the same time to serve the queen by opposing this prince, and to insult her by obliging her to banish Cardinal Mazarin, who retired to Cologne. The queen, by a contradiction too common to weak administrations, was obliged at once to accept of his services, to put up with his insults, and to nominate to the purple this very man,

who, when coadjutor, had been the author of the barricades, and had caused the royal family to quit their capital and besiege it.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER IV.

CONTINUATION OF THE CIVIL WAR, TILL THE END OF THE REBELLION IN 1654.

At length Condé determined upon a war, which he should have begun in the time of the rebellion, if he was desirous of being master of the state, or never to have undertaken, if he meant to live as a subject. He quitted Paris, armed the provinces of Guienne, Poitou, and Anjou, and applied for aid against his own country to those Spaniards, of whom he had so lately been the most dreadful scourge.

Nothing can better show the madness of these times, and the confused manner of proceeding, than what then happened to this prince. A courier was sent to him from Paris, with proposals for engaging him to return and lay down his arms. The courier by a mistake, instead of going to Angerville, where the prince then was, went to Augerville. The letter came too late; Condé declared that if he had received it sooner he would have accepted the proposals for peace; but since he was now at such a distance from Paris, it was not worth while to go back. Thus, by the mistake of a courier, and the mere capriciousness of this prince, France was once more plunged in a civil war.

And now Cardinal Mazarin, who, while an exile at the farther end of Cologne, had still continued to govern the court, returned to France, in December, 1651, rather like a sovereign who returns to take possession of his dominions, than like a minister coming to resume his post; he was escorted by a small army of seven thousand men, raised wholly at his own expense; that is to say, with the government's money, which he had appropriated to his own use.

The king, in a declaration at this time, is made to say that the cardinal actually raised those troops with his own money; which at once overturns the opinion of those writers who say that when he first left the kingdom he was very poor. He gave the command of his small army to Marshal d'Hoquincourt; all the officers wore green sashes, which was the color of the cardinal's livery. Each party at that time had its particular sash. The king's was white, and the prince of Condé's yellow: it was surprising that Cardinal Mazarin, who had all along affected so much humility and modesty, should have had the arrogance to make a whole army wear his livery, as if he had been of a different party from the king, his master; but he could not resist this emotion of vanity. The queen approved of it, and the king, who was then of age, with his brother, went to meet him.

On the first news of his return, Gaston, duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIII., who had insisted upon his being banished, began to raise troops in Paris without well knowing how he was to employ them. The parliament renewed its arrets, proscribed Mazarin, and set a price upon his head. They were obliged to consult the registers for the price paid for the head of an enemy to the state, and they found that in the reign of

Charles IX. the sum of fifty thousand crowns had been promised by arret to any person who should produce Admiral Coligny alive or dead. It was, therefore, seriously determined to act according to form, by setting the same price on the assassination of a cardinal and prime minister. No one, however, was tempted to gain the fifty thousand crowns offered by the proscription, which, after all, would never have been paid. In any other nation, or at any other time, such an arret would have met with persons to put it in execution; but now it served only to afford new subject of raillery. Blot and Marigni, two witty writers, who mingled gayety with these tumults and disorders, caused a paper to be fixed up in the public places of Paris, offering a reward of one hundred and fifty thousand livres, divided into shares; so much to the person who should cut off the cardinal's nose, so much for an ear, so much for an eye, and so much for the person who would make him a eunuch. This raillery was the only effect produced by this proscription. The cardinal, on his side, made no use of either poison or assassination against his enemies; and notwithstanding the rancor and madness of so many factions, and their hatred, no very great crimes were committed on any side. The heads of parties were not inclined to cruelty, nor were the people very furious, for it was not a religious war.

The whimsical spirit which prevailed at that time had taken such thorough possession of the body of the Parliament of Paris that, having solemnly ordered an assassination which was laughed at, they issued an arret, by which a certain number of counsellors were ordered to repair to the frontiers and take depositions against the army of Cardinal Mazarin, that is to say, the king's army.

Two of these counsellors had the imprudence to take some peasants with them, and break down the bridges over which the cardinal was to pass: they were taken prisoners in the attempt by a body of the king's troops, but were released again, without any further punishment than that of being laughed at by all parties.

At the very time that this body was running into these extremes against the king's minister, it declared the prince of Condé, who had taken up arms solely to oppose this minister, guilty of high treason; and by a strange reverse of judgment, which nothing but their former actions could render credible, they ordered the fresh troops which had been raised by Gaston, duke of Orleans, to march against Mazarin, and at the same time prohibited any sums to be taken out of the public funds to pay them.

Nothing else could be expected from a body of magistrates which, thrown quite out of its proper sphere, ignorant of its own rights and real power, and as little acquainted with state affairs and war, meeting in a tumultuous manner, and passing decrees in hurry and confusion, took measures which it had not thought of the day before, and which afterward astonished it.

The Parliament of Bordeaux, which was at that time in the prince of Condé's interest, observed a more uniform conduct, because, being at a greater distance from the court, it was not so much agitated by opposite factions.

But objects of greater importance now engrossed the attention of all France.

Condé, in league with the Spaniards, appeared in the field against the king; and Turenne, having deserted those Spaniards with whom he had been defeated at Rethel, had just made his peace with the court, and commanded the king's army. The finances were already too much drained to allow either of the two parties to keep large armies on foot; but small ones were sufficient to decide the fate of the kingdom. There are times when an army of one hundred thousand men is barely sufficient to take two towns; and there are others in which eight thousand men may subvert or establish a throne.

Louis XIV., who was brought up in adversity, wandered, with his mother, his brother, and Cardinal Mazarin, from province to province, with not nearly so many troops to attend his person as he afterward had in time of peace for his ordinary guard; while an army of five or six thousand men, part sent from Spain, and part raised by the prince of Condé, pursued him to the very heart of his kingdom.

The prince of Condé, in the meantime, made quick marches from Bordeaux to Montauban, taking towns and increasing his numbers in every place.

All the hopes of the court were centred in Marshal Turenne. The king's army was at Guienne, on the Loire, and the prince of Condé's a few leagues distant, under the command of the dukes of Nemours and Beaufort. The misunderstanding between these two generals nearly proved fatal to the prince's party. The duke of Beaufort was unfit for the least command. The duke of Nemours passed for a brave and amiable, rather than a skilful general. The army was ruined by them both together. The men, who knew that the great Condé was a hundred leagues distant from them, looked upon themselves as lost; when, in the middle of the night, a courier presented himself to the main guard in the forest of Orleans: the sentinels presently discovered this courier to be the prince himself, who had come post from Agen, through a thousand adventures, and always in disguise, to put himself at the head of his army.

His presence did a great deal, and this unforeseen arrival still more: he knew that men are elated with whatever is sudden and unexpected; he therefore took immediate advantage of the confidence and boldness with which his presence had inspired his troops. It was this prince's distinguishing talent in war to form the boldest resolutions in an instant, and to execute them with equal prudence and promptitude.

The royal army was divided into two corps. Condé attacked that which lay at Bléneau, under the command of Marshal d'Hoquincourt, which was shattered almost as soon as attacked. Turenne could not receive advice of this. Cardinal Mazarin, struck with a panic, flew to Gien in the midst of the night to awaken the king and acquaint him with this news. His little court was struck with consternation: it was proposed to save the king by flight, and convey him privately to Bourges. The victorious Condé advanced toward Gien, and the fear and desolation became universal. Turenne, however, quieted the apprehensions of the people by his steadiness, and saved the court by his dexterity. With the few troops he had left he made such dexterous movements, and so well improved his ground and time, that he prevented Condé from prosecuting the advantage he had gained. It was difficult at that time to determine which of these two generals had acquired the most honor; Condé by the victory he had gained, or

Turenne by having snatched the fruits of his victory from him. It is certain that in this battle of Bléneau, which for a long time continued to be famous in France, there were not above four hundred men killed: nevertheless, the prince of Condé was on the point of making himself master of the whole royal family, and of getting his enemy, the cardinal, into his hands. There could not well be a smaller battle, greater concerns depending, or a more pressing danger.

Condé, who did not flatter himself with the notion of surprising Turenne as he had done Hoquincourt, made his army march to Paris, and hastened to enter that city, and enjoy the glory he had acquired in the favorable dispositions of a blinded people. The admiration of this last action, which was exaggerated in all its circumstances, had raised in all ranks of people the general hatred to Mazarin, and the name and presence of the great Condé seemed at first to make him absolute master of the capital: but in fact the minds of the people in general were divided, and each party was split into different factions, as is the case in all civil troubles. The coadjutor, now Cardinal de Retz, who had apparently been reconciled to a court that feared him, and whom he equally distrusted, was no longer master of the people, nor acted the principal part in these transactions. He governed the duke of Orleans, and opposed Condé. The parliament fluctuated between the court, the duke of Orleans, and the prince; but all sides joined in crying out against Mazarin: every one in private took care of his own concerns. The people were like a stormy ocean, whose waves were driven at hazard by many contrary winds. The shrine of St. Geneviève was carried in procession through Paris to obtain the expulsion of the cardinal minister; and the populace did not in the least doubt that the saint would perform this miracle in the same manner as she grants rain.

Nothing was to be seen but negotiations between the heads of parties, deputations from the parliament, meetings of the chambers, seditions among the people, and soldiers all over the country. Guards were mounted even at the gates of convents. The prince had called in the Spanish to his assistance. Charles IV., duke of Lorraine, who had been driven out of his dominions, and who had nothing left but an army of eight thousand men, which he sold every year to the Spanish king, advanced with this army toward Paris: but Cardinal Mazarin offering him more money to return than he was to have from the prince of Condé for advancing, the duke soon withdrew from France, after having laid the countries waste in his march, and carried off a handsome sum of money from both sides.

Condé then remained in Paris, where his power was every day growing weaker, and his army dwindling away, while Turenne conducted the king and his court toward the capital. The king, who was then fifteen years old, beheld from the heights of Charonne, the battle of St. Anthony, in which these two generals, with a handful of troops, performed such great things as considerably increased the reputation of both, which already seemed incapable of addition.

The prince of Condé, with a few noblemen of his party, and a small number of soldiers, sustained and repelled the efforts of the king’s army. The king himself, attended by Cardinal Mazarin, beheld this fight from a neighboring eminence. The duke of Orleans, uncertain which side to take, kept within his palace of Luxembourg,

and Cardinal de Retz remained in his archbishopric. The parliament waited the issue of the battle to enact new decrees. The people, who at that time were equally afraid of the king's troops and the prince's, had shut the city gates, and would not suffer anyone to come in or go out, while the most noble blood of the kingdom was streaming in the suburbs. There it was that the duke de La Rochefoucauld, who was so famous for his courage and wit, received a blow over his eyes, which deprived him of his sight for some time. Nothing was to be seen but young noblemen killed or wounded, being carried to St. Anthony's gate, which was kept shut.

At length the daughter of the duke of Orleans, taking Condé's part, whom her father had not dared to assist, ordered the gates to be opened for the wounded, and had the boldness to fire the cannon of the Bastille upon the king's troops. The royal army retired. Condé gained only glory; but mademoiselle ruined herself forever with the king, her cousin, by this imprudent violence; and Cardinal Mazarin, who knew the great desire she had to espouse a crowned head, observed that those cannon had killed her husband.

Most of our historians amuse their readers only with accounts of the battles fought, and the prodigies of valor and politics displayed on these occasions; but whoever is acquainted with the shameful expedients which were put in practice, the wretchedness which was brought upon the people, and the meanness to which all sides were reduced, will look upon the glory of the heroes of these times with more pity than admiration; as we may judge from what we find related by Gourville, a man who was devoted to the prince of Condé. This writer acknowledges that he himself, in order to procure money for the prince on a pressing occasion, was obliged to rob a receiver's office; and that he went one day and seized a director of the posts in his own house, and obliged him to purchase his liberty with a sum of money; he relates all these outrages as common occurrences at that time.

After the bloody and indecisive battle of St. Anthony, the king could neither enter Paris, nor could the prince of Condé think of remaining there much longer. A commotion of the populace and the deaths of several citizens, of which he was thought to be the author, had made him hateful in the eyes of the people. Nevertheless, he had still a party in the parliament. This body, who had then little to apprehend from the resentment of a wandering court driven, as it were, from their capital, being pressed by the duke of Orleans and the prince's cabals, issued an arret declaring the former lieutenant-general of the kingdom, though the king was then of age. This was the title that had been conferred on the duke of Mayenne in the time of the league. The prince of Condé was appointed generalissimo of the forces. The court, incensed at these proceedings, ordered the parliament to remove itself to Pontoise, which some few of the counsellors did; so that there were now two parliaments, who disputed each other's authority, enacted contradictory decrees, and would by this means have fallen into universal contempt, had they not always agreed in demanding the cardinal's expulsion: so much was a hatred to that minister looked upon at that time as the essential duty of a Frenchman.

At that time all parties were alike weak, and the court was as much so as the rest. They all wanted men and money. Factions were daily increasing: the battles which

had been fought on both sides had produced only losses and vexations. The court found itself obliged once more to give up Mazarin, whom everyone accused of being the cause of these troubles, while he was in fact only the pretence. Accordingly he quitted the kingdom a second time; and, as an additional disgrace, the king was obliged to issue a public declaration, by which he banished his minister, while he commended his services and lamented his exile.

Charles I. of England had lately lost his head upon a scaffold, for having, at the beginning of his troubles, sacrificed the life of his friend and counsellor, the earl of Strafford, to his parliament's resentment. On the other hand, Louis XIV. became the peaceable master of his kingdom by agreeing to the banishment of Mazarin. Thus the same weakness had very different successes. The king of England, by giving up his favorite, emboldened a people who delighted in war, and had a hatred to all kings: and Louis XIV.—or rather the queen-mother—by banishing the cardinal, took away all pretence for a revolt from a people who had grown weary of war, and had an affection for the royal character.

No sooner had the cardinal departed on his way to Bouillon, the place fixed for his new retreat, than the citizens of Paris, of their own accord, sent deputies to the king to beseech him to return to his capital, which he accordingly did; and everything appeared so peaceable, that it would have been difficult to suppose that a few days before all had been in confusion. Gaston of Orleans, ever unfortunate in his undertakings, for want of spirit to carry them through, was banished to Blois, where he passed the rest of his days in repentance; and he was the second of the great Henry's sons who died without glory. Cardinal de Retz, who was perhaps as imprudent as he was bold and aspiring, was arrested in the Louvre, and after being carried from prison to prison, he for a long time led a wandering life, which at length ended in retirement, where he acquired virtues which his high spirit had made him a stranger to, amidst the tumults of his fortune.

Some counsellors of the parliament who had most abused their power paid the forfeit of their faults by banishment; the rest were restricted within the proper limits of the magisterial function; and some were encouraged to do their duty by a yearly gratification of five hundred pounds, which was paid them privately by Fouquet, procureur-general, and comptroller of the finances.

In the meantime the prince of Condé, abandoned in France by almost all his partisans, and but weakly seconded by the Spaniards, still carried on an unsuccessful war on the frontiers of Champagne. There were still some few factions in Bordeaux, but they were soon quelled.

The calm which the kingdom now enjoyed was owing to the banishment of Cardinal Mazarin. Yet scarcely was he expelled by the general cry of the French nation, and by the royal declaration, than he was recalled by the king, and to his infinite surprise, entered Paris once more in full power, and without the least disturbance, in March, 1653. The king received him as a father, and the people as a master. A public entertainment was made for him at the town-house, amidst the acclamations of the citizens: he distributed money among the populace on this occasion; but amidst all the

satisfaction he received in this happy change, he is said to have shown a contempt for our levity and inconstancy. The parliament, who had before set a price upon his head as a public robber, now sent deputies to compliment him; and this very parliament, a short time afterward, passed sentence of death on the prince of Condé for contumacy; a change common in such times, and which was the more base, as by this decree they condemned the very man in whose crimes they had been so long partakers.

The cardinal, also, who urged this condemnation of the great Condé, was soon afterward seen to give one of his nieces in marriage to the prince of Conti, Condé's brother, a proof that this minister's power would soon become boundless.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER V.

FRANCE, TILL THE DEATH OF CARDINAL MAZARIN, 1661.

While the state was thus torn in pieces within, it had been attacked and weakened from without. All the fruits of the victories of Rocroi, Lens, and Nördlingen were lost, the important fortress of Dunkirk was retaken by the Spaniards, who had also driven the French out of Barcelona, and retaken Casale, in Italy. Yet, notwithstanding the tumults of the civil broils, and the weight of a foreign war, Mazarin had, in 1648, been fortunate enough to conclude the famous Peace of Westphalia, by which the emperor and the empire sold the sovereignty of Alsace to the king and the crown of France for three millions of livres—about six millions of our present money—to be paid to the archduke, which became the basis of all future treaties. A new electorate was created in favor of the house of Bavaria. The rights of all the princes and cities of the empire, and even the privileges of every private gentleman, were settled at this peace. The emperor's power was restricted within very narrow limits, and the French, in conjunction with the Swedes, became the lawgivers of Germany. The glory accruing to France was in part owing to the Swedish arms; Gustavus Adolphus had first begun to shake the empire. His generals had also pushed their conquests quite extensively, under the government of his daughter, Christina. General Wrangel was ready to enter into Austria; Count Königsmarck was master of one half of the city of Prague, and was laying siege to the other half, when this peace was concluded: and to overwhelm the emperor in this manner cost France only a million a year in subsidies to the Swedes.

And indeed the Swedes gained more advantage from this treaty than the French. They had Pomerania, several fortified places, and a considerable sum of money. They obliged the emperor to deliver into the hands of the Lutherans certain benefices which belonged to the Roman Catholics. The court of Rome set up the cry of impiety, and loudly declared that the cause of God and religion was betrayed. The Protestants boasted that they had sanctified the work of peace by stripping the Papists. Everyone speaks as interest dictates.

The Spanish court did not accede to this peace, and with good reason; for seeing France overwhelmed with its civil wars, the Spanish ministry hoped to profit by our dissensions. The German troops, which were now disbanded, served as a fresh reinforcement to the Spaniards. The emperor, after the Peace of Münster, sent thirty thousand men into Flanders, in the space of four years. This was a manifest violation of treaties; but they are seldom executed in any other manner.

The ministers of the court of Madrid had the address in this Treaty of Westphalia to make a separate peace with the Dutch. The Spanish monarchy, in short, thought itself happy to have no longer for enemies, and to acknowledge as sovereigns, those whom they had so long treated as rebels, unworthy of pardon. These republicans increased

their wealth, and secured their tranquillity and greatness, by thus treating with Spain without breaking with France.

They were so powerful that, in 1653, in a war which they had with England, they sent a hundred ships of the line to sea: and victory long remained doubtful between Blake, the English admiral, and Tromp, who commanded the Dutch fleet, who were both at sea what Condé and Turenne were on shore. France had not at that time ten ships of fifty guns fit to send to sea; and her navy was every day falling more and more into decay.

Louis XIV. then saw himself, in 1653, absolute master of the kingdom which was still affected by the shocks it had received; full of disorder in every branch of the administration, but abounding in resources; without any ally, except the duke of Savoy, to assist it in carrying on an offensive war, and having no foreign enemies but Spain, which was then in a worse condition than France itself. All the French who had been concerned in the civil war were subjected, except the prince of Condé and some few of his partisans, of which one or two remained faithful to him, through friendship and gratitude, as the counts de Coligny and Bouteville; and some others, because the court would not buy their services at an exorbitant price.

Condé, now made general of the Spanish forces, could not recruit a body which he himself had weakened by the destruction of its infantry in the battles of Rocroi and Lens. He fought with new troops, of which he was not master, against the veteran regiments of the French, who had learned to conquer under him, and were now commanded by Turenne.

It was the fortune of Condé and Turenne to be always conquerors when they fought together at the head of the French, and to be beaten when they commanded the Spaniards. Turenne had with great difficulty saved the shattered remains of the Spanish army at the battle of Rethel, where, from being general to the king of France, he became lieutenant to Don Estevan de Gamarra.

The prince of Condé met with the same fate before Arras: he and the archduke were besieging that town; Turenne came and besieged them in their camp, forced their lines, and the archduke's troops were put to flight. Condé, with only two regiments of French and Lorrainers, sustained the attack of all Turenne's army; and, while the archduke was flying, he beat Marshal Hoquincourt, repulsed Marshal de la Ferté, and covered the retreat of the defeated Spaniards, upon which the Spanish king wrote to him in these terms: "I have heard that all was lost, and that you have saved all."

It is difficult to say by what battles are lost or won; but it is certain that Condé was one of the greatest military geniuses that had ever appeared, and that the archduke and his council refused to do anything that day which Condé had proposed.

Though raising the siege of Arras, forcing the enemy's lines, and putting the archduke to flight, reflected the highest glory on Turenne, it was observed that in the letter written in the king's name to the parliament upon this victory, the whole success of the campaign was attributed to Cardinal Mazarin, without the least mention of Turenne's name. The cardinal was actually within a few leagues of Arras with the king. He had even gone into the camp at the siege of Stenai, a town which Turenne had taken before he relieved Arras. Several councils of war had been held in the cardinal's presence: on this he founded his pretension to the honor of these events; and by this piece of vanity he drew ridicule upon himself, which not all the authority of prime minister could efface.

The king was not present at the battle of Arras, though he might have been so; he had been in the trenches at the siege of Stenai; but the cardinal would not suffer him to hazard a person on which the tranquillity of the state and the power of the minister seemed alike to depend.

This war, which was but weakly supported, was carried on in their masters' names, on one side by Mazarin, who was absolute master of France and its young monarch; and on the other by Don Luis de Haro, who governed the Spanish kingdom under Philip IV. The name of Louis XIV. was not then known to the world, and the king of Spain had never been spoken of. There was no crowned head at that time in Europe who enjoyed any share of personal reputation. Queen Christina of Sweden was the only one who governed alone, and supported the dignity of the throne, which was abandoned, disgraced, or unknown in other kingdoms.

Charles II., king of England, then a fugitive in France, with his mother and brother, had brought thither his misfortunes and his hopes; a private subject had subdued England, Scotland, and Ireland. Cromwell, that usurper so worthy of reigning, had prudently taken the title of Protector, and not that of King, as he knew that the English were acquainted with the extent of the royal prerogative, but did not so well know the limits of a protector's authority.

He strengthened his power by knowing when to restrain it: he made no attempt upon the rights of the people, of which they were always jealous; he never quartered soldiers upon the city of London, nor imposed any tax which might occasion murmurings; he did not offend the public eye with too much pomp; he did not indulge himself in any pleasures; nor did he heap up riches: he took care that justice should be observed with that stern impartiality which knows no distinction between the great and small.

The brother of Pantaleon Sá, the Portuguese ambassador in England, thinking that he might act as he pleased with impunity, because the person of his brother was sacred, had committed an outrage upon some citizens of London, and afterward caused some to be assassinated by his own people, in revenge for the opposition he had met with

from the rest; for this he was condemned to be hanged. Cromwell, though he had it in his power to save him, suffered him to be executed, and the next day signed a treaty with the ambassador.

Never had the trade of England been in so free and so flourishing a condition, nor the state so rich. Its victorious fleets made its name respected in every sea, while Mazarin, wholly employed in governing and heaping up riches, suffered justice, trade, navigation, and even the revenue itself, to languish and decline in France. As much master in France as Cromwell was in England, after a civil war, he might have procured the same advantages for the country which he governed as Cromwell had done for his; but Mazarin was a foreigner, and though of a less cruel disposition than Cromwell, wanted his greatness of soul.

All the nations of Europe, who had neglected an alliance with England during the reigns of James I. and Charles, solicited it under Cromwell. Queen Christina herself, though she had expressed her detestation at the murder of Charles I., entered into an alliance with a tyrant whom she esteemed.

Mazarin and Don Luis de Haro vied with each other in exerting their politics to engage the protector in an alliance; and he had for some time the satisfaction of seeing himself courted by the two most powerful kingdoms in Christendom.

The Spanish minister offered to assist him to take Calais; Mazarin proposed to him to besiege Dunkirk, and to put that place into his hands. Cromwell had then at his option the keys of France and Flanders. He was also strongly solicited by the great Condé; but he would not enter into a negotiation with a prince who had nothing to depend upon but his name, and who was without a party in France, and without power among the Spaniards.

The protector then determined in favor of France; but without making any particular treaty, or sharing conquests beforehand: he was desirous to render his usurpation illustrious by great undertakings. He had formed the design of taking America from the Spaniards, but they had timely notice of his intention. His admirals, however, took the island of Jamaica in May, 1655, which is still in possession of the English, and secures their trade in the new world. It was not till after the expedition to Jamaica that Cromwell signed his treaty with the French king; and then no mention was made of Dunkirk. The protector treated with the French king as a prince with his equal, and obliged him to acknowledge his title of Protector. His secretary signed before the French plenipotentiary on the copy of the treaty which remained in England; but he treated as a real superior when he obliged the French king to compel Charles II. and his brother, the duke of York, both grandsons of Henry IV., and to whom France consequently owed an asylum, to quit his dominions.

While Mazarin was engaged in this treaty, Charles II. asked one of his nieces in marriage: but the bad condition of this prince's affairs, which had obliged him to take this step, was the cause of his meeting with a refusal; and the cardinal was even suspected of an intention to marry the very niece, whom he had refused to the king of England, to Cromwell's son. This, however, is certain, that when he afterward found

Charles's affairs take a more favorable turn, he was for setting this match on foot again; but then he met with a refusal in his turn.

The mother of these two princes, Henrietta of France, daughter of Henry the Great, who was left in France destitute of all assistance, saw herself reduced to beg of the cardinal to intercede with Cromwell, that she might at least receive her jointure. It was certainly the most extreme and grievous of all humiliations, to be obliged to sue for subsistence to the man who had spilled her husband's blood on a scaffold. Mazarin, after some few remonstrances in the queen's favor to the English court, acquainted her that he had not been able to obtain anything. She therefore continued in poverty at Paris, and with the shame and mortification of having implored Cromwell's pity, while her sons went into the army commanded by the prince of Condé and Don John of Austria, to learn the art of war against France, which had abandoned them.

The children of Charles I., thus driven out of France, took refuge in Spain. Upon this the Spanish ministry loudly inveighed, both by word of mouth and writing, in all courts, and especially at Rome, against the behavior of the cardinal, who, they said, had sacrificed all laws, divine and human, all honor and religion, to the murderer of a king, and had driven out of France Charles II. and the duke of York, though cousins of Louis XIV., to please their father's executioner. No other reply was made to these outcries of the Spaniards, than the production of the very offers which they themselves had made to the protector.

The war was still carried on in Flanders with various success. Turenne having laid siege to Valenciennes, together with the marshal de la Ferté, experienced the same reverse of fortune which had befallen Condé before Arras. The prince, seconded at that time by Don John of Austria, more worthy of fighting by his side than the archduke had been, forced Marshal de la Ferté's lines, took him prisoner, and delivered Valenciennes, July 17, 1656. Turenne then did what Condé had done before in a like defeat. He saved the routed army, made head everywhere against the enemy, and in less than a month afterward went and laid siege to and took the small town of La Capelle: this was perhaps the first time that a defeated army had dared to undertake a siege.

This march of Turenne's, which was so greatly admired, and after which La Capelle was taken, was eclipsed by a still finer march of Condé's. Turenne had hardly sat down before Cambray, when Condé, at the head of two thousand horse, penetrated through the army of the besiegers, and, after having routed everything that attempted to stop him, threw himself into the town on May 30, 1658; he was received by the citizens on their knees as their deliverer. Thus did these two great men display all the power of their military genius in opposition to each other. They were equally admired for their retreats, for their victories, for their good conduct, and even for their faults, which they always knew how to repair. By their talents they alternately checked the progress of the two monarchies whom they served; but the disordered state of the finances, both in France and Spain, still proved a great obstacle to their success.

At length France acquired a more distinguished superiority, by the league it had made with Cromwell. On one hand Admiral Blake went and burned the Spanish galleons at

the Canary Islands, and thus deprived them of the only treasures with which they could carry on the war; and, on the other, twenty sail of English ships blocked up the port of Dunkirk, while six thousand veteran soldiers, who had been concerned in the revolution in England, were sent to reinforce Turenne's army.

And now Dunkirk, the most important place of all Flanders, was besieged by land and sea. The prince of Condé and Don John of Austria having assembled all their forces, presented themselves before the city to raise the siege. The eyes of all Europe were attentively fixed on this great event. Cardinal Mazarin carried Louis XIV. into the neighborhood of the theatre of war, without suffering him to act a part therein, though he was then upward of twenty years old. The king remained in Calais while his army attacked that of Spain, and gained, on June 14, 1658, the most glorious victory which had been known since that of Rocroi.

The prince of Condé's genius could do nothing that day against the superior forces of France and England. The Spanish army was destroyed, and Dunkirk capitulated soon after. The king and his minister repaired thither, to see the garrison march out. The cardinal would not permit Louis XIV. to appear either in the light of a king or a warrior. He had not money to distribute among the soldiers, and indeed had hardly proper attendants: whenever he went with the army, he used to eat at Mazarin's, or at the viscount Turenne's table.

This neglect of the royal dignity was not the effect of any contempt that Louis XIV. had for show and parade, but from the bad state of his affairs, and the care taken by the cardinal to arrogate all splendor and authority to himself.

Louis took possession of Dunkirk only to deliver it up to Lockhart, Cromwell's ambassador. Mazarin endeavored, by some finesse, to elude the treaty, and prevent the place being given up to the English; but Lockhart's threats and the English resolution got the better of Italian cunning.

It has been asserted by several persons that the cardinal, who had arrogated to himself the affair of Arras, wanted to prevail on Turenne to yield him likewise the honor of this battle. Du Bec-Crespin, count of Moret, was sent, they say, in the minister's name, to propose to the general to write a letter, by which it might appear that the cardinal himself had laid down the whole plan of operations. Turenne received these insinuations with the contempt they deserved, and would not consent to avow a thing which would have brought disgrace on a general, and ridicule on a churchman. Mazarin, after this weakness, had that of continuing at enmity with Turenne till the day of his death.

Some time after the siege of Dunkirk, Sept. 13, 1658, Cromwell died, aged fifty-five years, in the midst of the vast projects he had formed for the establishment of his own power and the glory of the nation he governed. He had humbled the Dutch, dictated the conditions of a treaty with the Portuguese, conquered Spain, and forced France to solicit his protection. Not long before his death, on being informed of the haughty manner in which his admirals behaved at Lisbon, "I am resolved," said he, "to make the English republic as much respected as that of Rome was in former times." He was

interred like a lawful sovereign, and left behind him the reputation of a great king, which threw a veil over the crimes of the usurper.

Sir William Temple pretends that Cromwell designed before he died to enter into an alliance with Spain against France, and to recover Calais by the help of the Spanish arms, as he had got Dunkirk by those of France. Nothing was more agreeable to his character and politics; he would have rendered himself the idol of the English, by thus stripping, one after another, two nations whom they equally hated. Death, however, at once overturned his great designs, his tyranny, and the English greatness. It is observable, that the court of France went in mourning for Cromwell; and that the daughter of the duke of Orleans was the only person who refused to pay this mark of respect to the memory of the murderer of a king, her kinsman.

Richard Cromwell succeeded his father in the protectorship, without any opposition, and in the same manner as a prince of Wales would have succeeded a king of England.

Richard was a proof that the fate of a kingdom frequently depends upon the character of one man. His genius was wholly different from that of his father, Oliver; he was possessed of all the meek virtues which make the good citizen, and had none of that brutal intrepidity which sacrifices everything to its own interests. He might have preserved the inheritance which his father had acquired by his labors, if he would have consented to put to death three or four of the principal officers of the army, who opposed his elevation; but he chose rather to lay down the government than to reign by assassination, and lived retired, and almost unknown, till the age of ninety, in a country of which he had once been the sovereign. After quitting the protectorship he made a voyage to France, where being one day at Montpellier, the prince of Conti, brother of the great Condé, discoursing with him, without knowing who he was, observed: “Oliver Cromwell was a great man, but his son Richard was a poor wretch, not to know how to enjoy the fruits of his father’s crimes.” This Richard, however, lived contented, whereas his father had never known what happiness was.

Some time before, France had seen another much more extraordinary example of the contempt of a crown in the famous Christina of Sweden, who came to Paris. Everyone admired a young princess, so worthy of reigning, who had resigned the sovereign authority for the sake of leading a life of ease and freedom. It is shameful in the Protestant writers to assert, without the least shadow of proof, that she resigned the crown only because she could keep it no longer. She had formed this design from the time she was twenty years of age, and had allowed seven years to bring it to maturity. A resolution so much above all vulgar conception, and which had been formed for such a length of time, should stop the mouths of those who reproach her with levity of disposition, and of having been compelled to this abdication. One of these accusations destroys the other: but everything great and noble is sure to be attacked by narrow minds.

The extraordinary turn of mind of this princess is sufficiently shown by her letters. In that which she wrote to Chanut, who had formerly been ambassador from France at her court, she thus expresses herself: “I wore the crown without ostentation, and I

resign it with readiness: after this you have nothing to fear for me, my happiness is out of the reach of fortune." She wrote thus to the great Condé: "I think myself as much honored by your esteem as by the crown I have worn. If after having resigned that, you shall think me less deserving of the other, I will own to you that the tranquillity I have so much desired will appear dearly bought; but I shall never repent of having purchased it at the price of a crown; nor will ever sully an act which to me appears so glorious, by a mean repentance: and if perchance you should condemn what I have done, I shall only tell you in excuse, that I should never have resigned the possessions which fortune bestowed on me, had I judged them necessary to my happiness; and should even have aspired to the sovereignty of the world, could I have been as certain of succeeding or dying in the attempt as the great Condé would have been."

Such was the soul of this extraordinary personage, and such her style in our language, which she was but rarely accustomed to speak. She understood eight different languages; she had been the friend and pupil of Descartes, who died in her palace at Stockholm, after having in vain tried to obtain a pension in France, where his works were even forbidden to be read, on account of the only good things which were in them. She invited into her kingdom all who were capable of bringing any knowledge into it; and the vexation of finding no men of learning among her own subjects had given her a dislike to reigning over a people who were unacquainted with everything but arms. She judged it more eligible to live privately among thinking men than to rule over a people who had neither learning nor genius. She patronized and cultivated all the arts, in a country where they were till her time unknown, and designed to make Italy the place of her retreat, where she might indulge herself in the midst of them; and, as they had but just begun to make their appearance in France, she only passed through that kingdom on her way to Rome, where her inclination determined her to fix her abode; and with this view she quitted the Lutheran religion for the Catholic. Equally indifferent to either, she made no scruple of outwardly conforming to the sentiments of a people among whom she was desirous of passing her life. She quitted the throne in 1654, and publicly performed the ceremony of her abjuration at Innspruck. She was admired at the French court, though she surpassed all the women there in understanding. The king saw her, and did her the greatest honors; but he did not discourse much with her. He had been bred in ignorance, and his natural good sense made him bashful.

The only extraordinary thing that the ladies and courtiers remarked in this philosophical queen was that she did not dress after the French fashion, and that she danced badly. The learned found nothing to condemn in her except the murder of Monaldeschi, her master of horse, whom she caused to be assassinated at Fontainebleau in the second journey she made to France, for some fault he had been guilty of toward her. As she had laid down the sovereign authority, she had no longer a right to impose a sentence. She could no longer be considered as a queen who punished a misdemeanor of state, but as a private woman who ended a love affair by a murder. This infamous and cruel action sullied that philosophy which had made her quit a throne. Had she been in England, she would have been punished; but the court of France winked at this insult against the royal authority, the law of nations, and humanity.

After Cromwell was dead, and his son Richard deposed, England continued for a year in anarchy and confusion. Charles Gustavus, to whom Queen Christina had resigned the kingdom of Sweden, made himself formidable in the North and in Germany. Emperor Ferdinand died in 1657. His son, Leopold, who was seventeen years old, and was already king of Hungary and Bohemia, had not been chosen king of the Romans during his father's lifetime. Mazarin endeavored to have Louis XIV. chosen emperor. This was a wild scheme: he should have compelled or corrupted the electors to his interest; but France was not in itself sufficiently powerful to seize on the empire, nor rich enough to purchase it; consequently the first overtures of this kind, made at Frankfort by Marshals de Gramont and Lionne, were laid aside almost as soon as proposed, and Leopold was chosen emperor. All that Mazarin's policy could then effect was to engage the German princes in a league for securing the observance of the Treaties of Münster, and to curb the emperor's authority in the empire.

After the affair of Dunkirk, France became powerful abroad by the reputation of her arms, and the bad condition to which other nations were reduced; but she suffered greatly at home; she was drained of money, and in want of peace.

In Christian monarchies the state itself is seldom interested in its sovereign's wars. Mercenary armies, raised by the order of a minister, and commanded by generals blindly devoted to his will, carry on several destructive campaigns, without the princes in whose name they fight having the least expectation or even intention of depriving each other of their whole patrimony. The people of the victorious state reap no advantage from the spoils of those who are conquered. They pay all expenses, and are alike sufferers, whether their country be prosperous or unsuccessful. Peace, therefore, is as necessary to them, even after the greatest victory, as if their enemies were in possession of all their frontier places.

There were two things wanting for the cardinal to finish his administration happily: the one was to bring about a peace, and the other to secure the tranquillity of the nation by marrying the king. The young monarch had been dangerously ill after the campaign of Dunkirk, insomuch that his life was despaired of. The cardinal, who knew he was not liked by the king's brother, had some intention, at this dangerous juncture, of securing his immense riches, and preparing for a retreat. These considerations determined him to marry his royal pupil as soon as possible. Two parties presented themselves at that time; the king of Spain's daughter and the princess of Savoy. The king's heart, however, had been previously engaged in a different way; he was desperately in love with Mademoiselle de Mancini, one of the cardinal's nieces, and as he was by nature amorous, positive in his will, and void of experience, it was not unlikely that in the warmth of his passion, he might have determined to marry his favorite mistress.

Madame de Motteville, the queen-mother's confidante, whose memoirs carry a great air of truth, pretends that Mazarin was tempted to give way to the king's passion, and place his niece on the throne. He had already married one of his nieces to the prince of Conti, and a second to the duke of Mercœur; and she whom Louis XIV. was so fond of had been demanded in marriage by the king of England. These were so many encouragements to justify his ambition. Being one day alone with the queen-mother,

he artfully attempted to sound her on this subject. “I am afraid,” said he, “that the king has a strong inclination to marry my niece.” The queen-mother, who knew the cardinal perfectly well, presently conjectured that he wished what he affected to fear, and with all the haughtiness of a princess of the Austrian blood, the daughter, wife, and mother of kings, and full of resentment against a minister who seemed to have shaken off all dependence upon her, she made him this reply: “Were the king himself capable of such a meanness, I would instantly put myself, with my second son, at the head of the people against the king and you.”

It is said that Mazarin never forgave the queen for this spirited answer: but he was wise enough to fall in with her sentiments, and made a merit of opposing the king’s passion; his power did not stand in need of a queen of his own blood to support it. He was even apprehensive of his niece’s disposition, and thought he should more effectually secure the authority of his place by shunning the dangerous glory of too greatly exalting his family.

He had in the year 1656, sent Lionne into Spain to bring about a peace, and demand the infanta in marriage; but Don Luis de Haro, sensible that weak as Spain was, France was not much stronger, had rejected the cardinal’s offers. The infanta, who was the child of a former marriage, was destined for young Leopold. The Spanish king had at that time only one son by his second wife, and this young prince was of so infirm a constitution, that it was imagined he could hardly live. It was therefore determined that the infanta, who was likely to become heiress to such large dominions, should transfer her claims to the house of Austria, rather than to the family of an enemy: but Philip IV. having afterward another son (Don Philip Prospero), and his queen being again with child, there did not appear so much danger in giving the infanta to the French king; besides, the battle of Dunkirk had made him wish for a peace.

The Spanish court then promised the infanta to Louis XIV., and desired a cessation of arms. Mazarin and Don Luis de Haro met on the frontiers of the two kingdoms, on the Isle of Pheasants. Notwithstanding that the design of their meeting was no less than that of settling the marriage of the king of France, and a general peace, a whole month was taken up in determining the disputes which arose about precedence, and in adjusting certain points of ceremony. The cardinals insisted upon being equal with kings, and superior to other sovereign princes. France with more justice pretended to the pre-eminence over all other kings. However, Don Luis de Haro kept up a perfect equality between Mazarin and himself, and between the crowns of France and Spain.

The conferences lasted four months, in which Don Luis and Mazarin displayed the whole strength of their politics. The cardinal excelled in finesse, Don Luis was remarkable for his deliberation. The former never spoke but with a double meaning, the latter very sparingly. The Italian minister’s talent lay in endeavoring to surprise; that of the Spaniard, in guarding against a surprise. It is reported that in speaking of the cardinal he said: “There is one great fault in his politics, he is always endeavoring to deceive.”

Such is the vicissitude of human affairs that there are hardly two articles of this famous Treaty of the Pyrenees now subsisting. The French king kept Roussillon, which he would always have kept without this peace; but with respect to Flanders, the Spanish monarchy has now nothing left there. The court of France was at that time necessarily in friendship with Portugal; we are now no longer so; everything is changed. Though Don Luis de Haro accused Cardinal Mazarin of deceit, the world has since acknowledged that he had the gift of foresight. He had for a long time formed the design of an alliance between France and Spain; witness that famous letter of his which he wrote during the conferences at Münster. "If his most Christian majesty could have the Low Countries and Franche-Comté, as a marriage portion with the infanta, in that case we might aspire to the Spanish succession, notwithstanding any renunciation made in the infanta's name; neither would it be a very distant prospect, seeing that there is only the life of the prince, her brother, to exclude her from it." This prince was Balthazar, who died in 1649.

It is plain that the cardinal was deceived, in supposing that the court of Spain would give the Low Countries and Franche-Comté with the infanta. There was not a single town stipulated for a dowry with her; on the contrary, we restored several considerable towns to the Spanish monarchy, which we had taken from it during the course of the war; such as St. Omer, Ypres, Menin, Oudenarde, and some other places. The cardinal, however, was right in supposing that the renunciation would one day be of no effect; but those who give him the honor of this prediction, suppose him to have likewise foreseen that Prince Balthazar would die in 1649; that afterward the three children by the second wife would all die in the cradle; that Charles, the fifth of all these male children, would die without issue; and that this Austrian king would one day make a will in favor of Louis XIV.'s grandson. But the truth is, that Cardinal Mazarin foresaw what value would be set upon a renunciation, in case the male issue of Philip IV. should all fail; and this was justified by a series of extraordinary events, above fifty years afterward.

The infanta Maria Theresa, who might have had for her dowry those towns which France by this treaty of marriage was obliged to restore, instead of that had only five hundred thousand golden crowns for her fortune: it cost the king more to go and receive her on the frontiers. However, these five hundred thousand crowns, worth at that time about two million five hundred thousand livres, were the subject of much altercation between the two ministers, and at last we never received more than one hundred thousand francs.

So far was this marriage from being of any real present advantage, excepting that of peace, that the infanta renounced forever all right or claim to any of her father's territories, and Louis XIV. ratified this renunciation in the most solemn manner, and caused it to be registered in parliament.

These renunciations, and a portion of five hundred thousand crowns, seemed to be customary clauses in the marriage contracts between the infantas of Spain and the kings of France. Queen Anne of Austria, daughter of Philip III., was married to Louis XIII. on the same conditions; and when Isabella, daughter of our Henry the Great, was married to Philip IV., king of Spain, there were no more than five hundred thousand

crowns agreed upon for a portion with her, and no part of that was ever paid; so that there did not seem at that time to be any great advantage in these grand marriages.

Charles IV., duke of Lorraine, of whom France and Spain had great reason to complain, or rather who had great reason to complain of them, was included in this treaty; but on the footing of an unfortunate prince, whom they punished because he could not make himself feared. France restored him his dominions, after dismantling Nancy, and prohibiting him from keeping any troops. Don Luis de Haro obliged Cardinal Mazarin to procure the prince of Condé's pardon, threatening otherwise to bestow on him the sovereignty of Rocroi, Châtelet, and other places in which he was in possession. Thus France at once gained these towns and the great Condé. However, he lost his post of master of the household to the king, and returned with little else than glory.

Charles II., the titular king of England, who was still more unfortunate than the duke of Lorraine, came to the Pyrenees, while they were negotiating the peace, to implore the assistance of the cardinal and Don Luis de Haro. He flattered himself that their kings, who were his cousins-german, being now in alliance, would, as Cromwell was no more, have the courage to avenge a cause which concerned every crowned head; but he could not even obtain an interview with either of the ministers. Lockhart, Cromwell's ambassador, was at St. John de Luz, and made himself still respected, notwithstanding the death of his master; and the two ministers fearing to disoblige him, refused to see Charles. They thought it impossible that he should ever be restored, and were persuaded that all the English factions, though at variance among themselves, would unanimously join to exclude forever the kingly authority; but herein they were both deceived, and fortune a few months afterward brought about that which these ministers might have had the honor of undertaking. Charles was recalled by the English, without a single potentate having interfered, either to prevent the murder of the father, or the son's restoration. He landed at Dover, and was received by twenty thousand of his subjects on their knees. I have been told by some old people who were on the spot, that almost every one present was bathed in tears. There never was perhaps a more affecting sight, nor a more sudden revolution. This change was brought about in less time than the Treaty of the Pyrenees took in concluding; and Charles II. was in quiet possession of the English throne before Louis XIV. was even married by proxy.

And now Cardinal Mazarin conducted the king and his new consort back to Paris. His behavior on this occasion was like that of a father who had married his son, without allowing him to have the management of his estate. This minister returned more powerful and more jealous of his authority and dignity than ever. He no longer gave the upper hand to the princes of the blood, in a third place, as formerly; and he who had behaved toward Don Luis de Haro as his equal, attempted to treat the great Condé as his inferior. He now appeared in public with royal pomp, having, besides his ordinary guard, a company of musketeers, the same which is now the second company in the king's musketeers. There was no longer any access to be had to the royal person; and whosoever was so little of a courtier as to apply to the king for any favor, was surely ruined. The queen-mother, who had so long been this minister's firm protectress against the whole French nation, saw herself left without credit, as

soon as he was no longer in want of her assistance. The king, her son, who had been brought up in a blind submission to this minister, was unable to throw off the yoke she had imposed upon him as well as herself: she had a respect for her own work, and Louis XIV. never dared to reign while Mazarin was alive.

A minister is excusable for the evil he may do when the helm of the government is forced into his hands by storms of state; but when there is a calm, he is answerable for all the good he does not do. Mazarin did good to no one but himself and those related to him; of the eight years of absolute and undisturbed authority which he enjoyed, from his last return till the day of his death, not one was distinguished by any honorable or useful establishment; for the college of the four nations was erected only in consequence of his last will. He managed the finances like a steward whose master is immersed in debt.

The king would sometimes ask Fouquet for money, who used to answer: “Sire, there is none in your majesty’s coffers, but my lord cardinal can lend you some.” Mazarin was worth about two hundred millions, according to the present value of money. It is said, in several memoirs, that he acquired a great part of his wealth by means which were beneath the dignity of his post; and that he obliged those who fitted out privateers to allow him a share in the profits of their cruises; this has never been proved; but the Dutch suspected him of something of this nature, a suspicion they could never have entertained of his predecessor, Cardinal Richelieu.

It is said that he was troubled with some scruples of conscience on his death-bed, though he died apparently with great courage. He was certainly in apprehension for his riches, of which he made a full donation to the king, supposing that his majesty would restore them to him again; in this he judged right, for three days afterward the king returned his deed of gift. Soon afterward he died, seemingly unregretted by anyone except the king, who had already learned the art of dissembling. The yoke began to sit heavy on his shoulders, and he grew impatient to reign; nevertheless, he thought it prudent to wear the appearance of concern for a death which put him in possession of his throne.

Louis XIV. and his court went into mourning for the cardinal; a very extraordinary mark of honor, and what Henry IV. had paid to the memory of the fair Gabrielle d’Estrées.

We shall not undertake in this place to examine whether Cardinal Mazarin was a great minister or not; we leave his actions to speak for him, and posterity to judge; but we cannot forbear opposing that mistaken notion, which ascribes a more than common understanding, and an almost divine genius, to those who have governed great kingdoms with tolerable success. It is not a superior share of penetration that makes statesmen, it is their particular character; anyone that has a tolerable degree of understanding can usually discern what is to his interest. A common citizen of Amsterdam or of Berne knows as much on this head as Sejanus, Ximenes, Buckingham, Richelieu, or Mazarin: but our conduct and our undertakings depend wholly upon the temperament of our souls, and our successes depend upon fortune.

For example: if one with a genius like that of Pope Alexander VI. or his son, Borgia, had undertaken to reduce Rochelle, he would have invited the principal citizens of the place into his camp, under the sanction of the most solemn oaths, and then have murdered them all. Mazarin would have got possession of the town two or three years later, by gaining over some of the citizens, and sowing dissension among the rest. Don Luis de Haro would never have hazarded the undertaking. Richelieu, after the example of Alexander, built a mole in the sea, and entered as a conqueror; but a stronger tide than usual, or a little more diligence on the part of the English, would have saved Rochelle and have made Richelieu pass for a mad adventurer.

We may judge of a man's character by the nature of his undertakings. We may safely affirm that Richelieu's soul was full of pride and revenge; that Mazarin was prudent, supple, and avaricious; but to know how far a minister is a man of understanding, we must either have frequently heard him discourse, or have read what he has written. That which we every day see among courtiers frequently happens among statesmen. He who has the greatest talents often fails, while he who is of a more patient, resolute, supple, and equable disposition succeeds.

In reading Mazarin's letters, and Cardinal de Retz's memoirs, we may easily perceive de Retz to have been the superior genius; nevertheless, the former attained the summit of power, and the latter was banished. In a word, it is a certain truth, that, to be a powerful minister, little more is required than a middling understanding, good sense, and fortune; but, to be a good minister, the prevailing passion of the soul must be a love for the public good; and he is the greatest statesman who leaves behind him the noblest works of public utility.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER VI.

LOUIS XIV. GOVERNS ALONE—HE OBLIGES THE SPANISH BRANCH OF THE HOUSE OF AUSTRIA TO YIELD HIM THE PRECEDENCY EVERYWHERE, AND THE COURT OF ROME TO GIVE HIM SATISFACTION—HE PURCHASES DUNKIRK, SENDS AID TO THE EMPEROR, THE DUTCH, AND THE PORTUGUESE, AND RENDERS HIS KINGDOM POWERFUL AND FLOURISHING.

Never was a court so full of intrigues and expectations as that of France, while Cardinal Mazarin lay dying. Those among the women who had any claim to beauty, flattered themselves with the hopes of governing a young prince, who was only twenty-two years old, and whom love had already influenced to make a tender of his crown to a favorite mistress. The young courtiers imagined that they should easily renew the reign of favorites. Every one of the officers of state thought that he should fill the first place in the ministry, not one of them suspecting that a king who had been brought up in such an ignorance of state affairs would venture to take the burden of government upon his own shoulders. Mazarin had kept the king in a state of nonage as long as he was able, and had not till very lately let him into the mystery of reigning, and then only because he had insisted upon being instructed.

They were so far from wishing to be governed by their sovereign that of all those who had been concerned with Mazarin in the administration, not one applied to the king to know when he would give them an audience; on the contrary, every one asked him to whom they were to apply, and were not a little surprised when Louis answered, “To me;” their astonishment was still increased, on finding him persevere. He had for some time consulted his own strength, and made a trial in secret of his capacity for reigning. His resolution once taken, he maintained it to the last moment of his life. He appointed every minister proper limits to his power, obliging them to give him an account of everything at certain hours, showing them as much confidence as was necessary to give a proper weight to their office, and carefully watching over them to prevent their abuse of it. He began by restoring order in the finances, which had been miserably mismanaged through a continuance of rapine.

He established proper discipline among the troops. His court was at once magnificent and decent; even the pleasures appeared there with a degree of lustre and greatness. The arts were all encouraged and employed, to the glory of the king and kingdom.

This is not the place for painting his character in private life, nor in the domestic government of his kingdom; we shall reserve this for a part by itself. It is sufficient to say that the people, who, since the death of Henry IV. had never seen a true king, and

who detested the authority of a prime minister, were filled with admiration and hope, when they saw Louis XIV. do, at twenty-two years of age, what Henry did at fifty. Had Henry IV. had a prime minister, he would have been lost, because the hatred against a private man would have awakened twenty different factions, which would have become too powerful. If Louis XIII. had not had a minister, that prince, whose feeble and sickly constitution made his soul weak and enervated, would have sunk beneath the weight of government; Louis XIV. might or might not have had a prime minister without any danger. There were not the least traces left of the old factions which had distracted the state. There was now only a master and subjects in France; Louis, at the very beginning, showed that he aspired after glory, and that he was resolved to make himself respected at home and abroad.

The ancient kings of Europe had always pretended to an exact equality with each other; this was natural; but the kings of France always claimed that precedence which was due to the antiquity of their race and kingdom; and if they yielded place to the emperors, it was because mankind have hardly ever the courage to abolish a long-established custom. The head of the German republic, though an elective prince, with very little power of his own, has undoubtedly the precedence of all kings, in virtue of his title of Cæsar and heir to Charlemagne. His German chancery does not even give the title of majesty to any other crowned head. The kings of France might dispute the precedence with the emperors, as France had founded the real western empire, of which the name only subsists in Germany. They could plead not only the superiority of a hereditary crown over an elective dignity, but the advantage of being descended in an uninterrupted succession of sovereigns, who reigned over a great monarchy several centuries before any of those houses who are now in possession of crowns had attained to the least degree of dignity. However, they were determined to assert their right of precedence over all the other potentates of Europe. They alleged in support of their claim the title of "Most Christian," to which the Spanish kings opposed theirs of "Most Catholic;" and since Charles V. had had a king of France prisoner at Madrid, the Spanish pride had made them more tenacious than ever of their rank. The English and Swedes, who pleaded none of these surnames at present, acknowledged as little as was possible this superiority.

Rome was the place where these pretensions were formerly canvassed; the popes, who disposed of kingdoms by a bull, imagined they had a much greater right to settle the rank among crowned heads. This court, where everything passes in ceremony, was the tribunal for trying these varieties of greatness. France had always had the superiority there when she was more powerful than Spain; but since the reign of Charles V. Spain had let slip no opportunity of maintaining an equality. The dispute was left undetermined; the precedence at a procession, or an elbow-chair placed near the altar, or opposite the pulpit, were matters of triumph, and established titles to that precedence. The chimerical point of honor in these articles was at that time carried to as great extremes among crowned heads as duels were among private persons.

It happened, in 1661, that at the entry of a Swedish ambassador at London, Count d'Estrade, ambassador from France, and Baron Watteville, ambassador from the court of Spain, disputed the way. The Spaniard, having more money and a greater train of servants, gained the English populace over to his interest, who began to kill the

French ambassador's coach horses, and soon afterward fell upon his people, who being wounded took to their heels, and left the Spaniards to proceed in triumph with their swords drawn.

Louis XIV. being informed of this insult offered to his ambassador, immediately recalled the minister he had at Madrid, and ordered the Spanish ambassador to leave France; broke off the conferences which were then in progress in Flanders, on the subject of the limits, and sent word to his father-in-law, Philip IV., that, unless he acknowledged the superiority of the French crown, and repaired the affront which had been offered its ambassador, by a public satisfaction, he would instantly renew the war. Philip IV. was not willing to plunge his kingdom into a fresh war for the sake of an ambassador's precedence; he sent the count of Fuentes to declare to the king at Fontainebleau, in presence of all the foreign ministers who were then in France, that the Spanish ministers could no longer dispute the precedence with those of France. This was not clearly acknowledging the king's pre-eminence, but it was a sufficient avowal of the weakness of the Spanish court. This court, which still preserved its haughtiness, murmured for a long time at its humiliation. Since then several Spanish ministers have renewed their old pretensions, and actually obtained an equality at Nimeguen; but Louis XIV. at that time acquired by his resolution a real superiority in Europe, by convincing all the powers how much he was to be feared.

He had scarcely concluded this small affair with so much dignity, when he showed still more on an occasion in which his glory seemed not so much interested. During the long wars carried on against the Spaniards in Italy, the behavior of the young French gentry had inspired the cautious and jealous Italians with the notion of their being a headstrong and impetuous people. The Italians looked upon all the nations by whom theirs was overrun as barbarians, and the French as barbarians more gay, but at the same time more dangerous, than the rest, as they introduced, into all families where they came, a taste for pleasures, with an air of contempt, and debauchery with outrage; in short, they were dreaded everywhere, and especially at Rome.

The duke de Créqui, the French ambassador at the pope's court, had greatly displeased the people of Rome by his arrogant behavior; his servants, a set of people who always carry the faults of their masters to extremes, committed the same disorders in Rome as the unbridled youth of France did in Paris, who at that time prided themselves in attacking the city watch every night.

Some of this nobleman's servants took it into their heads to fall, sword in hand, upon a party of the Corsi—who are the city guard at Rome—and put them to flight. The whole body of the Corsi, incensed at this ill usage, and cheered by Don Mario Chigi, brother of Alexander VII., the reigning pope, who hated the duke de Créqui, went with a multitude of his followers in arms, and besieged the duke in his own house. They even fired upon the ambassadress's coach, as she was driving into her palace, killed one of her pages, and wounded several of her other servants. The duke de Créqui left Rome, loudly accusing the pope's relatives, and even his holiness himself, of having countenanced this insult and murder. The pope deferred giving him satisfaction as long as he possibly could, in the belief that it requires only a little temporizing with the French, for everything to be forgotten. At the end of about four

months he caused one of the Corsican guard, and a *sbirro,* to be hanged, and banished the governor of Rome, who was suspected of having authorized these violent proceedings: but he was in no small consternation when he learned that the French king threatened to lay siege to Rome; that he had already ordered troops to be transported into Italy for that purpose; and that Marshal du Plessis-Praslin was appointed general. This affair had become a national quarrel, and the king was determined to support the dignity of his crown. The pope, before he could be brought to make the concessions demanded of him, implored the mediation of all the Catholic princes, and at the same time did all in his power to stir them up against Louis XIV., but the situation of affairs was at that time unfavorable for the holy father. The emperor was attacked by the Turks; and Spain was engaged in an unsuccessful war against the Portuguese.

The court of Rome therefore only irritated the king, without being able to hurt him. The Parliament of Provence summoned the pope to appear, and seized upon his county of Avignon. At any other time such an insult upon the papal dignity would have been followed by a peal of excommunications from the Vatican, but those arms were now equally useless and ridiculous. The holy father found himself under the necessity of giving way, and was obliged to banish his own brother from Rome; to send his nephew, Cardinal Chigi, in character of legate *a latere,* to render the king satisfaction; to break the Corsican guard; and to erect a pillar in the city of Rome, with an inscription expressing the injury and reparation.

Cardinal Chigi was the first legate who had ever been sent from the papal court to ask pardon. Before that, the legates had always been sent to give laws, and impose the tax of the tenth penny. The king did not content himself with accepting these temporary ceremonies in return for an injury offered, nor yet with monuments which are equally so—for, some years afterward, he permitted this pyramid to be destroyed—but he obliged the court of Rome to restore Castro and Ronciglione to the duke of Parma; to indemnify the duke of Modena for his claims on Commachio; and thus, from an insult offered him, he derived the solid honor of being the protector of the Italian princes.

While he thus supported his dignity, he forgot not to increase his power. The good management of his finances, under Colbert, enabled him to purchase Dunkirk and Mardyke of the king of England, for five millions of livres, at twenty-six livres ten sous the mark. Charles II., who was a spendthrift and a beggar, to his eternal disgrace, sold this place, which his subjects had purchased with their blood. Lord-Chancellor Hyde, who was accused of having advised or connived at this meanness, was banished on Oct. 27, 1662, by the English Parliament, who frequently punish the crimes of favorites, and sometimes even pass sentence upon its kings.

In 1663, Louis set thirty thousand men to work to fortify Dunkirk both toward land and sea. A large basin was dug between the town and the citadel, capable of containing several men of war; so that the English had hardly sold this place, when it became the object of their terror. A short time afterward, in 1663, the king obliged the duke of Lorraine to give him up the stronghold of Marsal. This unfortunate prince, who, though he had a reputation as a soldier, was of a weak, fickle, and imprudent disposition, and had lately made a treaty, by which he gave the duchy of Lorraine to

France after his death, on condition that the king should permit him to raise a million upon the territory; and the princes of the blood-royal of Lorraine should take rank as princes of the blood of France. This treaty, which was in vain registered by the Parliament of Paris, served only to produce new instances of levity on the side of the duke, who in the end thought himself very happy to give up Marsal, and throw himself upon the king's clemency.

Louis increased his dominions even in peace, and always kept himself in readiness for war, fortifying the frontier towns, augmenting the number of his troops, keeping them well disciplined, and frequently reviewing them in person.

The Turks were then a very formidable people in Europe; they attacked the emperor and the Venetians at one and the same time. It has been a maxim in politics with the kings of France, ever since Francis I., to be in alliance with the Turkish emperors, not only on account of the advantage arising to their trade, but for the sake of preventing the house of Austria from becoming too powerful. However, a Christian king could not well refuse his assistance to the emperor, when so hard pressed. It was to the interest of France that the Turks should raise disturbances in Hungary, but not that they should get possession of it; and, lastly, the treaties in which Louis was engaged with the empire made this step as indispensable as it was honorable to him.

Louis then sent six thousand men into Hungary, under the command of the count of Coligny, the only remaining branch of the family of Coligny, formerly so famous in our civil wars, and who perhaps deserves to be as much renowned as the admiral for his valor and virtuous qualifications. He was strictly connected by friendship with the great Condé; and not all the offers of Cardinal Mazarin could ever make him fail in what he owed to his friend. He was accompanied by the flower of the French nobility; and, among others, by the young Feuillade, a man of enterprising disposition, and unquenchable thirst for riches and glory. These went together into Hungary, to serve under General Montecuculi, who was making head against the Turkish vizier, Kiuperli, and who afterward, when he served against France, counterbalanced the reputation of the great Turenne. A great battle was fought at Saint Gothard, on the banks of the Raab, between the Imperial and Turkish armies, in which the French performed such prodigies of valor that the Germans themselves, who were not fond of them, could not help doing them justice. The Germans, however, are not treated with the same justice by those writers who pretend to ascribe the honor of the victory wholly to the French.

The king, while he thus settled his greatness in openly assisting the emperor, and raising the glory of the French arms, made a point of politics in secretly aiding the Portuguese against the king of Spain. Cardinal Mazarin had solemnly given up the cause of Portugal by the Pyrenean treaty; but the Spanish court, having been guilty of several little tacit infractions of that treaty, the French, in their turn, made a more bold and decisive one. Marshal Schomberg, a foreigner, and a Huguenot, was sent over to Portugal with four thousand French soldiery, who, under pretence of being in the pay of the Portuguese, were in fact maintained by the French king's money. These French troops, in conjunction with a body of Portuguese, gained a complete victory over the Spanish army at Villa Viciosa, in June, 1664, by which the house of Braganza was

fixed on the throne of Portugal. Louis now began to be looked upon as a warlike and politic prince; and Europe stood in dread of him even before he had declared war.

By the same policy, he eluded the performance of the promises he had made, to join the few ships he had at that time with the Dutch fleet. He had entered into an alliance with the states-general, in the year 1662, about which time that republic had renewed a war with England, on the vain and idle subject of the honor of the flags, and its real claim to a trade in the Indies; Louis beheld with pleasure these two maritime powers sending fleets of a hundred sail every year to destroy each other, by the most obstinate fights that had ever been known, which only tended to the weakening of both sides. One of these engagements lasted for three days, and here it was that the Dutch admiral, de Ruyter, acquired the reputation of being the greatest seaman that had yet appeared. This was the man who burned the finest ships the English nation had, in their own harbors, not above four leagues distant from London. He made the Dutch flag triumphant at sea, where the English had hitherto always been the masters, and where Louis XIV. was as yet nothing.

The empire of the sea was for some time divided between these two nations. They were then the only people who rightly understood the art of building ships, and employing them either for trade or war. France, during Richelieu's ministry, thought herself powerful at sea, because, out of about threescore vessels, which was then the whole of its marine, it had about thirty fit to send to sea, the largest of which mounted only seventy guns. In Mazarin's administration, they purchased what few ships they had from the Dutch. They were in want of sailors, officers, and manufactories, both for building and fitting out ships. The king with incredible diligence set about repairing the ruined condition of the marine, and to supply his kingdom with all it wanted; but in 1664 and 1665, while the English and Dutch covered the ocean with nearly three hundred sail of large men of war, he had not above fifteen or sixteen and those of the smallest rates, which were employed under the duke of Beaufort against the Barbary corsairs; and when the states-general pressed Louis XIV. to join his fleet to theirs, there was only one fireship in Brest harbor, which it was shameful to send, till upon their repeated remonstrances it was at last sent. This was no small disgrace to the French nation; but Louis, by his extraordinary vigilance, speedily and effectually removed it.

But he furnished the states with much more essential and honorable assistance by land; he sent six thousand French to defend them against the bishop of Münster, a prelate of a warlike disposition, and implacable in his enmity, who was paid by England to distress the Dutch; but Louis made them pay dearly for this assistance, and behaved toward them like a great man in power, who sells his protection to a body of rich merchants. Colbert made them accountable, not only for the pay of these troops, but even for the charges of an embassy which was sent to England to conclude a peace for them with Charles II. Never was aid given with a worse grace, nor accepted with less thankfulness.

The king, having thus exercised his troops in martial discipline, formed a number of good officers by the campaigns in Hungary, Holland, and Portugal, and asserted the honor of his name, and made it respected at Rome, beheld not a single potentate of

whom he had occasion to stand in awe. England, visited by a plague, which laid waste the whole kingdom, and London reduced to ashes by a fatal conflagration, which was falsely charged on the Roman Catholics; the prodigality and continual indigence of Charles II., which proved as fatal to his affairs as the scourges of pestilence and fire, made France perfectly easy with respect to that nation. The emperor had scarcely recovered the losses he had suffered in the war with the Turk. The Spanish king, Philip IV., being on the point of death, and his kingdom in as weak a condition as himself, Louis XIV. remained the only powerful and formidable sovereign in Europe. He was young, rich, well served, blindly obeyed, and impatient to signalize himself and to become a conqueror.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONQUEST OF FLANDERS.

The king was not long without an opportunity he so earnestly desired. His father-in-law, Philip IV., died; this prince had by his first wife, sister of Louis XIII., the princess Maria Theresa, who was married to her cousin, Louis XIV., by which match the Spanish monarchy fell at length into the house of Bourbon, which had been so long its enemy. By his second marriage, he had Charles II., a weak and unhealthy child, but who lived to inherit his father's crown, being the only surviving of three male children, the other two having died in their infancy. Louis XIV. pretended that Flanders and Franche-Comté, two provinces belonging to the kingdom of Spain, should by the laws of those provinces devolve to his wife, notwithstanding her former renunciation. Were the causes of kings to be tried by the laws of nations, before an impartial tribunal, perhaps this affair might have appeared a little doubtful.

Louis submitted his claims to the examination of his council and the body of theologians, who declared them indisputable; but the council and confessor of Philip IV.'s widow, thought them very ill founded. This princess had a very powerful argument in her favor, the express law made by Charles V.; but Charles V.'s laws were very little attended to by the court of France.

One of the pretexts made use of by the French king's council was, that the five hundred thousand crowns which had been granted in dowry with his wife, had never been paid; but they had forgotten at the same time, that the marriage portion of Henry IV.'s daughter had likewise never been paid. The two courts at first waged a paper war with each other, in which the nicest calculations and most learned arguments were displayed on both sides; but reasons of state silenced all other pleas.

The king, considering more in strength than arguments, marched in person into Flanders, in 1667, at the head of thirty-five thousand men; while another body of eight thousand was despatched toward Dunkirk, and a third, consisting of four thousand, to Luxemburg. Turenne had the command of this army, under his majesty. Colbert had multiplied the resources of the state, to furnish the necessary expenses. Louvois, the new secretary at war, had made immense preparations for carrying on the campaign, and magazines of all kinds were distributed over the frontiers. He was the first who introduced the advantageous method of supplying the army by magazines, which the weak condition of the government had hitherto rendered impracticable. Whatever place the king chose to lay siege to, or whithersoever he turned his arms, he was sure of finding supplies and subsistence ready. The quarters for the troops were all fixed, and their marches regulated. The officers were all kept close to their duty, by the strict discipline which this minister caused to be observed among them: and the presence of a young monarch, who was the idol of his army, made the strictness of their duty light, and even pleasing to them. The military degree became a right more inviolably observed than even that of birth. It was the man's services, and not his family, that

was considered; a thing which had hitherto been rarely seen. By this means an officer, however inconsiderable in point of birth, met with the encouragement due to his merit; and those of the most exalted rank had no reason for complaint. The infantry, who sustained all the weight of the war, since the disuse of lances, shared with the cavalry in those rewards of which they had till then been in sole possession. These new maxims in the government inspired everyone with a new kind of courage.

The king, assisted by a general and minister of equal abilities, both jealous of each other, and striving who should best serve him, at the head of the best troops in Europe, and newly engaged in an alliance with Portugal, with all those advantages, attacks an ill-defended province of a ruined and distracted kingdom. He had only his mother-in-law, Philip IV.'s widow, to deal with, and she a weak woman, whose unfortunate administration left her kingdom defenceless. She had made her confessor, one Father Nitard, a German Jesuit, prime minister, a man as fit for lording it over his penitent, as he was unfit for governing a state, having nothing of the minister or the churchman but haughtiness and ambition. He had the insolence one day to say to the duke of Lerma, even before he came into the administration: "It is you who ought to show me respect, since I have every day your God in my hands, and your queen at my feet." With all this insolence, so contrary to true greatness of mind, he suffered the treasury to remain without money, all the fortifications in the kingdom to go to ruin, the harbors to be without shipping, and the army without discipline, destitute of generals, badly paid, and still worse commanded, in presence of an enemy who possessed all the requisites which Spain wanted.

The art of attacking places was not as perfect as it now is, because that of fortifying and defending them was not so well known. The frontiers of Spanish Flanders were almost destitute of fortifications, and even garrisons.

Louis then had nothing more to do than to present himself before them. He entered Charleroi as he would Paris; Ath and Tournay were taken in two days; Furnes, Armentières, and Courtrai made as little resistance. The king entered the trenches before Douay, July 6, 1667, and the next morning it capitulated. Lille, which was the finest town in that country, and the only one well fortified, having a garrison of six hundred men, capitulated after nine days' siege. The Spaniards had only eight thousand men to oppose a victorious army, and even the rear guard of this small body was cut in pieces by the marquis, afterward marshal, de Créqui: the remainder hid itself within the walls of Brussels and Mons, leaving Louis to carry on his conquests, without striking a blow.

This campaign, which was made in the midst of abundance, and had been attended with such easy successes, seemed a party of pleasure made by a court. High living, luxury, and pleasures were then first introduced into our armies, at the same time that the strictest discipline was established. The officers performed military duty much more exactly than before; but with every kind of convenience. Marshal Turenne had for a long time been served only upon iron plates, when in camp. Marquis d'Humières was the first, at the siege of Arras, in 1658, who was served in plate in the trenches, and had different courses at his table. But in this campaign of 1667, where a young monarch, who was fond of magnificence, held the most brilliant court amidst the

fatigues of the field, everyone prided himself in showing a taste for splendor, elegant living, dress, and equipage. This luxury, the certain mark of riches in a great state, and frequently the cause of ruin to a small one, was nothing in comparison with what has been seen since. The king, his generals, and ministers, then went to the rendezvous of the army on horseback; whereas now, there is not a captain of horse, nor the secretary of a general officer, but has his postchaise hung on springs, in which he travels with greater ease and convenience than in those days a person could make a visit from one part of Paris to another.

This delicacy in the officers did not hinder them from going into the trenches with their steel caps and cuirasses: the king himself set the example. This prudent precaution preserved many a great man. It has been too much neglected since by our young people, who are naturally tender and effeminate, though courageous, and who seem to dread fatigue more than danger.

The rapidity of the king's conquests filled Brussels with alarm. The inhabitants already began to remove their effects to Antwerp. All Flanders might have been conquered in a single campaign. The king only wanted a sufficient number of troops to put into those places which were ready to open their gates at his approach. Louvois advised him to put large garrisons into the conquered towns, and to fortify them; and Vauban, one of the many great men and surprising geniuses who appeared in this century, for the service of Louis XIV., was appointed for this purpose. He constructed the fortifications on a new method of his own, which is now the standard for all good engineers. It was a matter of surprise to see towns surrounded by walls which were almost on a level with the neighboring country. The old lofty and menacing ramparts were only more exposed by their height to the force of the artillery; but by making them sloping or shelving, they were the less liable to this inconvenience. He built the citadel of Lille on these principles. At that time—1686—the government of a town and its citadel were among the French always vested in the same person; but now an innovation was made in favor of Vauban, who was the first governor of a citadel: and here we may observe that the first of those plans in relief, which are to be seen in the gallery of the Louvre, was that of the fortifications of Lille.

The king now hastened back to Paris to enjoy the acclamations of his people, the adorations of his courtiers and mistresses, and partake of the splendid entertainments which he gave to his court.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER VIII.

CONQUEST OF FRANCHE-COMTÉ—PEACE OF AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

The whole court was taken up with the diversions at St. Germain, when, in the midst of winter, in the month of January, everyone was surprised to see troops in motion on all sides, and several bodies coming and going on the road to Champagne, in the three bishoprics. Several trains of battering cannon, and wagons loaded with ammunition, stopped under different pretences on the route which leads from Champagne to Burgundy. This part of France was the scene of movements, of which no one could conjecture the cause. Foreigners, through interest, and the courtiers, through curiosity, exhausted themselves in surmises; Germany was alarmed; but everyone was alike ignorant of the object of these vast preparations and irregular marches. Never was more secrecy observed in a conspiracy than in this expedition of Louis XIV. At length, on February 2, the king himself set out from St. Germain, with the young duke of Enghien and some of his courtiers, the other officers being at the place of rendezvous appointed for the troops. He made long journeys on horseback, and arrived at Dijon. Twenty thousand men, who had been assembled on different routes, met the same day in Franche-Comté, some leagues from Besançon, and the great Condé appeared at their head, having his friend Bouteville-Montmorency for his lieutenant-general, lately made duke of Luxembourg, and who had always preserved an inviolable attachment to him through every change of his fortune. Luxembourg had studied the art of war under the great Condé, and his great merit obliged the king, who did not love him, to employ him.

The springs of this unforeseen expedition were these: the prince of Condé was jealous of Turenne's reputation; and Louvois of his favor with his master. Condé's jealousy was that of a hero, Louvois's that of a minister. The prince, who was governor of Burgundy, which borders on Franche-Comté, had formed the project of making himself master of this province during the winter season, in as short a time as Turenne had taken in the foregoing summer to make the conquest of French Flanders. He immediately communicated his scheme to Louvois, who eagerly embraced it, glad of an opportunity of removing Turenne to a distance, and making him useless, and at the same time of serving his master.

This province, which was then very poor, but extremely well peopled, is forty leagues long, and twenty broad. It was called Franche-Comté—the free country—and was actually so; for the Spanish kings were rather its protectors than its masters: and though this country was in the government of Flanders, yet it was very little dependent on it. The administration was divided and disputed between the parliament and the governor of Franche-Comté. The people enjoyed many privileges, which the court of Madrid were cautious of infringing on, being desirous to keep fair with a province that was jealous of its rights, and so near a neighbor to France. Never did people live under a milder government, or were more attached to their sovereigns.

They had preserved an affection for the house of Austria for almost two generations; but this was rather the love of their liberty.

In a word, Franche-Comté was happy, though poor; but as it was a kind of republic, there were necessarily some factions among its inhabitants; and notwithstanding what is said by Pellisson, Louis did not confine himself merely to force on this occasion.

He began by gaining over some of the inhabitants, by presents and promises. He made sure of the abbot, John Watteville, brother of him who, having insulted the French ambassador at a public entry into London, had by this outrage occasioned the humiliation of the Spanish branch of the house of Austria. This abbot, who had formerly been an officer, then a Carthusian friar, afterward a Turk, and last of all a churchman, had the promise of being made high dean, and of having several other preferments in the church. The count of St. Amour, the governor's nephew, was likewise bribed, and the governor himself at last proved not inflexible. A number of the counsellors of the parliament were bought at a reasonable rate, and these private intrigues were at their very beginning seconded by an army of twenty thousand men. Besançon, the capital of the province, was invested by the prince of Condé. Luxembourg marched to Salins; and the next day Besançon and Salins surrendered. Besançon insisted on no other terms of capitulation than that it should remain in possession of the holy handkerchief, which was held in great reverence in that city, and which was readily granted them. The king having arrived at Dijon, Louvois, who had hastened to the frontiers to direct all the marches, informed him that these two towns were besieged and taken. The king hastened to show himself to fortune, who did everything for him.

In person, he next laid siege to Dôle, a place reputed very strong, in which the count of Montrevel commanded; a man of distinguished valor, who was faithful to the Spanish government, which he hated, and a parliament which he despised. His garrison consisted of no more than four hundred soldiers and the inhabitants of the place, and yet he bravely resolved to defend it. The trenches were not carried on in form; for no sooner were they opened than a crowd of young volunteers, who had followed the king, flew to attack the counterscarp, on which they made a lodgment. The prince of Condé, whose age and experience gave him a more sedate courage, supported them properly, and by sharing in their danger extricated them from it. This prince was everywhere with his son, and went to give an account of all that passed to the king, as if he had been an officer who had his fortune to make. The king remained in his quarters, where he displayed the dignity of a monarch in his court, rather than that impetuous ardor which is by no means necessary. The same ceremonials were observed there as at St. Germain. He had his great couch and his lesser one; he had his drawing-rooms, his public audience-hall in his tent, and never stooped from the dignity of the throne in any other respect than that of permitting his general officers and aides-de-camp to dine at the same table with him. He never was seen to expose himself to the ruder fatigues of war, nor to show that rash courage for which Francis I. and Henry IV. were so famous, who greedily sought after danger in all shapes. He was contented with not fearing it himself, and with encouraging all about him to rush into it with ardor for his service. He entered Dôle after four days' siege, and twelve days after his departure from St. Germain, and in less than three weeks the whole

province of Franche-Comté was reduced. The Spanish council, both amazed and incensed at the small resistance which had been made, wrote the governor that, “the French king should have sent his valets to take possession of the province, instead of marching against it in person.”

So much ambition and good fortune roused Europe from its lethargy. The empire began to stir, and the emperor to raise troops. The Swiss nation, who are neighbors to the people of Franche-Comté, and who have nothing to depend upon but their liberty, trembled for themselves. The rest of Flanders might be invaded the ensuing spring; the Dutch, whose interest it had always been to have the French their friends, shuddered at the thoughts of having them for neighbors. Spain had then recourse for protection, and actually received it from that inconsiderable nation, which it had hitherto looked upon as a contemptible and rebellious people.

Holland was then governed by John de Witt, who had been chosen grand pensionary, when he was only twenty-five years old; a man who had the freedom of his country as much at heart as his own personal greatness; wedded to the old republican principles, frugality and moderation, he kept only one man and a maid, and always went on foot at The Hague, while in the negotiations of Europe his name was ranked with that of the most powerful kings: he was a person of unwearied application, of the greatest regularity, prudence, and assiduity in public affairs; an excellent citizen, a great politician, and yet in the end very unfortunate.

He had contracted a friendship with Sir William Temple, the English ambassador at The Hague, which is rarely to be found between statesmen. Sir William was a philosopher, who blended a taste for literature with public affairs, and an honest man, notwithstanding that Bishop Burnet has reproached him with atheism. He was born with a prudent republican genius, and loved Holland like his own country, because it was the seat of liberty, of which he was as jealous as the grand pensionary himself. These two excellent members of the community, joined with Count Dohna, the Swedish ambassador, to stop the French king’s progress.

This period was distinguished by rapid events. French Flanders had been taken within three months and Franche-Comté in the space of three weeks. The treaty entered into between Holland, England, and Sweden, for maintaining the balance of power in Europe, and bridling the ambition of Louis XIV., was proposed and concluded in five days.

The French monarch was not a little incensed that a pitiful state like that of Holland should have presumed to think of setting bounds to his conquests, and being the arbiter between crowned heads; and still more so, that it was in a condition to do it. He was sensibly affected by this indignity put upon his greatness by the Dutch, which he was obliged to swallow for the present; but for which he from that instant meditated revenge.

Ambitious, powerful, and incensed as he was, he yet found it most prudent to divert the storm which began to gather from all parts of Europe. He, himself, made the first

overtures for peace. Aix-la-Chapelle was selected by the courts of France and Spain for the place of conference, and Pope Clement IX. was chosen mediator.

The court of Rome, to cover its weakness with a show of credit, earnestly contended for the honor of being the arbiter between crowned heads. It had been disappointed at the Peace of the Pyrenees; but it seemed to have carried its point at this of Aix-la-Chapelle. A nuncio was sent to the congress, to be a phantom of an arbiter between phantoms of plenipotentiaries. The Dutch, who already felt a thirst for honor, would not share that of concluding what they had begun with any other. Accordingly everything was in fact settled at St. Germain, by their ambassador, Van Beuning. What had been privately agreed upon there with him was sent to Aix-la-Chapelle to be signed in great pomp by the ministers assembled at the congress. Who could have supposed thirty years before, that a burgher of Holland would oblige the kings of France and Spain to abide by his arbitration?

This Van Beuning, who was burgomaster of Amsterdam, had all the vivacity of a Frenchman, with the pride of a Spaniard. He took pleasure in thwarting the king's imperious disposition on all occasions; and opposed a republican inflexibility to the magisterial tone, which the French ministers began to assume. "Do you doubt the king's word?" said M. de Lionne to him, one day at a conference. "I know not what the king may intend," said Van Beuning, "I only consider what he may do." In short, at the court of the proudest monarch in the world, a simple burgomaster concluded by his own authority a peace by which the king was obliged to restore Franche-Comté. The Dutch would have been much better pleased had he restored Flanders, by which they would have been freed from so formidable a neighbor: but all Europe thought the king showed sufficient moderation in parting with Franche-Comté. However, he was a greater gainer by keeping the towns in Flanders, as by this means he opened himself a way into Holland, whose destruction he meditated even while he appeared to make the greatest concessions.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER IX.

MAGNIFICENCE OF LOUIS XIV.—CONQUEST OF HOLLAND.

Louis XIV., being obliged to remain peaceable for some time, continued, as he had begun, to regulate, fortify, and embellish his kingdom. His example showed that an absolute prince, who has good intentions, can compass the greatest things without difficulty. He had only to command; and the successes in the administration were no less rapid than his conquests had been. It was a thing truly wonderful to see the seaports, which were in a manner desolate and in ruins, now surrounded with works which served at once for their ornament and defence, full of shipping and seamen, and containing upward of sixty large vessels, which might occasionally be fitted for war. New colonies were every day sailing from all the ports in the kingdom, under the protection of the French flag, for America, the East Indies, and the coast of Barbary. At the same time, thousands of hands were employed at home under the king's eye, in raising immense edifices, and in all the arts which architecture introduces; while those of the more noble and ingenious kind embellished the court and capital, and diffused a degree of delight and fame over the kingdom, of which the preceding age had not even an idea. Literature flourished, and good taste and sound reasoning made their way into the schools of error and barbarism. But a more circumstantial account of these things, which made the happiness and glory of France, will be found in their proper place in this work; at present we must confine ourselves to general and military affairs.

At this period Portugal exhibited a strange spectacle to the rest of Europe. Don Alphonso, the unworthy son of the fortunate Don John of Braganza, reigned in that kingdom. He was a weak and hot-headed man. His wife, a daughter of the duke of Nemours, had conceived a passion for his brother, Don Pedro, and had the boldness to form a design of dethroning her husband and marrying the man she loved. The brutality of her husband in some measure justified this bold attempt of the queen's. Alphonso was of a more than common bodily strength: he had had a child by a courtesan, whom he publicly acknowledged for his own: he had for a long time cohabited with his wife, and yet, notwithstanding all this, she accused him of impotence, and having by her dexterous management acquired that authority in the kingdom which her husband had lost by his mad frenzy, she shut him up in a prison, and obtained a dispensation from the pope to marry her brother-in-law. It is not in the least surprising that the court of Rome should grant these dispensations; but it is extraordinary that those who have the power in their own hands should stand in need of them. This event, which affected only the royal family, and caused no revolution in the kingdom of Portugal, nor produced any change in the affairs of Europe, merits our attention only on account of its singularity.

France soon afterward gave asylum to a king who descended from the throne in another manner; this was John Casimir, king of Poland, who renewed the example of

Queen Christina. Tired by the fatigues of government, and desiring to live happily, he chose Paris for the place of his retreat, and retired to the abbey of St. Germain, of which he was abbot. Paris, which had for some years past been the abode of all the arts, afforded a delightful residence for a prince who sought the enjoyment of social pleasures, and was a lover of learning. He had been a Jesuit and a cardinal, before he was king; and now, equally disgusted with the regal and ecclesiastical state, was only desirous of living as a private person and a philosopher, and would never suffer the title of majesty to be given him at Paris.

But an affair of a more interesting nature took up the attention of all the Christian potentates.

The Turks, who, though not so formidable as under their Mahomets, their Selims, and their Solymans, were still dangerous, and strengthened by our divisions, had been laying siege to the island of Candia for over two years, with all the forces of the empire. We can hardly say whether it was more astonishing that the Venetians made so long a defence, or that the princes of Europe should have abandoned them.

Times were greatly changed. Formerly, when Christendom was in a barbarous state, a pope, or even a monk, could send forth millions of Christians to make war upon the Mahometans in their own empire: our dominions were stripped of men and money, to make the conquest of the wretched and barren province of Judæa; and now that the island of Candia, deemed the bulwark of Christendom, was overrun by sixty thousand Turks, the Christian kings looked on with indifference while it was lost. A few galleys sent by the Maltese and the pope were the only reinforcements this republic received to defend itself against the whole Ottoman Empire. The senate of Venice, with all its prudence, was unable with such weak aid to withstand the grand vizier, Kiuperli, who was an able minister, a still more able general, and master of the Turkish Empire, assisted by a formidable army, and even provided with good engineers.

Louis vainly attempted to set the other princes of Europe an example in assisting Candia. The galleys and ships of war which he had newly built in the port of Toulon transported thither seven thousand men, under the command of the duke of Beaufort: but this assistance proved too weak in this dangerous juncture, no other court choosing to imitate the generosity of France.

A private French gentleman, named la Feuillade, did an action on this occasion which had no example but in the old times of chivalry. He carried nearly three hundred gentlemen over to Candia at his own expense, though he had but a moderate fortune. If any other nation had assisted the Venetians in the same proportion with la Feuillade, it is more than probable that the island might have been saved. These reinforcements, however, only served to retard its fall for some days, and to spill a great deal of blood to no purpose. The duke of Beaufort was killed in a sally; and the city, reduced to a heap of ashes, capitulated on Sept. 16, 1669.

At this siege, the Turks had showed themselves superior even to the Christians, in the knowledge of the military art. The largest cannon which had hitherto been seen in Europe were cast in their camp. They were the first who drew parallel lines in the

trenches. It is from them that we learned this custom; but they were indebted for it to an Italian engineer. It is certain that a victorious people, such as the Turks were, with their experience, courage, riches, and that unwearied perseverance which was their distinguishing characteristic, might have conquered Italy, and made themselves masters of Rome in a very little time; but the dastardly emperors they have since had, their bad generals, and their faulty administration have preserved Christendom.

The king, little affected with these distant events, waited only for the ripening of his grand project of conquering all the Netherlands, and beginning by Holland. The opportunity became every day more favorable. This little republic was mistress of the seas, but by land nothing could be more weak. In alliance with England and Spain, and at peace with France, she placed too much security in treaties, and the advantages accruing from an immense trade: and with a well-disciplined and invincible naval power her land forces were as badly provided and contemptible. The cavalry was composed only of burghers, who never stirred out of their houses, and paid the dregs of the people to do duty in their stead. The infantry was nearly upon the same footing. Commissions in the army, and even the command of garrison towns, were given to children, or to the relations of burgomasters, brought up in idleness and inexperience, who considered their posts in the same light as priests do their benefices. The pensionary, John de Witt, endeavored to reform this abuse; but he did not endeavor sufficiently, and this was one of the great faults of this famous republican.

In order to facilitate Louis's scheme, it was previously necessary to detach England from its alliance with the Dutch, whose ruin seemed inevitably to follow upon their being deprived of this support. The king found it no difficult matter to persuade Charles II. to concur in his designs. This monarch was not much affected by the disgrace thrown upon his reign and the English nation, when his ships were burned in the river Thames by the Dutch fleet. He entertained no thoughts of revenge or conquest. He was desirous of enjoying a life of pleasure, and reigning as much as possible without control. This was his weak side; accordingly Louis, who had only to speak the word, and be supplied with what money he had occasion for, promised Charles a very considerable sum, who was not able to raise any himself without the concurrence of his parliament. This secret alliance between the two kings, which was formed in 1670, was known to no one in France but to the king's sister-in-law, to Louvois, and Turenne.

A young princess, then, who was only twenty-five years of age, was the plenipotentiary pitched upon to put the finishing hand to this treaty with Charles. A visit which the king was to make to his new conquests of Dunkirk and Lille served as a pretence for his sister-in-law's journey over to England. The pomp and grandeur of the ancient kings of Asia were nothing in comparison with the magnificence of this excursion. The king was always preceded or followed by thirty thousand men while on the road, some of whom were destined to reinforce the garrisons of the conquered countries, others to work at the fortifications, and the rest to level the roads. His majesty was also accompanied by the queen, his consort, all the princesses of the blood, and the most beautiful ladies of his court, among whom his sister-in-law shone with a superior lustre, and secretly enjoyed the glory and satisfaction of all this

parade, which was wholly on her account. It was one continual feast from St. Germain to Lille.

The king, willing to gain the hearts of his new subjects, and to dazzle the eyes of the neighboring states, distributed his liberalities wherever he came, to a degree of profusion. The most magnificent presents were lavished on everyone who had the least pretext for speaking to him. Princess Henrietta embarked at Calais to pay a visit to her brother, who had already come as far as Canterbury to receive her. Charles, blinded by the love he bore his sister, and the great sums promised him from France, signed everything that Louis XIV. desired, and laid a foundation for the ruin of Holland, in the midst of feastings and diversions.

The loss of the duchess of Orleans, who died in a sudden and shocking manner, immediately upon her return from England, drew great suspicions upon the duke of Orleans, her husband, but made no alteration in what had been resolved upon between the two kings. The spoils of the republic they had devoted to destruction were already shared by the secret treaty between them, in the same manner as Flanders had been shared between the Dutch and the French in 1635. Thus states frequently change their views, their alliances, and their enmities, and are not unfrequently disappointed in all their projects. The rumor of this approaching expedition began to spread abroad, but Europe listened to it without being stirred. The emperor, taken up with seditions in Hungary, the Swede lulled asleep by negotiations, and the Spanish monarchy still weak and ever irresolute and slow in its determinations, left Louis XIV. to follow the career of his ambition uninterrupted.

To complete its misfortune, Holland was at that time divided into two factions, the one composed of rigid republicans, to whom the least shadow of absolute authority seemed a monster contrary to the laws of human society; the other of republicans of a more moderate disposition, who were desirous of investing the young prince of Orange, afterward the famous William III., with the posts and dignities of his ancestors. The grand pensionary, John de Witt, and his brother Cornelius, were at the head of the rigid sticklers for liberty; but the young prince’s party began to gain ground. The republic was more attentive to its domestic dissensions than to the danger which threatened it from without, and thus contributed to its own ruin.

Louis not only purchased the king of England, but he brought over the elector of Cologne, and the famous Van Galen, bishop of Münster, who was greedy for war and plunder, and was naturally an enemy to the Dutch. Louis had formerly assisted them against the bishop, and now joined with him for their destruction. The Swedes, who had joined with the republic in 1668, to check the progress of a conqueror who had then no designs against them, abandoned her as soon as they saw her threatened with ruin, and renewed their old connections with France, on condition of receiving the former subsidies.

It is somewhat singular and worthy of remark that of all the enemies who were about to fall upon this petty state, there was not one that could allege a lawful pretext for entering into the war. This was much such an undertaking as the league between

Louis XII., the emperor Maximilian, and the king of Spain, who entered into a covenant to destroy the republic of Venice, only for being rich and haughty.

The states-general, in the utmost consternation, wrote to the king, beseeching him in the humblest manner to let them know if the great preparations he was making were really destined against them, his ancient friends and faithful allies. They asked how they had offended him, or what satisfaction he required. To these remonstrances he returned the answer that he should employ his troops in such manner as became his dignity, for which he should be accountable to no one. All the reasons his ministers could give were that the writer of the *Dutch Gazette* had been too insolent, and that Van Beuning was said to have caused a medal to be struck reflecting upon the honor of Louis XIV. Van Beuning's Christian name was Joshua. A taste for devices prevailed at that time in France. Louis XIV. had taken a sun for his, with this legend: "*Nec pluribus impar.*" Now, it was pretended that Van Beuning, in the medal in question, which, however, never had existence, was represented with a sun, and these words for the motto: *In conspectu meo stetit sol:* "At sight of me the sun stood still." It is certain that the states-general had ordered a medal to be struck, expressing all the glorious deeds of the republic in the following legend: "*Assertis legibus, emendatis sacris, adjutis, defensis, conciliatis regibus, vindicata marium libertate, stabilita oribis Europæ quiete:*" "The laws asserted, religion amended, princes succored, defended, and reconciled; the freedom of the ocean vindicated, and peace restored to Europe."

In all this they boasted of nothing more than they had done, and yet they ordered the mould of this medal to be destroyed in order to appease Louis's anger.

The king of England on his side pretended that their fleet denied the honors due to the English flag, by refusing to lower their topsails to an English pleasure-boat, and complained of a certain picture in which Cornelius de Witt, the pensionary's brother, was painted with the ensigns of a conqueror. On the background the painter had exhibited a representation of ships on fire. The truth is, that Cornelius de Witt, who bore a considerable share in the maritime exploits against England, had indulged himself in this trifling monument of his fame; but the picture itself was in a manner unknown, and hung in a room where hardly anyone ever entered. The English ministers, who had transmitted their master's pretended grievances in writing to the states-general, made mention of certain "abusive pictures." Now, the Dutch, who always translate the memorials of foreign ministers into French, had rendered the term "abusive," by the French word *fautis, trompeurs,* false or lying pictures; upon which they answered that they did not know what was meant by "lying pictures;" in short, they never once conceived that it related to this portrait of their fellow-citizen, nor could they imagine this to be a pretext for the war.

All that the efforts of ambition and human foresight could devise for the destruction of a nation was put in practice by Louis XIV. The history of mankind hardly furnishes us with an instance of such formidable preparations being made for so small an expedition. Of all the different conquerors that have invaded a part of the world, not one ever began the career of conquest with so many regular troops and so much money as Louis employed in subduing the petty state of the United Provinces. No less

than fifty millions, which were worth ninety-seven millions of our present currency, were expended in these pompous preparations. Thirty men of war, of fifty guns each, joined the English fleet, consisting of a hundred sail. The king, accompanied by his brother, the duke of Orleans, marched at the head of one hundred and twelve thousand men toward Maestricht and Charleroi, on the frontiers of Spanish Flanders and Holland. The bishop of Münster and the elector of Cologne had about twenty thousand more. Prince Condé and Marshal Turenne were the generals of the king's army, and the duke of Luxembourg commanded under them. Vauban had the direction of the sieges. Louvois was present in all places, with his customary vigilance. Never was there an army so magnificent, and at the same time so well disciplined; but the king's household troops, which were newly reformed, made a most glorious spectacle. They consisted of four companies of *gardes du corps,* or body-guards, each company composed of three hundred gentlemen, among whom were a considerable number of young cadets, who served without pay, but were equally subject to strict military discipline with the rest; two hundred gendarmes of the guard, two hundred light horse, five hundred musketeers, three hundred chosen gentlemen remarkable for their youth and handsome appearance, twelve companies of gendarmerie, since augmented to the number of sixteen; even the hundred Swiss regiment accompanied the king on this occasion, and the royal regiment of French and Swiss guards mounted before the house where he took up his residence, or at the door of his tent. These troops, the greater part of whom were covered with gold and silver, were at once the object of terror and admiration to a people who were strangers to all kinds of magnificence; and the exact discipline which was kept up in this army made it appear in a different light from any that had yet been seen. There were at that time no inspectors of the horse and foot, as there have since been; but these offices were performed by two men who were singular in their way. Martinet put the infantry upon the footing of discipline in which we now see it; and the chevalier de Fourilles did the same by the cavalry. Martinet had, a year before, introduced the use of the bayonet among some of the regiments: before him it had never been made use of in a constant or uniform manner. This last effort of what perhaps is the most terrible of the whole military art was already known, but had been little practised, because spears were still much in use. This same officer likewise invented copper boats for bridges, which might easily be transported in wagons, or on horseback. The king, confident of success and glory from all these advantages, carried along with him a historian to write his conquests. This was Pellisson, of whom mention will be made in the article of polite arts, a person whose talent lay more in good writing than avoiding flattery.

Against the great Condé, Turenne, Luxembourg, Vauban, an army of one hundred and thirty thousand men, an incredible train of artillery, and immense sums of money to bribe the fidelity of those who commanded garrison towns, what had the republic of Holland to oppose? A young prince of weak constitution, who had never seen a battle or a siege, and about twenty-five thousand bad soldiers, which were all the strength of the country. William, prince of Orange, who was about twenty-two years old, had lately been elected captain-general of the land forces, in spite of the opposition of John de Witt, who could no longer withstand the wishes of the nation. This prince, under the Dutch phlegm, concealed an ardent ambition and love of glory, which ever afterward manifested itself in his conduct, without ever appearing in his discourse. He was of a cold and sour disposition, but of an active and penetrating genius. His

courage, which never abandoned him, supported his feeble and languid body under fatigues which seemed above his strength. He was valiant without ostentation, ambitious without being fond of vainglory, and endowed by nature with a phlegmatic obstinacy, formed for combating adversity. He delighted in war and politics, and was equally a stranger to the joys of society, or the pleasures attendant upon greatness; in a word, he was in almost every respect the direct opposite to Louis XIV.

He was at first unable to stem the torrent which overflowed his country; his forces were but inconsiderable, and even his authority was greatly limited by the states. The whole power of France was ready to fall upon a republic which had nothing to defend it. The imprudent duke of Lorraine, who endeavored to raise troops in order to join his fortune with that of the republic, had just beheld his country seized upon by the French troops, with as much facility as they can seize upon Avignon on any quarrel with the papal see.

In the meantime the king caused his armies to advance on the side of the Rhine, into those countries which border upon Holland, Cologne, and Flanders. He ordered money to be distributed among the inhabitants of all the villages which were likely to suffer from the march of his troops through them. If a private gentleman made the least complaint to him, he was sure of being dismissed with a present. An envoy being sent from the governor of the Netherlands to make a representation of some disorders committed by the soldiers, the king with his own hand presented him with his picture, richly set in diamonds, and valued at over twelve thousand francs. This behavior attracted the admiration of the people, and made them stand more in awe of his power.

The king was at the head of his household, and a body of his choicest troops, in all amounting to thirty thousand men. Turenne had the command under him. Prince Condé was likewise at the head of as strong an army. The other corps, commanded alternately by Luxembourg and Chamilly, occasionally formed separate armies, which could all join one another in case of necessity.

The campaign was opened by the siege of four towns at once, Rheinberg, Orsoi, Wesel, and Borbeck; names which merit a place in this history only on account of the event. These were taken almost as soon as they were invested; Rheinberg, which the king thought proper to besiege in person, did not stand a single attack; and, in order to make more sure of its reduction, means had been found to corrupt the lieutenant of the garrison, one Dosseri, an Irishman, who, after having been base enough to sell his trust, was so imprudent as to retire to Maestricht, where the prince of Orange punished his treachery with death.

All the strongholds on the Yssel capitulated. Some of the garrisons sent the keys of their town as soon as they perceived two or three squadrons of the French appear in sight. Several officers fled from the towns where they were in garrison, even before the enemy had entered their territories: in short, the consternation was general. The prince of Orange had not a sufficient force to take the field. All Holland prepared to submit to the yoke as soon as the king should cross the Rhine. The prince of Orange caused lines to be drawn with the utmost haste on the other side the river; and even

after he had done this, he was sensible how impossible it was for him to defend them. Nothing now remained but to discover, if possible, in what part the French intended to throw over a bridge, in order to oppose their passage. In fact, it was the king's intention to pass the river on a bridge of those little copper boats, invented by Martinet. At that time the prince of Condé had received information from some of the country people that the dryness of the season had formed a ford on a branch of the Rhine, near an old castle, which served as an office for the toll-gatherers, and was called Toll Huis, or the Toll-house. The king ordered this ford to be sounded. According to Pellisson, who was an eye-witness of the whole, there was not above forty or fifty paces to swim over in the midst of this arm of the river. This was in fact nothing, for a number of horses abreast entirely broke the current of the water, which was of itself very weak. The landing on the opposite side was very easy, as it was defended only by four or five hundred horsemen, and two weak regiments of foot, without any cannon. The French artillery played upon those in flank, while the household troops, and some of the best of the cavalry, crossed the river without any hazard, to the number of fifteen thousand men. Condé crossed at the same time in one of the copper boats. Some few Dutch officers, who at first made a show of advancing into the water in order to oppose their landing, took to their heels the instant the French troops drew near to the shore, unable to stand before the multitude which came pouring on them. The foot immediately laid down their arms, and called for quarter. This passage was effected with the loss of only a few drunken horsemen, who had swum out of their depth; and there would not have been a single life lost that day—June 12, 1672—had it not been for the imprudence of the young duke of Longueville, who, being, it is said, overheated with wine, fired his pistol at some of the enemy's people, who had laid down their arms and were begging their lives, crying out, "Give the scoundrels no quarter;" and drawing his trigger, shot an officer dead. Upon this the Dutch infantry, in a fit of despair, instantly flew to their arms and made a general discharge, by which the duke of Longueville himself was killed. A captain of their horse, named Ossembrouk, who had not fled with the rest, rode up to the prince of Condé, who had just reached shore and was going to mount his horse, and pointed his pistol at his head. The prince, by a sudden motion of his body, turned aside the piece, and received only a wound in his wrist, which was the first wound he had ever received in all his campaigns. The French immediately fell upon the small body, sword in hand, who began to fly on all sides. In the meantime the king crossed the river with the rest of the army, on a bridge of boats.

Such was the passage of the Rhine; an action which made a great noise, was singular in its kind, and was celebrated at that time as one of those great events which ought to occupy the memory of mankind. The air of greatness with which the king performed all his actions, the rapid success of his victories, the glory of his reign, the adulation of his courtiers, and, lastly, the fondness which the common people, especially those of Paris, have in general for everything that appears extraordinary, or else that ignorance of military operations, which prevails among those who pass a life of idleness in great cities, made this passage of the Rhine appear a prodigy. It was the common opinion, that the whole army swam across the river in presence of the enemy, intrenched on the opposite side, and in defiance of the fire from an impregnable fortress, called the Toll-house. It is a certain truth, that the enemy themselves were greatly imposed upon in this affair, and that if they had had a body

of good troops on the other side of the river, the attempt would have been extremely dangerous.

As soon as the French army had passed the Rhine, it took Doesborgh, Zütphen, Arnheim, Nosembourg, Nimeguen, Skenk, Bommel, and Crèvecœur, and there was hardly an hour in the day in which the king did not receive the news of some fresh conquest. An officer, named Mazel, sent Turenne word that, if he would send him fifty horse, he would engage to make himself master of two or three places.

The inhabitants of Utrecht sent the keys of their city to the conqueror, and it capitulated, together with the whole province which bears its name. Louis made his entry into this city in triumph, on June 20, 1672, accompanied by his high-almoner, his confessor, and the titular bishop of Utrecht. The high church was with great solemnity delivered up to the Catholics; and the bishop of Utrecht, who had hitherto only held the empty title, was now for a little time put in possession of the real dignity.

The provinces of Utrecht, Overyssel, and Guelders were actually reduced, and Amsterdam only waited the hour of its slavery or destruction. The Jews settled there made interest with Gourville, the prince of Condé's confidant and chief manager of his affairs, to accept two millions of florins, to save them from being plundered.

Naarden, which is in the neighborhood of Amsterdam, was already taken. Four horsemen, who were on a marauding party, advanced to the very gates of Muiden, which is not above a mile from Amsterdam, and where are the sluices by which the country may be laid under water. The magistrates, struck with a panic at the sight of these four soldiers, came out and offered them the keys of the town; but at length perceiving that no other troops came up, they took back the keys and shut the gates again. A moment's more diligence would have put Amsterdam into the king's hands. This capital once taken, not only the republic itself must have fallen, but there would no longer have been such a republic as Holland, and even the country itself would have been annihilated. Some of the richest families, and those who were most zealous lovers of liberty, were preparing to fly to the extremity of the globe, and embark for Batavia. There was actually a list made out of the shipping fit for undertaking this voyage, and a calculation of the numbers they would carry; when it was found that fifty thousand families might be thus transported into their new country. Holland then would have existed only in the East Indies: its provinces in Europe, who purchase their corn wholly with the riches they import from Asia, who subsist wholly upon their commerce and their liberty, if I may use that expression, would have been almost in an instant depopulated and ruined. Amsterdam, the staple and warehouse of Europe, where three hundred thousand souls are daily employed in cultivating arts and trade, would have become one vast marsh. All the lands round about require an immense expense and thousands of men to raise their dikes: those would, in all probability, have been stripped at once of their inhabitants and riches, and at length buried under water.

The distresses of the state were still further increased by the divisions which commonly arise among unfortunate people, who impute to one another the public

calamities. The grand pensionary, John de Witt, thought there was no other way left to save what remained of his wretched country but by suing to the victors for peace. Full of a republican spirit, and jealous of his personal authority, he dreaded the aggrandizement of the house of Orange still more than the conquests of the French king; on this account he had obliged the prince of Orange himself to swear to the observance of a perpetual edict, by which he, the prince, was excluded from the stadtholdership. Honor, authority, party spirit, and interest all combined to make de Witt a strenuous asserter of this oath; and he chose rather to see his country subdued by a victorious king, than under subjection to a stadtholder.

The prince of Orange, on his side, who had more ambition than de Witt, was as much attached to his country, more patient under public calamities, and expecting everything from time and his own unshaken constancy, tried all means to obtain the stadtholdership, and opposed a peace with as much vehemence as de Witt promoted it. The states, however, resolved to sue for peace in spite of the prince, but the prince was raised to the stadtholdership in spite of de Witt.

In 1672, four deputies arrived in the king's camp, to implore mercy in the name of a republic, which, six months before, looked upon itself as the arbiter of kings. Louis's ministers did not receive the deputies with that French politeness which blends the mildness of civility with the severity of government. Louvois, who was of a haughty and arrogant disposition, and seemed better suited to serve his master well than to make him beloved, received the suppliants in a disdainful manner, and even with insulting raillery. They were obliged to go back and forth several times before the king would deign to make his will known to them. At length they were told that his majesty decreed that the states-general should give up all the places they were in possession of on the other side of the Rhine, with Nimeguen, and several other towns and forts in the heart of their country; that they should pay him twenty millions of livres; that the French should be masters of transporting merchandise on all the principal roads in Holland, both by land and water, without ever paying any duty; that the Roman Catholic religion should be everywhere established; that the republic should send an extraordinary embassy to the French court every year, together with a golden medal, on which should be engraved a legend, importing that they held their freedom of Louis XIV.; lastly, that they should make satisfaction to the king of England, the elector of Cologne, and the bishop of Münster, who had joined in the desolation of their country.

A peace on these conditions, which were little better than articles of slavery, appeared insupportable; the haughtiness of the conqueror inspired the vanquished with a desperate courage, and it was unanimously resolved to die fighting. The hearts and hopes of everyone were now fixed upon the prince of Orange. The populace grew furious against the grand pensionary, who had asked for peace. The prince, by his politics, and his party, by their animosity, increased the ferment. An attempt was made upon the grand pensionary's life; and afterward his brother Cornelius was accused of a design to murder the prince, and was put to the rack. In the midst of his tortures he repeated the beginning of this ode of Horace, *"Justum & tenacem propositi virum,"* which perfectly well suited with his condition and courage, and which may be thus translated, for the sake of those who do not understand Latin:

The man in conscious virtue bold,
Who dares his secret purpose hold,
Unshaken hears the crowd's tumultuous cries,
And the impetuous tyrant's angry brow defies.
Let the loud winds that rule the seas
Tempestuous their wild horrors raise;
Let Jove's dread arm with thunders rend the spheres;
Beneath the crush of worlds, undaunted he appears.

On Aug. 20, 1672, the two brothers were massacred at The Hague, by the mad multitude, after one of them had governed the state for over nineteen years, with the most unspotted integrity, and the other had defended it at the hazard of his life. The most shocking cruelties that could enter into the imagination of a furious populace were exercised upon their dead bodies. These barbarities are common in all nations; the French themselves had exercised them upon Marshal d'Ancre, Admiral Coligny, and others, for the populace is almost everywhere the same. They wreaked their revenge on all the pensionary's friends; even de Ruyter himself, the republic's admiral, and who was the only one who fought her battles with success, had his house at Amsterdam surrounded by assassins.

In the midst of this disorder and desolation the magistrates gave an example of integrity rarely found in republics. Those private persons who were possessed of bank notes, ran in crowds to the Bank of Amsterdam, apprehending that the public stock had been broken in upon: everyone was for being paid with the little money supposed to be left. The magistrates immediately ordered the vaults to be opened, when it was found entire, as it had been deposited there for more than sixty years. The money was still black and discolored, with the fire which had burned down the town-house several years before. The bank notes had been negotiated till that time, and the money had never been touched; everyone that chose to receive it was then paid with this money, in lieu of notes. So much integrity and so powerful a resource were at that time the more admirable, as Charles II. of England, not satisfied with the money he had received from France, and wanting a further supply to carry on his war against the Dutch and answer the expense of his pleasures, had lately turned bankrupt. If it was shameful in this monarch thus to violate public faith, it was no less glorious in the magistrates of Amsterdam to preserve it, at a time when they might have had a plausible excuse for failure.

To this republican virtue they added that courageous spirit which resorts to the utmost extremities in irremediable evils. They ordered the dikes which kept out the sea to be thrown down. The country seats, which are in prodigious numbers about Amsterdam, the villages, and the neighboring cities of Leyden and Delft, were in an instant laid under water. The peasant beheld his flocks drowned in the pastures, without once murmuring. Amsterdam stood like a vast fortress in the midst of the waves, encircled by ships of war, which had water enough to ride all around the city. The people suffered great want; they were particularly distressed for fresh water, which sold for six sous a pint; but these extremities seemed less grievous than slavery. It is a thing worthy of observation that Holland, thus distressed by land, and no longer a state, still retained its power at sea, which was this nation's true element.

While Louis XIV. was crossing the Rhine, and reducing these provinces, the Dutch admiral, de Ruyter, with a hundred sail of men of war and fifty fireships, sailed for the English coast in quest of the combined fleets of the two sovereigns, who, notwithstanding they had united their forces by sea, were not able to fit out a naval armament superior to that of the Dutch. The English and Dutch fought like people accustomed to dispute the empire of the sea with each other. This battle, which was fought on June 7, 1672, near Solebay, lasted a whole day. De Ruyter, who gave the signal for beginning the engagement, attacked the English admiral's ship, in which was the duke of York, the king's brother. De Ruyter gained all the glory of this single combat; the duke of York was obliged to go on board another ship, and never faced the Dutch admiral afterward. The French squadron, consisting of thirty ships, had little share in this action; and so decisive was the fortune of this day, that it put the coast of Holland out of danger.

After this battle, de Ruyter, notwithstanding the fears and contradictions of his countrymen, conveyed the fleet from the East Indies safe to Texel; thus defending and enriching his country on one side, while she was falling, overwhelmed with ruin, on the other. The Dutch even kept up their trade, and no colors but theirs were to be seen in the Indian seas. One day the French consul told the king of Persia, that his master, Louis XIV., had conquered almost all Holland. "How can that be," replied the monarch, "when there are now in the port of Ormus twenty Dutch ships for one French?"

The prince of Orange, however, had the ambition of being a good citizen. He made an offer to the state of the revenues of his posts, and of all his private fortune, toward the support of the common cause. He overflowed all the passes by which the French could penetrate into the rest of the country. By his prompt and secret negotiations he raised the emperor, the empire, the Spanish council, and the government of Flanders, from their lethargy: he even disposed the English court to listen to peace. In a word, Louis had entered Holland in May, and by the month of July all Europe was in confederacy against him.

Monterey, governor of Flanders, sent a few regiments privately to the assistance of the United Provinces. The emperor Leopold's council likewise despatched Montecuculi, at the head of twenty thousand men; and the elector of Brandenburg took the field with twenty-five thousand troops, whom he kept in his own pay.

The king now quitted his army, as there were no more conquests to be made in a country that was overflowed. It was even become difficult to keep the provinces which had been conquered. Louis, desirous to secure the glory he had acquired, contented himself with having taken such a number of towns in the space of two months; and leaving Turenne and Luxembourg to finish the war, he returned to St. Germain about the middle of the summer, to enjoy his triumphs. But while his subjects were everywhere erecting monuments of his conquests, the powers of Europe were at work to snatch them out of his hands.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER X.

HOLLAND EVACUATED—FRANCHÉ-COMTE CONQUERED A SECOND TIME.

We think it necessary to advise those who may read this work that they are to remember it is not a bare relation of campaigns, but rather a history of the manners of mankind. There are already a sufficient number of books filled with the minute particulars of military actions, and details of human rage and misery. The design of this essay is to describe the principal characters of these revolutions, and to remove the multitude of trifling facts, in order to set to view those only which are considerable, and the spirit by which they were actuated.

France was at that time in the zenith of her glory. The names of her generals inspired veneration. Her ministers were regarded as geniuses superior to the counsellors of other princes; and Louis XIV. seemed almost the only king in Europe. As to the emperor Leopold, he never appeared with his armies. Charles II., king of Spain, son of Philip IV., was as yet a child; and the king of England showed no activity but in the pursuit of his pleasures.

The princes of Europe and their ministers were all guilty of great blunders. England acted against the common principles of reason in joining with France to aggrandize a power which it was to her interest to weaken.

The emperor, the empire, and the king of Spain's council committed still a greater error in not opposing this torrent in the beginning; and even Louis himself was as blamable as any of them, for not rapidly pursuing conquests which were so easily made. Condé and Turenne were for demolishing the greatest part of the fortified places taken from the Dutch, alleging that states were not to be taken by garrisons but by armies; and that, keeping one or two strongholds only for a retreat, they should proceed immediately to complete the conquest of the whole country. Louvois, on the contrary, was for making every place a garrison or fortress. This was his peculiar genius, and it was likewise the king's own taste. Louvois had by this means more employments in his disposal, and increased his ministerial influence; besides, he took a pride in thwarting the two greatest captains of the age. Louis implicitly believed what he said, by which he was deceived, as he afterward acknowledged. He let slip the opportunity of entering the capital of Holland; he weakened his army by dividing it into too many detachments, and gave the enemy breathing time. The history of the greatest princes is frequently a narrative of human errors.

After the king had quitted the army, affairs took a different turn. Turenne was obliged to march into Westphalia, to oppose the imperialists. Monterey, the governor of Flanders, whom the Spanish council were afraid of countenancing openly, reinforced the prince of Orange's small army with about ten thousand men, by which the prince found himself strong enough to oppose the French till the winter. It was doing a great

deal to be able to hold fortune in suspense. At length winter came on, and covered the overflowed country of Holland with ice. Luxembourg, who commanded in Utrecht, carried on a new kind of war, to which the French themselves were strangers, and threw the Dutch into a fresh dilemma, as terrible as anything they had yet experienced.

One night he got together nearly twelve thousand foot soldiers, drawn from the neighboring garrisons; and having ordered every man to be furnished with a pair of skates, he put himself at their head, and began his march over the ice toward Leyden and The Hague: a thaw came on, which saved The Hague; and his little army, surrounded by the waters, knowing no longer which way to go, and being destitute of provisions, was on the point of perishing. There was a narrow and muddy dike, where four men could barely walk abreast, which he was obliged to march over before he could get back to Utrecht; and there was no way to get at this dike, but by attacking a fort which seemed impregnable without artillery; and had those who were in it defended it but for a single day, the French army must inevitably have perished with hunger and fatigue. Luxembourg now looked upon himself as lost; but the same good fortune which had preserved The Hague saved his army, through the cowardice of the commandant of the fort, who abandoned his post without the least reason. There are a thousand events in war, as in civil life, which are altogether incomprehensible, and this was of the number. This expedition was productive of nothing but a piece of cruelty, which rendered the French name completely odious in this country. Bodegraven and Swammerdam, two considerable villages, each well peopled, and as large as some of our middling towns, were given up to the soldiery for plunder, as a reward for the fatigues they had undergone. They immediately set fire to both towns, and indulged themselves by the light of the flames in all the excesses of debauchery and cruelty. It is surprising that the common soldiers among the French can be so barbarous, seeing they are commanded by officers who have with justice the reputation of being as humane as they are brave. The sacking of these two places was so exaggerated that I myself, above forty years afterward, saw some Dutch books in which children were taught to read, where this affair was recapitulated, in order to inspire the rising generation with a hatred to the French.

In 1673 the king cut out work for the cabinets of all Europe, by his negotiations. He gained over the duke of Hanover. The elector of Brandenburg, in entering into the war, had made a treaty which he soon broke. There was not a court in Germany where Louis had not some pensioners. By his emissaries in Hungary he fomented the troubles of that province, which had been severely treated by the emperor’s council. He lavished great sums on Charles II. of England, to engage him to declare war once more against the Dutch, notwithstanding the outcries and murmurs of all his subjects, who were filled with indignation at being made tools to raise the French king’s greatness, which it was to their interest and desire to humble. In a word, Louis disturbed all Europe by his arms and negotiations; but, after all, he could not prevent the emperor, the empire, and Spain from joining the Dutch, and publicly declaring war against him. He had so far changed the course of things that the Dutch, who were his natural allies, were become friends to Spain. The emperor Leopold sent aid slowly; but he showed great animosity against the French. It is reported that, as he was going to Eger to see the troops, which were there assembled, he took the

sacrament on the road, and that after having communicated, he took a crucifix in his hand, and called God to witness the justice of his cause. This action would have done very well in the time of the Crusades; however, the emperor's invocation did not in the least stop the progress of the French king's arms.

It was soon apparent how greatly his marine was improved. Instead of thirty ships, which had been sent the year before to join the English fleet, he now sent forty, without reckoning fireships. The officers had learned from the English the judicious manner of working their ships in their engagements with the Dutch. The duke of York, afterward King James II., was the person who first invented the method of giving orders in a naval fight by the different dispositions and motions of flags. Till that time the French did not know how to draw up a fleet in line of battle. All their experience consisted in fighting ship to ship, without knowing how to make a number move in concert, or to imitate at sea the evolutions of armies on shore, whose several different corps mutually sustain and assist each other. In this they resembled the Romans, who in one year's time learned the art of fighting at sea from the Carthaginians, and soon became equal with their masters.

The vice-admiral, d'Estrées, and his second in command, Martel, did honor to the industry of the French nation in three successive engagements, which were fought in June, 1673, between the Dutch fleet and the combined squadrons of France and England. Admiral de Ruyter was more admired than ever in these three engagements. D'Estrées, in a letter to Colbert, expressed himself in these terms: "I would willingly have died to purchase the glory which de Ruyter has acquired." D'Estrées deserved that Ruyter should have said the same by him. In short, the valor and conduct were so equal on both sides that it remained doubtful which had the victory.

Louis, having thus made seamen of his French subjects, through the diligence of Colbert, improved the art of war on land by the industry of Vauban. He went in person to lay siege to Maestricht, at the time that these three naval battles were fought. Maestricht was the key of the Low Countries and the United Provinces. The place was prodigiously strong, and defended by an intrepid governor, named Farjaux, a Frenchman by birth, who had gone into the Spanish service, and afterward into the Dutch. The garrison consisted of five hundred men. Vauban, who had the direction of the siege, made use for the first time of the parallel lines, which were invented by the Italian engineers in the service of the Turks at the siege of Candia. To these he added the *places d'armes,* or parade of arms, which is made in the trenches, for ranging the troops in order of battle, and better rallying them in case of sallies from the besieged. Louis, in this siege, showed himself more strict and assiduous than he had ever yet done. By his example he accustomed his subjects to endure labor patiently, who had hitherto been regarded as a nation which had only an impetuous courage that is soon exhausted by fatigues. Maestricht surrendered, June 29, after a week's siege.

The desire of establishing strict military discipline among his troops carried him rather to an excess of severity. The prince of Orange at first had only a few officers without emulation, and soldiers without courage, to oppose the rapid conquests of the French arms, and therefore was obliged to employ the utmost rigor in training them, and to hang everyone who quitted his post. The king likewise made use of

punishments. Naarden, the first place he lost, a very brave officer named du Pas gave up to the prince of Orange. It is true, he held out only four days, but he did not give it up till after an obstinate engagement of five hours on bad works, and to prevent a general assault, which it would have been impossible for him to have sustained with a weak and dispirited garrison. The king, incensed at this first affront which his arms had received, ordered du Pas to be led through Utrecht by the common hangman, with a shovel in his hand, and to have his sword broken before his face. This ignominious treatment was perhaps not altogether necessary, as the French officers have too nice a sense of honor to need being governed by the fear of disgrace. It is to be observed that, according to the tenor of his commission, the governor of a fortress is obliged to stand three assaults; but this is one of those laws which are hardly ever put in force.

But not all the king's diligence, Vauban's genius, Louvois's strict vigilance, the knowledge and great military experience of Turenne, nor the active intrepidity of the prince of Condé were sufficient to repair the fault which had been committed in keeping such a number of places, weakening the army, and missing the opportunity of taking Amsterdam.

The prince of Condé in vain attempted to penetrate into the heart of Holland, which was all under water. Turenne could neither prevent the junction of Montecuculi with the prince of Orange, nor hinder the latter from making himself master of the town of Bonn. The bishop of Münster, who had sworn the destruction of the states-general, was himself attacked by them.

The English Parliament obliged its king to enter seriously into a treaty of peace, and to cease being the mercenary instrument of aggrandizing France. And now the French were obliged to evacuate the three Dutch provinces as rapidly as they had conquered them; but not till they had made them pay dearly for their deliverance. The intendant, Robert, had raised in the single province of Utrecht in one year, no less than sixteen hundred and sixty-eight thousand florins. So great was their hurry to evacuate the country which they had overrun with such rapidity, that twenty-eight thousand Dutch prisoners were restored at a crown a man. The triumphal arch of St. Denis's gate, and the other monuments of Louis's conquests, were hardly finished when those conquests were already abandoned. During the course of this invasion, the Dutch had the honor of disputing the empire of the sea, and the dexterity to remove the theatre of the war out of their own country. Louis XIV. was considered throughout Europe as one who had enjoyed the glory of a transient triumph with too much precipitation and pride. The fruits of this expedition were, that he had a bloody war to support against the united forces of the Empire, Spain, and Holland; saw himself abandoned by England, and at length by the bishop of Münster, and even the elector of Cologne; and left the countries he had invaded and was compelled to quit, more hated than admired.

The king maintained his ground alone against all the enemies he had drawn upon him. The foresight of his administration and the strength of his kingdom appeared to much greater advantage, when he had so many combined powers and great generals to defend himself against, than even when he took French Flanders in a party of pleasure, and Franche-Comté, and one half of Holland, from a defenceless enemy.

It now appeared how great an advantage an absolute sovereign, whose finances are well managed, has over all other kings. He at one and the same time furnished Turenne with an army of twenty-three thousand men, against the imperialists; Condé, with one of forty thousand, against the prince of Orange; and a body of troops was stationed on the borders of Roussillon. A fleet of transports, full of soldiers, was sent to carry the war among the Spaniards, even to the gates of Messina; while he himself marched in person to subdue Franche-Comté a second time. In a word, he at once defended himself, and attacked his enemies on every side.

As soon as Louis began his expedition against Franche-Comté, the superiority of his administration showed in the fullest manner. It was necessary to bring over, or at least to amuse, the Swiss nation, who are as formidable as poor, are always in arms, jealous to an excess of their liberty, invincible on their own frontiers, and who already began to murmur and take umbrage at seeing Louis a second time in their neighborhood. The emperor and the court of Spain warmly solicited the thirteen cantons to grant a free passage to their troops, who were going to the assistance of Franche-Comté, which had been left defenceless by the negligence of the Spanish ministry; but the emperor and the Spaniard were only lavish in arguments and entreaties. The French king, on the contrary, by a million of livres in ready money, and the assurance of six hundred thousand more, prevailed on those people to do as he pleased. They refused to grant a passage to the Spanish troops. Louis, accompanied by his brother and the great Condé's son, laid siege to Besançon. He was fond of this part of war, which he understood perfectly well, and left the care of the campaign to Condé and Turenne. Besides, he never laid siege to a town without being morally sure of taking it. Louvois made such excellent preparations; the troops were so well found in everything; Vauban, who had almost always the direction of the sieges, was so great a master in the art of reducing places, that the king was secure of his reputation. Vauban directed the attacks against Besançon, which was taken in nine days; and, at the end of six weeks, all Franche-Comté submitted to the king. It has ever since remained in the hands of France, and seems to be forever annexed to it, a monument of the weakness of the Austro-Spanish ministry, and of the vigor of that of Louis XIV.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XI.

THE GLORIOUS CAMPAIGN AND DEATH OF MARSHAL TURENNE.

While the king was proceeding in the conquest of Franche-Comté, with that rapidity, ease, and glory which seemed inseparably annexed to his arms, Turenne, who was only defending the frontiers toward the Rhine, displayed all that was great and consummate in the art of war. Our esteem for men is generally measured by the difficulties they surmount; and this it was that gained Turenne such great reputation in this campaign.

In the first place, in June, 1674, he made a long and hasty march, passed the Rhine at Philippsburg, marched all night to Sinsheim, which he took by storm, and at the same time attacked and routed the emperor's general, Caprara, and the old duke of Lorraine, Charles IV., a prince who had spent his life in losing his dominions and raising troops; and who had lately joined his little army to a part of the emperor's. Turenne, after having defeated him, pursued him, and routed his cavalry at Ladenburg; then he, by hasty marches, came up with the prince of Bournonville, another of the imperial generals, who was only waiting for fresh troops to open a way into Alsace. Turenne prevented him from being joined by these troops, attacked him, and obliged him to quit the field of battle.

The empire now assembled all its forces against him; seventy thousand Germans occupied Alsace and blocked up the towns of Breisach and Philippsburg. Turenne's army did not consist of over twenty thousand effective men; but having received a small reinforcement of cavalry from the prince of Condé, who was then in Flanders, in December, 1674, he crossed the mountains covered with snow, marched through Tanne and Belfort, entered Upper Alsace, and appeared in the midst of the enemy's quarters, who thought him lying inactive in Lorraine, and looked upon the campaign as already finished. He beat up the quarters at Mülhausen that resisted, and made two thousand of them prisoners. He then marched to Colmar, where the elector of Brandenburg, who was called the great elector, and was at that time general of the armies of the empire, had his headquarters, and came upon him just as he and the rest of the princes and general officers were going to sit down to dinner. They had hardly time to escape, and in one instant the country was covered with the flying.

Turenne, who thought he had done nothing while there was anything left to be done, lay in wait near Türkheim, for a party of the enemy's foot who were to march that way. He had chosen so advantageous a pass that he was certain of success: accordingly he entirely defeated this body. In short, this army of seventy thousand men was beaten and dispersed almost without any great battle. Alsace fell into the king's hands, and the generals of the empire were obliged to repass the Rhine.

All these actions, following so rapidly upon one another, conducted with so much art, managed with such patience, and executed with so much promptitude, were equally admired by France and her enemies. But Turenne's reputation received a considerable addition when it was known that all he had done in this campaign had been done without the consent of the court, and even against the repeated orders sent to him by Louvois, in the king's name. It was not the least instance of Turenne's courage, nor the least memorable exploit of this campaign, thus to oppose the powerful Louvois, and take upon himself the consequences, in defiance of the outcries of the court, his master's orders, and the hatred of the ministry.

It is certain that those who had more humanity than esteem for military exploits were greatly displeased at this glorious campaign; which was as much distinguished by the miseries of the private people as by the great deeds of Turenne. After the battle of Sinsheim he laid waste with fire and sword the Palatinate, a level and fertile country, full of rich cities and villages: and the elector palatine, from his castle at Mannheim, beheld two cities and twenty-five villages burned before his eyes. This unhappy prince, in the first emotions of his rage, wrote a letter to Turenne, filled with the bitterest reproaches, and defying him to single combat. Turenne having sent this letter to the king, who forbade him to accept the challenge, he made no other return to the elector's reproaches and defiance than an empty compliment, which signified nothing. This was agreeable to the general behavior and style of Turenne, who always expressed himself in a cool and ambiguous manner.

He, in the same cold blood, destroyed the ovens and burned all the corn-fields in Alsace, to prevent the enemy from finding subsistence. He afterward permitted his cavalry to ravage Lorraine, where they committed such disorders that the intendant, who, on his side, laid waste that province with his pen, wrote to desire the marshal to put a stop to the excesses of the soldiery; who always replied coolly: "I shall take notice of it in the orders." Turenne was better pleased to be esteemed the father of the men who were entrusted to his care, than of the people who, according to the rules of war, are always the victims. All the evil he did seemed necessary: his reputation covered everything; and, besides, the seventy thousand Germans whom he prevented from entering France would have done more mischief there than he did in Alsace, Lorraine, and the Palatinate.

The prince of Condé, on his side, fought a battle in Flanders, which was much more bloody than all the victories of Turenne, though it proved neither so fortunate nor decisive; or rather because he had abler generals and better troops to encounter. This was the battle of Seneffe. The marquis of Feuquières insists that it should be called only a fight; because it was not an action between two armies drawn up in battle array, and that the corps were not all engaged; but it seems generally agreed to give the title of battle to this hot and bloody day. It is always the importance of an affair which determines its appellation. Had three thousand men, ranged in battle array, been engaged with each other, and even all their different corps been in action, it would have been only called a fight.

The prince of Condé, who was to keep the field with only forty-five thousand men, against the prince of Orange with more than sixty thousand, waited for the enemy's

army to pass a defile at Seneffe, near Mons, and fell upon a part of the rear guard, composed of Spaniards, over whom he gained a considerable advantage. The prince of Orange was blamed for not having taken sufficient precaution in passing through this defile; but everyone admired the dexterous manner in which he repaired this accident; and Condé himself was censured for attempting to renew the fight against an enemy so strongly intrenched. The combat was renewed three different times. The two generals, in this medley of errors and great deeds, equally distinguished themselves by their presence of mind and courage. Of all the battles in which the great Condé had been engaged, there was no one in which he hazarded his own life and that of his soldiers so much as in this. After having sustained three bloody attacks, he was for attempting the fourth. "The prince of Condé," said one of the officers who was there present, "seemed to be the only person who had an inclination for fighting." What was most remarkable in this action was that both armies, after having stood the most obstinate and bloody engagement, were seized with a sudden panic in the night, and took to flight. The next day they retreated, without either side having kept the field of battle, or claimed the victory; both being equally weakened and defeated. There were about seven thousand killed, and five thousand made prisoners, on the side of the French; and the enemy's loss was nearly equal. This useless carnage prevented either army from undertaking anything of moment against the other: but the appearance of advantage was at that time so necessary that the prince of Orange, in order to make the world believe that he had gained the victory, laid siege to Oudenarde; however, the prince of Condé soon showed that he had not lost the battle, by obliging him to raise the siege, and pursuing him in his retreat.

It was the practice with the French and the allies to observe the idle ceremony of giving public thanks for a victory they had not gained; a custom established to keep up the spirit of the populace, who must always be deceived.

Turenne, with his little army, continued to make some progress in Germany, by the mere efforts of his military genius. The Council of Vienna not daring to trust any longer the fate of the empire to princes who had made so bad a defence, once more delivered the command of its armies to General Montecuculi, who had defeated the Turks in the battle of St. Gothard, and who, in spite of the endeavors of Turenne and Condé, had effected a junction with the prince of Orange, and checked the career of Louis's conquest, after he had reduced three of the seven United Provinces.

It has been elsewhere remarked that the empire had been frequently indebted to Italy for its greatest generals. This country, though in a state of degeneration and slavery, still produces men who put us in mind of what it has once been. Montecuculi was the only person fit to be opposed to Turenne. They had both brought war to an art. They spent four months in following and observing each other in their marches and encampments, which were held in greater esteem by the French and Germans officers than even victories. Each of them judged what his adversary had in view, by the very steps which he himself would have taken on the same occasion, and they were seldom deceived. They opposed each other with perseverance, cunning, and activity. At last they were on the point of coming to an engagement, and staking their reputations on the fate of a battle near the village of Saltzbach, when, on July 27, 1675, Turenne was killed by a cannon ball as he was going to fix upon a place for erecting a battery.

Everyone is acquainted with the particulars of this great man's death; but we cannot refrain from repeating some of the principal circumstances of an event which continues to be spoken of to this day. There is one indeed which it is hardly possible to repeat too often. The ball which deprived Turenne of his life carried off the arm of St. Hiliare, lieutenant-general of the artillery, whose son threw himself down by his side in a flood of tears. "Weep not for me," said that brave officer, "but for that great man," pointing to Turenne. These words are equal to anything that history has consecrated as most heroic, and form the worthiest eulogium of the great Turenne. It is seldom that in a despotic government, where everyone is wholly taken up with his own private concerns, those who have served their country die regretted: nevertheless, Turenne was lamented by his own soldiers and by the people. Louvois was the only one who rejoiced at his death. Everyone knows that the king caused the greatest honors to be paid to his memory; and that he was interred at St. Denis, as the constable du Guesclin had been, to whom the public voice declares him as much superior as the age he lived in was superior to that of the constable.

Turenne had not always been successful in the field. He had been beaten at Mariendal, Rethel, and Cambray; he had likewise been guilty of some faults, and was great man enough to own them. He had never gained very striking victories, nor fought any of those pitched battles which decide the fate of one or the other nation; but by always repairing his defeats, and doing a great deal with a little, he passed for the ablest general in Europe, in an age when the art of war was better understood than ever it had been. In like manner, though he had been accused of having deserted his party in the civil wars, and though, when almost sixty years of age, he had suffered love to make him reveal a secret of state, and had exercised some unnecessary barbarities in the Palatinate, yet he still preserved the character of an upright, prudent, and honest man; because his virtues and great talents, which were peculiar to himself, made the world forget those weaknesses and failings which were common to the rest of mankind. If we were to compare him to anyone, we might venture to say that of all the generals of past ages, Gonsalvo de Cordova, surnamed the Great Captain, was the person whom he most resembled.

He was born a Protestant, but in 1688 he embraced the Roman Catholic religion. It was not supposed by either Protestant or philosopher that this change was the effect of mere persuasion only, in a warrior and a statesman of fifty years old who still kept mistresses. It is well known that Louis XIV., when he created him marshal-general of his armies, spoke to him in these very words, which we find related by Pellisson in his letters, and others: "I wish you would lay me under an obligation of doing more for you." These words—according to these writers—might, together with time, have been the means of bringing about this conversion. The place of constable might perhaps have entered into an ambitious mind; it is also possible that this conversion might be sincere. The human heart frequently unites politics, ambition, religious sentiments, and amorous weaknesses; but the Catholics, who triumphed in this change, would never be persuaded that the great soul of Turenne was capable of double dealing.

The turn which affairs took in Alsace immediately after the death of Turenne made his loss more sensibly felt. Montecuculi, who had for three months been kept on the other side of the Rhine by the French general, passed that river the instant he knew he

no longer had Turenne to fear; he then fell upon a part of the army, which remained thunderstruck with its loss, under the command of the two lieutenant-generals, de Lorges and Vauban. Though the French defended themselves with great valor, they could not hinder the imperialists from penetrating into Alsace, from which Turenne had always kept them at a distance.

The army stood in need of a leader not only to conduct it, but also to retrieve the late defeat which had happened to Marshal de Créqui, a man of enterprising genius, capable at once of the noblest and rashest actions, and equally dangerous to his country and its enemies. He had, through his own fault, been beaten at Consarbruck, August 11, 1675, and his little army routed and cut to pieces by a body of twenty thousand Germans, who were laying siege to Trier. Hardly one-fourth of his troops escaped. After this accident, he marched with the utmost precipitation through a thousand dangers, and threw himself into Trier, which he defended with the greatest valor; whereas he should have relieved it by a prudent management. He resolved to bury himself in the ruins of the place before he would give it up; and even when a breach was made practicable, he still continued to hold out. The garrison began to murmur at this obstinacy; and one Captain Bois-Jourdan, who was at the head of the mutineers, repaired to the breach, and proposed a capitulation. Never was cowardice carried on with so much boldness; he threatened to kill the marshal, unless he would sign the capitulation; Créqui upon this retires, with some officers who remained faithful to him, to a neighboring church, and chose rather to be a prisoner at discretion than to capitulate.

To recruit the great loss of men which the kingdom had sustained by so many sieges and battles, Louis XIV. was advised not to confine himself to the usual levies from among the militia, but to issue his orders for assembling the ban and arrière-ban. By an ancient custom, which is now laid aside, all those that held lands in fee were obliged to serve their lords paramount in the wars, at their own expense, and to continue in arms for a certain number of days. This service was one of the principal laws of our barbarous nations. Things are at present on a very different footing in Europe: every kingdom now raises soldiers, who are kept in constant pay, and form a regular and disciplined body.

Louis XIII. had once, during his reign, assembled the nobility of his kingdom; Louis XIV. now followed his example. The body of nobility took the field under the command of the marquis, afterward marshal, of Rochefort, and marched to the frontiers of Flanders, and thence to the borders of Germany; but this body was neither great in its numbers, nor useful in its operations, nor indeed could be rendered so. The gentlemen who had a military turn, and were fit for service, had all commissions in the army; those whom age or discontent had kept at home remained there; and the rest, who were employed in improving their estates, came with repugnance, to the number of about four thousand. In short, they were far from having the appearance of military troops. They were all differently mounted and accoutred, void of experience, ignorant of discipline, and either incapable or averse to regular service; so that they caused only confusion, and were forever laid aside. This was the last trace of ancient chivalry which appeared in our regular armies, of which those armies were formerly

composed, and which, though possessed of all the courage natural to their nation, never fought well.

Turenne dead, Créqui beaten and a prisoner, Trier taken, and Montecuculi laying all Alsace under contribution, the king thought that the prince of Condé alone was able to revive the drooping spirits of the army, discouraged by the death of Turenne. Condé left Marshal Luxembourg to support the French in Flanders, and hastened to check the progress of Montecuculi. On this occasion, he showed as much coldness as he had shown impetuosity at Seneffe; and, with a genius which conformed itself to everything, he displayed the same art as Turenne had done. By two encampments only, he stopped the progress of the German army, and obliged Montecuculi to raise the sieges of Haguenau and Saverne, during August and September, 1675. After this campaign, which was indeed less brilliant but more esteemed than that of Seneffe, this prince no longer appeared in the character of a warrior. He was desirous of having his son appointed to the command in his stead, and offered to assist him with his advice; but the king did not choose to have either young men or princes for generals; it was even not without reluctance that he had employed the prince of Condé, who owed his being at the head of the army to Louvois's jealousy of Turenne, as much as to his own great reputation.

The prince retired to Chantilly, and rarely came to Versailles, to see his glory eclipsed in a place where the courtier regards only favor. During the remainder of his life he was greatly tormented with the gout; but he consoled himself in the midst of his anguish and disgrace, by the conversation of men of genius of all kinds, with which France then abounded. He was truly worthy of their acquaintance, being himself acquainted with most of the arts and sciences in which they excelled. He still continued the object of admiration, even in his retirement; till at length that devouring fire, which had in his youth made him the impetuous hero and subject to a number of passions, having by degrees consumed the vigor of a body, which was by nature formed rather active than robust, he experienced a total decay before his time; and his mind growing as weak as his body, nothing of the great Condé remained during the last two years of his life. He died in 1680. Montecuculi retired from the emperor's service about the time that the great Condé resigned the command of the armies of France.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XII.

FROM THE DEATH OF TURENNE TILL THE PEACE OF NIMEGUEN, IN 1678.

Notwithstanding that Turenne was dead, and the prince of Condé withdrawn from the army, the king still continued the war against the emperor, the Spaniards, and the Dutch, with as much success as before. He had a number of officers who had been trained up under these great men; he had Louvois, who was as good as a general to him, because, by his ready foresight, he furnished the generals with means of undertaking everything they desired; and the troops, by a long series of victories, retained that ardor with which the presence of a monarch, ever fortunate in his undertakings, had inspired them.

During the course of this war, he in person took Condé, Bouchain, Valenciennes, and Cambray. He was accused by some of having been afraid to engage the prince of Orange, who, at the siege of Bouchain, presented himself with an army of fifty thousand men, in order to relieve the place. The prince of Orange was reproached with not having given battle to Louis, when he might have done it; for such is the fate of kings and generals, that they are always blamed for what they do, and for what they do not do; but neither the king nor the prince of Orange was in the least to blame: the former did not give battle, although he was desirous of it, because Monterey, who was governor of the Netherlands, and who was then in his army, did not choose to expose his province to the chance of a decisive action; and the honor of the campaign was undoubtedly on the king's side, since he did what he pleased, and took a town in sight of his enemy.

With regard to the town of Valenciennes; it was taken by assault, by one of those singular events which characterize the impetuous courage of the French nation.

The king carried on this siege, assisted by his brother and five marshals of France, namely, d'Humières, Schomberg, La Feuillade, Luxembourg, and de Lorges. The marshals had each their day of command in turn, and Vauban had the direction of all the operations.

They had not yet made themselves masters of any of the outworks of the place. The first thing to be done was to attack two half-moons; behind which was a large crown-work, guarded with palisades and friezes, and surrounded by a ditch, intersected with several traverses. Within this crown-work was another work, surrounded by another ditch. When all these intrenchments were carried, there was still a branch of the Scheldt to be passed. Even after this, there remained another work, called a pâté; behind this pâté ran the main stream of the Scheldt, which was very deep and rapid, and which serves as a ditch to the town wall, which was defended by strong ramparts. All these works were covered with artillery, and a garrison of three thousand men promised a long resistance.

The king held a council of war about attacking the outworks. It had always been a custom to make these attacks in the night, in order to steal upon the enemy unperceived, and save the lives of the men. Vauban proposed to make the attack in the day. This proposal was strongly opposed by the marshals, and Louvois joined in condemning it; Vauban, however, maintained his opinion, with the confidence of a man who is sure of what he advances: "You are desirous," said he, "of saving your men as much as possible; you will certainly do this much better by day, when they will be able to fight without confusion and tumult, or being apprehensive of one party firing upon another, as too often happens in attacks by night. We want to surprise the enemy, who are always on their guard against an attack by night; we shall therefore effectually surprise them if we oblige them to stand the attack of our fresh troops, after they have been wearied out by the fatigue of the night's watch. Add to this, that if there are any of our men who want courage, the night favors their backwardness; but, in day, the eye of the master inspires them with courage, and makes them surpass themselves."

The king was convinced by Vauban's arguments, and agreed to his proposal, notwithstanding the objections of the five marshals of France.

At nine o'clock in the morning, on March 17, 1677, the two companies of musketeers, a hundred grenadiers, a battalion of the guards, and another of the regiment of Picardy, mounted the great crown-work on all sides. Their orders were only to make a lodgment there, and this was a great deal; but some of the black musketeers having found entrance by a private passage into the inner intrenchments which were in this work, presently made themselves masters of it; at the same time the gray musketeers made way through another passage; these were followed by the battalion of guards, who fell upon the besieged, killed some of them, and put the rest to flight. By this time the musketeers had let down the drawbridge which joined this work to the rest: they followed the enemy from one intrenchment to another, both on the greater and lesser branch of the Scheldt. The guards pressed on in crowds, and the musketeers were in possession of the town before the king knew that the first work, which he had ordered to be attacked, was carried.

But this was the least considerable part of the action. It is likely enough that a number of young musketeers, inflamed with the ardor of success, might fall upon the troops or burghers whom they met in the streets, and lose their lives, or else plunder the town; but what is most extraordinary in this affair is, that these young men, under the command of a cornet called Moissac, drew up in rank behind some wagons, and while the rest of the troops who came in were forming with deliberation, other musketeers took possession of the neighboring houses, and covered with their fire those who were in the street. Hostages were now exchanged on each side; the town council assembled and despatched a deputation to the king, and all this was transacted without pillage, confusion, or the least outrage of any kind. The king made the garrison prisoners of war, and entered Valenciennes with astonishment. The singularity of this action engaged us to enter into this minute detail.

The king gained additional honor by the taking of Ghent in eight days, and Ypres in seven. His generals met with still greater success.

In Germany, indeed, the duke of Luxembourg, at the beginning of the war, suffered Philippsburg to be taken in his sight, after a fruitless attempt to relieve it with an army of fifty thousand men. The general who took Philippsburg was Charles V., the new duke of Lorraine, who succeeded his uncle, Charles IV., and was, like him, stripped of his dominions. He had all the good qualifications of his unhappy uncle, without any of his faults. He commanded the armies of the empire with great renown; but, notwithstanding that he had reduced Philippsburg, and was at the head of an army of sixty thousand men, he could never get possession of his dominions; and it was to no purpose that he carried these words on his colors: "*Aut nunc aut nunquam*"—"Now or never." Marshal Créqui, now ransomed from his confinement, and rendered more prudent by his defeat at Consarbruck, always kept the entrance into Lorraine shut from him. He beat him in a small skirmish at Kokersberk, in Alsace, on October 7, 1677, and continually harassed him in his marches. He took Freiburg in his sight on November 14, 1677, and beat a detachment of his army at Rheinfelden, in July, 1678. He passed the river Keres in his view, pursued him to Offenburg, fell upon him in his retreat, and having immediately afterward carried the fort of Rethel, sword in hand, he proceeded to Saarburg, where he burned the bridge by which that city, which was still free, had so many times afforded a passage for the imperial troops into Alsace. Thus did Marshal Créqui make amends for the imprudence of one day, by a series of successes which were wholly owing to his prudence; and, had he lived some time longer, it is probable he would have acquired an equal reputation with Turenne.

The prince of Orange was not more successful in Flanders than the duke of Lorraine had been in Germany; he was not only obliged to raise the siege of Maestricht and Charleroi, but, after having suffered Condé, Bouchain, and Valenciennes to fall into the hands of Louis XIV., he lost the battle of Montcassel, against the king's brother, in attempting to relieve St. Omer. The marshals Luxembourg and d'Humières were in command. It is said that the gaining of the battle was owing to an error committed by the prince of Orange, and a dexterous movement made by Luxembourg. Monsieur (as the brother of Louis XIV. was at that time called) fought with a courage and presence of mind that was never expected from so effeminate a prince. There could not be a stronger proof that valor is not incompatible with delicacy. This prince, who frequently used to go dressed like a woman, and who had the same inclinations, behaved on this occasion like a general and a soldier. It is said that the king was jealous of the reputation he acquired. He took very little notice of the victory he had gained, and did not so much as go to see the field of battle, though he was near by. Some of the staff of the duke of Orleans, who were more discerning than the rest, prophesied to him then that he would never again have the command of an army, and their predictions were verified.

The taking of so many towns, and the gaining of so many battles, were not the only successes which attended the arms of Louis XIV. during this war. The count of Schomberg and Marshal Navaille beat the Spaniards in the Lampourdan, at the foot of the Pyrenees, and attacked them even in Sicily.

This island, since the time of the tyrants of Syracuse, under whom it was of some note in the world, has always fallen a prey to foreigners: it has been successively enslaved by the Romans, the Vandals, the Arabians, the Norman princes, vassals to the popes,

the French, the Germans, and the Spaniards; still hating its masters and rebelling against them, without making any noble efforts to gain their liberty, and continually engaged in fresh seditions, only to change its chains.

The magistrates of Messina had lately stirred up a civil war against their governors, and called in the French to their assistance. Their harbor was blocked up by a Spanish fleet, and they were reduced to the last extremities of famine.

The chevalier de Valbille was immediately sent with a few frigates to their assistance. He passed through the Spanish fleet, and threw a supply of provisions, arms, and men into the city. Soon after, the duke of Vivonne arrived with seven men of war of sixty guns, two of eighty, and a number of fireships; engaged the enemy's fleet, which he defeated, and entered the harbor of Messina in triumph, February 9, 1675.

The Spaniards were obliged to have recourse to the Dutch, their ancient enemies, who were still looked upon as masters of the sea, to help them to defend Sicily. De Ruyter sailed from the Zuyder Zee, passed the mole of Messina, and reinforced the Spanish fleet of twenty ships with twenty-three large men of war.

And now the French, who, when joined with the English, had not been able to beat the Dutch fleets, gained a victory alone over the combined squadrons of Spain and Holland, on January 8, 1676. The duke of Vivonne, who was obliged to remain in Messina to restrain the populace, who already began to be displeased with their defenders, left the care of this engagement to Duquesne, his lieutenant-general, who was a man as extraordinary in his way as de Ruyter; he had, like him, risen to the command entirely by merit, but had never before had the management of a naval armament, having hitherto signalized himself rather in the character of a captain of a privateer than as the commander of a regular fleet. But whosoever possesses a genius for his art, and for carrying command, passes with great ease and quickness from the little to the great. Duquesne showed himself a very able officer in this action against de Ruyter, even though he only gained a small advantage over this experienced Hollander. He gave battle a second time to the enemy's fleets off Aosta, March 12, 1676. In this engagement, de Ruyter received the wound which put an end to his glorious life. He was one of those men whose memories are still held in great veneration by the people of Holland. On his first entrance into sea life he was only a cabin boy, or captain's servant, which makes him so much the more respectable. His name is equal with those of the princes of Nassau. The Spanish council gave him the title and patent of duke, an odd and ridiculous dignity to confer on a republican; the patent, however, did not arrive till after he was dead, when his children, proving themselves worthy of such a father, refused a title which is so earnestly sought after in our monarchies, but which is by no means to be preferred to the name of a good citizen.

Louis XIV. had too noble a soul not to be concerned at his death; and, when some of his courtiers represented to him that he was now rid of a troublesome and dangerous enemy, he replied: "Nevertheless, I cannot help being afflicted with the loss of a great man."

Duquesne, the de Ruyter of the French, attacked the combined fleets a third time, immediately upon the death of the Dutch admiral, and sank, burned, and took several of their largest ships. The marshal, the duke of Vivonne, had chief command in this action; but it was nevertheless Duquesne who gained the victory. Europe stood amazed to see France, in so short a space of time, become as formidable on sea as on land. It is certain that these armaments and victories only served to spread the alarm through every state. The king of England, having entered upon the war to support the interest of France, was now desirous of joining the prince of Orange, who had lately married his niece. Besides, the great reputation gained in Sicily cost too much money, and lastly, the French evacuated Messina April 8, 1678, at the very time when they were thought to be on the point of making themselves masters of the island. Louis XIV. was greatly blamed for having, during the course of this war, undertaken many things which he could not go through with, and for quitting Messina, as he had done Holland, after a fruitless conquest.

However, it must be allowed that a prince is very formidable who is no other way unsuccessful than in not being able to keep all his conquests. He pressed his enemies in every part of Europe. The war in Sicily had not cost him nearly so much money as it did the Spaniards, who were distressed and beaten in every place. He likewise raised up new enemies against the house of Austria; he fomented the troubles in Hungary, and his ambassadors at the Ottoman Porte pressed the sultan to carry the war into Germany, though at the same time common decency would have obliged him to send aid against those very people whom his politics had called in: for, at that time, the Swedes, his old allies, were engaged in an unsuccessful war against the elector of Brandenburg. This elector, father of the first king of Prussia, had begun to exalt his country to that degree of reputation which has since received so considerable an addition. He had just then taken Pomerania from the Swedes.

It is remarkable, that during the course of this war, there were almost continual conferences held for peace; first at Cologne, upon the fruitless mediation of the Swedes, and afterward at Nimeguen, by the equally useless interposition of the English, whose mediation was almost as idle a piece of ceremony as the arbitration of the pope. At the Treaty of Nimeguen, Louis XIV. was actually the only real arbiter: he made proposals for a peace, April 9, 1678, in the midst of his victories, and gave the enemy till May 10 to accept of them. He afterward allowed the states-general six weeks longer, upon their asking it in the most submissive manner.

He now entirely laid aside all ambitious views upon Holland; that republic had been so lucky, or skilful, as to appear only as an auxiliary in a war which was begun for its destruction; while the empire and Spain, who were at first only auxiliaries, were at length the principal parties.

The king greatly favored the trade of the Dutch by the conditions which he imposed upon them; he restored to them the city of Maestricht, and gave the Spaniards some towns to serve as barriers to the United Provinces; as Charleroi, Courtrai, Oudenarde, Ath, Ghent, and Limburg: but he reserved Bouchain, Condé, Ypres, Valenciennes, Cambray, Maubeuge, Aire, Saint Omer, Cassel, Charlemont, Popering, and Bailleul, which made a great part of Flanders. To these he added Franche-Comté, which had

been already twice conquered; and these two provinces were no despicable fruits of the war.

He demanded nothing more of the empire than Freiburg or Philippsburg, which he left to the emperor's choice. He reinstated the two brothers Fürstemberg in the bishopric of Strasburg, and their family estate, of which they had been stripped by the emperor, who still detained one of them in prison.

He protected his allies, the Swedes, unhappily joined with him against the king of Denmark and the elector of Brandenburg. He insisted that Denmark should give up all it had taken from Sweden, lower the toll duties in the Baltic Sea; that the duke of Holstein should be restored to his dominions; that the elector of Brandenburg should give up Pomerania, which he had lately conquered; and that every article of the Treaty of Westphalia should be again renewed. His will was law throughout Europe; the elector of Brandenburg in vain wrote a letter to him, in the most submissive terms, in which he styles him "Lord and Master," humbly entreating that he might be permitted to keep what he had conquered, with many assurances of his zeal and future service; but his submission proved as useless as his resistance, and the conqueror of the Swedes was obliged to restore all he had taken from them.

And now the ambassador of France insisted upon taking the upper hand of the electors. Brandenburg proposed every kind of modification, in order to settle a conference with the count, afterwards marshal, d'Estrades, who was ambassador to the states-general; but the king would never suffer a person who represented him to yield to an elector, and the count d'Estrades could not treat.

Charles V. had put the grandees of Spain in the same rank as the electors, consequently the peers of France had pretensions to the same equality. At present, we see that things are changed in every point, since in the imperial diets the ambassadors of electors are now recognized as those of crowned heads. As to Lorraine, Louis offered to restore the new duke, Charles V., but insisted upon remaining master of Nancy, and all the great roads.

These conditions were imposed with the haughtiness of a conqueror; but yet they were not so unreasonable as to drive his enemies to despair, or oblige them to join together against him, as the only thing left. He at once dictated to Europe as a master, and acted as a politician.

At the conferences at Nimeguen he found means to sow jealousy among his allies. The Dutch were in haste to sign, despite the prince of Orange, who resolved at all events to carry on war, alleging that the Spaniards were too weak to assist them, should they refuse to sign.

The Spaniards, seeing that the Dutch had accepted terms of peace, followed their example; alleging that the empire did not seem hearty in the common cause.

In the last place, the Germans, abandoned by Spain and Holland, signed after all the others, ceding Freiburg to the king, and confirming the Treaties of Westphalia.

There was no alteration made in the conditions prescribed by Louis XIV. The enemy in vain affected to make some extravagant proposals, in order to disguise their own weakness. He gave laws and peace to all Europe. The duke of Lorraine was the only one who refused to accede to a treaty which appeared to him in so oppressive a light. He chose rather to be a prince, and wander through the empire, than to be a sovereign without power or honors in his own dominions; and waited in expectation, till time and his own courage should bring about a favorable change of fortune.

During the conferences at Nimeguen, and four days after the plenipotentiaries of France and Holland had signed the treaty of peace, the prince of Orange showed how dangerous an enemy Louis XIV. had in him. Marshal Luxembourg, who was then besieging Mons, had lately received an account of the conclusion of the peace; upon which he lay lulled in full security in the village of St. Denis, and dined that day with the intendant of the army. The prince of Orange, with his whole army, attacked the marshal's quarters, and forced them: a long and bloody engagement ensued, from which the prince had the greatest reason to expect the most signal victory; for he not only gave the attack, which is a great advantage, but he attacked an army which depended upon the faith of treaties, and grew remiss in their military rigor. Marshal Luxembourg could with great difficulty resist the fury of this attack; and if the advantage lay on any side, it was with the prince of Orange, whose foot remained master of the field of battle where they had fought.

Did ambitious men pay any regard to the lives of their fellow creatures, the prince of Orange would not have fought this battle. He certainly knew that the peace was already signed, or on the point of being so; he knew that this peace would prove advantageous to his country, and yet he hazarded his own life, and that of thousands of men besides, as the first fruits of a general peace, which was then so far advanced that, had he even beaten the French army, it would have made no alteration in the congress. This act, as inhuman as it was glorious, and which at that time was more esteemed than blamed, did not produce one single additional article in the treaty; and the lives of two thousand French, and as many of the enemy, were thrown away to no end. By this peace we may see how much projects are contradicted by events. Holland, against whom alone the war was undertaken, and whose destruction seemed inevitable, lost nothing at all; on the contrary, she gained a barrier, while every other crowned head who had preserved it from destruction, lost by it.

The king was now at the height of his greatness. He had been victorious ever since he came to the throne; never had besieged any place without taking it; was superior in all things to those in league against him; the terror of Europe for six years together; and at length the arbiter and peace-maker: he added to his estates Franche-Comté, Dunkirk, and one-half of Flanders; and, what he should have looked upon as one of the greatest blessings, he was king over a happy kingdom, now the model for all other nations.

Some time afterward—in 1680—the town-house of Paris solemnly bestowed upon him the epithet of "Great," and ordered this title alone to be placed upon all public monuments. Several medals had been struck as early as 1673, with this surname on them; and Europe, though jealous of his glory, did not cry out against these honors.

Nevertheless, the name of Louis XIV. has prevailed among the public more than that of Great. Custom governs all things. Henry, who had the surname of Great conferred on him after his death, is commonly called Henry IV., and that name alone is sufficiently expressive. The prince of Condé is always called the Great Condé, not only on account of his heroic deeds, but from a lucky facility of distinguishing him by that means from the other princes of Condé. Had he been called Condé the Great, that title would never have remained with him. We say the great Corneille, to distinguish him from his brother. We do not say the great Virgil, the great Horace, or the great Tasso. Alexander the Great is now only known by the simple name of Alexander. Charles V., whose successes were more dazzling than those of Louis XIV., had never the surname of Great. It continues to be given to Charlemagne, only as a proper name. Titles are of no use to posterity; the name of a man who has done great things commands more respect than the most sounding epithet.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TAKING OF STRASBURG—THE BOMBARDING OF ALGIERS—THE SUBMISSION OF THE GENOESE—THE EMBASSY FROM THE EMPEROR OF SIAM—THE POPE BRAVED IN ROME—THE SUCCESSION TO THE ELECTORATE OF COLOGNE DISPUTED.

The general peace proved no restraint upon Louis's ambition. The empire, Spain, and Holland disbanded their extraordinary troops, but he still kept his in pay. Peace was to him a time of conquests. He was so secure in his power at that time that he established courts of jurisdiction in Mentz and Breisach for annexing to the crown all the territories which were formerly dependent upon Alsace or the three bishoprics; but which had from time immemorial been in the hands of other masters. Several sovereign princes of the empire, the elector palatine, the king of Spain himself, who had several bailiwicks in these countries, and the king of Sweden, as duke of Deux Ponts, were summoned before these courts, to do homage to the king of France, under pain of having their possessions forfeited. He was the only prince since the time of Charlemagne who had acted thus like the lord and judge of crowned heads, and conquered countries by judicial decrees.

The elector palatine, and the elector of Trier, were dispossessed of the lordships of Falkenberg, Germersheim, Velden, etc. They carried their complaints before the diet of the empire, assembled at Ratisbon, but in vain; for that assembly contented itself with entering protests against these proceedings.

The king did not think it sufficient to be thus master of ten free cities of Alsace, by the same titles which the emperors formerly had: no one dared even to mention liberty in any of those cities. Strasburg yet remained a great and opulent city, and mistress of the Rhine, by means of the bridge which it had over that river; of itself a powerful republic, and famous for its arsenal, which contained nine hundred pieces of cannon.

Louvois had for a long time cherished the design of putting this city into his master's hands. He had already prepared the way by bribery, intrigues, and menaces. The magistrates were seduced, and the people were struck with consternation at seeing their ramparts on a sudden surrounded by twenty thousand French; their forts, by which they were guarded on the side of the Rhine, attacked and taken in an instant; Louvois at their gates, and their burgomasters talking of surrendering, which Louvois accepted, taking possession of the town on Sept. 30, 1681. Vauban has since fortified it in such a manner that it has become the strongest barrier of France.

The king kept no better measures with Spain; he claimed the town of Alost, in the Netherlands, together with its whole bailiwick, which, as was pretended, his ministers had ministers had forgotten to insert in the articles of peace; and upon the Spanish

court making some hesitation in complying with his demand, he ordered the city of Luxemburg to be blockaded.

At the same time he purchased the city of Casal of the petty duke of Mantua, who would have sold all his dominions to supply his pleasures.

Europe began to be alarmed at seeing a power which thus extended itself on all sides, and had acquired in the midst of peace more than ten preceding monarchs of France had gained by all their wars. The emperor, the Dutch, and even the Swedes themselves, finding great reason to be displeased with Louis's proceedings, entered into a treaty of association. The English threw out some threats, the Spaniards resolved on war, and the prince of Orange left no stone unturned to fan the flame; but no power as yet dared to strike the first blow.

The king, who was feared everywhere, sought only how to make himself more formidable. He increased the power of his marine beyond the most sanguine hopes of his subjects, or the liveliest apprehensions of his enemies. He had sixty thousand sailors in pay; and this rude body of men were kept to their duty by laws as severe as those observed with respect to the military forces. The English and Dutch, on the contrary, though such powerful maritime nations, had neither so many seamen, nor such good regulations. Several companies of cadets and marine guards were formed and stationed in the frontier towns and the seaports, who were trained in all the arts requisite to their profession, under the care of masters paid out of the public treasury.

The harbor of Toulon, in the Mediterranean, was formed at immense expense, capable of containing a hundred ships of war, with an arsenal and magnificent storehouses. The port of Brest was formed in the western ocean at an equal expense. Dunkirk and Havre-de-Grâce were filled with shipping, and nature herself was forced at Rochefort.

At length Louis had above a hundred ships of the line, of which several mounted a hundred guns, and others more. These were not suffered to lie idle in port. His squadrons under the command of Duquesne cleared the seas of the Algerine and Tripoline pirates which infested them, and punished Algiers by the help of a new art, the discovery of which was owing to the care he took to encourage all kinds of genius in his reign. This fatal but admirable art is that of bomb-vessels, with which seaport towns may be reduced to ashes. There was a young man named Bernard Renaud, better known by the name of Little Renaud, who, by mere strength of genius, became an excellent mariner, without ever having served on board a ship. Colbert, who found out merit wherever it was hidden, had frequently sent for this man to the council of marine, even when the king was present: it was in pursuance of his diligent observations and instructions that they afterward devised a more uniform and easy method of building ships. Renaud had the boldness to propose in council to bombard Algiers with a fleet of ships. Everyone present started at the proposal, not having the least conception that a mortar could be fired anywhere but on solid ground: in short, he underwent all the raillery and contradiction which one must expect who offers a new invention; but his firmness, and that eloquence which naturally accompanies those who are forcibly struck with their own invention, prevailed upon the king to permit a trial of this new project.

Renaud then caused five vessels to be built of a lesser size than common, but much stronger, without any upper decks, and only a platform or false deck on the keel, in which hollow spaces were formed for receiving the mortars as in beds. Thus equipped he set sail under the command of old Duquesne, who had charge of this expedition, from which he expected little success: but the effect of the bombs filled both the admiral and the Algerines with surprise, half of the town being beaten down and laid in ashes, on Oct. 28, 1681. However, this art being soon communicated to other nations, served only to multiply the calamities of humankind, and proved more than once fatal to France, where it was invented.

This improvement in the marine within a few years was wholly owing to the care and vigilance of Colbert. Louvois was continually employed in fortifying upward of one hundred citadels; besides building the new ones of Hüningen, Saarlouis, the fortresses of Saarburg, Mont-Royal, and others, and while the kingdom was acquiring this exterior strength, the arts flourished within, and pleasure and abundance reigned everywhere. Strangers came in crowds to admire the court of Louis XIV. whose name was carried to the most distant nations of the earth.

His glory and success received a further addition from the weakness of most of the other crowned heads in Europe, and the miserable state of their people. The emperor Leopold was at that time in fear of the rebellious Hungarians, and especially of the Turks, whom they had called in to their assistance, and were preparing to invade Germany. Louis thought it politic to persecute the Protestants of his own kingdom, in order to prevent them from being able to create any disturbance; but he underhandedly protected the Protestants and rebels in Hungary, because they might be of service to him. His ambassadors at the Turkish court had importuned the sultan to fit out an armament before the Peace of Nimeguen. The divan by an unaccountable singularity has almost always waited till the emperor was at peace to break with him. The war in Hungary was not begun until 1682, and the ensuing year the Turkish army of two hundred thousand men, reinforced by several bodies of Hungarian troops, meeting with no fortified towns, such as there are in France, nor any regular army to oppose its progress, advanced to the very gates of Vienna, after laying all waste in its march.

The emperor Leopold, at the approach of the Turks, quitted Vienna with the utmost precipitation, and retired to Linz; and when he heard that they had invested his capital, he only retired to a still greater distance, to Passau, leaving the duke of Lorraine at the head of a small army, which had already been attacked by the Turks in their march, to defend the empire as well as he could.

No one had the least doubt that the grand vizier, Cara-Mustapha, who commanded the Ottoman army, would soon be master of Vienna, a badly fortified city, abandoned by its sovereign, and defended only by a garrison of ten thousand effective men, though called sixteen thousand. In short, a dreadful revolution was momentarily expected.

Louis XIV. had the greatest reason to expect that Germany, thus distressed by the Turks, and having no resource but in a chief whose flight had increased the general terror, would soon be forced to fly to the protection of France. He had an army on the

borders of the empire ready to defend it against those very Turks whom he had brought thither by his former negotiations. By this means he hoped to become protector of the empire, and to make his son king of the Romans.

At first, when the Turks threatened Austria with an invasion, he added generosity to his political views; not that he sent help a second time to the emperor, but he declared that he would not attack the Low Countries; but would leave the Austrian-Spanish branch at liberty to assist that of Germany, which was on the point of being overwhelmed. All that he asked in return for lying quiet was to be satisfied with respect to some disputable points in the Treaty of Nimeguen, and chiefly relating to the bailiwick of Alost, which had by mistake been omitted in the treaty. He actually ordered the blockade of Luxemburg to be raised in 1682, without waiting to be satisfied, and abstained from all hostilities for one whole year. But he did not observe the same generosity afterward, during the siege of Vienna. The Spanish council, instead of soothing, incensed him; and he renewed hostilities in the Netherlands, at the very time that Vienna was on the point of falling into the hands of the Turks: this was in the beginning of September; but, contrary to all expectation, Vienna was relieved. The presumption, effeminacy, ignorance, and slothfulness of the grand vizier, together with his brutal contempt for the Christians, proved his ruin. Nothing less than such a combination of faults could have preserved the capital of the empire. John Sobieski, king of Poland, had time to march to its relief; and having joined the duke of Lorraine, he presented himself before the Ottoman army on Sept. 12, 1683, who fled at his first appearance. The emperor returned to his capital, grieved and astonished at having quitted it. He entered just as his deliverer was coming out of the high church, where they had been singing *Te Deum,* and the preacher had taken these words for his text: “There was a man sent from God, and his name was John.” You may have already observed that the same words were applied by Pope Pius V. to Don John of Austria after the victory of Lepanto. You know that what at first appears new is frequently no other than a repetition. The emperor Leopold was at once triumphant and humbled. The French king, having no longer any measures to keep, bombarded Luxemburg, and seized upon Courtrai and Dixmude, in Flanders: he then made himself master of Trier, and demolished its fortifications; and all this, as he said, to fulfil the spirit of the Treaty of Nimeguen. The Imperialists and Spaniards entered into a negotiation with him at Ratisbon, while he was taking their towns; and the Treaty of Nimeguen, which had been infringed, was changed into a truce for twenty years, by which the king was left in possession of the city of Luxemburg, and its principality, which he had lately conquered.

Louis was still more formidable on the coast of Barbary, where, till his time, the French had been known only by some of their nation, which fell into the hands of the barbarians, and were made slaves.

The inhabitants of Algiers, after their city had been twice bombarded, sent deputies to make their submission, and demand peace. They delivered up all the Christian captives in their possession, besides paying a considerable sum of money, which is the greatest punishment that can be inflicted on a corsair.

Tunis and Tripoli made like submission; and here it may not be impertinent to relate the following anecdote. One d'Amfreville, captain of a French ship of war, having come to Algiers to release all the Christian captives there, in the French king's name, found several Englishmen among them, who, after they were on board, insisted to d'Amfreville that it was on the king of England's account that they had been set at liberty; upon which the French captain sent for the Algerine officers, and putting the English into their hands again, said: "These people pretend that they are released wholly in their own king's name; mine, therefore, will not take the liberty of offering them his protection; I therefore deliver them up to you again. It now remains with you to show what you owe the king of England." The English were carried back to their former slavery. This anecdote may serve to show the pride of the English, the weakness of Charles II., and the respect which all nations had for Louis XIV.

This respect was so general that new honors were granted to his ambassador at the Ottoman Porte, the same as to the sufis, at the very time that he was humbling the people of Barbary, who are immediately under the protection of the Grand Seignior.

The republic of Genoa humbled itself before him still more than that of Algiers. The Genoese had sold powder and bombs to the Algerines; they were also building four galleys for the service of the king of Spain. The king sent St. Olon, one of his gentlemen in ordinary, in character of an envoy, to forbid their launching those galleys, threatening them with instant punishment if they did not comply with his will. The Genoese, incensed at this attempt on their liberties, and reckoning too much upon the assistance of Spain, refused to give the king any satisfaction. Immediately fourteen large ships, twelve galleys, six bomb-vessels, and several frigates set sail from the port of Toulon, having on board the new secretary of the marine, Seignelay, son of the famous Colbert, who had procured him this post before his death. This young man was full of ambition, courage, wit, and vivacity, and wanted to be at once the soldier and the minister; he was greedy for honor, ardent in all his undertakings, and knew how to blend pleasures with business, without impeding either. Old Duquesne had the command of the large ships, and the duke of Mortemart of the galleys; but they were both dependents on the secretary of state. The fleet arrived before Genoa on March 17, 1684, and the ten bomb-vessels threw fourteen thousand shells into the town, by which a part of those noble marble buildings, whence Genoa had its name of superb, were reduced to ashes. Four thousand men were then landed from the fleet, who advanced to the gates of the city and burned the suburb of St. Pietro d'Arena. The inhabitants now found it necessary to submit, in order to avoid total ruin. The king insisted that the doge and four of the principal senators of Genoa should repair to his palace at Versailles, there to implore his clemency; and lest the Genoese should elude the required satisfaction, and diminish his glory on this occasion, he further insisted that the doge should be continued in his office, notwithstanding a perpetual law in Genoa, by which any doge who is absent but a moment from the city is deprived of his dignity.

Imperialo Lescaro, doge of Genoa, accompanied by senators Lomelino, Garebardi, Durazzo, and Salvago, arrived in Versailles Feb. 22, 1685, to perform all that the king demanded of them. The doge, dressed in his robes of state, with a red velvet cap on his head, which he frequently took off while he spoke, made his submission; the

words and gestures he used on this occasion were all dictated by Seignelay. The king gave him audience sitting, and covered; but, as in every action of his life he always joined politeness with dignity, he behaved toward Lescaro and the senators with as much goodness as pomp. His ministers, Louvois, Croissi, and Seignelay, treated them more haughtily, which made the doge say: “The king deprives our hearts of liberty, by the manner in which he receives us; but his ministers restore it to us again.” This doge was a man of great wit and understanding. Everyone knows the answer he made to the marquis of Seignelay, when he asked him what he thought most remarkable at Versailles: “To see myself there,” replied he.

The great fondness which Louis XIV. had for pomp and show was still more gratified by an embassy which he received from Siam, a country which, till that time, had never heard of such a kingdom as France. It happened by one of those extraordinary events which prove the superiority of the Europeans over all other nations, that a Greek, named Faulcon Constance, the son of a tavern-keeper at Cephalonia, was made barcalon, that is prime minister, or grand vizier, of the kingdom of Siam. This man, desirous of strengthening and increasing his authority, wanted for that purpose to call in some foreign assistance, but did not dare to trust either the Dutch or the English, who are dangerous neighbors in the Indies. The French had lately settled some factories on the coast of Coromandel, and had brought the fame of their monarch with them into that extreme part of Asia. Constance thought Louis XIV. a proper person to be flattered by homage coming from so distant a place, and so little expected. Religion, which is the master-spring of worldly politics from Siam to Paris, proved subservient to his design; accordingly in 1684 he sent a solemn embassy and magnificent presents, in the name of the king of Siam, his master, to Louis XIV., to acquaint him that the Indian monarch, charmed with his fame, was resolved to enter into a treaty of commerce with no other nation than the French, and that he even had some thoughts of becoming a Christian. The king thus flattered in his greatness, and deceived on the side of religion, engaged to send the king of Siam two ambassadors and six Jesuits, to whom he afterward added some officers and eight hundred soldiers. But the pomp of this embassy was all the fruit it produced. Constance, four years afterward, fell a victim to his own ambition. Part of the French who remained with him were massacred, and the rest were obliged to fly; while his widow, after having been on the point of becoming queen, was, by the king of Siam’s successor, condemned to serve in his kitchen as a cook, an employment which suited her birth.

That thirst for glory which led Louis XIV. to distinguish himself in everything from other kings, showed itself again in the haughty manner with which he affected to treat the court of Rome. Odescalchi, the son of a banker of Milan, was at that time in the papal chair, with the name of Innocent XI. He was a virtuous man, a prudent pontiff, a middling divine, and a courageous, resolute, and magnificent prince. He assisted the empire and the Poles against the Turks with his money, and the Venetians with his galleys. He blamed Louis XIV., in the severest terms, for joining with the Turks against the Christians. It was surprising to see a pope thus warmly espousing the cause of the emperors, who style themselves kings of the Romans, and would, if they could, establish the seat of their empire in Rome; but Odescalchi was born under the Austrian dominion, and had even made two campaigns in the army of Milan. All men are governed by habit and humor: his pride was hurt by the haughtiness of Louis

XIV., who on his side did everything to mortify him that a king of France can do to a pope, without absolutely separating from his communion. An abuse had prevailed for a long time in Rome, which was the more difficult to be eradicated as it was founded on a point of honor upon which the Catholics piqued themselves. Their ambassadors at Rome extended the right of franchise and asylum belonging to their palaces to a great distance, under the general name of quarters. These privileges, which were strictly maintained, made one-half of Rome an asylum for all kinds of villainy. By another abuse, whatever was brought into Rome under the ambassador's name was free from all duty. By this means trade suffered, and the state was impoverished.

At length Pope Innocent XI. prevailed on the emperor, the kings of Spain and Poland, and on the new king of England, James II., who was a Catholic, to give up these odious privileges. The nuncio Ranucci proposed to Louis to concur with these princes in restoring the peace and good order of Rome; but Louis, who in his heart hated the pope, returned for answer that he never regulated his conduct by the example of others, who rather ought himself to serve as an example for them. He then sent the marquis de Lavardin on an embassy to Rome, purposely to insult the pope. Lavardin accordingly made his entrance into that city in November, 1687, in spite of the pope's prohibition, and escorted by four hundred of the marine guards, the same number of volunteer officers, and two hundred men in livery, all armed. He immediately went and took possession of his palace, the quarters thereunto belonging, and the church of St. Louis, round which he ordered sentinels to be placed, and to go the rounds as in a garrison. The pope is the only sovereign to whom such an embassy can be sent; for the superiority which he always affects over crowned heads makes them always desirous of humbling him, and the weakness of his dominions permits them to insult him with impunity. All that Innocent XI. could do was to attack the marquis de Lavardin with the worn-out weapon of excommunication, a weapon which is now as little regarded in Rome as elsewhere, but which nevertheless was employed by an ancient ceremonial, in the same manner as the pope's soldiers carry arms, merely for form's sake.

Cardinal d'Estrées, a man of sense, but generally unfortunate in his negotiations, was at that time resident from the court of France at Rome. D'Estrées, being obliged to make frequent visits to the marquis de Lavardin, could not afterward be admitted to an audience of the pope without receiving absolution; he in vain endeavored to evade this ceremony; Innocent persisted in giving it to him, in order to keep up an imaginary power, by the customs on which it was founded.

Louis, through the same motives of pride, though secretly supported by politics, endeavored to make an elector of Cologne. Full of the scheme of dividing or making war with the empire, he thought to confer this electorate on Cardinal Fürstemberg, bishop of Strasburg, his creature and the victim of his interests, and an irreconcilable enemy to the emperor, who had ordered him to be imprisoned in the preceding war as a German who had sold himself to France.

The chapter of Cologne, like all the other chapters of Germany, has a right to nominate its bishop who by that becomes elector. The person who then filled this see was Ferdinand of Bavaria, formerly the ally, and afterward the enemy, of Louis, as

many other princes had been. He now lay at the point of death. The king, by money, intrigues, and promises, prevailed on the canons to choose Fürstemberg coadjutor; and after the death of Ferdinand he was chosen a second time by a majority of votes. By the Germanic concordat the pope has the right of conferring the bishopric on the bishop-elect, and the emperor that of confirming him in the electorate. The emperor and Pope Innocent, persuaded that to leave Fürstemberg in possession of the electoral dignity was the same as if they had given it to Louis XIV., joined together to bestow this principality upon young Bavaria, brother to the deceased prince. The king avenged himself on the pope by taking Avignon from him in October, 1688, and made preparations for a war against the emperor. At the same time he disturbed the elector palatine, on account of the rights of the princess palatine, second wife of the duke of Orleans, rights which she had renounced by her marriage articles. The war began in Spain, in the year 1667, on account of the claims of Maria Theresa, notwithstanding that a like renunciation made, which plainly proves that contracts can only bind private persons.

In this manner did the king, in the height of his greatness, perplex, strip, or humble almost all the princes of Europe, but they in return almost all joined in league against him.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XIV.

JAMES II. OF ENGLAND DETHRONED BY HIS SON-IN-LAW, WILLIAM III., AND PROTECTED BY LOUIS XIV.

The prince of Orange, still more ambitious than even Louis XIV., had conceived vast designs, which might appear chimerical in a stadtholder of Holland, but which he justified by his great abilities and courage. He wanted to humble the king of France and dethrone the king of England. He found no great difficulty in getting the powers of Europe to join with him against France; the emperor, some princes of the empire, the Dutch, and the duke of Lorraine had at first entered into a private league at Augsburg, in 1681, and were soon after joined by Spain and the duke of Savoy. The pope, without being actually one of the confederates, set them all to work by his intrigues. The Venetians, without openly declaring themselves, favored their designs in secret, and all the princes of Italy were sympathetic. In the North, Sweden at that time sided with the imperialists, and Denmark was a useless ally to France. Upward of five hundred thousand Protestants, who had been driven out of France by the persecution of Louis, and had carried with them their industry and an irreconcilable hatred to the French king, were as a new body of enemies, who dispersed themselves through all the courts of Europe, and animated the confederate powers, already inclined to war. We shall speak of the flight of these people in the chapter on religion. The king was surrounded by enemies on all sides, and had no friend but King James of England.

James II., who succeeded his brother, Charles II., was a Catholic; but Charles did not consent to become a Catholic till toward the latter part of his life, and then only out of compliance with his mistresses and his brother. In fact, he acknowledged no other religion but that of pure deism. His perfect indifference in those points which divide mankind in their disputations had contributed not a little to render his reign peaceable among the English. James, on the contrary, attached by strong persuasion to the Roman Catholic religion from his youth, joined to his belief the spirit of party and zeal. Had he been a Mahometan, or of the religion of Confucius, the English would never have disturbed his reign; but he formed a design to establish the Roman Catholic religion in his kingdom, which was looked upon with the utmost horror by these republican royalists, as a religion of slavery. It is sometimes a very easy matter to establish a religion in a country; Constantine, Clovis, Gustavus Vasa, and Queen Elizabeth did, without any danger, introduce a new religion into their kingdoms by different methods, and had it received by the people; but to bring about changes of this kind there are two things absolutely necessary—a depth of politics, and a lucky concurrence of circumstances, both of which were wanting here.

He could not without indignation reflect that so many kings of Europe were despotic; that those of Sweden and Denmark had lately become so; and, in a word, that Poland and England were the only kingdoms in the world where the liberty of the people subsisted at the same time with royalty. He was encouraged by Louis XIV. to render

himself absolute at home, and the Jesuits persuaded him to restore their religion, and with it their credit; but he took such unfortunate measures to compass this that at his first setting out he turned all hearts against him. He began as if he had already obtained the end he aimed at: he entertained a nuncio from the pope publicly at his court, with a train of Jesuits and Capuchin friars; he threw seven English bishops into prison, whom he should have won over by gentle means; deprived the city of London of its privileges, instead of indulging it with new ones; and overturned the laws with a high hand, which he should have secretly undermined; in a word, he acted with so little discretion that the cardinals at Rome used to say of him by way of jest that he ought to be excommunicated, as a person who was going about to destroy the little Catholic religion that remained in England.

Pope Innocent XI. conceived such indifferent hopes of James's projects that he never would grant a cardinal's hat, which that prince solicited for his confessor, Father Peters. This Jesuit was a hot-headed, intriguing man who, mad with the ambition of becoming a cardinal and primate of England, pushed his master to the brink of the precipice. The principal persons of the kingdom combined in secret to prevent the king's designs, and sent a deputation to the prince of Orange. They conducted their plot with such prudence and secrecy that the court was lulled into full security.

The prince of Orange fitted out a fleet, on board of which were to be embarked between fourteen and fifteen thousand men. This prince, who was only an illustrious private person, and had hardly five hundred thousand livres a year of his own estate, was nevertheless so happy in his politics that he saw himself master of money, a fleet, and the hearts of the states-general. He was truly a king in Holland by his skilful conduct, while James lost all regal power in England by his precipitate rashness.

It was at first stated that this armament was designed against France. The true destination was kept a profound secret, though intrusted to more than two hundred persons. Barillon, the French ambassador at London, a man of pleasure, and more conversant in the intrigues of James's mistresses than those of Europe, was the first imposed upon. Louis XIV., however, was not to be thus deceived; he saw what was going forward, and offered his assistance to his friend and ally, who, thinking himself secure, rejected that aid which he afterward solicited when it was too late, and the prince of Orange's fleet was under sail. He had been wanting to himself, and he now found everything fail him at once. He in vain wrote to the emperor Leopold; that prince returned for answer, "Nothing has befallen you but what we had foretold." He depended on his fleet, but his ships suffered those of the enemy to pass them. He might, however, have defended himself by land; he had an army of twenty thousand men, and if he had led them on without giving them time for reflection, it is probable they would have done their duty; but instead of that, he gave them leisure to fix their determination. Several of his general officers abandoned him, and among the rest the famous Churchill, who afterward proved as fatal to Louis as he had done to James, and became so illustrious under the name of the duke of Marlborough. He was the favorite of James, his creature, brother of his mistress, and a lieutenant-general in his army; notwithstanding which he left him, and went over to the prince of Orange at his camp. James saw himself abandoned by his son-in-law, the prince of Denmark, and even by his own daughter, the princess Anne.

And now finding himself attacked and pursued by one of his sons-in-law, abandoned by the other, deserted by his own daughters and bosom friends, and hated even by those of his subjects who were of his own party, he looked upon his fortune as desperate; and, without waiting for the issue of a battle, resolved upon flight, the last resource of a vanquished prince. At length, after being stopped in his flight by the populace, ill-treated by them, and carried back to London, receiving submissively the orders of the prince of Orange in his own palace, seeing his guard relieved by that prince's, without the least resistance, driven from his house, and made a prisoner at Rochester, he took advantage of the liberty purposely given him to quit his kingdom, and sought an asylum in France.

This was the epoch of the true English liberty. The nation, represented by its parliament, fixed the long-contested limits of the royal prerogative, and the privileges of the people; and having prescribed to the prince of Orange the conditions on which he was to reign, chose him for their king jointly with his wife, Mary, the daughter of King James. From that time this prince was acknowledged by the greater part of Europe as the lawful king of England, by the name of William III., and the deliverer of that nation; but in France they considered him only as the prince of Orange, the usurper of the dominions of his father-in-law.

In January, 1689, the fugitive king came with his wife, the daughter of the duke of Modena, and their son, the prince of Wales, as yet an infant, to implore the protection of Louis XIV. The queen of England, who arrived a little before her husband, was astonished at the splendor with which the French monarch was surrounded, and that profusion of magnificence which she beheld at Versailles; and still more so at the reception she met with from the king, who went as far as Chatou to meet her. "I now do you a melancholy service, madam," said he, "I hope, before very long, to render you one more considerable and fortunate." He then conducted her to the palace of St. Germain, where she met with the same attendance as the queen of France herself would have had, and was furnished with everything that ministers to convenience or luxury; presents of all kinds, in gold, silver, plate, jewels, and rich stuffs.

Among other presents she found a purse of ten thousand louis d'or laid on her toilet. The same attention was paid to her husband, who arrived just one day after her; he had six hundred thousand francs a year settled on him for the expenses of his household, besides an infinite number of presents which were made him. He had the king's own officers and guards. But this noble reception was little, in comparison with the preparations which were made for restoring him to his throne. Never did monarch appear so grand as Louis on this occasion, and James seemed as mean. Those of the court and city, by whose opinions the reputations of men are decided, conceived very little esteem for him. He saw nobody but Jesuits. He alighted at their college in the Rue St. Antoine in Paris; he told them that he was a Jesuit as well as themselves; and, what is still more extraordinary, he said the truth. He had got himself admitted into this order with certain ceremonies, by four English Jesuits, when he was only duke of York. This weakness of mind in a prince, joined to the manner in which he had lost his crown, rendered him so despicable that the courtiers diverted themselves every day with making songs about him. He was driven from England and ridiculed in France, where no one gave him any credit for being a Catholic. The archbishop of

Rheims, brother of Louvois, the minister, said openly in his antechamber at St. Germain: “There’s a good man, who has given up three kingdoms for a mass.” From Rome he received only indulgences and pasquinades. In a word, throughout the whole of this revolution, his religion was of so little service to him that when the prince of Orange, who was the head of the Calvinists, set sail to go and dethrone his father-in-law, the Catholic king’s minister at The Hague ordered masses to be said for the success of his expedition.

In the midst of the humiliations which befell this fugitive prince, and the liberality of Louis XIV. toward him, it was a spectacle worthy of attention to see James touching for the king’s evil in the little convent of the English nuns—whether the kings of England have arrogated this singular privilege to themselves, as pretenders to the crown of France, or that this ceremony has been established among them since the time of the first Edward.

The king soon sent him over to Ireland, where the Roman Catholics still formed a strong party; a squadron of thirteen ships of the first rate lay in Brest road, ready to carry him over. All the officers, courtiers, and even the priests who had repaired to James at St. Germain, had their passage to Brest defrayed at the French king’s expense. An ambassador—M. d’Avaux—was nominated to attend the dethroned king, and followed him in great state. Arms and ammunition of all kinds were put on board the fleet, and every sort of utensil, from the meanest to the most valuable. The king went to St. Germain to take his leave of him; where, for the last present, he gave him his own suit of armor, and embracing him affectionately, said: “The best thing I can wish you is never to see you here again.” James had scarcely landed in Ireland with this great preparation, when he was followed by twenty-three more large ships, and a prodigious number of transports, under the command of Château-Renaud. This fleet having, on May 12, 1689, engaged and dispersed the English squadron, which attempted to oppose its passage, and landed the troops in safety, on its return fell in with and took seven Dutch merchantmen, and came back to Brest victorious over the English, and laden with the spoils of the Dutch.

Shortly after, in March, 1690, a third supply set sail from the harbors of Brest, Toulon, and Rochefort. The ports of Ireland and the English Channel were covered with French ships. At length Tourville, vice-admiral of France, with seventy-two sail of large ships, fell in with the English and Dutch fleet of sixty sail, and a fight ensued which lasted ten hours; on this occasion Tourville, Château-Renaud, d’Estrées, and Nemond signalized themselves by their courage and skill, and reflected honor on the French navy, to which it had till then been a stranger. The English and Dutch, who till then had been masters of the ocean, and from whom the French had but a little time before learned the art of fighting their ships in line of battle, were totally defeated. Seventeen of their ships dismasted, or rendered useless, were run ashore and burned by themselves; the rest took refuge in the Thames, or on the banks of Holland. In this whole engagement the French lost but one small vessel. And now, what Louis had been wishing for upward of twenty years, and which seemed so little probable, came to pass; he had the empire of the sea, an empire which indeed was but of short duration. The enemy’s ships of war fled before his fleets; Seignelay, who dared to attempt the greatest things, brought the galleys of Marseilles upon the main ocean;

and the seacoast of England beheld this kind of vessel for the first time; by the help of these galleys a descent was made at Tynemouth, and upward of thirty merchant-ships burned in that bay. The privateers of St. Malo and the new harbor of Dunkirk enriched themselves and the state by continual prizes. In a word, for the space of two years there was not a ship to be seen on the sea but those of France.

King James did not second in Ireland these great efforts made by Louis in his favor. He had with him nearly six thousand French, and fifteen thousand Irish soldiers. The river Boyne ran between his army and King William's: this river was fordable, the water not being higher than the men's shoulders; but after it was passed there was a deep marsh to cross before they could attack the Irish army, after which a steep ground presented itself, which formed a kind of natural intrenchment. William made his army pass the river in three places, and began the battle in July, 1690. The Irish, who are known to be such good soldiers in France and Spain, have always behaved ill in their own country. There are certain nations which seem made to be subject to another; the English have always been superior to the Irish in genius, riches, and arms. Ireland has never been able to throw off the English yoke since first subdued by an English nobleman. The French stood their ground at the battle of the Boyne; the Irish gave way and fled. King James, who had not once made his appearance during the engagement, either at the head of the French or Irish, was the first to retreat, and yet he had given proofs of great courage on other occasions; but there are times when valor is lost in dispiritedness. King William having had his shoulder grazed by a cannon-ball before the battle, it was reported and believed in France that he was killed. This false report was received in Paris with a scandalous and indecent joy. The citizens and populace, encouraged by some of the under magistrates, made illuminations, rang the bells, and, in several quarters of the town, they burned figures made of osier, to represent the prince of Orange, in the same manner as they burn the pope in London. The cannon of the Bastille were fired, not by the king's order, but through the indiscreet zeal of the commandant. It might be supposed, from these great marks of satisfaction, and from what is said by a number of writers, that this mad joy at the supposed death of an enemy was the effect of the great dread they had of him. Almost every writer, French and English, has observed that these rejoicings were the greatest panegyric that could be made on William III. Nevertheless, if we only consider the circumstances of the times, and the spirit which then reigned, we shall presently discover that these transports of joy were not produced by fear. The lower class of citizens and the populace know not what it is to fear an enemy, unless when he threatens their city. Far from dreading the name of William III., the common people in France were so unjust as to despise him. He had almost always been beaten by French generals. The vulgar were ignorant how much real glory that prince had acquired even in his defeats. William, the victor of James in Ireland, did not yet appear, in the eyes of the French, an enemy worthy of Louis XIV. The people of Paris, who idolized their monarch, thought him absolutely invincible. The rejoicings then were not the effect of fear, but hatred; most of the Parisians, who were born under the reign of Louis, and moulded to despotic sway, looked upon a king at that time as a demigod, and a usurper as a sacrilegious monster. The common people, who had seen James going every day to mass, detested William as a heretic. The idea of a son-in-law and a daughter, Protestants, driving their father, a Catholic, from his throne, and reigning in his stead, together with that of an enemy to their king,

transported the Parisians to a degree of fury; but prudent people were of a more moderate way of thinking.

James returned to France, leaving his rival to gain new battles in Ireland, and settle himself on the throne. The French fleets were then employed in bringing back their countrymen, who had fought to no purpose, and the Irish Roman Catholics, who, being extremely poor in their own country, chose to go over to France and subsist upon the king's liberality.

Fortune had apparently very little share in any part of this revolution, from the beginning to the end. The characters of William and James did everything. Those who delight to trace the causes of events in the conduct of men will remark that King William, after his victory, caused a general amnesty to be published; and that King James, on the contrary, on his way through a little town called Galway, hanged some of the inhabitants, who had advised shutting the gates against him. Of two men behaving in this manner, we may easily perceive who would be more likely to prevail.

There were still some towns in Ireland that remained in James's interest, and among the rest Limerick, in which there were above twelve thousand soldiers. The French king, who still persevered in supporting James's desperate fortunes, ordered three thousand regular troops to be transported to Limerick; and by an additional generosity he sent all provisions necessary for the maintenance of a numerous garrison. Forty transport vessels, under the convoy of twelve ships of war, carried over every needful supply of workmen's tools, carriages, engineers, gunners, bombardiers, with two hundred masons, a number of saddles, bridles, and harnesses for upward of twenty thousand horse; cannon with their carriages; muskets, pistols, and swords for twenty-six thousand men; besides provisions and clothing, even to shoes. Limerick, though besieged, being thus abundantly furnished with supplies of every kind, hoped to see its king fight in its defence; but James not appearing, Limerick surrendered, and the French ships returned once more to the coast of Ireland, and brought back to France about twenty thousand soldiers and inhabitants.

What is perhaps more extraordinary than all the rest is, that Louis was not discouraged by these continued disappointments; and though he had a difficult war to support against the greatest part of Europe, he nevertheless endeavored once more to change the fortune of the unhappy king of England, by the decisive stroke of making a descent in England with twenty thousand men which were assembled between Cherbourg and La Hogue. More than three hundred transport vessels lay ready to receive them at Brest. Tourville, with forty-four capital ships, cruised off the coast of Normandy to wait for them. D'Estrées arrived in the port of Toulon with thirty ships more, on July 29, 1692. As there are some misfortunes which arise from bad conduct, so there are others that can only be imputed to fortune. The wind, which was at first favorable to d'Estrées' squadron, changed, and made it impossible for him to join Tourville, who with his forty-four ships was attacked by the combined fleets of England and Holland, consisting of nearly a hundred sail: the French were obliged to yield to superior numbers, but not till after an obstinate fight of ten hours. Russell, the English admiral, pursued him for two days. Fourteen large ships, of which there were two that carried one hundred and four guns, ran ashore, and the captains set fire to

them, to prevent their being burned by the enemy. King James, who was a spectator of this disaster, from the neighboring shore, saw all his hopes at once swallowed up.

This was the first check which had been given to the power of Louis XIV. at sea. Seignelay, who after the death of Colbert, his father, had continued to improve the French navy, died in 1690. Pontchartrain, who had been raised from the place of first president of Brittany to that of secretary for the marine department, did not suffer it to decay under his jurisdiction. The same spirit still continued in the administration. France had as many ships at sea after the fatal blow at La Hogue as she had before; for Tourville commanded a fleet of sixty ships of the line, and d'Estrées one of thirty, exclusive of those which were in harbor; and not more than four years afterward—in 1696—the king fitted out another armament, still more formidable than any of the former ones, to transport James over to England, at the head of twenty thousand French. But this fleet only made its appearance on the coast, for the measures of James's party in London were as ill concerted as those of his protector were well laid in France.

The dethroned king's party had now no hope left but in hatching plots against the life of his rival; and almost all those who were concerned in these attempts suffered by the hands of the executioner: besides, it is more than probable that, had they succeeded, he would never have recovered his kingdom. He passed the remainder of his days at St. Germain, where he lived on Louis's bounty, and a pension of seventy thousand francs, which he was mean-spirited enough to receive privately from his daughter Mary, who had been accessory in dethroning him. He died at St. Germain in the year 1700. Some Irish Jesuits pretended to assert that miracles were performed at his tomb. They even talked at Rome of canonizing after his death a prince whom they had abandoned when living.

Few princes were more unhappy than James; nor have we an example in history of a family for so long a time unfortunate. The first of the kings of Scotland, his ancestors, who bore the name of James, after having been detained for eighteen years a prisoner in England, was murdered, together with his queen, by his own subjects. James II., the son of this prince, was killed in battle against the English, at nineteen years of age. James III., after being imprisoned by his subjects, was slain by the rebels in fight. James IV. fell in a battle which he lost. Mary Stuart, his granddaughter, after being driven from her throne, and forced to take refuge in England, where she languished eighteen years in prison, was at length condemned to die by English judges, and lost her head on a scaffold; Charles I., grandson of this Mary, and king of England and Scotland, was sold by the Scots, sentenced to death by the English, and executed publicly as a traitor. His son, James, the subject of this chapter, was driven from three kingdoms, and, to crown the misfortunes of the family, even the birth of his son was disputed. This son, by the efforts he made to recover the throne of his fathers, brought many of his friends to an untimely end; and of late days we have seen Prince Charles Edward, in whom the virtues of his ancestors and the valor of King John Sobieski, his grandfather by the mother's side, were in vain united, performing exploits, and suffering calamities almost beyond the reach of credit. If anything can justify those who believe in an unavoidable fatality, it must be the continued series of misfortunes which have befallen the family of the Stuarts for over three hundred years.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONTINENT WHILE WILLIAM III. WAS INVADING ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND, TILL THE YEAR 1697—BURNING OF THE PALATINATE—VICTORIES OF MARSHALS CATINAT AND LUXEMBOURG.

Not having been willing to break in upon the chain of affairs in England in the preceding chapter, I now return to what passed on the continent.

While Louis was thus forming a maritime force that had never been exceeded by any state, he had to make head against the emperor and princes of the empire, Spain, the two maritime powers of England and Holland become both more formidable under one chief, Savoy, and almost all Italy. One such enemy as England and Spain would have been quite sufficient in former times to ruin France; and yet all of them united would not now make any impression upon her. The king had almost constantly five different armies on foot during the course of this war; sometimes six, but never less than four. The armies in Germany and Flanders frequently amounted to one hundred thousand effective men. The frontier places were at the same time provided with garrisons. Louis had four hundred and fifty thousand men in arms, including the marine troops. The Turkish Empire, so powerful in Europe, never had so great a number; and even the Roman Empire had not more; nor were there ever so many wars carried on at a time. Those who blame Louis XIV. for having made himself so many enemies cannot but admire the measures which he took to defend himself, and even to be beforehand with his enemies.

These had not as yet entirely declared themselves, nor were they all united. The prince of Orange had not yet sailed from Texel on his expedition against his father-in-law, when France had armies upon the frontiers of Holland, and on the borders of the Rhine. The king had sent his son, the dauphin, who was called Monseigneur, into Germany, with an army of twenty thousand men. This prince was gentle in his manners, modest in his deportment, and seemed greatly to resemble his mother. He was then twenty-seven years old, and this was the first time he had been intrusted with a command, after his behavior had given sufficient proofs that he would not make an ill use of his power. The king spoke to him in public thus, at his departure: “My son, in sending you to command my armies, I give you an opportunity of making your merit known; go and display it to all Europe, that when I depart this life it may not be perceived that the king is dead.”

The prince had a special commission for this command, as if he had been only a private general whom the king had made choice of. The king’s letters were directed “To our son, the dauphin, our lieutenant-general, commanding our armies in Germany.”

Everything had been so ordered and disposed beforehand, that the son of Louis XIV. who assisted in this expedition with his name and presence, might not be apt to meet with an affront. Marshal de Duras had in fact the command of the army. Bouflers had a body of troops on this side of the Rhine, and Marshal d'Humières another near Cologne, to watch the movements of the enemy. Heidelberg and Mentz were taken: the siege of Philippsburg, which is always the first step to be taken when the French make war in Germany, was already begun, under the inspection of Vauban. Such matters as were not in his department fell to the share of Catinat, then lieutenant-general, a man capable of everything, and formed for all exploits. Monseigneur arrived six days after the trenches had been opened. He exactly observed his father's conduct, exposing his person as much as was necessary, but never rashly; treating everyone with affability, and extending his liberality even to the private soldier. The king felt a sincere joy in having a son who thus imitated, without exceeding him, and who made himself beloved by everyone, without giving his father any occasion to fear him.

Philippsburg was taken in nineteen days, and Mannheim in three; Frankenthal surrendered in two; and Spires, Trier, Worms, and Oppenheim threw open their gates at the first approach of the French.

The king had resolved to make a desert of the Palatinate as soon as those towns were taken. His design in this was rather to cut off all means of subsistence from the enemy, than to take vengeance on the elector, whose only crime was that of having done his duty in joining with the rest of Germany against France. An order came to the army from the king, signed Louvois, to reduce the whole country to ashes. The French generals were then obliged to obey; and though it was in the very midst of winter, caused notice to be sent to the inhabitants of all these flourishing towns, and the villages round about, and to the masters of above fifty castles, to quit their dwellings; that they were going to destroy everything with fire and sword. Upon this dreadful summons, men, women, old people, and children, hurried out in the utmost haste: some of whom wandered up and down in the fields, and the rest took refuge in neighboring countries, while the soldiery, who always exceed commands of rigor, and seldom or never execute those of clemency, burned and pillaged their country. They began with Mannheim, the residence of the electors, whose palaces they levelled to the ground, as well as the private houses of the citizens; broke open their very tombs, thinking to satisfy their avarice with the immense treasures they expected to find there, and scattered their ashes abroad. This was the second time that this beautiful country had been laid waste by Louis's orders; but the burning of two cities and twenty villages by Turenne was but a spark in comparison to this conflagration. All Europe was struck with horror at this action. The very officers who executed it were ashamed of being the instruments of such cruelty. The blame was thrown on the marquis of Louvois, who had contracted that insensibility of heart which arises from a long administration. He was certainly the person who advised this proceeding; but Louis had it in his power to reject or follow his counsel. Had the king been a witness to this spectacle, he would have gone in person to extinguish the flames. From his palace in Versailles, where he was surrounded by pleasures, he signed the destruction of a whole country, because he there beheld only his own glory and the fatal right of conquest in the order he gave; but had he been nearer to the spot, he would have seen

all the horror of it. The nations, who till then had only blamed his ambition, and admired his other qualifications, now cried out against his cruelty, and even condemned his politics: for had his enemies penetrated into his dominions, as he did into theirs, they would have set all the cities in his kingdom on fire.

Nor was this a very remote danger; Louis, in covering his frontiers with one hundred thousand soldiers, taught Germany to make the same efforts. This country, being better peopled than France, may be able to raise larger armies. They have more difficulty indeed in raising, getting together, and paying them, and they are longer before they take the field; but their strict discipline and patience under fatigues make them at the end of a campaign as formidable as the French are at the beginning. The army of the empire was commanded by the duke of Lorraine, Charles V. This prince, who was still kept out of his dominions by Louis XIV., had preserved the empire for Leopold, and given him the victory over the Turks and Hungarians. He now came, with the elector of Brandenburg, to put a check to the success of the French king's arms. He retook Bonn and Mentz, two towns which were very badly fortified, but defended in a manner which was esteemed a model for the future defence of places. Bonn did not surrender till after a siege of nearly four months, and the baron d'Asfeld who commanded there, was mortally wounded in a general assault.

The marquis d'Uxelles, afterward marshal of France, a most prudent and wary general, had made such excellent dispositions for the defence of Mentz, that his garrison suffered hardly any fatigue in the great service it performed: besides the care he took to provide for the safety of the place, he made twenty-one sallies on the enemy, and killed over five thousand of their men. He sometimes made one or two sallies in open daylight: in short, he maintained the place for seven weeks, and surrendered at length only for want of powder. This vigorous defence deserves a place in history, both on account of its own merit, and the approbation it met with from the world. Paris, that immense city, whose indolent inhabitants pretend to judge of everything, and who have so many ears and tongues, with so few eyes, looked upon d'Uxelles as a timorous man, and deficient in judgment. When this great commander, on whom every good officer will bestow just praise, after his return from the campaign, went to the theatre, the populace hooted him, and cried out "Mentz!" upon which he was obliged to retire, not without heartily contemning, as every wise man must, a people who are such bad judges of merit, and whose praise, nevertheless, is so greedily sought after.

About the same time—June, 1689—Marshal d'Humières was beaten at Walcourt, on the Sambre, in the Netherlands, by the prince of Waldeck; but this check, though it hurt his reputation, very little affected the French arms. Louvois, whose creature and friend he was, found himself under the necessity of taking from him the command of this army, which was conferred on Marshal Luxembourg, whom neither the king nor Louvois liked; but their regard for the state got the better of their aversion to the man, and they made use of his services, though with some repugnance. He was therefore appointed commander in the Netherlands. Louvois was remarkable for correcting a too hasty choice, or for making a good one. Catinat was sent with a command into Italy. Marshal de Lorges defended himself everywhere in Germany. The duke de Noailles had some little success in Catalonia; but under Luxembourg in Flanders, and

Catinat in Italy, there was a continual succession of victories. These two generals were at that time esteemed the greatest in Europe.

The marshal duke of Luxembourg, in some parts of his character, resembled the great Condé, whose pupil he was in the art of war. He had a fiery genius, a prompt execution, a quick discernment, a mind greedy for knowledge, but too extensive and irregular: he was continually engaged in intrigues with the ladies, always in love, and frequently beloved, though deformed and ill-favored, and had more of the qualifications of a hero than a wise man.

Catinat had an application and activity in his disposition that made him capable of everything, though he never piqued himself upon any one particular qualification. He would have been equally as good a minister and chancellor as he was a general. In the earlier part of his life he followed the law; but quitted that profession at the age of twenty-three, because he lost a cause in which he had justice on his side. He then took up arms, and was at first an ensign in the French guards. In the year 1667, at the attack on the counterscarp of Lille, he performed an action in the presence of the king, which required both understanding and courage. The king took notice of him, and this was the beginning of his good fortune. He rose by degrees, without making any interest: he was a philosopher in the midst of war and grandeur, those two fatal rocks to moderation; exempt from all kind of prejudice, without the affectation of appearing to despise them too much; and an utter stranger to gallantry and the arts of courts, but a sincere friend, and an honest man. He lived a professed foe to interest and vainglory, and was equally the philosopher in all respects at the hour of his death that he was through the course of his life.

Catinat commanded at that time in Italy, where he was opposed by Victor Amadeus, duke of Savoy; who was then a wise, politic, and still more unfortunate prince; a warrior of remarkable courage, who always led his own armies, and exposed his person like a common man; no one better understood that deceitful kind of war which is carried on in a mountainous and uneven country, such as his was; he was active, vigilant, a lover of order, but sometimes guilty of errors, both as a prince and a general. He is said to have committed an essential one in the bad manner in which he drew up his army in presence of that of Catinat. The French general took advantage of his mistake, and gained a complete victory over him, in sight of Saluzzo, near the abbey of Stafarola, from which that battle took its name. When there are a number of men killed on one side and hardly any on the other, it is a certain proof that the army which is beaten was drawn up on a ground where it must necessarily be overpowered. The French had only three hundred men killed, and the allied army, commanded by the duke of Savoy, more than four thousand. After this battle, all Savoy, except Montmêlian, submitted to the king. Catinat then marched into Piedmont, in 1691, forced the enemy's intrenchments near Susa; took that town, together with Villafranca, Montalban, Nice, deemed impregnable, Veillano, and Carmagnola, and returned to Montmélian, of which he made himself master after an obstinate siege.

After all these successes the ministry lessened the army which he commanded, and the duke of Savoy augmented his. Catinat, inferior in numbers to his conquered enemy, remained a long time on the defensive; but at length having received

reinforcements, he descended the Alps, near Marsala, and there, on Oct. 4, 1693, gained a second pitched battle which was the more glorious, as Prince Eugene of Savoy was then one of the enemy's generals.

At the other extremity of France, toward the Netherlands, Marshal Luxembourg gained the battle of Fleurus, and by the confession of all the officers, this victory was entirely owing to the superiority of genius in the French general over Prince Waldeck, who then commanded the allied army. Eight thousand men taken prisoners, six thousand killed, two hundred stands of colors, almost all the cannon and baggage, and the flight of the enemy, were sufficient proofs of the victory.

King William had just returned from his victory over his father-in-law. This great genius, ever fertile in resources, made more advantage of the defeat of his party than the French often did of their victories. He had been obliged to have recourse to intrigues and negotiations, to procure men and money sufficient to oppose a king who had only to say, "I will." Nevertheless, after the defeat at Fleurus—Sept. 19, 1691—he came to meet Marshal Luxembourg with an army as strong as that of the French.

They each consisted of about eighty thousand men; but the marshal had already invested Mons, when William thought the French had hardly left their winter quarters. Louis himself came to be present at the siege, and entered the town the ninth day after opening the trenches, in sight of the enemy's army. After that he returned to Versailles, and left Luxembourg to dispute the field during the whole campaign, which ended with the battle of Liège, a very extraordinary action, in which twenty-eight squadrons of the king's household troops and the gendarmerie defeated seventy-five squadrons of the enemy's army.

The king next repaired to the siege of Namur, the strongest place in the Netherlands, both by its situation, which is at the confluence of the Sambre and the Meuse, and by its citadel, which is built on rocks. He took the town in eight days, and the castles in twenty-two, while the duke of Luxembourg prevented King William from passing the Mehaigne, at the head of eighty thousand men, to raise the siege. After this conquest Louis returned again to Versailles, and Luxembourg still continued to make head against the enemy's force. Now it was that the battle of Steinkirk was fought, so famous for the art and courage displayed therein. A spy, whom the French king had sent to watch the motions of King William, was discovered, and compelled, before he was led to execution, to write false information to Marshal Luxembourg, who, immediately upon receipt of this intelligence, made such dispositions as must necessarily bring on a battle. His army was attacked at daybreak, while everyone was asleep, and one entire brigade cut to pieces before the general knew anything of the matter. Without the extremest diligence and bravery, all would have been lost.

It was not enough to be a great general to prevent a total defeat; it likewise required well-disciplined troops, capable of rallying in an instant, general officers sufficiently skilful to recover these troops from the disorder into which they were thrown, and willing to do their duty; for a single officer of rank who had a mind to take advantage

of the general confusion to cause his general's defeat might easily have done it without exposing himself to detection.

The marshal was then ill, a fatal circumstance, at a time when uncommon activity was required; but the greatness of the danger restored him to his strength: it was necessary to perform prodigies not to be overcome, and he performed them; he changed his ground, gave a field of battle to his army, which before had none, recovered the right wing, which was all in confusion, rallied his men three times, and three times charged at the head of the household troops, and all this in less than two hours. He had with him in his army the duke of Chartres, afterward regent of the kingdom, a grandson of France, who was then not above fifteen years old. He could be of no service in striking a decisive blow; but it contributed not a little to animate the soldiers, when they saw a grandson of France charging at the head of the king's household troops, and, though wounded in the fight, returning again to the charge.

A grandson and grandnephew of the great Condé both served in this army as lieutenant-generals; one of these was Louis of Bourbon; called Monsieur, the duke, and the other Armand, prince of Conti, both rivals in courage, wit, ambition, and fame. Monsieur was of a more austere disposition, and had perhaps more solid qualifications, and the prince of Conti more brilliant ones. Being both called by the public voice to the command of armies, they earnestly longed for that honor, which, however, they never obtained; because Louis, who was as well acquainted with their ambition as their merit, always remembered that the prince of Condé had made war against him.

The prince of Conti was the first who recovered the army from its confusion, by rallying some of the brigades, and making the rest advance. Monsieur did just the same, without standing in need of emulation. The duke of Vendôme, grandson of Henry IV., was also a lieutenant-general in this army; he had served ever since he was twelve years of age, and though he was then over forty, he had never yet commanded in chief. His brother, the grand prior, was by his side.

It was necessary that all these princes should put themselves at the head of the king's household troops in order to drive a body of English from an advantageous post, on which the success of the battle depended. The French household troops and the English were the best troops in the world. The slaughter was great; but the French, animated by the crowd of princes and young noblemen who fought about the general's person, at length carried the post; and when the English were defeated, the rest were obliged to yield.

Bouflers, who was afterward marshal of France, flew with a body of dragoons from a place where he was, at some distance from the field of battle, and his arrival completed the victory. King William, after having lost about seven thousand men, retired in as good order as he had attacked; and always beaten, and always formidable, he still kept the field. This victory, which was due to the valor of the young princes and the flower of the nobility of the kingdom, produced an effect at court, in the city, and in the provinces, that no former victory had ever done.

Monsieur, the duke, the prince of Conti, M. de Vendôme, and their friends, on their return home from this campaign, found the roads lined with people, whose acclamations and expressions of joy were carried even to a degree of madness. The women all strove to attract their regard. The men at that time wore lace cravats, which took some time and pains to adjust. The princes, having dressed themselves in a hurry, threw these cravats negligently about their necks. The ladies wore handkerchiefs made in this fashion, which they called Steinkirks. Every new toy was a Steinkirk. Any young man who happened to have been present at this battle was looked upon with delight. The populace followed the princes everywhere in crowds, and they were the more beloved because the court did not show them favor equal to their reputation and merit.

In the ensuing campaign the same general, the same princes, with the same troops, who had been surprised and yet victorious at Steinkirk, made a forced march of seven leagues, and came unexpectedly upon William at Neerwinden, and beat him. Neerwinden is a village near the Layette, a few leagues distant from Brussels. William had time to put his army in order of battle. Luxembourg and the princes carried the village, sword in hand, two different times, and the instant the marshal turned another way, the enemy retook it; at length the general and the princes carried it a third time, and the battle was won, on July 29, 1693. Few actions proved more bloody. There were about twenty thousand killed on both sides; the allies lost twelve thousand, and the French eight. On this occasion, it was said there was more room to sing *De profundis,* than *Te Deum.*

These numerous victories were productive of much glory, but few great advantages. The allies, though defeated at Fleurus, Steinkirk, and Neerwinden, had never been completely beaten; King William always made fine retreats; and, in a fortnight's time after one battle it was necessary to fight another with him to be master of the campaign. The cathedral of Paris was filled with colors taken from the enemy. The prince of Conti called Marshal Luxembourg "the Upholsterer of Notre Dame." Nothing was talked of but victories, and yet Louis XIV. had formerly conquered one-half of Holland and Flanders, and all Franche-Comté, without fighting a single battle; whereas now, after the greatest efforts and the most bloody victories, they could hardly force an entrance into the United Provinces; they could not even lay siege to Brussels.

Marshal de Lorges had also gained a considerable advantage over the allies near Spirebach, and had even taken the old duke of Würtemberg prisoner, and penetrated into his country; but, after having invaded it as a conqueror, he was obliged to quit it again. Monseigneur took and plundered the city of Heidelberg a second time, which the enemy had retaken, and after all was obliged to act upon the defensive against the imperialists.

Marshal Catinat, notwithstanding his great victory at Stafarde, and his having conquered Savoy, could not prevent the duke of that country from making an irruption into Dauphiny, nor, after his victory at Marsala, could he save the important city of Casale.

In Spain Marshal de Noailles gained a battle on the banks of the Ter, on May 27, 1694; he took Gironde and some small places; but his army was weak, and he was obliged, after his victory, to retire from before Barcelona. The French, everywhere victorious, and weakened by their successes, had a hydra to engage in the allies, that was continually rising up afresh. France began to find it difficult to raise recruits, and still more so to procure money. The rigor of the season, by which the fruits of the earth were at that time wholly destroyed, brought on a famine. Numbers perished for want, while the whole kingdom resounded with *Te Deums* and rejoicings. The spirit of confidence and superiority, which had been the soul of the French troops, began visibly to diminish. Louis XIV. no longer appeared at their head. Louvois was dead, and Barbésieux, his son, was generally disliked by them. To crown all, the death, in January, 1695, of Marshal Luxembourg, under whom they thought themselves invincible, seemed to put an end to the rapid victories of the French.

The art of bombarding towns with ships now turned upon its inventors; not that the engine called “Infernal,” with which the English attempted to burn St. Malo, and that failed of success, was of French invention; machines of this kind had been for a long time in use in Europe. It was the art of throwing bombs with as much certainty from a moving vessel as from the solid ground, that the French invented; and it was by this art that the English had from their ships bombarded the towns of Dieppe, Havre-de-Grâce, St. Malo, Dunkirk, and Calais; Dieppe, as being the most easy of access, was the place which suffered the most damage. This town, which was now so delightful on account of the regularity of its buildings, and which seems to owe its beauty to its misfortunes, was almost reduced to ashes. There were not above twenty houses beaten down and burned in Havre-de-Grâce; but the fortifications of the place were entirely destroyed. In this sense it is that the medal struck by the Dutch is true, notwithstanding that so many French writers have inveighed against its falsity. In the exergue we find these words in Latin: “The harbor of Havre burned and destroyed,” etc. This inscription does not tell us that the town was burned; that would have been false; it only says that the harbor was burned, which is true.

Soon afterward the French lost Namur, which they had taken. The nation had lavished encomiums on Louis XIV., for having conquered this place; and the most indecent sallies had been thrown out against King William for not having succored it with an army of eighty thousand men. William at length became master of it, by the same manner in which it had been lost. He attacked it in the face of an army much stronger than his own was at the time that Louis XIV. laid siege to it. He now met with new fortifications of Vauban’s raising. The French garrison which defended this town was an army of itself; for while they were preparing matters to invest it, Marshal Bouflers found means to throw himself into it with seven regiments of dragoons; so that Namur was not only defended by sixteen thousand men, but was daily in expectation of being relieved by an army of a hundred thousand.

Marshal Bouflers had a great share of merit, was an active and diligent general, and a good citizen, who had nothing so much at heart as the welfare of the service, to promote which he valued neither his pains nor his life. The marquis de Feuquières, in his memoirs, accuses him of several faults in the defence of the town and citadel, and even blames his conduct in the defence of Lille, by which he gained so much honor.

Those who have written the history of Louis XIV. have servilely copied Marquis de Feuquières in military matters, and Abbé de Choisi in private anecdotes. They could not know that Feuquières, who was an excellent officer, and perfectly well versed both in the theory and practice of war, was of a disposition as morose as discerning, and sometimes the Aristarchus, sometimes the Zoilus of generals. He alters facts, to have the pleasure of censuring; he complains of everyone, and everyone of him; he was esteemed the bravest man in Europe, because he slept quietly in the midst of a hundred thousand of his enemies. His merit not having been rewarded with the staff of marshal of France, he employed his talents too much against the servants of the state, which would have been extremely useful, had he been as mild and charitable as he was discerning, diligent, and bold.

He charged Marshal de Villeroi with a greater number of faults, and those more essential, than even Bouflers. Villeroi, at the head of twenty thousand men, was to have relieved Namur; but even had the two marshals, Villeroi and Bouflers, done everything, generally speaking, they might have done—which is very seldom the case—the situation of the ground was such that Namur could not be relieved, and must be taken sooner or later. An army of observation posted along the banks of the Mehaigne had prevented King William from bringing up his reinforcements; the same thing now necessarily happened to Marshal Villeroi.

Though Marshal Bouflers, the count de Guiscard, governor of the town, the count de Laumont du Châtelet, commandant of the infantry, and all the officers and soldiers in the place defended it with remarkable obstinacy and bravery, it retarded the capitulation only two days. When a town is besieged by a superior army, when the works are well carried on, and the season favorable, they can judge nearly within what time it will be taken, be the defence ever so vigorous. King William made himself master of the town and citadel in September, 1695, though not in so short a time as Louis XIV.

The king, while he was thus losing Namur, bombarded Brussels; a poor revenge, which he took on the emperor for his towns which had been bombarded by the English; all this occasioned a war equally ruinous and fatal to both parties.

One of the effects of human industry and fury, of these two centuries past, has been that of not confining the havoc of war to our own continent of Europe. We drain ourselves of men and money to carry destruction against each other in Asia and America. The Indians, whom we have compelled by force or artifice to admit our settlements among them, and the Americans, from whom we have wrested their continent, after having dyed it with their blood, look upon us as the foes of humankind, who came from the farthest part of the globe to butcher them, and afterward to destroy one another.

The French had no other colony in the East Indies but Pondicherry, which had been formed by Colbert with great pains, and at an immense expense, and whence no considerable advantage could be drawn for several years; the Dutch easily made themselves masters of it, and thus destroyed the trade of the French in the East Indies, almost in its infancy.

Our plantations in San Domingo were destroyed by the English, in 1695, and one of the Brest privateers laid waste theirs at Gambia, on the coast of Africa. The privateers of St. Malo carried fire and sword into the eastern part of Newfoundland, of which they were in possession; and our squadrons insulted their island of Jamaica, took and burned their shipping there, and ravaged the coast.

Pointis, commander of a squadron of ships of war and some privateers off America, sailed as far as the line, and surprised the town of Cartagena, the magazine and staple for the Spanish treasures, which come from Mexico, in May, 1697; the damage he did there was computed at twenty million livres, and the booty he got at about half that sum. There is always some deduction to be made from such calculations, but little or none from the grievous calamities occasioned by these glorious expeditions.

The French privateers, and especially Duguay-Trouin, were every day making prizes of the English and Dutch merchant ships. This man was very extraordinary in his way, and wanted only a numerous fleet to have acquired as great reputation as Dragut or Barbarossa. The enemy made less rich prizes from the French, because they had less to be taken. Our trade was greatly impaired by the death of Colbert and the war.

A general misery was the result of these expeditions by sea and land. Those who delight more in humanity than politics will readily observe that in this war Louis XIV. took up arms against his brother-in-law, the king of Spain, against the elector of Bavaria, to whose sister he had married his son, the dauphin, and against the elector palatine, whose country he ravaged, though his brother was married to the princess palatine. King James was driven from his throne by his son-in-law and his own daughter; and since that time we have seen the duke of Savoy in league against France, where he had one daughter a dauphiness, and against Spain, where another was queen. Most of the wars between Christian princes are, in some sort, civil wars.

The most criminal enterprise in all this war proved the only truly fortunate one; William was perfectly successful in England and Ireland; in other places the successes were more equal. When I call this a criminal undertaking, I do not examine whether the nation, after having shed the blood of the father, were right or wrong in banishing the son, and maintaining its religion and privileges; I only say that, if there is any justice on earth, the daughter and son-in-law of King James should not have driven him from his throne and kingdom.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XVI.

TREATY WITH SAVOY—MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE OF BURGUNDY—PEACE OF RYSWICK—STATE OF FRANCE AND EUROPE—DEATH AND LAST WILL OF CHARLES II., KING OF SPAIN.

France still maintained her superiority over all her enemies; some she had crushed, as the duke of Savoy and the elector palatine, and she carried the war to the frontiers of the others, like a powerful and robust body, fatigued with long resistance, and exhausted by its victories; a well-directed blow would have made her stagger. Whoever has a number of enemies at once can at last find safety only in their division, or in a peace. Louis XIV. obtained both.

Victor Amadeus, duke of Savoy, was a prince easily persuaded to break his engagements, when his interest was concerned; to him the court of France addressed itself. The count de Tessé, afterward marshal of France, an amiable and able man, of a genius formed for pleasing, which is the first qualification of a negotiator, had begun a private treaty at Turin; and Marshal Catinat, who was equally capable of making peace and war, put the finishing hand to the affair. There did not want two such able men to determine the duke of Savoy to accept of what was to his advantage; they restored him his country, gave him a sum of money, and proposed a marriage between the young duke of Burgundy, son of the heir apparent of France, and his daughter. Matters were soon agreed upon: in July, 1696, the duke and Catinat concluded the treaty at Our Lady of Loretto, whither they went under pretence of a pilgrimage of devotion, which, however, imposed on no one. Pope Innocent XIV. entered heartily into this negotiation. His view was to deliver Italy at once from the invasions of the French, and the taxes which the emperor was continually levying to pay his troops. It was thought necessary that the imperialists should evacuate Italy, and leave it neutral; this the duke of Savoy engaged himself by the treaty to observe. The emperor gave a flat denial at first; for the court of Vienna rarely came to a determination, but at the last extremity. Upon the emperor's refusal, the duke joined his troops to the French army; and, from generalissimo to the emperor, became, in less than a month, generalissimo to Louis XIV. His daughter, who was only eleven years of age, was carried into France to be married to the duke of Burgundy, who was thirteen. After the defection of the duke of Savoy, it happened, as at the Peace of Nimeguen, that each of the allies thought proper to treat. The emperor agreed to leave Italy neutral. The Dutch proposed the castle of Ryswick, near The Hague, as the place for holding the conferences for a general peace. Four armies, which the king had on foot, contributed not a little to bring matters to a speedy conclusion. There were eighty thousand men in Flanders under Villeroi; Marshal de Choiseul had forty thousand men on the banks of the Rhine; Catinat had another army in Piedmont; and the duke of Vendôme, who had at length attained the rank of general, after having passed through all the degrees, from that of the king's guard, like a private soldier of fortune, commanded a body of

troops in Catalonia, where he gained a battle, and took Barcelona. These new efforts and successes proved the most effectual mediation. The court of Rome offered its arbitration, which was refused, as at Nimeguen. Charles XI., king of Sweden, was the mediator. At length the peace was concluded in October, 1697; no longer with that haughty superiority and those advantageous conditions which had distinguished the greatness of Louis XIV., but with a condescension and concession of rights on his side, that equally amazed the French and the allies. It was long believed that this peace had been concerted with the deepest policy.

It was pretended that the French king's grand design was, what it certainly should have been, to prevent the entire succession of the vast Spanish monarchy from devolving upon the other branch of the house of Austria. It is said he entertained hopes that the house of Bourbon might at least come in for a share in the dismemberment, and perhaps one day succeed to the whole. The formal renunciations made by his wife and mother seemed no other than trivial agreements, which should give way to new conjunctures. In this light, to aggrandize the house of France, it was necessary to show some moderation toward Europe; not to incense so many powers, who were still full of suspicions. The peace gave him time to form new alliances, settle the finances, gain over those whom he had occasion for, and to form new bodies of militia in the kingdom. It was necessary to give up something, in hope of obtaining much more.

These were thought to be the private motives of the Peace of Ryswick, which in the event actually procured the throne of Spain for the grandson of Louis XIV. This notion, probable as it may appear, is not, however, true; neither Louis XIV. nor his council had the views that they should have had in this affair. It is a strong example of the connection of the revolutions in this world, which govern men, by whom they seem to be conducted. The obvious interest of quickly possessing Spain, or at least a part of that monarchy, had not the least influence in the Peace of Ryswick; this is acknowledged by Marquis de Torci, in his manuscript memoirs. They made peace merely because they were weary of the war, and this war itself had been carried on without any particular object; at least on the side of the allies: it was only from the idle desire of humbling the greatness of Louis; and in that monarch it was merely the consequence of that greatness which would not hearken to concessions. King William had drawn over to his cause the emperor, the empire, Spain, the United Provinces, and Savoy; Louis XIV. found himself too far engaged to recede. The finest part of Europe had been laid waste, because the French king made use of the advantages he gained by the Peace of Nimeguen in too haughty a manner. The league was formed rather against his person than the kingdom of France; the king thought himself secure in the reputation he had gained by arms, and was now desirous of adding that of moderation; the weakness which began to be sensibly felt in the finances made him more ready to adopt such a method.

The political affairs were debated in the king's council, and the resolutions taken there; Marquis de Torci, then young, was only charged with the execution of them. The whole council was for peace, especially the duke of Beauvilliers, who set forth the miseries of the people with such energy, that Madame de Maintenon was affected by it, and the king himself appeared not insensible; and it made the more impression,

as they had fallen from that flourishing state to which the minister Colbert had raised the kingdom. The great establishments of all kinds had cost immense sums, and no economy had been used to retrieve the confusion occasioned by these extraordinary expenses. This inward calamity astonished everyone, because it had never been felt since Louis XIV. had governed alone: these were the true causes of the Peace of Ryswick, though doubtless some virtuous sentiments had an influence in it. Those who think that kings and ministers incessantly, and without bounds, sacrifice everything to their ambition, are no less mistaken than he who thinks they continually sacrifice to worldly happiness.

The king then restored to the Spaniards all those places near the Pyrenees that he had taken from them, and likewise the conquests he had made in Flanders during the last war, as Luxemburg, Mons, Ath, and Courtrai. He acknowledged William III. lawful king of England, whom he had till then treated as prince of Orange, a tyrant, and an usurper. He promised not to assist his enemies for the future; and King James, whose name was left out in the treaty, remained at St. Germain with the empty title of king, and a pension from Louis XIV. Thus sacrificed by his protector to the necessity of the times, and already forgotten in Europe, he ceased to publish any new manifestoes.

The sentences which the courts of Breisach and Metz had awarded against so many sovereigns, and the reunions made at Alsace, those monuments of a dangerous power and pride, were abolished, and the bailiwicks that had been seized upon by form of law were restored to their right masters.

Besides these concessions, Freiburg, Breisach, Kehl, and Philippsburg were restored to the empire; the king even submitted to destroy the fortress of Strasburg on the Rhine, Fort Louis, Traerbach, and Mount Royal, works on which the great Vauban had exhausted his art, and the king his treasury. Europe was surprised, and the French displeased, to see Louis XIV. make peace as if he had been conquered. Harlai, Créci, and Callières, who signed this peace, dared not show themselves either at court or in the city; they were loaded with reproaches and derision, as if they had taken a single step they had not been ordered by the ministry; they were reproached by the court with having betrayed the honor of the French nation, and afterward they were applauded for having, by this treaty, prepared the way for the succession to the Spanish monarchy: but in truth, they deserved neither censure nor praise.

It was by this peace, that France at length restored Lorraine to the family which had been in possession of it for more than seven hundred years. Duke Charles V., the prop of the empire, and conqueror of the Turks, was dead; his son Leopold, at the Peace of Ryswick, took possession of his sovereignty, with the loss indeed of his real privileges, he not being allowed to have ramparts to his capital; but they could not deprive him of a much more noble privilege, that of doing good to his subjects; a privilege of which no prince ever made a better use than himself.

It were to be wished that latest posterity may be informed, that one of the least powerful sovereigns in Europe was he who did the most good to his people. He found Lorraine a desert waste; he repeopled and enriched it, and preserved it in peace, while the rest of Europe was desolated by war. He had always the prudence to keep well

with France, and to make himself beloved in the empire; happily preserving that just medium, which hardly any prince, without power, has ever been able to maintain between two great potentates. He procured his people plenty, to which they long had been strangers; his noblesse, reduced to the last degree of wretchedness, were raised to a state of opulence, solely by his benefactions. If he saw the family seat of a gentleman in ruins, he rebuilt it at his own expense; he paid their debts, portioned out their daughters, and lavished presents with that art of giving which raises them even above benefactions; bestowing his gifts with the magnificence of a prince, and the politeness of a friend. The arts, which were held in the highest honor throughout his little province, produced a new circulation, which makes the riches of a state. His court was formed after the model of that of France, and the traveller hardly perceived a change of place in going to Lunéville from Versailles. After the example of Louis XIV. he advanced the belles-lettres; he established a kind of university, without pedantry, at Lunéville, where the young German nobility went to be formed. The true sciences were there taught in schools, where the theory of natural philosophy was demonstrated to the eye by the most curious apparatus. He sought out men of talents even in the shops and in the woods, brought them to light, and was himself their patron and rewarder. In a word, the whole business of his reign was to procure his nation tranquillity, riches, knowledge, and pleasure: “I would quit my sovereignty to-morrow,” said he, “if I could no longer do good.” Accordingly he tasted the satisfaction of being beloved, and I myself saw, long after his death, his subjects shed tears in mentioning his name. When he died he left an example to be followed by the greatest kings; but he could not, during his life, be instrumental in preparing the way for his son to the throne of the empire.

At the time that Louis XIV. was managing the affair of the Peace of Ryswick, which was to give him the Spanish succession, the throne of Poland became vacant. This was the only regal crown, then elective, in the world; natives and foreigners had equally a right to pretend to it, but to retain it required either a merit sufficiently striking, and properly supported by intrigues, to engage the suffrages—as was the case with John Sobieski, the late king—or else, money enough to buy the kingdom, which is almost always put up at auction.

The abbé, afterward cardinal, Polignac, had at first the art to engage the suffrages in favor of the prince of Conti, known by the valiant actions he had performed at Steinkirk and Neerwinden. He never had the command in chief, nor was he admitted into the king’s councils. The duke of Bourbon had an equal reputation as a warrior, the duke of Vendôme a still greater, and yet his fame surpassed that of all others, by the great art of pleasing, and making himself of consequence, which no one possessed in a more eminent degree than himself. Polignac, whose talent lay in persuasion, determined the minds of the people in his favor; and, by dint of eloquence and promises, counterbalanced the money which Augustus, elector of Saxony, lavished among them. Louis Francis, prince of Conti, was elected king by the majority of the nation, and proclaimed by the primate of the kingdom, on June 17, 1697. Augustus was elected two hours afterward by another party, inferior in numbers; but he was a sovereign prince, and powerful, and had a body of troops in readiness on the frontiers of Poland. The prince of Conti was absent, destitute of money, men and power, and had nothing on his side but his name, and Cardinal de Polignac. It was necessary that

Louis XIV. should either prvent his accepting the crown, or furnish him with proper assistance to get the better of his competitor. It was thought that the French ministry did too much in sending the prince of Conti over, and too little in furnishing him with only a small squadron of ships and a few bills of exchange, with which he arrived in the road of Dantzic; this was acting with that lukewarm policy which begins an affair only to quit it again. They would not even receive the prince at Dantzic, and his bills of exchange were protested. The intrigues of the pope and the emperor, and the money and troops of Saxony, had already secured the crown on his rival's head; he returned then with the glory of having been chosen king, and France had the mortification of having made it appear that she was not sufficiently powerful to make a king of Poland.

This disgrace which befell the prince of Conti did not interrupt the peace which subsisted between the Christian powers of the North. The south of Europe was soon afterward restored to its tranquillity by the Peace of Ryswick.

There was no longer any war but that which the Turks carried on against Germany, Poland, Venice, and Russia; and here the Christians, though under a bad administration, and divided among themselves, had the superiority. The battle of Zenta, in 1695, in which Prince Eugene beat the Grand Seignior in person, and remarkable by the deaths of the grand vizier, seventeen pashas, and upward of twenty thousand Turks, humbled the Ottoman pride, and brought about the Peace of Carlowitz, in 1699, in which the Turks submitted to the laws imposed by the conquerors. The Venetians had the Morea, the Muscovites Azov, the Poles Kamenets-Podolski, and the emperor Transylvania. All Christendom was then happy and tranquil, the sound of war was no longer heard, either in Asia or Africa, and the whole world was at peace during the last two years of the seventeenth century, an epoch, alas! of too short duration.

The public calamities were soon awakened again. The peace of the North was disturbed in the year 1700, by two men the most extraordinary the world ever produced; one was Czar Peter Alexeievitch, emperor of Russia, the other young Charles XII., king of Sweden. Czar Peter, though born a barbarian, became a great man, and by his genius and surprising labors, was the reformer, or rather founder, of his empire. Charles XII., more courageous than the czar, and yet less serviceable to his subjects, formed to command soldiers but not nations, was the first hero of his age, but died with the character of an imprudent king. The desolation the North underwent during a war of eighteen years, owed its rise to the ambitious politics of the czar and the kings of Denmark and Poland, who wanted to take advantage of the youth of Charles XII. to strip him of a part of his dominions; but Charles, at the age of sixteen, conquered all three. He was the terror of the world, and was already esteemed a hero, at an age in which other men have hardly finished their studies. He was for nine years the most formidable monarch in the world, and for nine years the most miserable.

The troubles of the South arose from another cause. The king of Spain lay at the point of death, and it was in dispute who should share the spoils he was to leave behind him. The powers, who already devoured in imagination this immense succession, did, on this occasion, what we frequently see practised during the illness of a rich old man

who has no children; the wife, the relatives, the priests of the sick king, and even the officers appointed to receive the last commands of those who are dying, beset him on all sides to get a favorable word from him. Some of the inheritors agree to divide the spoils, and others prepare to dispute them.

Louis XIV. and the emperor Leopold were both grandsons of Philip III., and both had married daughters of Philip IV., therefore monseigneur the dauphin, the king's son, and Joseph, king of the Romans, son of the emperor, were doubly in the same degree. The right of eldership was in the house of France, the king and monseigneur being sons of the elder daughters: but the imperial house reckoned as rights, first, the formal renunciation to the crown of Spain, made and ratified by Louis XIII. and Louis XIV. with the name of Austria; the blood of Maximilian, whence Leopold and Charles II. were descended; the almost perpetual union which had subsisted between the two branches of the house of Austria; the still more constant hatred of those two branches against the Bourbons; the aversion which the Spanish nation had at that time to the French; and lastly, the secret springs of the policy which governed the Spanish council.

Nothing at that time seemed more natural than to perpetuate the throne of Spain in the house of Austria; all Europe expected this before the Peace of Ryswick, but the weakness of Charles II. had disturbed this order of succession in the year 1696, and the Austrian house had been already sacrificed in secret. The king of Spain had a grandnephew, son of the elector of Bavaria; the king's mother, who was still living, was great-grandmother of this young prince of Bavaria, who was then about four years old; and this princess, notwithstanding that she herself was of the house of Austria, being a daughter of Emperor Ferdinand III., prevailed on her son to disinherit the imperial family, in consequence of a pique she had entertained against the court of Vienna. She therefore cast her eyes on the prince of Bavaria, though hardly out of his cradle, and destined him for the Spanish monarchy, and that of the new world. Charles II., who was then entirely governed by her, made a private will in the year 1696, in favor of the electoral prince of Bavaria; but having afterward lost his mother, he was governed by his wife, Mariana, of Bavaria Neuburg. This Bavarian princess, who was a sister-in-law of the emperor Leopold, had as great an attachment to the house of Austria as the Austrian queen-mother had to that of Bavaria. Thus the natural course of things was all along inverted in this affair, which concerned the most extensive monarchy in the world. Mariana of Bavaria procured the destruction of that will by which the young prince of Bavaria was called to the succession, and obtained a promise from the king that he would never have any other heir than a son of the emperor Leopold, and would not name the house of Austria. Matters were on this footing at the Peace of Ryswick. The kings of France and Austria were equally fearful and suspicious of each other, and had likewise Europe to fear. England and Holland, two powerful states, whose interest it was to maintain the balance of power between crowned heads, would never consent that the head which wore the crown of Spain should wear that of France or the empire.

It is not positively known who it was that first conceived the notion of making the premature and unheard-of partition of the Spanish monarchy, during the lifetime of

Charles II. Most probably it was the minister, Torci, for it was he who first opened it to Bentinck, earl of Portland, ambassador from William III. to Louis XIV.

King William entered with great alacrity into this new project; and in concert with the count de Tallard, at The Hague, disposed of the Spanish succession. To the young prince of Bavaria they gave Spain and the East Indies, without knowing that Charles II. had before that bequeathed to him all his dominions. The dauphin, son of Louis XIV., was to have Naples, Sicily, and the province of Guipuzcoa, together with some few towns. The archduke Charles, second son of the emperor Leopold, had only the duchy of Milan given him, and nothing was allotted for the archduke Joseph, Leopold's eldest son, and heir to the empire.

The destiny of a part of Europe and the half of America thus settled, Louis promised by this treaty of partition to renounce the entire succession to the Spanish dominions; the dauphin promised and signed the same thing. France thought to make an addition to its territories; England and Holland had in view the settlement of peace of a part of Europe; but all these politics were vain. The dying king, being informed how they were tearing his monarchy in pieces during his lifetime, was filled with indignation. It was generally expected that, upon hearing this news, he would declare either the emperor or one of his sons his successor, as a reward for his not having intermeddled in this shameful partition; and that he would make such a will as the house of Austria should dictate to him. He did indeed make a will, but he, a second time, declared the prince of Bavaria sole heir to his dominions. The Spanish nation, who dreaded nothing so much as the dismembering of its monarchy, applauded the disposition the king had made, which seemed calculated to bring about a peace. This hope proved as vain as the treaty of partition. The prince of Bavaria, the intended king, died at Brussels.

The house of Austria was unjustly charged with the sudden death of this prince, merely from the probability that those to whom the crimes are useful will be guilty of crimes, and new intrigues began to be revived again at the courts of Madrid, Vienna, Versailles, London, The Hague, and Rome.

Louis XIV., King William, and the states-general disposed once more of the Spanish monarchy in idea in March, 1706, and assigned to Archduke Charles, the emperor's youngest son, that part which they had before given to the infant, lately dead.

They gave Milan to the duke of Lorraine, and Lorraine, so often invaded, and so often restored again to France, was to be annexed to it forever. This treaty, which set the politics of all the princes at work, to thwart or support it, proved as useless as the first. Europe was again deceived in its attempt, as almost always happens.

When this treaty of partition was offered to the emperor to sign, he refused, because he hoped to get the entire succession. The French kings, who had strongly pressed the signing of it, waited in uncertainty for the event.

The king of Spain, who saw himself at the point of death in the flower of his age, was for bestowing all his dominions on the archduke Charles, his queen's nephew, and

second son of the emperor Leopold; he did not dare to leave them to the eldest son, so prevalent was the system of a balance of power in all minds, and so certain was it that the apprehension of seeing Spain, the Indies, the empire, Hungary, Bohemia, and Lombardy in the same hands, he was about to arm all Europe. Charles II. wanted the emperor Leopold to send his second son, Charles, to Madrid, at the head of ten thousand men; but neither France, England, the states-general, nor Italy would have permitted such a step to be taken at that time; everyone was for the partition. The emperor would not send his son alone, to be at the mercy of the Spanish council, and he could not transport ten thousand men thither; he only wanted to march troops into Italy to secure that part of the Austrian-Spanish monarchy. There now happened in the most important of concerns between two great princes, what happens every day between private persons in the most trifling affairs; they disputed, they grew warm; the Castilian haughtiness was offended by the German pride. The countess of Perlitz, who governed the wife of the dying king, alienated the minds of those in Madrid, whom she should have won over, and the court of Vienna disgusted them still more by its haughtiness.

The young archduke, who was afterward Emperor Charles VI., never mentioned the Spaniards but with some opprobrious appellation. He then experienced how incumbent it is on princes to weigh all their words. The bishop of Lérida, who was ambassador from the court of Madrid to that of Vienna, on some occasion of dislike against the Germans, collected these expressions and transmitted them with exaggerations to his court in his despatches, and even treated the Austrian council more injuriously in his letters than the archduke had done the Spaniards by his speeches. “Leopold’s ministers,” said he, “have understandings like the horns of the goats in my country, small, hard, and crooked.” This letter was made public. The bishop of Lérida was recalled, and on his return to Madrid he doubly increased the aversion which his countrymen had to the Germans.

While the Austrian party made itself thus hated by the court of Madrid, the marquis, afterward marshal, duke d’Harcourt, the French ambassador, gained all hearts by his prodigious magnificence, his dexterity, and perfect knowledge in the art of pleasing. He was the first who changed into benevolence that antipathy which the Spanish nation had nourished against the French, ever since the reign of Ferdinand the Catholic, and by his prudent conduct laid the foundation for that period, when France and Spain renewed the ancient bonds by which they were united before the time of that Ferdinand. “Crown with crown, nation with nation, and man with man.” He brought the Spanish court to have an affection for the house of France, its ministers to be no longer startled at the renunciations made by Maria Theresa and Anne of Austria, and the king himself to waver between his own house and that of Bourbon. He was, therefore, the *primum mobile* of the greatest change in the administration and the minds of the people in general. But this change was yet at a considerable distance. The emperor employed entreaties and threats. The king of France represented his rights, but without venturing to ask the entire succession for his grandson.

The Council of Madrid were as yet undetermined which side to take, and Charles II., who was every day drawing nearer to his grave, was in equal uncertainty. Leopold, in a pique, recalled his ambassador, the count de Harrach, from Madrid, but soon

afterward he sent him back again, and then the hopes in favor of the house of Austria were revived. The king of Spain wrote to the emperor that he would choose the archduke for his successor. Then the French king threatened in his turn; assembled an army on the frontiers of Spain, and the marquis d'Harcourt was recalled from his embassy, to command these forces, leaving only an officer of foot at the court of Madrid, who had served as secretary to the embassy, and now remained in quality of resident, as de Torci tells us. Thus the dying king, threatened alternately by those who pretended to the succession, and plainly perceiving that the hour of his death would be that of a bloody war, and that his dominions were on the point of being torn in pieces, drew toward his end comfortless, irresolute, and involved in disquietudes.

In this violent crisis of affairs, Cardinal Portocarrero, archbishop of Toledo, the count of Monterey, and others of the Spanish grandees, determined to save their country, and joined together to prevent the dismembering of the monarchy. Their hatred of the Austrian government added a double weight to reasons of state in their breasts, and did the court of France the most essential service without her knowing it. They persuaded Charles II. to prefer the grandson of Louis XIV. to a prince at so great a distance from them, and incapable of defending them. This was not an invalidation of the solemn renunciations of the Spanish crown made by the mother and wife of Louis XIV., because these had been made only to prevent the elder sons of their descendants from uniting the two kingdoms under one rule; and here it was an elder son that was chosen. It was at the same time doing justice to the rights of blood, and preserving the Spanish monarchy from a partition. The scrupulous king caused all his divines to be consulted on this head, who were all of opinion with the council; and ill as he was, wrote a letter with his own hand to Pope Innocent XII., proposing the same case to him. The pope, who thought the liberty of Italy depended upon the weakening of the house of Austria, wrote back to the king that the laws of Spain and the good of Christendom required of him to give the preference to the house of France. This letter of the pope's was dated July 16, 1700. He treated this case of conscience proposed by a sovereign as an affair of state; while the king of Spain made a case of conscience of an important affair of state.

Louis XIV. was informed of these dispositions by Cardinal de Janson, who then resided at Rome, and this was all the share that the court of Versailles had in this event. Six months had passed without there being any ambassador at the court of Madrid. This was perhaps a fault; but perhaps also this very fault secured the Spanish monarchy in the house of France. The king of Spain then made his third will, that was for a long time thought to be the only one, by which he bequeathed all his dominions to the duke of Anjou.

It was generally thought in Europe that this will of Charles II. had been dictated at Versailles. The dying king consulted only the interest of his kingdom, and the wishes and even fears of his people; for the French king had ordered his troops to advance to the frontiers, in order to secure to himself a part of the inheritance at the time the dying king determined to leave him the whole. Nothing is more true than that the reputation of Louis XIV. and the notion of his power were the only negotiations that completed this great revolution.

Charles of Austria, after having signed the ruin of his house, and the aggrandizement of that of France, languished about a month longer, when he ended, at the age of thirty-nine, the obscure life he had led while on the throne. It may perhaps not be altogether useless toward giving an insight into the human mind, to mention that this monarch, a few months before his death, caused the tombs of his mother and his first wife, Maria Louisa of Orleans, to the poisoning of whom he was suspected to have been privy, to be opened, and kissed the remains of their dead bodies. In this he either followed the example of some of the ancient kings of Spain, or was willing to accustom himself to the horrors of death, or from a secret superstition thought that opening these tombs would retard the hour in which he was to be carried to his own.

This prince was from his birth as weak in mind as body; and this weakness had spread itself through his dominions. It is the fate of monarchies to have their prosperity depend upon the disposition of a single man. Charles II. had been brought up in such profound ignorance that when the French were beseiging Mons, he thought that place had belonged to the king of England. He neither knew whereabouts Flanders lay, nor what place belonged to him there. This king left the duke of Anjou all his dominions without knowing what he had given him.

His will was kept so secret that the count de Harrach, the emperor's ambassador, still flattered himself that the archduke would be acknowledged his successor. He waited a long time for the issue of the great council, which was held immediately upon the king's death; at length seeing the duke of Abrantes coming toward him with open arms, he made sure in that instant that the archduke was king, and when the duke embraced him, accosted him thus: "*Vengo á expedirme de la casa de Austria*"—"I am come to take leave of the house of Austria."

Thus, after two hundred years of war and negotiations for some few frontier towns of the Spanish dominions, the house of France, by the single stroke of a pen, was put in possession of the whole monarchy, without treaties, without intrigues, and even without having entertained hopes of the succession. We thought ourselves obliged to bring to light the simple truth of a fact which has till now been obscured by so many statesmen and historians, led away, by their own prejudices and by appearances, that are almost always fallacious. What we find related in a number of books concerning the sums of money distributed by Marshal d'Harcourt, and the bribing of the Spanish ministers to get this will signed, may be ranked in the number of political lies and popular errors. But the king of Spain, in choosing for his successor the grandson of a king who had so long been his enemy, had always in view the consequences that naturally follow from a notion of a general equilibrium of power. The duke of Anjou, Louis XIV.'s grandson, was called to the Spanish succession only because he could never pretend to the crown of France; and in this very will, by which, in default of younger children of the blood of Louis XIV., the archduke Charles—afterward the emperor Charles VI.—is called to the succession, it is expressly declared, that the empire and Spain shall never be united under one sovereign.

Louis XIV. might still have abided by the treaty of partition, which was profitable for France, or he might have accepted the will, which was to the advantage of his family. This matter was actually in debate in an extraordinary council, held Nov. 11, 1700.

The chancellor, Pontchartrain, and the duke of Beauvilliers, were for abiding by the treaty, as they foresaw the danger of having a new war to support. Louis saw nothing like this; but he was accustomed not to fear war. He therefore accepted the will, and as he was coming out of the council, meeting the princess of Conti, with madame, the duchess; "Well," said he to them, smiling, "on which side are you?" and then, without giving them time to reply, "Whichsoever side I take," added he, "I am sure to be blamed."

The actions of kings, though often extravagantly flattered, are also liable to the severest strictures, insomuch that the king of England himself underwent the reproaches of his parliament, and his ministers were prosecuted for having been concerned in the treaty of partition. The English, who reason better than any other nation, but who frequently suffer the rage of party spirit to extinguish that reason, exclaimed unanimously against William, who had made this treaty, and against Louis, who had broken it.

Europe at first seemed lost in surprise, and unable to bestir itself when it saw the Spanish monarchy become subject to France, whose rival it had been for over three hundred years. Louis XIV. seemed the most fortunate and powerful monarch in the world. He saw himself, at the age of sixty-two, surrounded with a numerous posterity, and one of his grandsons going to rule, under his orders, the kingdom of Spain, America, one half of Italy, and the Low Countries. The emperor as yet could do nothing but complain.

King William, now fifty-two years of age, infirm and feeble, no longer appeared the formidable enemy he had been. He could not make war without the consent of his parliament; and Louis had taken care to send sums of money over to England with a view to purchasing several votes in that assembly. William and the Dutch, not being strong enough to declare themselves, wrote to Philip V., as to the lawful king of Spain. Louis XIV. was sure of the elector of Bavaria. This elector, who governed the Netherlands in the name of the deceased king, Charles II., immediately secured the possession of Flanders to Philip V., and left a passage open for the French army through his electorate to the capital of Germany, in case the emperor should venture to declare war. The elector of Cologne, brother of the elector of Bavaria, was as intimately connected with France as his brother, and these two princes seemed to act with reason on their side. The party of the house of Bourbon was at that time the strongest. The duke of Savoy, father-in-law of the duke of Burgundy, and prospective father-in-law of the king of Spain, was to have the command of the French forces in Italy. It was hardly imagined then that the father of the duchess of Burgundy and the queen of Spain would ever make war upon his two sons-in-law.

The duke of Mantua, who had been sold to France by his minister, now sold himself, and received a French garrison into Mantua. The duchy of Milan acknowledged Louis's grandson without hesitation; and even Portugal, who was naturally the enemy of Spain, immediately joined with it. In a word, from Gibraltar to Antwerp, and from the Danube to Naples, all seemed to be at the disposal of the Bourbons. The king was so elated with his prosperity that, talking with the duke de la Rochefoucauld one day

on the subject of the proposals which the emperor made him at that time, he expressed himself thus: “You will find them still more insolent than you have been told.”

King William, who to the hour of his death continued an enemy to Louis XIV., promised the emperor to arm England and Holland in his cause: he likewise engaged the court of Denmark in his interest; at length, in September, 1701, he signed at The Hague that league which had been already set on foot against the house of France. The king, however, was not much surprised at this, and depending upon the divisions he hoped to cause in the English parliament by the money he had sent over, and still more on the united forces of France and Spain, seemed to despise his enemies.

At this time King James died at St. Germain. Louis might on this occasion have paid what appeared due to decency and good politics in not too hastily acknowledging the prince of Wales for king of England, after having already acknowledged William’s title by the Peace of Ryswick. He was at first determined, from an emotion of pure generosity, to give the son of King James the consolation of a title and dignity which his unfortunate father had borne till the hour of his death, and which the Treaty of Ryswick did not take from him. The principal ministers of the council, however, were of a different opinion. The duke of Beauvilliers, especially, set forth in the most eloquent manner the many scourges of war which were likely to be the consequence of so dangerous a magnanimity. This nobleman was governor to the duke of Burgundy, and in everything thought like that prince’s preceptor, the famous archbishop of Cambray, so well known by his humane maxims of government, and the preference he gave to the interests of the people over the grandeur of the monarch. The marquis de Torci enforced as a politician what the duke de Beauvilliers had advanced as a citizen. He represented how impolitic it was to incense the English nation by so rash a step. Louis yielded to the opinions of his council, and resolved not to acknowledge the son of James II. as king. The same day Mary of Modena, widow of the deceased James, went to Madame de Maintenon’s apartments to speak with Louis XIV. She found him there, and with a flood of tears conjured him not to treat her son, herself, and the memory of a king he had protected, with so much indignity as to refuse a title, the only remains of all their former greatness. She observed that as her son had always received the honors of a prince of Wales, he ought to be treated as king after the death of his father; and that even William himself could not complain of this, provided he was left to enjoy his usurpation. To these arguments she added others, which concerned the interest and glory of Louis XIV. She represented to him that whether he acknowledged the son of James II. or not, the English would nevertheless declare against France; and that he would only feel the vexation of having sacrificed the most noble sentiments to a fruitless precaution. These representations and tears were powerfully seconded by Madame de Maintenon. The king resumed his former sentiments, and the noble resolution of protecting distressed kings to the utmost of his power. In a word, James III. was acknowledged the same day that it had been determined in council not to acknowledge him.

The marquis de Torci has frequently owned this remarkable anecdote; he has not indeed inserted it in his memoirs, because, as he himself observes, he thought it was not to the honor of his master to be prevailed upon by two women to alter a resolution which had been taken in his council. Some English gentlemen have told me that, had

it not been for this step, their parliament might not perhaps have taken part against the houses of Bourbon and Austria; but that this acknowledging as their king a person whom they had banished appeared an insult offered to the nation, and an attempt toward exercising an absolute authority over Europe. The spirit of freedom which then prevailed among the English, which was not a little increased by the hatred they bore to Louis, on account of his great power, made the nation contribute with cheerfulness to all the supplies which William demanded.

It appears more probable that the English would have declared war against Louis XIV., even though he had refused the empty title of king to the son of James II. His grandson's being in possession of the Spanish monarchy seemed alone sufficient to arm all the maritime powers against him. A few members of the house of commons bribed to favor his cause, could never have opposed the torrent of the nation. It remains to be decided whether Madame de Maintenon judged better than the French council, and whether Louis XIV. was in the right to indulge the pride and sensibility of his soul.

The emperor Leopold first began this war in Italy in the spring of the year 1701. Italy has always been the favorite object in all the concerns of the emperors. He knew his arms could more easily penetrate here through the Tyrolese and the Venetian states; for Venice, though neutral in appearance, still inclined more to the house of Austria than to that of France, and, moreover, being obliged by treaties to allow a passage to the German troops, she found no great difficulty in accomplishing these treaties.

The emperor, before he ventured to attack Louis XIV. on the side of Germany, waited till the Germanic body began to stir in his favor. He had correct reports from the Spanish court, and even a party there; but neither of these could prove of service without the presence of one of his sons, and he could not be transported thither but with the assistance of the English and Dutch fleets. King William hastened the necessary preparations; his soul more active than ever, in a feeble and almost lifeless body, set everything in motion; not so much with a view to serving the house of Austria as to humbling Louis XIV.

He was to have headed the armies himself, at the beginning of the year 1702, but death prevented his design. A fall from his horse completed the disorder of his enfeebled organs, and a slight fever carried him off March 16, 1702. He died without making any reply to what the English clergymen who attended at his bedside said to him in relation to their religion, and showed no concern but for the affairs of Europe.

He left behind him the character of a great politician, though he was never popular, and a formidable general, though he had lost so many battles; always circumspect in his conduct, and spirited only in the day of battle; he reigned peaceably in England merely because he did not attempt to be absolute; he was called the English stadtholder and the Dutch king; he understood all the European languages, but spoke none of them well, as he had a much greater share of reflection than imagination; he affected to hate flatterers and flattery, perhaps because Louis XIV. seemed to take rather too much pleasure in them. His reputation was of a different kind from that of the French monarch; those who admired most the advantage of having acquired a

kingdom without any natural right, and of maintaining the rule over a people without being beloved by them; of having governed Holland with all the authority of a sovereign, without enslaving it; of having been the soul and head of half of Europe, without possessing the talents of a general or the courage of a soldier; of never having persecuted anyone on the score of religion; of having a contempt for the superstitious prejudices of mankind; of having been simple and moderate in his manners, such, I say, will doubtless give the title of great to William, rather than to Louis: while those who are more delighted with the pleasures of a brilliant court, with magnificence, with the protection given to the arts, with a zeal for the public good, a thirst for glory, and a talent for reigning, who are more struck with the lofty manner in which ministers and generals added whole provinces to France, only on an order from their king; who are more astonished to see a single state prevail against so many powers; who have greater esteem for a king of France who procures the kingdom of Spain for his grandson, than for a son-in-law who dethrones his wife's father; in a word, those who admire more the protector than the persecutor of King James, will give Louis the preference.

William III. was succeeded by Princess Anne, daughter of King James by the daughter of Lawyer Hyde, afterward chancellor and one of the principal men of the kingdom. She was married to the prince of Denmark, who ranked only as the first subject in the kingdom. As soon as she came to the crown she adopted all the measures of her predecessor, King William, though she had been at open variance with him during his life. These measures were those of the nation. In other kingdoms, a prince obliges his people to enter blindly into all his views; but in England a king must enter into those of his people.

The dispositions made by England and Holland for placing, if possible, the archduke Charles, son of the emperor Leopold, on the throne of Spain, or at least to oppose the establishment of the Bourbon family, were such as perhaps may be said to merit the attention of all ages.

The Dutch on their side were to maintain an army of one hundred and two thousand men in pay, either in garrison or in the field. This was much more than the vast Spanish monarchy could furnish at that time; a province of merchants, who, thirty years before, had been almost totally subdued in the space of two months, could now do more than the masters of Spain, Naples, Flanders, Peru, and Mexico. England promised to furnish forty thousand men. It happens in most alliances that, in the long run, the parties concerned fall short of their promised quotas; but England, on the contrary, furnished fifty thousand men the second year instead of forty, which she had promised; and, in the latter part of the war, she had to pay, on the frontiers of France, in Spain, Italy, Ireland, America, and on board her fleet, more than one hundred and twenty thousand fighting men, soldiers and sailors, partly her own troops, partly those of her allies; an expense which appears almost incredible to those who reflect that England, properly so called, is not a third as large as France, and has not half the quantity of coin; but will appear probable in the eyes of those who know what trade and credit can do. The English always bore the greatest share of the burden in this alliance; while the Dutch insensibly lessened theirs; for, after all, the republic of the

states-general is only an illustrious trading company, whereas England is a fruitful country, abounding in merchants and soldiers.

The emperor was to furnish eighty thousand men, exclusive of the troops of the empire and those allies whom he hoped to detach from the house of Bourbon; and yet the grandson of Louis XIV. was already seated peaceably on his throne at Madrid, and Louis, at the beginning of the century, was at the zenith of his power and glory: but those who penetrated into the resources of the several courts of Europe, and especially that of France, began to fear some reverse. Spain, which had been weakened under the last kings of the race of Charles V., was still more feeble during the early part of the reign of the Bourbons. The house of Austria had partisans in several provinces of this monarchy; Catalonia seemed ready to shake off the new yoke, and acknowledge the archduke Charles. It was impossible that Portugal, sooner or later, should not side with the house of Austria. It was plainly to its interest to encourage a civil war among the Spaniards, its natural enemies, that might turn to the advantage of Lisbon. The duke of Savoy, lately become father-in-law to the new king of Spain, and linked to the Bourbons by ties of blood as well as by treaties, seemed already displeased with his sons-in-law. Fifty thousand crowns a month, afterward raised to two hundred thousand francs, did not appear a sufficiently valuable consideration to bind him to their interest; he wanted Montferrat, Mantua, and a part of the duchy of Milan. The haughty treatment he met with from the French generals, and from the ministry at Versailles, made him apprehensive, and not without reason, that he should soon be held for nothing by his two sons-in-law, who kept his dominions surrounded on every side. He had already quitted the emperor for France without any ceremony; and it seemed more than probable that, finding himself so little regarded by the latter, he would change sides the first opportunity.

As to the court of Louis XIV. and his kingdom, discerning spirits already perceived a change in them, which is only visible to the grosser ones when the decline is far advanced. The king, now over sixty years of age, was more retired, and consequently knew less of mankind; he saw things at too great a distance, and with eyes less discerning, and dazzled with prosperity. Madame de Maintenon, with all the amiable qualities of which she was mistress, had neither the strength, greatness, nor courage of mind requisite for supporting the glory of a state; she was instrumental in procuring the management of the finances in 1698, and the department of war in 1701, for her creature, Chamillard, who was more of the honest man than the minister, and had ingratiated himself with the king by his discreet conduct, when employed at St. Cyr; but, notwithstanding an outward appearance of modesty, he had the misfortune to think himself capable of bearing two burdens, which Colbert and Louvois had with difficulty supported separately. The king, depending on his own experience, thought that he could successfully direct his ministers; and when Louvois died, he said to King James: “I have lost a good minister, but neither your affairs nor mine shall go the worse for it.” When he made choice of Barbésieux to succeed Louvois as secretary of war, he said to him: “I formed your father, and I will form you.” He expressed himself much in the same manner to Chamillard. A king who had been so long engaged in public affairs, and with such great success, seemed to have a right to talk in this manner.

In regard to the generals whom he employed, they were frequently confined by the strict orders they received from him, like ambassadors who must not depart from their instructions. He and Chamillard directed the operations of the campaign in Madame de Maintenon's closet. If a general was desirous of executing any great undertaking, he was frequently obliged to despatch a courier to court for permission, who at his return found the opportunity lost, or the general beaten.

Military rewards and dignities were profusely lavished under Chamillard's administration; numbers of young persons, hardly out of their leading-strings, were allowed to purchase regiments, which, with the enemy, was the reward of twenty years' service. This difference was very sensibly felt on many occasions, in which an experienced officer might have prevented a total rout. The cross of the Knights of St. Louis, a reward invented by the king in 1693, and then the object of emulation among the officers, was exposed to sale in the beginning of Chamillard's ministry, and could be bought for fifty crowns apiece, at any of the war offices. Military discipline, the soul of service, which had been so strictly kept up by Louvois, had degenerated into a fatal remissness; the companies were not complete in their number of men nor the regiments in their officers. Hence arose a defect, which, supposing an equality in other respects, must infallibly occasion the loss of all their battles; for to have an equal extent of front with that of the enemy, they were obliged to oppose weak battalions to strong and numerous ones. The magazines were no longer so well provided, nor at such convenient distances, nor were the arms so well tempered as formerly. Those, therefore, who perceived these defects in the administration, and knew what generals France had to deal with, trembled for her, even in the midst of those first advantages which seemed to promise her greater success than ever.

[Back to Table of Contents]

Voltaire Age Of Louis XIV. VOL. XII—Part II

CHAPTER XVII.

THE WAR OF 1701—CONDUCT OF PRINCE EUGENE, MARSHAL VILLEROI, THE DUKE OF VENDÔME, THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH, AND MARSHAL VILLARS; UNTIL THE YEAR 1703.

The first general to put a check to the superiority of the French arms was a Frenchman, for so we should call Prince Eugene, though he was the grandson of Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy: his father, the count de Soissons, had settled in France, where he was lieutenant-general of the king's armies, and governor of Champagne, and had married Olympia Mancini, one of the nieces of Cardinal Mazarin. From this match, so unfortunate in other respects, was born this prince, who afterward proved so dangerous an adversary to Louis XIV., and was so little known to him in his youth. He was known at first in France by the name of the Chevalier de Carignan; he afterward took the *petit collet,* and was called the Abbot of Savoy. It is said that he asked the king for a regiment, which his majesty refused him, on account of his being too much connected with the princes of Conti, who were then in disgrace. Not being able to succeed with Louis XIV., he went to serve the emperor against the Turks in Hungary, in 1684, together with the princes of Conti, who had already made a glorious campaign there. The king sent an order to the princes of Conti, and all those who had accompanied them in this expedition, to return home. The abbot of Savoy was the only one who refused to comply with this mandate: he continued his journey, openly declaring that he renounced France forever. The king, when he was told of this, said to his courtiers, "Don't you think I have had a great loss?" and these gentlemen gave it as their opinion that the abbot of Savoy would always be a mad-headed fellow, and fit for nothing. They founded their judgment on certain sallies of youth, by which we are never to judge of men. This prince, who was held in so much contempt at the court of France, was born with all the qualifications which form the hero in war and the great man in peace. He had a just and lofty mind, and the necessary courage, both in the field and cabinet. He was guilty of faults, as all generals have been, but these were lost in the number of his great actions. He shook the greatness of Louis XIV. and the Ottoman power: he governed the empire, and in the course of his victories and ministry showed an equal contempt for vainglory and riches. He cherished, and even protected, learning, as much as could be done at the court of Vienna. At this time he was about thirty-seven years of age, and had the experience of his own victories over the Turks, and the faults which he had seen committed by the imperialists in the late wars in which he served against France. He entered Italy by the country of Trent, in the territories of Venice, with thirty thousand men, and with full liberty to make such use of them as he pleased. The court at first forbade Marshal Catinat to oppose the passage of Prince Eugene, either because they would not commit the first act of hostility, which was bad policy when the enemy had

already taken up arms, or else because they would not disoblige the Venetians, who were, however, less to be feared than the German army. This first mistake in the court occasioned Marshal Catinat to commit others. That person rarely succeeds who follows a plan that is not his own; besides, we well know how difficult a matter it is, in a country cut through with rivers and streams, toprevent a skilful enemy from passing them. Prince Eugene, to a great depth of scheming, added a lively promptitude of execution. From the nature of the ground on the banks of the Adige, the enemy's army was more compact, while that of the French was more extended. Catinat was for marching to meet the enemy; but the generals started difficulties and formed cabals against him. Instead of making them obey him, he gave way; the mildness of his disposition led him to commit this great error. Eugene began on July 9, 1701, by forcing the post of Carpi, near the White Canal, which was defended by St. Fremont, who neglected the general's orders in some respects, and occasioned his own defeat. After this success, the German army had the command of all the country between the Adige and the Adda, and penetrated into Bressan, while Catinat retreated behind the Oglio. Several good officers approved of this retreat, which, in their opinion, was a very prudent one; to which we may further add, that the failure of the provisions and ammunition promised by the ministry rendered it absolutely necessary. The courtiers, and especially those who had hopes of succeeding Catinat in the command, represented his behavior as a scandal to the French name. Marshal Villeroi persuaded them that he could retrieve the honor of the nation. The confidence with which he spoke, and the liking the king had for him, procured him the command in Italy; and Marshal Catinat, notwithstanding his former victories at Staffarde and Marseilles, was obliged to serve under him.

The marshal duke de Villeroi was son of the king's governor; had been brought up with his royal master, and always enjoyed a principal share of his favor; he had been with him in all his campaigns, and made one in all his parties of pleasure; he was of an agreeable and engaging figure, extremely brave, a very worthy man, a good friend, sincere in his connections and magnificent in all his actions. But his enemies said he was more taken up, after he came to be general, with the honor and pleasure of commanding than with the schemes of a great captain, and reproached him with being so much wedded to his own opinion as to slight the advice of everyone else.

He now repaired to Italy, to lord it over Catinat, and disgust the duke of Savoy. His behavior showed that he thought a favorite of Louis XIV. at the head of so powerful an army was infinitely superior to a prince. He never called the duke by any other name than M. de Savoy, and treated him like a common general in the pay of France, and not like a sovereign. In a word, the friendship of this prince was not regarded so much as was necessary, considering that he was master of the barriers which nature had placed between France and Italy. The court thought that fear was the surest knot to bind him; and that a French army, surrounding about six or seven thousand Piedmontese, was a sufficient pledge for his fidelity. Marshal Villeroi behaved to him as his equal in common correspondence, and his superior in the command. The duke of Savoy had the empty title of generalissimo, but Marshal Villeroi was so in fact. He immediately gave orders for attacking Prince Eugene in the post of Chiari, near the Oglio. The general officers were of opinion that it was against all the rules of war to attack this post, for these essential reasons: that it was of no consequence; that the

intrenchments were inaccessible; that nothing could be gained by forcing them, and that, if they failed, the reputation of the whole campaign would be lost. Villeroi, however, told the duke of Savoy that he must march, and sent an aide-de-camp to order Marshal Catinat in his name to begin the attack. Catinat made the messenger repeat the order to him three different times; then turning toward the officers who were under his command: "Come on then, gentlemen, we must obey." They marched directly up to the intrenchments, and the duke of Savoy fought like a person who had no subject of complaint against France. Catinat fought everywhere for death; he was wounded, but nevertheless, on seeing the king's troops repulsed, he made a retreat; after which he quitted the army, and returned to Versailles, to give an account of his conduct to the king, without complaining of any one.

Prince Eugene always maintained his superiority over Marshal Villeroi; at length, in the heart of the winter of 1702, one day when the marshal was sleeping in full security in Cremona, a strong town, and provided with a very numerous garrison, he found himself awakened with the noise of a discharge of small arms; upon which he rose in haste, mounted his horse, and the first thing he met with was a squadron of the enemy. The marshal was immediately made prisoner and led out of the town, without knowing anything that had passed there, and unable to conceive the cause of so extraordinary an event. Prince Eugene was already in the town of Cremona; a priest called Bozzoli, provost at St. Mary la Nova, had introduced the German troops through a common sewer. Four hundred men having been conveyed through this sewer into the priest's house, immediately killed the guard at the two gates, which were opened, and Prince Eugene entered the city with four thousand men. All this was done before the governor, who was a Spaniard, had the least suspicion, or Marshal Villeroi was awake. The whole affair was conducted with the greatest secrecy, order, and diligence. The Spanish governor, on the first alarm, appeared in the street with a few soldiers, but was presently shot dead; all the general officers were either killed or made prisoners, excepting Lieutenant-General Count de Revel, and the marquis du Prâlin. Chance, however, confounded the prudent measures of Prince Eugene.

It happened that the chevalier d'Entragues was that day to review the regiment of marines, of which he was colonel; the soldiers were assembled at four o'clock in the morning, in one of the outskirts of the city, exactly at the time that Prince Eugene entered at the other part; d'Entragues began to run through the streets with his soldiers; he repulsed those of the enemy that came in his way, and by this means gave the rest of the garrison time to repair thither. The streets and squares were filled with officers and soldiers, confusedly mingled together, some with arms, some without, and others half naked, without any commander at their head. The fight began in the utmost confusion, and they intrenched themselves from street to street, and from square to square. Two Irish regiments, that made part of the garrison, checked the efforts of the imperialists. Never was greater prudence shown in the surprise of a town, nor more valor in defending it. The garrison consisted of about five thousand men; Prince Eugene had as yet introduced only four thousand; a large detachment of his army was to have joined them by the bridge over the Po; the measures were well concerted, but another stroke of chance rendered them all fruitless. This bridge, which was guarded only by a hundred French soldiers, was to have been seized upon by the German cuirassiers, who were ordered to go and make themselves masters of it, the

instant Prince Eugene entered the town. For this purpose, as they came in by the south gate, next to the common sewer, they were to go out into the country of Cremona at the northern part of the city, through the Po gate, and then immediately make the best of their way to the bridge. As they were going through the city, the guide who conducted them was killed by a musket-shot from a window; the cuirassiers mistook one street for another, and wandered out of their way. During this interval, the Irish assembled at the Po gate, attacked and repulsed the cuirassiers; and the marquis du Prâlin, seizing this lucky moment, ordered the bridge to be broken down; the aid which the enemy expected could not cross, and the town was saved.

Prince Eugene, after having fought the whole day, and constantly keeping possession of the gate by which he entered, at length retired, taking with him Marshal Villeroi, and most of the general officers prisoners, but disappointed in taking Cremona, which his activity and prudence, together with the negligence of the generals, had once made him master of; and which chance, and the valor of the French and Irish troops, had snatched from him again.

Marshal Villeroi, who was extremely unhappy on this occasion, was condemned by the courtiers at Versailles, with all the severity and acrimony that his share of the royal favor, and the loftiness of his character, which was taken by them for vanity, could inspire. The king, who blamed but did not condemn him, was not a little displeased to find his choice so highly censured, and in the heat of his resentment suffered these words to escape him: “They take a pleasure in abusing him, because he is my favorite;” a term that he never before in his life made use of in regard to anyone. The duke of Vendôme was immediately ordered to go and take the command in Italy.

The duke of Vendôme was grandson of Henry IV., and like him, intrepid, mild, beneficent, and humble; a stranger to hatred, envy, and revenge; he showed pride only among princes, and behaved with equality to everyone else: he was the only general under whom the common men were not led to fight merely from principles of military duty, and that mechanical instinct which obeys the orders of an officer. They fought for the duke of Vendôme; and would have laid down their lives to extricate him out of a false step into which his fiery genius sometimes hurried him. He was thought not to equal Prince Eugene in the coolness and depth of his designs, and the art of subsisting his troops; he was too apt to neglect little matters, and suffered military discipline to languish in his army; he gave too much time to sleep and the pleasures of the table. This overindulgence put him more than once in danger of being carried off: but in the day of battle he made amends for all these faults, by a presence of mind and discernment which seemed to grow from danger; these opportunities he was continually seeking, being not so well qualified for a defensive war as Prince Eugene, but fully equal to him in the offensive.

The same disorder and negligence that he introduced into the army were visible to a surprising degree in his household, and even in his own person. From his great aversion to show or ostentation he contracted a slovenliness almost unparalleled; and disinterestedness, the most noble of all virtues, became in him a fault, by making him lose more by carelessness than he would have expended in acts of bounty. He has

been often known to want even common necessaries. His brother, the grand prior, who commanded under him in Italy, had all his faults, which he carried to a still greater excess, and made amends for by the same valor. It is surprising to see two generals never rising from bed till four o'clock in the afternoon, and two princes, grandsons of Henry IV., neglecting their persons in a manner that the meanest soldier would have thought shameful.

What is still more surprising is that mixture of activity and indolence with which Vendôme carried on so smart a war against Eugene; a war of artifice, surprises, marches, crossing of rivers, petty skirmishes, often as fruitless as bloody; and murderous battles, in which both sides claimed the victory; such as that of Luzzara—Aug. 15, 1701—for which *Te Deum* was sung both at Paris and Vienna. Vendôme always came off conqueror, when he had not to deal with Prince Eugene in person; but as soon as that general appeared at the head of his troops, the French had no longer the advantage.

In the midst of these battles, and the sieges of so many towns and cities, private intelligence was brought to Versailles that the duke of Savoy, grand-nephew of Louis XIV., father-in-law of the duke of Burgundy and Philip V., was going to quit the Bourbon interest, and was actually in treaty with the emperor. Everyone was astonished that he should at once leave two sons-in-law, and give up what appeared to be his true interest: but the emperor had promised him all that his sons-in-law had refused him: Montferrat, Mantua, Alexandria, Valencia, and the countries between the Po and the Tanaro, with more money than he received from France. The money was to be furnished by England, for the emperor had hardly sufficient to pay his troops. England, the richest of all the allies, contributed more than any of them toward the common cause. Whether the duke of Savoy showed any regard for the laws of nature and nations is a question in morality which has very little to do with the conduct of sovereigns. The event, however, proved in the end that he was not at all wanting to the laws of policy in the treaty he made; but he was wanting in another very essential point of politics, in leaving his troops at the mercy of the French, while he was treating with the emperor. The duke of Vendôme ordered them to be disarmed; they were indeed no more than five thousand men, but this was no inconsiderable object to the duke of Savoy.

No sooner had the house of Bourbon lost this ally, when she heard that Portugal had likewise declared against her. Peter, king of Portugal, acknowledged the archduke Charles for king of Spain. The imperial council, in the name of this archduke, dismembered, in favor of Peter II., a monarchy, in which he was not as yet master of a single town; and, by one of those treaties which are never executed, ceded to him Vigo, Bayonne, Alcantara, Badajoz, a part of Estremadura, all the countries lying to the west of the river La Plata in America; in a word, he made a partition of what he had not to give, in order to acquire what he might.

The king of Portugal, the prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, minister to the archduke, and the admiral of Castile, his creature, implored the assistance of the king of Morocco. They not only entered into a treaty with these barbarians, supplying them with horses and corn, but they likewise asked for a body of troops. The emperor of Morocco, Muley

Ismael, the most warlike and politic tyrant at that time in the Mahometan nation, would not send his troops but on such terms as were dangerous to Christendom, and shameful to the king of Portugal; he demanded a son of that king's as a hostage, together with a certain number of towns. The treaty did not take place; and the Christians contented themselves with tearing each other to pieces with their own hands, without calling in barbarians. The assistance of Africa would not have done the house of Austria so much service as that of England and Holland did.

Churchill, earl, and afterward duke, of Marlborough, was declared general of the confederate armies of England and Holland, in the year 1702. This man proved as fatal to the French greatness as any that had appeared for many ages. He was not one of those generals to whom a minister delivers the plan of the campaign in writing, and who, after having followed the order he has received from the cabinet, at the head of his army, returns home to solicit the honor of being employed again. He at that time governed the queen of England; both by the occasion she had for his service, and by the authority his wife had over her affections. He had the command of the parliament by his powerful interest, and by that of the treasurer, Godolphin, whose son married one of his daughters. Thus having the direction of the court, the parliament, the war, and the treasury, more a king than ever William had been, as great a politician, and a much greater general, he exceeded the most sanguine hopes of the allies. He possessed in a degree superior to any general of his time that tranquil courage in the midst of tumult, and serenity of soul in danger, which the English call a cool head. It is perhaps to this qualification, the principal gift in nature for a commander, that the English are indebted for their victories over the French in the fields of Poitiers, Crécy, and Agincourt.

Marlborough, who was indefatigable as a warrior during the campaign, was no less active a negotiator in the winter; he went to The Hague, and visited all the courts of Germany; he persuaded the Dutch to drain themselves to humble France; he roused the resentment of the elector palatine; he flattered the pride of the elector of Brandenburg, who wanted to be king, by which he drew from him a supply of eight thousand men. Prince Eugene, on his side, had no sooner finished one campaign than he went to Vienna to make preparations for another. We may easily judge whether an army is better supplied, where the general is at the same time the prime minister.

These two great men, who had sometimes the command jointly, sometimes separately, always understood each other. They had frequent conferences at The Hague, with the grand pensionary, Heinsius, and the secretary, Fagel, who governed the United Provinces with equal abilities, and better success than the Barneveldts and DeWitts. They, in concert, continually set the springs of one-half of Europe in play against the house of Bourbon; and the French ministry was at that time much too weak to oppose those combined forces for any length of time. The plan of operations for the campaign was always kept an inviolable secret. They settled their designs among themselves, and did not intrust them even to those who were to second them until the instant of execution. Chamillard, on the contrary, being neither a politician, a warrior, nor even acquainted with the management of the revenue, and who yet acted as prime minister, was unable to plan any designs of his own; and was, therefore, obliged to be dependent on inferior people for their assistance. His secret was almost

always divulged, even before he himself knew exactly what was to be done. Of this the marquis de Feuquières accuses him with great justice; and Madame de Maintenon acknowledges, in her letters, that she had made choice of a man who was not fit for the ministry. This was one of the principal causes of the misfortunes which befell France.

Marlborough, as soon as he came to the command of the allied army in Flanders, showed that he had learned the art of war of the great Turenne, under whom he had in his younger days made his first campaigns as a volunteer. He was then known in the army only by the name of the handsome Englishman: but Turenne soon perceived that this handsome Englishman would one day be a great man. He began his command by raising several subaltern officers in whom he had discovered merit, and who were till then unknown, without confining himself to the order of military rank, which we in France call the order of the *Tableau.* He was sensible that, when preferment is only the consequence of seniority, all emulation must perish; and that an officer is not always the most serviceable because the most ancient. He presently formed men. He gained ground upon the French without hazarding a battle. Ginkel, earl of Athlone, the Dutch general, disputed the command with him the first month, and, before six weeks were at an end, was obliged to yield to him in every respect. The king of France sent his grandson, the duke of Burgundy, against him, a wise and upright prince, born to make a people happy. The marshal de Bouflers, a man of indefatigable courage, commanded the army under the young prince. But the duke of Burgundy, after having seen several places taken before his face, and being by the skilful marches of the English, obliged to retreat, returned to Versailles before the campaign was half over, leaving Bouflers to be a witness to Marlborough's successes, who took Venlo, Ruremonde, and Liège, and continued advancing without losing the superiority one instant.

When Marlborough returned to London at the close of this campaign, he received all the honors that could be bestowed in a monarchy and a republic. He was created duke by the queen; and, what was still more flattering, he received the thanks of the two houses of parliament, who sent deputies to compliment him at his own house.

But now there arose a person who seemed likely to restore the drooping fortunes of France. This was the marshal duke de Villars, then lieutenant-general, and whom we have since seen, at the age of eighty-two, commander-in-chief of the armies of France, Spain, and Sardinia; this man was bold and confident, and had himself been the architect of his own fortune, by his unwearied perseverance in the discharge of his duty. He sometimes offended Louis XIV., and what was still more dangerous, his minister, Louvois, by speaking to them with the boldness with which he served. He was accused of not having a modesty becoming his courage. But at length it was seen that he had a genius formed for war, and to command Frenchmen. He had been greatly advanced within a few years, after having been left a long time unnoticed.

Never was there a man whose preferment created more jealousy, and with less reason. He was marshal of France, duke, and peer, and governor of Provence: but then he had saved the state; and others who had ruined it, or had no other claim but that of being courtiers, had met with as great rewards. He was even upbraided with the riches

which he acquired by contributions in the enemy's country, a just and reasonable reward for his valor and conduct; while those who had amassed fortunes of ten times the value by the most scandalous methods continued to enjoy them with the approbation of the public. He did not begin to taste the sweets of the reputation he had acquired till he was nearly eighty; and he must have outlived the whole court to have enjoyed it undisturbed.

It may not be amiss to acquaint the world with the reason of this injustice in mankind. It was owing to the want of art in Marshal Villars: he had not enough to make himself friends, with integrity and understanding; nor to set a proper value upon himself, by speaking that of himself which he deserved that others should say of him.

One day as he was taking leave of the king, he said to him before the whole court: "Sire, I am going to fight against your majesty's enemies, and leave you in the midst of mine." He said to the courtiers of the duke of Orleans, regent of the kingdom, who had all grown rich by that subversion of the state called system: "For my part I never got anything but by the enemies of my country." These speeches, which were accompanied by the same courage as his actions, were too humbling to those who were already sufficiently incensed at his good fortune.

At the beginning of the war he was one of the lieutenant-generals who had the command of the detachments in Alsace. His army was at that time in the mountains of Breisgau, which border on the Black Forest; and this immense forest separated the elector of Bavaria's army from the French. Catinat, who commanded in Strasburg, had too much circumspection in his conduct to think of attacking the prince of Baden at such a disadvantage; as in case of a repulse, the French army must be hopelessly lost, and Alsace laid open. Villars, who had resolved to be marshal of France, or to die in the attempt, hazarded what Catinat did not dare to undertake. He wrote to court for permission; and then marched toward the imperialists at Friedlengen, with an inferior army, and fought the battle of that name, Oct. 14, 1702.

The horse engaged in the plain, the foot climbed up to the top of the hill, and attacked the German infantry which was intrenched in the woods. I have more than once heard Marshal Villars himself say, that after the battle was won, and as he was marching at the head of his infantry, a voice was heard crying out, "We are cut off;" upon which the whole body immediately took flight. He directly ran up to them, crying out, "What is the matter, friends? we have gained the victory, God bless the king." The soldiers, all pale and trembling, repeated, "God bless the king," and began to fly as before. He declared that he never met with more difficulty than in rallying the conquerors, and that if only two of the enemy's regiments had showed themselves at that instant of general panic, the French would have been beaten; so frequently does the fate of battles depend on mere chance.

The prince of Baden, though he lost three thousand men, with all his cannon, was driven out of the field of battle, and pursued for two leagues, through woods and defiles, while as a proof of his defeat, the fort of Friedlengen capitulated. Nevertheless, he wrote to the court of Vienna that he had gained the victory, and

ordered *Te Deum* to be sung, which was more shameful to him than even the loss of the battle.

The French recovered from their panic, proclaimed Villars marshal of France on the field of battle; and a fortnight later the king confirmed the title which the soldiers had conferred on him.

Marshal Villars, having joined the elector of Bavaria with his victorious army, found him also a conqueror, gaining ground of the enemy, and in possession of the imperial city of Ratisbon, where the assembly of the empire had lately vowed his destruction.

Villars was better qualified to serve his country when acting only according to his own genius than in concert with another. He carried, or rather dragged, the elector across the Danube; but no sooner had they passed that river than the elector began to repent of what he had done, perceiving, that on the least check, he should be obliged to leave his dominions at the enemy's mercy. The count of Styria, at the head of nearly twenty thousand men, was marching to join the grand army under the prince of Baden, near Donauwörth. The marshal told the elector that this must be prevented, by marching directly and attacking Styria. The elector, willing to temporize, replied that he must consult his ministers and generals on that head. "Am not I your minister and general?" answered Villars. "Do you want any other counsel but me when you are to give battle?" The prince, realizing the danger which threatened his dominions, still kept back, and even grew angry with the general. "Well, then," said Villars, "if your electoral highness will not embrace this opportunity with your Bavarians, I will begin the battle with the French;" and immediately gave orders for the attack. The prince was incensed, and regarded Villars as a madman, but was obliged to fight against his will. This was in the plains of Höchstädt, near Donauwörth.

After the first charge there appeared another instance of the effect of chance in battles. Both armies were seized at the same time with a panic, and fled; and Marshal Villars saw himself left alone for some minutes on the field of battle; however, he rallied his troops, led them back to the charge, and gained the victory. Three thousand of the imperialists were left dead on the field, and four thousand taken prisoners, with their cannon and baggage. The elector made himself master of Augsburg. The road to Vienna was open, and it was even debated in the emperor's council whether he should quit his capital.

The emperor was excusable for his apprehensions; he was beaten everywhere. The duke of Burgundy, with Marshals Tallard and Vauban under him, had just taken old Breisach; and Tallard had not only taken Landau, but had also defeated the prince of Hesse, afterward king of Sweden, near Spires, as he was attempting to relieve the town. If we believe the marquis de Feuquières—a most excellent officer and competent judge in the military art, though rather too severe in his decisions—Marshal Tallard won the battle by a fault and a mistake. However, he wrote thus to the king from the field of battle: "Sire, your majesty's army has taken more standards and colors than it has lost private men."

In this action there was more execution done by the bayonet than in any other during the war. The French have a singular advantage in the use of this weapon, on account of their natural impetuosity; but it has become more menacing than fatal; quick and close firing has prevailed in its stead. The English and Germans were accustomed to fire in divisions with greater order and readiness than the French. The Prussians were the first who loaded with iron rammers. The second king of Prussia taught his troops such an exercise, that they could fire six times in a minute, with great ease. Three ranks discharging their fire at once, and then advancing briskly, decide the fate of the battle nowadays. The field-pieces produce a no less formidable effect. The battalions who are staggered with the fire do not wait to be attacked with the bayonet, and are completely defeated by the cavalry; so that the bayonet frightens more than it slays, and the sword is absolutely useless to the infantry. Strength of body, skill, and courage are no longer of any service to a combatant. The battalions are great machines, and those which are best formed naturally bear down all that stand in their way. This was the very thing which gave Prince Eugene the victory over the Turks in those famous battles of Temiswar and Belgrade; while the latter would in all probability have had the advantage from their superiority of numbers, had these battles been what we called mixed fights. Thus the art of destroying each other is not only entirely different from what it was before the invention of gunpowder, but even from what it was a century ago.

As the French arms maintained their reputation with such success at first in Germany, it was presumed that Marshal Villars would carry it still further by an impetuosity which would disconcert the German phlegm: but the qualifications which made him a formidable chief rendered it impossible for him to act in concert with the elector of Bavaria. The king would not suffer his generals to show haughtiness to any but his enemies; and the elector of Bavaria unhappily wrote for another marshal of France.

Villars then, whose presence was so necessary in Germany, where he had gained two battles, and might possibly have crushed the empire, was recalled and sent into the Cévennes, to make peace with the rebellious peasants. We shall speak of these fanatics in the chapter on religion. Louis XIV. had at this time enemies that were more terrible, successful, and irreconcilable than the inhabitants of the Cévennes.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XVIII.

LOSS OF THE BATTLE OF HÖCHSTÄDT, OR BLENHEIM.

The duke of Marlborough returned from the Low Countries in the beginning of 1703, with the same conduct and the same success. He had taken Bonn, the residence of the elector of Cologne. Thence he marched and retook Huy and Limburg, and made himself master of all the Lower Rhine. Marshal Villeroi, now returned from his confinement, commanded in Flanders, where he had no better success against Marlborough than he had had against Prince Eugene. Marshal Bouflers, with a detachment of his army, had indeed gained a small advantage in the fight of Eckeren, over the Dutch general, Opdam; but an advantage which has no consequences is no advantage at all.

And now the house of Austria was undone, unless the English general marched to the assistance of the emperor. The elector of Bavaria was master of Passau. Thirty thousand French, under the command of Marshal Marsin, who had succeeded Villars, overspread the countries of the other side of the Danube. There were several flying parties in Austria. Vienna itself was threatened on one side by the French and Bavarians, and on the other by Prince Ragotski, at the head of the Hungarians, fighting for their liberty, and supplied with money by the French and the Turks. In this situation of affairs, Prince Eugene hastens from Italy to take command of the armies in Germany: he had an interview with the duke of Marlborough at Heilbronn. The English general, whose hands were at full liberty, being left to act as he pleased by his queen and her allies, the Dutch, marched with reinforcements into the heart of the empire, taking with him ten thousand English foot, and twenty-three squadrons of horse. He made forced marches, and arrived on the banks of the Danube, near Donauwörth, opposite the elector of Bavaria's lines, where about eight thousand French and as many Bavarians lay intrenched, to guard the country they had conquered. After an engagement of two hours, Marlborough forced the lines, at the head of three battalions of English, and routed the Bavarians and French. It is said that he killed six thousand of the enemy, and lost as many himself. A general concerns himself little about the number of slain, provided he succeeds in his enterprise. He then took Donauwörth, July 2, 1704, repassed the Danube, and laid Bavaria under contribution.

Marshal Villeroi, who attempted to follow him in his first marches, lost sight of him, and knew not where he was, till he heard the news of his victory at Donauwörth.

Marshal Tallard, who with a corps of thirty thousand men, had marched by another route to oppose Marlborough, came and joined the elector. At the same time Prince Eugene arrived and joined Marlborough.

At length the two armies met within a small distance of Donauwörth, and nearly in the same place where Marshal Villars had gained a victory the year before. I know that

the marshal, who was then in the Cévennes, having received a letter from Tallard's army, written the night before the battle, acquainting him with the disposition of the two armies, and the manner in which Marshal Tallard intended to engage, wrote to his brother-in-law, the president de Maisons, telling him that if Marshal Tallard gave the enemy battle in that position, he must inevitably be beaten. This letter was shown to Louis XIV. and afterward became public.

The French army, including the Bavarians, consisted of eighty-two battalions, and one hundred and sixty squadrons, which made in all nearly sixty thousand men, the corps being then not quite complete. The enemy had sixty-four battalions, and one hundred and fifty-two squadrons, in all not more than fifty-two thousand men; for armies are always made more numerous than they really are. This battle, which proved so bloody and decisive, deserves particular attention. The French generals were accused of a number of errors; the chief was, having brought themselves under a necessity of accepting a battle, instead of letting the enemy's army waste itself for want of forage, and giving time to Marshal Villeroi, either to fall upon the Netherlands, then in a defenceless state, or to penetrate farther into Germany. But it should be considered in reply to this accusation, that the French army being somewhat stronger than that of the allies, might hope for the victory, which indeed would have dethroned the emperor. The marquis de Feuquières reckons up no less than twelve capital faults committed by the elector, Marsin, and Tallard, before and after the battle. One of the greatest was not having placed a large body of foot in their centre, and having separated the two bodies of the army. I have often heard Marshal Villars say, that this disposition was unpardonable.

Marshal Tallard was at the head of the right wing, and the elector, with Marsin, at the left. Tallard had all the impetuous and sprightly courage of a Frenchman, an active and penetrating understanding, and a genius fruitful in expedients and resources. It was he who had made the partition treaties. He was allied to glory and fortune by all the ways of a man of genius and courage. The battle of Spires had gained him great honor, notwithstanding the animadversions of Feuquières; for a victorious general never appears culpable in the eyes of the public, while he who is beaten is always in the wrong, however just or prudent his conduct may have been.

But Marshal Tallard labored under a malady very dangerous to a general; his sight was so weak that he could not distinguish objects at the distance of twenty paces from him. Those who were well acquainted with him have told me, moreover, that his impetuous courage, quite the reverse of the duke of Marlborough's, growing still warmer in the heat of the action, deprived him sometimes of the necessary presence of mind. This defect was owing to a dry and inflammatory state of the blood. It is well known that the qualifications of the mind are chiefly influenced by the constitution of the body.

This was the first time that Marshal Marsin had the chief command. With a great deal of wit and a good understanding, he is said to have had rather the experience of a good officer than of a general.

As to the elector of Bavaria, he was looked upon not less as a great general than as a valiant and amiable prince, the darling of his subjects, and who had more magnanimity than application.

At length the battle began, between twelve and one o'clock in the afternoon. Marlborough, with his English, having passed a small rivulet, began the attack upon Tallard's cavalry. That general, a little before, had ridden toward the left wing to observe its disposition. It was no small disadvantage to Tallard's corps from the beginning to be obliged to fight without its general at its head. The corps commanded by the elector and Marsin had not yet been attacked by Prince Eugene. Marlborough began upon our right nearly an hour before Eugene could have come up to the elector at our left.

As soon as Marshal Tallard heard that Marlborough had attacked his wing, he immediately posted thither, where he found a furious action begun; the French cavalry rallied three times, and was as often repulsed. He then went to the village of Blenheim, where he had posted twenty-seven battalions, and twelve squadrons. This was a little detached army that kept a continual fire on Marlborough during the whole time he was engaged with Tallard's wing. After giving his orders in this village, he hastened back to the place where the duke, with a body of horse and battalions of foot between the squadrons was driving the French cavalry before him.

M. de Feuquières is certainly mistaken in saying that Marshal Tallard was not present at this time, but was taken prisoner as he was returning from Marsin's wing to his own. All accounts agree, and it was but too true of him, that he was actually present. He received a wound in the action, and his son was mortally wounded by his side. His cavalry was routed before his face. The victorious Marlborough forced his way between the two bodies of the French army on one side, while on the other his general officers got between the village of Blenheim and Tallard's division, which was also separated from the little army in that village.

In this cruel situation, Marshal Tallard flew to rally some of the broken squadrons; but the badness of his sight made him mistake a squadron of the enemy for one of his own, and he was taken prisoner by the Hessian troops that were in English pay. At the very instant that the general was taken, Prince Eugene, after having been three times repulsed, at length gained the advantage. The rout now became total in Tallard's division; everyone fled with the utmost precipitation; and so great was the terror and confusion throughout that whole wing, that officers and soldiers ran headlong into the Danube, without knowing whither they were going. There was no general officer to give orders for a retreat; no one thought of saving those twenty-seven battalions and twelve squadrons of the best troops of France, that were so unfortunately shut up in Blenheim, or of bringing them into action. At last Marshal Marsin ordered a retreat. The count du Bourg, afterward marshal of France, saved a small part of the infantry by retreating over the marshes of Höchstädt; but neither he, Marsin, nor anyone else thought of this little army, which still remained in Blenheim, waiting for orders which were never sent them. It consisted of eleven thousand effective men, from the oldest corps. There are many examples of less armies that have beaten others of fifty thousand men, or at least made a glorious retreat; but the nature of the post determines

everything. It was impossible for them to get out of the narrow streets of a village, and range themselves in order of battle, in the face of a victorious army, that would have overwhelmed them at once with a superior front, and even with their own artillery, which had all fallen into the victors' hands.

The general officer who commanded here was the marquis of Clérembaut, son of the marshal of that name: he was hastening to find Marshal Tallard, to receive orders from him, when he was told that he was taken prisoner; and seeing nothing but people running on all sides, he fled with them, and in flying was drowned in the Danube.

Brigadier Sivières, who was posted in this village, ventured on a bold stroke: he called aloud to the officers of the regiments of Artois and Provence, to follow him: several officers even of other regiments obeyed the summons, and rushing out of the village, like those who make a sally from a town that is besieged, fell upon the enemy; but after this sally they were obliged to return again. One of these officers, named Des Nonvilles, returned some few moments afterward on horseback, with the earl of Orkney. As soon as he entered the village, the rest of the officers flocked round him, inquiring if it was an English prisoner that he had brought in. "No, gentlemen," replied he, "I am a prisoner myself, and am come to tell you, that you have nothing left but to surrender yourselves prisoners of war. Here is the earl of Orkney, who has come to offer you terms." At hearing this, all these old bands shuddered with horror: the regiment of Navarre tore its colors, and buried them. But at length they were obliged to yield to necessity; and this whole army laid down its arms without having struck a blow. My lord Orkney has told me that it was impossible for them to do otherwise in their confined situation. Europe was struck with astonishment that the best troops in France should have suffered such disgrace. Their misfortune was at first imputed to cowardice; but a few years afterward the same thing happening to fourteen thousand Swedes, who surrendered at discretion to the Muscovites, in the open field, fully justified the French.

Such was this famous action of Aug. 13, 1704, which in France was known by the name of the battle of Höchstädt, and by the English and Germans was called the battle of Blenheim. The victors had nearly five thousand killed and eight thousand wounded; the greatest part of which loss fell on the side of Prince Eugene. The French army was almost entirely cut to pieces. Of sixty thousand men, who had been so long victorious, not more than twenty thousand could be gathered together after the battle.

This fatal day was distinguished by the loss of twenty thousand men killed, fourteen thousand made prisoners, all the cannon, a prodigious number of standards, colors, tents, and equipages, with the general of the army, and twelve hundred officers of note in the hands of the conquerors. The runaways dispersed themselves on all sides; and more than a hundred leagues of country were lost in less than a month. The whole electorate of Bavaria, now fallen under the yoke of the emperor, experienced all the severity of Austrian resentment, and all the cruelties of a rapacious soldiery. The elector, on his way to Brussels, whither he was flying for refuge, met with his brother, the elector of Cologne, who like him was driven out of his dominions; they embraced each other with a flood of tears. The court of Versailles, accustomed to continual successes, was struck with astonishment and confusion at this reverse. The news of

the defeat arrived in the midst of the rejoicings made on account of the birth of a great-grandson of Louis XIV. No one would venture to acquaint the king with this cruel truth. At length Madame de Maintenon took upon her to let him know that he was no longer invincible. It has been affirmed both by word of mouth and in writing, and the same has been repeated in above twenty different histories, that the emperor ordered a monument of this defeat to be erected on the plains of Blenheim, with an inscription greatly to the dishonor of the French king; but no such monument ever existed.

The English erected one to the honor of their duke of Marlborough. The queen and the parliament built an immense palace for him on one of his principal estates, to which they gave the name of Blenheim, where this battle is represented in most curious paintings and tapestry. The thanks of the two houses of parliament, and of the cities and boroughs, and the general acclamation of the people, were the first fruits he received from his victory. But the poem written by the famous Addison, a monument more durable than the palace of Blenheim, is reckoned by this warlike and learned nation, among the most honorable rewards bestowed on the duke of Marlborough. The emperor created him a prince of the empire, bestowed on him the principality of Mindelsheim, which was afterward exchanged for another; but he was never known by that title; the name of Marlborough being now the most noble he could bear.

By the dispersion of the French army an open passage was left to the allies from the Danube to the Rhine. They passed the latter and entered Alsace. Prince Louis of Baden, a general famous for his encampments and marches, invested Landau. Joseph, king of the Romans, eldest son of the emperor Leopold, came to be present at this siege; Landau was taken, and afterward Traerbach.

Notwithstanding the loss of a hundred leagues of country, the French extended their frontiers. Louis XIV. supported his grandson in Spain, and his arms were victorious in Italy. It required great efforts to make head against the victorious Marlborough in Germany, which, however, he did; the scattered remains of the army were gathered together, the garrisons were ordered to furnish men, and the militia were ordered to take the field. The ministry borrowed money everywhere. At length an army was got together; and Marshal Villars was recalled from the heart of the Cévennes to take the command. He came and joined the army at Trier, where he found himself in presence of the English general with an inferior army. Both sides were desirous of giving battle; but the prince of Baden not coming up soon enough to join his troops to those of the English, Villars had the honor of obliging Marlborough to decamp, in May, 1705. This was doing a great deal at that time. The duke of Marlborough, who had a sufficient esteem for Marshal Villars to wish to be esteemed by him again, wrote him the following billet while he was decamping: “Do me the justice, sir, to believe, that my retreat is entirely the prince of Baden’s fault, and that I esteem you even more than I am angry with him.”

The French had still some barriers in Germany. The enemy had not yet done anything in Flanders, where Marshal Villeroi, now at liberty, had the command. In Spain King Philip V. and the archduke Charles were both in expectation of the crown, the former from the powerful assistance of his grandfather, and the good will of the greater part

of the Spaniards; the latter from the assistance of the English, and the partisans he had in Catalonia and Aragon. This archduke, afterward emperor, second son of the emperor Leopold, went, toward the latter part of 1703, without any retinue, to London, to implore the assistance of Queen Anne.

Now the English power appeared in all its glory. This nation, which had in fact so little to do with this quarrel, furnished the Austrian prince with two hundred transport ships, thirty ships of war, joined to ten sail of the Dutch, nine thousand men, and a sum of money, to go and conquer a kingdom for himself. But notwithstanding the superiority which power and benefits confer, the emperor, in his letter to Queen Anne, which the archduke presented, would not give this princess, his benefactress, the title of majesty, but only that of serenity, agreeable to the style of the court of Vienna, which custom alone could justify, and which reason has since changed, when pride has been obliged to stoop to necessity.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XIX.

LOSSES IN SPAIN—THE BATTLES OF RAMILLIES AND TURIN, AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES.

One of the first exploits performed by these English troops was the taking of Gibraltar, a place justly deemed impregnable. A long chain of steep rocks forbade all approach to it by land; it had no harbor, but only a long bay, very wild and unsafe, where ships lay exposed to storms and to the artillery of the fortress and mole; the inhabitants of the town were alone sufficient to defend it against a fleet of a thousand ships and a hundred thousand men. But this very strength was the cause of its being taken; there were only a hundred men in garrison, but these were more than sufficient, had they not neglected a duty which they looked upon as useless. The prince of Hesse had landed with eighteen hundred soldiers on the northernmost neck of land, behind the town; but the steepness of the rock made an attack upon the place impracticable on that side. The fleet in vain fired more than fifteen thousand shot; at length a body of sailors, in one of their merry-makings, happened to row close under the mole in their boats, the cannon of which might have sunk them all, but not a gun was fired; upon this they mounted the mole, made themselves masters of it, and fresh troops flocking in on all sides, this impregnable town was at length obliged to surrender, on Aug. 4, 1704. It is still in possession of the English; and Spain, now again become a formidable power under the administration of the princess of Parma, second wife of Philip V., and lately victorious in Africa and Italy, beholds with an impotent grief, Gibraltar in the hands of a Northern nation, that had hardly a single ship in the Mediterranean two centuries ago.

Immediately after the taking of Gibraltar, the English fleet, now mistress of the sea, attacked the count de Toulouse, admiral of France, in view of the castle of Malaga. This battle, Aug. 26, 1704, though not a decisive one, was the last epoch of the maritime power of Louis XIV. His natural son, the count de Toulouse, admiral of the kingdom, had fifty ships of the line and twenty-four galleys under his command. He made a glorious retreat, with very little loss. But the king afterward sent thirteen ships to attack Gibraltar, while Marshal de Tessé laid siege to it by land; this double rashness proved the ruin of both army and fleet. Some of the ships were destroyed by a storm, others were boarded and taken by the English after a most noble resistance, and another part of them burned on the coast of Spain. From that day the French had no longer any large fleets either in the Western Ocean or the Mediterranean. The marine returned nearly to the state from which Louis XIV. had raised it, as well as many other glorious things which rose and set under his reign.

The English, who had taken Gibraltar for themselves, in less than six weeks conquered the kingdom of Valencia and Catalonia for the archduke Charles. They took Barcelona by an event of chance, which was owing to the rashness of the besiegers.

The English were at that time commanded by one of the most extraordinary men ever produced by that country, so fruitful in proud, valiant, and whimsical minds. This was the earl of Peterborough, a man who, in every respect, resembled those heroes with whose exploits the imagination of the Spaniards has filled so many books. At fifteen years of age he left London, to go and make war against the Moors in Africa; at twenty he was the first who set on foot the revolution in England, and went over to the prince of Orange; but, lest the true reason of his voyage should be suspected, he took passage for America, and then went over to The Hague in a Dutch vessel. He parted with all his fortune more than once. He was now carrying on the war in Spain almost at his own expense, and maintained the archduke and all his household. It was this extraordinary man, who, with the prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, was laying siege to Barcelona. He proposed to the prince to make a sudden attack on the intrenchments which covered Fort Montjoie and the town. These intrenchments were carried, sword in hand; the prince of Darmstadt fell in the attack. A bomb falling upon a magazine of powder in the fort, blew it up. The fort was taken, and the town thereupon capitulated. The viceroy came to one of the gates of the town to confer with Lord Peterborough; but the articles were not yet signed, when their ears were suddenly struck with loud cries and shrieks. “You have betrayed us, my lord,” said the viceroy to Peterborough; “we made a fair capitulation, and there your English have entered the city over the ramparts, and are killing, robbing, and plundering everyone.” “You are mistaken,” replied Lord Peterborough, “it must certainly be the prince of Darmstadt’s troops. There is no other way left to save your town, but to let me enter immediately with my English. I will make everything quiet, and return again to the gate to sign the capitulation.” He spoke this with an air of truth and grandeur that, added to the present danger, entirely persuaded the governor, who immediately let him enter. He flew through the streets with his officers, where he presently found the Germans and Catalans busy in plundering the houses of the principal citizens; he drove them off, and made them quit their booty. After this he met with the duchess of Popoli in the hands of some soldiers, who were going to dishonor her; he took her from them, and delivered her to her husband. At length, having made everything quiet, he returned to the gate according to his promise, and signed the capitulation. The Spaniards were confounded to find such magnanimity in the English, whom the populace had always been taught to look upon as merciless barbarians, because they were heretics.

To the loss of Barcelona succeeded the mortification of a fruitless attempt to retake it. Philip V., though he had the greater part of Spain in his interest, had neither generals, engineers, nor hardly soldiers. The count of Toulouse returned to block up the harbor with twenty-five ships of war, the whole remains of the French navy; Marshal de Tessé formed the siege by land with thirty-one squadrons of horse, and thirty-seven battalions of foot; but the English fleet appearing, that of France was obliged to retire, and de Tessé raised the siege with precipitation, May 2, 1706, leaving an immense quantity of provisions behind him in his camp, and one thousand five hundred wounded to the mercy of Lord Peterborough. These were heavy losses; and it was hard to say whether it had cost France more to conquer Spain than it did now to assist it. Nevertheless, the grandson of Louis XIV. still kept his ground, through the affection of the Castilians, whose greatest pride is their fidelity, and who, on this occasion, continued firm to the choice they had made.

In Italy affairs wore a better aspect; Louis was avenged on the duke of Savoy; the duke of Vendôme had, in the beginning, repulsed Prince Eugene with some glory, in the battle of Cassano, near the Adda; this proved a bloody day, and one of those drawn battles for which both sides sing *Te Deum,* and that serve only to destroy men without advancing the affairs of either party. After the battle of Cassano he gained a complete victory at Cassinato, on April 19, 1706, in the absence of Prince Eugene; and that prince, arriving next day, saw another detachment of his army entirely routed; in short, the allies were obliged to give ground everywhere before the duke of Vendôme. Turin alone remained to be taken; they were already on the march to invest it, and there appeared no possibility of relieving it. Marshal Villars pushed the prince of Baden in Germany. Villeroi, with an army of eighty thousand men in Germany, hoped to indemnify himself on Marlborough for the ill success he had met with against Prince Eugene. His too great confidence in his own abilities proved now more fatal than ever to France.

Marshal Villeroi's army was encamped near the river Mehaigne, by the head of the little Ghette; his centre was at Ramillies, a village since as famous as that of Blenheim. It was in his power to have avoided a battle: he was advised to do so by his general officers; but a blind passion for glory prevailed over every other consideration. It is said that the disposition he made for the battle was such that everyone of the least experience foresaw the fatal consequence. His centre was composed of newly raised troops, neither complete nor acquainted with military discipline. He left the baggage between the lines, and posted his left wing behind a morass, as if he intended to prevent it from coming near the enemy.

On May 23, 1706, Marlborough, who observed all these mistakes with a careful eye, drew up his army in such a manner as to take advantage of them; he perceived that the left wing of the French army could not come up to attack his right; he, therefore, made drafts from that part of his army, in order to fall on the enemy's centre, at Ramillies, with a superior force. Monsieur de Gassion, the lieutenant-general, observing these movements, cried out to the marshal: "You are undone, sir, if you do not instantly change the order of battle. Make a draft from your left wing, that you may have an equal force to oppose the enemy. Close your lines more. If you lose a minute, you are irrecoverably lost." This salutary advice was backed by several of the other officers; but the marshal would not believe them. When Marlborough began the attack, he found the army drawn up in the very manner in which he himself would have posted it for a defeat. This was publicly declared through all France, and history is partly a relation of the opinions of men; but may it not be alleged that the troops of the confederates were better disciplined, and that the confidence they had in their generals, and their past successes, inspired them with superior boldness? Were there not some of the French regiments who did not do their duty? And do we not know that those battalions who can best stand fire decide the destiny of states? The French army did not maintain its ground for half an hour; at Höchstädt the fight lasted for eight hours, and the French killed over eight thousand men; but, at the battle of Ramillies, they killed only two thousand five hundred. The defeat was general; the French lost twenty thousand men, together with the honor of their nation, and every hope of recovering the advantage. Bavaria and Cologne had been lost by the battle of Blenheim, and all Spanish Flanders was now lost by this of Ramillies; Marlborough

entered victorious into Antwerp and Brussels, took Ostend, and Menin surrendered to him.

Marshal Villeroi, in despair, did not dare to acquaint the king with this defeat; he waited five days before despatching a courier. At length he wrote a confirmation of this news, which had already filled the court of France with consternation; and when he returned to Versailles to present himself to the king, that monarch, instead of reproaching him, only said: “Monsieur le maréchal, people at our time of life are not fortunate.”

The king immediately sent to Italy for the duke of Vendôme, where he thought his presence not necessary, in order to replace Villeroi in Flanders, and repair, if possible, his disgrace. He still entertained hopes, and with just reason, that the taking of Turin would make him amends for all these losses. Prince Eugene was at too great a distance to come to its relief; he was on the other side the Adige, and a long chain of intrenchments that lined the river on this side seemed to make a passage impracticable. Forty-six squadrons and a hundred battalions formed the defence of this great city.

The duke de la Feuillade, who commanded this army, was the gayest and most amiable man in the kingdom; and, though son-in-law of the minister, he was the darling of the people; he was a son of that marshal de la Feuillade who erected the statue of Louis XIV. in the square des Victoires. He appeared to have as much courage as his father; the same ambition; the same magnificence; and more understanding. He expected the staff of marshal of France as a reward for his taking Turin. Chamillard, his father-in-law, who loved him tenderly, had left nothing undone to secure him success. The imagination stands appalled at the detail of the preparations made for this siege. Those readers who have it not in their power to inform themselves of these matters, may perhaps not be displeased to meet here with an account of this immense and fruitless undertaking.

There were a hundred and forty pieces of cannon, and it is to be observed, that each large cannon, mounted on its carriage, costs about two thousand crowns; one hundred and ten thousand balls, one hundred and six thousand cartridges of one form, and three hundred thousand of another; twenty-one thousand bomb-shells, twenty-seven thousand seven hundred hand grenades, fifteen thousand sandbags, thirty thousand pioneering tools, and twelve hundred thousand pounds of powder, besides lead, iron, tin, cordage, with everything proper for the miners, sulphur, saltpetre, and implements of all kinds. It is certain that the expense of all these preparations for destruction was more than sufficient to have founded a numerous colony, and put it into a flourishing condition. Every siege of a great town requires the same prodigious expense, and yet when a little village is to be repaired at home, it is neglected.

The duke de la Feuillade, full of ardor and activity, inferior to no one in undertakings where courage alone was required, but incapable of conducting those that called for art, reflection, and time, hurried the siege against all rules. Marshal Vauban, the only general perhaps who loved his country better than himself, had proposed to the duke de la Feuillade to come and direct the siege as an engineer, and to serve in his army as

a volunteer; but the pride of la Feuillade made him take this offer for insolence, concealed beneath the appearance of modesty, and was piqued that the best engineer in France should presume to give him advice. He wrote back to him, in a letter which I have seen: “I hope to take Turin by Cohorn.” This Cohorn was the Vauban of the allies, an excellent engineer, and a good general, who had taken several places that had been fortified by Vauban. After such a letter it was necessary to take Turin; but having begun the attack by the citadel, which was the strongest part, and the city not being completely surrounded, an opening was left for men or provisions to be thrown in, or for the duke of Savoy to sally out. In short, the greater impetuosity the duke de la Feuillade showed in his repeated and fruitless attacks, the more tedious was the siege.

The duke of Savoy came out of the town with some squadrons of horse, in order to amuse the duke de la Feuillade. The latter immediately quitted the direction of the siege to run after the prince, who, being better acquainted with the ground, baffled his pursuit. Thus la Feuillade missed the duke, and the business of the siege suffered by it.

All our historians, almost to a man, assert, that the duke de la Feuillade had no intention of taking Turin, and pretend that he had sworn to the duchess of Burgundy to respect her father’s capital; they likewise tell us that this princess prevailed upon Madame de Maintenon, to cause such measures to be taken as would save the town. It is certain that almost all the officers in this army were for a long time persuaded of the truth of this; but it was only one of those popular rumors which are the disgrace of the novelist, and the dishonor of the historian; besides, how contradictory it was, that the general who would not take Turin should endeavor to seize on the person of the duke of Savoy!

From May 13 till June 20 the duke of Vendôme had been posted on the banks of the Adige, to cover this siege, and thought himself competent, with seventy battalions and sixty squadrons, to stop all the passages against Prince Eugene.

The imperial general was in want of men and money. The mercers’ company of London loaned him about six millions of our livres; he then sent for a supply of men from the circles of the empire. The slowness of these reinforcements might have proved the ruin of Italy; but the slowness of the siege of Turin was still greater.

Vendôme was already appointed to go and repair the losses in Flanders; but, before he left Italy, he suffered Prince Eugene to cross the Adige, to pass the White Canal, and even the Po itself, a river larger, and in some places more difficult of passage than the Rhine; and before he himself left the banks of the Po, he saw Prince Eugene in a condition to advance even to Turin. Thus he left affairs in the most critical state in Italy, while in Flanders, Germany, and Spain, they appeared desperate.

The duke of Vendôme then went to Mons to assemble Villeroi’s scattered forces; and the duke of Orleans, nephew of Louis XIV., was sent to command his army on the banks of the Po. He found these troops in as much disorder as if they had suffered a defeat. Eugene had passed the Po in sight of Vendôme; he now crossed the Tanaro in

view of the duke of Orleans, took Sarpi, Correggio, and Reggio; stole a march on the French, and at length joined the duke of Savoy near Asti. All that the duke of Orleans could do was to march and join la Feuillade in his camp before Turin. Prince Eugene followed with the utmost diligence. The duke of Orleans had now two alternatives, either to wait for Prince Eugene in the investing lines, or to march and meet him while he was yet on the other side of Veillane. He called a council of war, at which were present Marshal Marsin, who had lost the battle of Blenheim, the duke de la Feuillade, Albergoti, St. Fremont, and other lieutenant-generals, to whom he thus addressed himself: "Gentlemen, if we remain in our lines we lose the battle. The lines of circumvallation are above five leagues in length; it will be impossible for us to line all these intrenchments. On one hand here is the regiment of marines, that is not above two men deep; and, on the other hand, there are many places left entirely naked. The Doire, which runs through our camp, will prevent our men from marching readily to the assistance of one another; besides, when the French know they are attacked, they lose one of their principal advantages, that impetuosity and instantaneous ardor which so frequently decide the fate of battles. Believe me, it is to our interest to march directly to the enemy." The lieutenant-generals immediately cried out, one and all: "Let us march." Then Marshal Marsin drew the king's order out of his pocket, which left everything to his decision in case of an action, and it was his choice to remain in the lines.

The duke of Orleans was not a little incensed to find that he was sent to the army only as a prince of the blood, and not as a general; however, he was obliged to follow Marsin's advice, and made the necessary preparations for this disadvantageous action.

The enemy seemed at first to intend to make several attacks at once; and the variety of their movements threw the French camp into confusion. The duke of Orleans proposed one thing, Marsin and la Feuillade another; they disputed, and concluded upon nothing; till at length they suffered the enemy to pass the Doire, and advance in eight columns, each twenty-five men deep. There was an immediate necessity of opposing them with battalions of equal thickness.

Albergoti, who was posted at a distance from the main army, on the Capucins hill, had twenty thousand men with him, and only a body of the enemy's militia to oppose, who did not dare to attack. They sent from the camp for a detachment of twelve thousand men; but he said that he could not weaken his division, and gave some specious reasons. Time was lost in these altercations. Prince Eugene attacked the intrenchments, and in two hours forced them, on Sept. 7, 1706. The duke of Orleans was wounded, and had retired to have his wound dressed; but he had scarcely gotten to the surgeon's tent when word was brought him that all was lost, that the enemy was master of the camp, and that the defeat was general. Nothing remained but immediate flight; the trenches were abandoned, and the whole army dispersed. All the baggage, provisions, and ammunition, together with the military chest, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Marshal Marsin himself was wounded in the thigh, and made prisoner. One of the duke of Savoy's surgeons cut off his thigh, and he died a few minutes after the operation. Sir Paul Methuen, ambassador from England to the court of Turin, the most generous and brave man that his country had ever employed in her embassies, fought by the duke of Savoy's side during the whole action. He was present when

Marshal Marsin was taken prisoner, and was near him in his last moments; and he told me that the marshal, when he was dying, spoke to him in these very terms: “Be persuaded, sir, that it was contrary to my judgment that we waited for you in our lines.” These words seem positively to contradict what passed at the council of war, and may, nevertheless, be true; for Marsin, when he took leave of the king at Versailles, represented to his majesty that it would be proper to march and attack the enemy, in case they should appear to relieve Turin; but Chamillard, intimidated by so many former defeats, had afterward decided that the army should wait in the lines, and not offer battle: and this order given at Versailles occasioned the defeat of sixty thousand men.

The French had not more than two thousand men killed in this engagement; but we have already seen that a panic does more than even slaughter. The impossibility of finding subsistence, which would make an army retire after a victory, brought back the troops to Dauphiny, after their defeat. Everything was in such disorder that the count of Medavy-Grancei, who was at that time in Mantua with a body of troops, and beat the imperialists at Castiglione, on Sept. 9, 1706, under the command of the prince of Hesse, afterward king of Sweden, gained only a fruitless victory, though it was complete. In a word, the duchies of Milan, Mantua, Piedmont, and lastly the kingdom of Naples, were all lost within a very little time of one another.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XX.

LOSSES OF THE FRENCH AND SPANIARDS CONTINUED—LOUIS XIV. HUMBLED; HIS PERSEVERANCE AND RESOURCES—BATTLE OF MALPLAQUET.

The battle of Höchstadt, or Blenheim, cost Louis XIV. a fine army, and the whole country from the Danube to the Rhine; and the elector of Bavaria all his dominions. All Flanders was lost to the very gates of Lille, by the fatal day of Ramillies; and the defeat at Turin drove the French out of Italy, which had always happened to them in every war since the time of Charlemagne. They had still some troops left in the duchy of Milan, and the little victorious army under the count of Medavy. They were also still in possession of some strong places. They offered to give up all these to the emperor, provided he would permit these troops, which amounted to about fifteen thousand men, to retire unmolested. The emperor accepted of the proposition, and the duke of Savoy gave his assent. Thus the emperor, with a dash of his pen, became peaceable possessor of Italy. The kingdom of Naples and Sicily was guaranteed to him, and everything that had formerly been feudal was now treated as subject to a supreme power. He imposed a tax of one hundred and fifty thousand pistoles on Tuscany; forty thousand on the duchy of Mantua; and Parma, Modena, Lucca, and Genoa, notwithstanding they were free states, were included in these impositions.

The emperor, who had all these advantages on his side, was not that Leopold, the ancient rival of Louis XIV., who, under a show of moderation, had secretly cherished the most ambitious views. It was the fiery, sprightly, and passionate Joseph, his eldest son, who was not so good a soldier as his father. If ever there was an emperor who seemed formed to enslave Germany, it was this Joseph; his dominions stretched beyond the Alps, he laid the pope under contribution, and, by his sole authority, in 1706, had the electors of Bavaria and Cologne put under the ban of the empire, and then stripped them of their dominions. He kept Bavaria's children in prison, and took away from them even their name. Their father had nothing left but to retire to France and the Low Countries, afterward, in 1712; Philip V. ceded to him all Spanish Flanders. If he could have kept this province, it would have been a better settlement for him than even Bavaria, and have freed him from his subjection to the house of Austria; but he could get possession only of the cities of Luxemburg, Namur, and Charleroi, the rest being in the hands of the victors. Everything now seemed to threaten Louis XIV., who had so lately been the terror of all Europe. There was nothing to oppose the duke of Savoy's entering France. England and Scotland had lately become one kingdom, by the union; or, rather, Scotland, now a province of England, increased the power of its ancient rival. In 1706 and 1707 all the enemies of France seemed to have acquired new strength, and that kingdom to be on the verge of ruin. She was assailed on all sides, both by sea and land. Of the formidable fleets which Louis XIV. had raised, scarcely twenty-five ships were left remaining.

Strasburg still continued to be the barrier town toward Germany; but by the loss of Landau, all Alsace lay exposed. Provence was threatened with an invasion by sea and land, and the losses already sustained in Flanders made us tremble for what was left; and yet, notwithstanding all these disasters, the body of the kingdom had not yet been attacked; and, unsuccessful as the war had been, we only lost what we had before conquered.

Louis XIV. still opposed his enemies; and though beaten almost everywhere, he continued to resist, protect, and even attack on all sides. But affairs were as unsuccessful in Spain as in Italy, Germany, and Flanders. It is said that the siege of Barcelona was still worse conducted than that of Turin.

The count of Toulouse had hardly made his appearance with his fleet, when he was obliged to sail back again. Barcelona was relieved, the siege raised, and the French, after having lost half their army, were forced, for want of provisions, to march back into Navarre, a little kingdom that they kept from the Spaniards, and of which our kings take the title by a custom that seems beneath their dignity.

To these disasters was added yet another, which seemed to be the finishing stroke. The Portuguese, together with a body of English, under the command of Lord Galloway, a Frenchman, formerly Count de Ruvigni, lately created a peer of Ireland, took every place they came to and had advanced even into the province of Estremadura; while the duke of Berwick, an Englishman, who commanded the troops of France and Spain, in vain attempted to stop their progress.

Philip V., uncertain of his fate, was in Pampeluna; while his competitor, Charles, was increasing his party, and augmenting his forces in Catalonia.

He was master of Aragon, the province of Valencia, Cartagena, and part of the province of Granada. The English took Gibraltar for themselves, and gave him Minorca, Ivica, and Alicant: besides, the road to Madrid was open to him; and Lord Galloway entered that city without any resistance, and proclaimed the archduke Charles king on June 26, 1706; a single detachment sent from the army proclaimed him in Toledo. In short, Philip's affairs seemed so desperate that Marshal Vauban, the first of engineers, and the best of citizens, a man continually engaged in schemes, some useful, others impracticable, and all of them singular, actually proposed to the French court to send Philip over to America to reign there. In this case all the Spaniards in Philip's interest would have left their country to follow him. Spain would have been left a prey to civil factions. The French would have had the whole trade of Peru and Mexico, and France would have been aggrandized even by the misfortunes of Louis XIV.'s family. This project was actually under consideration at Versailles; but the perseverance of the Castilians, and the oversights of the enemy, preserved the crown upon Philip's head. The people loved him as the king of their choice; and his queen, the duke of Savoy's daughter, had gained their affections by the pains she took to please them; by an intrepidity above her sex, and an active perseverance under misfortunes. She went in person from city to city, animating the minds of her subjects, rousing their zeal, and receiving the donations which they brought in on all sides; so that in three weeks' time she remitted her husband more than two hundred thousand

crowns. Not one of the grandees who had taken the oath of fidelity proved false. When Lord Galloway proclaimed the archduke in Madrid, the people cried out, “Long live King Philip;” and at Toledo they mutinied, and put to flight the officers who were going to proclaim Charles.

The Spaniards had till then made very few efforts in support of their king; but when they saw him thus distressed, they exerted themselves in a surprising manner; and on this occasion showed an example of courage quite the reverse of that of other nations, who generally set out in a vigorous manner, but shrink back at last. It is very difficult to impose a king upon a nation against its will. The Portuguese, English, and Austrians that were in Spain were miserably harassed wherever they came, suffered much for want of provisions, and were guilty of errors almost unavoidable in a strange country; so that they were beaten piecemeal. In short, Philip V., three months after his leaving Madrid like a fugitive, entered it again in triumph, and was received with as much joy and acclamation as his rival had met with coldness and aversion.

Louis XIV. redoubled his efforts when he saw the Spaniards bestir themselves; and while he was obliged to provide for the safety of the seacoasts of the Western Ocean and the Mediterranean, by stationing militia all along shore; though he had one army in Flanders, another at Strasburg, a body of troops in Navarre, and one in Roussillon, he sent a fresh reinforcement to Marshal Berwick in Castile.

It was with these troops, seconded by the Spaniards, that Berwick gained the important battle of Almanza—April 25, 1707—in which he beat Galloway. Neither Philip nor the archduke was present at this action, on which the famous earl of Peterborough, who was singular in everything, observed: “It is excellent, indeed, to fight against one another for them.” The duke of Orleans, who was to have the command in Spain, and who was very desirous of being present, did not arrive till the day after the battle; however, he made all possible advantage of the victory, by taking several places, and among others Lérida, the rock on which the great Condé had split.

On the other hand, Marshal Villars, now replaced at the head of the armies in Germany, because the government could not do without him, made amends for the fatal defeat at Hochstädt. He forced the enemy’s lines at Stollhofen, on the other side the Rhine, dispersed their whole body, levied contributions for fifty leagues round, and advanced as far as the Danube. This momentary success gave a better face to affairs on the frontiers of Germany; but in Italy all was lost. The kingdom of Naples, entirely defenceless, and accustomed to a change of masters, was under the yoke of the conquerors; and the pope, unable to refuse a passage to the German troops through his dominions, saw, without daring to murmur, the emperor make him his vassal against his will. It is a strong instance of the force of received opinions, and the power of custom, that Naples may always be seized upon without consulting the pope, and yet the possessor is always obliged to do him homage for it.

While the grandson of Louis XIV. was thus deprived of Naples, the grandfather was on the point of losing Provence and Dauphiny. The duke of Savoy and Prince Eugene had already entered those provinces by the narrow pass of Tenda; and Louis XIV. had the mortification of seeing that very duke of Savoy, who a twelvemonth before had

hardly anything left but his capital, and Prince Eugene, who had been brought up at his court, on the point of stripping him of Toulon and Marseilles.

Toulon was besieged, and in danger of being taken; the English fleet lay before the harbor, and bombarded the town. A little more diligence, precaution, and unanimity, would have carried Toulon. Marseilles, then left defenceless, could have made no resistance, and France seemed likely to lose two provinces; but what is probable seldom happens. There was time to send relief; a detachment had been made from Marshal Villars' army, as soon as these provinces were threatened; and the advantages in Germany were made to give way to the safety of a part of France. That part of the country by which the enemy entered was dry, barren, and hilly; provisions were scarce, and a retreat difficult. A sickness, which made great havoc in the enemy's army, proved favorable to Louis XIV. The siege of Toulon was raised, and soon afterward the enemy evacuated Provence, and Dauphiny was out of danger; so seldom does an invasion prove successful, unless there is an intelligence with the people of the country. Charles V. failed in the same design, and of late days the queen of Hungary's troops have been disappointed in their attempts against this country.

However, this invasion, which cost the allies so dear, proved of no small importance to the French. The country had been spoiled, and our forces divided.

Europe little expected that, while the French nation thus exhausted, thought itself happy in having escaped an invasion, Louis XIV. was sufficiently great and fruitful in expedients to attempt an invasion in Great Britain, in spite of the weak state of his maritime forces and the powerful fleets of the English that covered the seas. This expedition was proposed by some of the Scotch, in the interest of James III. The success was doubtful; but Louis thought the very attempt sufficiently glorious; and actually declared afterward, that he was determined as much by this motive as his political interest.

To carry the war into Great Britain at that time, when we could with difficulty support the burden of it in so many other places, and to endeavor to replace the son of James II. on the throne of Scotland, at least while we could hardly support Philip V. on that of Spain, was a noble idea, and after all, not quite destitute of probability.

Those of the Scotch who had not sold themselves to the court of London, were grieved to see themselves reduced to a state of dependence on the English, and privately with one accord called upon the offspring of their ancient kings, who in his infancy had been driven from the throne of three kingdoms, and whose very birth had been contested by his enemies. They promised to join him with thirty thousand men, if he would only land at Edinburgh with some few men from France.

Louis XIV., who in his time of prosperity, had made such efforts in behalf of the father, now did the same for the son, though his fortunes were in the decline. Eight ships of war and seventy transports were got ready at Dunkirk, and six thousand men put on board, in March, 1708. The count de Gacé, afterward Marshal Matignon, had the command of the troops, and the chevalier de Forbin Janson, one of the best sailors of his time, had that of the fleet. Everything seemed favorable for their design: there

were but three thousand regular troops in Scotland, England was left defenceless, its soldiers being all engaged in Flanders, under the duke of Marlborough. The difficulty was to get there; for the English had a fleet of fifty ships of war cruising at sea. This expedition was exactly like the late one in 1744, in favor of the grandson of James II. It was discovered by the government, and impeded by several unlucky accidents; insomuch that the English ministry had time to send for twelve battalions out of Flanders. Several of the most suspected persons were seized in Edinburgh. At length, the Pretender having showed himself on the Scottish coast, and not seeing the signals which had been agreed upon, nothing was left but to turn back again. The chevalier Forbin landed him safely at Dunkirk, and by his prudent retreat saved the French fleet; but the expedition was entirely frustrated. Matignon was the only one who gained anything on this occasion: having opened his orders after he came out to sea, he there found a patent for marshal of France, a reward for what he meant to do, but could not perform.

There cannot be a more absurd notion than that of some historians, who pretend that Queen Anne had a correspondence with her brother in this affair. It is absolute folly to suppose that she would invite her competitor for the crown to come and dethrone her. They have confounded the time, and imagined that she favored him because she afterward looked upon him in private as her successor: but what prince would choose to be driven from the throne by his successor?

While the French affairs were every day growing worse and worse, the king thought that, by sending the duke of Burgundy, his grandson, to head the army in Flanders, the presence of the heir presumptive to the crown would excite the emulation of the troops, which began to droop. This prince was of a resolute and intrepid disposition, pious, just, and learned. He was formed to command wise men: he loved mankind, and endeavored to make them happy. Though well versed in the art of war, he considered that art rather as the scourge of human kind, and an unhappy necessity, than the source of real glory. This philosophical prince was the person sent to oppose the duke of Marlborough, and they gave him the duke of Vendôme for an assistant. It now happened, as it too frequently does: the experienced officer was not sufficiently listened to, and the prince’s counsel frequently carried it over the general’s reasons. Hence arose two parties; whereas, in the enemy’s army, there was but one, that of the public good. Prince Eugene was at that time on the Rhine; but when he and Marlborough were together, they had but one opinion.

The duke of Burgundy had the superiority in numbers; France, which Europe looked upon as exhausted, had furnished him with an army of one hundred thousand men; and the allies at that time had not quite eighty thousand. He had, moreover, the advantage of sympathy on his side, from a country which had been so long under the Spanish dominion, was tired out with Dutch garrisons, and where a great part of the inhabitants were inclined to favor Philip V. By his correspondence in Ghent and Ypres, he became master of these two places; but the schemes of the soldier soon rendered fruitless those of the politician. The disagreement in the council of war already began to distract their operations; so that now they began to march toward the Dender, and two hours afterward turned back again toward the Scheldt, to go to Oudenarde. In this manner they lost time, while the duke of Marlborough and Prince

Eugene were making the best of theirs, and acted in concert with each other. The French were routed near Oudenarde on July 11, 1708. This was not a great battle; but it proved a fatal retreat. Error was added to terror. The regiments were suffered to wander at random without receiving any orders, and more than four thousand men were made prisoners on the road, by the enemy's army, only a few miles from the field of battle.

The army, in despondency, retreated without any order, part under Ghent, part under Tournay, and part under Ypres, and quietly suffered Prince Eugene, now returned from the Rhine, to lay siege to Lille with an inferior army.

To sit down before so large and well-fortified a town as Lille without being master of Ghent, obliged to send for provisions and ammunition as far as Ostend; and these to be brought over a narrow causeway, at the hazard of being every moment surprised, was what Europe called a rash action; but which the misunderstanding and irresolution that prevailed in the French army rendered very excusable, and was justified in the end by the success. The grand convoys which might have been intercepted, arrived safe. The troops that escorted them, and which should have been defeated by a superior number, proved victorious. The duke of Burgundy's army, that might have attacked that of the enemy before it was complete, remained inactive; and Lille was taken, to the astonishment of all Europe, who thought the duke of Burgundy in a condition to besiege Marlborough and Eugene, rather than those generals to besiege Lille. Marshal Bouflers defended the place nearly four months.

The inhabitants became so familiar with the noise of cannon, and all the horror that attended a siege, that public diversions were carried on as in time of peace; and though a bomb one day fell very near the theatre, it did not interrupt the entertainment.

Marshal Bouflers had made such judicious dispositions that the inhabitants of this great city remained perfectly secure in his vigilance. The defence he made gained him the esteem even of his enemies, the hearts of the inhabitants, and a reward from the king. Those Dutch historians, or rather writers, who affect to blame him should remember that, to contradict the public voice, a person must have been a witness, and an intelligent one, or prove what he advances.

In the meantime, the army that had looked on while Lille was taken, began to diminish by little and little, and suffered Ghent to be taken next, and then Bruges, and all the posts one after another. Few campaigns have proved more fatal than this. The officers in the duke of Vendôme's interest laid all these faults to the duke of Burgundy's council, who blamed them on the duke of Vendôme. All minds were soured with misfortune. One of the duke of Burgundy's courtiers said one day to the duke of Vendôme: "Thus it is, never to go to mass; you see how misfortunes follow us." "Do you think then," replied the duke of Vendôme, "that Marlborough goes there oftener than we?" The emperor Joseph was puffed up with the rapid successes of the allied army; he saw himself absolute in the empire, master of Landau, and the road to Paris in a manner open, by the taking of Lille. A party of Dutch soldiers had the boldness to advance as far as Versailles, from Courtrai, and carried off the king's first

equerry from under the castle windows, thinking it was the dauphin, the duke of Burgundy's father. Paris was filled with terror; and the emperor entertained as strong hopes of settling his brother Charles on the throne of Spain as Louis XIV. had of keeping his grandson in possession of it.

This succession, which the Spaniards had wanted to render indivisible, was already split into three parts. The emperor had taken Lombardy and the kingdom of Naples to himself. His brother Charles was still in possession of Catalonia, and a part of Aragon. The emperor at that time obliged Pope Clement XI. to acknowledge the archduke for king of Spain. This pope, who was said to resemble St. Peter, because he owned, denied, repented, and wept, had, after the example of his predecessor, acknowledged Philip V., and was attached to the house of Bourbon. The emperor, to punish him, declared several fiefs, which at that time were held from the popes, subject to the empire, particularly Parma and Placentia; laid waste several lands belonging to the holy see, and seized on the town of Comacchio. In former times, a pope would have excommunicated any emperor who had attempted to dispute with him the most trifling privileges; and that excommunication would have driven the emperor from his throne: but the power of this see was now reduced within its proper bounds. Clement XI., at the instigation of France, had ventured to unsheathe the sword; but he had no sooner taken up arms than he repented of it. He perceived that the Romans were incapable of wielding the sword under a sacerdotal government. He therefore laid down his arms, left Comacchio in the emperor's hands as a pledge of his future peaceable conduct, and consented to write to the archduke with the style of "Our dearest son, the Catholic king in Spain." A fleet of English ships in the Mediterranean and a German army in his dominions soon made him glad to write, "To our dearest son, Charles, king of Spain." It was thought that this suffrage of the popes, though of no service in the German Empire, might have some effect on the Spanish populace, who had been made to believe that the archduke was unworthy to reign, because he was protected by heretics, who had taken Gibraltar.

There yet remained to the Spanish monarchy beyond the continent, the two islands of Sardinia and Sicily: an English fleet had taken Sardinia, and given it to the emperor; for the English were not willing that the archduke should have anything more than Spain. At that time they made treaties of partition with their arms. The conquests of Sicily they reserved for another time, choosing to employ their ships at sea in capturing Spanish galleons, rather than in conquering new territories for the emperor.

France was now as much humbled as Rome, and more in danger; resources began to fail, credit was at a stand, and the people, who had idolized their monarch in his prosperity, began to murmur against him when unfortunate.

A set of men to whom the ministry had sold the nation for a little ready money to supply the immediate call grew fat on the public calamity, and insulted the sufferings of the people by their luxurious manner of living. The money they had advanced was spent; and had it not been for the bold industry of certain traders, particularly those of St. Malo, who made a voyage to Peru, and brought home thirty millions, half of which they lent to the government, Louis XIV. would not have had money to pay his troops. The war had ruined the kingdom, and the merchants saved it; this was the case in

Spain. The galleons which had escaped being taken by the English helped to support Philip V., but this resource, which was only of a few months' duration, did not facilitate the raising of recruits. Chamillard, who had been made treasurer and secretary of war, resigned the latter post in favor of M. Voisin, afterward chancellor, who had formerly been an intendant on the frontiers. The armies were as badly supplied as before, nor did merit meet with more encouragement. Chamillard afterward resigned the management of the treasury; but Desmarets, who succeeded him, was not able to restore a ruined credit. The severe winter of 1709 completed the despair of the nation. The olive trees, which bring in a great deal of money in the south of France, were all destroyed; almost all the fruit-trees were killed by the severe frost; there were no hopes of a harvest; and there was very little corn in the granaries; and what could be bought at a very great distance, from the seaport towns of the Levant, and the coast of Barbary, was liable to be taken by the enemies' fleets, to whom we had hardly any ships of war to oppose. The scourge of this dreadful winter was general all over Europe; but the enemies had more resources, especially the Dutch, who had been so long the factors for other nations, had magazines sufficiently stored to supply the strongest armies the allies could bring into the field, in a plentiful manner, while the French troops, diminished and disheartened, seemed ready to perish for want.

Louis XIV., who had already made some advances toward a peace, determined under these fatal circumstances to send his chief minister, the marquis Torci Colbert, to The Hague, assisted by the president Rouillé. This was a humbling step. They first met at Antwerp, with two burgomasters from Amsterdam, named Buis and Vanderhussen, who talked like conquerors, and returned to the ministers of the proudest of all princes all the arrogance with which they themselves had been treated in 1672.

The states-general had chosen no stadtholder since the death of King William; and the Dutch magistrates, who already began to call their families "the patrician families," were so many petty kings. The four Dutch commissaries, who attended the army, behaved with the utmost insolence to more than thirty German princes, whom they maintained in their pay. "Send Holstein hither," said they; "tell Hesse to come and speak to us." In this manner did a set of merchants express themselves, who, all plain in their garb, and abstemious in their way of living, took a pleasure in trampling upon German haughtiness in their pay, and mortifying the pride of a king who had formerly been their conqueror. They were not contented with showing the world by these external marks of superiority, that power is the only real greatness, but they insisted on having ten towns in Flanders given them in sovereignty, and among others Lille, which was already in their hands; and Tournay, which was not yet taken, Thus the Dutch wanted to reap all the fruits of the war, not only at the expense of France, but also at that of the house of Austria, whose cause they had been fighting, in the same manner as the republic of Venice had formerly augmented its territories with those of its neighbors. The republican spirit is in the main fully as ambitious as the monarchial.

This plainly appeared a few months afterward; for when this shadow of a negotiation had vanished and the allied army had gained some fresh advantages, the duke of Marlborough, at that time more absolute in England than his royal mistress, having been gained over by the Dutch, concluded a treaty with the states-general in 1709, by

which they were to keep possession of all the frontier towns which should be taken from the French; were to have garrisons in twenty fortresses in Flanders, to be maintained at the expense of the country, and to have Upper Guelders in perpetual sovereignty. By this treaty they would have become actual sovereigns of the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands, and have had supreme rule in Liège and Cologne. In this manner did they want to aggrandize themselves by the ruin even of their allies. They were full of these lofty projects when the chief minister of France came to them to ask for peace; we must not therefore be surprised at the disdainful reception he met with.

After these first steps of humiliation, Louis's minister went to The Hague, where he received in his master's name the last degree of insult. He there saw Prince Eugene, the duke of Marlborough, and the pensionary, Heinsius, who all three were for continuing the war—the prince, because it at once gratified his glory and his revenge; Marlborough, because he gained both reputation and immense riches, of which he was equally fond; the third, who was guided by the other two, looked upon himself as a Spartan humbling the pride of a Persian monarch. They proposed instead of peace a truce, and during that truce a full satisfaction for all their allies, without taking any notice of the king's, provided the king should assist in driving his grandson from the throne of Spain, within two months; and that as a surety for his performance of the treaty, he should begin by ceding to the states-general forever, ten towns in Flanders, restore Strasburg and Breisach, and renounce the sovereignty of Alsace. Louis little expected, some years before, when he refused a company of horse to Prince Eugene, when Churchill was only a colonel in the English army, and the name of Heinsius was hardly known, that one day these three men should impose such terms upon him. The marquis de Torci took his leave without negotiating, and returned to carry the king the orders of his enemies. Louis XIV. now did what he had never before done toward his subjects. He justified his conduct in a circular letter, which he addressed to them, in which, after acquainting his people with the added burdens he was obliged to lay upon them, he endeavored to rouse their indignation, honor, and even pity. The politicians said that Torci went to The Hague in that suppliant manner, only to throw the whole blame upon the enemy, to justify Louis XIV. in the eyes of Europe, and animate the French to a just resentment; but the fact is that he went there purely to demand peace. The president Rouillé was left some few days at The Hague, to endeavor to get more favorable conditions; but all the answer he received to his remonstrances was an order from the states-general to leave Holland in twenty-four hours.

Louis XIV., when he heard the rigorous terms imposed upon him, said to Rouillé: "Well then, since I must make war, I would rather it should be against my enemies than my children." He then made preparations to try his fortune once more in Flanders; the famine, which had laid waste the countries round, proved a resource for the war; those who wanted bread enlisted for soldiers. Many lands lay untilled; but we had an army. Marshal Villars, who had been sent the preceding year into Savoy, to command a few troops whose ardor was revived by his presence, and who had met with some little successes, was recalled into Flanders, as the person in whom his country placed all her hopes.

Marlborough had already taken Tournay; and with Prince Eugene, who had covered the siege, marched to invest Mons. Marshal Villars advanced to prevent them, having with him Marshal Bouflers, a senior officer, but who had desired to serve under him. Bouflers had a true affection for his king and country; he proved on this occasion—notwithstanding what has been said by a very sensible man—that there are virtues in a monarchical state, especially under a good master. There are doubtless as many as in a republic, with less enthusiasm perhaps, but with more of what is called honor.

As soon as the French advanced to oppose the investing of Mons, the allies on their side advanced to attack them near the wood of Blangies and the village of Malplaquet, Sept. 11, 1709.

The two armies consisted of about eighty thousand men each; but the allies had forty-two battalions more. The French brought eighty pieces of cannon into the field, the allies one hundred and forty. The duke of Marlborough commanded the right wing, composed of the English and German troops in English pay; Prince Eugene was in the centre; Tilli and the count of Nassau at the left, with the Dutch.

Marshal Villars took the command of the left wing of his army, and left the right to Marshal Bouflers; he had intrenched his army in haste, a method perhaps most suitable to his troops, that were inferior in numbers, and had been a long time unsuccessful, and consisted of one-half recruits; it was most suitable likewise to our condition at that time; as an entire defeat would have ruined the nation. Some historians have found fault with the disposition made by the marshal: “He should,” say they, “have passed a large hollow, instead of having it in his front.” Is it not being rather too discerning to judge thus from our closet of what passes on a field of battle?

All that I know is, that the marshal himself said, that the soldiers who had had no bread for a whole day, and had just had their allowance distributed among them, threw half of it away, to make the greater haste to come to action. There has not been for many ages a longer or more obstinate battle; none more bloody. I shall say nothing touching this action but what has been universally acknowledged. The enemies’ left wing, where the Dutch fought, was almost entirely cut to pieces; and we pursued them with fixed bayonets. Marlborough, at the right, made and withstood surprising efforts. Marshal Villars had occasion to thin his centre to oppose Marlborough; at that very instant the centre was attacked, the intrenchments which covered it were carried, the regiment of guards who defended them making no resistance. The marshal, in riding from his left wing to his centre, was wounded, and the day was lost; the field of battle was covered with the bodies of thirty thousand men, killed and dying.

The loss of the French in this battle did not amount to more than eight thousand men; the enemy left nearly twenty-one thousand killed and wounded, but the centre being forced, and the two wings cut off, those who had made the greatest slaughter lost the day.

Marshal Bouflers made a retreat in good order, with the assistance of the prince of Tingri-Montmorency, afterward Marshal Luxembourg, inheritor of the valor of his

ancestors. The army retired between Quesnoy and Valenciennes, carrying with them several standards and colors they had taken from the enemy. Louis XIV. comforted himself with these spoils, and it was esteemed a victory to have disputed the day so long, and to have lost only the field of battle. Marshal Villars, at his return to court, assured the king that, if he had not been wounded, he should have gained the victory. I know the general was persuaded of this, but I know very few people besides who believe it.

It may seem surprising that an army which had destroyed nearly two-thirds more men than it lost itself should not endeavor to prevent those who had gained no other advantage but that of lying in the midst of their dead, from going to lay siege to Mons, The Dutch were fearful for the success of this enterprise, and hesitated for some time; but the conquered are frequently imposed upon, and disheartened, by the name of having lost the battle. Men never do all that they might do, and the soldier who is told he is beaten, fears to be beaten again. Thus Mons was besieged and taken, and all for the Dutch, who kept possession of this town, as they had done of Lille and Tournay.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXI.

LOUIS XIV. CONTINUES TO SOLICIT PEACE, AND TO DEFEND HIMSELF—THE DUKE OF VENDÔME SECURES THE KING OF SPAIN ON HIS THRONE.

The enemy not only continued thus advancing by degrees, and levelled all the barriers of France on this side, but they pretended with the assistance of the duke of Savoy, to surprise Franche-Comté, and penetrate at once by both ends to the heart of the kingdom. General Merci, who was charged with facilitating this enterprise, by entering into Upper Alsace by the city of Basel, was happily stopped near the isle of Newburg on the Rhine, by the count, afterward Marshal, Dubourg. By an unaccountable fatality, all those of the name of Merci have been as unsuccessful as esteemed. This one was defeated most completely. Nothing was undertaken on the side of Savoy, but much was apprehended in regard to Flanders; the domestic affairs of the kingdom were in so languid a state that the king once more solicited peace like a suppliant; he offered to acknowledge the archduke for king of Spain; to withdraw all assistance from his grandson, and leave him to his fate; to deliver up four places as securities; to restore Strasburg and Breisach; to resign the sovereignty of Alsace, reserving only the prefecture; to demolish all the fortified places between Basel and Philippsburg; to fill up the long formidable harbor of Dunkirk, and demolish its fortifications; and to leave Lille, Tournay, Ypres, Menin, Furnes, Condé, and Maubeuge, in the hands of the states-general. These were in part the articles proposed, to serve as a basis for the peace which he solicited.

The allies, determined to have the triumph of discussing the submissive proposals of Louis XIV., permitted his plenipotentiaries to come to the little town of Gertruydenberg, in the beginning of the year 1710, to present their master's supplications. Louis made choice of Marshal d'Uxelles, a man of great coolness and taciturnity, and of a disposition rather prudent than elevated or bold; with him was joined Abbé, afterward cardinal, Polignac, one of the brightest wits, and most eloquent orators of his age, and of a most engaging person and address; but wit, prudence, and eloquence are of no service in a minister, when the master is unsuccessful. It is conquest that makes treaties. The ambassadors of Louis XIV. were rather confined in Gertruydenberg than received there. The deputies came to hear their proposals, which they transmitted to The Hague to Prince Eugene, the duke of Marlborough, and Count Zinzendorf, ambassador from the emperor. These proposals were almost always received with contempt. The plenipotentiaries were insulted by the most abusive libels, the work of French refugees, who were more inveterate enemies to the glory of Louis XIV. than even Prince Eugene or the duke of Marlborough.

Though the French plenipotentiaries carried their submission so far as to promise for the king, that he should furnish money to dethrone Philip V., they were not listened to. It was insisted upon as a preliminary, that Louis XIV. should engage alone to drive

his grandson out of Spain by force of arms. This absurd piece of inhumanity arose from fresh successes.

While the allies were thus treating Louis XIV. like masters irritated against his pride and greatness, the city of Douay fell into their hands; and soon afterward Béthune, Aire, and St. Venant; and Lord Stair proposed to send parties to the gates of Paris.

The archduke's army, commanded by Guy Staremberg, the nearest in military reputation to Prince Eugene of all the German generals, gained a complete victory near Saragossa, on Aug. 20, 1710, over that army in which Philip and his adherents had placed their hopes, and that was commanded by the marquis de Bay, an unfortunate general. Here again it was observed that the two rival kings, though within reach of their armies, were not present at this battle. Of all the princes for whom Europe was then up in arms, the duke of Savoy was the only one who fought his own battles. It was a melancholy consideration, that he could acquire his glory only by fighting against his two daughters, one of whom he endeavored to dethrone, in order to gain a small spot of ground in Lombardy, about which the emperor Joseph already began to make some difficulties, and of which he would have been stripped at the very first opportunity.

This emperor, who was successful everywhere, showed no moderation in his good fortune. By his own pure authority he dismembered Bavaria, and bestowed the fiefs thereof on his relatives and creatures. He despoiled the young duke of Mirandola of his dominions in Italy, and the princes of the empire maintained an army for him on the Rhine, without thinking that they were laboring to cement a power of which they stood in dread; so much did the old reigning hatred for the name of Louis XIV. occupy every mind, as if their chief interest had been concerned therein. Joseph had also the good fortune to suppress the rebellious Hungarians. The court of France had set up Prince Ragotski against him, who came armed with his own pretensions and those of his countrymen. Ragotski was beaten, his town taken, and his party ruined. Thus Louis XIV. was equally unfortunate abroad and at home, by sea and by land, in his public negotiations and his private intrigues.

It was believed by all Europe at that time, that the archduke Charles, brother of the fortunate Joseph, would reign without a competitor in Spain. Europe was threatened with a power more formidable than that of Charles V. and the English, so long the declared foes of the Austrian-Spanish branch, and the Dutch, its revolted slaves, were those who exerted themselves to establish it. Philip V., who had taken refuge in Madrid, quitted it again, and retired to Valladolid, while the archduke Charles made his entry as a conqueror.

The French king could no longer supply his grandson with aid; he had been obliged to do that partly through necessity which the allies had exacted of him at Gertruydenberg, to abandon the cause of Philip, by sending for those troops that were yet in Spain, for his own defence, being hardly able to make head against the powerful efforts of the enemy in Savoy, on the Rhine, and in Flanders, where the stress of the war chiefly lay.

Spain was in a still more deplorable situation than France. Almost all its provinces had been laid waste by its enemies and friends. It was attacked by Portugal. Its trade was destroyed. There was a general dearth throughout the kingdom; but this was more severely felt by the victors than by the vanquished, because the common people throughout this great country gave all in their power to Philip, for whom they had an affection, and refused everything to the Austrians. Philip had no longer a general or troops from France; the duke of Orleans, by whom his drooping fortune had been a little raised, instead of commanding his army, was his enemy. It is certain that, notwithstanding the affection the inhabitants of Madrid had for Philip, and the fidelity of the grandees and all Castile, he had still a powerful party against him in Spain. The Catalonians, a warlike and headstrong nation, were, to a man, obstinately attached to his rival. One-half of Aragon had likewise been gained over. One party of the people waited the outcome of affairs, and the other hated the archduke more than they loved Philip. The duke of Orleans, the namesake of Philip, disgusted with the Spanish ministry, and still more displeased with the princess Orsini, who governed affairs, began to think that he might secure for himself the country which he was sent to defend; and when Louis XIV. himself proposed to give up his grandson, and an abdication was already talked of in Spain, the duke of Orleans thought himself worthy of filling the throne which Philip V. would be obliged to resign. He had some pretensions to that place, which had been left unnoticed in the king of Spain's will, and which his father had supported by a protest.

By means of his agents he made an agreement with some of the grandees, who engaged to place him on the throne, in case Philip V. should quit it. In this case, he would have found many of the Spaniards ready to enlist under the standard of a prince who was so complete a warrior. This scheme, had it succeeded, could not have displeased the maritime powers, as there would have been less apprehension of seeing the kingdoms of France and Spain united in one person, and fewer obstacles to the peace. The project was discovered at Madrid about the beginning of 1709, while the duke of Orleans was at Versailles, and his agents in Spain were imprisoned. Philip V. never forgave his cousin for thinking him capable of abdicating, and endeavoring to succeed him. In France the whole kingdom cried out against the duke of Orleans. The dauphin, father of Philip V., proposed in council to bring the offender to justice; but the king chose to pass in silence this abortive and pardonable scheme, rather than to punish a nephew, at the time that a grandson was on the verge of ruin.

In fine, about the time of the battle of Saragossa, the Spanish council and most of the grandees, finding they had no leader to oppose to Staremberg, whom they looked upon as a second Eugene, wrote in a body to Louis XIV. requesting him to send them the duke of Vendôme. This prince, who had retired to Anet, set out immediately, and his presence was as good as an army. The Spaniards were struck with the great reputation he had gained in Italy, which the unfortunate campaign of Lille had not been able to impair. His affability, openness, and liberality, which latter qualification he carried to a degree of profusion, and his love for his soldiers won him all hearts; the moment he set his foot in Spain there happened to him what had formerly happened to Bertrand du Guesclin; his name alone drew a crowd of volunteers. He wanted money; the corporations of the towns and villages, and the religious communities supplied him. The nation was seized with a spirit of enthusiasm. The

scattered troops left after the battle of Saragossa assembled together under him at Valladolid, in August, 1710. Every place exerted itself in furnishing recruits. The duke of Vendôme, without allowing time for this fresh ardor to cool, went in pursuit of the conquerors, brought the king back to Madrid, obliged the enemy to retire toward the frontiers of Portugal, followed them thither, made his army swim the Tagus, took General Stanhope prisoner in Brihuega with five thousand English, came up with General Staremberg at Villaviciosa, and gave him battle the next day—Dec. 9, 1710. Philip V., who had not accompanied any of his former generals to the fight, animated with the duke of Vendôme's spirit, put himself at the head of the right wing, while that general took the left. A complete victory was gained over the enemy; and, in less than four months, this great general who had been called in when things were at the last extremity, retrieved all, and secured the crown forever on the head of Philip V.

While the allies remained confounded at this surprising revolution, one of a more secret kind, though equally important, was preparing in England.

Sarah Jennings, duchess of Marlborough, governed Queen Anne, and the duke, her husband, governed the state. He had the treasury at his command, through the means of the lord high treasurer, Godolphin, whose son had married one of his daughters. His son-in-law, Sunderland, who was secretary of state, submitted everything in the cabinet to him, and the queen's household, where his wife had an unlimited authority, was at his devotion. He was master of the army, while he had the disposal of all offices.

England was at that time divided between two parties, the Whigs and the Tories. The Whigs, at whose head he was, did everything that could contribute to his greatness; and the Tories had been forced to admire him in silence. It is not unworthy of history to add, that the duke and duchess were the two handsomest persons of their time; and that this advantage contributes not a little to impose on the multitude, when accompanied with dignities and honor.

The duke had more interest at The Hague than the pensionary; and had great influence in Germany, had always been successful as a negotiator and general, and enjoyed a more extensive share of power and reputation than had ever been the lot of any one private man. He could likewise strengthen his power by the immense riches he had acquired during his having command. I have heard his widow say that, after he had given fortunes to his four children, he had remaining, independent of any gifts from the crown, seventy thousand pounds a year clear money, which makes about one million five hundred thousand of our livres. Had not his frugality been equal to his greatness, he might have formed a party in the kingdom that Queen Anne could not easily have overthrown; and had his wife been a little more complaisant, the queen would never have broken her chains. But the duke could never get the better of his thirst for riches, nor the duchess of her capricious temper. The queen loved her with a tenderness that went even to submission, and a giving up of all will. In attachments of this nature, we generally find that dislike begins first on the side of the monarch: caprice, pride, and an abuse of superiority are the things which first make the yoke felt, and all these the duchess of Marlborough heaped upon her mistress with a heavy

hand. The queen, who could not do without a favorite, turned her eyes on Lady Masham, one of the ladies of her bedchamber. The duchess could not conceal her jealousy; it broke out on a thousand occasions. A pair of gloves of a particular fashion which she refused the queen, and a jar of water that she let fall in her presence upon Lady Masham's gown, by an affected mistake, changed the face of affairs in Europe. Matters grew warm between the two parties. The new favorite's brother asked the duke for a regiment; the duke refused it, upon which the queen gave it to him herself. The Tories seized this opportunity to free the queen from her domestic slavery, humble the power of the duke, change the ministry, make peace, and if possible replace the Stuart family on the throne of England. If the disposition of the duchess would have allowed her to make some concessions, she might still have retained her power. The queen and she had been used to write to each other every day, under borrowed names: this mysterious familiarity always left the way open for a reconciliation; but the duchess made use of this resource only to make things worse. She wrote to the queen in the most insolent terms; and, among other expressions made use of the following: "Do me justice, and make me no answer." She soon repented of what she had done, and went to ask pardon of the queen with tears in her eyes; but her majesty answered: "You have ordered me not to answer you, and I shall not answer you." After this the breach was irreparable; the duchess appeared no more at court, and some time afterward, Sunderland, the duke's son-in-law, was removed from the ministry, as the first step toward turning out Godolphin, and then the duke himself. In other kingdoms this is called a disgrace; in England it is only a change of affairs; but this was a change very difficult to be brought about. The Tories, though masters of the queen, were not of the kingdom; they found themselves obliged to have recourse to religion. At present there is little more religion in Great Britain than what is just sufficient to distinguish factions. The Whigs inclined to Presbyterianism. This was the faction that had dethroned James II., persecuted Charles II., and brought Charles I. to the block. The Tories were in the Episcopal interest, that favored the house of Stuart, and wanted to introduce the doctrine of passive obedience to kings, because the bishops hoped, by that means, to have more obedience paid to themselves. A clergyman was procured to preach up this doctrine in St. Paul's cathedral, and to set forth, in the most odious light, the administration of the duke of Marlborough, and the measures of the party who had given the crown to King William; but notwithstanding that the queen secretly favored this preacher, she could not prevent his being silenced for three years by the two houses, assembled in Westminster hall, who ordered his sermon to be burned by the hands of the common hangman. She felt her want of power still more sensibly, in not daring to indulge the calls of blood in opening a way for her brother to that throne which the Whigs had barred against him. Those writers who say that Marlborough and his party fell the instant the queen ceased to support them with her favor, know nothing of the affairs of England. The queen, though now desirous of peace, did not dare to remove Marlborough from the command of her armies; and, in the spring of 1711, he was still pursuing his conquests over France, though in disgrace at his own court. A private agent from France was sent to London, to propose conditions of peace underhand; but the queen's new ministry did not dare to accept them as yet.

A new event, as unforeseen as the others, completed this great work. The emperor Joseph died, April 17, 1711, and left the dominions of the house of Austria, and the

German Empire, together with the pretensions to Spain and America, to his brother Charles, who was elected emperor some months afterward.

On the first news of his death, the prejudices which had put arms into the hands of so many nations began to be dissipated in England by the care of the new ministry. “The war,” said they, “was begun to prevent Louis XIV. from governing Spain, America, Lombardy, and the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, in the name of his grandson; why, then, should we endeavor to unite all these kingdoms in the family of Charles VI.? Why must the English nation exhaust its treasures? We have paid more to the war than Germany and Holland together. The expenses of this year alone amount to seven millions sterling; and is the nation to ruin itself for a cause it has no concern with, and to procure a part of Flanders for the Dutch, our rivals in trade?” All these arguments emboldened the queen, and opened the eyes of a great part of the nation, and a new parliament being called, the queen was at liberty to prepare matters for the peace of Europe.

But though she might do this privately, she could not as yet publicly break with her allies; so that while they were negotiating in the cabinet, Marlborough was carrying on the service in the field. He still continued advancing in Flanders, where he forced the lines that Marshal Villars had drawn from Montreuil to Valenciennes, took Bouchain, advanced as far as Quesnoy, and from thence was proceeding in September, 1711, toward Paris, which had not a single rampart to oppose him.

It was at this unfortunate period that the famous Duguay-Trouin, who had not as yet any rank in the sea service, and owed everything to himself, by his own courage, and the assistance of some merchants who furnished him with money, fitted out a small fleet, and sailed to Brazil, where he took one of the principal cities called St. Sebastian de Rio Janeiro. He and his crew returned home loaded with riches, and the Portuguese lost even more than he had gained; but the mischief that he had done in Brazil did not alleviate the miseries of France.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXII.

VICTORY GAINED BY MARSHAL VILLARS AT DENAIN—THE AFFAIRS OF FRANCE RETRIEVED—THE GENERAL PEACE.

The negotiations which were now openly set on foot in London proved more salutary. The queen sent the earl of Strafford, ambassador to Holland, to communicate to the states the proposals made by Louis XIV. Marlborough's leave was no longer asked. The earl of Strafford obliged the Dutch to name plenipotentiaries, and to receive those of France.

Three private persons still continued to oppose the peace; these were Marlborough, Prince Eugene, and Heinsius, who persisted in their intention of crushing Louis XIV., but when the English general returned to London, at the close of the campaign in 1711, he was deprived of all his prestige; he found a new house of commons, and had no longer the majority in the house of lords. The queen, by creating a number of new peers, had weakened the duke's party and strengthened the crown interest. He was now accused, like Scipio, of malfeasance; and, like that hero, extricated himself by his reputation, and by retiring. He was still powerful, though in disgrace. Prince Eugene himself came over to London purposely to strengthen his party. This prince met with the reception due to his birth and reputation, but his proposals were rejected. The court interest prevailed; Prince Eugene returned to end the war alone, with the fresh incentive of a prospect of victory, without a companion to divide the honor.

While the congress was assembling at Utrecht and the French plenipotentiaries, who had been so ill used at Gertruydenberg, now returned to treat upon more equal terms, Marshal Villars lay behind his lines to cover Arras and Cambray. Prince Eugene took the town of Quesnoy, and overspread the country with an army of a hundred thousand men. The Dutch had exerted themselves; and though they had never before furnished their whole quota toward the necessary expenses of the war, they had this year exceeded their contingent. Queen Anne could not as yet openly disengage herself from them; she had sent the duke of Ormond to join Prince Eugene's army with twelve thousand English, and still kept in pay a number of German troops. Prince Eugene, after burning the suburbs of Arras, advanced toward the French army, and proposed to the duke of Ormond to give them battle; but the English general had been sent with orders not to fight. The private negotiations between England and France drew toward a conclusion: a suspension of arms was proclaimed between the two crowns. Louis XIV. put Dunkirk into the hands of the English, as a security for the performance of his engagements. The duke of Ormond then retired toward Ghent: he endeavored to take with him the troops that were in the queen's pay; but none would follow him except four squadrons of the regiment of Holstein, and one regiment of Liège. The troops of Brandenburg, Saxony, Hesse, and Denmark remained with Prince Eugene, and were paid by the Dutch. The elector of Hanover himself, who was to succeed Queen Anne on the throne of England, notwithstanding her remonstrances,

continued his troops in the pay of the allies, which plainly showed that the pretensions of his family to the crown of England did not depend on Queen Anne's favor.

Prince Eugene, though deprived of the assistance of the English, was still superior by twenty thousand men to the French army; he was likewise superior by his position, by the great plenty of magazines, and by nine years of continued victories.

Marshal Villars could not prevent him from laying siege to Landrecy. France, exhausted of men and money, was in consternation, and people placed no great dependence on the conferences at Utrecht, which might be all overthrown by the successes of Prince Eugene. Several considerable detachments had already entered Champagne and ravaged the country, and advanced as far as the gates of Rheims.

The alarm was now as great at Versailles as in the rest of the kingdom. The death of the king's only son, which occurred this year, the duke of Burgundy, the duchess, his wife, and their eldest son, all carried to their graves the same day, and the only remaining child at the point of death; all these domestic misfortunes, added to those from without, and the sufferings of the people, made the close of Louis XIV.'s reign considered as a time pointed out for calamities, and everyone expected to see more disasters than they had formerly seen greatness and glory.

Precisely at this period the duke of Vendôme died in Spain. The general despondency which seized upon the French nation on this occasion, of which I remember to have been a witness, filled them with apprehensions, lest Spain, which had been supported by the duke of Vendôme, should fall with him.

As Landrecy could not hold out long, it was debated at Versailles whether the king should retire to Chambord. On this occasion he told Marshal d'Harcourt that, in case of any fresh misfortune, he would assemble the nobility of his kingdom, lead them in person against the enemy, notwithstanding he was now over seventy, and die fighting at their head.

A fault committed by Prince Eugene delivered the king and kingdom from these dreadful disquietudes. It is said that his lines were too much extended; that his magazines at Marchiennes were at too great a distance; and that General Albemarle, who was posted between Denain and the prince's camp, was not within reach of assisting him soon enough, in case he was attacked. I have been assured that a beautiful Italian lady, whom I saw some time afterward at The Hague, and whom Prince Eugene then kept, lived at Marchienne-au-Pont; and that it was on her account that this was made a place for magazines. It is doing injustice to Prince Eugene to suppose that a woman could have any share in his military arrangements; but when we know that a curate and a counsellor of Douay, named le Fevre d'Orval, walking together in those quarters, first conceived the idea that Denain and Marchienne-au-Pont might easily be attacked, this will better serve to prove by what secret and weak springs the great affairs of this world are often directed. Le Fevre communicated his notion to the intendant of the province, and he to Marshal Montesquieu, who commanded under Marshal Villars; the general approved of the scheme, and put it into execution. To this action, in fact, France owed her safety more than to the peace

she made with England. Marshal Villars misled Prince Eugene; a body of dragoons were ordered to advance in sight of the enemy's camp, as if going to attack it; and while these dragoons retired toward Guise, the marshal on July 24, 1712, marched towards Denain, with his army drawn up in five columns, and forced General Albemarle's intrenchments, defended by seventeen battalions, who were all killed or made prisoners of war, with two princes of the house of Nassau, the prince of Holstein, the prince of Anhalt, and all the officers of the detachment. Prince Eugene marched in haste to their assistance; but did not come up till the action was over, and, in endeavoring to get possession of a bridge that led to Denain, he lost a number of his men, and was obliged to return to his camp, after having been witness of this defeat.

All the posts along the Scarpe, as far as Marchienne-au-Pont, were carried, one after another, with the utmost rapidity; the army then pushed directly for Marchienne-au-Pont, which was defended by four thousand men; the siege was carried on with the greatest vigor, and in three days the garrison were made prisoners of war; and all the ammunition and provisions that the enemy had laid up for the whole campaign fell into our hands. The superiority was now wholly on the side of Marshal Villars; the enemy discouraged, raised the siege of Landrecy, and soon afterward saw Douay, Quesnoy, and Bouchain retaken by our troops. The frontiers were now in safety. Prince Eugene drew off his army, after having lost nearly fifty battalions, forty of whom were made prisoners between the fight of Denain and the end of the campaign. The most signal victory could not have produced greater advantages.

Had Marshal Villars been possessed of the same share of popular favor as some other generals, he would have been publicly called the restorer of France, instead of which they hardly acknowledged the obligations they were under to him, and envy prevailed over the public joy for this unexpected success.

Every step of Marshal de Villars hastened the Peace of Utrecht; Queen Anne's ministry, as answerable to their country and to Europe for their actions, neglected nothing that concerned the interest of England and its allies, and the safety of the public weal. In the first place, they insisted that Philip V., now settled on the throne of Spain, should renounce his right to the crown of France, which he had hitherto constantly maintained; and that the duke of Berry, his brother, presumptive heir to that crown, after the only remaining great-grandson of Louis XIV., then at the point of death, should likewise renounce all pretensions to the crown of Spain, in case he should come to be king of France. They exacted the same on the part of the duke of Orleans. The late twelve years' war had shown how little men are to be bound by such acts; there is no one known law that obliges the descendants of a prince to give up their right to a throne because their father may have renounced it. These renunciations are of no effect, except when the common interest is in concert with them; however, they served to calm, for the present, a twelve years' storm; and it is probable that one day several nations may join to support these renunciations that are now the basis of the balance of power and the tranquillity of Europe.

By this treaty the island of Sicily was given to the duke of Savoy, with the title of king, and on the continent the towns of Fenestrelles, Exilles, with the valley of Pragilas; so that they took from the house of Bourbon to aggrandize him.

The Dutch had a considerable barrier given them, which they had always been aiming at; and if the house of Bourbon was despoiled of some territories in favor of the duke of Savoy, the house of Austria was, on the other hand, stripped to satisfy the Dutch, who were, at its expense, the guaranties and masters of the strongest cities of Flanders. Due regard was paid to the interest of the Dutch, with respect to trade; and there was an article stipulated in favor of the Portuguese.

The sovereignty of the ten provinces of the Spanish Netherlands was reserved for the emperor, together with the advantageous lordship of the barrier towns. They also guaranteed to him the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, with all his possessions in Lombardy, and the four ports on the coast of Tuscany. But the court of Vienna would not subscribe to these conditions, as thinking she had not sufficient justice done her.

As to England, her glory and interest were sufficiently secured. She had obtained the demolition of the harbor and fortifications of Dunkirk, which had been the object of so much jealousy. She was left in possession of Gibraltar and the island of Minorca by Spain. France ceded to her Hudson's Bay, the island of Newfoundland, and Acadia; and she procured greater privileges for her American trade than had been granted even to the French, who placed Philip V. on the throne. We must also reckon among the glorious acts of the English ministry its having engaged Louis XIV. to consent to set at liberty those of his subjects who were confined in prison on account of their religion; this was dictating laws, but laws of a very respectable nature.

Lastly, Queen Anne, sacrificing the rights of blood, and the secret inclinations of her heart, to the desires of her country, secured the succession to the crown of Great Britain to the house of Hanover.

As to the electors of Bavaria and Cologne, the former was to keep the duchy of Luxemburg and the county of Namur till his brother and himself should be restored to their electorates; for Spain had ceded those two sovereignties to the elector of Bavaria, as a consideration for his losses, and the allies had taken neither of them during the war.

France, who demolished Dunkirk, and gave up so many places in Flanders that her arms had formerly conquered, and that had been secured to her by the treaties of Nimeguen and Ryswick, got back Lille, Aire, Béthune, and St. Venant.

Thus did the English ministry to all appearance do justice to everyone; but this was denied them by the Whigs; and one-half of the nation reviled the memory of Queen Anne, for having done the greatest good that a sovereign possibly could do, in giving peace to so many nations. She was reproached with not having dismembered France, when it was in her power to do it.

All these treaties were signed, one after another, in the course of the year 1713; but whether it was owing to the obstinacy of Prince Eugene, or to the bad politics of the emperor's council, that monarch did not enter into any of these negotiations. He would certainly have had Landau, and perhaps Strasburg, had he at first fallen in with

the views of Queen Anne and her ministry; but he was bent on continuing the war, and so got nothing.

Marshal Villars, having secured the rest of French Flanders, marched toward the Rhine, and, after making himself master of Spires, Worms, and all the adjacent country, he took Landau, which the emperor might have had by acceding to the peace, forced the lines that Prince Eugene had ordered to be drawn from Breisgau, defeated Marshal Vaubonne, who defended those lines; and, lastly, besieged and took Freiburg, the capital of Upper Austria.

The council of Vienna pressed the circles of the empire to send the reinforcements they had promised, but none came. They now began to be sensible that the emperor, without the assistance of England and Holland, could never prevail against France, and resolved upon peace when it was too late.

Marshal Villars, after having thus put an end to the war, had the additional honor of concluding the peace with Prince Eugene, at Rastatt. This was, perhaps, the first time that two generals of opposite parties had been known to meet together at the close of a campaign to treat in the names of their masters. They both brought with them that openness of character for which they were distinguished. I have heard Marshal Villars relate that one of the first things he said to Prince Eugene was this: “Sir, we do not meet as enemies; your enemies are at Vienna, and mine at Versailles.” And in fact both of them had always cabals to combat at their respective courts.

In this treaty there was no notice taken of the pretensions which the emperor still maintained to the Spanish monarchy, nor of the empty title of Catholic King, that he continued to bear after Philip V. was in quiet possession of the kingdom. Louis XIV. kept Strasburg and Landau, which he had before offered to give up, Huninguen, and New Breisach, which he had proposed to demolish, and the sovereignty of Alsace, which he had offered to renounce. But what was still more honorable for him, he procured the reinstatement of the electors of Cologne and Bavaria in their ranks and dominions.

It is a remarkable circumstance that France, in all her treaties with the emperors, has constantly protected the rights of the princes and states of the empire. She laid the foundation of the Germanic liberties by the Peace of Münster; and caused an eighth electorate to be erected in favor of this very house of Bavaria. The Treaty of Westphalia was confirmed by that of Nimeguen. By the Treaty of Ryswick she procured all the estate of Cardinal Furstemberg to be restored to him. Lastly, by this Peace of Utrecht, she obtained the re-establishment of the two electors. It must be acknowledged that, throughout the whole negotiation which put an end to this long quarrel, France received laws from England, and imposed them on the empire.

The historical memoirs of those times, from which so many histories of Louis XIV. have been compiled, say that Prince Eugene, when he had finished the conferences, desired the duke de Villars to embrace the knees of Louis XIV. for him, and to present that monarch, in his name, with assurances of the most profound respect of “a subject toward his sovereign.” In the first place, it is not true that a prince, the grandson of a

sovereign, can be the subject of another prince, because he was born in his dominions; and in the second place, it is still less so that Prince Eugene, vicar-general of the empire, could call himself the subject of the king of France.

And now each state took possession of its new rights. The duke of Savoy got himself acknowledged in Sicily without consulting the emperor, who complained of it in vain. Louis XIV. procured entrance for his troops into Lille, the Dutch seized on their barrier towns, and the states of the country gave them one million two hundred and fifty thousand florins a year to continue masters in Flanders. Louis XIV. filled up the harbor of Dunkirk, razed the citadel, and demolished the fortifications toward the sea, in presence of the English commissary. The inhabitants, who saw their whole trade ruined thereby, sent a deputation over to London to implore the clemency of Queen Anne. It was a mortifying circumstance to Louis XIV. that his subjects should go to ask favors of a queen of England; but it was still more melancholy for these poor people to meet with a refusal from the queen.

The king some time afterward enlarged the canal of Mardyke, and by means of sluices formed a harbor there, which was thought already to equal that of Dunkirk. The earl of Stair, ambassador from England, complained of this in warm terms to the king. It is said in one of the best books we have that Louis XIV. made him this reply: “My lord, I have always been master in my own kingdom, sometimes in those of others; do not put me in remembrance of it.” I know of my own certain knowledge that Louis XIV. never made so improper a reply; he was far from ever having been master in England: he was indeed master in his own kingdom; but the point in question was, whether he was master of eluding a treaty to which he owed his repose, and perhaps the greatest part of his kingdom. This, however, is true, that he put a stop to the works of Mardyke, and thus yielded to the remonstrances of the ambassador, instead of braving them. The works of the canal of Mardyke were demolished soon afterward, during the regency, and the treaty accomplished in every point.

Notwithstanding the Peace of Utrecht and that of Rastatt, Philip V. was not yet in possession of all Spain: he still had Catalonia to conquer, and the islands of Majorca and Ivica.

It is necessary to know that the emperor Charles, having left his wife at Barcelona, and finding himself unable to carry on a war in Spain, and yet unwilling to give up his claim, or accept of the Peace of Utrecht, had nevertheless made an agreement with Queen Anne for a squadron of English ships to bring away the empress and the troops, now useless in Catalonia. In fact, Catalonia had been already evacuated; and Staremberg, when he quitted that province, had resigned his title of viceroy; but he left behind him all the seeds of a civil war. Those who had the most credit in that province imagined that they might be able to form a republic under a foreign protection; and that the king of Spain would not be strong enough to subdue them. On this occasion they displayed that character which Tacitus gave them so long since, who calls them “an intrepid people, that count their lives for nothing when not employed in fighting.”

If they had made half the efforts for Philip V., their king, that they then did against him, the archduke would never have disputed Spain. By the obstinate resistance they made, they proved that Philip, though delivered from his competitor, was not able to reduce them by his own power. Louis XIV., who, during the latter part of the war, had not been able to assist his grandson with either ships or soldiers, against his rival, Charles, now sent him aid against his rebellious subjects. A fleet of French ships blocked up the harbor of Barcelona, and Marshal Berwick laid siege to it by land.

The queen of England, faithful to her treaty, would not assist this city. The emperor made a vain promise of relief. The besieged defended themselves with a courage that was fortified by fanaticism. The priests and monks ran to arms, and mounted the trenches, as if it had been a religious war. A phantom of liberty rendered them deaf to all the advances made to them by their master. More than five hundred ecclesiastics died during this siege, with their arms in their hands: we may judge whether by their speeches and examples they helped to animate the people.

They hung out a black ensign on the breach and withstood several assaults; at length, the besiegers having made their way into the town, the besieged disputed street after street; and having retreated into the new town, after the old one was taken, they offered to capitulate on condition of being allowed all their privileges; but they obtained only their lives and estates. Most of their privileges were taken from them. Sixty monks were condemned to the galleys, and this was the only vengeance taken by the conquerors. Philip V. had, during the war, treated the little town of Xativa much more severely, by ordering it to be razed from the foundation, as an example; but though he might do this to a town of no importance, he would not destroy a large city that had a fine seaport and was of use to the state.

This fury of the Catalans, that had not exerted itself while Charles VI. was among them, and which transported them to such extremes when they were left without assistance, was the last spark of that flame which had been lighted up by the will of Charles II., king of Spain, and had so long laid waste the most beautiful part of Europe.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXIII.

PRIVATE ANECDOTES OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV.

Anecdotes are a sort of confined field, where we glean after the plentiful harvest of history: they are small narratives, which have long been secreted, whence they receive the name of anecdotes, and when they concern any illustrious personages, are sure to engage the public attention.

Plutarch's "Lives" is but a collection of anecdotes, rather entertaining than true; how could he have procured faithful accounts of the private life of Theseus or Lycurgus? Most of the maxims which he puts into the mouths of his heroes advance moral virtue rather than historical truth.

The secret history of Justinian, by Procopius, is a satire dictated by revenge; and though revenge may speak the truth, this satire, which contradicts his public history, has not always the appearance of it.

We now are not allowed to imitate even Plutarch, much less Procopius. We admit as historical truths none but what are well supported. When contemporaries like the cardinal de Retz and the duke de Rochefoucauld, inveterate enemies to each other, confirm the same transaction in both their accounts of it, that transaction cannot be doubted: when they contradict each other, we must doubt them; what does not come within the bounds of probability can deserve no credit, unless several contemporaries of unblemished reputation join unanimously in the assertion.

The most useful and most valuable anecdotes are those secret papers which great princes leave behind them, in which their minds have thrown off all reserve. Such are those I am now going to relate of Louis XIV.

Domestic occurrences amuse only the curious; the discovery of weaknesses entertains only the malignant, except where these weaknesses instruct, either by their fatal consequences, or those virtues which prevented the impending misfortune.

Secret anecdotes of contemporaries are liable to the charge of partiality; they who write at any considerable distance of time should use the greatest circumspection, should discard what is trifling, reduce what is extravagant, and soften what is satirical.

Louis XIV. was so magnificent in his court, as well as in his reign, that the least particulars of his private life seem to interest posterity, as they drew the attention of all the courts of Europe, and of all his contemporaries. The splendor of his government threw a light on his most trivial actions. We are more eager, especially in France, to know the transactions of his court than the revolutions of other states. Such is the effect of a great reputation! We had rather be informed of what passed in the cabinet and court of Augustus, than hear a full detail of the conquests of Attila or Tamerlane.

Hence all who have written the history of Louis XIV. have been very exact in dating his first attachment to the baroness of Beauvais, to Mademoiselle d'Argencourt, to Cardinal Mazarin's niece, who was married to the count of Soissons, Prince Eugene's father; and quite elaborate in setting forth his passion for Maria Mancini, that prince's sister, who was afterward married to Constable Colonne.

He had not assumed the reins of empire when these amusements busied and plunged him into that languid state in which Cardinal Mazarin, who governed with a despotic sway, permitted him to remain. His bare attachment to Maria Mancini was an affair of great importance; for he was so passionately fond of her as to be tempted to marry her, and yet was sufficiently master of himself to quit her entirely. This victory which he gained over his passion made the first discovery of the greatness of his soul; he gained a more severe and difficult conquest in leaving Cardinal Mazarin in possession of absolute sway. Gratitude prevented him from shaking off that yoke which now began to grow too heavy. It was a well-known anecdote at court that, after the cardinal's death, he said: "I do not know what I should have done, had he lived any longer."[1]

He employed this season of leisure in reading books of entertainment, and especially in company with the constable, who, as well as his sisters, had a facetious turn. He delighted in poetry and romances, which secretly flattered his own character, by pointing out the beauty of gallantry and heroism. He read the tragedies of Corneille, and formed that taste which was the result of solid sense, and of that readiness of sentiment which is the characteristic of a real genius.

The conversation of his mother and the court ladies contributed very much to give him this taste and that peculiar delicacy which began now to distinguish the court of France. Anne of Austria had brought with her a kind of generous and bold gallantry, not unlike the Spanish disposition in those days; to this she had added politeness, sweetness, and a decent liberty, peculiar to the French only. The king made greater progress in this school of entertainment from eighteen to twenty than he had all his life in that of the sciences under his tutor, Abbé Beaumont, afterward archbishop of Paris; he had very little learning of this last sort. It would have been better had he at least been instructed in history, especially the modern, but what they had at that time was very indifferently written. He was uneasy at having perused nothing but idle romances, and the disagreeableness he found in necessary studies. A translation of Cæsar's "Commentaries" was printed in his name, and one of Florus in that of his brother; but those princes had no other hand in them than having thrown away their time in writing a few observations on some passages in those authors.

He who was chief director of the king's education under the first Marshal Villeroi, his governor, was well qualified for the task, was learned and agreeable, but the civil wars spoiled his education; and Cardinal Mazarin was content he should be kept in the dark. When he conceived a passion for Maria Mancini, he soon learned Italian, to converse with her, and at his marriage he applied himself to Spanish, but with less success. His neglect of study in his youth, a fearfulness of exposing himself, and the ignorance in which Cardinal Mazarin kept him, persuaded the whole court that he would make just such a king as his father, Louis XIII.

There was only one circumstance from which those capable of forming a judgment of future events could foresee the figure he would make; this was in 1655, after the civil wars, after his first campaign and consecration, when the parliament was about to meet on account of some edicts: the king went from Vincennes in a hunting dress, attended by his whole court, and entering the parliament chamber in jack-boots, and his whip in his hand, made use of these very words: "The mischiefs your assemblies produce are well known; I command you to break up those you have begun upon my edicts. M. President, I forbid you to permit these assemblies, and any of you to demand them."

His height, already majestic; his noble action, the masterly tone and air he spoke with, affected them more than the authority due to his rank, which hitherto they had not much respected: but these blossoms of his greatness seemed to fall off a moment after; nor did the fruits appear till after the cardinal's death.

The court, after the triumphant return of Mazarin, amused itself with play, with balls, with comedies, which, being but just produced in France, had not grown into an art; and with tragedies, which were now a sublime science, through the management of Peter Corneille. A curate of St. Germain, who inclined toward the rigorous precepts of the Jansenists, had frequently written to the queen against these shows, from the very beginning of her regency. He pretended that those were damned who attended them, and had this anathema signed by seven doctors of the Sorbonne: but Abbé Beaumont, the king's preceptor, defended them by the approbation of more doctors than the rigid priest could procure to condemn them. Thus he quieted the queen's scruples, and when he was archbishop of Paris, gave the sanction of authority to that opinion which he had defended when only an abbé.

I must observe that, after Cardinal Richelieu had introduced at court regular plays, which have at last raised Paris to rival Athens, there was not only a bench appointed for academics—in which body were several ecclesiastics—but one in particular for the bishops.

Cardinal Mazarin, in 1646 and 1654, had Italian operas performed by voices which he brought from Italy, in the theatre of the royal palace, and at the Little Bourbon, near the Louvre. This new entertainment had just arisen at Florence, a country favored at that time by fortune as well as nature, to which we owe the revival of many arts, lost in the preceding centuries, and the invention of new ones. France showed some relics of her ancient barbarity in opposing the establishment of these arts.

The Jansenists, whom Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin wanted to keep under, revenged themselves upon these diversions, which these two ministers had introduced. The Lutherans and Calvinists had acted the same part in the time of Pope Leo X. Besides, their opposition was sufficient to gain them the character of austerity. The same men, who would overturn a state to establish opinions frequently absurd, anathematized the innocent pleasures necessary in so large a city, and the arts, which contributed to the splendor of the nation. Abolishing these diversions was an act more worthy of the age of Attila than that of Louis XIV.

Dancing, which may now be reckoned among the arts,[1] because it is tied down to rules, and adds grace to motion, was one of the greatest amusements of the court. Louis XIII. had only danced once at a ball, in 1625, and that ball was in so bad taste that it did not in the least presage the appearance this art made in France thirty years after. Louis XIV. excelled in grave dances, which were agreeable to the majesty of his figure, and did not injure that of his rank. At the running at the ring, which was sometimes performed with great splendor, he showed that peculiar dexterity which he had at all exercises. Pleasure and magnificence, such as they then were, diffused themselves universally; but they were nothing in comparison with what appeared when the king sat on the throne; and yet might be reckoned amazing, after the horrors of a civil war, and the dulness of the retired and melancholy life of Louis XIII. That prince, without health and spirits, had neither been attended, lodged, nor equipped as a king. He had not above a hundred thousand crowns' worth of jewels belonging to the crown; Cardinal Mazarin little more than doubled that sum, and now we have jewels to the amount of above twenty millions of livres.

At the marriage of Louis XIV., in 1660, everything assumed an air of the highest taste and magnificence, and this increased daily. When he made his entry with his queen consort, Paris saw with a respectful and tender admiration, that beautiful young queen, drawn in a superb car of a new invention; the king rode on horseback by her side, adorned with all that art could add to his manly and heroic beauty, which drew universal attention. At the end of the streets of Vincennes a triumphal arch was built, the foundation of which was stone, but the shortness of the time would not permit them to finish it with such durable materials; the rest was only plaster, and has since been pulled down. It was designed by Claude Perrault. The gate of St. Anthony was rebuilt for the same ceremony; a monument of no very noble taste, but adorned with some good pieces of sculpture. All who had seen the day of the battle of St. Anthony, and the dead and dying bodies of the citizens brought to Paris through this gate, then furnished with a portcullis, and who beheld this entry so extremely different, blessed heaven, and returned their thanks for so happy a change.

Cardinal Mazarin added to the solemnity of this marriage the representation of an Italian opera in the Louvre, called "Hercules in Love." This did not please the French. They saw nothing in it that entertained them but the king and queen, who danced. The cardinal wanted to signalize himself by a play more to the taste of the nation. The secretary of state at Lyons undertook to have a sort of allegorical tragedy after the taste of that of "Europa," in which Cardinal Richelieu had some hand. The great Corneille was happy in not being chosen to work upon such poor materials. The subject was "Lisis and Hesperia." Lisis signified France, and Hesperia Spain. Quinault, who had just won a reputation by his "False Tiberinus," which, though a bad piece, had amazing success, was set to work at it. The "Lisis" had not the same fate. It was acted at the Louvre, and had nothing good in it but the machinery. The marquis of Sourdiac, of the name of Rieux, to whom France was afterward indebted for the establishment of the opera, acted at the same time, at his own expense, in his castle of Newbourg, "The Golden Fleece," by Peter Corneille, with machinery. Quinault, a youth of genteel figure, was supported by the court; Corneille by his name and the nation. There was one continued train of feasts, pleasures, and gallantry after the king's marriage, which increased on that of the king's brother with Henrietta of

England, sister of Charles II., and was not interrupted till the death of Cardinal Mazarin, in 1661.

Some months after the death of this minister, an event happened which was not to be paralleled, and what is no less strange, is unnoticed by all the historians. An unknown prisoner, of majestic height, young, of a graceful and noble figure, was sent with the utmost secrecy to the castle on St. Margaret's Island, in the see of Provence. This prisoner, on the road wore a mask, the chin of which was composed of steel springs, which gave him liberty to eat with his mask on. Orders were given to kill him if he discovered himself. He remained on the island till an officer of tried fidelity, named St. Mars, governor of Pignerol, was made governor of the Bastille in 1690. He went to the island of St. Margaret and brought him to the Bastille with his mask on all the way. The marquis de Louvois went to see him on that island before his departure, and spoke to him with great respect, and without sitting down. This stranger was brought to the Bastille, and lodged as well as he could be in that castle. He was refused nothing that he desired. His greatest pleasure was extraordinary fine linen and laces. He played on the guitar. He was much caressed, and the governor seldom sat down in his presence. An old physician of the Bastille, who had frequently attended this strange gentleman in his illness, declared he never saw his face, though he had frequently examined his tongue and other parts of his body. This physician said that he was rather brown, but extremely well made. The very tone of his voice was engaging, but he never complained of his situation, and never disclosed who he was.[1]

This stranger died in 1704, and was buried at night in the parish of St. Paul. What redoubles our astonishment is that, when he was sent to the isle of St. Margaret, no person of any consequence disappeared in Europe. This prisoner was, however, doubtless a man of high rank, for on his first arrival on the island, the governor himself set the silver plates upon his table and then retired, after securing the door. One day the prisoner wrote upon a silver plate with the point of a knife, and threw the plate out of the window toward a boat which was on the river, near the foot of the tower. A fisherman, to whom the boat belonged, took up the plate, and brought it to the governor. He, with great eagerness, asked the fisherman: "Have you read what is written upon this plate, or has anyone seen it since you had it?" The fisherman answered: "I do not know how to read. I have just found it, and nobody has seen it." The peasant was detained till the governor was convinced that he never could read, and that the plate had been seen by no other person. "Go," said he, "you are happy in not knowing how to read." There are some very credible witnesses of this fact, who are now living. M. Chamillard was the last person who knew anything of this strange secret. The second marshal de Feuillade, his son-in-law, told me, that at the death of his father-in-law, he conjured him on his knees to tell him who that person was who was never known but by the name of "the man with the iron mask." Chamillard answered him that it was a secret of state, and that he had taken an oath never to reveal it. In fine, there are many of my contemporaries who will attest the truth of what I advance; nor do I know any one fact so extraordinary and so well supported.

Louis XIV. meanwhile divided his time between the pleasures agreeable to his age and the duties of his station. He held a council daily, and then studied in secret with Colbert. This secret labor was the original cause of the disgrace of the famous

Fouquet, in which the secretary of state, Gunegaud, Pellisson, and many others were included. The fall of this minister, who perhaps was less to blame than Cardinal Mazarin, showed that all people have not the liberty of committing the same faults. His ruin was already determined when the king accepted that magnificent feast with which this minister entertained him in his house at Vaux. This palace and gardens had cost him eighteen millions of livres, which were then as much as thirty-six millions would be now. He had built the palace twice, and bought three entire villages, the land of which was all enclosed in these immense gardens, laid out by Lenôtre, and then esteemed the finest in all Europe. The fountains of Vaux, which made no indifferent appearance after even those of Versailles, of Marly, and St. Cloud, were at that time prodigies. But the expense of eighteen millions, the accounts of which are now in existence, show that he was served with as little economy as he served the king. The palaces of St. Germain and Fontainebleau, the only pleasure houses the king had, certainly were not to compare with Vaux. Louis XIV. observed it, and was piqued. Throughout the whole house were to be seen the arms of Fouquet, a squirrel with this motto: "*Quo non ascendam?*"—"Where shall I not ascend?" The king had it explained to him. The ambition of this device did not contribute to appease the monarch. The courtiers observed that the squirrel was everywhere painted, as pursued by an adder, which was the arms of Colbert. The entertainment exceeded any Cardinal Mazarin had ever given, not only in magnificence, but also in taste. There, for the first time, was acted the "Impertinents" of Molière. Pellisson had made the prologue, which was much admired. Public pleasures so often conceal or prepare the court for private disasters, that, had it not been for the queen-mother, the superintendent and Pellisson would have been arrested at Vaux the very day of the feast. What inflamed the resentment of his master was that Mademoiselle la Vallière, for whom the king began to feel a lively passion, had been one of the objects of the superintendent's loose desires, who spared nothing to satisfy them. He had offered La Vallière two hundred thousand livres, which she had rejected with scorn, before she had formed any design upon the heart of the king. The superintendent soon perceiving what a powerful rival he had, aimed at being the confidant of her of whom he could not be the possessor, and this, too, enraged his majesty.

The king, who, in the first heat of his resentment, was tempted to arrest the superintendent in the very middle of the entertainment he received from him, afterward dissembled when it was not necessary. It was said that the monarch, now in full power, dreaded Fouquet's party.

He was attorney-general to the parliament, and this office gave him the privilege of being tried by the united chambers. But after so many princes, marshals, and dukes, had been tried by commissaries they might have given the same treatment to a magistrate, who would make use of such extraordinary measures as, though they might not really be unjust, might raise a suspicion of their being so.

Colbert persuaded him by no very honorable artifice to sell his office, and he parted with it for twelve hundred thousand livres, which now represents above two millions. The immoderate price of places belonging to the parliament, so greatly diminished in value since that time, shows the high estimation in which this body was still held, even in its state of depression. The duke of Guise, great chamberlain to the king, had

not sold this office of the crown to the duke of Bouillon for more than eight hundred thousand livres.

Though Fouquet squandered the revenues of the state, and used them as his own proper income, he had still much greatness of soul; what he embezzled he spent in magnificence and acts of liberality. He caused the money which he had for his place to be brought into the king's privy treasury; yet this noble action did not save him. They drew a man by artifice to Nantes, whom one exempt and two soldiers might have seized at Paris. The king caressed him before his disgrace.

I know not why most princes commonly affect to deceive by false appearances of favor those among their subjects whom they mean to ruin. At such times dissimulation is the opposite to greatness; it never is a virtue, and cannot become a valuable accomplishment, except when absolute necessity enforces it. Louis XIV. seemed to act out of character, but he was made to understand that Fouquet was about raising considerable fortifications in Belle-Isle, and that he possibly might have too many connections, both without and within the kingdom. It plainly appeared at the time in which he was arrested and carried to the Bastille, and to Vincennes, that the strength of his party lay only in the avarice of some courtiers and certain women, who received pensions from him and forgot him the moment he was no longer able to bestow them. The only friends he had left were Pellisson, Gourville, Mademoiselle Scudéri, such as were involved in his disgrace, and some men of letters. The verses of Hainault, the translator of Lucretius, against Colbert, the persecutor of Fouquet, are well known.

Ministre avare & lâche, esclave malheureux,
Qui gémis sous le poids des affaires publiques,
Victime dévouée aux chagrins politiques,
Fantôme révéré sous un titre onéreux,
Vois combien des grandeurs le comble est dangereux;
Contemple de Fouquet les funestes reliques,
Et tandis qu' à sa perte en secret tu t'appliques,
Crains qu'on ne te prépare un destin plus affreux.
Sa chûte quelque jour te peut être commune.
Crains ton poste, ton rang, la cour and la fortune.
Nul ne tombe innocent d'où l'on te voit monté.
Cesse donc d'animer ton prince à son supplice,
Et, près d'avoir besoin de toute sa bonté,
Ne le fais pas user de toute sa justice.
Base, sordid minister, poor slave misplaced,
Who groanest beneath the weight of state affairs,
Devoted sacrifice to public cares,
Vain phantom, with a weary title graced;
The dangerous point of envied greatness see;
Of fallen Fouquet behold the sad remains;
And while his fall rewards thy secret pains,
Dread a more dismal fate prepared for thee.
Those pangs he suffers thou one day mayest feel;

Thy giddy station dreads the court and fortune's wheel.
Against him cease thy prince's ire to feed,
From power's steep summit few unhurt descend,
Thyself, perhaps, shall all his mercy need;
Then seek not all his rigor to extend.

M. Colbert, as some persons were discoursing with him about this libellous sonnet, asked whether the king was offended with it, and upon being told he was not, "So neither am I," replied the minister.

It is true that the commencing of a process against the superintendent would be impeaching the memory of Cardinal Mazarin: for the most considerable depredations of the finances were his doings: he, like a despotic sovereign, had appointed to himself several branches of the public revenue; he had treated in his own name, and to his own advantage, for military stores. "He had imposed," says Fouquet, in his defence, "by *lettres de cachet,* extraordinary sums on the generalities; which was never done but by him, and for his behalf; a proceeding which was punishable with death according to the royal ordinances." It was in this manner the cardinal amassed immense riches, and these even unknown to himself.

I have heard the late M. de Caumartin, intendant of the finances, relate, that in his youth, some years after the death of the cardinal, he had been in the Palais Mazarin, where the duke, his heir, and the duchess Hortense resided; that he saw there a large press, or cabinet, which was very deep, and from top to bottom took up the whole height of the closet where it stood. The key had been lost for some time, so that the drawers had not been opened. M. Caumartin, surprised at the oversight, said to the duchess of Mazarin, that probably some curiosities might be found in this press. It was accordingly opened, and was quite full of the coin called quadruples, also gold counters, and medals of the same metal: of this Madame Mazarin threw handfuls to the people out of the windows for over eight days.

The abuse which Cardinal Mazarin made of his arbitrary power did not justify the superintendent, but the irregularity of the proceedings against him, the tediousness of his process; time, which extinguishes public envy and inspires people's minds with compassion for the unhappy; together with solicitations, always more active in favor of an unfortunate person than means employed to ruin him; all these together saved his life. Judgment was not given in the process till three years after, in 1664, and, of the twenty-two judges who gave sentence, only nine made it capital. The other thirteen, among whom there were some that Gourville had prevailed on to accept of presents, were in favor of perpetual banishment. But the king commuted the punishment into one still more severe; for he was confined in the castle of Pignerol. All the historians say that he died there in 1680; but Gourville assures us, in his memoirs, that he was released from prison some time before his death. The countess of Vaux, his daughter-in-law, had before strongly averred this fact to me, though the contrary is believed among his own family. Thus one knows not in what place died an unfortunate man, whose least actions, while he was in power, were striking.

Gunegaud, the secretary of state, who sold his place to Colbert, was no less pursued by the chamber of justice, who stripped him of the greatest part of his fortune.

St. Évremond, who had a particular friendship for the superintendent, was involved in his disgrace. Colbert, who searched everywhere for proofs against him whom he had a mind to ruin, caused some papers to be seized that were intrusted to the care of Madame Duplessis-Bellièvre, among which was found a manuscript letter of St. Évremond's, upon the Peace of the Pyrenees. This piece of pleasantry, which was represented as a crime against the state, was read to the king. Colbert, who scorned to avenge himself upon Hainault, a person of an obscure character, persecuted in St. Évremond the friend of Fouquet, whom he hated, and the fine genius, which he dreaded. The king was so extremely severe as to punish an innocent piece of raillery composed some time before against Cardinal Mazarin, whom he himself had not regretted, and whom the whole court had insulted, reproached, and proscribed for several years with impunity. Among a thousand pieces written against this minister, the least poignant was the only one which was punished; and that after his death.

St. Évremond, having retired into England, lived and died there with the freedom of a man and a philosopher. The marquis de Miremont, his friend, formerly told me in London that there was another reason for his disgrace, which St. Évremond would never be prevailed upon to explain.

The new minister of the finances, under the simple title of comptroller-general, justified the severity of his proceedings in re-establishing the order which his predecessors in office had broken through, and by laboring indefatigably to promote the grandeur of the state.

The court became the centre of pleasure, and the model for the imitation of other courts. The king piqued himself on giving feasts or entertainments which obliterated the remembrance of that made by the count of Vaux.

It seemed that nature took delight at that time to produce in France some of the greatest men in all the arts, and to assemble at court the most beautiful and best made persons of both sexes. The king excelled all his courtiers in the proper dignity of his stature and the majestic beauty of his features. The tone of his voice, noble and striking, gained those hearts which his presence intimidated. He had a gait which could suit none but himself and his high rank, and would have been ridiculous in any other. The embarrassment into which he threw those who spoke to him secretly flattered the complaisance with which he felt his own superiority. That old officer, who, being somewhat confounded, faltered in his speech on asking him a favor, and being unable to finish his discourse, told him: "Sire, I do not tremble thus before your enemies," easily obtained his demand.

The relish of society had not as yet received all its perfection at court. Anne of Austria, the queen-mother, began to love retirement; the reigning queen hardly understood the French tongue, and goodness constituted her only merit. The princess of England, sister-in-law of the king, brought to court the charms of a soft and animated conversation, which was soon improved by the reading of good books, and

by a solid and delicate taste. She perfected herself in the knowledge of the language, which she wrote but badly at the time of her marriage. She inspired an emulation of genius that was new, and introduced at court a politeness and such graces as the rest of Europe had hardly any idea of. Madame possessed all the vivacity of her brother, Charles II., being adorned with the charms of her own sex, and both the power and desire of pleasing. The court of Louis XIV. breathed a gallantry full of decorum, whilst that which reigned at the court of Charles II. was of a freer kind, and, being too much unpolished, dishonored its pleasures.

There passed at first between madame and the king a good deal of that coquetry of wit and secret sympathy, which were observable in little feasts often repeated. The king sent her copies of verses, and she answered him in like manner. It happened that the very same person was confidant both to the king and madame, in this ingenious commerce, and this was Marquis de Dangeau. The king commissioned the marquis to write for him, and the princess also engaged him to answer the king. He thus served both of them, without giving any grounds for suspicion to the one that he was employed by the other: and this was one of the causes of his making his fortune.

This intelligence had alarmed the royal family, but the king converted the noise made by this commerce into an invariable source of esteem and friendship. When madame afterward engaged Racine and Corneille to write the tragedy of *"Bérénice,"* she had in view not only the rupture of the king with Constable Colonna, but the restraint which she herself put upon her own inclinations, lest they should have a dangerous tendency. Louis XIV. is sufficiently pointed out in these two lines of Racine's *"Bérénice:"*

> *Qu'en quelque obscurité, que le ciel l'eût fait naître,*
> *Le monde, en le voyant, eût reconnu son mâitre.*
> His birth, howe'er obscure, his race unknown,
> The world in him its sovereign chief would own

These amusements gave way to the more serious and regularly pursued passion which he entertained for Mademoiselle de la Vallière, maid of honor to madame. He tasted with her the happiness of being beloved purely for his own sake. She had been for two years the secret object of all the gallant amusements and feasts which the king had given. A young valet de chambre to the king, called Belloc, composed several recitatives, intermixed with dances, which were performed sometimes at the queen's, and sometimes at madame's; and these recitatives mysteriously expressed the secret of their hearts, which soon ceased being any longer so.

All the public diversions which the king gave were so many pieces of homage paid to his mistress. In 1662 a carrousal (tilt) was held near the Tuileries, in a space which still retains the name of La Place du Carrousel. In it were five quadrilles, or parties: the king was at the head of the Romans; his brother at that of the Persians; the prince of Condé of the Turks; the duke d'Enghien, his son, headed the Indians; and the duke of Guise the Americans. This duke of Guise was the grandson of Balafré; he had made himself famous in the world for the unfortunate temerity with which he had undertaken to make himself master of Naples. His prison, duels, romantic amours,

prodigality, and adventures rendered him quite singular. He seemed to be a person of another age. It was said of him, upon seeing him run against the great Condé: "Here go the heroes of history and of romance."

The queen-mother, the reigning queen, and the queen of England, dowager of Charles I., then forgetting her misfortunes, sat under a canopy to view this spectacle. The count de Sault, son of the duke de Lesdiguières, won the prize, and received it from the hands of the queen-mother. Those feasts revived, more than ever, the taste for devices and emblems, which tournaments had formerly brought into vogue, and which continued after these were no more.

An antiquary, called d'Ouvrier, invented, in 1662, for Louis XIV., the emblem of the sun, darting its rays upon a globe, with these words: *"Nec pluribus impar"*—"Yet a match for many." The thought was a kind of imitation of a Spanish device made by Philip II., and was more applicable to this king, who possessed the finest part of the new world, and so many states in the old, than to a young king of France, who hitherto gave no more than hopes. This device had prodigious success. The king's cabinets, the movables of the crown, the tapestries, and sculptures were all adorned with it; yet the king never carried it in his tournaments. Louis XIV. has been unjustly condemned for the pride of this device, as if he had chosen it himself; and perhaps it has been more justly censured for its foundation. The body does not represent that which the legend signifies; and this legend has not a quite clear and determined sense. That which may be explained several ways does not deserve to be explained by any. Devices, those remains of the ancient chivalry, may suit with feasts, and give some pleasure when these allusions are just, new and pointed. It is better to have none than suffer such as are bad and low, like that of Louis XII., which was a hedgehog, with these words: *"Qui s'y frotte, s'y pique"*—"He that touches me, galls himself." Devices are, with regard to inscriptions, what masquerades are to more solemn ceremonies.

The feast of Versailles, in 1664, surpassed that of the Carrousel for its singularity, magnificence, and the pleasures of the mind, which, mixing with the splendor of these diversions, added a relish and such charms as no feast had ever yet been embellished with. Versailles began to be a delightful residence, without approaching to the grandeur at which it arrived afterward.

On May 5, the king came hither with a court consisting of six hundred persons, who, with their attendants, were entertained at his expense, as were likewise all those employed in preparing these enchanting scenes. There was nothing ever wanting at these feasts but such monuments erected for giving of them, as were constructed by the Greeks and Romans. But the readiness with which they built the theatres, amphitheatres, and porticoes, beautified with as much magnificence as taste, was a wonder which added to the illusion, and which, diversified afterward in a thousand ways, still augmented the charms of these spectacles.

There was at first a sort of tournament. Those who were to run appeared the first day as in a review; they were preceded by heralds at arms, pages, and squires, who carried the devices and bucklers; and upon the bucklers were written in letters of gold, verses

composed by Perrin and Benserade; this last especially had a singular talent for these gallant pieces, in which he always made delicate and lively allusions to the characters of the persons present, to the personages of antiquity or mythology which they represented, and to the passions actuating the court at that time. The king personated Roger; when all the diamonds belonging to the crown sparkled upon his clothes, and the horse which he rode. The queens, and three hundred ladies under triumphal arches, viewed this entry.

The king, amidst all the eyes which were fixed upon him, distinguished only those of Mademoiselle de la Vallière. The feast was for her alone; which she secretly enjoyed, though not distinguished from the crowd.

The cavalcade was followed by a gilt car eighteen feet high, fifteen broad, and twenty-four long, representing the chariot of the sun. The four ages of gold, silver, brass, and iron, the celestial signs, the seasons, and the hours followed this car on foot. All was distinctly characterized. Shepherds carried pieces of the enclosure, that were adjusted by the sound of trumpets, to which succeeded at intervals violins and other instruments. Some persons who followed Apollo's car, came at first to recite to the queens certain verses suitable to the place, the time, and the persons present. After the races were finished, and the night came on, four thousand large flambeaux lighted the spot where the feast was given. The tables therein were served by two hundred persons, who represented the seasons, the fauns, sylvans, and dryads, with shepherds, grape-gatherers, and reapers. Pan and Diana advanced upon a moving mountain, and descended from it in order to place upon the tables whatever the country and the forests produced that was most delicious. Behind the tables, in a semi-circle, rose up all at once a theatre filled with performers in concert. The arcades which surrounded the table and theatre were decorated with five hundred chandeliers, with tapers in them; and a gilt balustrade inclosed this vast circuit.

These feasts, so much superior to what are invented in romances, lasted for seven days. The king carried four times the prizes of the games; and afterward he left those he had won to be contended for by other knights, and accordingly gave them up to the victors.

The comedy of the "*Princesse d'Élide,*" or "Princess of Elis," though not one of the best plays of Molière, was one of the most agreeable decorations of these games, for the vast number of fine allegories on the manners of the times, and for the apposite purposes which form the agreeableness of these feasts, but which are lost to posterity. People at court were still fond, even to madness, of judicial astrology: many princes imagined, through a haughty superstition, that nature distinguished them by writing their destiny in the stars. Victor Amadeus, duke of Savoy, father of the duchess of Burgundy, retained an astrologer near his person, even after his abdication. Molière was so bold as to attack this delusion in his comedy.

Here also was to be seen a court fool. These wretched fellows were still much in vogue. This was a relic of barbarism that continued longer in Germany than in any other place. The want of amusements, and the inability of procuring such as are agreeable and virtuous in times of ignorance and bad taste, had given occasion to the

invention of this wretched pleasure, which degrades the human mind. The fool who was then in the court of Louis XIV. had formerly belonged to the prince of Condé; his name was Angeli. The count de Gramont said that, of all the fools who followed that prince, there was none but Angeli who made his fortune. This buffoon was not without some sense. It is he who said: "That he went not to hear sermons, because, as he did not like brawling, so he did not understand reasoning."

The farce of "The Forced Marriage" was likewise acted at this feast. But what was truly admirable here was the first representation of the first three acts of *"Tartuffe."* The king had an inclination to see this masterpiece even before it was finished. He afterward protected it against those false bigots who would have drawn in earth and heaven to be interested for the suppression of it: and it will subsist, as has been already said elsewhere, as long as there shall be any taste and hypocrites remaining in France.

Most of these shining solemnities are often calculated only to please the eyes and the ears. That which is no more than pomp and magnificence passes away in one day; but when masterpieces of art like *"Tartuffe"* make up the ornament of these feasts they leave behind them an eternal remembrance.

There are still fresh in memory several strokes of those allegories of Benserade, which were an ornament to the ballads of that time. I shall only give here the verses for the king, representing the sun.

Je doute qu'on le prenne avec vous sur le ton
De Daphné ni de Phaeton.
Lui trop ambitieux, elle trop inhumaine,
Il n'est point là de piège, où vous puissiez donner;
Le moyen de s'imaginer,
Qu'une femme vous fuie, et qu'un homme vous mène?
With you I doubt we must not prate
Of Daphne's scorn and Phaeton's fate,
He too aspiring, she inhuman;
In snares like these you cannot fall,
For who will dream that e'er you shall
Be fooled by man, or shunned by woman.

The principal glory of these amusements, which perfected taste, politeness, and talents, in France, proceeded from this, that they did not divert the monarch in the least from his assiduous labors: for without these he would only have known how to keep a court, and would have been unacquainted with the methods of governing: so that had the magnificent pleasures of this court glossed over the miseries of the people, they had only been odious. But he who gave these feasts gave bread to the people in the famine of 1662. He caused corn to be brought, which the rich purchased at a cheap rate, and he gave it gratuitously to poor families at the gates of the Louvre: he remitted to the people three millions of imposts; no part of the interior administration was neglected, his government was respected abroad, the king of Spain was obliged to yield to him the precedency, the pope was forced to make reparation,

Dunkirk was added to France by a sale no less glorious to the purchaser than it was ignominious to the seller. In short, all the steps taken while he held the reins of government, had been either noble or useful; after this the giving of feasts was extremely proper.

Chigi, the legate *a latere,* and nephew of Pope Alexander VII., coming in the midst of these rejoicings to Versailles to make amends to the king for the high insult offered by the pope's guards, presented a new spectacle to the court. Such grand ceremonies are like feasts for the public. The honors paid him rendered the satisfaction more striking and illustrious. He received under a canopy the compliments of the superior courts, the bodies of the city and clergy: he entered Paris amid the discharge of cannon, with the great Condé on his right hand, and the son of that prince on his left: he came in this pomp to humble himself, Rome, and the pope, before the king who had not yet drawn his sword. After he had audience he dined with the king, and all endeavored to treat him magnificently, and to give him pleasure. Afterward the doge of Genoa was treated with less ceremony, but with the same earnest desire of pleasing, which the king always made reconcilable with his more lofty proceedings.

All this gave the court of Louis XIV. an air of grandeur, which quite obscured all the other courts of Europe. He was desirous that this lustre annexed to his person should reflect a glory on all around him; that the great should be honored, beginning with his brother and the prince; and that none should be powerful. It was with this view that he determined in favor of the peers their ancient dispute with the presidents of the parliament: the latter pretended that they should give their opinions before the peers, and accordingly they put themselves in possession of this right: but he decided, in an extraordinary council, that the peers should give their opinions at the bars of justice, held in the king's presence, before the presidents, as if they owed this prerogative only to his person, when present; and he allowed the ancient usage in those assemblies which are not judicial still to continue.

In order to distinguish his principal courtiers, he invented blue short coats embroidered with gold and silver. The permission of wearing these was a great favor to such as were guided by vanity. They were in almost as much demand as the collar of an order. It may be observed, as we have entered upon minute details, that at that time these coats were worn over a doublet adorned with ribbons, and over the coat passed a belt, to which hung the sword. There was also a sort of laced cravat, and a hat adorned with a double row of feathers. This style, which lasted till 1684, became that of all Europe, except Spain and Poland: for people almost everywhere already piqued themselves on imitating the court of Louis XIV.

He established an order in his household, which still continues, regulated the several ranks and offices belonging thereto; and he created new places about his own person, as that of the grand master of the wardrobe. He re-established the tables instituted by Francis I. and augmented them. There were twelve of these for the commensal officers, as they are called, who eat at court, and are served with as much elegance and profusion as a great many sovereigns: he would have all strangers invited thither, and this lasted during all his reign. But there was another point of a still more desirable and polite nature, which was, that after he had built the pavilions of Marly in

1679, all the ladies found in their apartments a complete toilette, in which nothing that belonged to luxury was overlooked: whoever happened to be on a journey, might give repasts in their apartments to their friends, and the same delicacy was used in serving the guests as for the master himself. Such trivial matters have their value only when they are supported by greater. In all his actions, splendor and generosity were to be seen. He made presents of two hundred thousand francs to the daughters of his ministers at their marriage.

That which roused most admiration of him in Europe was an unexampled instance of liberality. He had the hint from a discourse which he held with the duke of Saint-Aignan, who told him that Cardinal Richelieu had sent presents to some learned men of other countries who had written eulogies upon him. The king did not wait till he was praised; but, sure of deserving it, he recommended his ministers Lionne and Colbert to select a number of Frenchmen and foreigners distinguished for their literature, on whom he might bestow marks of his generosity. Lionne, having written to foreign countries, informed himself as much as possible in a matter of such delicacy, where the point was to give preference to contemporaries. At first a list of sixty persons was made out: some had presents given them, and others pensions, according to their rank, wants, and merits. Allati, librarian of the Vatican; Count Graziani, secretary of state to the duke of Modena; the celebrated Viviani, mathematician to the grand duke of Florence; Vossius, historiographer to the United Provinces; the illustrious mathematician Huygens, and a Dutch resident in Sweden; in short, down to the professors of Altorf and Helmstadt, towns almost unknown to the French, were astonished upon receiving letters from Colbert, by which he acquainted them that though the king was not their sovereign, he entreated them to allow him to be their benefactor. The expressions in these letters were estimated from the dignity of the persons who sent them; and all were accompanied with rewards or pensions.

Among the French, they knew how to distinguish Racine, Quinault, Fléchier, since bishop of Nîmes, who was then but very young. They had presents. It is true that Chapelain and Cotin had pensions bestowed upon them: but it was chiefly Chapelain whom the minister Colbert had consulted. These two men, otherwise so much disparaged on account of their poetry, were not without merit. Chapelain was possessed of an immense stock of learning; and what is surprising is, that he had taste and was one of the most acute critics. There is a great difference in all this from genius. Science and vivacity conduct an artist; but they do not form him in any kind. None in France had more reputation in their time than Ronsard and Chapelain: the reason for this was that in Ronsard's days barbarism prevailed, and in those of Chapelain the people had hardly emerged from it. Costar, a fellow student of Balzac and Voiture, called Chapelain the first of the heroic poets.

Boileau had no share in these bounties: he had hitherto produced only satires; and it is well known that these pieces attacked the learned men whom the ministry had consulted. The king distinguished him some years after, without consulting anybody.

The presents made in foreign countries were so considerable that Viviani built a house at Florence out of the liberality of Louis XIV. He put in letters of gold upon the frontispiece, "*Ædes a Deodatæ*"—"This house is the gift of God," being an allusion

to the surname of Dieu Donné, which appellation the public voice had given to this prince at his birth.

The effect which this extraordinary munificence had in Europe may be easily imagined; and if we consider all the memorable things which the king did very soon after, the most severe and most morose men should bear with the excessive eulogiums lavished upon him. Twelve panegyrics of Louis XIV. were pronounced in different towns in Italy; a homage which was paid him neither from fear nor hope; and these the marquis Zampieri sent to the king.

He always continued pouring his favors upon the sciences and arts: of these we have plain proofs from particular gratuities; as about four thousand louis d'or to Racine, also from the fortunes of Despréaux and Quinault, especially that of Lulli, and of all the artists who devoted their labors to him. He even gave a thousand louis d'or to Benserade for engraving the mezzotinto plates of his Ovid's *"Metamorphoses"* in roundelays; a liberality badly applied, and which only shows the generosity of the sovereign. He also recompensed Benserade for the little merit which he had shown in his ballads.

Several writers have attributed solely to M. Colbert this protection given to the arts and this magnificence of Louis XIV. But he had not further merit in the affair than seconding the magnanimity and taste of his master. This minister, who had a very great genius for the finances, commerce, navigation, and the general police, had not in his own mind that taste and elevation which the king had: he zealously promoted, but was far from inspiring him with what nature had given.

It is not easy to discover upon what foundation certain authors have reproached this monarch with avarice. A prince who has domains entirely independent of the revenues of the state may be avaricious, like an individual; but a king of France, who, in reality, only distributes the treasures of his subjects, must of consequence be free from this vice. The will or care to recompense may indeed be wanting; but this is what Louis XIV. can never be justly reproached with.

At the time that he began to lavish so many favors on men of talents, the use which the count de Bussi made of those he possessed was punished with the utmost severity. He was imprisoned in the Bastille in the year 1665. His writing "The Amours of Gaul" was the pretext for his confinement. The real cause was a song in which the king was a little too freely treated; the memory of it was revived at this time, in order to ruin Bussi, the supposed author:

Que Deodatus est heureux,
De baiser ce bec amoureux,
Qui d'une oreille à l'autre va!
Beyond expression sure that bliss is,
When Deodatus fondly kisses,
That beak so delicate and dear,
Replete with charms from ear to ear.

His works were not good enough to compensate for the mischief which they brought upon him. He spoke his own language with the utmost purity: he was not destitute of merit, but his self-sufficiency was much greater than his merit, and he made no other use of it but to create himself enemies. It would have been generous in Louis XIV. to have pardoned him: but thus he avenged his personal injury, while he, in appearance, yielded to the public clamor. The count de Bussi was released in about eighteen months; but he never recovered his former place in the king's favor, though he continued, during the remainder of his life, to profess an attachment to Louis XIV. which neither the king nor anybody else believed to be sincere.

[Back to Table of Contents]

NOTES TO CHAPTER XXIII.

The King and the Cardinal.—This anecdote is attested by the memoirs of La Porte, p. 255, and we there see that the king had taken an aversion to the cardinal; that the minister, though his relative, and intrusted with his education, had made no effort to improve him, and had often left him without the common necessaries of life. He adds much heavier accusations, which reflect dishonor on the cardinal's reputation; but they do not appear to be proved, and no accusation should be recognized without proof.

The King and the Assembly.—These words, faithfully copied, are in all the authentic journals of those times; it is neither allowable to omit or change a word in them in any history of France. The author of M. de M. makes a bold conjecture in his note. "His speech was not quite so good, but his eyes spoke more sensibly than his mouth."

St. Évremond.—This was the celebrated Charles de St. Denis, lord of St. Évremond, who had distinguished himself by his gallantry in the field, and his wit in conversation. His letter, reflecting on the memory of Cardinal Mazarin, being discovered, Louis ordered him to be imprisoned in the Bastille; but before he could be arrested, he made his escape into Holland, and was invited to England by King Charles II. who gratified him with a pension of three hundred pounds. He lived to enjoy the favor of King William also, and died at London in 1703, at the age of ninety. His writings have been admired for the vivacity of his style, the strength and delicacy of his portraits, the justness of his reflections, the elegance of his taste, and the agreeable variety of his expression. They are not, however, without affectation, obscurity, and false fire; and his poetry is but indifferent.

Henry, duke of Guise.—This Henry, duke of Guise, was designed for the Church, provided with a great number of abbeys, and even nominated to the archbishopric of Rheims: but he was stripped of all his benefices by Cardinal Richelieu. He fought a duel with Count de Coligny, for which he was obliged to retire to Rome, whence he repaired to Naples, in order to command the army of the people who had rebelled against the court of Spain. His adventures, on this occasion, were altogether romantic; but, in spite of all his courage and efforts, he was taken prisoner and carried to Spain, being eventually released at the solicitation of the great prince of Condé.

Perrin and Benserade.—Abbé Perrin was a native of Lyons, the first who, by royal patent, established an opera in Paris, in imitation of the Venetian opera. He and his partners erected a theatre in the Rue Mazarine, and, in 1672, exhibited the pastoral "Pomona," the poetry by Perrin, and the music by Lambert. Perrin quarreling with his partners, resigned his patent in favor of the famous Lulli, who built a new theatre near the palace of the Luxembourg, from which he later transferred his company to the hall of the Palais Royal. Perrin, besides several pastorals of five acts, wrote many sonnets, odes, and elegies. He also translated the "Æneid" of Virgil in verse, and enjoyed a great reputation. His death happened about the year 1680.

Isaac Benserade was born of a good family, at Lyons, in Normandy, in 1612. He soon distinguished himself as a wit, a poet, and a man of gallantry, was gratified with a pension by the queen mother of Louis XIV., and lived in great familiarity and favor with the noblemen of that court. He composed tragedies, comedies, and verses for ballets, which were in great esteem at court, as well as through all France, in the younger days of Louis. All the wits of that kingdom were divided on the merit of two sonnets, one by Benserade, and the other by Voiture. He was particularly patronized by Cardinal Mazarin, and preserved his reputation to a good old age. Among his bons mots, the most remarkable is the repartee he made to a gentleman whom he had often rallied on suspicion of impotence. That gentleman, meeting Benserade on the street: "Well," said he, "notwithstanding all your raillery, my wife has been delivered some days." "O, sir," replied the poet, "I never doubted the ability of your wife."

La Vallière.—Louisa Frances de la Baume-le-Blanc de la Vallière was maid of honor to Henrietta of England, duchess of Orleans. She fell in love with the person of Louis XIV., who returned her passion, had several children by her and raised her to the rank of duchess of Vaujour, and peeress of France. Tired of the pleasures of a court, and touched by the stings of repentance, she retired to the convent of the Carmelites in Paris, and spent the latter part of her life in acts of piety and mortification.

Alazzi.—Leo Alazzi was a native of Chio, acquired a great share of reputation for learning, and wrote a great number of books; but his taste and judgment were not thought equal to his erudition. He died at Rome in 1669, in the eighty-third year of his age.

Graziani.—Jerome Graziani, count of Sarzana, distinguished himself by his poetical genius. He wrote a heroic poem, entitled "Cleopatra," and another on the conquests of Granada, together with a collection of odes and sonnets. He was appointed secretary of state, and afterward created count of Sarzana by Francis, duke of Modena, to whose family he had been always zealously attached.

Viviani.—Vincent Viviani was a disciple of the famous Galileo, and soon distinguished himself by a sublime genius for geometry. He undertook to restore, by conjecture, the fifth book of "*Apollonius de Maximis et de Minimis,*" which was lost. While he was engaged in this undertaking, the famous Borelli found in the grand duke's library at Florence, an Arabic manuscript, with this Latin title: "*Apollonii Pergæi Conicorum Libri Octo.*" This, with the grand duke's permission, he carried to Rome to be translated by Abraham Ecchellensis, Maronite professor of the Oriental tongues. Viviani, in the meantime, without the least communication with this translator, published his restoration by conjecture; and when the translation of the Arabic manuscript was finished, it appeared that he had not only restored all that was in the fifth book of Apollonius, but carried his researches much farther on the same subject. He afterward restored by the same art of divination or conjecture, three books of the ancient geometrician, Aristæus, which had been lost.

Vossius.—Dionysius Vossius, who translated into Latin "Reidanius's Annals," and was nominated professor of history and eloquence at Derpt in Livonia, died young at Amsterdam, in 1633. Isaac Vossius, the son of Gerard John Vossius, was also a man

of great erudition, and received a very considerable present from Louis XIV., but he was no historian. He came over to England in the reign of Charles II., and died canon of Windsor. Matthew Vossius, the brother of Dionysius, wrote in Latin five books of the "Annals of Holland and Zealand;" but it does not appear that he received either pension or present from the king of France; whereas the letter of Colbert to Isaac Vossius is still extant.

Racine.—John Racine, celebrated for his tragedies, which are preferred to those of the great Corneille, in point of correctness, tenderness, and regularity. Corneille was more sublime; Racine more interesting; the one commanded admiration; the other maintained an empire over all the passions of the heart. Corneille was living, and admired by all France, when Racine made his first appearance as a tragic writer, and acquired the applause of the whole kingdom, without diminishing the fame of his great contemporary.

Quinault.—Philip Quinault acquired great reputation by his comedies and operas, notwithstanding the satirical couplet of Boileau:

Si je pense exprimer un auteur sans desaut,
La raison dit Virgile, et la rime Quinault.

To the censure of this poet, Quinault made no reply. On the contrary, he courted his friendship, and visited him often, in order to take his advice concerning his works; but he never spoke a syllable of Boileau's own performances, and this affected silence piqued him extremely. "His only reason," said Despréaux, "for soliciting my acquaintance was that he might have an opportunity to talk of his own verses; but he never says a word of mine."

Fléchier.—Esprit Fléchier, bishop of Nimes, rendered himself famous by writing panegyrics on the saints, and by composing funeral orations, one of the most celebrated of which is that which he pronounced on the great Turenne. He was a prelate of uncommon erudition, pious, moderate, and extremely charitable.

Chapelain.—John Chapelain was in very high reputation for his poetical genius, under the ministry of the Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin. Balzac has praised him on many occasions. He wrote one ode to Cardinal Richelieu, which is generally admired; but his poem "*De la Pucelle*" was the ruin of all his poetical fame; and produced the following severe distich:

Illa Capellani dudum expectata puella,
Post tata in lucem tempora prodit anus.

Chapelain, in the midst of his success as an author, had the misfortune to fall under the ridicule of Boileau; as did his contemporary, Cotin, canon of Bayeux, who, though a good scholar was a wretched preacher, and a miserable poet.

Guez.—John Louis Guez, lord of Balzac, was patronized as a man of genius by Richelieu, esteemed the most eloquent man in France, and the great restorer of the French language.

Voiture.—Vincent Voiture was patronized by the duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIV. He distinguished himself by his writings, both in prose and verse, which were much admired for their purity of style, gayety, gallantry, and elegant turn of thought. He was the son of a vintner of Amiens; of an amorous disposition, and much addicted to play.

Boileau.—Nicholas Boileau, sieur Despréaux, is so well known by his poetical works as to need no further description.

Lulli.—John Baptist Lulli was a native of Florence, though he is styled the father of French music. He it was who introduced operas into France, and his compositions were universally admired. St. Évremond says he was a perfect master of the passions, and understood the human heart much better than the authors whose works he set to music.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXIV.

ANECDOTES CONTINUED.

Louis XIV. was desirous of joining the sweets of friendship to the glory, the pleasures, the pomp, and the gallantry which brightened the first years of his reign; but to make a happy choice of friends is a difficult task for a monarch. One of those in whom he placed the greatest confidence basely betrayed him, the other made an ill use of his favor. The first was the marquis de Vardes, who was privy to the king's affection for Madame de la Vallière. It is generally known that court intrigues induced him to seek her ruin; her situation exposed her to the ill-will of the jealous, but her character should have secured her from the machinations of enemies. It is known also that he had the boldness, in concert with the count de Guiche and the countess of Soissons, to write a counterfeit letter to the queen, in the name of the king of Spain, her father. This letter informed the queen of what should have been concealed from her, and what could not but disturb the peace of the royal family. Besides being guilty of this piece of treachery, he was malicious enough to spread a report that the duke and duchess of Navailles, the worthiest persons at court, were at the bottom of it. These, though entirely innocent, were sacrificed to the resentment of the deceived monarch. The villainous proceeding of de Vardes was detected, but too late; criminal as he was, however, his punishment did not exceed that of the innocent persons whom he had accused, and who were deprived of their places, and obliged to retire from court.

The other favorite was the count of Lauzun, afterward created duke, sometimes the king's rival in his occasional amours, sometimes his confidant, and so well known since, by the marriage which he contracted in too public a manner with the king's niece, and which he afterward renewed in secret, notwithstanding the promise he had given to his master.

The king, disappointed in his choice of favorites, declared that where he had sought for friends he had found only intriguers. This unhappy knowledge of mankind, which is generally acquired too late, caused him likewise to say: "Whenever I give a vacant place I make a hundred malcontents, and one ungrateful wretch." Neither the pleasures nor embellishments of the king's palaces and of Paris, nor the care of the police, were in the least discontinued during the war of 1666.

The king danced at the balls till the year 1670. He was then thirty-two years of age. Upon seeing the tragedy of *"Britannicus"* played at St. Germain, he was struck with the following verses:

Pour mérite premier, pour vertu singulière,
Il excelle à traîner un char dans la carrière.
Á disputer des prix indignes de ses mains,
Á se donner lui-même en spectacle aux Romains.

His chief desert in trifling feats to place,
To drive the chariot foremost in the race,
In low pursuits to win the ignoble prize,
Himself exposed a show to vulgar eyes.

From that time he ceased to dance in public, and the poet reformed the monarch. His connection with the duchess de la Vallière still subsisted, notwithstanding the frequent breaches of his fidelity to her. These were not attended with much difficulty. He found every woman disposed to receive his addresses with transport, and he constantly returned to her, who by the mildness and goodness of her character, and even by the force of habit, had captivated his affections without art. But, in the year 1669, she perceived that Madame de Montespan was gaining the ascendent: she bore this with her usual mildness; she supported the mortification of being a long time witness to the triumph of her rival: she scarcely uttered a complaint, but thought herself happy in her misfortune, because she was respectfully treated by the king, whom she continued to love, and had opportunities of seeing him, though she was not now the object of his affections.

At length, in the year 1675, she had recourse to the refuge of a mind replete with tenderness and sensibility, which can only be subdued by the most profound and affecting considerations. She thought that God alone was worthy to possess a heart which had been honored with the affection of such a lover; and her conversion in a short time made as much noise as her passion had done formerly. She became a Carmelite at Paris, and persevered in the austerities of that order. The delicacy of a woman accustomed to so much pomp, luxury, and pleasure was not shocked when she was obliged to cover herself with a hair-cloth, walk barefooted, fast rigidly, and sing among the choir at night in a language she did not understand. In this manner she lived from 1675 till 1710, by the name of Sister Louisa the Penitent. A king would deserve the name of tyrant should he punish a guilty woman with so much severity; yet many a woman has punished herself thus for having loved. There are scarcely any examples of statesmen who have buried themselves in this manner; yet the guilt of politicians seems to stand more in need of expiation than the frailty of lovers; but those who govern souls have authority only with the weak.

It is generally known that when Sister Louisa was informed of the death of the duke of Vermandois, her son by the king, she said, “I should lament his birth more grievously than his death.” She had a daughter, who, of all the king’s children, had the nearest resemblance to her father; and afterward married Prince Armand of Conti, cousin of the great Condé.

In the meantime Madame de Montespan enjoyed the monarch’s favor, and availed herself of it with an external pomp and pride equal to the modesty of Madame de la Vallière.

While Madame de la Vallière and Madame de Montespan continued to vie with each other for the first place in the king’s affection, the whole court was taken up with love intrigues. Louvois himself became sensible to the influence of this passion. Among the many mistresses of this minister, whose rough character seemed so incompatible

with love, was Madame du Frenoi, wife of one of his clerks, in whose favor he, by his credit, afterward caused a new place to be established among the queen's attendants: she was created lady of the bedchamber: she had access to the queen's person on all occasions. The king, by thus indulging the private inclinations of his ministers, thought to justify his own.

There cannot be a more striking example of the power of prepossession and custom than married women being at that time allowed publicly to have gallants, while the granddaughter of Henry IV. was refused even a husband. She, after having rejected so many sovereigns, and having entertained hopes of marrying Louis XIV., was, at the age of forty-three, desirous to make the fortune of a gentleman of a noble race. She obtained leave to marry Péquilin, of the Caumont family, count of Lauzun, and a captain of one of the two companies called the hundred gentlemen pensioners, which are now extinct, and for which the king had instituted the place of colonel-general of the dragoons. There were numerous precedents of princesses who had married gentlemen: the Roman emperors often gave their daughters in marriage to senators: the daughters of the sovereigns of Asia, more powerful and more despotic than a king of France, always marry the slaves of their fathers.

Mademoiselle bestowed upon the count of Lauzun all her possessions, valued at twenty millions, four duchies, the sovereignty of Dombes, the county of Eu, and the palace of Orleans, called Luxembourg. She retained nothing, having given herself up entirely to the pleasing idea of making the person she loved richer than any king ever made a subject. The contract was drawn up; Lauzun was for a day duke of Montpensier; nothing now remained but to sign. In a word, all things were in readiness, when the king, attacked on every side by representations of princes, ministers, and the enemies of a man whose prosperity was too great to be borne, retracted his promise, and forbade the alliance. He had, by letter, apprised foreign courts of the intended marriage; he wrote again to inform them that it was dropped. He was censured for having permitted it; he was equally censured for having forbidden it. He was afflicted at being the cause of Mademoiselle's unhappiness. However, this very prince, who had been grieved at being under the necessity of breaking his word with Lauzun, caused him, in November, 1670, to be confined in the castle of Pignerol, for having privately married the princess, who he had, a few months before, given him leave to marry publicly. He was shut up during the space of ten years.

There are many kingdoms whose sovereigns have not so much power; those that have are most beloved when they decline to make use of it. Should a citizen who does not violate the laws of the state be so severely punished by him who represents the state? Is there not a wide difference between offending one's sovereign and betraying one's sovereign? Should a king treat a man with more rigor than the law would treat him? Those who have asserted that Madame de Montespan, who put a stop to this marriage, being irritated against the count de Lauzun for the bitter reproaches he uttered against her, exacted that vengeance, have done that monarch great injustice. It would have been a proof both of tyranny and pusillanimity to sacrifice to female resentment a brave man and a favorite, who, after being deprived of an immense fortune by his

master, had been guilty of no other crime but speaking too freely of Madame de Montespan.

I hope my readers will excuse these reflections, which the natural rights of mankind oblige me to make; but at the same time equity requires that as Louis XIV. had not been guilty of an action of that nature during the whole course of his reign, he should not be accused of so cruel a piece of injustice. He was certainly severe enough in punishing with such rigor a clandestine marriage, an innocent union, which it would have been more prudent in him to pass over in silence. To withdraw his favor from Lauzun was but just, to imprison him was too severe.

Those who call this private marriage in question need only read the memoirs of Mademoiselle with attention. These memoirs reveal what she endeavors to conceal. It appears from them that this princess, who had complained so bitterly to the king when her marriage was forbidden, did not dare to complain of her husband's being imprisoned. She owns that she was thought to be married; she does not, however, assert that she was not: and, if there was no proof of it but that expression: "I neither can nor ought to change my sentiments for him," it would be conclusive.

Lauzun and Fouquet were astonished at meeting in the same prison; but the latter, who in the height of his glory and power had seen Péquilin mixed with the crowd like a gentleman of no fortune from one of the provinces, thought him out of his senses when he assured him that he had been the king's favorite, and had obtained leave to marry the granddaughter of Henry IV. with all the wealth and the titles of the house of Montpensier.

After having languished ten years in prison, he was at length released; but it was not till after Madame de Montespan had engaged Mademoiselle to confer the sovereignty of Dombes and the county of Eu upon the duke of Maine, then an infant, who possessed them after the death of that princess. She made this donation merely through a hope that the duke of Lauzun would be acknowledged as her husband; but she was herein deceived: the king only allowed her to bestow on her concealed and unfortunate husband the lands of St. Fargeau and Thiers, with other considerable revenues, which Lauzun found insufficient. In a word, she was obliged to be satisfied with being his wife in private, and to suffer herself to be neglected by him in public. This princess, unhappy at court and unhappy at home, which is the ordinary effect of violent passions, died in 1693.

As for the count of Lauzun, he went over to England in 1688. Being fated to extraordinary adventures, he conducted to France the queen of James II. and her son, then in the cradle. He was created duke. He commanded in Ireland with but indifferent success; and returned more celebrated for his adventures than esteemed for his personal merit. We have seen him die at a very advanced age, quite forgotten, as is generally the case with those who have been concerned in important events, without having performed great exploits.

Madame de Montespan, however, was all-powerful at court, at the beginning of the intrigues just spoken of.

Athénaïs de Mortemart, wife of the marquis de Montespan; her elder sister, the marchioness de Thiange, and her younger sister, for whom she obtained the abbey of Fontevraud, were the finest women of that age; and all three added the most refined and lively wit to their personal attractions. Their brother, the duke of Vivonne, marshal of France, was one of the most eminent men at court, both for taste and learning. The king, happening one day to ask him: "What advantage is there in reading?" the duke, who was fat and of a ruddy complexion, answered, "Reading has the same effect upon the mind that partridges have upon my cheeks."

These four were universally admired for a happy turn of conversation, which united humor, simplicity, and refinement, and went by the appellation of the Mortemart wit. They wrote with inexpressible ease and grace. This sufficiently shows the absurdity of a story which I have heard repeated over and over, that Madame de Montespan was obliged to employ Madame Scarron to write her letters; and that she thereby became her rival, and afterward supplanted her.

It is true, indeed, that Madame Scarron, since Madame de Maintenon, had more acquired knowledge, and her conversation was more agreeably insinuating. There are letters of hers extant wherein art embellishes nature, and which are written with the utmost elegance. But Madame de Montespan had no occasion for the assistance of another's wit; and she was long possessed of the king's favor before Madame de Maintenon was presented to him.

Madame de Montespan's glory was in its brightest lustre at the time of the king's journey into Flanders in 1670. The ruin of the Dutch was planned during this journey, in the midst of pleasures. It was a continual festival, attended with the utmost pomp and magnificence.

The king, who generally went upon an expedition on horseback, upon this occasion went in a coach. Post-chaises were not invented till afterwards. The queen, her sister-in-law, and the marchioness de Montespan, were in this magnificent equipage, which was followed by many others; and when Madame de Montespan went alone, she had four of the king's guards to attend her. Then the dauphin came with his retinue, and Mademoiselle with hers: this was before the fatal affair of her marriage; she, in perfect peace of mind, partook of all these triumphs, and saw with secret satisfaction her lover, who was the king's favorite, at the head of his company of guards. The finest movables of the crown were carried into the towns where the king passed the night. In every city the court passed through there was either a ball or fire-works. The king was accompanied by all the troops of his household, and all his domestics went before or followed. A public table was kept at St. Germain. In this pomp the court visited all the conquered towns. The chief ladies of Brussels and Ghent came to see this magnificent procession. The king invited them to his table, and with great generosity made them presents. All the officers of the troops in garrison received gratuities. There was frequently no less than fifteen hundred louis d'or a day spent in liberalities.

All the honors and distinctions were intended for Madame de Montespan, except what duty exacted for the queen; yet that lady was not in the secret of the expedition. The king knew how to make a distinction between pleasure and state affairs.

The king's sister, who was alone intrusted with the care of uniting two kings, and bringing about the destruction of Holland, embarked at Dunkirk aboard the fleet of her brother, Charles II., king of England. She carried with her Mademoiselle Kerowal, afterward duchess of Portsmouth, whose beauty was equal to that of Madame de Montespan. She afterward became, in England, what Madame de Montespan was in France, but with greater credit. King Charles was governed by her to the last moment of his life; and though he was by no means constant to her, she always preserved her ascendency over him. No woman's beauty was ever more lasting than hers; when near the age of seventy she had something noble and pleasing in her countenance, which years could not efface.

The king's sister went to see her brother at Canterbury, and returned with the glory of being successful. She had not long enjoyed it when a sudden and painful death carried her off, at the age of twenty-six, on June 30, 1670. The court was seized with grief and consternation, aggravated by the manner of her death. The princess thought she had been poisoned. Montague, the English ambassador, was convinced of it, the court scarcely doubted it, and it was the received opinion all over Europe. One of her husband's old domestics told me the name of the person who, as he thought, gave the poison. "This man," said he, "whose circumstances were but narrow, immediately afterward retired into Normandy, where he purchased an estate upon which he lived a long time in opulence." The poison was a diamond reduced to powder, and strewed over strawberries, instead of sugar. The court and city were of opinion that the princess was poisoned with a glass of succory water; after which she felt insupportable pangs, and in a short time died in convulsions.

But the malice of mankind, and a love for the marvellous, were the sole causes of this general persuasion. There could have been no poison in the glass of water, since Madame de la Fayette and another drank the remainder of it without being in the least affected. The powder of diamond is no more poisonous than the powder of coral. The princess had been a long time troubled with an abscess formed in her liver. She was in a very bad state of health, and had even been brought to bed of a child entirely putrefied. Her husband, who has been much suspected all over Europe, was never accused of any crime, either before or after this event: and there are but few instances of criminals who have been guilty of only one inhuman action. The human species would be indeed unhappy if atrocious deeds were as often committed as believed.

It was said that the chevalier of Lorraine, a favorite of the duke of Orleans, had recourse to this horrible vengeance on account of his being banished and imprisoned for his ill behavior to the princess. People do not reflect that the chevalier of Lorraine was then at Rome, and that it is difficult for a Knight of Malta, of twenty years of age, to occasion, when at Rome, the death of a great princess at Paris.

It is but too true that a weakness and indiscretion of the viscount de Turenne was what first gave rise to these invidious reports, which men take a pleasure in reviving. At the

age of sixty he was the lover and the dupe of Madame Coatquen, as he had been before of Madame de Longueville. He disclosed to that lady the secret of state, which was concealed from the king's brother. Madame de Coatquen, who loved the chevalier of Lorraine, divulged it to her gallant, who informed the duke of Orleans of it. The family of this prince was deluged with the bitterest reproaches and the most tormenting jealousies. These vexations began before the princess' voyage to England. The evil was aggravated by her return. The duke's sallies of passion, and the frequent contentions of his favorites with the friends of the duchess, filled the house with trouble and confusion. The duchess, a few days before her death, tenderly complained to the marchioness of Coatquen of the misfortunes which she had occasioned. That lady kneeled down by her bedside and, bathing her hands with tears, answered only by these verses from the tragedy of "*Wenceslaus*:"

j'allois—j'étais—l'amour a sur moi tant d'empire Je m'égare, Madame, & ne puis que vous dire.

I thought—I was—love reigns with boundless sway—

In mazes lost—I know not what to say!

The chevalier of Lorraine, who had caused all these dissensions, was immediately sent by the king to the prison of Pierre Encise; the count Marsan, of the house of Lorraine, and the marquis, afterward marshal, of Villeroi, were banished. In a word, the natural death of this unhappy princess was looked upon as the consequence of these misunderstandings.

The public belief that the duchess of Orleans had been poisoned was greatly confirmed by this crime's becoming prevalent in France at that juncture. Amidst all the horrors of a civil war, this base method of revenge was never put in practice. This crime, by an unaccountable fatality, infected France at the time of its greatest glory, and of pleasures calculated to soften the manners of mankind, just as it gained ground in Rome during the most shining period of the commonwealth.

Two Italians, one of whom went by the name of Exili, labored for a long time in conjunction with an Italian apothecary named Glaser, to discover the philosopher's stone. Having lost the little fortune they had, they endeavored to repair their loss by carrying on a criminal commerce. They secretly sold poisons. Confession, one of the greatest restraints upon human depravity, but which men frequently abuse in the belief that they may commit crimes and afterward expiate them; confession, I say, made it known to the chief penitentiary of Paris that some persons had died by poison. He gave immediate notice of this to the government. The two Italians, who were suspected, were confined in the Bastille; one of them died there. Exili continued in confinement without being convicted; and from the midst of a prison he spread over Paris those fatal secrets which cost the civil lieutenant Daubrai and his family their lives, and at last gave occasion to erecting the chamber of poisons, commonly called "The Fiery Chamber."

Love was the original source of these shocking adventures. The marquis of Brivilliers, son-in-law of the civil lieutenant, Daubrai, lodged in his house St. Croix, a captain in his regiment, who was remarkable for his agreeable person. His wife suggested to him the ill consequences that this might produce. The husband, however, was obstinantely bent upon having the young man live in the same house with his wife, who was young, handsome, and very susceptible. The event was such as might have been expected; they conceived a mutual passion for each other. The civil lieutenant, father of the marchioness, was severe and imprudent enough to cause the captain to be sent to the Bastille, when it would have been sufficient to send him to his regiment. St. Croix unluckily happened to be confined in the same chamber with Exili. This Italian taught him to wreak his revenge. The consequences, which are enough to make one shudder with horror, are universally known.

The marchioness did not make any attempt upon the life of her husband, who considered with indulgence a passion of which he himself had been the cause; but her ardent desire of vengeance impelled her to poison her father, her two brothers, and her sister. Though guilty of such execrable crimes, she retained a sense of religion: she often went to confession; and even when she was apprehended at Liège, a general confession written with her own hand was found upon her. This was not considered as a positive proof of her guilt, but only as a presumptive. It is not true that she made experiments of the efficacy of her powders in the hospitals, according to the popular report which has been adopted by the author of the remarkable trials, the work of a lawyer without employment, and calculated to amuse the vulgar. But it is true that both she and St. Croix had private dealings with persons since accused of the same crimes. She was burned in 1679, her head being first cut off. But this crime continued to infect Paris from 1670, when Exili began to compound poisons, till 1680. It cannot be concealed from the world that Pennautier, receiver-general for the clergy, and the friend of this woman, was accused some time after of having made use of these secrets, and that it cost him one-half of his wealth to stifle the accusation.

La Voisin, la Vigoueaux, a priest named le Sage, and others dealt in Exili's secrets, under the pretext of amusing persons of curious and weak minds with the sight of apparitions. The crime was imagined to be more general than it really was. The Fiery Chamber was established at the arsenal near the Bastille in 1680. Persons of the first quality were cited before it: among others, two nieces of Cardinal Mazarin, the duchess of Bouillon, and the countess of Soissons, mother of Prince Eugene. They were not ordered into custody, as we are told in the history of Reboulet. He is not less mistaken when he asserts that the duchess appeared before her judges with so many friends that she would have been in no danger even if she had been guilty. What friends could at that time have screened anybody from justice? The duchess of Bouillon was accused of nothing but indulging an absurd curiosity.

The countess of Soissons, who retired to Brussels, was charged with something of a more serious nature. The marshal of Luxembourg was confined in the Bastille, and underwent a long examination, after which he remained fourteen months longer in prison. It is easy to conjecture the shocking reports which these accusations gave rise to in Paris. At length, upon la Voisin and her accomplices being burned alive, these crimes and inquiries discontinued. This abomination, however, was peculiar to some

individuals, and did not corrupt the refined manners of the nation: but it left in the minds of men an unhappy propensity to suspect natural death of being occasioned by violent means.

The same opinion which had been formed concerning the unhappy fate of Henrietta of England, duchess of Orleans, was afterward revived with respect to her daughter, Mary Louisa, who was married in 1679 to Charles II., king of Spain. That young princess set out for Madrid with regret. Mademoiselle had often said to the duke of Orleans, brother to the king, "Do not carry your daughter so often to court; she will be too unhappy elsewhere." This young princess was desirous of marrying the dauphin. "I make you queen of Spain," said the king, "what more could I do for my daughter?" "Ah!" returned she, "you might do much more for your niece." She died in the year 1689, at the same age as her mother. It was regarded as an incontestable truth that the Austrian council of Charles II. was desirous of removing her out of the way, because she loved her country, and might prevent the king, her husband, from declaring for the allies, against France. An antidote was sent her from Versailles; but these remedies are very precarious, since what may cure one disorder occasioned by poison may increase another; and there is no universal antidote. The pretended counter-poison arrived after her death. Those who have read the memoirs compiled by the marquis de Dangeau, will find therein that the king said at supper, "The queen of Spain has been poisoned by eating of an eel-pie; and the countess of Pernitz, with the two attendants Zapata and Nina, eating it also, have lost their lives by the same poison."

After having read this extraordinary anecdote in these manuscript memoirs, which are said to have been carefully written by a courtier, who had scarcely ever quitted Louis XIV. during the space of forty years, I still entertain some doubt. I inquired of the king's ancient domestics, whether it was true that a king always so reserved in his discourse had expressed himself in so indiscreet a manner. They all assured me that nothing could be more false. I asked the duchess of St. Pierre, on her return from Spain, whether the three persons mentioned had died at the same time as the queen; she gave me convincing proofs that they had all three survived their mistress. In a word, I discovered that these memoirs of the marquis de Dangeau were nothing more than a collection of news, written by one of his footmen; and this may be very easily perceived by the style, the trifling circumstances, and the falsehoods with which it abounds. After all these dismal ideas, to which the death of Henrietta of England has led us, we must now return to those events by which her loss was followed at court. The princess palatine succeeded her a year after, and was mother of the duke of Orleans, afterward regent of the kingdom. She was under the necessity of abjuring Calvinism, in order to marry the duke of Orleans; but she always retained a secret veneration for her own religion, which is not easily shaken off when it has been impressed upon the mind from infancy.

The unfortunate adventure of one of the queen's maids of honor in 1673, gave rise to a new institution. This misfortune is well known by the sonnet of the abortion, which has been so frequently cited.

Toi que l'amour fit par un crime,
Et que l'honneur défait par un crime à son tour,

Funeste ouvrage de l'amour,
De l'honneur funeste victime, etc.
O thou! who diest imperfect and unborn,
Sad compound of creation and decay,
Embryo unformed, denied the light of day,
Of blank and being the reproach and scorn,
Produced by guilty love's impetuous tide,
By guilty honor in its turn destroyed,
The fatal work of love by stealth enjoyed,
The hapless victim of stern honor's pride:
O let me calm the tempest of my breast;
For thou in dark oblivion's shade at rest
Feelest not these horrors of internal strife.
In thee two rival powers their empire prove,
And love in spite of honor gave thee life;
But honor slew thee e'en in spite of love.

The dangerous situation of maid of honor in a gay and voluptuous court occasioned twelve ladies of the bedchamber to be substituted in the room of the twelve maids of honor; and this regulation has ever since continued in the queen's household. This institution rendered the court more numerous and magnificent, by fixing there the husbands and relatives of these ladies, which increased the number of those who attended the court, and made it more brilliant.

The princess of Bavaria, who had espoused the dauphin, added lustre and vivacity to the court. The marchioness of Montespan always attracted the chief attention: but at last she ceased to please; and her violent emotions of grief by no means conciliated the almost alienated affection of the monarch. However, her connection with the court always continued, as she was possessed of a responsible place there, being superintendent of the queen's household. Her connection with the king remained likewise on account of the children he had by her, the force of habit, and the ascendency she had acquired.

She retained all the outward show of esteem and friendship, but that was no consolation to her; and the king, afflicted at being the occasion of her frequent inquietudes, and inspired by another passion, already began to find pleasure in conversing with Madame de Maintenon, which he no longer enjoyed with his former mistress. He found himself at once divided between Madame de Montespan, whom he could not forsake, Mademoiselle Fontagne, whom he loved, and Madame de Maintenon, whose conversation was necessary to his distracted mind. The rivalry of these three kept the whole court in suspense. It reflects great honor on Louis XIV. that none of these intrigues had any influence on public affairs; and that love, which disturbed the court, never caused the least disturbance in the kingdom. There cannot, in my opinion, be a better proof that the soul of Louis was as great as it was tender.

I should even look upon these court intrigues, which have no connection with state affairs, as undeserving of a place in this history, if the name of Louis XIV. did not

render everything interesting, and if the veil had not been removed from those mysteries by several historians, who have for the most part disfigured them.

[Back to Table of Contents]

NOTES TO CHAPTER XXIV.

Montespan.—At the end of the memoirs above mentioned is printed a history of the amours of Mademoiselle and M. de Lauzun. It is the work of some valet de chambre. Verses on a parallel with the history are subjoined, and with all the absurdities which the Dutch book-sellers have long had a sort of a privilege to impose upon the world.

We should place in the same class most of the stories concerning Mademoiselle to be met with in the memoirs of Madame de Maintenon: it is there said, that, in 1681, one of the ministers of the duke of Lorraine came disguised like a beggar, and presenting himself before Mademoiselle in church, showed her a prayer-book upon which was written: “From the duke of Lorraine,” and that he afterward endeavored to prevail on her to declare the duke her heir. (Vol. ii., page 204.) This fable is copied from the adventure of Queen Clothilde; whether true or false, Mademoiselle takes no notice of it in her memoirs, in which she seldom omits little circumstances. The duke of Lorraine had no pretensions to the succession of Mademoiselle: add to this that she had in 1679 appointed the duke of Maine and the count of Toulouse her heirs.

The author of these wretched memoirs says, on page 207, that the duke of Lauzun, on his return, looked upon Mademoiselle in no other light but as a woman inflamed by an impure passion. She was his wife, and he himself acknowledged it. It is hardly possible to write a greater number of falsehoods in a more indecent style.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXV.

ADDITIONAL MEMOIRS.

The youth and beauty of Mademoiselle de Fontagne, the birth of a son, whom she bore to the king in 1680, and the title of duchess, with which she was graced, all conspired to prevent Madame de Maintenon from obtaining the first place, to which, as yet, she dared not aspire, and which she afterward possessed; but the duchess of Fontagne and her son died in 1681.

The marchioness de Montespan, having now no declared rival, was no longer able to preserve a heart wearied with her and her eternal complainings. When men are past the vigor of youth, they almost all require the company of an agreeable woman; the weight of public affairs, especially, renders such a relaxation extremely necessary. The new favorite, Madame de Maintenon, who perceived the secret power she was daily acquiring, conducted herself with that artful address which is so natural to the female sex, and is by no means displeasing to the male. She one day wrote to Madame de Frontenac, her cousin, in whom she reposed the most perfect confidence: “When he leaves me, he is always in affliction, but never in despair.” While her interest was thus increasing, and that of Madame de Montespan was drawing toward an end, the two rivals saw each other every day, sometimes with a secret uneasiness, and sometimes with a transient familiarity, which the necessity of conversing together and the fatigue of perpetual constraint obliged them to assume. They both agreed to write memoirs of all that passed at court. The work was never brought to any degree of perfection. Madame de Montespan was wont, in the latter years of her life, to divert herself in reading some of these memoirs to her friends. That spirit of devotion, which mingled itself in all these secret intrigues, contributed still more to strengthen the influence of Madame de Maintenon, and to weaken that of Madame de Montespan. The king began to reproach himself for his attachment to a married woman, and felt this scruple the more sensibly as he no longer felt the power of love. Things continued in this state of perplexity until 1685, a year rendered memorable by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Scenes of a very different nature were then presented to the public view: on the one hand, the despair and flight of a part of the nation; on the other, new feasts at Versailles, Trianon and Marly built, Nature forced in all these beautiful spots, and gardens formed with all the taste and elegance that art could bestow. The marriage of the grandson of the great Condé to Mademoiselle de Nantes, the king’s daughter by Madame de Montespan, was the last triumph of that mistress, who now began to retire from court.

The king afterward disposed in marriage of two other children whom he had by the same lady; Mademoiselle de Blois to the duke de Chartres, whom we have since seen regent of the kingdom; and the duke de Maine to Louisa Benedicta de Bourbon, granddaughter of the great Condé, and sister of the present duke, a princess distinguished by her wit, and her taste for the polite arts. Those who have approached the royal palace, or the palace de Sceaux, know that all the popular reports relating to

her marriage, and retailed in so many histories, are absolutely false and groundless. You will find it reported in more than twenty different volumes, that the house of Orleans and the house of Condé rejected the proposals with indignation: you will find it written that the princess, the duke de Chartres's mother, threatened her son; nay, that she even beat him. The "Anecdotes of the Constitution," relates, with a very serious air, that the king having employed Abbé du Bois, sub-preceptor to the duke de Chartres, to negotiate the match, the abbé found great difficulty in succeeding; and that he asked the cardinal's hat as a reward for his labor. Whatever relates to the court is written with as little regard to truth in several of our modern histories.

Before the marriage between the duke and Mademoiselle de Nantes was celebrated, the marquis de Seignelay gave the king an entertainment worthy of that monarch in the gardens de Sceaux, laid out by Lenôtre with as much taste and elegance as those of Versailles; and the entertainment was embellished by a representation of "*L'Idylle de laPaix,*" composed by Racine. There was another tournament at Versailles; and, after the marriage, the king displayed a scene of uncommon magnificence, of which Cardinal Mazarin had given the first specimen in 1656. There were placed in the hall of Marly four shops, filled with all the richest and most exquisite curiosities that the industry of the Parisian artists could produce. These four shops were so many superb decorations, representing the four seasons of the year. Madame de Montespan kept one of them with the dauphin; her rival kept another with the duke de Maine. The two newly-married noblemen had each his shop; the duke with Madame de Thiange; and the duchess, who, on account of her youth, could not decently keep a shop with a man, was with Madame de Chevereuse. The ladies and gentlemen who were named for this excursion drew by lot the jewels with which these shops were adorned. Thus the king made presents to all his court, in a manner worthy of himself. The lottery of Cardinal Mazarin was neither so ingenious nor so brilliant. These lotteries had formerly been used by the Roman emperors; but none of them ever thought of heightening their magnificence by such an air of gallantry

After the marriage of her daughter, Madame de Montespan appeared no more at court. She continued to live in Paris with great dignity. She had a large annuity settled upon her for life; the king ordered a pension of a thousand louis d'or to be paid her every month. She went yearly to drink the waters at Bourbon; and married the young women in the neighborhood, to whom she gave portions. She was now past the age when the imagination, struck with lively impressions, sends people to a nunnery. She died at Bourbon in 1707.

About a year after the marriage of Mademoiselle de Nantes, the prince of Condé died at Fontainebleau, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. His death was occasioned by a disease which was rendered more violent by a journey he took to visit the duchess, who was seized with smallpox. From this anxious concern for the safety of the duchess, which cost him his life, one may easily judge whether he had any aversion to the marriage of his grandson with the daughter of the king and Madame de Montespan, as has been reported by all those lying gazettes with which Holland was then overrun. We even find, in a history of the prince of Condé, produced from the same repositories of ignorance and imposture, that the king took pleasure in mortifying that prince on all occasions; and that, at the marriage of the princess of

Conti, daughter to Madame de la Vallière, the secretary of state refused him the title of High and Mighty Lord, as if that were a title commonly given to the princes of the blood. But how could the author, who composed the history of Louis XIV. in Avignon, partly from these wretched memoirs, be so ignorant of the world, and of the custom of our court, as to relate the like falsehoods?

Meanwhile, after the marriage of the duchess, and the total eclipse of the mother, Madame de Maintenon, victorious over all opposition, gained such an ascendency, and inspired Louis XIV. with so much love, and so many scruples of conscience, that, by the advice of Father de la Chaise, he married her privately in the month of January, 1686, in a little chapel, which stood at the end of the apartment that was afterward possessed by the duke of Burgundy. There was no contract, nor any articles of marriage. Harlay de Chanvalon, archbishop of Paris, assisted by the confessor, gave them the nuptial benediction. Montchevreuil and Bontems, first valet de chambre, were present as witnesses. It is no longer possible to suppress this fact, which has been mentioned by so many authors, who have been mistaken, however, with regard to the names, the place, and the dates. Louis XIV. was then in his forty-eighth year, and the lady he married in her fifty-second. This king, already covered with glory, was desirous of mingling the innocent pleasures of a private life with the cares of state. The marriage did not engage him in anything unworthy of his rank; and it was always a doubtful point at court, whether Madame de Maintenon was married or not. She was respected as the choice of the king, but never treated as queen.

We are apt to consider the fate of this lady as something very surprising, though history supplies us with many instances of greater and more distinguished fortunes, which had a meaner and lower origin. The marchioness de St. Sebastian, married to Victor Amadeus, king of Sardinia, was not superior to Madame de Maintenon; Catherine, empress of Russia, was greatly inferior; and the first wife of James II., king of England, was far beneath her, according to the prejudices of Europe, unknown in other parts of the world.

She was of an ancient family, and granddaughter of Theodore-Agrippa d'Aubigné, gentleman of the bedchamber to Henry IV. Her father, Constant d'Aubigné, having formed a design of settling in Carolina, and having applied to the English for that purpose, was thrown into prison in the castle of Trompette; whence he was delivered by the daughter of the governor, whose name was de Cardillac, a gentleman of Bourdelois. Constant d'Aubigné married his benefactress in 1627, and carried her along with him to Carolina: but returning to France, in a few years after, they were both committed to custody, at Niort in Poitou, by order of the court. It was in this prison of Niort that Frances d'Aubigné was born in 1635: a woman destined by heaven to suffer all the hardships and to enjoy all the favors of fortune. Carried to America at three years of age; left on the shore by the negligence of a servant, where she was on the point of being devoured by a serpent; brought back an orphan at ten years of age; educated with great severity in the house of Madame de Neuillant, a relative, and mother of the duchess de Navailles. She was so happy as to marry, in 1651, Paul Scarron, who lived near her in Hell street. Scarron was of an ancient family belonging to the parliament, and illustrious by its great alliances; but the character of a wit, and of burlesque writer, which he bore, lessened his dignity,

although it made him more generally beloved. It was, however, a very lucky incident for Mademoiselle d'Aubigné to get this man for a husband, deformed and impotent as he was, and possessed of but a small fortune. Before her marriage, she abjured the Calvinistic religion, which was her own as well as that of her ancestors. Her beauty and her wit were such that she soon began to be distinguished. Her acquaintance was eagerly courted by the best company in Paris; and this part of her youth was doubtless the happiest time of her life. After her husband's death, in 1660, she solicited the king for a small pension of fifteen hundred livres, which Scarron had enjoyed. At last, after some years had elapsed, the king gave her a pension of two thousand; addressing her at the same time in the following strain: "Madame, I have made you wait long; but you have so many friends that I was determined to have all the merit of this action to myself."

This anecdote I had from Cardinal de Fleury, who took pleasure in frequently repeating it, because he said that Louis XIV. paid him the same compliment when he gave him the bishopric of Fréjus.

And yet it appears, from the letters of Madame de Maintenon herself, that she was indebted to Madame de Montespan for this small supply, which delivered her from extreme poverty. She was again noticed some years after, when there was a necessity for educating privately the duke de Maine, whom the king had in 1670 by the marchioness de Montespan. It was not surely until the year 1672 that she was chosen to superintend this private education. She says, in one of her letters, "If the children are the king's, I will cheerfully undertake the task; but I would not willingly take the charge of Madame de Montespan's children; the king must therefore give me orders; this is my last word." Madame de Montespan had not two children until 1672, the duke de Maine, and the count de Vexin. Hence it is evident that the dates of Madame de Maintenon's letters in 1670, in which she speaks of those two children, one of whom was not yet born, must necessarily be false. Almost all the dates of these printed letters are equally erroneous. This inaccuracy would give one reason to suspect the authenticity of these letters, did we not discover in them such strong marks of truth and ingenuity as it is almost impossible to counterfeit.

It is a matter of no great consequence to know in what particular year this lady undertook the care of the natural children of Louis XIV., but the attention given to these minute circumstances may serve to show with what scrupulous exactness we have related the principal events in this history.

The duke de Maine was born with a deformed foot. The first physician, d'Aquin, who was in the secret, advised sending him to the waters of Barèges. Strict search was made for a person of integrity who might be intrusted with this precious charge. The king mentioned Madame Scarron. M. de Louvois went privately to Paris to make the proposal to her. From that time she had the care of the duke de Maine's education, being appointed to that employment by the king, and not by Madame de Montespan, as has been reported. She immediately wrote to the king, who was greatly charmed with her letters. Such was the beginning of her good fortune; her merit completed the rest.

The king, who at first could not endure her company, passed by degrees from aversion to confidence, and from confidence to love. His letters, which still remain, are a much more precious treasure than is commonly imagined: they discover the mixture of religion and gallantry, of dignity and weakness, which is so frequently to be found in the human mind, and which filled the soul of Louis XIV. The mind of Madame de Maintenon seems, at once, to be inspired with a true ambition, and a true devotion. Her confessor, Gobelin, approves equally of both: he is alike a director and a courtier. His penitent, though guilty of ingratitude to Madame de Montespan, still continues to dissemble her crime. The confessor encourages the illusion; and she calls in religion to the assistance of her superannuated charms, in order to supplant her benefactress, who has now become her rival.

This strange mixture of love and scruples on the part of the king, and of ambition and devotion on the part of the new mistress, seems to have continued from 1680 till 1686, which was the era of their marriage.

Her elevation was only a retreat. Shut up in her apartment, which was on the same floor with that of the king, she confined herself to the company of two or three ladies, who had retired like herself; and even these she saw but seldom. The king went to her chamber every day after dinner, and before and after supper, and tarried with her until midnight. He there deliberated with his ministers; while Madame de Maintenon employed herself in reading, or in needlework; never displaying the least forwardness to talk of state affairs; frequently seeming to be ignorant of them; carefully avoiding everything that might have the least appearance of cabal or intrigue; more desirous of pleasing him that governed, than of governing herself; and husbanding her interest with the greatest economy, by never employing it without extreme circumspection. She did not avail herself of her place, to make all the dignities and great employments fall into her family. Her brother, the count d'Aubigné, though an old lieutenant-general, was not even a marshal of France. A blue ribbon, and some appropriation in the farms of the public revenues, were his only fortune: hence it was said to Marshal de Vivonne, brother of Madame de Montespan, that he had received his marshal's staff in ready money.

The marquis de Villette, her nephew, or her cousin, was only a commodore. Madame de Cailus, daughter of the marquis de Villette, had but a very small portion given her in marriage by Louis XIV. Madame de Maintenon, when she married her niece, d'Aubigné, to the son of the first marshal de Noailles, gave her but two hundred thousand livres; the king made up the rest. She endeavored to make the public excuse her elevation, in favor of her disinterestedness. The wife of the marquis de Villette, who was afterward Lady Bolingbroke, could obtain nothing from her. I have frequently heard her say that she upbraided her cousin with the little service she did her family; and that she told her in a passion: "You obstinately persist to act up to your moderate plan, and your family must be the victim of your moderation." Madame de Maintenon forgot everything, when she was in the least apprehensive of offending Louis XIV. She had not even the courage to support Cardinal de Noailles against Father Letellier. She had a great friendship for Racine; but that friendship was not strong enough to protect him against a slight resentment of the king. One day, being deeply affected with the eloquence with which he represented the calamities of

the people in 1698, calamities which are always exaggerated, but which have since been carried to a deplorable pitch, she prevailed upon her friend to draw up a memorial, pointing out the evil and the remedy. The king, having read it, and shown himself dissatisfied with the contents, she had the weakness to name the author, and to promise not to defend him. Racine, still weaker, if possible, than she, was seized with excessive grief, which brought him to the grave.

The disposition which rendered her incapable of doing a service made her likewise incapable of doing an injury. Abbé de Choisy relates that the minister Louvois fell on his knees before Louis XIV. in order to dissuade him from marrying the widow Scarron. If Abbé de Choisy knew this fact, Madame de Maintenon was not ignorant of it; and yet she not only forgave that minister, but she even appeased the first transports of passion into which the blunt behavior of the marquis de Louvois sometimes threw his master.

Hence it appears, that Louis XIV. in marrying Madame de Maintenon, only gave himself an agreeable, submissive companion. The only public distinction that discovered her private elevation was, that at mass she occupied one of those little pulpits, or gilded canopies, which seemed to be made for the king and queen. The devotion with which she had inspired the king, and which had contributed to facilitate her marriage, became by degrees a real and deep sense of religion, which was greatly strengthened by age and weariness. She had already acquired, both with the king and the court, the character of a foundress, by assembling at Noisi a number of young ladies of quality; and the king had appropriated the revenues of the abbey of St. Denis to this rising community. St. Cyr was built at the end of the park of Versailles in 1686. She gave this settlement a complete form, composed the regulations of it with Godet Desmarets, bishop of Chartres, and was herself the superior of the convent. She frequently went thither to pass a few hours; and when I say that melancholy determined her to follow these amusements, I only repeat her own words. Read what she wrote to Madame de la Maisonfort, of whom mention is made in the chapter on "Quietism."

"Why cannot I give you my experience? Why cannot I make you sensible of the melancholy that devours the Great, and of the difficulty they have to dispose of their time? Do you not see that I die of lowness of spirits, though possessed of a more splendid fortune than ever I could have hoped to obtain? I have been young and handsome; I have tasted pleasures; I have been universally beloved. In a more advanced age, I have passed some years in the participation of intellectual pleasures; I am now arrived at the summit of fortune; and I assure you, my dear, that every condition leaves a horrid void in the soul."

Could anything undeceive men with regard to the pleasures of an exalted station, this letter certainly would do it. Madame de Maintenon, who had no other cause of uneasiness than the uniformity of her life in the company of a great king, said one day to the count d'Aubigné, her brother, "I can bear it no longer, I wish I were dead." The answer which her brother gave her is well known: "You have then got a promise," said he, "of being married to the Almighty."

Upon the king's death, she retired wholly to St. Cyr. What is surprising is that the king left her no fixed salary. He recommended her to the duke of Orleans. She desired only a pension of eighty thousand livres. This annuity was regularly paid till her death, April 15, 1719. The author of her epitaph has affected too much to forget the name of Scarron; this name is not a disgrace, and the omission of it serves only to make one think that it is so.

The court became less gay and more serious, from the time that the king began to lead a retired life with Madame de Maintenon; and the severe fit of sickness he had in 1686 contributed still more to destroy his taste for those splendid feasts which he had hitherto celebrated almost every year. He was seized with a fistula in ano. The art of surgery, which under this reign had made greater progress in France than in all the rest of Europe, was not yet sufficiently acquainted with this condition. Cardinal de Richelieu had died of it, for want of proper treatment. The king's danger alarmed the whole nation. The churches were filled with crowds of people, who, with tears in their eyes, implored the recovery of their sovereign. This expression of universal pity and lamentation was somewhat akin to that which happened in the present age, when his successor's life was in danger at Metz in 1744. These two epochs will serve as perpetual monuments to remind kings of what they owe to a people who love them with such a warmth of affection.

As soon as Louis XIV. felt the first attacks of his disease, his chief surgeon, Felix, went to the hospitals to search for such patients as were in the same condition. He consulted the best surgeons; and, in conjunction with them, he invented some new instruments which abridged the operation, and rendered it less painful. The king suffered the operation without complaining: he caused his ministers to hold a council at his bedside the very same day; and that the news of his danger might occasion no change of measures in the courts of Europe, he gave audience to the foreign ambassadors next day. To this fortitude of mind may be added the generosity with which he rewarded Felix, to whom he gave an estate which was then worth fifty thousand crowns.

After this the king went no more to the public shows. The dauphiness of Bavaria, being seized with a deep melancholy, and oppressed with a lowness of spirits, which brought her to the grave in 1690, refused to join in any party of pleasure, and obstinately persisted in immuring herself in her chamber. She was fond of learning; she had composed some verses; but in her melancholy she was fond of nothing but solitude.

It was the convent of St. Cyr that revived the taste for the Polite arts. Madame de Maintenon entreated Racine, who had renounced the theatre for the court and Jansenism, to write a tragedy that might be acted by her pupils; and she desired the subject might be taken from the Bible. Racine composed "*Esther.*" This play, having been first represented in the convent of St. Cyr, was afterward acted several times at Versailles before the king in the winter of 1689. The prelates and Jesuits were eager to obtain permission to see this remarkable play.

It is somewhat surprising that this play was, at this time, universally approved; and that, two years after "*Athalie,*" which was acted by the same persons, was as universally condemned. The case was quite the reverse when they were played at Paris, long after the author's death, and when all party distinctions were utterly abolished. "*Athalie*" was presented in 1717, and was received, as it deserved, with great applause; and "*Esther,*" which was presented in 1721, excited no other feeling in the breasts of the spectators than languor and weariness, and never appeared more. But there were now no courtiers so complaisant as to recognize Esther in Madame de Maintenon, and so malicious as to discover Vashti in Madame de Montespan, Haman in M. de Louvois, and especially the Huguenots, who were persecuted by that minister, in the proscription of the Jews. The impartial public could discover nothing in that piece but a plot without probability, and incapable of interesting the affections; and a frantic king, who had lived six months with his wife without knowing who she was, and who having, without the least pretext, given orders for butchering a whole nation, afterward caused his favorite to be hanged with as little reason. But, notwithstanding the imperfection of the plot, thirty lines of "*Esther*" are of more value than many tragedies which have met with great success. These ingenious amusements were revived in order to forward the education of Adelaide of Savoy, duchess of Burgundy, who was brought to France at eleven years of age.

It is one of the many contradictions in our manners, that theatrical exhibitions should be branded with a mark of infamy, and yet be considered as an amusement the most noble and most worthy of persons of royal birth. A little theatre was built in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon, on which the duchess of Burgundy and the duke of Orleans played with such persons of the court as were most remarkable for their wit and abilities. The famous actor, Baron, gave them lessons, and played with them. Most of the tragedies of Duché, valet de chambre to the king, were composed for this theatre; and Abbé Genêt, almoner to the duchess of Orleans, wrote some plays for the duchess of Maine, which that princess and her court represented.

These amusements formed the taste of and enlivened society. How could the marquis de la Fare say in his memoirs, that "after the death of the dauphiness, all was play, confusion, and impoliteness?" The courtiers frequently played in their excursions to Marly and Fontainebleau, but never in the apartment of Madame de Maintenon; and the court has always been considered as the standard of the most perfect politeness. The duchess of Orleans, then duchess of Chartres, the duchess of Maine, the princess of Conti, and Madame the duchess disproved by their conduct what the marquis de la Fare asserts. This man, in the social intercourses of life, discovered the greatest sweetness of temper, and yet his writings may almost be considered as a satire. He was dissatisfied with the government: he passed his time in a society of men who made a merit of condemning the court; and this society converted a man of a most amiable disposition into a historian who is sometimes unjust.

But neither he, nor any of those who have censured Louis XIV. with so much severity, can deny that till the battle of Höchstädt, he was the most powerful, the most magnificent, and the greatest man in the world: for though there have been heroes, such as John Sobieski and the kings of Sweden, who have eclipsed him as a warrior, no one has ever been able to eclipse him as a monarch. It must also be owned that he

supported and repaired his losses. He had failings; he committed faults; but would those who condemn him have been able to equal him had they been in his place?

The duchess of Burgundy improved daily in beauty and merit. The praises bestowed upon her sister in Spain inspired her with an emulation, which redoubled her talent of pleasing. She was not a perfect beauty; but she had a countenance like that of her son, an air of grandeur, and a majestic stature. These advantages were greatly embellished by her wit, and still more by her extreme desire of meriting the praises of all the world. She was, like Henrietta of England, the idol and the pattern of the court, and possessed of a still higher rank, as she was on the point of ascending the throne. France expected from the duke of Burgundy such a government as the sages of antiquity have figured to themselves, but whose austerity would be softened by the virtues and accomplishments of this princess, which were of a nature to be more sensibly felt than the philosophy of her husband. Everybody knows how these hopes were frustrated. It was the fate of Louis XIV. to see all his family in France die premature deaths; his wife in the forty-fifth year of her age; his son in the fiftieth; and in a year after he had lost his son, he saw his grandson, the dauphin, his wife, and their eldest son, the duke of Brittany carried to St. Denis in the same funeral car, in April, 1712; while the youngest of their children, who afterward mounted the throne, was in his cradle at the point of death. The duke of Berry, brother of the duke of Burgundy, followed them two years after; and at the same time his daughter was carried from her cradle to her grave.

These lamentable losses made such a deep impression on the minds of men, that I have seen several persons in the minority of Louis XV. who could not mention them without tears: but amidst so many untimely deaths, the fate of him who seemed likely to fill the throne in a short time was most to be lamented.

The same suspicions which prevailed at the death of Madame, and at that of Maria Louisa, queen of Spain, were now revived with double fury. The excess of the public grief might almost have excused the calumny, could anything have excused it. It was unreasonable to suppose that anyone would have taken off, by a violent death, so many royal persons, and yet have left alive the only one that could avenge them. The disease of which the dauphin of Burgundy and his wife and son died was an epidemic purple fever. This distemper destroyed more than five hundred persons in Paris in the space of a month. The duke of Bourbon, grandson of the prince of Condé, the duke de la Trimouille, Madame de la Vallière, and Madame de Listenai, were seized with it at court. The marquis de Gondrin, son of the duke of Antin, died of it in two days. His wife, afterward countess of Toulouse, was at the point of death. This disease overran all France. In Lorraine it carried off the eldest son and daughter of Francis, that duke of Lorraine who was destined by heaven to be one day emperor, and to raise the house of Austria from its state of depression.

Meanwhile it was sufficient that a physician called Bouden, a debauched, forward, and ignorant fellow, used the following expression: “We do not understand such diseases.” This, I say, was sufficient to make calumny rage without control.

The prince had a laboratory, and studied chemistry, as well as several other arts; this was an unanswerable proof. The clamor of the public was so terrible that one must have been a witness of it in order to believe it. Several pamphlets, and some wretched histories of Louis XIV. would eternize these suspicions, did not men who have had better opportunities of information take pains to destroy them. I will venture to say that, as I have long been sensible of the injustice of mankind, I have made several inquiries to arrive at the truth; and the following account has been frequently repeated to me by the marquis de Canillac, one of the most worthy men in the nation, and intimately connected with the suspected prince, of whom he had afterward just reason to complain. The marquis de Canillac, amidst all this public clamor, went to visit him in his palace. He found him stretched at full length on the ground, bathed in tears, and frantic with despair. His chemist, Homberg, ran to the Bastille, to surrender himself a prisoner; but no orders had been given to receive him, and accordingly he was not admitted. The prince himself—who would believe it!—in the excess of his grief, desired to be taken into custody, and to have an opportunity of clearing his innocence by a formal trial; and his mother joined him in demanding this cruel satisfaction. The *lettre de cachet* was made out, but was not signed; and the marquis alone, amidst this general ferment, preserved so much presence of mind as to perceive the dangerous consequences of such a desperate measure. He prevailed upon the prince's mother to oppose this ignominious *lettre de cachet.* The monarch who granted it, and the prince who demanded it, were equally unhappy.

[Back to Table of Contents]

NOTES TO CHAPTER XXV.

Montespan.—The memoirs published under the name of Madame de Maintenon relate that she said to Madame de Montespan, in speaking of her dreams: "I dreamed that we were on the grand staircase of Versailles; I was ascending, you were descending; I mounted to the clouds, you went to Fontevraut." This story is borrowed from the famous duke d'Épernon, who met Cardinal Richelieu on the staircase of the Louvre in 1624. The cardinal asked him: "What news?" "None," said he, "except that you are going up, and I am coming down." But the beauty of the allusion is destroyed by adding that from a staircase one could mount to the clouds. It is to be remarked that in most books of anecdotes, in the era, the authors always ascribe to their speakers things that have been said a century, or even several centuries before.

Montchevreuil.—And not the chevalier de Fourbin, as the "Memoirs" of Choisy assert. None are intrusted with such a secret but faithful domestics and people attached by their place to the person of their master. There was no formal act of celebration: that is only employed to prove the reality of the wedding; but the present marriage was a marriage of conscience. How could anyone have the impudence to report, that after the death of Harlay, archbishop of Paris, which happened in 1695, almost ten years after the marriage, his lackeys found the form of the marriage ceremony in his old breeches? This story, which is even too mean for lackeys, is only to be found in the "Memoirs" of Maintenon.

Maintenon.—It is said, in the pretended "Memoirs" of Maintenon (tom. i, page 216) that for a long time she lay in the same bed with the celebrated Ninon l'Enclos, according to the hearsay reports of the abbé de Châteauneuf, and of the author of the "Age of Louis XIV." But there is not a syllable of such an anecdote to be found in the author of the "Age of Louis XIV." nor in the remaining works of the abbé de Châteauneuf. The author of Maintenon's "Memoirs" quotes only at random. This circumstance is mentioned nowhere, except in the "Memoirs" of the marquis de la Fare, page 190, Amsterdam edition. It was a custom, it is true, for people to share their beds with their friends; and this custom, which is now extinct, was very ancient, even at court. We find, in the "History of France," that Charles IX., in order to save the count de Brissac from the massacre of St. Bartholomew, advised him to sleep at the Louvre in his bed; and that the duke of Guise and the prince of Condé lay together for a long time.

Maintenon.—Who would imagine, that, in the "Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon" (iii, page 237), it should be said that this minister was afraid of being poisoned by the king. Strange that in Paris we should publish horrid falsehoods at the end of so many ridiculous fables.

This stupid and shocking story is founded on a common report, which was spread abroad after the death of the marquis de Louvois. This minister was using the waters, which Seron, his physician, had prescribed for him, and which la Ligerie, his surgeon, made him drink. This is the same Ligerie who gave the public the remedy which is

now called the Poudre des Chartreux. This la Ligerie has frequently told me that he apprised M. de Louvois of the great risk he ran by laboring while he drank the waters. The minister, however, continued to attend to business as usual. He died suddenly on July 16, 1691, and not in 1692, as the author of these false memoirs asserts. La Ligerie opened his body and found no other cause of his death than what he had foretold. Some people suspected that Seron had poisoned a bottle of these waters. We have seen how common these injurious suspicions then were. It was pretended that a neighboring gentleman, whom Louvois had greatly provoked and abused, bribed Seron. Some of these anecdotes are to be found in the "Memoirs of the Marquis de Fare," page 249. The family of the marquis de Louvois did even imprison a native of Lavay, who was a menial servant in the house; but this poor man, who was perfectly innocent, was soon released. But if people suspected, though very unreasonably, that a prince, who was an enemy to France, endeavored to take away the life of a minister of Louis XIV., this surely could never be a reason for suspecting Louis himself of the same crime.

The same author, who, in the "Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon," has collected such a heap of falsehoods, alleges, in the same place, that the king said that he had got rid in one year of three men whom he could not endure; the marshal de la Feuillade, the marquis de Seignelay, and the marquis de Louvois. In the first place, M. de Seignelay did not die in 1691, but in 1690. In the second place, to whom did Louis XIV., who always spoke with great circumspection and like a gentleman; to whom did he address these imprudent and hateful words? To whom did he discover such a cruel and ungrateful heart? To whom could he say that he was glad that he had got rid of three men who had served him with so much zeal and fidelity? Is it lawful thus to blacken, without the least proof, without the least appearance of probability, the memory of a king, who was always known to speak with great prudence? Every sensible reader beholds with contempt and indignation this collection of lies, with which the public is surfeited.

Maintenon—The author of the "Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon" (tom. iv) in a chapter entitled "Mademoiselle Choin." says that the dauphin was in love with one of his own sisters, and that he afterward married Mademoiselle Choin. These popular reports are known to be false by every sensible man. One should not only be a contemporary, but should be furnished with proofs before he ventures to advance such anecdotes as these. There never was the least evidence of the dauphin's having married Mademoiselle Choin. To revive, after the expiration of sixty years, these common reports, so vague, so improbable, and so generally condemned, is not to write history; it is to compile at random the most scandalous falsehoods, in order to gain money. Upon what foundation has this writer the impudence to advance, in page 244, that the duchess of Burgundy said to her husband: "If I were dead, would you compose the third volume of your family?" He makes Louis XIV. and all the princes and ministers talk as though he had heard them. There is scarcely a page in the memoirs that is not filled with such barefaced lies as justly to excite the indignation of every virtuous person.

Louis the Great.—If greatness of soul consists in a love of pageantry, an ostentation of fastidious pomp, a prodigality of expense, an affectation of munificence, an

insolence of ambition, and a haughty reserve of deportment, Louis certainly deserved the appellation of Great. Qualities which are really heroic we shall not find in the composition of his character.

Abbé Castel de St. Pierre, author of several strange performances, in which there are many things of a philosophical, but very few of a practical, nature, has left behind him some political annals, from 1658 till 1739, which are probably suppressed. He, in several places, condemns the administration of Louis XIV. with great severity; and will not, by any means, allow him the title of Louis the Great. If by Great he means perfect, this title to be sure does not belong to him; but from these memoirs written with the hand of that monarch, it appears that he had as good political principles at least as the abbé de St. Pierre.

Marquis de Canillac.—The author of the "Life of the Duke of Orleans" was the first that mentioned these cruel suspicions. He was a Jesuit of the name of La Motte, who preached at Rouen against this prince during his regency, and who afterward took refuge in Holland under the name of La Hode. He was acquainted with some public facts. He says (tom. i, p. 112) that the prince who was so unjustly suspected, offered to surrender himself a prisoner; and this is very true. La Motte had no opportunity of knowing how M. de Canillac opposed this step, which was so injurious to the prince's innocence. All the other anecdotes he relates are false. Reboulet, who copied his, says (tom. viii, p. 143) the youngest child of the duke and duchess of Burgundy was saved by the counter-poison of Venice. There is no counter-poison of Venice that is thus given at random. Physic knows no general antidotes that cure a disease, the cause of which is unknown. All the stories which were spread abroad in the world at that unhappy time are no more than a collection of popular errors.

It is a falsehood of little consequence in the compiler of the "Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon" to say that the duke of Maine was then at the point of death. It is a childish calumny to say that the author of "The Age of Louis XIV." rather confirms than destroys the credit of these stories.

Never was history disgraced with more absurd falsehoods than in these pretended memoirs. The author pretends to have written them in 1753. He supposes that the duke and duchess of Burgundy, and their eldest son, died of smallpox. He advances this falsehood to give himself an opportunity to speak of inoculation; an experiment that was not tried till May, 1756. Thus in the same page we find him speaking in 1753 of what happened in 1756; and he expresses himself thus: "This 24th of April, 1753, I was interrupted, an order came from the king to tear me from my family and myself." He then relates how he was thrown into prison; and accuses persons who never saw him of having informed the government against him. The same man, in the edition of "The Age of Louis XIV.," which he published at Frankfort in 1752, had attacked, in his notes, the memory of the duke of Orleans, on pp. 346 and 347, tom. ii of this spurious edition.

Learning has been infected with so many kinds of defamatory libels, and the Dutch have published so many false memoirs and injurious aspersions on the government

and the people that it is the duty of every faithful historian to caution the reader against the imposture.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXVI.

LAST YEARS OF LOUIS XIV.

Louis XIV. concealed his grief from the world, and appeared in public as usual: but in private the pain of so many misfortunes pierced him to the heart, and threw him into convulsions. He met with all these domestic losses toward the conclusion of an unsuccessful war, before he was sure of obtaining a peace, and at a time when famine laid waste the kingdom; and yet he was never seen to sink under his afflictions.

The remaining part of his life was unhappy. The disordered state of the finances, which he was unable to rectify, alienated the minds of the people. The unbounded confidence he placed in Father Letellier, a man of too violent passions, completed the disgust. It is remarkable that the public, who freely forgave him his love to his mistress, could never forgive him his attachment to his confessor. He lost, during the last three years of his life, in the minds of most of his subjects, all the respect and esteem he had gained by his great and memorable actions.

Deprived of almost all his children, his love which was now redoubled to the duke of Maine and the count of Toulouse, his illegitimate sons, caused him to declare them heirs to the crown, them and their descendants, in default of princes of the blood, by an edict that was registered without opposition in 1714. He thus tempered, by the law of nature, the severity of positive laws, which deprive children born out of marriage of all right of succeeding to their father's estate: but kings dispense with this law. He thought he might safely do for his own blood what he had done for several of his subjects. He imagined, particularly, that he might make the same establishment for two of his children, which he had caused to be made in parliament for the princes of the house of Lorraine. He afterward raised them to the same rank as princes of the blood, in 1715. The suit commenced by the princes of the blood against the legitimated princes is well known. The latter preserved for themselves and their children the honors conferred on them by Louis XIV., but the fate of their posterity must depend on time, on merit, and on fortune. Louis XIV. was seized about the middle of August, 1715, on his return from Marly, with the disease that brought him to the grave. His legs were swelled; a mortification began to appear. The earl of Stair, the English ambassador, laid a wager, according to the custom of his country, that the king would not outlive the month of September. The duke of Orleans, who in his journey to Marly had no attendants, had now the whole court about him. An empiric, in the last days of the king's illness, gave him an elixir which revived his spirits. He ate, and the empiric affirmed he would recover. The crowds which surrounded the duke of Orleans began to diminish apace. "If the king eats a second time," said the duke of Orleans, "I shall not have a single person in my leveé." But the disease was mortal. Measures were taken for giving the regency, with an absolute authority, to the duke of Orleans. The king by his will, which was deposited with the parliament, had left it to him under great limitations; or rather had only appointed him the head of a council of regency, in which he would have had only the casting vote: and yet he said

to him: “I have preserved to you all the rights to which you are entitled by your birth.” The reason was, that he did not believe there was a fundamental law in the kingdom which gives, during a minority, an absolute power to the presumptive heir of the crown. This supreme authority, which may be easily abused, is no doubt dangerous; but a divided authority is still more dangerous. He imagined that, having been so faithfully obeyed during his life, he would be equally so after his death, not remembering that the will of his father had been violated.

Everybody knows with what greatness of soul he beheld the approach of death. He said to Madame de Maintenon, “I imagined it was more difficult to die;” and to his servants, “Why do you weep? Did you think me immortal?” He gave orders about several things, and even about the funeral solemnity. Whoever has many witnesses of his death, always dies with courage. Louis XIII., in his last illness, set to music the psalm *De Profundis,* which was to be sung at his funeral. The fortitude of mind with which Louis XIV. beheld his end was divested of that glare of ostentation which covered the rest of his life. He had the courage even to acknowledge his errors. His successor has always kept under his pillow the remarkable words which that monarch spoke to him as he sat up in his bed and held him in his arms. These words are not such as have been represented in all former histories. The following is a faithful copy:

“You are soon to be the king of a great kingdom. What I would chiefly recommend to you is never to forget the obligation you are under to God. Remember that you are indebted to Him for all that you are. Endeavor to preserve peace with your neighbors. I have been too fond of war; in this do not follow my example any more than in my too expensive manner of living. Take counsel in everything. Endeavor to distinguish what is best, and always take care to pursue it. Relieve your subjects as much as you can, and do what I have been so unhappy as not to be able to do myself,” etc.

This speech contains nothing of that meanness of spirit which is ascribed to him in some memoirs. He has been reproached for carrying some relics about him during the latter years of his life. His sentiments of religion were noble and elevated; but his confessor, who was of a different character, had subjected him to some practices little consistent with these sentiments, and now disused, in order to subject him the more absolutely to his direction.

Though the life and death of Louis XIV. were certainly glorious, yet was he less lamented than he deserved. The love of novelty; the approach of a minority, in which everyone hoped to make a fortune; the dispute about the constitution, which then exasperated the minds of the people, all conspired to make the news of his death be received with something more than indifference. We beheld the same people, who, in 1686, had importuned heaven with tears and sighs for the recovery of their sick monarch, follow his funeral procession with demonstrations of a very different nature. It is pretended that the queen, his mother, said to him when he was very young: “My son, imitate your grandfather and not your father.” The king having asked the reason, she said: “Because, the people wept at the death of Henry IV. and laughed at that of Louis XIII.”

Notwithstanding that he has been reproached with littleness of mind in his zeal against the Jansenists, with too much haughtiness to foreigners in his prosperity, with too great indulgence to several women, and too great severity in personal concerns, with wars undertaken without sufficient reason, with the burning of the Palatinate, and the persecution of the Protestants, yet his great qualities and glorious actions being placed in the scale have at last more than counterpoised all his imperfections. Time, which rectifies the opinions of mankind, has stamped his reputation with the seal of immortality; and in spite of all that has been written against him, his name will never be mentioned without respect, or without reviving the idea of an age forever memorable. If we consider him in his private character, we shall find him indeed too full of his own greatness; but withal affable, refusing his mother a share in the administration, but performing to her all the duties of a son, and observing the strictest rules of decency and decorum in his behavior to his wife; a good father, a good master, always decent in public, laborious in the cabinet, exact in the management of his affairs, thinking justly, speaking fluently, and amiable with dignity.

I have elsewhere remarked that he never spoke the words which have been ascribed to him, when the first gentleman of the bedchamber and the grand master of the wardrobe were disputing about the honor of serving him: “What does it signify which of my valets serves me?” Such a coarse expression could never be used by a man so polite and so considerate as Louis XIV., and agreed but ill with what he afterward said to one of these gentlemen when talking of his debts: “Why do you not speak to your friends?” Words of a very different meaning, and of great importance, being accompanied with a present of fifty thousand crowns.

Nor is it true, that he wrote to the duke de la Rochefoucauld: “I give you my compliments as your friend, with regard to the post of grand master of the wardrobe, which I give you as your king.” The historians have done him the honor of this letter, not remembering how very indelicate and even cruel it is to tell a man, whose master you are, that you are his master. This would be very proper were a sovereign writing to a rebellious subject; and Henry IV. might justly enough have said it to the duke of Mayenne before a reconciliation was effected. Rose, secretary of the closet, wrote the letter; but the king had too much good sense to send it. It was the same good sense that made him suppress the pompous inscriptions which Charpentier, of the French Academy, affixed to the paintings of Le Brun in the gallery of Versailles: “The Incredible Passage of the Rhine;” “The Marvellous Taking of Valenciennes,” etc. The king thought that “The Taking of Valenciennes,” and “The Passage of the Rhine,” were more expressive. Charpentier was in the right to adorn with inscriptions in our language the monuments of our country; flattery alone spoiled the execution.

Some smart answers, and witty expressions of this prince have been collected, which are reducible to a very small number. It is pretended that when he formed the design of abolishing Calvinism in France, he said: “My grandfather loved the Huguenots, and did not fear them; my father feared them, but did not love them; for my own part, I neither love nor fear them.”

Having given, in 1658, the place of first president of the Parliament of Paris to M. de Lamoignon, then master of requests, he said to him: “Had I known a worthier man, or a better subject, I would have chosen him.” He used much the same expression to Cardinal de Noailles, when he gave him the archbishopric of Paris. What constitutes the merit of these words is that they were true, and inspired a principle of virtue.

It is said that a foolish preacher having one day pointed him out at Versailles—a rashness that is not allowable toward a private man, and far less toward a king—Louis XIV. contented himself with saying to him: “Father, I like well enough to take my share of a sermon; but do not choose to be made the subject of it.” Whether he used this expression or not, it may serve as a lesson.

He always expressed himself with majesty and precision, studying in public to speak as well as to act like a sovereign. When the duke of Anjou was setting out on his journey to ascend the throne of Spain, he said to him, in order to mark the union which would for the future unite the two nations: “Remember there are now no Pyrenees.”

Nothing surely can set his character in a clearer light than the following memorial, written entirely with his own hand:

“Kings are frequently obliged to do many things contrary to their inclination, and which shock the natural humanity of their temper. They should take pleasure in doing favors, and they are often forced to punish, and even to ruin, those to whom they naturally wish well. The interest of the state should hold the first place. They must force their inclinations: they must act in every matter of importance, so as to have no cause to reproach themselves with the thought of having been able to do better: but some private interests prevented me from following this course, and engrossed that attention which I should have employed in promoting the grandeur, the happiness, and the power of the state. There are many circumstances that create uneasiness; there are some so intricate that it is difficult to unravel them. We have confused ideas; and while that is the case, we may remain long without coming to any determination; but the moment we have formed our resolution, and are convinced that it is the best, we should carry it into execution. It is to the observance of this maxim that I have frequently owed my success in several of my undertakings. The errors I have committed, and which have given me infinite pain, have been owing to complaisance, and to a too ready compliance with the advice of others. Nothing is so dangerous as weakness of every kind. To be able to command others we must raise ourselves above them; and after having heard the opinions of all parties, we must fix upon that which we judge to be best, without prejudice or partiality, always careful not to order or execute anything unworthy of ourselves, of the character we bear, or of the grandeur of the state. Princes who have good intentions, and some knowledge of their own

affairs, whether by experience, study, or intense application, find so many ways of discovering their natural disposition, that they should take particular care of themselves and of all around them. We should constantly be on our guard against ourselves, our inclinations, and our natural propensities. The employment of a king is grand, noble, and agreeable, especially when he finds himself able to perform his duty; but it is not exempted from pain, fatigue, and inquietude. Uncertainty sometimes occasions despair; when, therefore, he has employed a reasonable time in examining an affair, he should come to a determination, and pursue the course which he thinks most advisable.

"When he labors for the state, he labors for himself; the welfare of the one constitutes the glory of the other. When the former is great, happy, and powerful, he who is the cause of all these advantages is glorious, and consequently should, both on his own account and that of his subjects, enjoy a greater share of all that is most pleasant and agreeable in life. When he has committed an error, he should repair it as soon as possible, and should allow no consideration to hinder him, not even good nature itself.

"In 1671 there died a man who had the post of secretary of state, being charged with the department of foreign affairs. He was a man of capacity, but not without faults. He filled that important post with great ability.

"I was some time in considering to whom I should commit this weighty charge; and, after mature deliberation, I found that a man who had long served me in the character of an ambassador was most likely to fill it with success.

"I ordered him to return home: all the world approved of my choice, which is not always the case. On his return I put him in possession of the post. I knew him only by report, and by the commissions with which I had charged him, and which he had executed with great fidelity; but the employment I had now given him was too great and too extensive for his narrow capacity. I have not availed myself of all the advantages I might have obtained, and this has always been owing to my complaisance and good nature. At last I was obliged to order him to retire, because all that passed through his hands, lost that air of grandeur and importance which should ever attend the execution of the orders of a king of France. Had I been so wise as to have removed him sooner, I should have prevented many of the misfortunes which afterward befell me, and should have had no cause to reproach myself with allowing my indulgence to him to hurt the state. These particulars I have thought proper to mention, in order to confirm the truth of what I advanced above."

This precious and hitherto unknown monument will serve to convince posterity of the integrity of his heart, and the greatness of his soul. We may even say that he judges himself with too much severity; and that he has no cause to reproach himself with regard to M. de Pompone, since the great services and reputation of that minister determined the prince's choice, which was likewise confirmed by the general approbation of the public; and if he condemns himself for his choice of M. de Pompone, who at least had the happiness to serve during a glorious period, what should he say with regard to M. de Chamillard, whose ministry was so unfortunate and so universally condemned?

He had written several memoirs in this style, either with a view of keeping an account of his own conduct, or for the instruction of the dauphin, duke of Burgundy. These reflections succeeded the events: he would have attained nearer to perfection, to which his merit entitled him to aspire, had he been able to form to himself a philosophy superior to the politics and prejudices of the times—philosophy which, in the space of so many centuries, we have seen practised by so few sovereigns, and which kings are very excusable for not understanding, since it is understood by so few private men.

The following are a few of the many instructions which Louis XIV. gave to his grandson, Philip V., when he was setting out on his journey for Spain. He wrote them in haste, and with a negligence that shows the soul much better than a studied discourse. We behold in them the father and the king.

“Love the Spaniards, and all your subjects who are attached to your crown and person. Don’t prefer those that flatter you most; esteem such as, for the public good, will run the risk of displeasing you; these are your true friends.

“Promote the happiness of your subjects; and with this view never undertake a war until you are forced to it, and until you have fully weighed and examined the reasons for and against it in your council.

“Endeavor to lower your taxes; take care of the Indies, and of your fleets; give great attention to commerce, and live in a perfect union with France, nothing being so advantageous for both kingdoms as this union, which no power can resist.

“If you are obliged to make war, put yourself at the head of your army.

“Endeavor to re-establish your troops upon their former footing in all your dominions, and begin with those of Flanders.

“Never neglect business for pleasure; but form to yourself a kind of plan which will allow you proper times for amusements and diversions.

“Of these there are hardly any more innocent than hunting, and the pleasures of a country house, provided you are not too expensive in your decorations.

“Give great attention to business when anyone talks to you on that subject; hear much at first, without making any decision.

“When once you have acquired more knowledge, remember that it is your province to decide; but whatever experience you may have, be always sure to hear the opinions and reasonings of your council before you come to a decision.

“Exert your utmost sagacity and penetration, in order to find men of the greatest abilities, that so you may properly employ them.

“Take care that your viceroys and governors be always Spaniards.

"Treat everybody well; never say a disagreeable thing to anyone; but distinguish people of quality and merit.

"Show the grateful sense you have of the kindness of the late king, and all of those who have concurred in choosing you for his successor.

"Place great confidence in Cardinal Portocarrero, and let him know how much you are pleased with the conduct he has pursued.

"I think you ought to do something considerable for the ambassador who had the happiness to invite you into the kingdom, and to salute you first in the quality of a subject.

"Do not forget Bedmar, who is a man of merit, and is capable of serving you.

"Place an unreserved confidence in the duke d'Harcourt: he is a man of capacity and of honor, and will never give you any advice but what is for your interest.

"Keep all the French in order.

"Use your domestics well; but never admit them into too great a degree of familiarity, and far less of confidence. Employ them as long as they behave well; but send them back on the least fault they commit; and never support them against the Spaniards.

"Have no intercourse with the queen-dowager, but such as you cannot dispense with. See that she quits Madrid; but let her not go out of Spain. Wherever she is, observe her conduct, and never allow her to interfere in any affairs of state. Suspect the fidelity of those who have too much intercourse with her.

"Always love your relatives; remember the pain it cost them to part with you: preserve a constant intercourse with them, as well in small as in great things. Ask from us freely whatever you either want or desire to have, that is not to be found in your own country, and we will use the same freedom with you.

"Never forget that you are a Frenchman, nor what may possibly befall you. When you have secured the succession of Spain by children, visit your kingdoms, go to Naples and Sicily, pass over to Milan, and come to Flanders. This will give you an opportunity of paying us a visit. Meanwhile visit Catalonia, Aragon, and other places. See what improvements may be made at Ceuta.

"Throw some money to the people when you are in Spain, and especially when you enter Madrid.

"Don't seem to be shocked at the strange figures you may see. Ridicule nothing; every country has its particular manners; and you will soon be familiarized to what at first may appear most surprising.

"Avoid, as much as possible, the granting of favors to those who give you money in order to obtain them. Give with discretion and liberality; and never receive any

presents, unless they be trifles. If it should sometimes happen that you are obliged to receive them, be always sure, in a few days after, to return greater presents to those who gave them.

"Have a strong box, in which you may deposit anything particular, and keep the key of it yourself.

"I shall conclude with one of the most important advices I can give you. Do not suffer yourself to be governed. Be master yourself. Have no favorite, nor prime minister. Hear and consult your council; but decide yourself. And God, who has made you king, will give you such degrees of light and knowledge as are necessary for you, in proportion to the rectitude of your intentions."

Louis XIV. was more remarkable for a just and noble manner of thinking than for brilliant sallies of wit. Besides, we do not expect that a king should say memorable things, but that he should do them. What is necessary for every man in power is that he should never suffer anyone to leave his presence in a bad humor; but should render himself agreeable to all who approach him. We cannot always do generous actions; but we can always say obliging things. Louis had acquired this excellent habit. Between him and his court there was a perpetual interchange of all the graces that majesty could show without being degraded; and all the arts which eagerness to serve, and solicitude to please, could show without abasement. In the company of the ladies especially, he displayed a politeness and complaisance which increased that of his courtiers; and with the men he never missed an opportunity of saying such things as flattered their self-love, at the same time that they excited their emulation, and left a deep impression on the mind.

One day the duchess of Burgundy, when she was very young, observing an officer at supper, who was remarkably disagreeable, began to jest on his ugliness with great freedom, and in a very high tone: "I think him, madam," said the king, in a still higher tone, "one of the handsomest men in my kingdom; for he is one of the bravest."

A general officer, a man of blunt address, and who had not polished his manners even in the court of Louis XIV., had lost an arm in an engagement, and was making his complaints to the king, who, however, had rewarded him as much as the loss of an arm could be recompensed: "I wish," said he, "I had lost my other arm likewise, that so I might never serve your majesty more." "I should have been extremely sorry for that," said the king, "both on your account and my own;" and immediately granted him a considerable favor. He was so far from saying disagreeable things, which in the mouth of a prince are deadly arrows, that he never indulged himself, even in the most innocent and harmless railleries, while private men daily use the most severe and cruel.

He frequently diverted himself, and even excelled in those ingenious things called impromptus, and agreeable songs; and he sometimes composed, extempore, little parodies on the songs most in vogue, such as this:

Chez mon cadet de frère,

Le chancelier Serrant
N'est pas trop nécessaire;
Et le sage Boifrant
Est celui qui sait plaire.
There's Phil, my younger brother,
With Chancellor Serrant
He seldom makes a pother;
He likes wise Boifrant
Much better than the other.

And this other, which he made one day in dismissing the council:

Le conseil à ses yeux a beau se présenter;
Sitôt qu'il voit sa chienne, il quitte tout pour elle:
Rien ne peut l'arrêter,
Quand la chasse l'appelle.
The council in vain at his elbow appears,
When his bitch comes across, from all business he'll fly;
Nought else he minds, or sees, or hears,
When once the hounds are in full cry.

These trifles serve at least to show, that the charms of wit composed one of the pleasures of his court; that he partook in these pleasures; and that he was as capable of living like a private man, as of acting the great monarch on the theatre of the world.

His letter to the archbishop of Rheims, concerning the marquis de Barbèsieux, though in a very careless style, does more honor to his heart than the most ingenious thoughts could have done to his head. He had given this youth the post of secretary of war, which had been formerly possessed by his father, the marquis de Louvois: but being soon dissatisfied with the conduct of his new secretary, he resolved to correct him, without giving him too great mortification. With this view he applied to his uncle, the archbishop of Rheims, and desired him to advise his nephew; and shows himself a master informed of everything, while he had all the tenderness of a father.

"I know," says he, "what I owe to the memory of M. de Louvois; but if your nephew does not alter his conduct, I shall be obliged to do what I shall be sorry for; but there will be a necessity for it. He has talents; but does not make a good use of them. He spends too much time in giving entertainments to the princes, instead of minding business: he neglects the public affairs for his pleasures. He makes the officers wait too long in his antechamber; he speaks to them with haughtiness, and even sometimes with rudeness."

This is all that I remember of this letter, which I once saw in the original. It plainly shows that Louis XIV. was not governed by his ministers, as has been reported; but that he knew how to govern them.

He was fond of praise; and it were to be wished the kings were more fond of it, so that they might endeavor to deserve it. But Louis XIV. did not always swallow it, when it

was too strong and excessive. When our academy, which always gave him an account of the subjects it proposed for prizes, showed him the following, “Which of all the virtues of the king deserves the preference?” the king blushed, and would not allow the subject to be treated of. He suffered, it is true, the prologues of Quinault; but it was in the height of his glory, and at a time when the intoxication of the people was some apology for his; Virgil and Horace, from a principle of gratitude, and Ovid, from the most contemptible meanness of spirit, loaded Augustus with praises far more extravagant, and, if we consider the proscriptions, much less deserved.

Had Corneille said to any of the courtiers in Cardinal de Richelieu’s chamber, “Tell the cardinal that I understand poetry better than he,” the minister would never have forgiven him; and yet this is the very thing that Despréaux said openly to his majesty, in a dispute that happened about some verses which the king thought good, and Despréaux condemned. “He is in the right,” said the king; “he understands the subject better than I do.”

The duke de Vendôme had in his retinue a person called Villiers, one of those men of pleasure who make a merit of talking with a cynical freedom. He lodged at Versailles in the duke’s apartment: he was commonly called Villiers Vendôme. This man openly condemned the taste of Louis XIV., in music, in painting, in architecture, in gardening, and in everything else. If the king planted a grove, furnished an apartment, or built a fountain, Villiers found it to be ill-contrived, and expressed his disapprobation in very indiscreet terms. “It is strange,” said the king, “that Villiers should have chosen my house to laugh at everything I do.” Having one day met him in the garden, “Well,” said he to him, showing him at the same time one of his new performances, “has not that the good fortune to please you?” “No.” said Villiers. “And yet,” replied the king, “there are several people who do not dislike it.” “That may be,” returned Villiers; “everyone has his own way of thinking.” The king replied, with a smile, “It is impossible to please all the world.”

One day Louis XIV. playing at tick-tack, had a doubtful throw. A dispute arose, and the courtiers remained in the most profound silence. At that instant the count de Gramont arrived. “Decide this question,” said the king to him. “Sire,” said the count, “your majesty is in the wrong.” “How,” replied the king, “can you accuse me of being in the wrong before you know what the question is?” “Because,” said the count, “had the matter been in the least doubtful, all these gentlemen would have given it for your majesty.”

The duke of Antin distinguished himself in this age by a singular art, not of saying flattering things, but of doing them. The king went to pass a night at Petitbourg, when he found fault with a long alley of trees, which concealed the view of the river. The duke caused them to be cut down in the night. Next morning the king was surprised at not seeing the trees with which he had found fault. “It is,” replied the duke, “because your majesty found fault with them, that you no longer behold them.”

We have elsewhere remarked, that the same man observing that a pretty large wood at the end of the canal of Fontainebleau displeased the king, at the minute when his majesty went to take a walk in it, everything being ready for the purpose, he ordered

the trees to be cut down, and in a moment they were levelled with the ground. These are the strokes of an ingenious courtier, and not of a flattering sycophant.

Louis XIV. has been accused of intolerable pride, for suffering the base of his statue in the Place des Victoires to be surrounded with slaves in fetters: but neither this statue, nor that in the Place de Vendôme was erected by him. The statue in the Place des Victoires is a monument of the greatness of soul of the first marshal de la Feuillade, and of his gratitude to his royal master. He expended on this statue five hundred thousand livres, amounting nearly to a million of our present money; and the city added as much more, to render the place regular. It seems equally unjust to impute to Louis XIV. the pride of this statue, and to find nothing but vanity and flattery in the magnanimity of the marshal.

Nothing was talked of but the four slaves; though they rather represent vices subdued than nations conquered, duelling abolished, and heresy destroyed; for so the inscriptions import. They likewise celebrate the junction of the sea, and the Peace of Nimeguen: they talk of nothing but benefits; and none of the slaves has the least resemblance to the people conquered by Louis XIV. Besides, it is an ancient practice among sculptors to place slaves at the feet of the statues of kings. It would be better, indeed, to represent there free and happy subjects. But, to conclude, we see slaves at the feet of the merciful Henry IV. and of Louis XIII. at Paris: we see them at Leghorn under the statue of Ferdinand de Medici, who never, sure, enslaved any nation; and we see them at Berlin under the statue of an elector, who repulsed the Swedes, but made no conquests.

The neighbors of France, and even the French themselves, have, with great injustice, made Louis XIV. answerable for this custom. The inscription, "*Viro immortali,*" "to the immortal man," has been accused of idolatry; as if that expression meant any more than the immortality of his glory. The inscription of Viviani, on his house at Florence, "*Ædes a Deo datœ,*" "the house given by God," would be still more idolatrous. It is no more, however, than an allusion to the surname, *Dieu-donne,* and to the verse of Virgil, "*Deus nobis hœc otia fecit.*"

With regard to the statue in the Place de Vendôme, it was erected by the city. The Latin inscriptions, on the four sides of its base, display a more gross kind of flattery than the statue in the Place des Victoires. We there read that Louis XIV. never took arms but with reluctance. To this adulation he solemnly gave the lie on his deathbed, by those words, which will be remembered longer than these inscriptions, unknown to him, and produced by the meanness of spirit of some men of letters.

The king had set apart the houses of this square for his public library. The place was too large: it had at first three sides, which were those of an immense palace. The walls were already built, when the calamities that happened in 1701 obliged the city to build private houses on the ruins of the palace, which was already begun. Thus the Louvre was never finished. Thus the fountain and the obelisk, which Colbert intended to raise opposite to the gate of Perrault, never appeared but in embryo. Thus the beautiful gate of St. Gervais remained in obscurity; and most of the monuments of Paris fill us only with sorrow.

The nation wished that Louis XIV. had preferred his Louvre and his capital to the palace of Versailles, which the duke de Créqui called a favorite without merit. Posterity admires, with the most grateful remembrance, the great and noble things he did for the public welfare; but our admiration is mixed with censure, when we behold all the magnificence and defects that Louis XIV. has introduced into his house in the country.

From all we have said it appears that Louis XIV. loved grandeur and glory in everything. A prince who should perform as great things as he, and yet be modest and humble, would be the first of kings, and Louis only the second.

If he repented, on his deathbed, of having undertaken war without just reason, it must be owned that he did not judge by events; for, of all his wars, the most just, and the most indispensable—that in 1701—was the only unfortunate one.

He had by his queen, besides the dauphin, two sons and three daughters, who died in their infancy. His amours were more successful. There were only two of his natural children that died in the cradle: eight of them were legitimated, and five of them had children. He had likewise, by a lady who lived much with Madame de Montespan, a daughter, whom he never acknowledged, and whom he married to a gentleman near Versailles, of the name of Le Queue.

Some people suspected, and not without reason, that a certain lady in the abbey of Moret was his daughter. She was very brown, and resembled him in other respects. The king, when he placed her in the convent, gave her a portion of twenty thousand crowns. The opinion she had of her birth gave her an air of pride, of which the superiors of the convent loudly complained. Madame de Maintenon, in a journey to Fontainebleau, went to the convent of Moret; and, willing to inspire this nun with more modest sentiments, endeavored to banish the idea that nourished her pride. “Madam,” said the nun, “the trouble which a lady of your rank takes to come on purpose to tell me that I am not the king’s daughter, fully convinces me that I am.”

This anecdote the nuns of Moret remember to this day.

Such a particularity of circumstances would be irksome to a philosopher; but curiosity, that weakness so incident to mankind, ceases almost to be a weakness, when it is employed about times and personages which attract the attention of posterity.

[Back to Table of Contents]

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVI.

Philip V. of Spain.—The king of Spain profited by these wholesome advices: he was a virtuous prince.

The author of the "Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon" (tom. v, p. 200) accuses him of having had "a scandalous supper with the princess of Ursino the day after the death of his first wife," and of having intended to marry that lady, whom he loads with the most bitter invectives. It must be observed that the princess of Ursino, who had been maid of honor to the deceased queen, was then in the sixtieth year of her age. These popular reports, which should be buried in oblivion, become calumnies that deserve the most severe punishment, when people have the impudence to print them, and endeavor to sully the most respectable names without the least proof.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXVII.

GOVERNMENT, COMMERCE, LAWS, MILITARY DISCIPLINE, UNDER LOUIS XIV.

This justice we owe to persons of a public character who have done good to the age they have lived in: that we should view the point from which they have set out, in order to form a just idea of the changes they have produced in their own country. Posterity is eternally indebted to them for the examples they have given, even though these are surpassed. This just glory is their only recompense. It is certain that the love of such glory animated Louis XIV.; when beginning to govern by himself, he had resolved to reform his kingdom, embellish his court, and perfect the arts.

He not only imposed it as a law upon himself, to labor regularly with each of his ministers, but every man that was but known might obtain a particular audience of him, and all citizens had the liberty of presenting their requests and projects; the petitions were received at first by a master of requests, who marked them on the margin, and they were afterward sent to the officers of the ministers. The projects were examined in council, when they deserved it, and their authors were admitted more than once to discuss the points they contained with the ministers, in presence of their master. Thus we see a correspondence subsisting between the throne and the nation, notwithstanding absolute power.

Louis XIV. accustomed himself to labor; and this was so much the more painful, as it was new to him, and the seduction of pleasures might easily distract him. He wrote the first despatches himself to his ambassadors. The most important letters were often afterward minuted with his own hand, and there was none written in his name which he did not cause to be read to him.

Scarcely had Colbert, after the fall of Fouquet, re-established order in the finances, before the king remitted to his people all the arrears due on the imposts from 1647 till 1656, and especially three millions of taille or excise. The enormous duties were abolished for five hundred thousand crowns a year. Thus Abbé de Choisy seems either to have been very ill informed, or to be guilty of very great injustice, when he says that the public receipt was not diminished; for it is certain that it was lessened by these indulgent remissions, and increased by good order.

The care of the first president, de Bellièvre, assisted by the liberalities of the duchess d'Aiguillon, and several citizens, had established the general hospital. The king augmented it, and caused similar edifices to be erected in all the principal towns of the kingdom.

The great roads, till that time impassable, were not neglected, and by degrees they have become what they are now, under the reign of Louis XV.—the admiration of foreigners. On whatever side you come out of Paris, you travel at present from fifty to

sixty leagues, and in some places of the neighborhood, through close alleys bordered with trees. The roads made by the ancient Romans were more durable indeed, but not so spacious nor so beautiful.

Colbert's genius turned chiefly toward commerce, which was but weakly cultivated, and its grand principles were not yet known. The English, and the Dutch still more, carried on in their own bottoms almost the whole traffic of France. The Dutch, especially, loaded with our merchandise in our ports, and distributed it all over Europe. The king began, from 1662, to exempt his subjects from an impost called the duty of freight, which all the vessels of foreigners paid; and he granted the French the indulgence of transporting their merchandise themselves at less expense. It was then that maritime commerce had its birth. The council for that department, which at present continues, was established, and in it the king presided every fifteenth day.

Dunkirk and Marseilles were declared free ports; and soon afterward this advantage drew the trade of the Levant to Marseilles, and that of the North to Dunkirk.

In 1664 was formed a West India Company, and that of the East Indies was established the same year. Before this time France paid tribute for her luxuries to the Dutch. The partisans of the ancient economy, who were timid, ignorant, and had contracted views, declaimed in vain against a commerce in which a continual exchange was made of money that would not perish for effects which do. They did not reflect that these merchandises of India, which were become necessary, would be more dearly paid for by foreigners. We carry indeed to the East Indies more kinds of goods than we bring from there, and by that means Europe is impoverished. But these come from Peru and Mexico; they are the price of our goods carried to Cadiz, and there remains more of this money in France than the East Indies absorb of it.

The king gave more than six millions of our present currency to the company. He invited rich people to embark in it. The queens, the princes, and all the court furnished two millions of the coin of that time. The superior courts gave twelve hundred thousand livres, the financiers two millions, the body of merchants six hundred and fifty thousand livres. So the whole nation seconded their king.

This company has always subsisted; for though the Dutch had taken Pondicherry in 1694, and the commerce of the Indies has languished ever since, it has recovered in our days new strength; Pondicherry has become a rival to Batavia: and this India company, founded with extreme difficulty by the great Colbert, and re-established in our days by singular revolutions, is now one of the greatest resources of the kingdom. The king also founded a Company of the North, in 1669; he invested funds in it, as he did in that of the Indies. It was then very plain that commerce is no disgrace to any, since the greatest houses interested themselves in these establishments, after the example of the monarch.

The West India Company was no less encouraged than the others. The king furnished the tenth part of all the funds.

He granted thirty francs per ton for exportation, and forty for importation. All those who had vessels built in the ports of the kingdom received five livres for each ton they contained.

Yet one cannot forbear being very much surprised that Abbé de Choisy has censured these establishments in his memoirs, which cannot be read without some mistrust. We are sensible in our days of all that Colbert did for the benefit of the kingdom; but at that time we were entirely ignorant of it; he worked for ungrateful people. They were much more disgusted with him in Paris for the suppression of certain rents on the town house, purchased at a cheap rate since 1656, and for the discredit into which the notes of the king's privy treasury fell, that were squandered under the preceding minister, than they were sensible of the general good which he did. In this affair were concerned more burgesses than good citizens. Few people had an eye to the public advantage. It is well known what a fascinating power interest has upon the eyes, and how it contracts the mind; I do not mean this only concerning the interest of a single trader, but that of a company, and even a town. The clownish answer of a merchant called Hazon—who upon being consulted by this minister, told him: "You have found the carriage overset on one side, and have overturned it on the other"—was still obsequiously quoted in my young days: and this anecdote is to be met with in Moréri. The philosophic spirit introduced very late into France, reformed the prejudices of the people, so as to make them at length do entire justice to the memory of this great man. He had the same exactness as the duke de Sully; but withal, he had views which were much more extensive. The one was acquainted only with economy, but the other knew how to form grand establishments.

Almost everything was either repaired or created in his time. The reduction of interest on the twentieth denier, on the loans given to the king and particular persons, was a sensible proof of an abundant circulation in 1665. His meaning was, both to enrich and to people France. Marriages in the country were encouraged by an exemption from the taille during the space of five years, for such as would settle themselves at the age of twenty; and every father of a family who had ten children was exempted all his lifetime, because he gave more to the state by the labor of these than he could possibly have done in paying the taille. This regulation ought to have continued forever, unrepealed.

From 1663 till 1672, each year of this ministry was distinguished by the establishment of some manufacture or other. The fine cloths, which before had been brought from England and Holland, were manufactured in Abbeville. The king advanced to the manufacturer, for each working loom, two thousand livres, besides considerable gratuities. In 1669 about forty-four thousand two hundred woollen looms were reckoned to be in the kingdom. The silk manufactures, when brought to perfection, produced a commerce of above fifty millions currency of that time; and the advantage drawn from these was not only very much above the prime cost of the silk necessary in their manufacture, but the cultivation of mulberry trees put the manufacturers into a condition of dispensing with foreign silk for the woof of their stuffs.

From the year 1666 they began to make as fine glasses as at Venice, which city had always before furnished the whole consumption throughout Europe; and they soon

made pieces of this kind, which, for largeness and beauty, could never be imitated in any other place. The carpets of Turkey and Persia were surpassed at Savonnières: the tapestry hangings from Flanders were inferior to those of the Gobelins; which vast enclosure was filled at that time with more than eight hundred workmen, and of these three hundred were lodged in it. The best painters had the direction of the work, either from their own designs, or those of the ancient masters of Italy. Besides the tapestry hangings, was made an admirable kind of mosaic, and the art of inlaying was carried to its highest perfection.

Besides this fine manufactory of tapestry in the Gobelins, another was set up at Beauvais. The first manufacturer had six hundred workmen in this town; and the king made him a present of sixty thousand livres.

Sixteen hundred young girls were employed in lace works, and thirty principal workwomen in this way were brought from Venice, and two hundred out of Flanders, who had thirty-six thousand livres given them for their encouragement.

The manufactory of the cloths of Sedan, and that of the tapestry hangings of Abusson, degenerated and fallen into decay, were re-established. The rich stuffs, in which silk is mixed with gold and silver, were woven at Lyons and Tours, with an industry which had not been seen before.

It is a thing well known, that the ministry purchased in England the secret of that ingenious machine by which stockings are made ten times faster than with needles. Tin plates, steel, fine delft ware, and Morocco leather, which was always brought from abroad, were made in France. But the Calvinists, who had the secret of making tin plates and steel, carried it away with them in 1686, and imparted this advantage, with several others, to foreign nations.

The king every year expended about four hundred thousand livres upon the different works of taste which were fabricated in his kingdom, of which he made presents.

Paris was then very different from what it is at present; for it wanted light, security, and cleanliness. It was necessary to make provision for the continual cleansing of the streets, for lighting of them, which is done by means of five thousand lamps burning every night, for paving the city quite through, building two new gates, and repairing the old ones, and causing a continual guard on foot and on horseback to keep watch for the security of the citizens. The king took the whole upon himself, allotting funds for these necessary expenses. In 1667 he created a magistrate solely for taking care of the police. The greater part of the large cities of Europe did not follow these examples till a long time after; and none have equalled them: so that no city is paved like Paris; and Rome itself is not lighted at all.

Everything began to have so great a tendency to perfection that the second lieutenant of police, which Paris had, acquired in that post a reputation which set him in the rank of those who have done honor to this age: such was the capacity of this man for everything. He was afterward in the ministry, and he had been a good general. The place of lieutenant of the police was below his birth and merit, yet it gained him a

much greater name than the inconsiderable post in the ministry which he obtained near the end of his days.

Here we should observe that M. d'Argenson was by no means the only person of the ancient nobility who had been in the public magistracy. France is almost the only country of Europe where the ancient nobility have often taken to the long robe. All other nations, merely from the remains of Gothic barbarism, are still ignorant that there is dignity in this profession.

The king still carried on the buildings at the Louvre, St.-Germain, and Versailles, from 1661. Private individuals, after his example, erected in Paris a thousand superb and commodious edifices. Of these the number was so increased that, after the building of the environs of the Palais Royal, and those of St.-Sulpice, there were formed in Paris two new towns, very much superior to the old one. It was at this time that they invented the magnificent convenience of coaches adorned with glasses and hung upon springs; so that a citizen of Paris could convey himself through this large city with more pomp than the first Romans displayed in their triumphal processions to the capitol. This custom was soon after received throughout Europe; and being now very common, it is no longer a piece of luxury.

1 Louis XIV. had a taste for architecture, gardening, and sculpture; and this showed itself in all these to be great and noble. From the time that Comptroller-General Colbert had, in 1664, the direction of the buildings, which is properly the office of the arts, he applied himself to second the schemes of his master. The first necessary work was to finish the Louvre. Francis Mansard, one of the greatest architects whom France had produced, was fixed upon to construct the vast edifices that were projected. He would not undertake this task unless he had liberty given him to rectify whatever should appear to him defective in the execution. This diffidence of himself, which had drawn a train of too much expense after it, was the reason for excluding him. The chevalier Bernini was therefore sent for from Rome, an artist whose name was famous on account of the colonnade which surrounds the portal of St. Peter's church, the equestrian statue of Constantine, and the Navonne fountain. Equipages were furnished him for his journey. He was conducted to Paris as a man who came to do honor to France. He received, besides five louis d'or a day, for the eight months that he staid there, a present of fifty thousand crowns, with a pension of two thousand more, and one of five hundred for his son. This generosity of Louis XIV. to Bernini was much greater than the munificence of Francis I. to Raphael. Bernini, by way of acknowledgment, made since that time in Rome the equestrain statue of the king, which is to be seen at Versailles. But when he came to Paris with so much parade, as the only person worthy of being employed by Louis XIV., he was very much surprised to see the design of the front of the Louvre on the side of St.-Germain l'Auxerrois, which soon after, when completed, became one of the most august monuments of architecture in the world. Claude Perrault had given this design, which was executed by Louis Levau and Dorbay. He invented the machines with which the stones of fifty-two feet in length were raised, that form the pediment of this majestic edifice. Sometimes there is fetched from afar what is to be met with at hand among ourselves. No palace of Rome has an entrance comparable to that of the Louvre, for which we are indebted to this Perrault,1 whom Boileau has attempted to render

ridiculous. Travellers allow that the most celebrated villas of Italy are not superior to the castle of Maisons, which Francis Mansard had built at so little expense. Bernini was magnificently recompensed, but did not deserve it; he only gave designs which were not executed.

The king, when the works at the Louvre were in progress, the completion of which was so much desired; when making a town at Versailles, near this palace, which has cost so many millions; when building Trianon and Marly, and ordering so many other edifices to be embellished, caused the observatory to be erected, which was begun in 1666, after the time that he established the Academy of Sciences. But the most glorious monument for its utility, grandeur, and the difficulties encountered in the execution was the canal of Languedoc, which joins the two seas, and falls into the port of Cette, constructed for the receiving of its waters. These works were begun in 1664, and continued without interruption till 1681. The founding of the Hôtel des Invalides, and the chapel of that structure, the finest in Paris, the establishment of St. Cyr, the last of so great a number of works constructed by this monarch, are alone sufficient to render his name revered. Four thousand soldiers, and a great number of officers, who find in one of these grand asylums comforts in their old age, and relief for their wounds and wants; two hundred and fifty daughters of noblemen, who receive an education worthy of them in the other, are so many voices that celebrate the praises of Louis XIV. The establishment of St. Cyr will be surpassed by that which Louis XV. has just formed for the education of five hundred gentlemen; but far from causing St. Cyr to be forgotten, it makes it to be remembered. This is the art of doing good, brought to perfection.

Louis XIV. was at the same time desirous to perform greater things, and those of more general utility, but more difficult in the execution; and that was to reform the laws. In this he employed the labors of the chancellor Séguier, de Lamoignon, Talon, Bignon, and more especially the chancellor of state, Pussort. He himself sometimes assisted at their assemblies. The year 1667 was at the same time the epoch of his first laws and first conquests. The civil ordinances appeared first; next the code of the waters and forests; then the statutes for all the manufactures; the criminal ordinances; the code of commerce, and that of the marine. All these followed nearly one year after another. There was also a new jurisprudence, established in favor of the negroes of our colonies, a sort of men who had not yet enjoyed the privileges of humanity.

A profound knowledge of the civil law is not to be acquired by a sovereign. But the king was acquainted with the principal laws; he possessed the spirit of them, and knew how, either to maintain or mitigate them properly. He often decided the causes of his subjects, not only in the council of the secretaries of state, but in that called the "*Conseil des Parties.*" There are two celebrated determinations of his, in which he decided against himself.

In the first, which was given in 1680, the case was in a process between him and certain inhabitants of Paris, who had built upon his ground. He decided that the houses should remain to them, with the land belonging to himself, and which he ceded to them.

The other related to a Persian merchant, called Roupli, whose goods had been seized by the commissaries of his farms, in 1687. His decision was, that all should be restored to him, and the king added a present of three thousand crowns. Roupli carried his admiration and gratitude with him into his own country; and when Mehemet Rizabeg was afterward in Paris we found him acquainted with this fact by common report.

The abolition of duels was one of the greatest services which he did to his country. These combats had been formerly authorized even by the parliament, and by the Church; and though they had been prohibited from the time of Henry IV., yet this fatal custom prevailed more than ever. The famous combat of the La Frettes, four against four, in 1663, was that which determined Louis XIV. not to pardon it any longer. His happy severity corrected by degrees our own nation, and even the neighboring nations, who conformed themselves to our wise customs, after having adopted our bad ones. There are in Europe now a hundred times fewer duels than in the time of Louis XIII.

He was the legislator both of his people, and of his armies. It was strange, that, before his time, uniforms among the troops was a thing not known. It was he, who in the first year of his administration, ordered that each regiment should be distinguished, either by the color of their clothes, or by different marks; a regulation which was adopted soon after by all nations. It was he also who instituted brigadiers, and put the corps of which the household troops of the king are formed upon the footing they are on at present. He formed a company of musketeers out of the guards of Cardinal Mazarin, and fixed at five hundred men, the number of the two companies, to which he gave the clothing they still retain.

Under him were made no constables, and after the death of the duke d'Épernon no colonels-general of the infantry; Marshal Gramont, who was only campmaster of the French guards, under the duke d'Épernon, and took orders from that colonel-general, for the future took them only from the king, and was the first who had the title of colonel of the guards. He himself installed these colonels at the heads of their regiments, by giving them, with his own hands, a gilt gorget and pike, and afterward a spontoon, or a kind of half pike, when the use of the former weapon was abolished. He instituted the grenadiers, at first to the number of four in each company of the king's regiment, which is of his own creation; afterward he formed a company of grenadiers in each regiment of foot; he gave two companies of them to the French guards, which at present have three. He very much augmented the corps of dragoons, and gave them a colonel-general. We must not forget the establishment of studs for breeding of horses, in 1667, which had been absolutely set aside before that time, and was afterward a great resource for remounting the cavalry.

The use of the bayonet at the end of the gun is an institution of the king's. Before his time it was used occasionally, and some companies only had this weapon; there was no uniform usage nor exercise with it: all was left to the general's discretion. The pike was looked upon as the most formidable weapon. The first regiment which had bayonets, and was trained to this exercise, was that of the fusiliers, established in 1671.

The manner in which the artillery is managed at present is entirely owing to him. He founded schools for this purpose at Douai, afterward at Metz and Strasburg; and the regiment of artillery was at length filled with officers, almost all capable of conducting a siege. All the magazines of the kingdom were stored, and every year furnished with eight hundred thousand weight of powder. He formed a regiment of bombardiers, and one of hussars, a kind of horsemen which, before his time, were known only among our enemies.

In 1688 he established thirty regiments of militia, furnished and equipped by the communities of the kingdom. These corps of militia exercised themselves in war without neglecting the cultivation of the lands.

Companies of cadets were entertained in most parts of the frontiers; there they learned mathematics, designing, and all the exercises, and did also the duty of soldiers. This institution lasted ten years. At length they were tired of these youths, as it was too difficult a matter to discipline them; but the corps of engineers, which the king formed, and to which he gave the regulations still followed by them, is an establishment that will last forever. Under him the art of fortification was carried to perfection by Marshal de Vauban[1] and his pupils, who surpased Count de Pagan. He constructed or repaired a hundred and fifty fortified places.

In order to maintain the military discipline, he created inspectors-general, afterward directors, who gave an account of the state of the troops; and from their reports it was seen whether or not the commissaries of war had done their duty.

He instituted the order of St. Louis, an honorable recompense, often courted more than fortune. The Hôtel des Invalides crowned the cares which he took for meriting to be well served.

It was owing to such cares as these, that, from 1672, he had a hundred and eighty thousand regular troops; and that by augmenting his forces in proportion as the number and power of his enemies increased, he had at length four hundred and fifty thousand men in arms, including the troops of the marine.

Before his time, no such strong armies had been seen. His enemies hardly opposed to him any of equal force; though there was a necessity for a close union among them. He showed what France alone could do; and he had always either great success or great resources.

He was the first, who, in time of peace, gave a perfect idea and complete lesson of war. In 1698 he assembled at Compiègne seventy thousand men, where he performed all the operations of a campaign; and this was in order to instruct his three grandsons. But this military academy became a school of luxury.

The attention which he showed in forming numerous and well-disciplined armies, even before he was engaged in any war, he likewise exerted in acquiring the empire of the sea. First, the few vessels which Cardinal Mazarin had suffered to rot in the harbors were repaired; some others were bought in Holland and Sweden; and after the

third year of his government he sent his maritime forces to make an attempt on the coast of Africa. The duke de Beaufort cleared the sea of pirates, in 1665, and two years after France had in its ports sixty ships of war.

This was only a beginning. But, while new regulations and new efforts were being made, he already felt all his force. He was unwilling to consent that his ships should strike their flag to that of England. The council of King Charles II. in vain insisted upon this right, which force, industry, and time had given to the English. Louis XIV. wrote to Count d'Estrades, his ambassador: "The king of England and his chancellor may see what my forces are; but they do not see my heart. I regard my honor more than all other things."

He said no more than what he was resolved to maintain; and, in fact, the usurpation of the English gave way to natural right, and the firmness of Louis XIV. Everything was equal between these two nations at sea. But, while he would have an equality kept up with England, he maintained his superiority over Spain. He obliged the Spanish admirals to strike to his flag in virtue of the solemn precedence agreed upon in 1662.

Pains, however, were used on all sides for the establishment of a marine capable of justifying those high sentiments. The town and port of Rochefort were built at the mouth of the Charente. Sailors were enrolled and ranked by classes, who were to serve at one time in merchant ships, and at another in the royal navy. And soon there were found to be sixty thousand of these actually registered.

Councils of construction were established in the ports, for giving vessels the most commodious form. Five marine arsenals were built: at Brest, Rochefort, Toulon, Dunkirk, and Havre-de-Grâce. In 1672 there were sixty ships of the line and forty frigates. In 1681, a hundred and eighty ships of war, including the tenders, and thirty galleys, were in the harbor of Toulon, either equipped or ready to be so. Eleven thousand regular troops served on board the ships; and the galleys had three thousand. There were a hundred and sixty-six thousand men registered by classes, for all the different services of the marine. The following years there were reckoned to be in the service a thousand gentlemen, doing the duty of soldiers on board the ships, and learning in the ports whatever might qualify them for the art of navigation, and the working of a ship; these were the marine guards; they were on sea what the cadets were on land; and were instituted in 1672, but in small numbers. This corps has been the school which has produced the best officers of the service of the navy.

There had not been yet marshals of France in the corps of the marine; and this shows how this essential part of the forces of France had been neglected. John d'Estrées was the first marshal, in 1681. It appears that one of the great objects of Louis XIV. was to inspire all ranks with that emulation without which everything languishes.

In all the naval fights in which the French fleets were engaged, the advantage was always on their side, till the battle of La Hogue, in 1692, when Count de Tourville, following the orders of the court, attacked with forty-four sail a fleet of ninety English and Dutch ships: there was no standing against numbers; fourteen capital ships, of the first rate, were lost; which, being run aground, were burned, lest they should fall into

the hands of the enemy. Notwithstanding this defeat, the maritime forces supported themselves; but they declined in the following war. They did not begin to be well re-established till 1751, during a happy peace, the only proper time for establishing a good marine, for the accomplishment of which there is neither leisure nor power while a war lasts.

These naval forces were of use to protect commerce. The colonies of Martinique, Santo Domingo, and Canada, before in a languishing condition, now flourished: not indeed to such a height of prosperity as we see them now arrived at, but with an advantage which till then had not been hoped for; for, from 1635 till 1665, these colonies had been a positive burden to the state.

In 1664 the king sent a colony to Cayenne, and soon after another to Madagascar. He tried all methods for repairing the loss and misfortune which France had suffered for a long time by neglecting the sea, while her neighbors had erected empires for themselves at the extremities of the earth.

From this general view, we see what changes Louis XIV. introduced into the state; changes indeed advantageous, as they still exist. His ministers had an emulation among themselves, who should second him best. The whole detail, the whole execution is undoubtedly owing to them, but the general disposition to him. It is certain that the magistrates would not have reformed the laws, the finances would not have been put again in order, discipline introduced into the armies, general police in the kingdom; that there would have been no fleets; the arts would not have been encouraged; and all this in concert, and at the same time, with perseverance, and under different ministers, if there had not been found a master who had in general all these grand views, with a will determined to accomplish them.

He did not separate his own glory from the advantage of France, nor look upon the kingdom with the same eye as a lord does upon his lands, from which he draws all he can, that he may live luxuriously. Every king who loves glory, loves the public good. He had no longer Colbert and Louvois when, in 1698, he ordered, with a view to the instruction of the duke of Burgundy, that each intendant should give a circumstantial description of his respective province; by which means an exact account might be obtained of the kingdom, and the true number of its inhabitants ascertained. The work was useful, though all the intendants had not the capacity and attention of M. Lamoignon de Bâville. Had the views of the king been so fully answered, with regard to each province, as they had been by this magistrate in the enumeration of the people of Languedoc, this collection of memoirs would have been one of the finest monuments of the age. Some of them are well done; but a plan was wanting by which all the intendants were to be subjected to the same order. It had been a thing much to be desired, that each had given in columns a state of the number of inhabitants in every province, also that of the nobles, citizens, laborers, artificers, works of art, the beasts of every sort, the good, middling, and bad lands, the whole clergy, regular and secular, their revenues, with those of the towns and companies.

All these objects are confounded in the greatest part of the memoirs which have been given; the matters in them are not canvassed thoroughly, and are done with little

exactness. You are often obliged to seek with pains for the necessary lights which a minister should find ready under his hand, and catch up by a single glance, that he may easily discover the several forces, wants, and resources contained therein. The project was excellent, and a uniform execution of it would have been of the greatest utility.

This then in general is what Louis XIV. did and attempted, that he might render his own nation more flourishing. It seems to me that one cannot behold all these labors and all these efforts without some acknowledgment, and being animated with the love of the public good, which inspired them. Let us but represent to ourselves what the state of the kingdom was in the days of The Fronde, and what it is at present. Louis XIV. did more good to his own nation than twenty of his predecessors put together, and yet it falls infinitely short of what might have been done. The war, which was ended by the Peace of Ryswick, began the ruin of that commerce which Colbert had established, and the succeeding war completed it.

Had he employed for the embellishing of Paris and the completion of the Louvre, those immense sums expended on the aqueducts, and the works of Maintenon for conveying water to Versailles, works indeed interrupted and useless; had he laid out in Paris the fifth part of what that cost, in order to force nature at Versailles, Paris would be throughout its whole extent as beautiful as it is on the side of the Tuileries and the Pont-royal, and would have been the most magnificent city in the world.

It is a great deal to have reformed the laws; but chicanery could not be crushed by justice. The government once thought of making jurisprudence uniform: it is so already in criminal affairs, in those of commerce, and the forms of process; it might be so likewise in the laws which regulate the fortunes of the subject. It is a great inconvenience, that the same tribunal has more than a hundred different customs to give decisions upon. The duties arising from lands, either equivocal, or burdensome to society, still continue, as the remains of the feudal government, which itself subsists no longer. These are the remains of a Gothic building, now no more.

It is not pretended these different orders of the state should be subjected to the same law, for one is very sensible that the usages of the noblesse, the clergy, the magistrates, and those who cultivate the earth should be different. But it is undoubtedly to be wished for, that each order should have its uniform law throughout the kingdom, that what is just and true in Champagne may not be considered false in Normandy. Uniformity in all sorts of administration is a virtue; but the difficulties of this great work have deterred people from attempting it.

Louis XIV. might have more easily dispensed with the dangerous resource of the farmers of the taxes, to which he was compelled by the constant anticipation of the receipt of his revenues, as may be seen in the chapter of the finances.

Had he not believed that he was sufficiently able, merely by his own authority, to oblige a million of men to change their religion, France had not lost so many subjects. This country, however, notwithstanding its various shocks and losses, is at present the most flourishing on the face of the earth, because all the good which Louis XIV. did is

still in existence, and the evil, which it was difficult for him to avoid in turbulent times, has been repaired. In fine, posterity, who pass judgment on kings, and whose judgment they should always have before their eyes, will admit on weighing the virtues and foibles of this monarch, that though he had been too much praised in his lifetime, he deserved to be so forever; and that he was worthy of the statue erected to him at Montpellier, with the inscription "To Louis the Great, after his death."

All the changes which we have just now seen pointed out in the government, and in all the orders of the state, must necessarily have produced a very considerable one in the manners of the people. The spirit of faction, fury, and rebellion, which possessed the nation from the time of Francis II., became a spirit of emulation for serving the prince. The lords, who possessed great estates, being no longer cantoned upon them; the governors of provinces having no more posts of honor to bestow, each individual studied to deserve no other favors than those of the sovereign; and the state became one regular whole, every line of which terminated in the centre.

This was what delivered the court from factions and conspiracies, which had always troubled the state during a course of so many years. Under the administration of Louis XIV. there was but one plot, in 1674, which was contrived by la Traumont, a gentleman of Normandy, ruined by debauchery and debt; he was joined by one of the house of Rohan, who, by like conduct, had been reduced to the same indigent circumstances. In this plot were concerned only the chevalier de Preaux, nephew of la Traumont, who, seduced by his uncle, also seduced his mistress, Madame de Villiers. Their aim and hopes neither were, nor could be, to form a party in the kingdom. They only intended to sell and deliver up Quillebeuf to the Dutch, and introduce the enemy into Normandy. This was a base treason ill planned rather than a conspiracy. The punishment of all the criminals was the only event which this mad and fruitless affair produced, of which there is hardly at present any remembrance left.

If there were any seditions in the provinces, these were only feeble tumults of the people, which were easily repressed. Even the Huguenots were always quiet, till their churches were demolished. At length the king succeeded so far as to make, out of a nation till then turbulent, a peaceable people, who were dangerous only to the enemy, after having been so to themselves for above a hundred years. Their manners were softened, without hurting their courage.

In the houses which the nobility built or bought in Paris, their ladies lived with dignity, and formed schools of politeness, which drew by degrees the young people from a life spent at the taverns, which had been the prevailing mode for a long time before, and only served to inspire those who frequented them with an insolent debauchery. Manners depend on such trifles, that the custom of riding on horseback in Paris kept up a disposition for quarrels, which ceased as soon as this usage was abolished. Decorum, for which we are principally obliged to the fair sex, who assembled company at their houses, rendered conversation more agreeable, and, by reading, came in time to be more solid. Treasons and great crimes, which do not disgrace mankind in times of faction and confusion, were hardly known any longer. The villainies of Brinvilliers and Voisin were only transitory storms, under a sky otherwise serene: and it would be equally unreasonable to condemn a whole nation on

account of the glaring crimes of some individuals, as to canonize it on account of the reformation of La Trappe.

All the different states of life were, in former times, easily known by the faults which characterized them. Those of a military turn, and the young people who designed themselves for the profession of arms, had a hasty vivacity; those belonging to the courts of justice, a stern, forbidding gravity; to which the custom of going always in a long robe, even to court, did not a little contribute. And it was the same case with regard to the universities, and to physicians. Merchants still wore little robes whenever they met together, and when they went to wait on the ministers; also the most considerable tradesmen were at that time persons of rustic manners. But the houses, the theatres, and the public walks, in which they began to meet together, in order to enjoy the pleasure of a social life, gradually rendered the exterior appearance of all these people nearly alike. One may see at this day, even in tradesmen's shops, that politeness has gained ground upon all ranks. The provinces have in time also felt the effects of these changes.

At length people no longer place luxury in anything but taste and convenience. The crowd of pages and servants in livery has disappeared, to make way for more freedom in the houses of the great; vain pomp and outward pride have been left to those nations, among whom the people still know no more than to show themselves in public, and who are ignorant of the art of living.

The extreme easiness introduced into the intercourse of the world, affability, simplicity, and the cultivation of the mind, have rendered Paris a city which, for the conveniences of life enjoyed there, probably very much surpasses Rome and Athens in the height of their splendor.

That great number of helps always ready, always open for the whole circle of the sciences, all the arts, particular tastes and wants, so many solid advantages uniting with such a number of agreeable things, joined to that openness peculiar to the inhabitants of Paris; all these together induce vast numbers of strangers to travel, or take up their residence in this social city. If some natives quit it, they are either such as being called elsewhere on account of their talents, are an honorable testimony to their country, or else the refuse of the nation, who try to make their advantage of the consideration it has acquired.

Complaints are made, that no longer is to be seen at court so much grandeur and dignity as formerly; the truth is that there are no petty tyrants, as in the days of The Fronde, under the reign of Louis XIII., and in the preceding ages. But true greatness is now to be met with in those crowds of nobility, who were formerly debased for so long a time by serving subjects grown too powerful. There are seen gentlemen, and also citizens, who would have thought themselves honored in former days to be the domestics of these lords, become now their equals, and very often their superiors in the military service: and the more this service prevails over titles, the more flourishing is any state.

The age of Louis XIV. has been compared to that of Augustus. Not that the power and personal events in both can be compared: for Rome and Augustus were ten times more considerable in the world than Louis XIV. and Paris. But we must call to mind that Athens was equal to the Roman Empire in all things which do not derive their value from force and power. We must further consider, that if there is nothing at present in the world like ancient Rome and Augustus, yet all Europe together is much superior to the whole Roman Empire. In the time of Augustus there was but one nation, and at this day there are several who are well regulated, warlike, and enlightened, who are possessed of arts to which the Greeks and Romans were utter strangers; and among these nations there are none which has been more illustrious for about an age past than that formed in some measure by Louis XIV.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FINANCE UNDER LOUIS XIV.

If we compare the administration of Colbert with all the preceding ones, posterity will be fond of this man, whose body the frantic populace after his death would have torn to pieces. The French certainly owe to him their industry and their commerce; and consequently that wealth, the sources of which are sometimes diminished in war, but are always opened again with an abundant flow in peace. Yet in 1702 people had still the ingratitude to throw the blame upon Colbert for the languor which began to be perceivable in the sinews of the state. A financier of Normandy published about that time an account of the revenues of France, in two small volumes, in which he pretended that everything was in a declining state from 1660. But so far from this being the case, it was quite the reverse. France had never been so flourishing as since the death of Cardinal Mazarin, down to the war of 1689; and even in that war, the body of the state, though beginning to be out of order, supported itself by means of the vigor which Colbert had diffused through all its members. The author of this detail pretended that, from 1660, the lands of the kingdom had diminished in value fifteen hundred millions. But nothing was more false, nor less probable. These captious arguments, however, persuaded such as would be persuaded to believe this ridiculous paradox.

It was easier in France than in any other country to decry the ministry of the finances in the minds of the people. This ministry is the most odious, because the imposts are always so; besides, there prevailed in general as much prejudice and ignorance in the finances, as there did in philosophy.

It was so long before people received better information, that even in our days we find in 1718, the parliament in a body telling the duke of Orleans that the intrinsic value of the silver mark is twenty-five livres; as if there was any other real intrinsic value than that of the weight and the fineness: and the duke of Orleans, with all his penetration in other respects, had not enough of it in this to remove that mistake of the parliament.

It is true, Colbert had not done all that he could, and still less than he would have done. Men were not then sufficiently enlightened; and in a great kingdom there are always great abuses. The arbitrary taille, the multiplicity of duties, the different customs of the provinces, which make one part of the inhabitants of France strangers and even enemies to the other; the little resemblance there is between the measures of one town and those of another; with twenty other maladies of the body politic, could not be remedied.

Colbert, in order to furnish at once the expense of the war, of buildings, and pleasures, was obliged to re-establish, in 1672, what at first he intended to have abolished forever; namely, imposts on places, rents, new offices, and the augmentation of

salaries: in short, that which supports the state for some time but involves it in debt for many years.

He was carried beyond his intended measures; for by all the instructions remaining of his, we see he was persuaded that the riches of a country consist only in the number of its inhabitants, the cultivation of the lands, the industry of the people, and commerce. We see, that the king, possessing very few domains, and being only the administrator of the goods of his subjects, cannot indeed be rich but by imposts easy to bear and equally assessed.

He feared so much to give up the state to the farmers of the king's revenue, that some time after the dissolution of the chamber of justice, which he had caused to be erected against them, he got an arret of council passed, which made it death for those who should advance money upon the new imposts. His meaning by this menacing arret, which was never printed, was to cure the avidity of undertakers. But soon after he was obliged to make use of them, without even revoking the arret: for the king was pressing, and it was necessary to find prompt means to satisfy him.

This invention, brought from Italy into France by Catherine de Medici, had so much corrupted the government, by the facility with which it procured supplies, that after having been suppressed in the glorious days of Henry IV., it appeared again throughout the reign of Louis XIII. and greatly infected the latter times of Louis XIV.

Six years after the death of Colbert, in 1689, France was precipitated into a war, which she was obliged to maintain against all Europe, without having any funds in reserve. The minister, Lepelletier, believed that it would be sufficient to diminish luxury. An ordinance was accordingly made, that all the movables of solid plate, which were to be seen at that time in considerable quantities in the houses of the great, and were a proof of opulence, should be carried to the mint. The king set the example: he parted with all those silver tables, branched chandeliers, grand canopy-couches of massive silver, and all the other movables, which were masterpieces, chased by the hand of Ballin, the greatest artist in his way, and all done from designs of Lebrun. They had cost ten millions, but produced only three. The wrought plate belonging to private persons yielded three millions more. The resource was inconsiderable.

In 1691 and 1692 the finances of the state appeared sensibly out of order. Those who attributed the diminution of the public revenue to the profusion of Louis XIV. on his buildings, the arts, and his pleasures were not aware that, on the contrary, the expenses which encourage industry, enrich a state. It is war that necessarily impoverishes the public treasury, unless the spoils of the vanquished can fill it again. Since the time of the ancient Romans, I know of no nation that has enriched itself by victories. Italy, in the sixteenth century, was rich only by commerce. Holland would not have existed long had she confined herself to the taking of the plate-fleet of the Spaniards, and were not the East Indies the support of her power. England has always impoverished herself by war, even in destroying the French fleets: and commerce alone has maintained her. The Algerines, who have hardly any more than what they gain by piracy, are most miserably poor.

Among the nations of Europe, war, at the end of some years, renders the conqueror nearly as unhappy as the conquered. It is a gulf in which all the streams of abundance are absorbed. Ready money, that principle of all good and of all evil, raised with such difficulty in the provinces, terminates in the coffers of a hundred stock-jobbers and farmers of the revenue, who advance the sums wanting by the state, and who buy, by virtue of these advances, the right of pillaging the nation in the name of the sovereign. The people, in consequence of this, looking on the government as their enemy, conceal their wealth; and the want of circulation brings a languor on the kingdom.

No sudden remedy can supply a fixed and permanent establishment of long standing, which provides at a distance against any unforeseen wants. The capitation[1] was established in 1695. It was suppressed at the Peace of Ryswick, and re-established later. Comptroller-General de Pontchartrain sold patents of nobility for two thousand crowns, in 1696; five hundred persons bought them. But the resource was transitory, and the shame permanent. The nobles, both ancient and modern, were obliged to register their coats of arms, and to pay for the permission of sealing their letters with them. The farmers bargained for this tax, and advanced the money; so that the ministry had hardly ever recourse to any but petty resources, in a country which could have furnished much greater.

They dared not impose the tenth penny till 1710. But this tenth penny, raised after so many other burdensome taxes, appeared so hard, that they dared not exact it with rigor. The government did not draw from it twenty-five millions a year, at forty francs to the mark.

Colbert had made few attempts to change the nominal value of money. But it is better not to change it at all. Silver and gold, those standards of exchange, should be invariable. He raised the nominal value of the silver mark, which was twenty-six francs in his time, only to twenty-seven and twenty-eight; and after his death, in the last years of Louis XIV., this denomination was extended as far as forty imaginary livres: a fatal resource, by which the king was relieved for a moment, in order to be ruined afterward; for instead of a silver mark, he had only given him little more than the half of it. He who owed twenty-six livres in 1668, gave a mark; and he who owed forty livres, gave little more than this same mark in 1710. The diminutions which followed disconcerted the little commerce that remained, as much as raising it had done.

A real resource might have been found in paper credit; but this should be established in a time of prosperity, that it may maintain itself in times that are otherwise.

The minister, Chamillard, began in 1706 to pay in bank notes, notes of subsistence, and free quarters; but as this paper money was not received into the king’s coffers, it was destroyed almost as soon as it appeared. The government was reduced to the necessity of continuing to negotiate heavy loans, and use by anticipation four years of the revenues of the crown.

We are told, in the history written by La Hode, and put under the name of de la Martinière, that it cost seventy-two per cent. for exchange in the wars of Italy, which

is an absurdity. The matter of fact is this, that M. Chamillard, in order to pay the armies, made use of the credit of the chevalier Bernard. This minister believed, through an old prejudice, that money must not go out of the kingdom, as if such money were given for nothing, and as if it were possible that one nation indebted to another, and which does not discharge itself by mercantile effects, should not pay in ready money. This minister gave the banker eight per cent. of the profits, upon condition that foreigners were paid without making the money go out of France. Besides this, he paid the exchange, which amounted to five or six per cent. loss; yet the banker, notwithstanding his promise, was obliged to pay his accounts with the foreigners in money; and this produced a considerable loss.

Comptroller-General Desmarets, nephew of the celebrated Colbert, having succeeded Chamillard in 1708, could not cure an evil which everything rendered incurable.

Nature conspired with fortune to distress the state. The severe winter of 1709 obliged the king to remit to the people nine millions of taxes at the time when he had not wherewithal to pay his soldiers. The scarcity of provisions was so excessive that it cost forty-five millions for provisions for the army; and the king's ordinary revenue produced scarcely forty-nine. The expenses of 1709 amounted to two hundred and twenty-one millions. There was then a necessity for ruining the state, that the enemy might not make themselves masters of it. The disorder grew to such a head, and was so little repaired, that for a long time after the peace, at the beginning of 1715, the king was obliged to cause thirty-two millions of notes to be negotiated, in order to have eight millions in specie. In short, at his death, he left a debt of two thousand six hundred millions, reckoning twenty-eight livres to the mark, the rate to which the coin was then reduced; and this makes about four thousand five hundred millions of our current money in 1750.

It is astonishing, but true, that this immense debt would not have been a burden impossible to bear, had there been at that time a flourishing commerce in France, a paper credit established, and substantial companies, which would have answered this credit, as is the case in Sweden, England, Venice, and Holland: for when a powerful state is indebted only within itself, credit and circulation are sufficient to make payments. But a great deal was wanting for France to have at that time a sufficient number of springs to operate so vast and complicated a machine, the weight of which crushed it.

Louis XIV. in his reign expended eighteen thousand millions; which amounts, one year with another, to three hundred and thirty millions of the present currency, by compensating interchangeably with each other, the nominal raisings and lowerings of the coin.

Under the administration of the great Colbert, the ordinary revenues of the crown rose only to a hundred and seventeen millions, at twenty-seven livres, and afterward twenty-eight livres to the silver mark. Thus the whole surplus was always furnished by extraordinary methods. Colbert was obliged, for example, to raise four hundred millions in six years, in the war of 1672. The king had but very few ancient domains of the crown left. These were declared unalienable by all the parliaments of the

kingdom; and yet almost all of them were alienated. The king's revenue consisted of the wealth of his subjects, and was a perpetual circulation of debts and payments. His majesty owed the people more nominal millions a year, under the name of annuities of the town house, than any king ever drew from the domains of the crown.

In order to form an idea of this prodigious increase of taxes, debts, riches, circulation, and at the same time of the embarrassments and trouble which have been experienced in France and other countries, it is to be considered that, at the death of Francis I., the state owed about thirty millions of livres to the town house, and that at present it owes over forty-five millions a year.

Those who have compared the revenues of Louis XIV. with those of Louis XV. have found, by only keeping to the fixed and current revenue, that Louis XIV. was much richer in 1683, at the time of Colbert's death, with a hundred and seventeen millions of revenue, than his successor was in 1730, with nearly two hundred millions: and this will appear, by considering only the fixed and ordinary revenues of the crown. For a hundred and seventeen nominal millions, with the mark at twenty-eight livres, is a much greater sum than two hundred millions at forty-nine livres, which was the amount of the king's revenue in 1730; and moreover, we must reckon the charges increased by the loans of the crown. But the revenues of the king, that is, of the state, have since been accumulated; and the knowledge of the finances has been brought to such a state of perfection, that in the ruinous war of 1741, there was no stagnation of credit. We have begun to form funds of mortgages, as among the English: it was necessary to adopt a part of their system of finances, as we have done of their philosophy: and if in a state purely monarchial, these circulating notes could be introduced, which at least double the wealth of England, the administration of France would acquire its last degree of perfection.1

In 1683, there were about five hundred nominal millions of silver coin in the kingdom; and about twelve hundred of the present currency. But the denomination in our days is almost double what it was in Colbert's time. It therefore appears, that France is only about one-sixth part richer in circulating specie, since the death of that minister. It is much more so in materials of silver and gold worked and used for service and luxury. In 1690 it had not four hundred millions of our perfect coin; and at this day we have as much as there is circulating specie. Nothing shows more plainly how commerce, the sources of which Colbert opened, has been increased, when a free course has been given to its channels, that were shut close by the wars. Industry has been brought to perfection, notwithstanding the emigration of so many artists, which the revoking of the Edict of Nantes has dispersed; and this industry still increases daily. The nation is capable of as great things, and even still greater, than it was under Louis XIV., because genius and commerce always gain new strength wherever they are encouraged.

To see the affluence of individuals, the number of agreeable houses built in Paris and in the provinces, the multitude of equipages, the conveniences and refinements of luxury, you would think that our opulence is twenty times greater than it was formerly. All this is the fruit of ingenious labor rather than of riches. At this day it costs but little more for an agreeable lodging than it did for a bad one in the reign of

Henry IV. A beautiful sort of glass of our own manufacture adorns our houses, at much less expense than the little glasses which were brought from Venice; our fine and showy stuffs are cheaper than those which we brought from foreign countries, and which were not of equal value with them. In effect, it is not silver and gold that procure a commodious life, but genius. A people possessed only of these metals would be miserable; whereas, on the other hand, a people without these metals, but who can happily employ all the productions of the earth, would be the truly wealthy people. France has this advantage, with a great deal more specie than is necessary for circulation.

Industry being brought to perfection in the towns, grew up and increased in the country. There will always be complaints raised about the condition of the tillers of the soil; you hear them in all countries of the world; and such murmurings are generally produced from indolent people of fortune, who condemn the government more than they bemoan the people. It is true that in almost every country, if such as pass their days in rural labors had leisure to murmur, they would rise up against the exactions which take from them a part of their substance. They would detest the necessity of paying such taxes as they had not laid upon themselves, and of bearing the burden of the state without participating in the advantages enjoyed by other citizens. It does not belong to the province of history to examine how the people may be taxed without being oppressed, and to mark the precise point so difficult to be fixed between the execution of the laws and the abuse of them; between impost and rapine. But history should show that it is impossible for a town to be flourishing, unless the country round it enjoys plenty; for certainly the produce of its fields supports its inhabitants. We hear on particular days, in all the towns of France, the reproaches of those who by their profession are allowed to declaim in public against all the different branches of consumption to which the name of luxury is given. It is evident that the nourishment for this luxury is furnished only by the industrious labor of the tillers of the ground: a labor which is always dearly paid for.

More vineyards have been planted, and better cultivated. New wines have been made, that were not known before, like those of Champagne, the makers of which have been well acquainted with the methods of giving them the color, flavor, and strength of the Burgundy wines, and which they vend among foreigners to a great advantage. This increase of wines has produced that of brandies. The cultivation of gardens of pulse and fruit has received a prodigious improvement; and the commerce in provisions with the colonies of America has from this been augmented. The loud complaints which have been made in all times about the misery of the country have now ceased to have any foundation. Besides, in these vague complaints there is no distinction made between the planters, the farmers, and the mechanics. These last live only by the labor of their hands; and the case is alike in all the countries of the world, where the bulk of the people, or the greater number, should subsist by that means: but there is scarcely a kingdom in the universe in which the planter and the farmer are more at ease than in France; and England alone may dispute this advantage with it. The proportional land-tax, instead of that substituted at discretion, has still contributed for about thirty years past to render more stable the fortunes of such husbandmen as have ploughs, vineyards, and gardens. The craftsman, or workman, must be restricted to

necessaries for labor: such is the nature of man. For though the greater part of mankind may be poor, there is no necessity for their being miserable.

The middling sort have enriched themselves by industry. The ministers and the courtiers are less wealthy, because money having been raised nominally about half its value, their appointments and pensions have continued the same; and the price of goods has risen more than half. This is what has happened in all the countries of Europe. The several dues and fees have everywhere remained on the ancient footing. An elector of the empire, who receives the investiture of his states, pays no more than what his predecessors paid in the time of the emperor Charles IV., in the fourteenth century: and in this ceremony there is only a crown due to the emperor's secretary.

What is much stranger is, that though all things have been raised, the nominal value of coin, the quantity of materials in gold and silver, and the price of merchant goods, yet the pay of a soldier has continued at the same rate as it was two hundred years ago. A foot soldier has five nominal sous, the same as he had in the time of Henry IV. None among the great number of ignorant men who sell their lives at so cheap a rate know that since the over-rating of the specie, and the dearness of merchandise, he receives about two-thirds less than the soldiers of Henry IV. did. If he knew it, and demanded a pay two-thirds greater, it must have been granted him. Hence it must happen that as the powers of Europe would keep on foot two-thirds fewer troops, their forces would be balanced in the same proportion; the cultivation of the ground and the manufactures would profit by this measure.

We must further observe, that the profits of commerce, being augmented, and the appointments for all the great offices diminished in their real value, there is found to be less wealth among the great than formerly, and more among the middling rank of people: and this circumstance has put men more upon a level. In former days there was no resource for the little but to serve the great. At present, industry has opened a thousand ways, which were not known a hundred years ago. In short, in whatever manner the finances of the state may be administered, France possesses in the labor of twenty millions of inhabitants an inestimable treasure.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXIX.

PROGRESS OF THE SCIENCES.

This happy age, which has seen a revolution produced in the human mind, did not seem destined to it. To begin with philosophy, there was no appearance in the time of Louis XIV. that it would have emerged out of the chaos into which it was plunged. The Inquisition of Italy, Spain, and Portugal had linked the errors of philosophy to the tenets of religion; the civil wars in France, and the disputes of Calvinism were not more adapted to cultivate human reason than was the fanaticism of Cromwell's time in England. Though a Canon Thorn renewed the ancient planetary system of the Chaldæans, which had been exploded for so long a time, this truth was condemned at Rome; and the congregation of the holy office, composed of seven cardinals, having declared not only heretical but absurd the motion of the earth, without which there is no true astronomy—the great Galileo having asked pardon at the age of seventy for being in the right—there was no appearance that the truth would be received in the world.

Chancellor Bacon had shown, but at a distance, the track which might be followed. Galileo had made some discoveries on the descent of bodies; Torricelli began to ascertain the gravity of the air which surrounds us; and some experiments had been made at Magdeburg. Notwithstanding these essays, all the schools continued in absurdity, and the world in ignorance. Then appeared Descartes; he did the contrary of what should have been done; instead of studying nature, he wanted to guess at her. He was the greatest geometrician of his age; but geometry leaves the mind as she finds it. That of Descartes was too much addicted to invention. The prince of mathematicians made scarcely any more than romances of philosophy. A man who scorned experiments, never cited Galileo, and was for building without materials, could erect no more than an imaginary edifice.

That which was romantic in it succeeded; and the few truths, mixed with these new chimeras, were at first contested; but at last these few truths broke out by the help of the method which he himself introduced. For before his time there was no thread for this labyrinth; and at least he gave one, of which a use was made after he had bewildered himself. It was a great deal to destroy the chimeras of Peripateticism, though by means of other chimeras. These two phantoms combated each other. They fell successively; and reason raised itself at length upon their ruins. There was at Florence an academy for experiments, under the name of del Cimento, established by Cardinal Leopold de Medici, about 1655. They were already aware in this country of the arts, that it was not possible to comprehend anything about the grand fabric of nature, but by examining her minutely. This academy, after the days of Galileo, and from the time of Torricelli, performed signal services.

Some philosophers in England, under the gloomy administration of Cromwell, met together for the discovery of truth, at a time when it was oppressed by the severity of

enthusiasm. Charles II., being called home to the throne of his ancestors, by the repentance and inconstancy of his own nation, gave letters patent to this infant and rising academy; but this was all that the government gave. The royal society, or rather the free society of London, labored to promote useful knowledge. It was from this illustrious body that in our days proceeded the discoveries on light, the principle of gravitation, the motion of the fixed stars, and a hundred other discoveries, which in that respect might give occasion to the calling of this age the age of the English as well as that of Louis XIV.

In 1666, Colbert, jealous of this new kind of glory, was desirous that the French should partake of it; and, at the entreaty of some learned men, prevailed on Louis XIV. to condescend to the establishment of the Academy of Sciences. It was free till 1699, like that of England and the French Academy. Colbert drew from Italy, Dominico de Cassini,1 and Huygens from Holland, by means of large pensions. They discovered the satellites and the ring of Saturn. The world is indebted to Huygens for pendulum clocks. By degrees, knowledge was acquired in all parts of true physics, by rejecting systems. The public was surprised to see a chemistry, in which researches were made neither for the grand secret nor for the art of prolonging life beyond the bounds of nature; an astronomy which did not predict the events of the world; and a medicine independent of the phases of the moon. Putrefaction was no longer the parent of animals and plants. There were no more prodigies, from the time that nature came to be better known; for she was studied in all her works.

Geography received astonishing improvements. No sooner had Louis XIV. built the observatory, than he caused a degree of the meridian to be measured in 1669, by Dominico de Cassini and Picard; which was continued toward the north in 1683, by de Lahire, and at last Cassini prolonged it in 1700, as far as the extremity of Roussillon. This is the finest monument of astronomy, and is sufficient to eternize this age.

In 1672, natural philosophers were sent to Cayenne, in order to make useful observations. This voyage gave rise to the discovery of a new law of nature, which the great Newton has demonstrated, and has paved the way for those more famous voyages which have since given a lustre to the reign of Louis XV.

In 1700, de Tournefort was sent to the Levant, to collect there the plants necessary to enrich the royal garden, which was formerly neglected, but was at that time restored, and is now worthy of the curiosity of Europe. The royal library, already well stocked, was enriched under Louis XIV. with upward of thirty thousand volumes; and this example is so well followed in our days, that it contains at this time more than a hundred and eighty thousand. He caused the law school, which had been shut for a hundred years past, to be opened. He established in all the universities of France professors of the French law. One would imagine that there should be no other here, and that the good Roman laws incorporated with those of the country, should form but one body of the laws of the nation.

Under him literary journals were established. It is well known that the *"Journal des Savans,"* which began in 1665, is the first of all the works of this kind with which

Europe is at this day filled, and into which too many abuses have crept, as commonly happens in things of the greatest utility.

The Academy of the Belles-Lettres, composed at first, in 1663, of some members of the French Academy, for transmitting to posterity, by medals, the actions of Louis XIV., became useful to the public, from the time that it was no longer solely employed about the monarch, and that they applied themselves to researches into antiquity, and a judicious criticism upon opinions and facts. It produced nearly the same effect in history as the Academy of Sciences did in natural philosophy: it dispelled errors.

The spirit of discernment and criticism, which increased by degrees, insensibly destroyed superstition. It is to this dawn of reason that we owe the declaration of the king in 1672, which forbids the tribunals to admit simple accusations of sorcery. This was a matter which dared not be attempted under Henry IV. and Louis XIII. And if, since 1672, there have been accusations of enchantment, the judges have not condemned the persons accused, excepting where profanation of religion, or the use of poison was proved against them.1

It was formerly very common to try sorcerers by plunging them in water, being first bound with cords; and if they floated on the surface, they were convicted. Several judges in the provinces had ordered such trials to be made; and these methods still continued for a long time among the people. Every shepherd was a sorcerer; and amulets and studded rings were used in the towns. The effects of the hazel wand, with which it was believed that springs, treasures, and thieves could be found out, were looked upon as certain; and have still a great deal of credit given them in more than one province in Germany. There was hardly anybody but who had his nativity cast; and nothing was talked of but magical secrets. All ranks were infected with the delusion. Learned men and magistrates had written seriously on these matters. A set of authors was distinguished by the name of "Dæmonographi." There were rules for discerning true magicians, and true demoniacs from the false. In fine, even to our time, there was hardly anything adopted from antiquity but errors of every kind. Superstitious notions were so rooted among men, that people were frightened by a comet in 1680; and scarcely anyone dared to combat this popular fear. James Bernoulli, one of the greatest mathematicians in Europe, in his answer to those who maintained the ominous nature of comets, says, that its head cannot be a sign of the divine wrath, because that head is eternal; but that the tail may very well be so. However, neither the head nor tail are eternal. It was then necessary that Bayle should write against vulgar prejudices, a book, famous at that time, which the progress since made by reason has now rendered useless.

One would not believe that sovereigns had obligations to philosophers. It is, however, true, that this philosophic spirit, which has gained ground among all ranks except the lower class of people, has very much contributed to give a due weight to the rights of princes. Disputes which would have formerly produced excommunications, interdicts, and schisms have caused none of these things. It has been said that the people would be happy had they philosophers for their kings; it is equally true, that kings are the more happy, when many of their subjects are philosophers.

It must be allowed that the reasonable spirit, which begins to preside over education in the large towns, has not been able to cure the frenzy of the fanatics in the Cévennes, nor prevent the inferior people of Paris showing their folly at the tomb of St. Médard,[1] nor quiet the disputes, as violent as they are frivolous, which arise between men who ought to be wiser. But before this age, such disputes had caused troubles in Europe: the miracles of St. Médard were believed by the most considerable citizens; and fanaticism, which had been confined within the mountains of the Cévennes, diffused itself into the towns.

Science and literature seemed carried to perfection in this age; and so many writers have extended the powers of the human understanding that those who at other times would have been thought prodigies passed undistinguished in the crowd. Their glory is lessened on account of their number; but the glory of the age is greatly exalted.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXX.

THE POLITE ARTS IN EUROPE AT THE TIME OF LOUIS XIV.

I have sufficiently hinted, in the course of this history, that the public disasters it contains, which succeed one another almost without intermission, are at length erased from the registers of time. The springs and minute circumstances of politics, sink into oblivion; while wise laws and institutions, the monuments produced by the arts and sciences, continue forever.

Of the immense crowd of strangers that now travel to Rome, not as pilgrims, but as persons of taste, hardly one takes pains to inquire anything concerning Gregory VII. or Boniface VIII. They admire the beautiful churches built by a Bramantes and a Michelangelo, the paintings of a Raphael, and the sculptures of a Bernini; if they have genius, they read the works of Ariosto and Tasso, and reverence the ashes of Galileo. In England the exploits of Cromwell are scarcely mentioned, and the disputes of the white and red roses are almost forgotten; but Newton is studied for whole years together: no one is surprised to see in his epitaph that "he was the glory of mankind;" but it would be a matter of great wonder in that country to see the remains of any statesman honored with such a title.

I should be glad, in this place, to do justice to all the great men, who, like him, were the ornaments of their country in the last century. I have called this the Age of Louis XIV. not only because this monarch patronized the arts much more than all the other kings, his contemporaries, put together, but also because he saw all the generations of the princes of Europe thrice renewed. I have fixed this epoch some years before the time of Louis XIV. and have carried it down some years after his decease, as this was, in fact, the space of time in which the human mind made the greatest progress.

The English have made greater advances toward perfection, in almost every species of learning, from 1660 till the present time, than in all the preceding ages. I shall not here repeat what I have elsewhere said, of Milton. It is true, he is accused by several critics of a whimsical extravagance in his description, such as that of the fools' paradise; the walls of alabaster with which the garden of Eden was surrounded; the devils, who transformed themselves from giants to pygmies, to take up less room in the council chamber of hell, built all of pure gold; the firing of cannon in heaven; the hills that the combatants flung at one another's heads; angels on horseback, and angels whose bodies, after being cut asunder, unite again. He is complained of for his prolixity and incessant repetitions. They say he equals neither Ovid nor Hesiod in that long description of the formation of the earth, animals, and man. His dissertations on astronomy are censured, as being too dry and uninteresting; his invention is thought rather extravagant than wonderful, and more disgusting than striking; for instance, the long causeway over chaos; sin and death enamored of each other, and having children by their incestuous commerce; "Death, who lifts up his nose, to snuff, through the

immensity of chaos, the change which has befallen the earth, as a raven smells dead carcasses." The same Death who smells out sin, who strikes with his petrifying club on the elements of Earth and Water, which, together with Heat and Humidity, become four valiant generals of an army, leading in battle-array the light-armed embryos of atoms.1 In short, writers have exhausted themselves in criticisms on this celebrated work; but there can be no end to the praises it merits. Milton will ever continue the boast and admiration of the English nation, will always be compared to Homer, whose faults are equally great, and always preferred to Dante, whose imagination is even more extravagant.

Among the great number of pleasing poets that adorned the reign of Charles II., such as Waller, the earls of Dorset and Roscommon, the duke of Buckingham, etc., the celebrated Dryden holds a distinguished place; he is equally famous in all the different kinds of poetry. His writings abound with a number of minute particulars, at once natural and lively, animated, bold, nervous, and pathetic; a merit in which he has been equalled by no other poet of his nation, nor exceeded by anyone among the ancients. If Pope, who came after him, had not, in the latter part of his life written his "Essay on Man," he would have fallen far short of Dryden.

No nation has ever treated morality, in verse, with so much energy and depth, as the English. In this, I think, seems to lie the greatest merit of their poets.

There is another kind of varied literature, which requires a still more cultivated and universal genius; this Addison possessed in an eminent degree. He has not only immortalized his name by his "Cato," which is the only English tragedy written with elegance and well-supported dignity, but his other writings, both moral and critical, breathe the very soul of good taste; here sense is everywhere embellished with the flowers of imagination; and his manner of writing may serve as a model to all nations. There are several little pieces of Dean Swift, unmatched by anything of the kind in antiquity. He is Rabelais improved.

The English are not acquainted with funeral orations, it not being the custom with them to praise their kings and queens in their churches, but pulpit eloquence, which, before the reign of Charles II., was very rude, became formed on a sudden. Bishop Burnet acknowledges that this was owing to their imitation of the French; perhaps they have even surpassed their masters; they are not so stiff, affected, and declamatory in their sermons as the French are.

It is also remarkable that these islanders, who are separated from the rest of the world, and who remained so long untaught, should have acquired at least as much knowledge of antiquity as is to be met with in Rome, though the centre of all nations. Masham has unveiled the dark accounts of ancient Egypt; no Persian had ever a more perfect knowledge of the religion of Zoroaster than the celebrated Hyde. The history of Mahomet, and the times preceding him, which was unknown to the Turks, has been fully illustrated by Hales, who made so many useful voyages to Arabia.

There is no country in the world where the Christian religion has been so strongly attacked and so learnedly defended as in England. From the time of Henry VIII. to

that of Cromwell, they carried on their disputes like the ancient gladiators, who were wont to come into the arena to fight with scimitars in their hands and bandages about their eyes. Some slight differences in doctrine and worship were productive of the most bloody wars; whereas, from the Restoration to the present time, though scarcely a year has passed without some attack on Christianity, the controversy has not excited the least disturbance, learning being the only weapon now employed on either side, instead of fire and sword, as formerly.

But, it is in philosophy that the English have particularly had the mastery over all other nations. Ingenious and speculative notions were out of the question. The fables of the Greeks had been long laid aside, and those of the moderns were to appear no more. Chancellor Bacon first led the way, by asserting that we should search into nature in a new manner, and have recourse to experiments. Boyle employed his whole life in making them. This is no place for discussions on natural philosophy; let it suffice to say that, after three thousand years of vain inquiries, Newton was the first who discovered and demonstrated the great law of nature, by which every part of matter tends toward the centre, and all the planets are retained in their proper course. He was the first who truly beheld light; before him we knew not what it was.

His principles of the mathematics, which contain a system of natural philosophy, entirely new and true, are founded on the discovery of what is called the Calculation of Infinites, the last effect of geometry, and which was executed by him at the age of twenty-four. This occasioned that great philosopher, the learned Halley, to say: “It will never be permitted any mortal to approach nearer to the Deity.”

Numberless good geometricians and natural philosophers were at once improved by his discoveries, and encouraged to pursue the course he had pointed out to them. Bradley at length went so far as to discover the parallax of the fixed stars, at twelve millions of millions of miles distant from our little globe.

Halley, though no more than a private astronomer, had the command of one of the king’s ships in 1698. In this ship he determined the position of the stars of the Antarctic, or South Pole, and marked the different variations of the compass in all the parts of the known world. The famous voyage of the Argonauts was, in comparison with his, no more than the passing from one side of a river to another in a boat; and yet this voyage of Halley’s has scarcely been spoken of in Europe.

This indifference of ours for great things, when become too familiar, and the admiration paid by the ancient Greeks to the most trivial ones, is another proof of the prodigious superiority of our age over the ancient times. Boileau, in France, and Sir William Temple, in England, obstinately deny any such superiority; they seem

resolved to depreciate their own age, in order to exalt themselves above it. This dispute between the ancients and moderns is at length decided, at least as to philosophy. There is not one of the ancient philosophers whose works are now made use of for the instruction of youth in any of the enlightened nations.

Locke alone might serve as a great instance of the advantage that the present time has over the finest ages of Greece. From Plato down to him there is one great chasm, no one during all that interval having explained the operations of the soul; and a person who should be acquainted with all that Plato has written, and acquainted with that only, would have very little knowledge, and even that erroneous.

The Greek was indeed an eloquent writer; his apology for Socrates is a great piece of service done to the learned of all nations. It is but just to hold in veneration him who made oppressed virtue so venerable, and its persecutors so detestable. It was for a long time thought that he, who was so fine a moralist, could not be a bad natural philosopher; he was held almost for a father of the Church, on account of his *"Ternarion,"* which no one understood; but what would be thought of a philosopher in our days who would tell us that matter is the author; and that the world is a figure of twelve pentagons; that fire is a pyramid, and is linked to the earth by numbers? How would a person be received, who should go about to prove the immortality and metempsychosis of the soul, by saying that sleep comes from watching, watching from sleep, life from death, and death from life? Yet such are the arguments that have been the admiration of so many ages, and ideas still more extravagant have since continued to be made use of, in the education of mankind.

Locke is the only one who has explained human understanding, in a book where there is nothing but truths; and what renders the work perfect is that these truths are all clear.

If we would, once for all, see in what this last age has the superiority over the former ones, we have only to cast our eyes upon Germany and the North. Dantzic has produced a Hevelius, who is the first astronomer that was ever well acquainted with the planet of the moon, no man before him having ever so carefully examined the heavens; among the many great men whom this age has produced, no one is a more striking example how justly it may be called the age of Louis XIV. Hevelius lost an immense library by fire. The French monarch recompensed the astronomer with a present that far overpaid his loss.

In Holstein, Mercator was the forerunner of Newton in geometry. The Bernouillis of Switzerland were disciples worthy this great man, and Leibnitz was for some time considered his rival.

The famous Leibnitz was born at Leipsic; he ended his days in Hanover, like a true philosopher, believing in a God, like Newton, without consulting the various opinions of mankind. He was perhaps a man of the most universal learning in Europe; he was a historian indefatigable in his inquiries; a profound civilian, who enlightened the study of law by philosophy, foreign as it may appear to that kind of study; so thorough a metaphysician, as to attempt reconciling divinity and the metaphysics; a tolerable

Latin poet; and lastly, so good a mathematician, as to dispute with the great Newton the invention of the Calculation of Infinities, and to make it for some time doubted which of them had the justest claim to the honor of that discovery.

This was then the golden age of geometry. Mathematicians sent frequent challenges to one another, that is to say, problems to solve, much in the same manner as it is said the ancient kings of Egypt and Asia sent enigmas to be answered by one another. The problems proposed by these geometricians were of a much more difficult nature than the Egyptian enigmas, and yet none of them remained unanswered, either in Germany, England, Italy, or France. There never was a more universal correspondence kept between philosophers than at this period, and Leibnitz contributed not a little to encourage it. A republic of letters was insensibly established in Europe, in the midst of the most obstinate war, and the number of different religions; the arts and sciences, all of them thus received mutual assistance from each other, and the academies helped to form this republic. Italy and Russia were united by the bonds of science, and the natives of England, Germany, and France went to study at Leyden. The famous physician, Boerhaave, was consulted at the same time by the pope and the czar of Muscovy. His principal pupils have in like manner drawn strangers after them, and have in some measure become the physicians of nations. The truly learned of every denomination have strengthened the bonds of this grand society of geniuses, which is universally diffused, and everywhere independent. This correspondence is still carried on, and proves one of the greatest comforts against the evils which ambition and politics scatter through the world.

Italy has preserved her ancient glory in this age, though she has produced no new Tassos, nor Raphaels. It is sufficient that she has once produced them. A Cabrera, a Zappi, and a Filicaia have shown that delicacy is always the portion of this nation. The *"Merope"* of Maffei, and the dramatic works of Metastasio, are the beautiful monuments of the age.

The study of true natural philosophy, as established by Galileo, still keeps its ground in spite of the ancient philosophy, which has but too many bigoted admirers. The Cassinis, the Vivianis, the Mandis, the Bianchinis, the Zanottis, and many others have spread over Italy the same light that beamed in other countries, and, though its principal rays came from England, yet the Italian schools have been able to gaze on it in all its splendor.

Every kind of literature has been cultivated in this ancient seat of the arts as much as elsewhere, except in those subjects where a liberty of thinking allows a greater scope to the genius in other nations. This age in particular has attained a better knowledge of antiquity than the preceding. Italy furnishes more monuments than all Europe together, and in proportion as these have been brought to light, science has become more extensive.

We are indebted for this progress to some wise men and geniuses, scattered in small numbers over some parts of Europe, almost all of them for a long time subjected to persecutions, and lost in oblivion; they have enlightened and comforted the world during the wars that spread desolation through it. There are lists to be met with

elsewhere, of all those who have been the ornaments of Germany, England, and Italy. It would be very improper, in a stranger, to pretend to rate the merits of so many illustrious men; let it suffice then to have shown, that in the last age mankind acquired throughout Europe greater light than in all the ages that preceded it.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE CHILDREN OF LOUIS XIV.—THE SOVEREIGN PRINCES CONTEMPORARY WITH HIM—HIS GENERALS AND MINISTERS.

THE CHILDREN OF LOUIS XIV.

Legitimate Heirs.

Louis XIV. married Maria Theresa of Austria, born in 1638, only daughter of Philip IV. by his first queen, Elizabeth of France, and sister of Charles II. and Margaret Theresa, whom Philip IV. had by his second wife, Marie Anne of Austria. The nuptials were celebrated July 9, 1660, and Maria Theresa died in 1683. He had by her:

Louis, the dauphin, called Monseigneur, born Nov. 1, 1661, who died at Meudon, April 14, 1711. Nothing was more common for some time before the death of this prince than the following proverb, which was applied to him: “The son of a king, the father of a king, and never king.” The event seemed to countenance the credulity of those who place faith in predictions; but this saying was only a repetition of that which went about concerning Philip de Valois, and was moreover founded chiefly on Louis XIV.’s own state of health, he being much more robust than his son. This prince had by Mary Anne Christina Victoria of Bavaria, who died April 20, 1690:

1. Louis, duke of Burgundy, who was born Aug. 6, 1682, and died Feb. 18, 1712. He had issue by his duchess, Maria Adelaide of Savoy, who died Feb. 12, 1712: N., duke of Brittany, who died in 1705; Louis, duke of Brittany, who died in 1712; and Louis XV., who was born Feb. 15, 1710.

2. Philip, duke of Anjou, king of Spain, born Dec. 19, 1683, died July 9, 1746.

3. Charles, duke de Berry, born Aug. 31, 1686, died May 4, 1714.

Louis XIV. had two other sons and three daughters, who all died young.

His Natural And Legitimated Children.

Louis XIV. had by the duchess de la Vallière, who turned Carmelite nun June 2, 1674, took the habit June 4, 1675, and died June 6, 1710, aged sixty-five:

Louis de Bourbon, count of Vermandois, born Oct. 2, 1667, died in 1683.

Mary Anne, called Mademoiselle de Blois, born in 1666, married to Armand, prince of Conti, and died in 1739.

Other Natural And Legitimated Children.

Louis Augustus, of Bourbon, duke de Maine, born March 31, 1670, died in 1736.

Louis Cæsar, count of Vexin, abbot of St. Denis and St.-Germain-des-Prés, born in 1672, died in 1683.

Louis Alexander de Bourbon, count of Toulouse, born June 6, 1678, died in 1737.

Louise Frances of Bourbon, called Mademoiselle de Nantes, born in 1673, married to Louis III., duke of Bourbon-Condé, and died in 1743.

Louise Marie of Bourbon, called Mademoiselle de Tours, died in 1681.

Frances Mary, of Bourbon, called Mademoiselle de Blois, born in 1677, married to Philip II., duke de Orleans, regent of France, died in 1749.

Two other sons both died young.

[Back to Table of Contents]

CHAPTER XXXII.

CELEBRATED ARTISTS AND MUSICIANS.

[The foregoing review of the progress made in the arts and sciences would be incomplete without a glance at the leading artists in painting and music. Each nation has its peculiar theories of art, which fact tends to the formation of schools, modified by conditions of national life, scenery, climate, and largely by patriotic enthusiasms. In no art are national characteristics more marked than in that of music.]

French music, especially the vocal, is disliked by all other nations. It cannot be otherwise, because the French prosody or versification differs from that of every other country of Europe. We make the pauses always upon the last syllable, whereas all others make it upon the penult, or antepenult, as the Italians. Our language is the only one that has words terminating in e mute, and those e's that are not pronounced in ordinary discourse, yet are uniformerly so in music, as *gloire, victoire,* etc. Hence it comes, that most of our airs and recitative are insupportable to those who have not been accustomed to them. The climate denies us that flexibility of voice which it gives the Italians, and it is not custom among us, as at Rome and other Italian courts, to make eunuchs of men, in order to render their voices finer than those of women. All these things, joined to the slowness of our singing, which, by the bye, forms a strange contrast with our native vivacity, will always make the French music disagreeable to any but Frenchmen.

After all, foreigners who have resided some considerable time in France, acknowledge that our musicians have performed wonders in adapting their airs to our words, and also that the music is very expressive; but only so to ears that have been some time accustomed to it, and besides, the execution must be very good.

Our instrumental music is not altogether free from the monotony and slowness of the vocal; but many of our symphonies and tunes have been relished by foreigners. They are admitted into many of the Italian operas, and scarcely any others are in use at the court of a king who has one of the best operas in Europe, and who, among his other extraordinary talents, has a fine taste for music, which he cultivates with great assiduity.

Jean Baptiste Lulli, who was born at Florence in 1633, and came to France at the age of fourteen, when he could perform on no instrument but the violin, was the parent of true French music. He knew how to suit his art to the genius of the language, which was the only sure way to succeed: but at that time the Italian music had not begun to deviate from that gravity and noble simplicity which we still admire in Lulli's recitative. Nothing resembles these recitatives more than the "*Motet*" of Lugi, sung in Italy with so much success in the seventeenth century, which begins thus:

Sunt breves mundi rosæ; sunt fugitivi flores;

Frondes veluti annosæ, sunt labiles honores.
The rose's date is brief;
The lilies soon decay;
And like the annual leaf,
Frail honors fleet away.

It must be observed, that in this pure recitative music, which is the *mélopée* of the ancients, the beauty of the singing is principally owing to the natural melody of the words; no words but such as are musical can well have a place in recitative. But of this they were not sufficiently sensible in the days of Quinault and Lulli. The poets were jealous of these gentlemen as poets, but not as musicians. Boileau thus addresses Quinault:

Ces lieux communs de morale lubrique
Que Lulli ré chaussa des sons de sa musique,
Those hackneyed thoughts, so wanton yet so tame,
That Lulli strove to warm at music's flame.

The tender passions, which Quinault expressed so well, were much rather a striking picture of the human heart, than a loose morality; his diction animated the music still more than Lulli's art did the words. These two, with the help of actors, have, of some scenes of Atys, Armida, and Roland, made an entertainment such as no people, ancient or modern, can match. Detached airs and ariettes did not at all come up to the perfections of these grand scenes. They very much resembled our Christmas carols, or the Venetian barcaroles; and yet they were contented with them at that time. The more artless the music then was, the fonder they were of it.

After Lulli, all our musicians, such as Colasse, Campra, Destouches, and others, copied after him, till at last one appeared, who far excels them in sublime harmony, and has vastly altered and improved the art of music.

With regard to sacred music, though we have had some celebrated composers in France, yet their pieces have not been executed anywhere but in the king's chapel.

Painters.

The case is not the same with regard to painting as with music. The latter may be such as to please none but the natives, because the genius of the language is incompatible with any other; but painters should represent nature, which is the same everywhere, and seen with the same eyes.

The only true test of a painter's merit is the judgment of foreigners. It is not enough that he has a party, and is praised by scribblers; his works must be in request, and bear a high price. What sometimes hampers the genius of painters one would be apt to imagine would elevate and enlarge it, I mean the particular taste or manner of the school, or of those who preside in it. Academies are, without doubt, extremely useful to form pupils, especially when the directors aim at the sublime in painting; but if they are men of grovelling taste, if their manner is dry and minute, if their figures are

ungraceful, their pieces painted like fans; their pupils are the dupes of imagination, or aiming at the applause of a bad master. There is a sort of fatality attending academies. None of the works styled academic, of any kind, have been works of genius. Suppose an artist extremely solicitous lest he should not hit the manner of his fellow academicians, his productions will infallibly be stiff and disgusting. But if a man is free from these prejudices, and aims only at copying nature, it is ten to one that he succeeds. Almost all the eminent painters either flourished before the establishment of academies, or got the better of the prejudices contracted there.

Corneille, Racine, Despréaux, and Lemoyne took a route quite different from their brethren, and in consequence had most of them for their enemies.

Nicholas Poussin was born at Andelys in Normandy, in 1599. Nature gave him a genius for painting, which he improved at Rome. He is called the painter of men of sense; with equal justice may he be denominated that of men of taste. His only defect is his heightening of the dismal and solemn in the coloring of the Roman school. He was the greatest painter in Europe in his time. He was invited from Rome to Paris; but was forced to give way to envy and cabal, and to withdraw, as many other ingenious men have done. He went back to Rome, where he lived poor, but contented, his philosophy enabling him to despise the frowns of fortune. He died in 1665.

Le Sueur, born at Paris in 1617, had no other master than Vouet, and yet became a celebrated painter. He carried the art to a high degree of perfection, when he was taken off the stage of time at the age of thirty-eight years, in 1655.

Bourdon and Valentin were eminent men. Three of the best pictures that adorn the church of St. Peter at Rome, are by Poussin, Bourdon, and Valentin.

Charles Lebrun, born at Paris in 1619, had scarcely begun to display his talent, when Superintendent Fouquet, one of the most generous, and at the same time most unhappy men that ever lived, gave him a pension of twenty-four thousand livres present money. His picture of the family of Darius at Versailles is little short, in point of coloring, of that of Paul Veronese, which faces it; and in design, composition, dignity, expression, and observance of costume, surpasses it. His battles of Alexander, engraved, are still more in request than those of Constantine by Raphael and Julio Romano. He died in 1690.

Peter Mignard, born at Troyes, in Champagne, in 1610, rivalled Lebrun for some time; but he is now considered as much below him. He died in 1695.

Claude Lorrain.—His father, when he would have made a pastry-cook of him, did not foresee that he would one day be reckoned one of the greatest landscape painters that ever Europe had produced. He died at Rome in 1682.

Case.—We have some pieces of his that begin to be highly valued. We do not do justice to ingenious men in France as soon as we should. Their indifferent performances often prevent us from seeing the beauties of their masterpieces. On the contrary, the Italians extol what is great and excellent, without taking notice of what is

indifferent. Every nation seeks to promote its own glory and renown, except the French. They value nothing but what is foreign.

Joseph Parrocel, born in 1648, was a good painter, but inferior to his son. He died in 1704.

John Jouvenet, born at Rouen in 1644, was Lebrun's pupil, and a good painter, but not to be compared to his master. He has painted almost everything yellow; for by some extraordinary conformation of his organs, they appeared to him of that color. He died in 1717.

Jean Baptiste Santerre.—There are some admirable pictures of his, the color of which is just and delicate. His picture of Adam and Eve is one of the finest in Europe: that of St. Theresa, in the chapel of Versailles, is a very noble piece, but rather luscious for an altarpiece.

Lafosse distinguished himself much in the same way.

Bon Boullongne was an excellent painter, of which the high price and great demand for his pieces are an evidence.

Louis Boullongne.—His works, though not without merit, yet are not so much admired as his brother's.

Raoux.—His pieces are not all of equal merit. In some of them he is nothing short of Rembrandt.

Rigaud.—Though he excelled chiefly in portraits, yet his piece of Cardinal Bouillon opening the jubilee, is not at all inferior to any of Rubens.

Detroy.—He painted in Rigaud's manner. There are some good historical pieces by his son.

Watteau.—He excelled as much in the graceful as Teniers did in the grotesque. Some of his pupils have done him honor.

Lemoine.—His "Hercules' Apotheosis," at Versailles, is perhaps superior to anything I have yet mentioned. It was intended as a compliment to Cardinal Hercules de Fleury, who, by the way, had nothing in common with the fabulous Hercules. It would have been more apropos to have represented the apotheosis of Henry IV. in the falcon of a French king. Lemoine, being envied by his brethren, and thinking himself ill-reputed by the cardinal, died of grief and despair.

Besides these there have been some other painters, who excelled in still life, or in painting animals, as Desportes and Oudry; others in miniature, and others in portraits. At present we have some that distinguish themselves in the grand and sublime, and posterity, in all appearance, will have them, too.

Sculptors, Architects, And Engravers.

Under Louis XIV. sculpture was carried to perfection, in which it still continues under Louis XV.

James Sarazin, born in 1590, executed some masterpieces at Rome for Pope Clement VIII., and at Paris he was equally successful. He died in 1660.

Peter Puget, born in 1622, was an architect, sculptor, and painter. He is celebrated chiefly for his "Andromeda," and "Milo of Crotona." He died in 1694.

Italy is indebted to Legros and Theodon for many of its embellishments.

Francis Girardon, born in 1630.—Antiquity can boast of nothing superior to his "Bath of Hercules," and his "Tomb of Cardinal Richelieu." He died in 1715.

Coysevox and Coustou were eminent in their way; yet we have three or four sculptors at present that excel them.

Chauveau, Nanteuil, Vermeulen, Audran, Hedlinger, Leclerc, les Drevet, Poilly, Picart, Duchange, though they have been outdone, yet were ingenious men, and their engravings supply the want of original pictures, etc., all over Europe.

There were also some goldsmiths, such as Ballin and Germain, who, on account of the beauty of their designs, and elegance of execution, deserve to be ranked among the most celebrated artists.

It is more difficult for one born with a genius for architecture to make his talent appear, than for any other artist. Unless he is set to work by princes he has no opportunity to display his taste and skill in any work of grandeur and magnificence. Thus have the talents of many an architect been entirely useless to him.

Francis Mansard was one of the best architects of Europe. The château, or palace of Maisons, near St.-Germain's, is a masterpiece, because he was at liberty to give full scope to his genius.

Jules Hardouin Mansard, his nephew, was superintendent of the buildings under Louis XV. and made an immense fortune. The beautiful chapel of the Invalides is a design of his. As to the palace of Versailles, he could not display his talents to advantag in it, by reason of the situation.

Foreigners say that the city of Paris has only two fountains in good taste; the old one of John Gougeon, and the new of Bouchardon; and even these are badly situated. Neither has it any magnificent theatre besides that of the Louvre, which is not used. The places for the public diversions and representations have neither proportion, taste, nor ornament; and their situation is as bad as their contrivance, notwithstanding the example that has been set us by some cities in the provinces, but which we have not yet thought fit to follow. France, however, can boast of magnificent buildings of

another sort, and of more importance, such as stately hospitals, storehouses, stone bridges, quays, dikes for checking the inundations of rivers, canals, sluices, ports, and especially the fortifications of the frontier towns, in which beauty is united with solidity.

The magnificent structures erected from the designs of Perrault, Levau, and Dorbay are too well known to require mention.

The art of gardening was in a manner invented and perfected by Lenôtre, and de la Quintinie; by the former with respect of beauty and ornament, and by the latter with regard to utility.

Engraving of precious stones, coining of medals, and casting of types for printing have kept pace with the other arts in point of improvement.

Clocks and watches, the makers of which may be considered as a sort of practical naturalists, have likewise been carried to a very high degree of perfection.

The watering of stuffs, and the gold with which they are embellished and enriched, displays such rare ingenuity and taste that what is worn only from vanity and luxury deserves to be preserved as a monument of industry.

The making of porcelain was set on foot at St. Cloud before it was attempted anywhere else in Europe.

In fine, the last age has taught the present how to unite, and transmit as a sacred deposit to posterity, the whole assemblage of the arts and sciences, each of them carried to the utmost perfection possible; and to do so is actually the object and aim of numbers of learned and ingenious men at this day. But such is the brevity of human life, that the execution of part of the immense and immortal design must be left to posterity.

[1] This anecdote is attested by the memoirs of La Porte, page 255, and we there see that the king had taken an aversion to the cardinal; that that minister, though his relative, and intrusted with the charge of his education, had taken no care to improve him, and had often left him in want of common necessaries. He adds much heavier accusations, which reflect dishonor on the cardinal's memory; but they do not appear to be proved, and no accusation should be admitted without it.

[1] Cardinal Richelieu had already given balls, but they were without taste, as were all entertainments before his time. The French, who have now carried the art of dancing to perfection, had only a few Spanish dances in the minority of Louis XIV., as the sarabande, the courante, etc.

[1] A famous surgeon, son-in-law to the physician above mentioned, is witness of what I have said, and Mr. Bernaville, successor of St. Mars, has often confirmed it.

[1] The abbot St.-Pierre, in his *"Annales Politiques,"* page 104 of his manuscript, says: "These things plainly show the number of lazy lubbers, as also their taste for

laziness, which sufficiently serves to maintain and cherish other kinds of dronish fellows; and yet this is the condition of the Italian nation at present, where these arts are carried to a high degree of perfection; for they are beggars, lazy, heavy, vain poltroons, occupied about impertinences," etc.

These rude reflections, written in language equally rude, are void of justice. The time in which the Italians succeeded best in these arts was under the Medici, while Venice was in its most warlike and opulent state; then it was that Italy produced great warriors and illustrious artists of all kinds. And it was also in the flourishing years of Louis XIV. that the arts have been carried to the greatest perfection. The abbot St.-Pierre has mistaken a great number of things, and has given grounds for regretting that reason has not always seconded his good intentions.

[1] Claude Perrault was a member of the Royal Academy at Paris, and bred a physician, though he did not practise that art. He made some noble designs in architecture, and was allowed to be a man of genius by all the world but Boileau, who, from private pique, has satirized both him and his brother Charles; a want of candor in Boileau which greatly detracts from the merit of his genius.

[1] Anthony le Prêtre, chevalier, count de Vauban, is so well known as the greatest engineer of his time—if Coehorn does not contest that pre-eminence—that we need not dwell upon the particulars of his character.

[1] In Vol. iv, p. 136, of Maintenon's "Memoirs," we find that the capitation "brought in beyond the hopes of the farmers." But there has never been any farm of the capitation. It is said that "the lackeys of Paris went to the town house to beg that they might be put into the capitation." This ridiculous story destroys itself, for masters always paid for their domestics.

[1] The abbot of St.-Pierre, in his *"Journal Politique,"* in the article "System," says that in England and Holland there are no more notes than specie; but it is certain that the former greatly exceed the latter and do not subsist but by credit.

[1] John Dominico Cassini was one of the most able astronomers that Italy ever produced. He flourished in the seventeenth century, and in his youth was appointed professor of astronomy at Bologna, but he was invited to France by Colbert to be a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences, and there he spent the remaining part of his life, which was happily extended to extreme old age. He explained the nature and revolutions of comets; he discovered that the planet Mars revolved upon its own axis in twenty-four hours and forty minutes; he discerned the spots on the body of Venus; he demonstrated that Saturn had five satellites, instead of one, which was all that Huygens had discerned; and he measured a degree of the meridian in the south of France.

[1] In 1609 six hundred sorcerers were condemned in the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Bordeaux, and most of them burned. Nicholas Remi, in his *"Demonolatri,"* gives an account of nine hundred arrets, passed in fifteen years

against sorcerers in Lorraine only. The famous curate, Louis Guaffredi, burned at Aix in 1611, had publicly owned that he was a sorcerer, and the judges believed him.

It is shameful that Father Lebrun, in his treatise of "Superstitious Practices," still admits of the decision of doubtful matters by casting lots. He even goes so far as to say, page 524, that the Parliament of Paris acknowledged it; but he is mistaken; the parliament indeed owned that there were profanations and enchantments, but no supernatural effects produced by the devil. The book of Don Calmet, *"Sur les Vampires et sur les Apparitions,"* has been looked upon as the work of a disordered brain, but it plainly shows how much the mind of man is addicted to superstition.

[1] Miracles were said to be performed at the tomb of Abbé Paris, in 1730. As this abbé was a professed Jansenist, the Jesuits would not allow him to be a saint, and found means to interest both the clergy and the government against his pretensions to this title. The archbishop of Paris published a mandamus, condemning the new miracles of this beatified Jansenist. The life of the abbé, which had been published at Brussels, was pronounced heretical by the holy congregation of the office, and burned by the hands of the hangman; but the reputation of the defunct flourished under this persecution. His tomb was surrounded by crowds of devotees, the lame were cured, the blind were restored to sight; so that the catalogue of miracles daily increased, until the burying-ground of St. Médard was shut up by the king's express arret, and then the saint being deprived of his retinue, sank into oblivion.

Four champions fierce,Strive here for mastery, and to battle bringTheir *embryon* atoms.—Paradise Lost.