addicted. And she partially reclaimed him, although, while her counsels were still regarded, Louis was enslaved by Madame de Fontanges — a luxurious beauty, whom he made a duchess, and on whom he squandered the revenues of a province. But her reign was short. Mere physical charms must soon yield to the superior power of intellect and wit, and, after her death, the reign of Madame de Maintenon was complete. As the king could not live without her, and as she refused to follow the footsteps of her predecessors, the king made her his wife. And she was worthy of his choice; and her influence was, on the whole, good, although she befriended the Jesuits, and prompted the king to many acts of religious intolerance. It was chiefly through her influence, added to that of the Jesuits, that the king revoked the edict of Nantes, and its revocation was attended by great sufferings and privations among the persecuted Huguenots. He had, on ascending the throne, in 1643, confirmed the privileges of the Protestants; but, gradually, he worried them by exactions and restraints, and, finally, in 1685, by the revocation of the edict which Henry IV. had passed, he withdrew his protection, and subjected them to a more bitter persecution than at any preceding period. All the Protestant ministers were banished, or sent to the galleys, and the children of Protestants were taken from their parents, and committed to the care of their nearest Catholic relations, or such persons as judges appointed. All the terrors of military execution, all the artifices of priestcraft, were put forth to make converts; and such as relapsed were subjected to cruel torments. A twentieth part of them were executed, and the remainder hunted from place to place. By these cruelties, France was deprived of nearly six hundred thousand of the best people in the land — a great misfortune, since they contributed, in their dispersion and exile, to enrich, by their agriculture and manufactures, the countries to which they fled.

From this period of his reign to his death, Louis XIV. was a religious bigot, and the interests of the Roman Church, next to the triumph of absolutism, became the great desire of his life. He was punctual and rigid in the outward ceremonials of his religion, and professed to regret the follies and vices of his early life. Through the influence of his confessor, the Jesuit La Chaise, and

his wife, Madame de Maintenon, he sent away Montespan from his court, and discouraged those gayeties for which it had once been distinguished. But he was always fond of ceremony of all kinds, and the etiquette of his court was most irksome and oppressive, and wearied Madame de Maintenon herself, and caused her to exclaim, in a letter to her brother, "Save those who fill the highest stations, I know of none more unfortunate than those who envy them."

The favorite minister of the king at this time was Louvois, a very able but extremely prodigal man, who plunged Louis XIV. into innumerable expenses, and encouraged his taste both for palaces and war. It was probably through his intrigues, in order to make himself necessary to the king, that a general war again broke out in Europe.

In 1687 was formed the famous League of Augsburg, by which the leading princes of Europe united in a great confederacy to suppress the power and encroachments of the French king. Louvois intrigued to secure the election of the Cardinal de Furstemberg to the archbishopric of Cologne, in opposition to the interests of Bavaria, the natural ally of France, conscious that, by so doing, he must provoke hostilities. But this act was only the occasion, not the cause, of war. Louis had enraged the Protestant world by his persecution of the Huguenots. He had insulted even the pope himself by sending an ambassador to Rome, with guards and armed attendants equal to an army, in order to enforce some privileges which it was not for the interest or the dignity of the pope to grant; he had encouraged the invasion of Germany by the Turks; he had seized Strasburg, the capital of Alsace; he bombarded Genoa, because they sold powder to the Algerines, and compelled the doge to visit him as a suppliant; he laid siege to some cities which belonged to Spain; and he prepared to annex the Low Countries to his dominions. Indeed, he treated all other powers as if he were the absolute monarch of Europe, and fear and jealousy united them against them. Germany, Spain, and Holland, and afterwards England, Denmark, Sweden, and Savoy, coöperated together to crush the common enemy of European liberties.

Louis made enormous exertions to resist this powerful confederacy. Four hundred thousand men were sent into the field,

divided into four armies. Two of these were sent into Flanders, one into Catalonia, and one into Germany, which laid waste the Palatinate with fire and sword. Louvois gave the order, and Louis sanctioned it, which was executed with such unsparing cruelty that all Europe was filled with indignation and defiance.

The forces of Louis were immense, but those of the allies were greater. The Spaniards, Dutch, and English, had an army of fifty thousand men in Flanders, eleven thousand of whom were commanded by the Earl of Marlborough. The Germans sent three more armies into the field; one commanded by the Elector of Bavaria, on the Upper Rhine; another by the Duke of Lorraine, on the Middle Rhine; and a third by the Elector of Brandenburg, on the Lower Rhine; and these, in the first campaign, obtained signal successes. The next year, the Duke of Savoy joined the allies, whose army was commanded by Victor Amadeus: but he was beaten by Marshal Catinat, one of the most distinguished of the French generals. Luxembourg also was successful in Flanders, and gained the great battle of Charleroi over the Germans and Dutch. The combined fleet of the English and Dutch was also defeated by the French at the battle of Beachy Head. In the next campaign, Prince Eugene and the Duke of Schomberg distinguished themselves in checking the victorious career of Catinat; but nothing of importance was effected. The following spring, William III. and Louis XIV., the two great heads of the contending parties, took the field themselves; and Louis, with the aid of Luxembourg, took Namur, in spite of the efforts of William to succor it. Some other successes were gained by the French, and Louis retired to Versailles to celebrate the victories of his generals. The next campaign witnessed another splendid victory over William and the allies, by Luxembourg, at Neerwinden, when twelve thousand men were killed; and also another, by Catinat, at Marsaglia, in Italy, over the Duke of Savoy. The military glory of Louis was now at its height; but, in the campaign of 1694–95, he met with great reverses. Luxembourg, the greatest of his generals, died. The allies retook Huy and Namur, and the French king, exhausted by the long war, was forced to make peace. The treaty of Ryswick, in 1697, secured the tranquillity of Europe for four years — long enough only for the

contending parties to recover their energies, and prepare for a more desperate contest. Louis XIV., however, now acted on the defensive. The allied powers were resolved on his complete humiliation.

War broke out again in 1701, and in consequence of the accession of Philip V., grandson of Louis XIV., to the throne of Spain. This great war of the Spanish Succession, during which Marlborough so greatly distinguished himself, claims a few explanatory remarks.

Charles II., King of Spain, and the last of the line of the Austrian princes, being without an heir, and about to die, selected as his successor Leopold of Bavaria, a boy five years of age, whose grandmother was Maria Theresa. But there were also two other claimants — the Duke of Anjou, grandson of Louis XIV., whose claim rested in being the grandson of Maria Theresa, daughter of Philip IV., and sister of Charles II., and the Emperor of Germany, whose mother was the daughter of Philip III. The various European states looked with extreme jealousy on the claims of the Emperor of Germany and the Duke of Anjou, because they feared that the balance of power would be seriously disturbed if either an Austrian or a Bourbon prince became King of Spain. They, therefore, generally supported the claims of the Bavarian prince, especially England and Holland.

But the Prince of Bavaria suddenly died, as it was supposed by poison, and Louis XIV. so successfully intrigued, that his grandson was nominated by the Spanish monarch as heir to his throne. This incensed Leopold II. of Germany, and especially William III., who was resolved that the house of Bourbon should be no further aggrandized.

On the accession of the Duke of Anjou to the Spanish throne, in 1701, a grand alliance was formed, headed by the Emperor of Germany and the King of England, to dethrone him. Louis XIV. long hesitated between his ambition and the interests of his kingdom; but ambition triumphed. He well knew that he could only secure a crown to his grandson by a desperate contest with indignant Europe. Austria, Holland, Savoy, and England were arrayed against France. And this war of the Spanish Succession was the longest, the bloodiest, and the most disastrous war in which Louis

was ever engaged. It commenced the last year of the reign of William III., and lasted thirteen years.

The great hero of this war was doubtless the Duke of Marlborough, although Prince Eugene gained with him as imperishable glories as war can bestow. John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, cannot be said to be one of those geniuses who have impressed their minds on nations and centuries; but he was a man who gave great lustre to the British name, and who attained to a higher pitch of military fame than any general whom England has produced since Oliver Cromwell, with the exception of Wellington.

He was born in 1650, of respectable parents, and was page of honor to the Duke of York, afterwards James II. While a mere boy, his bent of mind was discernible, and he solicited and obtained from the duke an ensign's commission, and rapidly passed through the military grades of lieutenant, captain, major, and colonel. During the infamous alliance between Louis XIV. and Charles II., he served under Marshal Turenne, and learned from him the art of war. But he also distinguished himself as a diplomatic agent of Charles II., in his intrigues with Holland and France. Before the accession of James II., he was created a Scottish peer, by the title of Baron Churchill. He followed his royal patron in his various peregrinations, and, when he succeeded to the English throne, he was raised to an English peerage. But Marlborough deserted his patron on the landing of William III., and was made a member of his Privy Council, and lord of the bed-chamber. Two days before the coronation of William, he was made Earl of Marlborough; but was not intrusted with as high military command as his genius and services merited, William being apparently jealous of his fame. On the accession of Anne, he was sent to the Continent with the supreme command of the English armies in the war with Louis about the Spanish Succession. His services in the campaign of 1702 secured a dukedom, and deservedly, for he contended against great obstacles — against the obstinacy and stupidity of the Dutch deputies; against the timidity of the English government at home; and against the veteran armies of Louis, led on by the celebrated Villars. But neither the campaigns of 1702 or 1703 were marked by any decisive battles. In 1704 was fought the celebrated battle of Blenheim, by which

the French power was crippled, and the hopes of Louis prostrated.

The campaign of 1703 closed disastrously for the allies. Europe was never in greater peril. Bavaria united with France and Spain to crush Austria. The Austrians had only twenty thousand men, while the Bavarians had forty-five thousand men in the centre of Germany, and Marshal Tallard was posted, with forty-five thousand men, on the Upper Rhine. Marshal Villeroy opposed Marlborough in the Netherlands.

But Marlborough conceived the bold project of marching his troops to the banks of the Danube, and there uniting with the Imperialists under Prince Eugene, to cut off the forces of the enemy before they could unite. So he left the Dutch to defend themselves against Villeroy, rapidly ascended the Rhine, before any of the enemy dreamed of his designs. From Mentz, he proceeded with forty thousand men to Heidelberg, and from Heidelberg to Donauworth, on the Danube, where his troops, which had effected a junction with the Austrians and Prussians, successfully engaged the Bavarians. But the Bavarians and the French also succeeded in uniting their forces; and both parties prepared for a desperate conflict. There were about eighty thousand men on each side. The French and Bavarians were strongly intrenched at the village of Blenheim; and Marlborough, against the advice of most of his generals, resolved to attack their fortified camp before it was reënforced by a large detachment of troops which Villeroy had sent. "I know the danger," said Marlborough; "but a battle is absolutely necessary." He was victorious. Forty thousand of the enemy were killed or taken prisoners; Tallard himself was taken, and every trophy was secured which marks a decisive victory. By his great victory, the Emperor of Austria was relieved from his fears, the Hungarians were overawed, Bavaria fell under the sway of the emperor, and the armies of Louis were dejected and discouraged. Marlborough marched back again to Holland without interruption, was made a prince of the empire, and received pensions and lands from the English government, which made him one of the richest and greatest of the English nobility. The palace of Blenheim was built, and he received the praises and plaudits of the civilized world.

The French were hardly able to cope with Marlborough during the next campaign, but rallied in 1706, during which year the great battle of Ramillies was fought, and won by Marlborough The conquest of Brabant, and the greater part of Spanish Flanders, resulted from this victory; and Louis, crippled and humiliated, made overtures of peace. Though equitable, they were rejected; the allies having resolved that no peace should be made with the house of Bourbon while a prince of that house continued to sit upon the throne of Spain. Louis appealed now, in his distress, to the national honor, sent his plate to the mint, and resolved, in his turn, to contend, to the last extremity, with his enemies, whom success had intoxicated.

The English, not content with opposing Louis in the Netherlands and in Germany, sent their armies into Spain, also, who, united with the Austrians, overran the country, and nearly completed its conquest. One of the most gallant and memorable exploits of the war was the siege and capture of Barcelona by the Earl of Peterborough, the city having made one of the noblest and most desperate defences since the siege of Numantia.

The exertions of Louis were equal to his necessities; and, in 1707, he was able to send large armies into the field. None of his generals were able to resist the Duke of Marlborough, who gained new victories, and took important cities; but, in Spain, the English met with reverses. In 1708, Louis again offered terms of peace, which were again rejected. His country was impoverished, his resources were exhausted, and a famine carried away his subjects. He agreed to yield the whole Spanish monarchy to the house of Austria, without any equivalent; to cede to the emperor his conquests on the Rhine, and to the Dutch the great cities which Marlborough had taken; to acknowledge the Elector of Brandenburg as King of Prussia, and Anne as Queen of England; to remove the Pretender from his dominions; to acknowledge the succession of the house of Hanover; to restore every thing required by the Duke of Savoy; and agree to the cessions made to the King of Portugal.

And yet these conditions, so honorable and advantageous to the allies, were rejected, chiefly through the influence of Marlborough Eugene, and the pensionary Heinsius, who acted from entirely

selfish motives. Louis was not permitted to cherish the most remote hope of peace without surrendering the strongest cities of his dominions as pledges for the entire evacuation of the Spanish monarchy by his grandson. This he would not agree to. He threw himself, in his distress, upon the loyalty of his people. Their pride and honor were excited; and, in spite of all their misfortunes, they prepared to make new efforts. Again were the French defeated at the great battle of Malplaquet, when ninety thousand men contended on each side; and again did Louis sue for peace. Again were his overtures rejected, and again did he rally his exhausted nation. Some victories in Spain were obtained over the confederates; but the allies gradually were hemming him around, and the king-hunt was nearly up, when unexpected dissensions among the allies relieved him of his enemies.

These dissensions were the struggles between the Whigs and Tories in England; the former maintaining that no peace should be made; the latter, that the war had been carried far enough, and was prolonged only to gratify the ambition of Marlborough. The great general, in consequence, lost popularity; and the Tories succeeded in securing a peace, just as Louis was on the verge of ruin. Another campaign, had the allies been united, would probably have enabled Marlborough to penetrate to Paris. That was his aim; that was the aim of his party. But the nation was weary of war, and at last made peace with Louis. By the treaty of Utrecht, (1713,) Philip V. resumed the throne of Spain, but was compelled to yield his rights to the crown of France in case of the death of a sickly infant, the great-grandson of Louis XIV., who was heir apparent to the throne; but, in other respects, the terms were not more favorable than what Louis had offered in 1706, and very inadequate to the expenses of the war. The allies should have yielded to the overtures of Louis before, or should have persevered. But party spirit, and division in the English cabinet and parliament, prevented the consummation which the Whigs desired, and Louis was saved from further humiliation and losses.

But his power was broken. He was no longer the autocrat of Europe, but a miserable old man, who had lived to see irreparable calamities inflicted on his nation, and calamities in consequence

of his ambition. His latter years were melancholy. He survived his son and his grandson. He saw himself an object of reproach, of ridicule, and of compassion. He sought the religious consolation of his church, but was the victim of miserable superstition, and a tool of the Jesuits. He was ruled by his wife, the widow of the poet Scarron, whom his children refused to honor. His last days were imbittered by disappointments and mortifications, disasters in war, and domestic afflictions. No man ever, for a while, enjoyed a prouder preëminence. No man ever drank deeper of the bitter cup of disappointed ambition and alienated affections. No man ever more fully realized the vanity of this world. None of the courtiers, by whom he was surrounded, he could trust, and all his experiences led to a disbelief in human virtue. He saw, with shame, that his palaces, his wars, and his pleasures, had consumed the resources of the nation, and had sowed the seeds of a fearful revolution. He lost his spirits; his temper became soured; mistrust and suspicion preyed upon his mind. His love of pomp survived all his other weaknesses, and his court, to the last, was most rigid in its wearisome formalities. But the pageantry of Versailles was a poor antidote to the sorrows which bowed his head to the ground, except on those great public occasions when his pride triumphed over his grief. Every day, in his last years, something occurred to wound his vanity, and alienate him from all the world but Madame de Maintenon, the only being whom he fully trusted, and who did not deceive him. Indeed, the humiliated monarch was an object of pity as well as of reproach, and his death was a relief to himself, as well as to his family. He died in 1715, two years after the peace of Utrecht, not much regretted by the nation.

Louis XIV. cannot be numbered among the monsters of the human race who have worn the purple of royalty. His chief and worst vice was egotism, which was born with him, which was cultivated by all the influences of his education, and by all the circumstances of his position. This absorbing egotism made him insensible to the miseries he inflicted, and cherished in his soul the notion that France was created for him alone. His mistresses, his friends, his wives, his children, his court, and the whole nation were viewed only as the instruments of his pride and pleasure

All his crimes and blunders proceeded from his extraordinary selfishness. If we could look on him without this moral taint, which corrupted and disgraced him, we should see an indulgent father and a generous friend. He attended zealously to the duties of his station, and sought not to shake off his responsibilities. He loved pleasure, but, in its pursuit, he did not forget the affairs of the realm. He rewarded literature, and appreciated merit. He honored the institutions of religion, and, in his latter days, was devoted to its duties, so far as he understood them. He has been foolishly panegyrized, and as foolishly censured. Still his reign was baneful, on the whole, especially to the interests of enlightened Christianity and to popular liberty. He was a bigoted Catholic, and sought to erect, on the ruins of states and empires, an absolute and universal throne. He failed; and instead of bequeathing to his successors the power which he enjoyed, he left them vast debts, a distracted empire, and a discontented people. He bequeathed to France the revolution which hurled her monarch from his throne, but which was overruled for her ultimate good.

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