CHAPTER XVII.

WILLIAM AND MARY.

From Louis XIV. we turn to consider the reign of his illustrious rival, William III., King of England, who enjoyed the throne conjointly with Mary, daughter of James II.

The early life and struggles of this heroic prince have been already alluded to, in the two previous chapters, and will not be further discussed. On the 12th day of February, 1689, he arrived at Whitehall, the favorite palace of the Stuart kings, and, on the 11th of April, he and Mary were crowned in Westminster Abbey.

Their reign is chiefly memorable for the war with Louis XIV., the rebellion in Ireland, fomented by the intrigues of James II., and for the discussion of several great questions pertaining to the liberties and the prosperity of the English nation, questions in relation to the civil list, the Place Bill, the Triennial Bill, the liberty of the press, a standing army, the responsibility of ministers, the veto of the crown, the administration of Ireland, the East India Company, the Bank of England, and the funded debt. These topics make the domestic history of the country, especially in a constitutional point of view, extremely important.

The great struggle with Louis XIV. has already received all the notice which the limits of this work will allow, in which it was made to appear that, if Louis XIV. was the greater king, William III. was the greater man; and, although his military enterprises were, in one sense, unsuccessful, since he did not triumph in splendid victories, still he opposed successfully what would have been, without his heroism, an overwhelming torrent of invasion and conquest, in consequence of vastly superior forces. The French king was eventually humbled, and the liberties of continental Europe were preserved.

Under the wise, tolerant, and liberal administration of William, the British empire was preserved from disunion, and invaluable liberties and privileges were guaranteed.

Scarcely was he seated on the throne, which his wife inherited from the proud descendants of the Norman Conqueror, when a rebellion in Ireland broke out, and demanded his presence in that distracted and unfortunate country.

The Irish people, being Roman Catholics, had sympathized with James II. in all his troubles, and were resolved to defend his cause against a Calvinistic king. In a short time after his establishment at St. Germain's, through the bounty of the French king, he began to intrigue with the disaffected Irish chieftains. The most noted of these was Tyrconnel, who contrived to deprive the Protestants of Lord Mountjoy, their most trusted and able leader, by sending him on a mission to James II., by whose influence he was confined, on his arrival at Paris, in the Bastile. Tyrconnel then proceeded to disarm the Protestants, and recruit the Catholic army, which was raised in two months to a force of forty thousand men burning to revenge their past injuries, and recover their ancient possessions and privileges. James II. was invited by the army to take possession of his throne. He accepted the invitation, and, early in 1689, made his triumphal entry into Dublin, and was received with a pomp and homage equal to his dignity. But James did not go to Ireland merely to enjoy the homage and plaudits of the Irish people, but to defend the last foothold which he retained as King of England, trusting that success in Ireland would eventually restore to him the throne of his ancestors. And he was cordially, but not powerfully, supported by the French king, who was at war with England, and who justly regarded Ireland as the most assailable part of the British empire.

The Irish parliament, in the interest of James, passed an act of attainder against all Protestants who had assisted William, among whom were two archbishops, one duke, seventeen earls, eighteen barons, and eighty-three clergymen. By another act, Ireland was made independent of England. The Protestants were every where despoiled and insulted.

But James was unequal to the task he had assumed, incapable either of preserving Ireland or retaking England. He was irresolute and undecided. He could not manage an Irish House of Commons any better than he could an English one. He debased the coin, and resorted to irritating measures to raise money

At last he concluded to subdue the Protestants in Ulster, and advanced to lay siege to Londonderry, upon which depended the fate of the north of Ireland. It was bravely defended by the inhabitants, and finally relieved by the troops sent over from England under the command of Kirke — the same who inflicted the cruelties in the west of England under James II. But William wanted able officers, and he took them indiscriminately from all parties. Nine thousand people miserably perished by famine and disease in the town, before the siege was raised, one of the most memorable in the annals of war.

Ulster was now safe, and the discomfiture of James was rapidly effected. Old Marshal Schomberg was sent into Ireland with sixteen thousand veteran troops, and, shortly after, William himself (June 14, 1690) landed at Carrickfergus, near Belfast, with additional men, who swelled the Protestant army to forty thousand.

The contending forces advanced to the conflict, and on the 1st of July was fought the battle of the Boyne, in which Schomberg was killed, but which resulted in the defeat of the troops of James II. The discomfited king fled to Dublin, but quitted it as soon as he had entered it, and embarked hastily at Waterford for France, leaving the Earl of Tyrconnel to contend with vastly superior forces, and to make the best terms in his power.

The country was speedily subdued, and all the important cities and fortresses, one after the other, surrendered to the king. Limerick held out the longest, and made an obstinate resistance, but finally yielded to the conqueror; and with its surrender terminated the final efforts of the old Irish inhabitants to regain the freedom which they had lost. Four thousand persons were outlawed, and their possessions confiscated. Indeed, at different times, the whole country has been confiscated, with the exception of the possessions of a few families of English blood. In the reign of James I., the whole province of Ulster, containing three millions of acres, was divided among the new inhabitants. At the restoration, eight millions of acres, and, after the surrender of Limerick, one million more of acres, were confiscated. During the reign of William and Mary, the Catholic Irish were treated with extreme rigor, and Ireland became a field for place-hunters. All important or lucrative offices in the church, the state, and the army, were

filled with the needy dependants of the great Whig families. Injustice to the nation was constantly exercised, and penal laws were imposed by the English parliament, and in reference to matters which before came under the jurisdiction of the Irish parliament. But, with all these rigorous measures, Ireland was still ruled with more mildness than at any previous period in its history, and no great disturbance again occurred until the reign of George III.

But the reign of William III., however beneficial to the liberties of England and of Europe, was far from peaceful. Apart from his great struggle with the French king, his comfort and his composure of mind were continually disturbed by domestic embarrassments, arising from the jealousies between the Whigs and Tories, the intrigues of statesmen with the exiled family, and discussions in parliament in reference to those great questions which attended the settlement of the constitution. A bill was passed, called the *Place Bill*, excluding all officers of the crown from the House of Commons, which showed the jealousy of the people respecting royal encroachments. A law also was passed, called the *Triennial Bill*, which limited the duration of parliament to three years, but which, in a subsequent reign, was repealed, and one substituted which extended the duration of a parliament to seven years. An important bill was also passed which regulated trials in case of treason, in which the prisoner was furnished with a copy of the indictment, with the names and residences of jurors, with the privilege of peremptory challenge, and with full defence of counsel. This bill guaranteed new privileges and rights to prisoners.

The great question pertaining to the Liberty of the Press was discussed at this time — one of the most vital questions which affect the stability of government on the one side, and the liberties of the people on the other. So desirable have all governments deemed the control of the press by themselves, that parliament, when it abolished the Star Chamber, in the reign of Charles I., still assumed its powers respecting the licensing of books. Various modifications were, from time to time, made in the laws pertaining to licensing books, until, in the reign of William, the liberty of the press was established nearly upon its present basis.

William, in general, was in favor of those movements which

proved beneficial in after times, or which the wisdom of a subsequent age saw fit to adopt. Among these was the union of England and Scotland, which he recommended. Under his auspices, the affairs of the East India Company were considered and new charters granted; the Bank of England was erected; benevolent action for the suppression of vice and for the amelioration of the condition of the poor took place; the coinage was adjusted; and financial experiments were made.

The crown, on the whole, lost power during this reign, which was transferred to the House of Commons. The Commons acquired the complete control of the purse, which is considered paramount to all other authority. Prior to the Revolution, the supply for the public service was placed at the disposal of the sovereign but the definite sum of seven hundred thousand pounds, yearly was placed at the disposal of William, to defray the expense of the civil list and his other expenses, while the other contingent expenses of government, including those for the support of the army and navy, were annually appropriated by the Commons.

The most important legislative act of this reign was the Act of Settlement, March 12, 1701, which provided that England should be freed from the obligation of engaging in any war for the defence of the foreign dominions of the king; that all succeeding kings must be of the communion of the Church of England; that no succeeding king should go out of the British dominions without consent of parliament; that no person in office, or pensioner, should be a member of the Commons; that the religious liberties of the people should be further secured; that the judges should hold office during good behavior, and have their salaries ascertained; and that the succession to the throne should be confined to Protestant princes.

King William reigned in England thirteen years, with much ability, and sagacity, and prudence, and never attempted to subvert the constitution, for which his memory is dear to the English people. But most of his time, as king, was occupied in directing warlike operations on the Continent, and in which he showed a great jealousy of the genius of Marlborough, whose merits he nevertheless finally admitted. He died March 8, 1702, and was buried in the sepulchre of the kings of England.

Notwithstanding the animosity of different parties against William III., public opinion now generally awards to him, considering the difficulties with which he had to contend, the first place among the English kings. He had many enemies and many defects. The Jacobites hated him because "he upset their theory of the divine rights of kings; the High Churchmen because he was indifferent to the forms of church government; the Tories because he favored the Whigs; and the Republicans because he did not again try the hopeless experiment of a republic." He was not a popular idol, in spite of his great services and great qualities, because he was cold, reserved, and unyielding; because he disdained to flatter, and loved his native better than his adopted country. But his faults were chiefly offences against good manners, and against the prejudices of the nation. He distrusted human nature, and disdained human sympathy. He was ambitious, and his ambition was allied with selfishness. He permitted the slaughter of the De Witts, and never gave Marlborough a command worthy of his talents. He had no taste for literature, wit, or the fine arts. His favorite tastes were hunting, gardening and upholstery. That he was, however, capable of friendship, is attested by his long and devoted attachment to Bentinck, whom he created Earl of Portland, and splendidly rewarded with rich and extensive manors in every part of the land. His reserve and coldness may in part be traced to his profound knowledge of mankind, whom he feared to trust. But if he was not beloved by the nation, he secured their eternal respect by being the first to solve the problem of constitutional monarchy, and by successfully ruling, at a very critical period, the Dutch, the English, the Scotch, and the Irish, who had all separate interests and jealousies; by yielding, when in possession of great power, to restraints he did not like; and by undermining the intrigues and power of so mighty an enemy of European liberties as Louis XIV. His heroism shone brilliantly in defeat and disaster, and his courage and exertion never flagged when all Europe desponded, and when he himself labored under all the pains and lassitude of protracted disease. He died serenely, but hiding from his attendants, as he did all his days, the profoundest impressions which agitated his earnest and heroic soul.

Among the great men whom he encouraged and rewarded, may be mentioned the historian Burnet, whom he made Bishop of Salisbury, and Tillotson and Tennison, whom he elevated to archiepiscopal thrones. Dr. South and Dr. Bentley also adorned this age of eminent divines. The great poets of the period were Prior, Dryden, Swift, and Pope, who, however, are numbered more frequently among the wits of the reign of Anne. Robert Boyle distinguished himself for experiments in natural science, and zeal for Christian knowledge; and Christopher Wren for his genius in architectural art. But the two great lights of this reign were, doubtless, Sir Isaac Newton and John Locke, to whom the realm of natural and intellectual philosophy is more indebted than to any other men of genius from the time of Bacon. The discoveries of Newton are scarcely without a parallel, and he is generally regarded as the greatest mathematical intellect that England has produced. To him the world is indebted for the binomial theorem, discovered at the age of twenty-two; for the invention of fluxions; for the demonstration of the law of gravitation: and for the discovery of the different refrangibility of rays of light. His treatise on Optics and his *Principia*, in which he brought to light the new theory of the universe, place him at the head of modern philosophers — on a high vantage ground, to which none have been elevated, of his age, with the exception of Leibnitz and Galileo. But his greatest glory was his modesty, and the splendid tribute he rendered to the truths of Christianity, whose importance and sublime beauty he was ever most proud to acknowledge in an age of levity and indifference.

John Locke is a name which almost exclusively belongs to the reign of William III., and he will also ever be honorably mentioned in the constellation of the very great geniuses and Christians of the world. His treatises on Religious Toleration are the most masterly ever written, while his Essay on the Human Understanding is a great system of truth, as complete, original, and logical, in the department of mental science, as was the system of Calvin in the realm of theology. Locke's Essay has had its enemies and detractors, and, while many eminent men have dissented from it, it nevertheless remains, one of the most enduring and proudest monuments of the immortal and ever-expanding intellect of man

On the death of William III., (1702,) the Princess Anne, daughter of James II., peaceably ascended the throne. She was thirty-seven years of age, a woman of great weaknesses, and possessing but few interesting qualities. Nevertheless, her reign is radiant with the glory of military successes, and adorned with every grace of fancy, wit, and style in literature. The personal talent and exclusive ambition of William suppressed the national genius; but the incapacity of Anne gave scope for the commanding abilities of Marlborough in the field, and Godolphin in the cabinet.

The memorable events connected with her reign of twelve years, were, the war of the Spanish succession, in which Marlborough humbled the pride of Louis XIV.; the struggles of the Whigs and Tories; the union of Scotland with England; the discussion and settlement of great questions pertaining to the constitution, and the security of the Protestant religion; and the impulse which literature received from the constellation of learned men who were patronized by the government, and who filled an unusual place in public estimation.

In a political point of view, this reign is but the continuation of the reign of William, since the same objects were pursued, the same policy was adopted, and the same great characters were intrusted with power. The animating object of William's life was the suppression of the power of Louis XIV.; and this object was never lost sight of by the English government under the reign of Anne.

Hence the great political event of the reign was the war of the Spanish succession, which, however, pertains to the reign of Louis as well as to that of Anne. It was during this war that the great battles of Blenheim, Ramillies, and Malplaquet attested the genius of the greatest military commander that England had ever sent into the field. It was this war which exhausted the energies and resources of all the contending states of Europe, and created a necessity for many years of slumbering repose. It was this war which completed the humiliation of a monarch who aspired to the sovereignty of Europe, which preserved the balance of power, and secured the liberties of Europe. Yet it was a war which laid the foundation of the national debt, inflamed the English mind with a mad passion for military glory, which demoralized the nation,

and fostered those international jealousies and enmities which are still a subject of reproach to the two most powerful states of Europe. This war made England a more prominent actor on the arena of European strife, and perhaps contributed to her political aggrandizement. The greatness of the British empire begins to date from this period, although this greatness is more to be traced to colonial possessions, manufactures, and commercial wealth, than to the victories of Marlborough.

It will ever remain an open question whether or not it was wise in the English nation to continue so long the struggle with Louis XIV. In a financial and material point of view, the war proved disastrous. But it is difficult to measure the real greatness of a country, and solid and enduring blessings, by pounds, shillings, and pence. All such calculations, however statistically startling, are erroneous and deceptive. The real strength of nations consists in loyalty, patriotism, and public spirit; and no sacrifices can be too great to secure these unbought blessings — "this cheap defence." If the victories of Marlborough secured these, gave dignity to the British name, and an honorable and lofty self-respect to the English people, they were not dearly purchased. But the settlement of these questions cannot be easily made.

As to the remarkable genius of the great man who infused courage into the English mind, there can be no question. Marlborough, in spite of his many faults, his selfishness and parsimony, his ambition and duplicity, will ever enjoy an enviable fame. He was not so great a moral hero as William, nor did he contend against such superior forces as the royal hero. But he was a great hero, nevertheless. His glory was reached by no sudden indulgence of fortune, by no fortunate movements, by no accidental circumstances. His fame was progressive. He never made a great mistake; he never lost the soundness of his judgment. No success unduly elated him, and no reverses discouraged him. He never forgot the interests of the nation in his own personal annoyances or enmities. He was magnanimously indulgent to those Dutch deputies who thwarted his measures, criticized his plans, and lectured him on the art of war. The glory of his country was the prevailing desire of his soul. He was as great in diplomacy and statesmanship as on the field of Blenheim. He ever sacri-

ficed his feelings as a victorious general to his duty as a subject. His sagacity was only equalled by his prudence and patience, and these contributed, as well as his personal bravery, to his splendid successes, which secured for him magnificent rewards — palaces and parks, peerages, and a nation's gratitude and praise.

But there is a limit to all human glory. Marlborough was undermined by his political enemies, and he himself lost the confidence of the queen whom he had served, partly by his own imperious conduct, and partly from the overbearing insolence of his wife. From the height of popular favor, he descended to the depth of popular hatred. He was held up, by the sarcasm of the writers whom he despised, to derision and obloquy; was accused of insolence, cruelty, ambition, extortion, and avarice, discharged from his high offices, and obliged to seek safety by exile. He never regained the confidence of the nation, although, when he died, parliament decreed him a splendid funeral, and a grave in Westminster Abbey.

In private life, he was amiable and kind; was patient under contradiction, and placid in manners; had great self-possession, and extraordinary dignity. His person was beautiful, and his address commanding. He was feared as a general, but loved as a man. He never lost his affections for his home, and loved to idolatry his imperious wife, his equal, if not superior, in the knowledge of human nature. These qualities as a man, a general, and a statesman, in spite of his defects, have immortalized his name, and he will, for a long time to come, be called, and called with justice, the *great* Duke of Marlborough.

Scarcely less than he, was Lord Godolphin, the able prime minister of Anne, with whom Marlborough was united by family ties, by friendship, by official relations, and by interest. He was a Tory by profession, but a Whig in his policy. He rose with Marlborough, and fell with him, being an unflinching advocate for the prosecution of the war to the utmost limits, for which his government was distasteful to the Tories. His life was not stainless; but, in an age of corruption, he ably administered the treasury department, and had control of unbounded wealth, without becoming rich — the highest praise which can ever be awarded to a minister of finance. It was only through the