Dundee, with whom were forfeited all the fruits of that bloody victory. Mackay, when he found himself free from pursuit, declared his conviction that his opponent had fallen in the battle. And such was the opinion of Dundee's talents and courage, and the general sense of the peculiar crisis at which his death took place, that the common people of the low country cannot, even now, be persuaded that he died an ordinary death. They say that a servant of his own, shocked at the severities which, if triumphant, his master was likely to accomplish against the Presbyterians, and giving way to the popular prejudice about his having a charm against the effect of lead balls, shot him, in the tumult of the battle, with a silver button taken from his livery coat. The Jacobites and the Episcopal party, on the other hand, lamented the deceased victor, as the last of the Scots, the last of the Grahams, and the last of all that was great in his native country.

XLVIII.

DOWNFALL OF MARLBOROUGH.—LECKY.

[While William, by his wise statesmanship, conferred great benefits upon England, he rendered still greater service to the Continental states in checkmating the ambition of Louis XIV. Death came to him, however, before the struggle with Louis was over, and the work which he had begun was committed to other hands. John Churchill, earl of Marlborough, was appointed by William's successor, Queen Anne, commander-in-chief of the army. By a series of remarkably brilliant campaigns which proved him to be the greatest general of his age, he forced the French king to sue for peace. But, as the proffered terms were rejected through Marlborough's influence, it was thought that he was prolonging the war for his own advantage. Therefore, the Tories, who strongly opposed the war, and who hated Marlborough because of his great successes, determined to accomplish his ruin.]

MEANWHILE the government at home had been pressing on the peace by measures of almost unparalleled violence.

Supported by a large majority in the House of Commons, it resolved to silence or crush all opposition. The first and most conspicuous victim was Marlborough. It was alleged, and alleged with truth, that, while commanding in the Netherlands, he had during several years received an annual pension of about £6,000 from the contractor who supplied his army with bread, and also that he had appropriated two and a half per cent. of the money which had been voted by Parliament for paying the subsidized troops, and on these grounds he was accused of peculation. The answer, however, in ordinary times would have been accepted as conclusive. It was shown that the former sum was a perquisite always granted to the commander in the Netherlands, and employed by him for obtaining that secret intelligence which is absolutely essential to a general, and which was never more complete than under Marlborough, and that the deduction from the subsidies was expressly authorized by the foreign powers who were subsidized, and by a royal warrant which granted it to the commander-in-chief "for extraordinary contingent expenses." Whatever irregularity there might be in providing by these means a supply of secret-service money, it was of old standing; there was no reason whatever to believe that the fund was misappropriated, though from its very nature it could not be accounted for in detail, and it was proved that the expenditure of secret-service money in the campaigns of Marlborough was considerably smaller than it had been in the incomparably less successful campaigns of William. Prince Eugene afterward very candidly declared that he had himself given for intelligence three times as much as Marlborough was charged with on that head.

The object of the dominant party, however, was, at all costs, to discredit Marlborough. He was dismissed from all his employments, pronounced guilty by a party vote of the House of Commons, and exposed to a storm of mendacious obloquy. When Eugene came over to England in order to use his