

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

influence against the peace in January of 1711-12, he perceived, with no little generous indignation, that every effort was made to extol his military talents at the expense of the great English commander. Marlborough was assailed as he drove through the streets with cries of "Stop thief!" He was grossly insulted in the House of Lords. He was accused of the most atrocious plots against the queen and against the state. The scurrilous pens of Mrs. Manley and of a host of other libelers were employed against him. Ballads, describing him as the basest of men, were sung publicly in the high-ways. The funds which the queen had hitherto provided for the construction of Blenheim were stopped, and the tide of calumny and vituperation ran so strongly that he thought it advisable to abandon the country, and accordingly proceeded, in November, 1712, almost alone, to Flanders, and soon after to Germany. He was received in both countries with a respect and an enthusiasm that contrasted strangely with his treatment at home, and he at the same time invested £50,000 in Holland, in case the state of home politics should exclude him forever from his country.

English history contains no more striking instance of the sudden revulsion of popular feeling. Beyond comparison, the greatest of English generals, Marlborough, had raised his country to a height of military glory such as it had never attained since the days of Poitiers and Agincourt, and his victories appeared all the more dazzling after the ignominious reigns of the last two Stuarts, and after the many failures that checkered the enterprises of William. His military genius, though once bitterly decried by party malignity, will now be universally acknowledged, and it was sufficient to place him among the greatest captains who have ever lived. Hardly any other modern general combined to an equal degree the three great attributes of daring, caution, and sagacity, or conducted military enterprises of equal magnitude and duration without losing a single battle, or failing in a single siege. He was

one of the very few commanders who appear to have shown equal skill in directing a campaign, in winning a battle, and in improving a victory. It cannot, indeed, be said of him, as it may be said of Frederick the Great, that he was at the head of a small power, with almost all Europe in arms against it, and that nearly every victory he won was snatched from an army enormously outnumbering his own. Nor did the circumstances of Marlborough admit of a military career of the same brilliancy, variety, and magnitude of enterprise as that of Napoleon. But both Frederick and Napoleon experienced crushing disasters, and both of them had some advantages which Marlborough did not possess. Frederick was the absolute ruler of a state which had for many years been governed exclusively on the military principle, in which the first and almost the sole object of the government had been to train and discipline the largest and most perfect army the nation could support. Napoleon was the absolute ruler of the foremost military power on the Continent, at a time when the enthusiasm of a great revolution had given it an unparalleled energy, when the destruction of the old hierarchy of rank and the opening of all posts to talent, had brought an extraordinary amount of ability to the forefront, and when the military administrations of surrounding nations were singularly decrepit and corrupt. Marlborough, on the other hand, commanded armies consisting, in a great degree, of confederates and mercenaries of many different nationalities, and under many different rulers. He was thwarted at every step by political obstacles, and by the much graver obstacles arising from divided command and personal or national jealousies; he contended against the first military nation of the Continent, at a time when its military organization had attained the highest perfection, and when a long succession of brilliant wars had given it a school of officers of consummate skill.

But, great as were his military gifts, they would have been

insufficient had they not been allied with other qualities, well fitted to win the admiration of men. Adam Smith has said, with scarcely an exaggeration, that "it is a characteristic almost peculiar to the great duke of Marlborough, that ten years of such uninterrupted and such splendid successes as scarce any other general could boast of, never betrayed him into a single rash action, scarcely into a single rash word or expression." Nothing in his career is more admirable than the unwearied patience, the inimitable skill, the courtesy, the tact, the self-command with which he employed himself during many years in reconciling the incessant differences, overcoming the incessant opposition, and soothing the incessant jealousies of those with whom he was compelled to co-operate. His private correspondence abundantly shows how gross was the provocation he endured, how keenly he felt it, how nobly he bore it. As a negotiator, he ranks with the most skillful diplomatists of his age, and it was, no doubt, his great tact in managing men that induced his old rival Bolingbroke, in one of his latest writings, to describe him as not only the greatest general, but also "the greatest minister our country or any other has produced." Chesterfield, while absurdly depreciating his intellect, admitted that "his manner was irresistible," and he added that, of all men he had ever known, Marlborough "possessed the graces in the highest degree."

Nor was his character without its softer side. Though he cannot, I think, be acquitted of a desire to prolong war, in the interests of his personal or political ambition, it is at least true that no general ever studied more, by admirable discipline and by uniform humanity, to mitigate its horrors. Very few friendships, among great political or military leaders, have been as constant, or as unclouded by any shade of jealousy, as the friendship between Marlborough and Godolphin; and between Marlborough and Eugene. His conjugal fidelity, in a time of great laxity, and under temptations and provocations of no common order, was beyond reproach. His attachment to the

Church of England was at one time the great obstacle to his advancement. It appears never to have wavered through all the vicissitudes of his life; and no one who reads his most private letters with candor, can fail to perceive that a certain vein of genuine piety ran through his nature, however inconsistent it may appear with some portions of his career.

Yet it may be questioned whether, even in the zenith of his fame, he was really popular. He had grave vices, and they were precisely of that kind which is most fatal to public men. His extreme rapacity in acquiring, and his extreme avarice in hoarding money, contrasted forcibly with the lavish generosity of Ormond, and alone gave weight to the charges of speculation that were brought against him. It is true that this, like all his passions, was under control. Torcy soon found that it was useless to attempt to bribe him, and he declined, as we have seen, with little hesitation, the enormously lucrative post of governor of the Austrian Netherlands, when he found that the appointment aroused the strong and dangerous hostility of the Dutch. In these cases, his keen and far-seeing judgment perceived clearly his true interest, and he had sufficient resolution to follow it. Yet still, like many men who have risen from great poverty to great wealth, avarice was the passion of his life, and the rapacity, both of himself and of his wife, was insatiable. Besides immense grants for Blenheim, and marriage portions given by the queen to their daughters, they at one time received between them an annual income of public money of more than £64,000.

Nor can he be acquitted of very gross and aggravated treachery to those he served. It is, indeed, not easy to form a fair estimate in this respect of the conduct of public men at the period of the Revolution. Historians rarely make sufficient allowance for the degree in which the judgments and dispositions even of the best men are colored by the moral tone of the age, society, or profession in which they live, or for the temptations of men of great genius and of natural ambition in

times when no highly scrupulous man could possibly succeed in public life. Marlborough struggled into greatness from a very humble position, in one of the most profligate periods of English politics, and he lived through a long period when the ultimate succession of the crown was very doubtful. A very large proportion of the leading statesmen, during this long season of suspense, made such overtures to the deposed dynasty as would at least secure them from absolute ruin in the event of a change; and their conduct is surely susceptible of much palliation. The apparent interests and the apparent wishes of the nation hung so evenly, and oscillated so frequently, that strong convictions were rare, and even good men might often be in doubt.

But the obligations of Marlborough to James were of no common order, and his treachery was of no common dye. He had been raised by the special favor of his sovereign from the position of a page to the peerage, to great wealth, to high command in the army. He had been trusted by him with the most absolute trust. He not only abandoned him in the crisis of his fate, with circumstances of the most deliberate and aggravated treachery, but also employed his influence over the daughter of his benefactor to induce her to fly from her father, and to array herself with his enemies. Such conduct, if it had indeed been dictated, as he alleged, solely by a regard for the interests of Protestantism, would have been certainly, in the words of Hume, "a signal sacrifice to public virtue of every duty in private life;" and it "required ever after the most upright, disinterested, and public-spirited behavior, to render it justifiable." How little the later career of Marlborough fulfilled this condition is well known. When we find that, having been loaded under the new government with titles, honors, and wealth, having been placed in the inner council and intrusted with the most important state secrets, he was one of the first Englishmen to enter into negotiations with the exiled king; that he purchased his pardon from James by betraying

important military secrets to the enemies of his country, and that during a great part of his subsequent career, while holding office under the government, he was secretly negotiating with the pretender, it is difficult not to place the worst construction upon his public life. It is probable, indeed, that his negotiations with the Jacobites were never sincere, that he had no real desire for a restoration, and that his guiding motive was much less ambition than a desire to secure what he possessed; but these considerations only slightly palliate his conduct. At the period of his downfall his later acts of treason were, for the most part, unknown; but his conduct toward James weighed heavily upon his reputation, and his intercourse with the pretender, though not proved, was suspected by many. Neither Hanoverians nor Jacobites trusted him; neither Whigs nor Tories could regard him, without reserve, as their own.

And with this feeling of distrust there was mingled a strong element of fear. In the latter years of Queen Anne the shadow of Cromwell fell darkly across the path of Marlborough. The profound horror of military despotism, which is one of the strongest and most salutary of English sentiments, has been, perhaps, the most valuable legacy of the commonwealth. In Marlborough, for the first time since the Restoration, men saw a possible Cromwell, and they looked forward with alarm to the death of the queen as a period peculiarly propitious to military usurpation.

These considerations help to explain the completeness of the downfall of Marlborough.

XLIX.

WALPOLE AS A PEACE MINISTER.—GREEN.

[By a law enacted during the life-time of William it was settled that, if neither he and Queen Mary, nor Queen Anne, left any children, the crown should go to the German branch of the Stuart family. The head of this branch, at the time of Queen Anne's death, was George, elector of Hanover, and he accordingly became the first English king of the house of Hanover, or Brunswick, as it is often called. As he was a foreigner, ignorant of English politics, and even of the English language, it was almost inevitable that the administration of affairs should fall into the hands of his ministers. Among these Sir Robert Walpole soon rose to prominence, and became prime minister in 1721. From that time on until his retirement, in 1742, his history is the history of the nation.]



GEORGE I.

BUT it was no mere chance or good luck which maintained Walpole at the head of affairs for more than twenty years. If no minister has fared worse at the hand of poets or historians, there are few whose greatness has been more impartially recognized by practical statesmen. His qualities, indeed, were such as a practical statesman can alone do full justice to. There is nothing to charm in the outer aspect of the man; nor is there any thing picturesque in the work which he set himself to do, or in the means by which he succeeded in doing it. But picturesque or no, the work of keeping England quiet, and of giving quiet to Europe, was in itself a noble one; and it is the temper with which he carried on this work, the sagacity with which he discerned the means by which alone it could be done, and the stubborn, indomitable will with which he faced every difficulty in the doing it, which gives Walpole his place

among English statesmen. He was the first and he was the most successful of our peace ministers. "The most pernicious circumstances," he said, "in which this country can be are those of war; as we must be losers while it lasts, and cannot be great gainers when it ends." It was not that the honor or influence of England suffered in Walpole's hands, for he won victories by the firmness of his policy and the skill of his negotiations as effectual as any that are won by arms. But up to the very end of his ministry, when the frenzy of the nation at last forced his hand, in spite of every varying complication of foreign affairs, and a never-ceasing pressure alike from the opposition and the court, it is the glory of Walpole that he resolutely kept England at peace. And as he was the first of our peace ministers, so he was the first of our financiers. He was far indeed from discerning the powers which later statesmen have shown to exist in a sound finance—powers of producing both national development and international amity; but he had the sense to see, what no minister till then had seen, that the only help a statesman can give to industry or commerce is to remove all obstacles in the way of their natural growth, and that beyond this the best course he can take in presence of a great increase in national energy and national wealth is to look quietly on and to let it alone. At the outset of his rule he declared in a speech from the throne that nothing would more conduce to the extension of commerce "than to make the exportation of our own manufactures, and the importation of the commodities used in the manufacturing of them, as practicable and easy as may be."

The first act of his financial administration was to take off the duties from more than a hundred British exports, and nearly forty articles of importation. In 1730 he broke, in the same enlightened spirit, through the prejudice which restricted the commerce of the colonies to the mother country alone, by allowing Georgia and the Carolinas to export their rice directly to any part of Europe. The result was, that

the rice of America soon drove that of Italy and Egypt from the market. His excise bill, defective as it was, was the first measure in which an English minister showed any real grasp of the principles of taxation. The wisdom of Walpole was rewarded by a quick up-growth of prosperity. The material progress of the country was such as England had never seen before. Our exports, which were only six millions in value at the beginning of the century, had reached the value of twelve millions by the middle of it. It was, above all, the trade with the colonies which began to give England a new wealth. The whole colonial trade at the time of the battle of Blenheim (1704) was no greater than the trade with the single isle of Jamaica at the opening of the American war. At the accession of George the Second the exports to Pennsylvania were valued at £15,000. At his death they reached half a million. In the middle of the eighteenth century the profits of Great Britain from the trade with the colonies were estimated at two millions a year. And with the growth of wealth came a quick growth in population. That of Manchester and Birmingham, whose manufactures were now becoming of importance, doubled in thirty years. Bristol, the chief seat of the West Indian trade, rose into new prosperity. Liverpool, which owes its creation to the new trade with the West, sprang up from a little country town into the third port of the kingdom. With peace and security, and the wealth that they brought with them, the value of land, and with it the rental of every country gentleman, rose fast. "Estates which were rented at two thousand a year threescore years ago," said Burke, in 1766, "are at three thousand at present."

Nothing shows more clearly the soundness of his political intellect than the fact that this up-growth of wealth around him never made Walpole swerve from a rigid economy, from a steady reduction of the debt, or a diminution of fiscal duties. Even before the death of George the First the public

burdens were reduced by twenty millions. It was, indeed, in economy alone that his best work could be done. In finance, as in other fields of statesmanship, Walpole was forbidden from taking more than tentative steps toward a wiser system by the needs of the work he had specially to do. To this work every thing gave way. He withdrew his excise bill rather than suffer the agitation it roused to break the quiet which was reconciling the country to the system of the revolution. His hatred of religious intolerance, or the support he hoped for from the dissenters, never swayed him to rouse the spirit of popular bigotry, which he knew to be ready to burst out at the slightest challenge, by any effort to repeal the laws against non-conformity. His temper was naturally vigorous and active, and yet the years of his power are years without parallel in our annals for political stagnation. His long administration, indeed, is almost without a history. All legislative and political action seemed to cease with his entry into office. Year after year passed by without a change. In the third year of Walpole's ministry there was but one division in the House of Commons. Such an inaction gives little scope for the historian; but it fell in with the temper of the nation at large. It was popular with the class which commonly presses for political activity. The energy of the trading class was absorbed, for the time, in the rapid extension of commerce and accumulation of wealth. So long as the country was justly and temperately governed the merchant and shopkeeper were content to leave government in the hands that held it. All they asked was to be let alone to enjoy their new freedom and develop their new industries. And Walpole let them alone.

On the other hand, the forces which opposed the revolution lost, year by year, somewhat of their energy. The fervor which breeds revolt died down among the Jacobites as their swords rusted idly in their scabbards. The Tories sulked in their country houses; but their wrath against the house of

Hanover ebbed away for want of opportunities of exerting itself. And, meanwhile, on opponents as on friends, the freedom which the revolution had brought with it was doing its work.

It was to the patient influence of this freedom that Walpole trusted; and it was the special mark of his administration that, in spite of every temptation, he gave it full play. Though he dared not touch the laws that oppressed the Catholic or the dissenter, he took care that they should remain inoperative. Catholic worship went on unhindered. Yearly bills of indemnity exempted the non-conformists from the consequences of their infringement of the test act. There was no tampering with public justice or with personal liberty. Thought and action were alike left free. No minister was ever more foully slandered by journalists and pamphleteers, but Walpole never meddled with the press.

L.

THE PREACHING OF WHITEFIELD.—LECKY.

[The great Methodist revival dates from the later years of Walpole's ministry. The Church of England was in a state of great stagnation, and a group of Oxford students, among whom John and Charles Wesley were the most prominent, determined to regenerate it. But the wonderful preaching of Whitefield was the main instrument in spreading the movement, especially among the lower classes.]

His eloquence had nothing of that chaste and polished beauty which was displayed in the discourses of the great French preachers, and which, in the present century, has led so many men of fastidious taste to hang spell-bound around the pulpit of Robert Hall. It had none of that force of reasoning, that originality of thought, or that splendor of language, which constituted the great charm of the sermons of

Chalmers. Yet, while exercising a power which has, probably never been equaled on the most ignorant and the most vicious, Whitefield was quite capable of fascinating the most refined audiences in London, and he extorted the tribute of warm admiration from such critics as Hume and Franklin, from such orators as Bolingbroke and Chesterfield. His preaching combined almost the highest perfection of acting with the most burning fervor of conviction. No man ever exhibited more wonderfully that strange power which great histrionic talent exercises over the human mind—investing words which are, in truth, the emptiest bombast with all the glow of the most majestic eloquence, and imparting, for a moment at least, to confident assertions more than the weight of the most convincing arguments. His gestures were faultless in their beauty and propriety, while his voice was so powerful that Franklin, who was the most accurate of men, ascertained by experiment that it could be heard distinctly in the open air by 30,000 persons. It was, at the same time, eminently sweet, musical, and varied, and it was managed with perfect skill. Garrick is reported to have said, with a pardonable exaggeration, that Whitefield could pronounce the word *Mesopotamia* in such a way as to move an audience to tears. With the exception of a slight squint of one eye, which was much dwelt on by his satirists, his person was unusually graceful and imposing, and, like Chatham, the piercing glance of a singularly brilliant eye contributed, in no small measure, to the force of his appeals.

To these gifts we must add a large command of vivid, homely, and picturesque English, and an extraordinary measure of the tact which enables a practiced orator to adapt himself to the character and dispositions of his audience. We must add, above all, a contagious fervor of enthusiasm, which, like a resistless torrent, bore down every obstacle. Of no other preacher could it be more truly said that he preached "as a dying man to dying men." His favorite