

the two extremities of the immense line of operations in Spain, in Italy, and in the Netherlands, was beaten in the centre, on the Rhine. At the same time Charles XII. of Sweden appeared in Saxony at the head of an army until then invincible. Villars proposed to march across the Empire to join him, and Louis XIV. begged him to attack the coalition in the rear. But instead he burst upon Russia, and was ruined there.

Defeat of Oudenarde (1708); France itself entered. — Prince Eugene rejoined Marlborough in Flanders. The allies had eighty thousand men; France, whom Europe believed to be exhausted, furnished a hundred thousand. Louis XIV. entrusted them to his grandson, the Duke of Burgundy, under whom Vendôme served as lieutenant. The division of the command led to a fresh disaster: the army was put to rout at Oudenarde (July, 1708). This was but an extensive picket fight; and when evening came, nothing had been lost. Vendôme proposed to begin the fight again the next day, but the Duke of Burgundy and his counsellors refused. The retreat was disastrous; the enemy killed or captured more than ten thousand men. Ghent, Bruges, and even Lille, capitulated; and France lay exposed to the allies. A party of Dutch went as far as the neighborhood of Versailles.

France and Spain begin to recover; Battles of Malplaquet (1709) and Villaviciosa (1710). — The winter of 1709 added to the misfortunes of the French. The cold was intense, and famine resulted. Louis XIV. humbled himself and asked for peace. But the triumvirs did not consider him sufficiently humiliated. They required that he should restore Strassburg and renounce the sovereignty of Alsace, and should himself drive his grandson out of Spain. "Since I must make war," he replied, "I prefer to fight my enemies rather than my children," and he wrote a letter to the governors, bishops, and communes, calling upon them to be judges between him and his enemies.

This noble appeal to patriotism moved all France; again an army was raised, as large as that of the coalition. Villars was put in command of it. It was clearly shown at the battle of Malplaquet, near Mons (September, 1709), that the struggle had become a national one. The allies had almost one hundred and twenty thousand men; the marshal, ninety thousand. When the action began, the soldiers, who had

had nothing to eat for a whole day, had just received their rations; they threw them away in order to run more lightly to the fight. They were forced to retreat; but the French had only eight thousand men disabled, and the allies twenty-one thousand.

This glorious defeat announced the end of the French reverses. Louis XIV. sent into Spain the Duke of Vendôme, who had been in disfavor since Oudenarde. His name alone was worth a whole army. The Spanish nation, like the French, awoke at the voice of Louis XIV. The people of the country districts began that guerilla warfare which, in the mountainous surface of Spain, has always been fatal to foreigners; finally, the archduke's general, Count Stahremberg, was completely overthrown at Villaviciosa (December, 1710). This victory saved the crown of Philip V.

Withdrawal of England (1711); Battle of Denain (1712).— This unexpected energy on the part of two nations, who were thought to be ready to give up, astonished the allies; they were growing weary too, especially England, whose subsidies fed the coalition, and who had increased her public debt by £60,000,000. A court intrigue precipitated the change which public opinion, paramount in a free country, was already preparing, and which the queen herself desired. The Duchess of Marlborough, falling into disgrace with Queen Anne, brought down with her her husband's friends and, after a while, the duke himself. Bolingbroke and Oxford formed a new ministry, and the majority which they obtained in a newly elected House of Commons proved that the nation itself accepted the change which was about to take place in the foreign policy of England.

Marlborough and his friends the Whigs owed their influence to the war; the Tories, the new advisers of the crown, sought to found their credit on the making of peace. Secret negotiations were entered into; an unforeseen event soon made public negotiations possible. The emperor Joseph I., who had succeeded Leopold in 1705, died in 1711, leaving no heir but his brother, the Archduke Charles. England, who had fought to separate Spain and France, had no desire to continue the war for the purpose of uniting Spain to Austria. The preliminaries of peace were signed at London in October, 1711. The allies followed the example; a congress assembled at Utrecht in January, 1712. The em-

peror and the empire refused to take part in it; but the combat had now become wholly unequal, and a single campaign sufficed to prove it. Prince Eugene was besieging Landrecies. He rightly called his lines "the road to Paris"; for if Landrecies should fall, there was no fortress between Paris and his army. But the lines of the Imperialists were too extensive. Villars, making a feint on Landrecies, marched in all haste upon Denain. The camp was taken and seventeen battalions destroyed (July, 1712). Eugene hastened to re-enforce, but was repulsed; Landrecies was delivered, and the frontiers of France were placed in security.

Maritime Expeditions; Duguay-Trouin.— The necessity for keeping all the French forces on land in order to resist the armies of the continent had caused the navy to be neglected. England profited by this, and easily gained the empire of the seas, which France abandoned and which the Dutch could no longer retain. Henceforward there were only some encounters of squadrons, and soon the fighting was reduced to privateering. The French colonies, left without defence, were either devastated or conquered.

Nevertheless, some of the French privateers and captains won for themselves great reputations. Duguay-Trouin, the son of a shipowner of St. Malo, gained great celebrity as a privateer; he was made captain in the royal navy in 1706, and commanded an expedition against Rio Janeiro in which the vigor of the execution corresponded with the boldness of the plan (1711). This place, which seemed impregnable, was carried after eleven days' siege. Many vessels and an immense quantity of merchandise were either taken or burned. Unhappily the exploits of these brave sailors had no influence upon the war.

Treaties of Utrecht, Rastadt, and Baden (1713-1714).— The victory of Denain hastened the conclusion of peace. There were three treaties: that of Utrecht (April 11, 1713), between France, Spain, England, the Netherlands, Savoy, and Portugal; that of Rastadt (March 7, 1714), between France and the emperor; that of Baden (June 7, 1714), between France and the Empire. The treaty of Rastadt was retarded a year by the obstinacy of Charles VI., until the successes gained by Villars on the Rhine forced him to yield.

By these treaties, Louis XIV. retained the earliest acqui-

sitions of his reign: Alsace, Artois, and Roussillon, which France owed to Richelieu and Mazarin; Flanders, Franche-Comté, Strassburg, Saarlouis, Landau, and of the colonies, the Antilles, Cayenne, Bourbon, and Senegal; he acquired the valley of Barcelonette, but ceded to the Duke of Savoy Exilles, Fenestrelle, and Château-Dauphin; to England, Newfoundland, Hudson's Bay, and Acadia; he caused the port of Dunkirk to be dismantled and filled up; he recognized the Protestant Elector of Brunswick, George I., as heir presumptive of Queen Anne, agreed to send the Pretender, James III., out of France, to release from prison all of his subjects who were confined for religious reasons, and not to receive from Spain any exclusive commercial privilege, while he granted to England important commercial advantages, and ceded to her the monopoly of the slave trade from the coast of Africa to the Spanish colonies.

Philip V. retained Spain and her immense colonial possessions, but he renounced for himself and his children all pretensions to the throne of France; he ceded to the English Gibraltar and Minorca; Sicily to the Duke of Savoy, and to the emperor the Southern Netherlands, the Milanese, the kingdom of Naples, and Sardinia. The Duke of Bavaria, the unfortunate ally of Louis XIV., was re-established in his states. The title of King was bestowed upon the head of the house of Savoy. Finally, the Dutch obtained the right to garrison all the most important places in the Austrian Netherlands, in order to use them as a barrier against France.

These conditions were honorable, if compared to the humiliating propositions of the triumvirs. France was saved by her perseverance, her united strength, and the energy of her king; she came forth from this terrible trial weakened, but not humiliated, and with the honors of war. Two powers had gained especially by this war: Austria had won magnificent domains in Italy and the Netherlands; England had seized upon the empire of the seas. Besides, the one had recovered Hungary, which was more necessary to her than Italy; the other remained at Port Mahon, whence she could hold Toulon in check, and at Gibraltar, whence she threatened Spain and guarded the entrance to the Mediterranean. But France gained the alliance of Spain.

Numerous Deaths in the Royal Family (1712-1714).—The last years of the reign of Louis XIV. were as dark as the first had been brilliant. In addition to the national

misfortunes, the king had to bear terrible domestic afflictions: he lost his only son, the dauphin (April, 1711); the Duke of Burgundy and his wife (February, 1712); their oldest son, the Duke of Brittany (March); the Duke of Berry, son of the dauphin, in 1714. Thus Louis XIV. had left only his grandson, Philip V., king of Spain, and his great-grandson, the Duke of Anjou, then only five years old, who was afterwards Louis XV.

So many deaths happening in quick succession determined the king to take an extraordinary measure: his legitimated sons, the Duke of Maine and the Count of Toulouse, children of the Marchioness of Montespan, were declared heirs of the crown in default of princes of the blood. He appointed them, in his will, members of a council of regency, composed principally of their friends, and of which the Duke of Orleans, his nephew, was to be merely the president; the Duke of Maine obtained, besides, the guardianship of the young king. This will was an unfortunate act. It fixed a slight on the Duke of Orleans, and organized war in the heart of the government itself.

Death of the King (1715).—Louis XIV. died on September 1st, 1715, at the age of seventy-seven years, after having reigned seventy-two. He left France excessively exhausted. The State was ruined, and seemed to have no resource but bankruptcy. This trouble seemed especially imminent in 1715, after the war, during which the government had been obliged to borrow at four hundred per cent, to create new taxes, to spend in advance the revenue of two years, and to increase the public debt to 2400 millions.

The acquisition of two provinces (Flanders, Franche-Comté) and a few cities (Strassburg, Landau, and Dunkirk) was no compensation for such terrible poverty. Succeeding generations have remembered only the numerous victories, Europe defied, France for twenty years preponderant, and the incomparable splendor of the court of Versailles, with its marvels of letters and arts, which have given to the seventeenth century the name of the age of Louis XIV. It is for history to show the price which France has paid for her king's vain attempts abroad to rule over Europe, and at home to enslave the wills and consciences of men.