of the fight his father embraced him, saying: "Sweet son, God has given you good perseverance; you are my true son—right loyally have you acquitted yourself this day, and worthy are you of a crown." Ten years later, at twenty-six, the Black Prince won the battle of Poictiers. At twenty-seven, Henry V. gained the victory of Agincourt.

Some of the most distinguished French rulers and generals have been of equally youthful years. Henry of Navarre was, from his sixteenth year, the recognized leader of the Huguenots. At that age he led them at the battles of Jarnac and Moncontour. After the massacre of St. Bartholomew, which occurred in his twenty-third year, he put himself at the head of the French Calvinists, and led them through a series of hazardous and hard-fought campaigns. At thirty-four he won the battle of Coutras, and shortly after, those of Arques and Ivry. The battle of Arques was gained by Henry, with five thousand men against the Duc de Mayenne, with twenty-five thousand. He conquered his opponent mainly by his youthful energy and activity. It was said of him that he wore out very little broadcloth but a great deal of boot leather, and that he spent less time in bed than the Duc de Mayenne did at table. When some one was extolling in his presence the skill and courage of his rival, Henry observed: "You are right; he is a great captain, but I have always five hours' start of him." Henry got up at four in the morning and Mayenne at about ten.

Condé was another distinguished young French commander. He was so able and successful that he was surnamed "The Great." He won the battle of Rocroi at twenty-two against a superior Spanish force, and he afterwards defeated in succession the troops of the Emperor of Germany at Fribourg and Nordilingen; and again, in the following year, at Lens in the Artois—all before he was twenty-seven. Turenne was another great commander,

though he was by no means precocious. Indeed he was at first considered a dull boy, and learnt slowly and with difficulty. But he was dogged and persevering, and what he did learn was rooted deeply in his mind. When his ambition was appealed to he made rapid progress. Turenne was trained to arms by his uncle, Prince Maurice of Holland, who made him begin his apprenticeship by carrying a musket as a private. After passing through a course of subaltern duty, he obtained a company which was shortly acknowledged to be one of the best drilled and disciplined in the army. At twenty-three Turenne was made maréchal du camp, the next position in rank to that of maréchal de France. The first important service which he performed was in conducting the disastrous retreat from Mayence in 1635. He protected the rear and preserved order with the greatest skill, courage, and self-control. In his twenty-sixth year he conducted the arduous campaign of 1637, during which he took Landrécies and Soire, and finally drove the Spaniards across the Sambre. During the rest of his life Turenne was acknowledged to be the greatest commander of his time, as great in age as in youth. He was killed in battle at Sasbach in his sixty-fourth year.

Marshall Saxe was nursed in arms. At twelve years old he served in the army of the Allies before Lisle. In the following year he had a horse shot under him at the siege of Tournay; and in the same year he was at the battle of Malplaquet. At twenty-four he was maréchal du camp under the Duke of Orleans. He did not become marshal of France until he had reached his forty-seventh year. He was a man of war only; for his education in letters was of the slenderest description. When the French Academy proposed to admit him as a member, which he had the good sense to decline, he wrote to a friend, "Ils veule me fere de la Cademie; sela miret come une bage a un chas."

Vauban was naturally led to the study of fortifications

while pursuing his career as a soldier. He entered the army under Condé at seventeen, and was with him at Clermont in Lorraine while the fortifications there were in progress. This circumstance gave the direction to his studies, which he prosecuted with great assiduity. It was during his active services in the field, in the course of which he displayed great bravery and did many daring acts in sight of the enemy, that he prepared and composed his great work on fortification. The last of his books was only finished a few days before his death, which occurred at seventy-four, while he was engaged in superintending the formation of an entrenched camp extending from Dunkirk to Bergues. Besides his important works on fortification, Vauban left behind him no fewer than twelve folio volumes of manuscript entitled *Oisiveté*. He was a man who would never lose a minute, but turned every moment to account.

The two great Swedish commanders—Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII.—were both very young men when they first gave evidence of their military capacity. Gustavus succeeded to the crown of Sweden in his seventeenth year. He had no sooner assumed the reins of government than his country was invaded by Sigismund, King of Poland, who also laid claim to his throne. At the same time another part of his dominions was attacked by the Russian Czar. But Gustavus, after a war extending over nine years, succeeded in defeating both, and also in annexing Riga and part of Livonia. While this war raged, the Austrians had violated the Swedish territory. This led to a declaration of hostilities, and a furious war ensued,—the army of Gustavus forming the rallying point of the oppressed Protestants of Germany. The Swedish army completely defeated the Austrians on the plains of Leipsic; and after an extraordinary series of battles, Gustavus Adolphus died on the field of Lutzen in the moment of victory, in his thirty-eighth year.

The career of Charles XII. was still more remarkable, though his valor and generalship were marred by self-will and rashness. Charles became King of Sweden at fifteen. When he had reached eighteen a league was formed against him by the Czar of Russia, the King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, and the King of Denmark,—the object of these monarchs being the dismemberment of Sweden. Charles immediately embarked his army, sailed for Copenhagen, besieged the city, and in a few weeks compelled the King of Denmark to sue for peace. He next turned upon Russia, embarked, and landed his army of eight thousand men in Livonia, marched upon the Russians then besieging Narva with ten times the number of soldiers, and after a sharp struggle completely defeated them. Charles was then only in his eighteenth year. He next turned his arms against Augustus, King of Poland, and after repeatedly defeating the Polish army, he deposed Augustus and set up another king in his stead. Charles's ambition was only inflamed by his marvellous successes. Instead of resting satisfied with the castigation he had inflicted on his enemies, he now aimed at the dethronement of Czar Peter, his great rival and enemy. Crossing the Nieman, he defeated the Russians at Grodno, and next on the banks of the Beresina. His enemies disappeared, but winter approached; and the same disasters fell upon him and his army which afterwards ruined Napoleon. His troops suffered from cold, hunger, disease, and privations of all kinds; and in this reduced and exhausted state, the Czar fell upon the Swedes with double the number of well-appointed troops at Pultawa, and completely routed them. The rest of Charles's life was a romance. He took refuge in Turkey; made his escape from it after four years; reached Stralsund, Pomerania, in sixteen days; took the field against Prussia, Denmark, Saxony, and Russia—all leagued against him; then escaped from Stralsund, and reached Sweden, after an ab-

sence of some fifteen years. He raised an army of twenty thousand men; invaded Norway, then united to Denmark; and, after varying successes, his career was cut short; for, while inspecting the trenches near Frederichshall, which he was besieging he was struck in the head by a shot, and died instantly, in his thirty-seventh year.

Frederick the Great of Prussia was another great young man of history. While a youth, he was treated with so much coarseness and brutality by his father, that the wonder is that anything good could ever be made of him. The early disinclination which he showed for military exercises, and his hankering after French literature, music, and the fine arts, especially disgusted his father, who shut him up in prison, and is even said to have at one time contemplated his execution. But the death of the old savage in 1740, placed young Frederick on the throne at twenty-eight; and in the following year he took the field against Austria, and won the battle of Mollwitz, which decided the fate of Silesia. Two years later, we find him again at war with Austria, and victorious in the battles of Hohenfriedburg and Sorr, on which the second Silesian war was brought to a triumphant close in his thirty-third year. But the Seven Years' War, in the course of which he gave the most striking evidence of his military genius, did not commence until he had reached his forty-fourth year. He won the battle of Rosbach at forty-five; his last great battles were Zorndoff when he was forty-six, and Torgan when he was forty-eight; after which his military career was a comparative blank. The result of his campaigns was the enlargement of his kingdom, and the establishment of Prussia as a first-class power in Europe.

Nearly all the generals of the French Revolution were young men. Napoleon was only twenty-four when he commanded the artillery at the siege of Toulon, the capture of which was mainly due to the skill with which he conducted the operations. At twenty-six he fought and won the battle of the Sections in the streets of Paris. In the following year he successfully led the French army in its first Italian campaign, capturing Milan and winning the battle of Lodi, which gave the French possession of Lombardy. He then overran South Italy, and turned northward to meet old Wurmser, who was advancing from the Tyrol with a large army. But the young and active French general proved more than a match for his veteran opponent, and he out-generalled and defeated him again and again. As in the case of Henry of Navarre and the Duc de Mayenne, Napoleon had always five hours' start of his aged rival; and he afterwards declared that he beat the Austrians because they did not know the value of time. The old generals boasted of their greater professional experience; but their experience had become ossified into pedantic maxims, and while they reasoned about the proper method of conducting war, their dashing and energetic youthful opponent suddenly overthrew them. They could only conclude, in their arguments, that they had been most improperly beaten.

After his short campaign in Egypt, Buonaparte returned to France, was appointed First Consul, and again crossed the Alps to contend with the Austrians, who were overrunning Italy. At thirty he won the battle of Marengo; and the "child of victory" went on from one battle to another, reconquering Italy, overrunning Austria, Prussia, and the provinces of the old German Empire. At last he was brought to a halt by the snows of Russia. As long as his youth lasted, he was great; but when age came upon him, his activity and energy departed. After a warfare lasting for about twenty-three years, Napoleon was at last baffled and beaten on the field of Waterloo in his forty-sixth year. French writers allege that by this time his age and fatness were telling against him, and that, but for his

lying in bed when he ought to have been active and stirring on the morning of the 17th of July 1815, immediately after the battle of Ligny, he would have crushed Wellington unsupported by Blucher, and won the Belgian campaign. He was, however, beaten, not by younger men, but by generals who could get up in the morning earlier than he did.

Napoleon's best generals were for the most part young. Indeed the wars of the French Revolution are but a continuous record of old generals beaten by younger ones. The brilliant Hoche was made general in command of the army of the Moselle at the age of twenty-four. Humbert was general of brigade at twenty-six. Kleber and Lefevre were both generals at thirty-nine. Lannes was general of brigade at twenty-eight. Victor was "chef de bataillon" at twenty-five. Soult commanded a brigade at twenty-nine. St. Cyr was general of division at thirty. Murat commanded Napoleon's cavalry at twenty-nine. Ney, "the Indefatigable," was adjutant-general at twenty-five, and general of brigade at twenty-seven. Indeed, one of our military writers has been recently urging that none but young and active generals should take the field—that no man above fifty should be put in command of a large army in actual warfare. Modern English history furnishes many illustrations of youthful generalship. At the beginning of many of our wars, toothless generals and paralytic admirals have represented us by land and sea; but we have been beaten into the employment of younger men, in the full possession of their physical and mental faculties.

The two youngest English commanders in modern times were General Wolfe and Sir John Moore. Wolfe attained the rank of regimental major at twenty-two, and he was placed in command of the expedition to Quebec at thirty-one. Yet Pitt, who selected him for the post, was not

without great misgivings as to his ability.* Wolfe however, closed his career with glory by the brilliant capture of Quebec, at the early age of thirty-three. The promotion of Sir John Moore was slower than that of Wolfe; though, like him, he was distinguished for the zeal with which he devoted himself to the study of his profession, and the conscientious labor which he gave to mastering its various details. He reached the rank of brigadier-general at thirty-three; led the landing at Aboukir at forty-one, and commanded the noble but disastrous retreat at Corunna at forty-seven,—the French officers attesting their admiration of his worth by erecting a monument over his grave.

It is principally in India that our young soldiers have had the best opportunities for distinguishing themselves. Robert Clive, the dunce and reprobate at school, was sent out to India in the Civil Service at the age of nineteen. He did not distinguish himself as a clerk, and after fretting and fuming at Madras for two years, he left the civil for the military service, which suited him much better. He ob-

* Earl Stanhope relates a curious anecdote about General Wolfe which, he observes, "affords a striking proof how much a fault of manner may obscure and disparage high excellence of mind. . . After Wolfe's appointment, and on the day preceding his embarkation for America, Pitt, desirous of giving his last verbal instructions, invited him to dinner—Lord Temple being the only other guest. As the evening advanced, Wolfe, heated perhaps by his own aspiring thoughts and the unwonted society of statesmen, broke forth into a strain of gasconade and bravado. He drew his sword; he rapped the table with it; he flourished it round the room; he talked of the mighty things which that sword was to achieve. The two ministers sat aghast at an exhibition so unusual from any man of real sense and real spirit; and when at last Wolfe had taken his leave; and his carriage was heard to roll from the door, Pitt seemed for the moment shaken in the high opinion which his deliberate judgment had formed of Wolfe. He lifted up his eyes and arms, and exclaimed to Lord Temple, 'Good God! that I should have entrusted the fate of the country and of the administration to such hands!' Lord Stanhope truly remarks that Wolfe's extraordinary conduct on the occasion confirms Wolfe's own avowal, that he was not seen to advantage in the common occurrences of life; and shows how shyness may at intervals rush, as it were for refuge, into the opposite extreme."

tained an ensigncy, and entered upon his military career at twenty-one, distinguishing himself at the siege of Pondicherry. The courage and ability which he displayed elicited the admiration of his superiors, and he was recommended for promotion. When the war in the Carnatic broke out, Clive submitted a plan of operations, which was adopted, and he was himself entrusted with its execution. At twenty-five, he took the field with an army comparatively insignificant, mustering only some five hundred English and Sepoys, but led by a youth of intrepid genius. He seized Arcot, beat the French under their veteran commanders, and after a series of battles and victories, he brought the war to a successful conclusion. He returned to England at twenty-seven, tried to enter Parliament, but failed, and returned to India to prosecute his military career. His first service was to reduce the piratical stronghold of Gheriah; his next, to recover Calcutta, where Sujah-u-Dowlah had thrown his prisoners into "The Black Hole"; and his last was to capture Chandernagore, and suppress the power of the barbarous nabob. With an army of three thousand men, of whom only a thousand were English, he fought and won the memorable battle of Plassy, against an army of forty thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry. He was only in his thirty-second year when he achieved this last and crowning feat of his life,—which virtually laid the foundation of the British power in India.

Wellington gathered his first laurels in the same field. This great general was anything but a precocious boy, for his mother regarded him as a dunce, and treated him with marked neglect. * He made little progress at Eton, where he was considered dreamy, idle, and shy. He had, however, to fight his way. One of his fights was with Sydney

* Gleig's *Life of Wellington* (ed. 1864), p. 3.

Smith's brother "Bobus," whom he thrashed. But he was not always so successful. Mr. Gleig says that he was fairly vanquished by a young blacksmith, though not till after both had been severely punished. The blacksmith lived to an old age, and was very proud of having beaten the man before whom Napoleon and his best generals had gone down. Wellington had no special talent; indeed, the only talent he displayed was playing the violin. He displayed no desire to enter the army, but inclined to the life of a civilian. A commission was, however, obtained for him in the 41st Foot, and he entered the army as ensign at eighteen. Ten years later we find him in India as Colonel of the 33rd Foot. His steadiness, industry, application, and business qualities as an administrator, by this time commanded general admiration. The Mahratta War having broken out, he had at last an opportunity of exhibiting his military capacity. In his thirty-fourth year, he fought and won the battle of Assaye, with eight thousand men, of whom only fifteen hundred were Europeans, against the Mahratta army consisting of fifty thousand men. The exploit was of almost as much importance as that performed by Clive at Plassy. According to Wellington himself, "It was the hardest fought affair that ever took place in India." At forty, Wellington was placed in command of the army in Portugal, and during four years he conducted that great campaign. At forty-six he fought at Waterloo; the whole of his military career, in the capacity of commander, being comprised within a period of only about twelve years.

Of the otheryoung English commanders in India, the most remarkable were Nicholson, Hodson, and Edwardes. The last exhibited all the promptitude and valor of Clive, together with a purity and nobility of character, to which the other had but slender claim. Edwardes was serving as lieutenant on the Sikh frontier at the age of twenty-nine,

when the rebellion broke out at Mooltan. By the rapid concentration of the troops at his disposal, Edwardes met and defeated the Moolraj against tremendous odds in two pitched battles, and forced him to take refuge in his citadel, which was besieged, stormed, and taken with great rapidity and courage.

Although, as we shall afterwards find, many generals of renown have flourished late in life,—because it was only then that the opportunities for distinction presented themselves,—young commanders have usually exhibited in greater affluence those qualities of promptitude, decision, vigorous action and effort—that complete and instantaneous command of resources in body and mind—which are natural to young men, and so essential to success in war. The eye of the young man is keener in detecting the weak points of his opponent, and his arm is more prompt to strike. The older general is more apt to wait—to stand upon routine and rules; his experience ossifying into pedantry, which younger men disregard, provided they can win battles. Wurmser fought by rule and failed; Napoleon broke through all his rules and succeeded. The youthful general makes his own rules according to circumstances, which he masters by the quick instinct of intelligence and genius. Napoleon himself was eventually defeated in defiance of his own rules,—the constantly repeated crushing force of heavy battalions,—alleging that the English at Waterloo ought to have been vanquished, but that they did not know when they were beaten.

A man may not have the opportunity of distinguishing himself until late in life; but he must possess the qualities though latent, of doing so when the time arrives. What a man is enabled to do in advanced life, is for the most part the result of what he has been preparing himself for in his youth. Yet many of the greatest geniuses never saw the age of forty; indeed, Goethe has expressed the opinion

that men rarely, if ever, adopt any new and original view after reaching that age. Raphael, Mozart, Schubert, Rossini, Tasso, Keats, Shelley, Byron, and others, had executed their immortal creations long before forty. Shakespeare wrote his *Hamlet* about the age of thirty-six, and it is doubtful whether he afterwards surpassed that work. Most great men, even though they live to advanced years, have merely carried into execution the conceptions of their youth. The discovery of Columbus originated in the thoughts and studies of his early life. Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation was made at twenty-five, and he carried out no new work after forty-four. Watts made his invention of the condensing steam-engine at thirty-two, and this maturer years were devoted to its perfection.

Youth is really the springtime of inspiration, of invention, of discovery, of work, and of energy; and age brings all into order and harmony. All new ideas are young, and originate for the most part in youth-hood, when the mind is thoroughly alert and alive, ready to recognize new truths; and though great things may be done after forty—new inventions made, new books written, new thoughts elaborated,—it is doubtful whether the mind really widens and enlarges after that age. There is indeed much truth in the saying of Montaigne that "Our souls are Adult at Twenty. A Soul that has not by that time given evident earnest of its Force and Virtue, will never after come to proof." And again: "Of all the great Humane Actions I ever heard or read of, of what sort soever, I have observed, both in former Ages and our own, more perform'd before the age of Thirty than after; and oft-times in the very Lives of the same Men. . . The better half of their Lives they lived upon the Glory they had acquired in their Youth; great Men after, 'tis true, in comparison of others; but by no means in comparison of themselves. As to my

own particular, I do certainly believe, that since that Age, both my Understanding and my Constitution have rather decayed than improved, and retired rather than advanced. 'Tis possible, that with those who make the best use of their Time, Knowledge and Experience may grow up and increase with their Years; but the Vivacity, Quickness and Steadiness, and other pieces of us, of much greater Importance, and much more essentially our own, languish and decay." *

* *Essays of Montaigne*, book i. chap. lvii. : "Of Age."

CHAPTER IV.

GREAT OLD MEN.

Call him not old whose visionary brain
Holds o'er the past its undivided reign :
For him in vain the envious seasons roll
Who bears eternal summer in his soul—
Dr. OLIVER WENDEL HOLMES.

O hours more blest than gold,
By whose blest use we lengthen life, free
From drear decays of age, outlive the old:—
ANNA SEWARD.

Don't let your heart grow cold, and you may carry cheerfulness and love with you into the teens of your second century, if you can last so long.—
Dr. O. W. HOLMES.

Contentment in old age is deserved by him alone who has not lost his faith in what is good, his persevering strength of will, and his desire for active employment.—
TURGANIEF.

Everything comes, if a man will only wait.—BEACONFIELD.

JOHNSON said of Goldsmith, after his death, that "he was a plant that flowered late; there was nothing remarkable about him when he was young." Men are like plants; many of them flower late. The plants that flower the soonest are often the most evanescent. Early in the year the anemones, crocuses, and snowdrops appear. Then come the daffodils "that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty." The sweet violets accompany them—the "violet by a mossy stone, half hidden from the eye." The lady's-smock, hare-bell, dan lily of the valley follow. They appear in leaping,