

saved the country, if not from conquest, at least from deplorable calamities. If indeed the enemy had landed, we may be sure that he would have been heroically opposed. But history shows us so many examples of the superiority of veteran troops over new levies, however numerous and brave, that, without disparaging our countrymen's soldierly merits, we may well be thankful that no trial of them was then made on English land. Especially must we feel this when we contrast the high military genius of the Prince of Parma, who would have headed the Spaniards, with the imbecility of the Earl of Leicester, to whom the deplorable spirit of favoritism, which formed the great blemish on Elizabeth's character, had then committed the chief command of the English armies.

The ships of the royal navy at the time amounted to no more than thirty-six; but the most serviceable merchant vessels were collected from all the ports of the country; and the citizens of London, Bristol, and the other great seats of commerce showed as liberal a zeal in equipping and manning vessels, as the nobility and gentry displayed in mustering forces by land. The seafaring population of the coast, of every rank and station, was animated by the same ready spirit; and the whole number of seamen who came forward to man the English fleet was 17,472. The number of the ships that were collected was 191; and the total amount of their tonnage, 31,985. There was one ship in the fleet (the *Triumph*) of 1100 tons, one of 1000, one of 900, two of 800 each, three of 600, five of 500, five of 400, six of 300, six of 250, twenty of 200, and the residue of inferior burden. Application was made to the Dutch for assistance; and, as Stowe expresses it, "The Hollanders came roundly in, with threescore sail, brave ships of war, fierce and full of spleen, not so much for England's aid, as in just occasion for their own defense: these men foreseeing the greatness of the danger that might ensue if the Spaniards should chance to win the day and get the mastery over them; and in due regard whereof, their manly courage was inferior to none."

We have more minute information of the number and equipment of the hostile forces than we have of our own. In the first volume of Hakluyt's "Voyages," dedicated to Lord Effingham, who commanded against the Armada, there is given (from the contemporary foreign writer, Meteran) a more complete and detailed catalogue than has perhaps ever appeared of a similar armament.

"A very large and particular description of this navie was put in print and published by the Spaniards, wherein was set downe the number, names, and burthens of the shippes, the number of mariners and soldiers throughout the whole fleete; likewise the quantitie of their ordinance, of their armor, of bullets, of match, of gun-powder, of victuals, and of all their navall furniture was in the saide description particularized. Unto all these were added the names of the governours, captaines, noblemen, and gentlemen

voluntaries, of whom there was so great a multitude, that scarce was there any family of accompt, or any one principall man throughout all Spaine, that had not a brother, sonne, or kinsman in that fleete; who all of them were in good hope to purchase unto themselves in that navie (as they termed it) invincible, endless glory and renown, and to possess themselves of great seignories and riches in England and in the Low Countreys. But because the said description was translated and published out of Spanish into divers other languages, we will here only make an abridgement or brief rehearsal thereof.

"Portugall furnished and set forth under the conduct of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, generall of the fleete, 10 galeons, 2 zabraes 1300 mariners, 3,300 soldiers, 300 great pieces, with all requisite furniture.

"Biscay, under the conduct of John Martines de Ricalde, admiral of the whole fleete, set forth 10 galeons, 4 pataches, 700 mariners, 2000 soldiers, 250 great pieces, &c.

"Guipusco, under the conduct of Michael de Oquendo, 10 galeons, 4 pataches, 700 mariners, 2,000 souldiers, 310 great pieces.

"Italy, with the Levant islands, under Martine de Vertendona, 10 galeons, 700 mariners, 2,000 souldiers, 310 great pieces, &c.

"Castile, under Diego Flores de Valdez, 14 galeons, 2 pataches, 1700 mariners, 2,400 souldiers, and 380 great pieces, &c.

"Andalusia, under the conduct of Petro de Valdez, 10 galeons, 1 patache, 800 mariners, 2,400 souldiers, 280 great pieces, &c.

"Item, under the conduct of John Lopez de Medina, 23 great Flemish hulkes, with 700 mariners, 3,200 souldiers, and 400 great pieces.

"Item, under Hugo de Moncada, 4 galliasses, containing 1200 gally-slaves, 460 mariners, 870 souldiers, 200 great pieces, &c.

"Item, under Diego de Mandrana, 4 gallies of Portugall, with 888 gally-slaves, 360 mariners, 20 great pieces, and other requisite furniture.

"Item, under Anthonie de Mendoza, 22 pataches and zabraes, with 574 mariners, 488 souldiers, and 193 great pieces.

"Besides the ships aforementioned, there were 20 caravels rowed with oars, being appointed to perform necessary services under the greater ships, insomuch as all the ships appertayning to this navie amounted unto the summe of 150, eche one being sufficiently provided of furniture and victuals.

"The number of mariners in the saide fleete were above 8,000, of slaves 2,088 of souldiers 20,000 (besides noblemen and gentlemen voluntaries), of great cast pieces 2,600. The foresaid ships were of an huge and incredible capacitie and receipt, for the whole fleete was large enough to containe the burthen of 60,000 tunnes.

"The galeons were 64 in number, being of an huge bignesse, and very flatly built, being of marvellous force also, and so high that they resembled great castles, most fit to defend themselves and to

withstand any assault, but in giving any other ships the encounter far inferior unto the English and Dutch ships, which can with great dexterity wield and turne themselves at all assayes. The upper worke of the said galeons was of thicnesse and strength sufficient to beare off musket-shot. The lower worke and the timbers thereof were out of measure strong, being framed of planks and ribs foure or five foote in thicnesse, insomuch that no bullets could pierce them but such as were discharged hard at hand, which afterward proved true, for great number of bullets were founde to sticke fast within the massie substance of those thicke planks. Great and well-pitched cables were twined about the masts of their shippes, to strengthen them against the battery of shot.

"The galliasses were of such bignesse that they contained within them chambers, chapels, turrets, pulpits and other commodities of great houses. The galliasses were rowed with great oares, there being in eche one of them 300 slaves for the same purpose, and were able to do great service with the force of their ordinance. All these, together with the residue aforementioned, were furnished and beautified with trumpets, streamers, banners, warlike ensignes, and other such like ornaments.

"Their pieces of brazen ordinance were 1600, and of yron a 1000.

"The bullets thereto belonging were 120,000.

"Item of gun-poulder, 5,600 quintals. Of matche, 1200 quintals. Of muskets and kaleivers, 7,000. Of haleberts and partizans, 10,000.

"Moreover, they had great stores of canons, double-canons, culverings and field-pieces for land services.

"Likewise they were provided of all instruments necessary on land to convey and transport their furniture from place to place, as namely of carts, wheeles, wagons, &c. Also they had spades, mattocks, and baskets to set pioners on worke. They had in like sort great store of mules and horses, and whatsoever else was requisite for a land armie. They were so well stored of biscuit, that for the space of halfe a yeere they might allow eche person in the whole fleete halfe a quintall every moneth, whereof the whole summe amounteth unto an hundredth thousand quintals.

"Likewise of wine they had 147,000 pipes, sufficient also for halfe a yeere's expedition. Of bacon, 6,500 quintals. Of cheese, 3,000 quintals. Besides fish, rise, beanes, pease, oile, vinegar, &c.

Moreover, they had 12,000 pipes of fresh water, and all other necessary provision as namely, candles, lanternes, lampes, sailes, hempe, ox-hides, and lead, to stop holes that should be made with the battery of gunshot. To be short, they brought all things expedient, either for a fleete by sea, or for an armie by land.

"This navie (as Diego Pimentelli afterward confessed) was esteemed by the king himselfe to containe 32,000 persons, and to cost him every day 30,000 ducates.

"There were in the said navie five terzaes of Spaniards (which terzaes the Frenchmen call regiments), under the command of five governours, termed by the Spaniards masters of the field, and among the rest there were many olde and expert souldiers chosen out of the garisons of Sicillie, Naples, and Tergera. Their captaines or colonels were Diego Pimentelli, Don Francisco de Toledo, Don Alongo de Lugon, Don Nicolas de Isla, Don Augustin de Mexia, who had eche of them thirty-two companies under their conduct. Besides the which companies, there were many bands also of Castilians and Portugals, every one of which had their peculiar governours, captains, officers, colors, and weapons."

While this huge armament was making ready in the southern ports of the Spanish dominions, the Duke of Parma, with almost incredible toil and skill, collected a squadron of war-ships at Dunkirk, and a large flotilla of other ships and of flat-bottomed boats for the transport to England of the picked troops, which were designed to be the main instruments in subduing England. The design of the Spaniards was that the Armada should give them, at least for a time, the command of the sea, and that it should join the squadron that Parma had collected off Calais. Then, escorted by an overpowering naval force, Parma and his army were to embark in their flotilla, and cross the sea to England, where they were to be landed, together with the troops which the Armada brought from the ports of Spain. The scheme was not dissimilar to one formed against England a little more than two centuries afterward.

As Napoleon, in 1805, waited with his army and flotilla at Boulogne, looking for Villeneuve to drive away the English cruisers, and secure him a passage across the Channel, so Parma, in 1588, waited for Medina Sidonia to drive away the Dutch and English squadrons that watched his flotilla, and to enable his veterans to cross the sea to the land that they were to conquer. Thanks to Providence, in each case England's enemy waited in vain!

Although the numbers of sail which the queen's government and the patriotic zeal of volunteers had collected for the defense of England exceeded the number of sail in the Spanish fleet, the English ships were, collectively, far inferior in size to their adversaries, their aggregate tonnage being less by half than that of the enemy. In the number of guns and weight of metal, the disproportion was still greater. The English admiral was also obliged to subdivide his force; and Lord Henry Seymour, with forty of the best Dutch and English ships, was employed in blockading the hostile ports in Flanders, and in preventing the Duke of Parma from coming out of Dunkirk.

The INVINCIBLE ARMADA, as the Spaniards in the pride of their hearts named it, set sail from the Tagus on the 29th of May, but near Corunna met with a tempest that drove it into port with severe loss. It was the report of the damage done to the enemy

by this storm which had caused the English court to suppose that there would be no invasion that year. But, as already mentioned, the English admiral had sailed to Corunna, and learned the real state of the case, whence he had returned with his ships to Plymouth. The Armada sailed again from Corunna on the 12th of July. The orders of King Philip to the Duke de Medina Sidonia were, that he should, on entering the Channel, keep near the French coast, and, if attacked by the English ships, avoid an action and steer on to Calais Roads, where the Prince of Parma's squadron was to join him. The hopes of surprising and destroying the English fleet in Plymouth led the Spanish admiral to deviate from these orders and to stand across to the English shore; but, on finding that Lord Howard was coming out to meet him, he resumed the original plan, and determined to bend his way steadily toward Calais and Dunkirk, and to keep merely on the defensive against such squadrons of the English as might come up with him.

It was on Saturday, the 20th of July, that Lord Effingham came in sight of his formidable adversaries. The Armada was drawn up in the form of a crescent, which, from horn to horn, measured some seven miles. There was a southwest wind, and before it the vast vessels sailed slowly on. The English let them pass by; and then following in the rear, commenced an attack on them. A running fight now took place, in which some of the best ships of the Spaniards were captured; many more received heavy damage; while the English vessels, which took care not to close with their huge antagonists, but availed themselves of their superior celerity in tacking and maneuvering, suffered little comparative loss. Each day added not only to the spirit, but to the number of Effingham's force. Raleigh, Oxford, Cumberland, and Sheffield joined him; and "the gentlemen of England hired ships from all parts at their own charge, and with one accord came flocking thither as to a set field, where glory was to be attained, and faithful service performed unto their prince and their country."

Raleigh justly praises the English admiral for his skilful tactics. Raleigh says, "Certainly, he that will happily perform a fight at sea must be skilful in making choice of vessels to fight in: he must believe that there is more belonging to a good man of war, upon the waters, than great daring; and must know, that there is a great deal of difference between fighting loose or at large and grappling. The guns of a slow ship pierce as well, and make as great holes, as those in a swift. To clap ships together, without consideration, belongs rather to a madman than to a man of war; for by such an ignorant bravery was Peter Strossie lost at the Azores, when he fought against the Marquis of Santa Cruza. In like sort had the Lord Charles Howard, admiral of England, been lost in the year 1588, if he had not been better advised than a great many

\* "Historie of the World," p. 791.

malignant fools were that found fault with his demeanor. The Spaniards had an army aboard them, and he had none; they had more ships than he had, and of higher building and charging: so that, had he entangled himself with those great and powerful vessels, he had greatly endangered this kingdom of England; for twenty men upon the defenses are equal to a hundred that board and enter; whereas then, contrariwise, the Spaniards had a hundred, for twenty of ours, to defend themselves withal. But our admiral knew his advantage, and held it; which had he not done, he had not been worthy to have held his head."

The Spanish admiral also showed great judgment and firmness in following the line of conduct that had been traced out for him; and on the 27th of July, he brought his fleet unbroken, though sorely distressed, to anchor in Calais Roads. But the King of Spain had calculated ill the number and the activity of the English and Dutch fleets; as the old historian expresses it, "It seemeth that the Duke of Parma and the Spaniards grounded upon a vain and presumptuous expectation, that all the ships of England and of the Low Countreys would at the first sight of the Spanish and Dunkerke navie have betaken themselves to flight, yielding them sea-room, and endeavoring only to defend themselves, their havens, and sea-coasts from invasion. Wherefore their intent and purpose was, that the Duke of Parma, in his small and flat-bottomed ships, should, as it were under the shadow and wings of the Spanish fleet, convey over all his troupes, armor, and war-like provisions, and with their forces so united, should invade England: or while the English fleet were busied in fight against the Spanish, should enter upon any part of the coast, which he thought to be most convenient. Which invasion (as the captives afterward confessed) the Duke of Parma thought first to have attempted by the River of Thames; upon the banks whereof having at the first arrivall landed twenty or thirty thousand of his principall souldiers, he supposed that he might easily have woonne the citie of London; both because his small shippes should have followed and assisted his land forces, and also for that the citie it-selfe was but meanelly fortified and easie to ouercome, by reason of the citizens' delicacie and discontinuance from the warres, who, with continuall and constant labor, might be vanquished, if they yielded not at the first assault."

But the English and Dutch found ships and mariners enough to keep the Armada itself in check, and at the same time to block up Parma's flotilla. The greater part of Seymour's squadron left its cruising-ground off Dunkirk to join the English admiral off Calais; but the Dutch manned about five-and-thirty sail of good ships, with a strong force of soldiers on board, all well seasoned to the sea-service, and with these they blockaded the Flemish ports

\* Hakluyt's "Voyages," vol. 1., p. 601.

that were in Parma's power. Still it was resolved by the Spanish admiral and the prince to endeavor to effect a junction, which the English seamen were equally resolute to prevent; and bolder measures on our side now became necessary.

The Armada lay off Calais, with its largest ships ranged outside, "like strong castles fearing no assault, the lesser placed in the middle ward." The English admiral could not attack them in their position without great disadvantage, but on the night of the 29th he sent eight fire-ships among them, with almost equal effect to that of the fire-ships which the Greeks so often employed against the Turkish fleets in their late war of independence. The Spaniards cut their cables and put to sea in confusion. One of the largest galleasses ran foul of another vessel and was stranded. The rest of the fleet was scattered about on the Flemish coast, and when the morning broke, it was with difficulty and delay that they obeyed their admiral's signal to range themselves round him near Gravelines. Now was the golden opportunity for the English to assail them, and prevent them from ever letting loose Parma's flotilla against England, and nobly was that opportunity used. Drake and Fenner were the first English captains who attacked the unwieldy leviathans; then came Fenton, Southwell, Burton, Cross, Raynor, and then the lord admiral, with Lord Thomas Howard and Lord Sheffield. The Spaniards only thought of forming and keeping close together, and were driven by the English past Dunkirk, and far away from the Prince of Parma, who, in watching their defeat from the coast, must, as Drake expressed it, have chafed like a bear robbed of her whelps. This was indeed the last and the decisive battle between the two fleets. It is, perhaps, best described in the very words of the contemporary writer, as we may read them in Hakluyt.\*

"Upon the 29th of July in the morning, the Spanish fleet after the forsaid tumult, having arranged themselves againe into order, were, within sight of Greveling, most bravely and furiously encountered by the English, where they once again got the wind of the Spaniards, who suffered themselves to be deprived of the commodity of the place in Calais Road, and of the advantage of the wind neer unto Dunkerk, rather than they would change their array or separate their forces now conjoynd and united together, standing only upon their defense.

"And albeit there were many excellent and warlike ships in the English fleet, yet scarce were there 22 or 23 among them all, which matched 90 of the Spanish ships in the bigness, or could conveniently assault them. Wherefore the English shippes using their prerogative of nimble steerage, whereby they could turn and weild themselves with the wind which way they listed, came often times very near upon the Spaniards, and charged them so

sore, that now and then they were but a pike's length asunder; and so continually giving them one broad side after another, they discharged all their shot, both great and small, upon them, spending one whole day, from morning till night, in that violent kind of conflict, untill such time as powder and bullets failed them. In regard of which want they thought it convenient not to pursue the Spaniards any longer, because they had many great vantages of the English, namely, for the extraordinary bigness of their shippes, and also for that they were so neerely conjoynd, and kept together in so good array, that they could by no meanes be fought withall one to one. The English thought, therefore, that they had right well acquitted themselves in chasing the Spaniards first from Calais, and then from Dunkerk, and by that meanes to have hindered them from joyning with the Duke of Parma his forces, and getting the wind of them, to have driven them from their own coasts.

"The Spaniards that day sustained great loss and damage, having many of their shippes shot thorow and thorow, and they discharged likewise great store of ordinance against the English; who, indeed, sustained some hinderance, but not comparable to the Spaniard's loss; for they lost not any one ship or person of account; for very diligent inquisition being made, the Englishmen all that time wherein the Spanish navy sayled upon their seas, are not found to have wanted above one hundred of their people; albeit Sir Francis Drake's ship was pierced with shot above forty times, and his very cabben was twice shot thorow, and about the conclusion of the fight, the bed of a certaine gentleman lying weary thereupon, was taken quite from under him with the force of a bullet. Likewise, as the Earle of Northumberland and Sir Charles Blunt were at dinner upon a time, the bullet of a demy-culvering brake thorow the middest of their cabben, touched their feet, and strooke downe two of the standers-by, with many such accidents befalling the English shippes, which it were tedious to rehearse."

It reflects little credit on the English government that the English fleet was so deficiently supplied with ammunition as to be unable to complete the destruction of the invaders. But enough was done to insure it. Many of the largest Spanish ships were sunk or captured in the action of this day. And at length the Spanish admiral, despairing of success, fled northward with a southerly wind, in the hope of rounding Scotland, and so returning to Spain without a farther encounter with the English fleet. Lord Effingham left a squadron to continue the blockade of the Prince of Parma's armament; but that wise general soon withdrew his troops to more promising fields of action. Meanwhile the lord admiral himself, and Drake, chased the vincible Armada, as it was now termed, for some distance northward; and then, when they seemed to bend away from the Scotch coast toward Norway, it was

thought best, in the words of Drake, "to leave them to those boisterous and uncouth Northern seas."

The sufferings and losses which the unhappy Spaniards sustained in their flight round Scotland and Ireland are well known. Of their whole Armada only fifty-three shattered vessels brought back their beaten and wasted crews to the Spanish coast which they had quitted in such pageantry and pride.

Some passages from the writings of those who took part in the struggle have been already quoted, and the most spirited description of the defeat of the Armada which ever was penned may perhaps be taken from the letter which our brave Vice-admiral Drake wrote in answer to some mendacious stories by which the Spaniards strove to hide their shame. Thus does he describe the scenes in which he played so important a part.\*

"They were not ashamed to publish, in sundry languages in print, great victories in words, which they pretended to have obtained against this realm, and spread the same in a most false sort over all parts of France, Italy, and elsewhere; when, shortly afterward, it was happily manifested in very deed to all nations, how their navy, which they termed invincible, consisting of one hundred and forty sail of ships, not only of their own kingdom, but strengthened with the greatest argosies, Portugal carracks, Florentines, and large hulks of other countries, were by thirty of her majesty's own ships of war, and a few of our own merchants, by the wise, valiant, and advantageous conduct of the Lord Charles Howard, high admiral of England, beaten and shuffled together even from the Lizard in Cornwall, first to Portland, when they shamefully left Don Pedro de Valdez with his mighty ship; from Portland to Calais, where they lost Hugh de Moncado, with the galleys of which he was captain; and from Calais, driven with squibs from their anchors, were chased out of the sight of England, round about Scotland and Ireland; where, for the sympathy of their religion, hoping to find succor and assistance, a great part of them were crushed against the rocks, and those others that landed, being very many in number, were, notwithstanding, broken, slain, and taken, and so sent from village to village, coupled in halters to be shipped into England, where her majesty, of her princely and invincible disposition, disdaining to put them to death, and scorning either to retain or to entertain them, they were all sent back again to their countries, to witness and recount the worthy achievement of their invincible and dreadful navy. Of which the number of soldiers, the fearful burden of their ships, the commanders' names of every squadron, with all others, their magazines of provision, were put in print, as an army and navy irresistible and disdaining prevention; with all which their great

\* See Strype, and the notes to the Life of Drake, in the "Biographia Britannica."

and terrible ostentation, they did not in all their sailing round about England so much as sink or take one ship, barque, pinnace, or cock-boat of ours, or even burn so much as one sheep-cote on this land."

SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS BETWEEN THE DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA, A.D. 1588, AND THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM, A.D. 1704.

A.D. 1594. Henry IV. of France conforms to the Roman Catholic Church and ends the civil wars that had long desolated France.

1598. Philip II. of Spain dies leaving a ruined navy and an exhausted kingdom.

1603. Death of Queen Elizabeth. The Scotch dynasty of the Stuarts succeeds the throne of England.

1619. Commencement of the Thirty Years' War in Germany.

1624-1642. Cardinal Richelieu is minister of France. He breaks the power of nobility, reduces the Huguenots to complete subjection, and by aiding the Protestant German princes in the latter part of the Thirty Years' War, he humiliates France's ancient rival, Austria.

1630. Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, marches into Germany to the assistance of the Protestants, who were nearly crushed by the Austrian armies. He gains several great victories, and after his death, Sweden, under his statesmen and generals, continues to take a leading part in the war.

1640. Portugal throws off the Spanish yoke; and the house of Braganza begins to reign.

1642. Commencement of the civil war in England between Charles I. and his Parliament.

1648. The Thirty Years' War in Germany ended by the treaty of Westphalia.

1653. Oliver Cromwell Lord Protector of England.

1660. Restoration of the Stuarts to the English throne.

1661. Louis XIV. takes the administration of affairs in France into his own hands.

1667-1668. Louis XIV. makes war upon Spain, and conquers a large part of the Spanish Netherlands.

1672. Louis makes war upon Holland, and almost overpowers it. Charles II., of England, is his pensioner, and England helps the French in their attacks upon Holland until 1674. Heroic resistance of the Dutch under the Prince of Orange.

1674. Louis conquers Franche-Comte.

1679. Peace of Nimeguen.

1681. Louis invades and occupies Alsace.

1682. Accession of Peter the Great to the throne of Russia.

1685. Louis commences a merciless persecution of his Protestant subjects.

1688. The glorious Revolution in England. Expulsion of James II. William of Orange is made King of England. James takes refuge at the French court, and Louis undertakes to restore him. General war in the west of Europe.

1697. Treaty of Ryswick. Charles XII. becomes King of Sweden.

1700. Charles II., of Spain, dies, having bequeathed his dominions to Philip of Anjou, Louis XIV.'s grandson. Defeat of the Russians at Narva by Charles XII.

1701. William III. forms a "Grand Alliance" of Austria, the Empire, the United Provinces, England, and other powers, against France.

1702. King William dies; but his successor, Queen Anne, adheres to the Grand Alliance, and war is proclaimed against France.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM, A.D. 1704.

The decisive blow struck at Blenheim resounded through every part of Europe: it at once destroyed the vast fabric of power which it had taken Louis XIV., aided by the talents of Turenne and the genius of Vauban, so long to construct.—ALISON.

THOUGH more slowly moulded and less imposingly vast than the empire of Napoleon, the power which Louis XIV. had acquired and was acquiring at the commencement of the eighteenth century was almost equally menacing to the general liberties of Europe. If tested by the amount of *permanent* aggrandizement which each procured for France, the ambition of the royal Bourbon was more successful than were the enterprises of the imperial Corsican. All the provinces that Bonaparte conquered were rent again from France within twenty years from the date when the very earliest of them was acquired. France is not stronger by a single city or a single acre for all the devastating wars of the Consulate and the Empire. But she still possesses Franche-Comte, Alsace, and part of Flanders. She has still the extended boundaries which Louis XIV. gave her; and the royal Spanish marriage a few years ago proved clearly how enduring has been the political influence which the arts and arms of France's "Grand Monarque" obtained for her southward of the Pyrenees.

When Louis XIV. took the reins of government into his own hands, after the death of Cardinal Mazarin, there was a union of ability with opportunity such as France had not seen since the

days of Charlemagne. Moreover, Louis's career was no brief one. For upward of forty years, for a period nearly equal to the duration of Charlemagne's reign, Louis steadily followed an aggressive and a generally successful policy. He passed a long youth and manhood of triumph before the military genius of Marlborough made him acquainted with humiliation and defeat. The great Bourbon lived too long. He should not have outstayed our two English kings, one his dependent, James II., the other his antagonist, William III. Had he died when they died, his reign would be cited as unequalled in the French annals for its prosperity. But he lived on to see his armies beaten, his cities captured, and his kingdom wasted year after year by disastrous war. It is as if Charlemagne had survived to be defeated by the Northmen, and to witness the misery and shame that actually fell to the lot of his descendants.

Still, Louis XIV. had forty years of success; and from the permanence of their fruits, we may judge what the results would have been if the last fifteen years of his reign had been equally fortunate. Had it not been for Blenheim, all Europe might at this day suffer under the effect of French conquests resembling those of Alexander in extent, and those of the Romans in durability.

When Louis XIV. began to govern, he found all the materials for a strong government ready to his hand. Richelieu had completely tamed the turbulent spirit of the French nobility, and had subverted the "imperium in imperio" of the Huguenots. The faction of the Frondeurs in Mazarin's time had had the effect of making the Parisian Parliament utterly hateful and contemptible in the eyes of the nation. The Assemblies of the States-General were obsolete. The royal authority alone remained. The king was the state. Louis knew his position. He fearlessly avowed it, and he fearlessly acted up to it.\*

Not only was his government a strong one, but the country which he governed was strong—strong in its geographical situation, in the compactness of its territory, in the number and martial spirit of its inhabitants, and in their complete and undivided nationality. Louis had neither a Hungary nor an Ireland in his dominions. The civil war in the Cevennes was caused solely by his own persecuting intolerance; and that did not occur till late in his reign, when old age made his bigotry more gloomy, and had given fanaticism the mastery over prudence.

Like Napoleon in after times, Louis XIV. saw clearly that the great wants of France were "ships, colonies, and commerce." But Louis did more than see these wants; by the aid of his great minister, Colbert, he supplied them. One of the surest proofs of the

\* "Quand Louis XIV. dit, 'L'Etat, c'est moi.' il n'y eut dans cette parole ni enflure, ni vanterie, mais la simple énonciation d'un fait."—MICHELET *Histoire Moderne*, vol. II, p. 166.