

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.

genius of Louis was his skill in finding out genius in others, and his promptness in calling it into action. Under him, Louvois organized, Turenne, Conde, Villars, and Berwick led the armies of France, and Vauban fortified her frontiers. Throughout his reign, French diplomacy was marked by skilfulness and activity, and also by comprehensive far-sightedness, such as the representatives of no other nation possessed. Guizot's testimony to the vigor that was displayed through every branch of Louis XIV.'s government, and to the extent to which France at present is indebted to him, is remarkable. He says that, "taking the public services of every kind, the finances, the departments of roads and public works, the military administration, and all the establishments which belong to every branch of administration, there is not one that will not be found to have had its origin, its development, or its greatest perfection under the reign of Louis XIV.)\* And he points out to us that "the government of Louis XIV. was the first that presented itself to the eyes of Europe as a power acting upon sure grounds, which had not to dispute its existence with inward enemies, but was at ease as to its territory and its people, and solely occupied with the task of administering government properly so called. All the European governments had been previously thrown into incessant wars, which deprived them of all security as well as of all leisure, or so pestered by internal parties or antagonists that their time was passed in fighting for existence. The government of Louis XIV. was the first to appear as a busy, thriving administration of affairs, as a power at once definitive and progressive, which was not afraid to innovate, because it could reckon securely on the future. There have been, in fact, very few governments equally innovating. Compare it with a government of the same nature, the unmixed monarchy of Philip II. in Spain; it was more absolute than that of Louis XIV., and yet it was less regular and tranquil. How did Philip II. succeed in establishing absolute power in Spain? By stifling all activity in the country, opposing himself to every species of amelioration, and rendering the state of Spain completely stagnant. The government of Louis XIV., on the contrary, exhibited alacrity for all sorts of innovations, and showed itself favorable to the progress of letters, arts, wealth—in short, of civilization. This was the veritable cause of its preponderance in Europe, which arose to such a pitch, that it became the type of a government not only to sovereigns, but also to nations, during the seventeenth century."

While France was thus strong and united in herself, and ruled by a martial, an ambitious, and (with all his faults) an enlightened and high-spirited sovereign, what European power was there fit to cope with her or keep her in check?

"As to Germany, the ambitious projects of the German branch

\* "History of European Civilization," Lecture 13.

of Austria had been entirely defeated, the peace of the empire had been restored, and almost a new constitution formed, or an old revived, by the treaties of Westphalia; nay, the imperial eagle was not only fallen, but her wings were clipped."\*

As to Spain, the Spanish branch of the Austrian house had sunk equally low. Philip II. left his successors a ruined monarchy. He left them something worse; he left them his example and his principles of government, founded in ambition, in pride, in ignorance, in bigotry, and all the pedantry of state.†

It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that France, in the first war of Louis XIV., despised the opposition of both branches of the once predominant house of Austria. Indeed, in Germany, the French king acquired allies among the princes of the empire against the emperor himself. He had a still stronger support in Austria's misgovernment of her own subjects. The words of Bolingbroke on this are remarkable, and some of them sound as if written within the last three years. Bolingbroke says, "It was not merely the want of cordial co-operation among the princes of the empire that disabled the emperor from acting with vigor in the cause of his family then, nor that has rendered the house of Austria a dead weight upon all her allies ever since. Bigotry, and its inseparable companion, cruelty, as well as the tyranny and avarice of the court of Vienna, created in those days, and has maintained in ours, almost a perpetual diversion of the imperial arms from all effectual opposition to France. I mean to speak of the troubles in Hungary. Whatever they became in their progress, they were caused originally by the usurpations and persecutions of the emperor; and when the Hungarians were called rebels first, they were called so for no other reason than this, that they would not be slaves. The dominion of the emperor being less supportable than that of the Turks, this unhappy people opened a door to the latter to infest the empire, instead of making their country what it had been before, a barrier against the Ottoman power. France became a sure though secret ally of the Turks as well as the Hungarians, and has found her account in it by keeping the emperor in perpetual alarms on that side, while she has ravaged the empire and the Low Countries on the other."‡

If, after having seen the imbecility of Germany and Spain

\* Bolingbroke, vol. ii., p. 378. Lord Bolingbroke's "Letters on the Use of History," and his "Sketch of the History and State of Europe," abound with remarks on Louis XIV. and his contemporaries, of which the substance is as sound as the style is beautiful. Unfortunately, like all his other works, they contain also a large proportion of sophistry and misrepresentation. The best test to use before we adopt any opinion or assertion of Bolingbroke's, is to consider whether in writing it he was thinking either of Sir Robert Walpole or of Revealed Religion. When either of these objects of his hatred was before his mind, he scrupled at no artifice or exaggeration that might serve the purpose of his malignity. On most other occasions he may be followed with advantage, as he always may be read with pleasure.

† Bolingbroke, vol. ii., p. 378.

‡ Bolingbroke, vol. ii., p. 397.

against the France of Louis XIV., we turn to the two only remaining European powers of any importance at that time, to England and to Holland, we find the position of our own country as to European politics, from 1660 to 1688, most painful to contemplate; nor is our external history during the last twelve years of the eighteenth century by any means satisfactory to national pride, though it is infinitely less shameful than that of the preceding twenty-eight years. From 1660 to 1668, "England, by the return of the Stuarts, was reduced to a nullity." The words are *Michel-et's*,\* and, though severe, they are just. They are, in fact, not severe enough; for when England, under her restored dynasty of the Stuarts, did not take any part in European politics, her conduct, or rather her king's conduct, was almost invariably wicked and dishonorable.

Bolingbroke rightly says that, previous to the revolution of 1688, during the whole progress that Louis XIV. made toward acquiring such exorbitant power as gave him well-grounded hopes of acquiring at last to his family the Spanish monarchy, England had been either an idle spectator of what passed on the Continent, or a faint and uncertain ally against France, or a warm and sure ally on her side, or a partial mediator between her and the powers confederated together in their common defense. But though the court of England submitted to abet the usurpations of France, and the King of England stooped to be her pensioner, the crime was not national. On the contrary, the nation cried out loudly against it even while it was committing.†

Holland alone, of all the European powers, opposed from the very beginning a steady and uniform resistance to the ambition and power of the French king. It was against Holland that the fiercest attacks of France were made, and, though often apparently on the eve of complete success, they were always ultimately baffled by the stubborn bravery of the Dutch, and the heroism of their great leader, William of Orange. When he became King of England, the power of this country was thrown decidedly into the scale against France; but though the contest was thus rendered less unequal, though William acted throughout "with invincible firmness, like a patriot and a hero,"‡ France had the general superiority in every war and in every treaty; and the commencement of the eighteenth century found the last league against her dissolved, all the forces of the confederates against her dispersed, and many disbanded; while France continued armed, with her veteran forces by sea and land increased, and held in readiness to act on all sides, whenever the opportunity should arise for seizing on the great prizes which, from the very beginning of his reign, had never been lost sight of by her king.

\* "Histoire Moderne," vol. ii., p. 106.

† *Ibid.*, p. 404.

‡ Bolingbroke, vol. ii., 418.

This is not the place for any narrative of the first essay which Louis XIV. made of his power in the war of 1667; of his rapid conquest of Flanders and Franche-Comte; of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which "was nothing more than a composition between the bully and the bullied"\* of his attack on Holland in 1672; of the districts and the barrier towns of the Spanish Netherlands, which were secured to him by the treaty of Nimeguen in 1678; of how, after this treaty, he "continued to vex both Spain and the empire, and to extend his conquests in the Low Countries and on the Rhine, both by the pen and the sword; how he took Luxembourg by force, stole Strasburg, and bought Casal;" of how the league of Augsburg was formed against him in 1686, and the election of William of Orange to the English throne in 1688 gave a new spirit to the opposition which France encountered; of the long and checkered war that followed, in which the French armies were generally victorious on the Continent, though his fleet were beaten at La Hogue, and his dependent, James II., was defeated at the Boyne; or of the treaty of Ryswick, which left France in possession of Roussillon, Artois, and Strasburg, which gave Europe no security against her claims on the Spanish succession, and which Louis regarded as a mere truce, to gain breathing-time before a more decisive struggle. It must be borne in mind that the ambition of Louis in these wars was two-fold. It had its immediate and its ulterior objects. Its immediate object was to conquer and annex to France the neighboring provinces and towns that were most convenient for the increase of her strength, but the ulterior object of Louis, from the time of his marriage to the Spanish Infanta in 1659, was to acquire for the house of Bourbon the whole empire of Spain. A formal renunciation of all right to the Spanish succession had been made at the time of the marriage; but such renunciations were never of any practical effect, and many casuists and jurists of the age even held them to be intrinsically void. As the time passed on, and the prospect of Charles II., of Spain dying without lineal heirs became more and more certain, so did the claims of the house of Bourbon to the Spanish crown after his death become matters of urgent interest to French ambition on the one hand, and to the other powers of Europe on the other. At length the unhappy King of Spain died. By his will he appointed Philip, duke of Anjou, one of Louis XIV.'s grandsons, to succeed him on the throne of Spain, and strictly forbade any partition of his dominions. Louis well knew that a general European war would follow if he accepted for his house the crown thus bequeathed. But he had been preparing for this crisis throughout his reign. He sent his grandson into Spain as King Philip V. of that country, addressing to him, on his departure, the memorable words, "There are no longer any Pyrenees."

\* *Ibid.*, p. 399.

The empire, which now received the grandson of Louis as its king, comprised besides Spain itself, the strongest part of the Netherlands, Sardinia, Sicily, Naples, the principality of Milan, and other possessions in Italy, the Philippines and Manilla Islands in Asia, and in the New World besides California and Florida, the greatest part of Central and of Southern America. Philip was well received in Madrid, where he was crowned as King Philip V. in the beginning of 1701. The distant portions of his empire sent in their adhesion; and the house of Bourbon, either by its French or Spanish troops, now had occupation both of the kingdom of Francis I, and of the fairest and amplest portions of the empire of the great rival of Francis, Charles V.

Loud was the wrath of Austria, whose princes were the rival claimants of the Bourbons for the empire of Spain. The indignation of our William III, though not equally loud, was far more deep and energetic. By his exertions, a league against the house of Bourbon was formed between England, Holland, and the Austrian emperor, which was subsequently joined by the kings of Portugal and Prussia, by the Duke of Savoy, and by Denmark. Indeed, the alarm throughout Europe was now general and urgent. It was evident that Louis aimed at consolidating France and the Spanish dominions into one preponderating empire. At the moment when Philip was departing to take possession of Spain, Louis had issued letters-patent in his favor to the effect of preserving his rights to the throne of France. And Louis had himself obtained possession of the important frontier of the Spanish Netherlands with its numerous fortified cities, which were given up to his troops under pretense of securing them for the young King of Spain. Whether the formal union of the two crowns was likely to take place speedily or not, it was evident that the resources of the whole Spanish monarchy were now virtually at the French king's disposal.

The peril that seemed to menace the empire, England, Holland, and the other independent powers is well summed up by Alison. "Spain had threatened the liberties of Europe in the end of the sixteenth century. France had all but overthrown them in the close of the seventeenth. What hope was there of there being able to make head against them both, united under such a monarch as Louis XIV.?"\*

Our knowledge of the decayed state into which the Spanish power had fallen ought not make us regard their alarms as chimerical. Spain possessed enormous resources, and her strength was capable of being regenerated by a vigorous ruler. We should remember what Alberoni effected even after the close of the war of Succession. By what that minister did in a few years, we may judge what Louis XIV. would have done in restoring the mari-

\* "Military History of the Duke of Marlborough," p. 32.

time and military power of that great country, which nature had so largely gifted, and which man's misgovernment has so debased.

The death of King William, on the 8th of March, 1702, at first seemed likely to paralyze the league against France; "for, notwithstanding the ill success with which he made war generally, he was looked upon as the sole center of union that could keep together the great confederacy then forming; and how much the French feared from his life had appeared a few years before, in the extravagant and indecent joy they expressed on a false report of his death. A short time showed how vain the fears of some, and the hope of others were."\* Queen Anne, within three days after her accession, went down to the House of Lords, and there declared her resolution to support the measures planned by her predecessor, who had been "the great support, not only of these kingdoms, but of all Europe." Anne was married to Prince George of Denmark, and by her accession to the English throne the confederacy against Louis obtained the aid of the troops of Denmark; but Anne's strong attachment to one of her female friends led to far more important advantages to the anti-Gallican confederacy than the acquisition of many armies, for it gave them MARLBOROUGH as their captain general.

There are few successful commanders on whom France has shone so unwillingly as upon John Churchill, duke of Marlborough, prince of the Holy Roman Empire, victor of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet, captor of Liege, Bonn, Limburg, Landau, Ghent, Bruges, Antwerp, Oudenarde, Ostend, Menin, Denendermonde, Ath, Lille, Tournay, Mons, Dounay, Aire, Bethune, and Bouchain; who never fought a battle that he did not win, and never besieged a place that he did not take. Marlborough's own character is the cause of this. Military glory may, and too often does, dazzle both contemporaries and posterity, until the crimes as well as the vices of heroes are forgotten. But even a few stains of personal meanness will dim a soldier's reputation irreparably; and Marlborough's faults were of a peculiarly base and mean order. Our feelings toward historical personages are in this respect like our feelings toward private acquaintances. There are actions of that shabby nature, that however much they may be outweighed by a man's good deeds on a general estimate of his character, we never can feel any cordial liking for the person who has once been guilty of them. Thus, with respect to the Duke of Marlborough, it goes against our feelings to admire the man who owed his first advancement in life to the court favor which he and his family acquired through his sister becoming one of the mistresses of the Duke of York. It is repulsive to know that Marlborough laid the foundation of his wealth by being the paid lover of one of the fair

\* Bolingbroke, vol. II., 445.

and frail favorites of Charles II.\* His treachery, and his ingratitude to his patron and benefactor, James II., stand out in dark relief, even in that age of thankless perfidy. He was almost equally disloyal to his new master, King William; and a more un-English act cannot be recorded than Godolphin's and Marlborough's betrayal to the French court in 1694 of the expedition then designed against Brest, a piece of treachery which caused some hundreds of English soldiers and sailors to be helplessly slaughtered on the beach in Cameret Bay.

It is, however, only in his military career that we have now to consider him; and there are very few generals, of either ancient or modern times, whose campaigns will bear a comparison with those of Marlborough, either for the masterly skill with which they were planned, or for the bold yet prudent energy with which each plan was carried into execution. Marlborough had served while young under Turenne, and had obtained the marked praise of this great tactician. It would be difficult, indeed, to name a single quality which a general ought to have, and with which Marlborough was not eminently gifted. What principally attracted the notice of contemporaries was the imperturbable evenness of his spirit. Voltaire\* says of him.

"He had, to a degree above all other generals of his time, that calm courage in the midst of tumult, that serenity of soul in danger, which the English call a *cool head* [que les Anglais appellent *coûd head, tête froide*], and it was, perhaps, this quality, the greatest gift of nature for command, which formerly gave the English so many advantages over the French in the plains of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt."

King William's knowledge of Marlborough's high abilities, though he knew his faithlessness equally well, is said to have caused that sovereign in his last illness to recommend Marlborough to his successor as the fittest person to command her armies; but Marlborough's favor with the new queen, by means of his wife, was so high, that he was certain of obtaining the highest employment; and the war against Louis opened to him a glorious theater for the display of those military talents, which he had previously only had an opportunity of exercising in a subordinate character, and on far less conspicuous scenes.

He was not only made captain general of the English forces at home and abroad, but such was the authority of England in the council of the Grand Alliance, and Marlborough was so skilled in winning golden opinions from all whom he met with, that on his reaching the Hague, he was received with transports of joy by the

\* Marlborough might plead the example of Sylla in this. Compare the anecdote in Plutarch about Sylla when young and Nicopolis, *κοινῆς μὲν, εὐπόρον δὲ γυναικός*, and the anecdote about Marlborough and the Duchess of Cleveland, told by Lord Chesterfield, and cited in Macaulay's "History," vol. I., p. 461.

† "Siccle de Louis Quatorze."

Dutch, and it was agreed by the heads of that republic, and the minister of the emperor, that Marlborough should have the chief command of all the allied armies.

It must, indeed, in justice to Marlborough, be borne in mind, that mere military skill was by no means all that was required of him in his arduous and invidious station. Had it not been for his unrivalled patience and sweetness of temper, and his marvelous ability in discerning the character of those whom he had to act with, his intuitive perception of those who were to be thoroughly trusted, and of those who were to be amused with the mere semblance of respect and confidence; had not Marlborough possessed and employed, while at the head of the allied armies, all the qualifications of a polished courtier and a great statesman, he never would have led the allied armies to the Danube. The confederacy would not have held together for a single year. His greatest political adversary, Bolingbroke, does him ample justice here. Bolingbroke, after referring to the loss which King William's death seemed to inflict on the cause of the allies, observes that, "By his death, the Duke of Marlborough was raised to the head of the army, and, indeed, of the confederacy; where he, a new, a private man, a subject, acquired by merit and by management a more deciding influence than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain had given to King William. Not only all the parts of that vast machine, the Grand Alliance, were kept more compact and entire, but a more rapid and vigorous motion was given to the whole; and, instead of languishing and disastrous campaigns, we saw every scene of the war full of action. All those wherein he appeared, and many of those wherein he was not then an actor, but abettor; however, of their action, were crowned with the most triumphant success.

"I take with pleasure this opportunity of doing justice to that great man, whose faults I knew, whose virtues I admired; and whose memory, as the greatest general and the greatest minister that our country, or perhaps any other, has produced, I honor."\*

War was formally declared by the allies against France on the 4th of May, 1702. The principal scenes of its operation were, at first, Flanders, the Upper Rhine, and North Italy. Marlborough headed the allied troops in Flanders during the first two years of the war, and took some towns from the enemy, but nothing decisive occurred. Nor did any actions of importance take place during this period between the rival armies in Italy. But in the center of that line from north to south, from the mouth of the Scheldt to the mouth of the Po, along which the war was carried on, the generals of Louis XIV. acquired advantages in 1703 which threatened one chief member of the Grand Alliance with utter destruction. France had obtained the important assistance

\* Bolingbroke, vol. II., p. 445.

of Bavaria as her confederate in the war. The elector of this powerful German state made himself master of the strong fortress of Ulm, and opened a communication with the French armies on the Upper Rhine. By this junction, the troops of Louis were enabled to assail the emperor in the very heart of Germany. In the autumn of the year 1703, the combined armies of the elector and French king completely defeated the Imperialists in Bavaria: and in the following winter they made themselves masters of the important cities of Augsburg and Passau. Meanwhile the French army of the Upper Rhine and Moselle had beaten the allied armies opposed to them, and taken Treves with Landau. At the same time, the discontents in Hungary with Austria again broke out into open insurrection, so as to distract the attention and complete the terror of the emperor and his council at Vienna.

Louis XIV. ordered the next campaign to be commenced by his troops on a scale of grandeur and with a boldness of enterprise such as even Napoleon's military schemes have seldom equalled. On the extreme left of the line of war, in the Netherlands, the French armies were to act only on the defensive. The fortresses in the hands of the French there were so many and so strong, that no serious impression seemed likely to be made by the allies on the French frontier in that quarter during one campaign, and that one campaign was to give France such triumphs elsewhere as would (it was hoped) determine the war. Large detachments were therefore to be made from the French force in Flanders, and they were to be led by Marshal Villeroy to the Moselle and Upper Rhine. The French army already in the neighborhood of those rivers was to march under Marshal Tallard through the Black Forest and join the Elector of Bavaria, and the French troops that were already with the elector under Marshal Marsin. Meanwhile the French army of Italy was to advance through the Tyrol into Austria, and the whole forces were to combine between the Danube and the Inn. A strong body of troops was to be dispatched into Hungary, to assist and organize the insurgents in that kingdom; and the French grand army of the Danube was then in collected and irresistible might to march upon Vienna, and dictate terms of peace to the emperor. High military genius was shown in the formation of this plan, but it was met and baffled by a genius higher still.

Marlborough had watched, with the deepest anxiety, the progress of the French arms on the Rhine and in Bavaria, and he saw the futility of carrying on a war of posts and sieges in Flanders, while death-blows to the empire were being dealt on the Danube. He resolved, therefore, to let the war in Flanders languish for a year, while he moved with all the disposable forces that he could collect to the central scenes of decisive operations. Such a march was in itself difficult; but Marlborough had, in the first instance, to overcome the still greater difficulty of obtaining the consent and cheerful co-operation of the allies, especially of the Dutch, whose

frontier it was proposed thus to deprive of the larger part of the force which had hitherto been its protection: Fortunately, among the many slothful, the many foolish, the many timid, and the not few treacherous rulers, statesmen, and generals of different nations with whom he had to deal, there were two men, eminent both in ability and integrity, who entered fully into Marlborough's projects, and who, from the stations which they occupied, were enabled materially to forward them. One of these was the Dutch statesman Heinsius, who had been the cordial supporter of King William, and who now, with equal zeal and good faith, supported Marlborough in the councils of the allies; the other was the celebrated general, Prince Eugene, whom the Austrian cabinet had recalled from the Italian frontier to take the command of one of the emperor's armies in Germany. To these two great men, and a few more, Marlborough communicated his plan freely and unreservedly; but to the general councils of his allies he only disclosed part of his daring scheme. He proposed to the Dutch that he should march from Flanders to the Upper Rhine and Moselle with the British troops and part of the foreign auxiliaries, and commence vigorous operations against the French armies in that quarter, while General Auverquerque, with the Dutch and the remainder of the auxiliaries, maintained a defensive war in the Netherlands. Having with difficulty obtained the consent of the Dutch to this portion of his project, he exercised the same diplomatic zeal, with the same success, in urging the King of Prussia and other princes of the empire, to increase the number of the troops which they supplied, and to post them in places convenient for his own intended movements.

Marlborough commenced his celebrated march on the 19th of May. The army which he was to lead had been assembled by his brother, General Churchill, at Bedburg, not far from Maestricht, on the Meuse: it included sixteen thousand English troops, and consisted of fifty-one battalions of foot, and ninety-two squadrons of horse. Marlborough was to collect and join with him on his march the troops of Prussia, Luneburg, and Hesse, quartered on the Rhine, and eleven Dutch battalions that were stationed at Rothweil.\* He had only marched a single day, when the series of interruptions, complaints, and requisitions from the other leaders of the allies began, to which he seemed subjected throughout his enterprise, and which would have caused its failure in the hands of any one not gifted with the firmness and the exquisite temper of Marlborough. One specimen of these annoyances and of Marlborough's mode of dealing with them may suffice. On his encamping at Kuppen on the 20th, he received an express from Auverquerque pressing him to halt, because Villeroy, who commanded the French army in Flanders, had quitted the lines which he had been occupying, and crossed the Meuse at Namur with thirty-six battal-

\* Coxe's "Life of Marlborough."