

dug in an obscure corner, a brief religious service was held, and the body of Pizarro, wrapped only in a shroud, was consigned to earth. Neither love nor pity presided over that miserable burial. "There was none even to say, 'God forgive him!'" says a writer of that period.

In 1607, when time had softened the animosities he had incurred, his remains were disinterred and removed to a tomb in the cathedral.

CHAPTER VIII.

JOHN CHURCHILL (DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH).

Ancestors—Birth and Education—Love for Military Studies—Page to King James—Commissioned at Sixteen—Sent to the Continent—Publicly Commended—Return to London—Marriage—Created Peer—The "One Blot"—Possible Extenuation—Commanding the Horse-Guards—Duke of Marlboro'—In Ireland—Arrested by the New King—Retired to Private Life—Restored to Rank—Intrusted with Public Affairs—Death of King William—Churchill Promoted—At the Head of the English Army—Narrow Escape from Captivity—Battle of Blenheim—A Hero's Honors—Fighting his Old Enemy—Narrow Escape—Crowning Glories—Retirement—Last Appearance in the House of Lords.

JOHN CHURCHILL, afterward Duke of Marlborough, made in his day a powerful impression on the continent of Europe. The Dutch found in his conquering arm the stay of their sorely-pressed country; the Germans beheld the ravages of war rolled back from the Rhine to the land of their enemies; the Lutherans regarded him as an instrument of divine vengeance to punish the perfidy and cruelty of the revocation of the edict of Nantes; and the French saw the glory of triumph torn from their *grande monarchie*, and for years afterward frightened their children with stories of "Marlbrook."

His father was Sir Winston Churchill, a gallant cavalier who had been driven into exile by Cromwell, and

"My God!" exclaimed the king, "my very children have forsaken me."

It may be urged in extenuation that any other course would have precipitated a civil war; that England would not again have submitted to the See of Rome. William seems to have reposed the utmost confidence in Churchill at first. He was despatched to London to assume command of the Horse-Guards, and while there the famous Act of Association, that seated William and Mary on the throne, was signed. At the coronation he was created Duke of Marlborough.

William sent him to Flanders to assume command, where the king with heroic courage was contending with the armies of France. Churchill, not being in love with the cause, made slow progress with the enemy, and was at length recalled and sent to take command in Ireland, which was the scene of frequent insurrections in favor of James. King William, becoming impatient at seeming delay and inactivity of Churchill, and rumors of bad faith having reached him, caused the arrest of the commander and several noblemen of distinction, and had them confined in the tower on the charge of conspiring to restore James. William had already made himself obnoxious by his partiality for Dutch troops and the severity of his government.

Sir John Fenwick was executed, but there was not found sufficient evidence against Churchill, who on being liberated retired to private life, where his prudent and exemplary conduct weakened William's resentment.

Churchill was restored to his rank at court, and made privy counselor and preceptor to the young Duke of Gloucester. "Make my nephew to resemble yourself,"

said the king, "and he will be all that I can wish."

During William's absence in Holland, he was intrusted with great civil and military power. The king returned to prosecute a threatened invasion of the Chevalier St. George, who on the death of his father laid claim to the English throne, with the advice and assistance of France. But a fall from his horse brought about a dangerous illness. The king soon after died, and Queen Anne ascended the throne. Marlborough was confirmed in all his former offices, and advanced to that of plenipotentiary to the Hague.

At this time, 1702, commences the great and memorable period of the life of the Duke of Marlborough. For a proper understanding of the war in which his share was a series of brilliant successes, it is necessary to state that at this time the power of France threatened the safety of Europe as greatly as in the later time of Napoleon. The court of Louis XIV. was at this time not only the most powerful, but the most elegant, in Europe. Statesmen, poets, preachers and artists thronged Paris. Greatness seemed to have blossomed in every department at once. Vauban, the prince of engineers, was the terror of fortified cities and the bulwark of defence. Turenne, Boufflers and Conde were generals whose names filled their adversaries with dismay. Germany and Austria made strenuous efforts, but could not defy the mighty power. Conquest and annexation, carrying on war in her neighbors' territories, was the system France had rendered a success. Half of Holland was subdued, and the French forces were marching to the very gates of Amsterdam.

Prince George of Denmark was wise enough to see that William's foreign policy must be continued, or the liberties of Europe and the Protestant faith would alike be lost. Marlborough was sent at once with an English army to the help of the allies. Marlborough reached headquarters when the French lay before Nimeguen, elate with recent victories. He at once laid siege to Venloo, which was carried by storm, and then marched upon Liege, one of the strongly fortified cities, which was taken, to the utter surprise of the French, who were thus driven back a considerable distance.

Marlborough, in company with some Dutch officers, embarked on the Meuse, but was captured by a band of French marauders. His servant, with great presence of mind, thrust into his hand an old passport, made in the name of General Churchill. They seized the plate and valuables, but, ignorant of the great prize in their grasp, allowed the men to proceed on their way.

The people at Hague received Marlborough as their deliverer, and were wild with joy at hearing of his narrow escape. He returned to London, where Queen Anne conferred upon him new honors; but as soon as spring opened he rejoined the army, having by his great influence and engaging manners succeeded in persuading the allies to unite on some basis of war that would be best for all. Bavaria had joined with France, so in the very heart of Europe was an enemy to menace Hungary, Austria and Italy. Marlborough marched up the Rhine, capturing several of the smaller outposts, and then took possession of Friburg, ravaging the country with his troops. The Elector of

Bavaria applied to Tallard for assistance, but Marlborough and Prince Eugene united their forces and resolved to give battle. Their defeat in this case would be total ruin, but Marlborough's intrepidity and perseverance defeated one important move of the French army, and the loyalty of the Tyrolese opposed a furious resistance that delayed their march; but on the morning of the battle they were posted in splendid force from the Danube with Blenheim on their front, and the river between them and the allies, their lines extending as far as Sutzingen. * The French were a veteran army, splendidly equipped, animated by faith in their own prowess and in their leaders, while the allies were of different nations and languages, between whom there had always existed petty jealousies. Only the splendid talents, sagacity and conciliatory manners of Marlborough could so have smoothed differences, infused courage and agreement. Between him and Prince Eugene there was no rivalry, but a noble emulation to do all that was possible for the cause they had espoused.

The battle of Blenheim must always stand as one of the great European victories, one of the three great victories that were destined to change the face of the continent for many years, and to be fought over again for nearly the same purpose.

The battle lasted nearly all day, with the utmost courage and daring on both sides. Marlborough's eagle eye had seen in the morning the one weak spot in the long array, but he purposely refrained from attacking that until he had engaged nearly the whole army at different points. Once, indeed, it seemed as if Eugene and the right wing of the army might be

cut off, but Marlborough, hastening to the spot, not only recovered the army, but turned it to a decided advantage. The weak center was driven back. Tallard could not unite the broken columns, and the French, unused to defeat, were filled with dismay. Tallard, with a small body of horse, was taken prisoner. With a shout, the allies turned to Blenheim, and though the resistance there was vigorous, it could only be brief, as they were cut off from succor and compelled to surrender.

The allies took thirteen thousand prisoners, over a thousand of whom were officers, and immense stores of cannon, provision and standards. The French loss was estimated at forty thousand. A transcendent victory, that thrilled Europe then, and gave courage everywhere, now that the invincible enemy had suffered a defeat.

Marlborough sent his own carriage for Tallard, and all the prisoners were treated with the utmost kindness. On the parapet of the bridge over the Danube he penciled a note to his wife, whom he seems to have loved with the utmost devotion.

"I have not time to say more, but beg that you will give my duty to the queen, and let her know that her army has had a great victory."

Marlborough followed up the remnant of the French army. Ulm and Landau were forced to capitulate. The result of this campaign was the delivering of Germany and the utter humiliation of France.

Honors of every kind were showered upon the English hero. He was created a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, and the courts of Berlin and Hanover received him with triumph, even the people thronging about to honor him with shouts of joy.

Nor was England unmindful. The queen and parliament granted him the extensive manor of Woodstock, famous for the romance of fair Rosamond. A magnificent palace was begun, which is still an enduring monument of a nation's gratitude.

But the conqueror was destined to feel bitterly the effects of petty jealousies, and the want of support that prevented him from following up the victory and marching on to Paris, where he might have made such a peace that later wars could have been avoided. But for a while matters languished, and he had to try his conciliatory and persuasive arguments in courts, instead of striking vigorous blows upon the field.

Meanwhile the French recovered from their dismay, and the wrangling of the allies was joy to them. A new army was collected, and Pilleri at the head of seventy-five thousand once more struck terror to the hearts of the Dutch, who appealed to their powerful friend. Without a moment's hesitation Marlborough marched his army, hoping to surprise the enemy, but he found them strongly entrenched directly across their line of march, on a lofty plateau. Marlborough at once prepared for battle, and in the first charge the allied forces were much shaken and reduced to considerable disorder. Marlborough saw the great danger, and leading the reserve with his wonted gallantry was recognized by some French troops, who made a sudden rush and surrounded him. And now, indeed, the fortunes of the day seemed almost in the grasp of France, if the allies should lose their intrepid leader. Like the knights of old, he fought his way through, sword in hand, until leaping a ditch his horse fell under him. His aide-de-camp instantly substituted another; but as

his equerry held the stirrup a cannon ball carried off the brave fellow's head, but the leader was safe. The incident served to renew the intrepidity of the troops, and some reinforcements coming up, the French gave way a little. Villeroy was able and determined, but Marlborough's eyes seemed everywhere, and bent upon every advantage. He gave him no time to reform when the line was once broken, and the French, finding themselves divided into sections, amazed, panic-stricken, gave way, and streamed over the plateau, leaving the allies masters of the hard-fought field of Ramillies.

The trophies of the battle-field were immense. The large number of the slain showed how desperate the struggle had been. The result of this splendid victory was the recovery of Austrian Flanders. Marlborough made a triumphant entry into Brussels, where public transport knew no bounds.

There was still to follow the victory which at last compelled Ghent and Bruges to open their gates, and thus broke the mighty power of France. And now the hero hoped the war would be brought to a close, but jealousies threatened to undo all. Louis, taking advantage of this, prepared to invade England and place the Chevalier St. George on the throne. Marlborough was recalled to England, but this danger over he was again summoned to the continent, where the battle of Malplaquet and the siege of Lille added the crowning glories.

And now, when the brave soldier might reasonably look forward to a time of peace, dissensions at home arose, which were still harder to conquer. The Duchess of Marlborough, grown irritable and proud, had been

displaced in the queen's favor, who was led to believe that the duke would attempt to rule England, indeed did rule it. He was accused of wasting money and lives in useless battles, of perverting funds intrusted to him for the army. The Tories had resolved upon his downfall, although one offer was left open to him, which he rejected with scorn. Disdaining to make any defence, he retired from public life, wounded to the quick by a treaty that the queen had made without his knowledge, and which undid much that he had gained. Though exonerated from the charges against him, his opponents were too strong and too many for him to conquer, and in 1713 he retired to the continent, where crowds of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest, thronged to do him honor, struck with his noble air and demeanor, and softened by the approach of age.

Marlborough remained firm to the act of succession and the house of Hanover through all intrigues for the restoration of the Stuart dynasty. On the death of Queen Anne he returned to England, and aided in the settlement of the new King George I., who restored him to some of his old positions and honor. But the brave veteran had learned not to covet earthly glories. His two daughters, Lady Bridgewater and the lovely Countess of Sunderland, died within a year of each other, and he was seized with a severe illness from which he partially recovered, but even travel could not restore him. In November, 1721, he made a last appearance in the House of Lords, where his friends were in force and his enemies quite dispersed. Some months later another attack followed, and in the following June he calmly breathed his last, in the seventy-second year of his age.

His body lay in state at Marlborough house, with the standards and shields of the towns he had taken and the fields he had won. Seeing these England had no cause to blush for her hero, but rather for the manner in which she had allowed his detractors to assail him.

Prince Eugene, whose love and admiration for Marlborough had never waned, in answer to some one who said in his downfall that he had once been fortunate, answered: "It is true he was *once* fortunate, and it is the greatest praise that can be bestowed upon him, for as he was *always* successful, that implies that all his other successes were owing to his own conduct."

CHAPTER IX.

KING CHARLES (MAN OF IRON).

Ancestral Lines—Birth and Education—Early Characteristics—On the Throne at fifteen—Impatience—Coronation—The Leagued Enemy—Early Display of Power and Genius—Attacking his Enemies Individually—Battle of Narva—Instance of Bravery—Defeat at Pultowa—Flees to Turkey—Charles Threatens the Sultan—Returns Home—At War with Norway—Second Campaign—Last Battle—The Fatal Shot.

AT the beginning of the sixteenth century, a new era, both in politics and religion, dawned upon Europe. The feudal system had long been on the decline. The Reformation, in recognizing the right of freedom of thought, had become its deadly enemy. The soil of Sweden was not favorable to the old plan of feudalism, which required large tracts of fertile land to sustain it.

The ancestors of Charles XII. were warriors, and his immediate predecessor had been the most despotic of all. He abolished the authority of the Senate, declaring it was not the Senate of the people, but of the king.

In June, 1682, at the palace in Stockholm, Charles XII. was born. His first years were passed under the guardianship of his mother, a woman of great virtue and integrity. The remarkable talent of the young Prince was early developed, and his progress was rapid

his mother claimed descent from the great navigator, Sir Francis Drake. John was born at Ash, in Devonshire, July, 1650. The family were uncompromising Protestants, and from the parish clergyman John received the first rudiments of education and a still stronger religious bias.

At the school of St. Paul's, where he was next entered, he discovered the bent of his mind was toward military life. The stories of the old-time heroes moved him powerfully. His father obtained for him the position of page to the Duke of York, afterward King James II. His handsome figure and the elegance of his manners attracted no small share of attention from the beauties of the court of Charles II., but his inclination for arms was so evident that the duke procured him a commission in the Guards when he was but sixteen, but he soon afterward embarked as a volunteer in the expedition against Tangiers, and so distinguished himself that the Duchess of Cleveland, the king's favorite, made him a gift of five thousand pounds, and evinced so much admiration that Charles hastened to remove the handsome young soldier by sending him to the continent to aid in subduing the United Provinces. Thus it was that, under such masters as Turenne and Condé, he acquired the art of scientific warfare that was one day to be turned against the French so destructively. Turenne gave him the sobriquet of "the handsome Englishman." He had the good fortune to save the life of his colonel, the Duke of Monmouth, and acquitted himself so heroically during a siege that Louis XIV. publicly thanked him at the head of his army.

Upon his return to London his brilliant reputation

and distinguished beauty of person rendered him the idol of the day. The Duke of York showered upon him many favors, and he married Sarah Jennings, the favorite of Princess Anne, and between whom for the greater portion of their lives existed a most romantic friendship. At this period he also obtained command of a regiment, and laid the foundation of future greatness and fortune.

In 1665 the Duke of York ascended the throne, and Churchill was raised in military rank and created a peer, beside being of the confidential advisers of the king. But he soon saw the perilous course in which the monarch embarked in his attempt to bring about a re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion, to which James and his young wife, Mary of Modena, were strongly attached. At first he remonstrated in respectful terms, but the headstrong monarch persisted in his plans of overturning the religion and the constitution. The temper of the people and their recent struggle, as well as the enlightenment of the times, would have prevented the success of such a movement.

Churchill wrote to Lord Galway that if James persisted in his course he must leave his service. There was already a movement in favor of William of Orange, the Princess Mary's husband, and the blot on Churchill's fame must always be his treasonable correspondence against his friend and patron while he was in his service. James was warned, but would believe nothing against his favorite, and sent him with a corps of five thousand men to oppose the prince. Instead he joined the forces of William at Salisbury, and his influence, with that of his wife, induced the Princess Anne and her husband to forsake the falling monarch.