CHAPTER I.

THE GOVERNMENT OF LOUIS XIV.

(1661—1715.)

WHEN Mazarin's death left the government of France in the hands of the young King, the country seemed to be so happily situated, so free from dangerous rivals and pressing dangers, that it was capable of determining its own destiny. While France had triumphed over Europe, in France itself the monarchy had triumphed over all rival powers, classes and organisations. The futile struggle of the Fronde had discredited the *Parlements,* and had exhibited the egotism and the incapacity of the *noblesse.* France turned to her King with a loyal enthusiasm born of a sense that the monarchy alone could maintain order in the State and ensure its prosperity.

At the time of Mazarin's death Louis XIV was twenty-three years old. "His character was as yet little known. If Mazarin had not kept the sovereign in ignorance, he had certainly kept him in the background; and hence it was that Louis XIV's declaration "that he intended to be his own first minister" and that "all ministers were to address themselves to him" was received with amusement and incredulity. His singular grace and dignity of manner were already apparent; his amorous temperament was familiar to those who had been brought into close contact with him; and these characteristics endured to the end. But the world had not yet suspected the persistent energy of the young King, or his fondness for "the business of reigning," or, again, the boundless pride and egotism which neutralised many of his best qualities. During the whole of his reign he maintained his habits of regularity and hard work. He was constant in attendance at the various councils by which the business of the State was transacted; and he was always attentive, eager to master the details of business, and confident in his own judgment whether in domestic or in foreign affairs. From the first he was the real ruler of the country, and his mastery increased as his reign advanced. The domestic and the foreign policy of France were at first largely controlled by his great Ministers—Colbert, Louvois, and Lionne—though the approval of the King was always a necessary condition of their action, and at each point his judgment had to be

convinced. But, before the end of the reign, the relative importance of the Ministers had greatly declined; they were at last the almost servile executors of the King's will; and he had grown intolerant of opposition and protest.

It is difficult to arrive at a judgment as to the abilities of Louis XIV. Lord Acton has called him "by far the ablest man who was born in modern times on the steps of a throne."[1] Clearly, his was no commonplace character or intelligence. One who directed the policy of the first State in Europe for fifty-five years, who achieved many victories, and showed great tenacity and skill in the hour of defeat, must have had powers above the average. No historian has ever denied to him patience, industry, or method. "One must work hard to reign," he wrote, "and it is ingratitude and presumption towards God, injustice and tyranny towards man to wish to reign without hard work." He laboured at the task of reigning his whole life through, undeterred by ennui, uninterrupted by pleasures or domestic afHiction. Montesquieu's judgment, that his character was more striking than his intelligence ("*U avait Tame plus grande que Fesprit*"), is perhaps the fairest summing-up of the *Grand Monarque.* In what concerned foreign affairs and the organisation of the central government he exhibited real skill. But he did not show the same intelligence or the same patience in relation to social or religious problems or the organisation of local government. The extension of monarchical authority and of his own personal power was the predominant impulse with him ; and where these were not concerned his attention and energy were apt to flag. His theory of life was theocratic through and through: the King is God's vicegerent, and is possessed of a sort of divine infallibility. The history of his reign passes judgment on this theory as to its effects both on the kingdom and on the King. In his reign the monarchy ceased to be the one principle of unity in the State; it ceased to justify itself as the protector of the people against the nobility and as the successful leader of the nation in war. It became something apart from the people and the nation. The way was thus prepared for the Revolution of the next century.

The authority of the Crown had triumphed over, without actually effacing, all rival authorities. *Parlements* and local Estates and municipalities still existed. The Church still held its assemblies; but, if they still exercised any power, it was by permission of the King. All power, came from the King, and it was the fixed determination of Louis XIV that this fact should be recognised by all the officials of the State. When Voysin became Secretary of State, he apologised to the King for referring certain decisions to him, saying that he had not yet had. sufficient experience of office to take on himself the responsibility of decision. Louis answered emphatically that it would never be his business to decide anything; that he must always take his orders from the King, and limit his activity to executing them.

The machinery of government developed by Richelieu and Mazarin was used by Louis XIV ; but it was developed still further. The essential characteristic of the constitution of France during his reign consisted in its being a government through Councils, to which, with few exceptions, neither birth nor rank gave any right of admission. The nobility were excluded with jealous care; great ecclesiastics were no longer admitted ; the Councils were filled chiefly with men of middle-class birth, usually lawyers *(gens de la robe),* who owed everything to the King and could not possibly regard themselves as independent of him. The exclusion of those above the accepted level was maintained even against members of the royal family.

There were four chief Councils : the *Conseil d'État,* the *Conseil des Dépêches,* the *Conseil des Finances,* and the *Conseil Privé.* The *Conseil d'État,* unofficially known as the *Conseil d'en haut,* was a small body of not more than four or five men, which met in the presence of the King. It assembled three times a week, and in it the great questions of State were considered and decided. All the members could take part in discussing these questions, but the decision rested with the King. This Council was the pivot of the State; but tlie King took care not to allow it to become apparent constitutionally. No minutes were taken of the proceedings of the Council, and no record was kept of its decisions. Its meetings were merely occasions on which the King chose to ask the advice of those whom he cared to consult. The *Conseil des Dépêches* was also held in his presence, and considered and decided on all questions relating to the internal condition of France. The *Conseil des Finances* had under its control all questions relating to taxation, and' was also held in the royal presence. All these three Councils were held in the royal apartments. The fourth Council, the *Conseil Privé* or *Conseil des parties,* was a body quite different in kind. It was held in the palace, but not in the royal apartments, was not usually presided over by the King, and consisted of a large number of lawyers *(maîtres de requêtes).* It was not technically a supreme Court of appeal, for its functions were purposely left indefinite ; but it was the highest judicial Court in the land, and represented the vague but supreme judicial authority belonging to the King. These were the chief Councils ; but there were others, such for instance as those dealing with religion, with the Huguenots and with commerce. In any matter of importance the King was accustomed to seek the advice of persons whose opinion he valued and whom he had no reason to fear, and to decide after listening to their advice.

Thus, at the centre, the royal authority triumphed completely, and thrust the *Parlement* and the sovereign Courts into the shade. His aim was the same in the provinces ; but in these the royal authority had to struggle to supremacy through the ruins of a vast number of provincial institutions, customs, and rights. There were the provincial Estates, or

what remained of them: there were the provincial *Parlements;* there were the municipal liberties, once so vigorous and important, and still general, though decadent and threatened with extinction. Wide differences still existed between province and province, not only in feeling and institutions, but even in language. Lavisse has asserted that in the year 1661 the greater number of Frenchmen were still ignorant of the French tongue. In consequence of these separatist tendencies the royal authority had a hard struggle to carry out its aim of centralised and unified government, in spite of the heavy blows which Richelieu had already struck in this direction. The ruins of the past were still left to cumber the ground, and often to prevent the rise of any more useful edifice; but in their midst there rose the power of the royal *intendants.* The *Parlements* were not abolished: they continued to sit and to give decisions at Toulouse, Grenoble, Bordeaux, Dijon, Rouen, Aix, Pau, Rennes, Metz; and later in the reign at Tournay and Besancon. The provincial Estates still met at intervals in Britanny, the Boulonnais, Artois, Burgundy, Provence, Languedoc, and Franche Comte. The Governors still held nominal power in the various provinces: they were usually men of aristocratic birth and they enjoyed a large income. But they were for the most part absentees, and, when they went to their provinces, it was for ceremonial purposes rather than for the performance of important business. *Parlements,* Estates and Governors were devoid of any real power. The real authority lay with the royal *intendants,* who in effect represented in the provinces the unlimited authority of the King, and who were placed there in order to maintain and increase it. The King informed his *intendants* that it was their business to see to "the observation of our edicts, the administration of civil and criminal justice and of police, and all other matters which concern the prosperity and security of our subjects." They were chosen from the ranks of the unprivileged classes, and the nobility saw in them their chief rivals and enemies. In the passage quoted above, the King speaks of "the prosperity and security of our subjects,'[1] and the relief of the poor figures occasionally in despatches. But it is the special weakness of the reign that so much was made of the royal authority for its own sake, while the condition of the people occupied a quite secondary place. Notwithstanding the great power of Louis XIV and the reforming energy of Colbert, little was done for the relief of the people even during the early and prosperous years of Louis XIVs rule; and the wars, successful and unsuccessful, of his later years heaped intolerable burdens on the shoulders of the poor and threw into further confusion the system of administration, which Colbert had done his utmost to regularise and simplify.

It was the effort of the King to keep the power in his own hands and to avoid the slightest appearance of a " mayor of the Palace." Without violently overthrowing the old machine of government, he reduced to

something like impotence the ministers of old and high-sounding titles, and gave the reality of power into the hands of other ministers and Secretaries of State who were immediately appointed by and dependent on himself. The Secretaries of State, despite their nominally dependent position, were elevated above the heads of the old nobility. They represented Royalty itself, and only Princes, Dukes, and Marshals, were exempted from the necessity of saluting them by the title of *"Monseigneur?* The Chancellor was in name the chief of the King's servants. He seemed the last survival of the Middle Ages. He was nominal president of all the Councils and head of all Courts and tribunals; he had the custody of the royal seal, so that all acts of the royal authority passed through his hands. He was irremovable and seemed therefore a very bulwark of aristocratic power against the monarchy. But, in truth, the treatment of the Chancellor is symbolic of the whole political condition of France. He remained in his splendour and wealth and nominal power. Earlier Kings had eluded his power by giving the actual custody of the seals to an official removable at pleasure; but in the reign of Louis XIV the prestige of the royal authority was so great that no such subterfuge was necessary. The Chancellors of Louis XIV ^ere not the slightest check upon his authority. Next came the Controller-General of Finances and the Ministers of State, whose office under Louis XIV lasted just so long as they retained the confidence of the King. They were without accurately defined duties, and were in fact exactly what the King chose to make of them. After them came the Secretaries of State, in whose hands lay the real administration of the realm. Their duties in 1661 were the superintendence of (1) foreign affairs, (2) war, (3) the King's household and the Church, (4) the Protestants of France: but, in addition, the provinces were rather arbitrarily divided into four groups, and each group was placed under one of the four Secretaries. But these duties were not rigidly defined and were varied when new appointments were made.

Louis XIV was excellently served during the first part of his reign by men most of whom had received their training in statesmanship in the schools of Richelieu and Mazarin. Le Tellicr, a man of humble origin, was Secretary of State for war and had shown great efficiency in that department. He was a servant such as Louis XIV loved to have—painstaking, efficient and incapable of any ambition except to rise in the favour and service of his royal master. His reputation has been effaced by his subordinate Colbert, and by his son, the notorious Louvois. Brienne, La Vrilliere, and Guenegaud were the other secretaries in 1661; but the name of Lionne was greater than theirs. He had served as a diplomatist with great distinction under Mazarin, and was soon to show his skill under Louis XIV as Secretary of State for foreign affairs.

For the moment, however, it was not war or foreign affairs which claimed the King's chief attention, but rather the department of finances,

where Nicolas Fouquet still reigned as *surintendant.* It has been told in an earlier volume how Fouquet had used the troubles of the Fronde to amass for himself an enormous fortune by methods even more corrupt than the moral standard of the time allowed. Mazarin had known what he was doing, had winked at it, and had probably shared in the profits. But the new master of France had an authority and a spirit which placed him above such temptations; and the wealth and the position of Fouquet were such that he was the most real rival of the royal power. Colbert had already marked the dishonest gains of Fouquet and had reported them to Mazarin; but no action had been taken. His counsels had more weight with Louis XIV, and the overthrow and trial of Fouquet was the first serious measure of his reign. He was condemned to banishment and confiscation of property; but this was not enough for the King, who commuted the sentence into imprisonment for life. Fouquet was immured until his death in the prison of Pinerolo.

The chief agent in pressing on the trial of Fouquet had been Colbert. He was sprung from a family engaged in commerce, and had at first thought of commerce as his destined career. But he had then entered the service of Le Tellier, and had through him become acquainted with Mazarin, to whom he had rendered important services. His opposition to Fouquet was prompted by a detestation of the methods employed which animated his whole career; but personal ambition also played its part. The fall of Fouquet brought Colbert to the control of the finances, though the title of *surintendant* was not employed again. Finance was now relegated to the attention of a Council; but in this Council Colbert was henceforth the supreme influence, though he at first only held the title of *intendant dcs finances,* which was later changed to controller-general. His influence too extended far beyond the finances, and largely controlled the King's policy until the epoch of the great wars began. Charge after charge was accumulated upon him. In 1661 he was member of the Council of Finance and *charge d'affaires* for the navy. In 1664 he became superintendent of buildings. He was raised to the post of Controller-General of Finance in 1667. He became Secretary of State for the King's household and Secretary of State for the navy in 1669.

Colbert was neither a philanthropist nor a philosopher. The relief of the poor is often mentioned in his projects, but it seeins rather a conventional phrase than a deeply cherished aim. He has nothing to add to the economic or political theory of the State. He identified the wealth of a State with the amount of gold and silver which it contains. This was the common theory of his age. It was more individual to himself that he conceived the total volume of European commerce to be incapable of a material increase. What one nation gained, he concluded, another must lose. The idea of the fraternity of nations found no place in his scheme of thought He was anxious that France should win

from the other nations the commerce which they at present possessed. Commerce with him was divided from war by its methods rather than by its spirit or its objects. The greatness of France, he declared on one occasion, was proved not merely by its own flourishing condition but by the poverty and general distress to which it had reduced its neighbours. Yet, while neither philanthropist nor philosopher, he was a man of business with a passionate enthusiasm for detail, industry, and efficiency. And, though not an original thinker, there is something revolutionary in his general objects: for he wished to make of France, in spite of all her feudal, aristocratic, and military traditions, a commercial State; to transfer her ambition from war to finance; to manage her policy, not with an eye to glory, but on sound business principles. But he failed to bend France to his will. Her traditions stood in his way, and Louis XIV cared nothing for commerce and much for military glory. Yet even the small measure of success to which he attained makes an epoch in French history.

The man himself is clearly revealed in his projects, his letters, and the correspondence and memoirs of the time. Madame de Sdvigne calls him the " North Star," in allusion both to his fixity of purpose and the coldness of his temperament. Industry with him ceased to be an effort and became a passion. The labour which he so readily underwent himself he exacted from others. He loved to work his way into all the details of business; to determine the methods by which it could be simplified and improved; and then to carry out the reform in spite of all obstacles, thrown in his way by tradition, corruption, and the carelessness of the King. But a desire to paint Colbert as the King's good influence, while Louvois figures as the opposite, has sometimes led to the attribution of virtues to Colbert which are not really his. His life was not without very serious blemishes. He made himself the complacent instrument of the King's amours, and his passionate hatred of corruption did not prevent him from gaining titles, income, and offices for himself and his relatives by means which in another he would have bitterly condemned.

As a man of business Colbert, while he sought to open out new sources of income for the State, desired also to see the State managed on its present lines with economy and efficiency. For the present these qualities were the last that could be attributed to the political and economic system of France. There was confusion everywhere. A medal struck in Colbert's honour mentioned without exaggeration *"aerarii rationes pcrturbatas et hactenus inextricablies."* But confusion was not the only trouble; there had been corruption and knavery too. And, so soon as Fouquet had been arrested, and long before his trial had reached its strange termination, Colbert set to work. A tribunal was established to deal with the fraudulent financiers, and sat from 1661 to 1665. There was no inclination to lean to mercy's side. Some were condemned

to death, though none were executed; more than four thousand were fined and compelled to disgorge large sums for the benefit of the treasury.

The debts of the State next demanded his attention. Through the mouth of the King he repudiated certain debts altogether, because only a small portion of the original capital had ever reached the treasury. Then he declared that other bonds were to be cancelled by paying off the original sum advanced, less the sum of the interest already received. Those who were chiefly injured by this measure were the *rentiers* of the city of Paris, and their protests were loud and long. The King supported Colbert in a declaration wherein he stated that the cancelling of the bonds was the only way of effecting "the relief of the people which we desire with so much ardour"; but subsequently the procedure was modified in deference to the outcries of the people of Paris. The net result was, however, a considerable reduction in the indebtedness of the State.

The assessment and collection of the taxes also called for immediate consideration. The chief of the taxes was the *taille.* The abuses connected with this most burdensome and long-lived impost were threefold, and may be summed up in the words privilege, arbitrary assessment and oppressive exaction. Nobility, clergy, court and government officials were exempt. Boisguillebert estimated, in 1697, that not more than a third part of the population contributed to the *taille,* and this third was the poorest and most wTetched. In the *pays d'élection* the total sum was fixed by the Government, divided among the districts and parishes of the province by the *intendant,* and finally collected by prominent villagers, who were made responsible in their own property for the full payment. The payment of the tax was enforced by distraint and quartering of soldiers, often accompanied by acts of cruelty, and was frequently evaded by corruption. The collectors especially groaned under the burden of their responsibility. Failure to find the prescribed amount of taxes was punished by imprisonment. In 1679 we hear that there were 54 collectors imprisoned in Tours alone. Colbert's letters are full of the shifts to which the taxpayers had recourse in their efforts to escape, and of the misery caused by the government exactions. In the *pays* <f eta*, the taxes paid to the King were still called a *don gratuit* (or "benevolence"), and the *taille* was by no means so grievous a burden and did not discourage industry and the cultivation of the soil. The total amount was fixed by the *intendant*; but the provincial Estates had some influence in its assessment on districts and individuals, and it was reckoned, not on the general wealth of the taxpayer *(taille personnelle),* but upon his house and landed property *(taille réelle).* How was the situation to be remedied? Colbert did not propose or desire to anticipate the ideas of 1789 by the abolition of privilege; but he scrutinised all claims to exemption, and brought back into the ranks of the taxable

a large number who had escaped under various pretexts. But, above all, he insisted on a more careful supervision of the collection of the *taille* at each of its stages. He urged the *intendants* to keep a jealous watch on the receivers and collectors; he gave rewards to those who collected the tax with the least expense, and punished the most wasteful. Sometimes there breaks out in his instructions a feeling of pity for the misery of the people; but it is for the most part the man of business who speaks. Here, as in the case of all Colbert's schemes for reform, the Dutch war of 1672 exercised a fatal effect; and the need for much money at once brought back many of the worst abuses that he had striven to destroy.

A vast number of other taxes, usually in the nature of customs and excise, exhibited the same features of confusion, corruption, and oppression as those noticed in the case of the *taille.* The abuses arose chiefly out of the indirect method of collecting these taxes. They were sold to capitalists who usually undersold them, and thus a large number of intermediate profits were exacted from the taxpayer and were lost to the State. Here also Colbert exhibits his usual characteristics. His ideas do not rise above the existing system. He does not propose to institute the direct collection of these taxes by state officials. But he inspected the existing system with minute care; he punished fraud; he tried to establish greater simplicity of working. Yet even under the improved system introduced by Colbert the weight of the burden of the taxes is shown by frequent provincial disturbances. These provincial risings make little mark in the memoirs of the time (though Madame de Sevigne" devotes some precious pages -to the troubles in Britanny), and the society of Versailles cared little about them. But they were in many instances very serious, and a study of them shows how little the classic dignity of the Court of the *Grand Monarque* is truly representative of the condition of France during his reign. There was a serious rising in the Boulonnais in 1662 caused by the quartering of troops and the imposition of unpopular taxes. It was suppressed without difficulty, but was followed by cruel and unjust punishments. Two years later a much more dangerous movement broke out in the Landes of Gascony. Here it was a new tax on salt that raised the fury of the people. The nature of the country, and above all the skill and audacity of the leader, Audijos, prolonged the trouble for many months. In vain those who were caught were cruelly punished, and high rewards were offered for the head of Audijos. He escaped in spite of all, sometimes finding a refuge on the Spanish side of the frontier. In the end the Government had to come to terms with the audacious leader, and gave him the command of a regiment of dragoons. An equally serious revolt broke out in the Vivarais, where a report of absurd taxes exasperated the people beyond patience. It was reported that the peasants were to pay ten *livres* for each male child born and five for each female, three *livres* when they bought a new coat and five when they bought a new hat. The rising

was not suppressed until a force of nearly five thousand men had been despatched from headquarters. After the Dutch war of 1672, there were even more serious troubles. In 1674 Bordeaux broke out into rebellion to the cry of *"Vive le roi sans gabelkJ"* The forces of the *intendant* were at first defeated, and it was only by great exertions that the rebellious city was reduced. The troubles in Britanny were perhaps the most serious of all, and they were supported by the *Parlcment* Before the province was quiet, the troops of the King had been guilty of horrible excesses, and their officers of broken promises. Thus it is clear that even at the zenith of the absolute monarchy the passions that inspired the peasantry in 1789 were not far below the surface.

While Colbert strove to improve the working of the actual machinery of France, and succeeded in diverting to the coffers of the State gains which had hitherto gone into the pockets of individuals, he was not contented with this. He desired also to add to the wealth of France by promoting her productive energies and by stimulating her industries. In all this he frankly takes the national point of view. The wealth of one country meant the poverty of her neighbour: such was his economic creed. And he desired to acquire for France the industries which her neighbours—especially England and Holland—enjoyed. False theory here led him into the one supreme mistake of his life—his promotion of the war against Holland. His eyes were never opened to his theoretic error; but he saw the war sweep away many of the reforms and improvements that had been the result of his passionate energy.

His general industrial scheme is easily summarised. He desired to turn France into a busy hive of industry, to promote and direct those industries by the action of the State, to protect them from the rivalry of foreign countries by high protective tariffs; and then to open up trade in the commodities produced by improving the internal communication of France, by establishing trade with distant lands and defending the country by an increased and remodelled fleet. He pursued this task with energy and gained as large a measure of success as his commercial theory, the lukewarmuess of Louis XIV, and the condition of the country allowed.

In 1663 he drew up a statement of the various articles imported into France and declared that they ought to be produced on French soil. Some of them had formerly been produced in France, but had disappeared; others had always come from abroad. Domestic manufactures must be revived and stimulated, foreign manufactures must be planted in the land. Many industries he found in the exclusive possession of foreign countries. Colbert was determined to break through these monopolies and to transfer these industries to French soil. He offered rewards to foreign workmen—English, Dutch, German, Swedish, Venetian —to come and settle in France and establish a centre for the manufacture of their various articles on French territory. At the same time he

punished severely Frenchmen who tried to transfer their industrial knowledge to a foreign soil. For the rest, all France must work hard. The pauperising almsgiving of the monasteries must be limited; the admission of peasants into the Orders of the celibate Church must be discouraged. The King was to take the lead in the endeavour. Chief among the royal industries was the Gobelins factory, which soon gained a great celebrity for its tapestries; but there were more than a hundred other establishments that bore the title of Royal. The example thus given would, it was hoped, be widely followed. Religious establishments were encouraged to manufacture; municipalities were directed to turn their attention to industry; there were honours and State-aid for those who laboured, and the great Minister's bitterest opposition visited all idlers.

But it was not in Colbert's nature to trust for the development of industrial France to the effects of competition and the free impulses of the people. He could not believe that a thing was done, unless he did it himself or through his agents. He was alarmed and irritated to find that in certain markets the products of the French factories were not welcomed and were regarded as deficient in Quality compared with those of the rivals of France. To alter this condition of things, the manufacturers must be schooled by the State. The industries of France were nearly all in the hands of trade-guilds, and it was through these that Colbert brought the influence of the State to bear on the manufacturers. Edicts and regulations followed one another by the score; methods of manufacture, with details as to the size, colour and quality of manufactured articles, were laid down. The tone adopted was that of a schoolmaster who alternates punishment with moral platitudes. Then inspectors were sent round the country to enforce these regulations. A famous edict of 1671 on the weaving and dyeing of cloth will show to what lengths he was ready to go. If bad cloth is produced specimens of it are to be exposed- on a stake with a ticket attached giving the name of the delinquent. If the same fault is committed again, the master or the workman who is at fault shall be censured in the meeting of the guild. In the event of a third offence the guilty person shall himself be tied to the post for two hours with a specimen of the faulty product tied to him. The customs and traditions of France and the love of ease natural to all men resisted Colbert at every turn. His instructions show his growing anger with the *falnkantm* of the-people. He closes the public-houses during working-hours. He uses irony and threats, and often confesses that his efforts arc in vain. But much was done. Industrial France was slowly coming into being. Patient energy and a continuation of peace would have done more.

But Colbert had not succeeded in destroying or seriously injuring the industries of the neighbours of France; and his theory persuaded him that this was an indispensable sign of her prosperity. Holland, he

complained, possessed 15,000 or 16,000 of the 20,000 ships that carried on the commerce of the world, and France had only five or six hundred. His first system of tariffs (in 1664) contained nothing that went beyond the ideas and practices of the time. But three years later he was more eagerly bent on the development of French industries and more determined on the destruction of the rival industries of the Dutch. We have seen that by him commerce was always regarded as a sort of war, and he saw, without desiring to withdraw from the struggle, that this time the commercial struggle was likely to lead to a military one. In the tariff of 1667 the customs on goods entering the kingdom of France were in many instances doubled, in some considerably more than doubled. Thus worsted stockings were charged 8 *livres* instead of 3 *livres* 10 *sous;* fine cloth was rated 80 *livres* instead of 40; lace at 60 instead of 25. A little later an absolute prohibition was placed upon Venetian glass and lace. Heavy taxes had already been put upon the export of raw materials produced in France, and this was often extended so as to include corn. The Dutch answered with counter-tariffs; and this war of the tariffs leads directly up to the outbreak of war in 1672.

In Colbert's scheme industry and commerce were closely connected; and, while he desired to stimulate the productive energies of France, he desired also to increase her share in the interchange of the commodities of the world. French traders lagged far behind those of Holland and England. They had hitherto played a small part in exploiting the wealth of the Indies and the Americas. Holland and England employed the method of chartered companies for their distant over-sea traffic, and Colbert resolved to do the same. His dealing with this question reveals his invariable characteristics. France must have trade, and therefore she must have trading companies; the rich men of France, whether merchants or nobles, must be forced to invest in these companies; the companies, when formed, must be under direct State supervision at every point. All that energy and constant watchfulness could do for the promotion of trade would be done. Colbert's failure, in this instance as so often, was that he did not realise the part that liberty must of necessity play in the development of commerce. It was his habit to think of efficiency and liberty as rivals, not as partners. He reorganised the Company of the West Indies; he founded a Company for the East Indies; these were followed by Companies for the Levant, for the timber trade of the Pyrenees, for the Northern Seas. The development and the failure of all these Companies follows similar lines. We may take the East India Company as typical of all. It was founded by a royal edict of August, 1664. The capital was to be 15 million *livres,* and the King subscribed 3 million without asking for interest. The Company was to enjoy a monopoly of all trade between the Cape of Good Hope and the East Indies. It was to possess in its own right whatever it took from the natives or from European enemies, with full

mining rights. The only burdens imposed on it were that it should build churches and pay priests for the conversion of the natives, and that it should in all things comply with the laws of France and the *coutumier tie Paris.* But this last stipulation proved ruinous to the prosperity of the Company. It forced upon the agents of the Company, and upon all future colonists the restrictions both religious and political of France-restrictions damaging at home, suicidal abroad. Nothing went well with the Company from the first. It was in vain that the rich and the noble were forced to subscribe. The record of the Company is a record of corruption, failure, and bankruptcy. In eleven years the Company lost six and a half millions of *livres.* And Colbert heard with impotent jealousy that during this period the corresponding Dutch Company had paid a dividend of 40 per cent. Some of Colbert's Companies did worse; some rather better; none succeeded in rivalling the great Companies of England and Holland.

The colonies of France were closely connected with the commercial companies; and their history during the administration of Colbert is much the same. France possessed excellent bases for colonisation in Canada, Louisiana, and the West Indian Islrnds, and made a promising beginning in Madagascar, Ceylon, and India. But, though Colbert realised to the full the possibilities of these colonial establishments, he interfered too much; and his interference was even more dangerous at so great a distance from France than it was in France itself. The spirit of religious intolerance, which was soon to strike a heavy blow against his enterprises at home, ruined those abroad. The only thing that could have served the French colonies was liberty; and of this Colbert with all his vast gifts and powers never knew the value.

The internal customs of France were an irrational medley of tradition and privilege; each province had a different system; and this system was guaranteed in many instances by the treaty whereby the province was incorporated with the Crown. It was impossible even for the ruthless will of Colbert to make a clean sweep of all the fetters which the past had placed upon the future; but by persuasion he brought the great central provinces of France under the same system, viz., Normandy, Poitou, Maine, Picardy, the Aunis, Thouars, Perche, Champagne, Berry, the Nivcrnais, Burgundy, the Bourbonnais, the Bcaujolais, Touraine, Bresse, Anjou, and the lie de France. In this case he aimed at much more than he accomplished. "I am opposed," he wrote, "to all that interferes with commerce, which ought to be extremely free." He would have liked to see an uniform system of weights and measures and the almost complete abolition of interprovincial custom and dues. He was not sufficiently supported by the King's authority to realise more than a small part of his plan, though French commerce had acquired a more unrestricted movement before the Dutch War.

Colbert did much to facilitate the internal trade of France by the

construction of canals and the improvement of roads. The idea of the chief among these enterprises, the famous Canal of Languedoc, which joined the Mediterranean to the Bay of Biscay, was no new one, though the actual project suggested to Colbert was due to Pierre-Paul Riquet, who was employed in the administration of the *gabelle.* Colbert eagerly adopted the proposal, and at first thought of making a canal capable of carrying ships of war; but he had to be satisfied with a more modest scheme. The difficulties, financial and engineering, were very great, and towards the end Colbert and Riquet had ceased to be on good terms with each other. The canal was opened in May, 1681, a few months after the death of Riquet It was, for the times, an extraordinary feat in engineering. The canal was 162 miles long, had 75 locks and was carried over a watershed 830 feet above the sea-level. But Colbert was far from resting satisfied with the one great enterprise. He directed the improvement of the waterways throughout France, the making of new canals, and above all the improvement of the roads. Since the time of the Romans there had been no such road-maker in France as he.

Colbert's vision of a France, colonial, industrial, and commercial, necessarily included a strong navy. What Richelieu had done in this respect had been undone in the period of Mazarin's domination. Colbert took up the work with more than his usual energy, and here all his great qualities were seen at their best When he began, the warships of the French navy were, he tells us, only twenty in number; and of these not more than two or three were really serviceable. But by 1671 the number had risen to 196 effective vessels, and by 1677 the figure had risen to 270. Thus Colbert saw the King in a position to realise the object summed up by him in the phrase *"sc passer des elrangers."* The old harbours and arsenals of France were repaired, and new ones created. A fresh life was infused into Toulon, Rochefort, Brest, Le Havre, Dunkirk; and ship-building rapidly developed. He gave as careful a consideration to the question of the crews as to that of the ships themselves ; but here the hardness of his nature becomes painfully evident. He forced the maritime population of France into the service with a vigour not less brutal than that of the English press of later days. But the cruelties to which his system could descend are seen at their worst in relation to the galleys. These vessels had been of the greatest service in the naval warfare of the Mediterranean, and Colbert was passionately determined to build and equip them with the greatest possible rapidity. He succeeded in building them, and boasted that the French yards were capable of turning out a galley within the space of twenty-four hours. But the crews gave him endless trouble. The toil of the rowers was so terrible and their treatment so cruel that free men could not be induced in sufficient quantities to undertake the work. The galleys were a common form of punishment for the criminals of France; and the correspondence

of Colbert shows him to have urged upon the judges the sentencing of as large a number as possible to the galleys. The vagrants of France were forced wholesale into this living death; and those condemned for a short period were often detained for life. History has few more terrible chapters than that of the barbarous treatment of the French galley-slaves.

We stand amazed at the different subjects which came under the survey of Colbert and at the minute attention which he was able to bestow on them. There is assuredly no French statesman besides him whose energy flows through so many channels until we come to Napoleon. As Minister of Marine the fortifications of France were partly under his control, and, with Vauban, he laboured to make them impregnable. He was interested in the public works of Paris, and hoped to make the King concentrate his architectural ambitions on the Louvre; and he saw with despair that the royal inclination was turned wholly in the direction of Versailles. He protested against the expenses of Versailles with singular frankness, declaring that the new palace "would perhaps afford the King pleasure and amusement but would never increase his glory"; but all was in vain, and his projected improvement for the Louvre were never realised. In order to complete the survey of his manifold activities, we need here only mention that the creation of five new Academics was due to Colbert—the Academy of Inscriptions and Medals; the Academy of Science; the French Academy at Rome; the Academy of Architecture; the Academy of Music. Though with these royal protection and ministerial direction counted for much and sometimes hindered their free development, they all lived and flourished and were one of the most permanent effects of Colbert's genius. Of the pensions which he accorded to men of science and letters, the first list (1662) contained 60 names—45 French and 15 belonging to foreign countries. It must, however, be allowed that the list, and especially the order of names in it, suggest no very favourable idea of Colbert's literary tastes. His object was in point of fact mainly political, and, by acting as Maecenas under Louis XIV, he intended to control the men of letters and through them to influence public opinion.

In its ideals and its efforts, both political and literary, the age of Louis XIV typifies order and authority. But an enquiry into the actual condition of things reveals a striking contrast to the ideals of the age. The administration of justice was irregular and corrupt. The encroachments of the Crown had broken the independence of feudal justice, but it still subsisted in a most confused, arbitrary and corrupt form. Crimes were amazingly frequent even in the neighbourhood of Paris and were increased by the brutality of the punishments inflicted. The procedure both in civil and criminal cases was uncertain, dilatory, and embarrassed by the rival claims of innumerable feudal Courts as against the royal magistrates and one another. The corruption of the

provincial administration of justice is attested by innumerable complaints; and the rich and powerful among French criminals enjoyed a large measure of impunity. All that was best in Louis XIV and in the traditions of the French Crown fought against this state of things, and here also Colbert was the chief agent and stimulus to the royal will. A series of ordinances, of which the chief were the *ordonnance civile* (1667), the *ordonnance criminelle* (1670), the *ordonnance sur les eaux etforttS,* and the *edit sur le commerce* (1673) defined the procedure in various departments and controlled the legal system of France, until the *Code Louis* was replaced, a century and a half later, by the *Code Napolion.* The general tendency and the general result of these ordinances was excellent; but in some points they stereotyped odious practices, and Colbert defended at every point the cause of monarchy rather than humanity. The use of torture was prescribed; counsel was denied to the accused in criminal cases; the treatment of bankrupts was severe in the extreme. But it was not enough to declare the royal authority by ordinance, it was also to be demonstrated in action. A royal commission under the presidency of the Sieur de Novion was sent down to Clermont-en-Auvergne in 1665 to repress disturbances there and assert the royal power against the presumption of the nobles. Flechicr, afterwards Bishop of Nimes, has left us a brilliant and amusing description of the procedure of this commission. The chief incident was the trial and execution of the Vicomte de La Mothe dc Canillac for the killing of a man of humble birth in the prosecution of a private quarrel. The peasantry, when they found the royal authority thrown on their side against their aristocratic oppressors, passed at once from servility to insolence, refused the usual acts of courtesy to the nobles, and would clearly have anticipated the violences of 1789, if the Government had not been strong enough to repress them. What was done in Auvergne was repeated in other parts of France. Novion reported to Louis XIV that a single official could now execute orders, which could not formerly have been carried out without the support of a body of soldiers. If all exaggerations are excluded we still see here the action of the monarchy in its most typical and beneficent aspect. The disorders of Paris and the neighbourhood, which at one time reached an incredible height, were largely remedied by the appointment of La lteynie as Lieutenant of Police.

The first eleven years of Louis XIVs personal government are so much influenced by the ideas of Colbert that the reign of the King and the biography of the Minister are almost identical. But before the end of that period Colbert had found a serious rival. The pacific designs of Colbert were opposed by the plans and influence of Louvois, the Minister of War. Louvois and Colbert were alike in their industry, and in their devotion to the service and glory of their King; but they were alike in nothing else. The causes of their personal hostility have been examined as if there were some secret to be revealed; but, in fact,

Louvois crossed Colbert's path at every turn. He urged Louis to spend money on Versailles, while Colbert wanted to make Paris the royal residence; he wanted to spend the revenues of France on military preparations, while Colbert wished to use them for the promotion of colonial and industrial enterprises; in short, he was for war, and Colbert, with one fatal exception, was for peace. The struggle between them for their master's support was very keen ; but it was decided in favour j of Louvois. For some years before his death Colbert had suffered from gout, and this decision seems to have overwhelmed him. He died in September, 1683, almost in disgrace. It was the supreme misfortune of France that Louis XIV, with all his great qualities of intelligence and character, had so imperfect a sympathy with Colbert's aims. What might not Colbert have done if he had served a Frederick the Great!

The year 1672 and the outbreak of the war with the United Netherlands mark the end of the pacific period of Louis XIV's reign, throughout which Colbert's had been the chief influence over the royal mind. During those first twelve years of the reign the prosperity of France was not unchequered nor her aims always right; tut the chief effort of the Government was directed towards commercial and industrial development, the limitation of privilege and the unification of the State. The War of Devolution had been only a slight interruption to this progress, but the Dutch quarrel opened a continuous period of war lasting with little real interruption from 1672 to 1713. During this period the internal development of France was of little account. Colbert's influence had much declined even before his death. The King's mind was absorbed by'military glory and religious orthodoxy; and these two tendencies were represented in his Court by Louvois and Madame de Main tenon.

Louvois was the son of Le Tellier, of whom mention was made above, and who in 1655 had procured for him the right of succession to his office, in accordance with the dangerous custom which established a sort of heredity in many of the highest positions in the State. In 1662 the King raised Louvois to the position of Secretary of State; and from that date he became one of the chief influences with the King and the rival of Colbert. He was a man exactly suited to win and to retain the favour of Louis XIV. To the rest of the world he was disdainful, arrogant, and violent; but in his dealings with the King he showed himself pliant and servilely deferential. It flattered the pride of the King'to see his power over one who submitted to no other authority. Louvois did not, like Colbert, strive to thwart the King's natural disposition. Rather, he impelled him towards the goal to which his natural bent directed him. War, glory, dominion, and self-worship—these were the objects that Louvois held up before the eyes of Louis XIV, and to which he was by nature only too much inclined.

There are two sides to the work of Louvois, and our judgment on him will vary widely according as he is regarded as an administrator or a statesman. As a statesman he not only urged the King on to those military adventures which brought the "Age of Louis XIV" to so disastrous an end, but he also approved and cooperated in the tragic blunder of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. But as an administrator and organiser he deserves the very highest praise. He found the French army, famous indeed and victorious, but full of gross corruption and so bound by traditions, usually of feudal origin, that it was far from answering quickly to the wishes of the central Government. Louvois, acting in agreement with the whole tendency of the ideas and policy of Louis XIV, centralised the administration of the army, made the control of the King direct and paramount, and eliminated what remained of aristocratic influence. At the same time he improved its weapons, tightened its discipline, punished abuses and brought its différent parts into organic connexion.

The abuses in the army were chiefly due to the power and influence which the nobility still held in the recruiting and organisation of the army. It was the nobles, not the Government, who collected and equipped the troops. They had themselves purchased the posts which they held, and they found various ways of making a profit out of their positions. The chief of these was to make a return of, and consequently to receive pay for, more men than were actually to be found in the ranks. On days of official inspection the gaps were filled up by paid substitutes *(passe-volants),* whom Louvois strove to suppress by the severest penalties. The scandals and corruptions in the provisioning of the army were also notorious.

Louvois sought to remedy this state of things, chiefly by bringing the army under more direct control of the Government. He was not prepared to revolutionise the whole system ; but, by indefatigable attention to detail and by the strictest severity against proved malefactors, he succeeded in abolishing or diminishing the worst evils. The army was still recruited by the nobles ; but Louvois appointed inspectors to ensure that the soldiers, for whom the Government paid, really existed, and to repress the licence and indiscipline of the noble officers. The cynical hardness of Louvois' nature—the *brutalité* that is so often attributed to him—here stood France in good stead ; and he was excellently served by two inspectors, the famous Martinet for the infantry and de Fourilles for the cavalry.

But Louvois was not satisfied with the enforcement of honesty. Equipment and organisation both underwent important modifications. The bayonet was introduced ; the *Jusil* (flint-lock) took the place of the *mousquet,* which had been discharged by means of a match. The grenadiers were organised into an important force ; the status of the engineers and of the infantry was raised ; the artillery was brought into

closer relationship with the other parts of the army. An uniform was not yet insisted on for the whole army, but much was done to improve and regularise the appearance of the troops. Much thought also was devoted to the question of victualling. The slowness of the movements of earlier armies was often explained by the impossibility of procuring supplies. By Louvois" orders magazines were established, which greatly improved the mobility of the armies in the earlier wars of the reign. He carried on the work of Richelieu too by abolishing certain posts whose occupants held an almost independent position. The position of colonel-general of the infantry was suppressed; and, though the colonel-general of the cavalry and the *grand maître* of the artillery still remained, their powers were so reduced that they no longer conflicted with Louvois' chief aim of concentrating all military power in the hands of the King. A reform of a different kind must also be mentioned. He made generous provision for disabled soldiers by the establishment of the *Hôtel des Invalides.*

In sum, Louvois was efficient in the highest degree; as energetic as Colbert, and capable of infusing his own energy into his subordinates; ready to take responsibility and usually able to justify it by success. Without the efficiency of the French War Office under Louvois it is impossible to conceive of all the triumphs dating from the earlier part of Louis XIV's reign.

Before the death of Colbert another influence besides that of Louvois had begun to be strong with the King. Orthodox pietism had triumphed over him in the person of Madame de Maintenon. The political marriage, which had been arranged for him at the Peace of the Pyrenees, was not likely to retain exclusive control of his heart. The licence which had become traditional with the kings of France would not be checked by loyalty to Maria Teresa, who was a true and virtuous wife, but neither intellectual nor attractive. The King had been strongly attached in the first instance to Maria Mancini, the niece of Mazarin, and it needed all the power of the Cardinal to induce Louis XIV to carry out the stipulated treaty and marry Maria Teresa. Immediately after the marriage gossip was busy with the King's infidelities, and soon it was known that Louise de La Vallière was the chosen favourite. The King felt for her probably the purest passion of his life. She was only seventeen at the time of their first acquaintance, and her great beauty, charm of manner and sweetness of disposition sufficed to maintain her influence for many years. But she was in many ways singularly unfitted to maintain her position at Court. Her conscience was not easy; the religious life was always attractive to her; and, when at last she found her power waning and a rival preferred to herself, it was chiefly her genuine love for the King that made her regret the change. In 1674 she retired to a Carmelite nunnery. Her successor was Madame de Montespan, who had intrigued desperately against Mademoiselle de La Vallière and held the first place in the King's affections from 1670 to 1679,

though not without occasional rivals. She was in point of character and person almost the antithesis of her predecessor, haughty, domineering, proud of her position, striking and imperious in her type of beauty. She had innumerable enemies at Court, both among the nobles and the clergy; but she out-faced them and for nearly ten years she triumphed over them. Her eclipse came from a strange quarter. She had borne the King several children, and it was necessary to find a discreet person to attend to their education. She met Madame Scarron at the house of a friend, induced her to accept the charge of the children, and thus introduced to the King the woman who was destined to be her successful rival.

Madame Scarron, who soon received at the King's hands the title of Marquise de Maintenon, is perhaps the most interesting figure in the Court of Louis XIV. She was the grandchild of Agrippa d'AubigneV the famous Protestant leader of the sixteenth century. Her father had been a worthless spendthrift, and she had passed through many remarkable changes in life before she came to be the unacknowledged wife of the most splendid of the French kings. She was born in the ante-chamber of a prison; had spent some portion of her early life in Martinique, had been left an orphan at the age of seven, and, following the tenets of her protectors, had passed from Catholicism to Protestantism and from Protestantism back to Catholicism. In her seventeenth year she had married Scarron, a comic dramatist of reputation in Paris, preferring, as she has told us, such a marriage to the cloister; at twenty-five years of age she was left a widow, and lived for some time an obscure life, until an accidental meeting with Madame de Montespan made her the governess of the King's children. In her new task she came into contact with the King and soon became a well-known figure in the Court. She played a part of extraordinary difficulty with the utmost adroitness. Though she was in name the servant of the King's mistress, she gained great influence with the King himself. It was partly due to her that he severed himself from Madame de Montespan and was reconciled to his much-injured wife. After the death of Maria Teresa in 1683, Madame de Maintenon was secretly married to the King in January, 1684, in the presence of Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, and Louvois. She was a woman of great charm and dignity of manner; demure, self-restrained, and even cold in temperament; loving sobriety and reason both in thought and action ; a character apparently little fitted for so romantic a destiny. She was, too, a woman sincerely, if not passionately, religious, and it was the religious element in her mind and character which contributed much to her conquest of Louis XIV.

The religious vein had never been wanting in Louis XIV even in his careless and licentious youth, and his confessor had always been one of the chief influences upon him. But under Madame de Maintenon the whole tone of the Court had changed. The splendid gaiety of the early years was thrown aside, and the practices of religion became the

mode at Versailles.' Madame de MaintenorTs influence cooperated with this religious development and did much to make the once brilliant Court of Versailles decorous and dull. As Louis XIV drew hear to the Church, his. personal morality underwent a most welcome improvement; but the new influence was unfortunately answerable for the worst political mistake in his reign, which contained so many. For, unfortunately, the conversion of Louis XIV was one which "had no root in reason and bore no fruit of charity." The Church had never abandoned her desire for uniformity, or her belief that physical coercion might be legitimately used to enforce it. And thus Louis XIV was led on to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

The attack upon the Protestants of France which culminated in! the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was due, almost entirely, to religious intolerance, little complicated by the political and social motives which had intensified the religious struggles of the sixteenth century. The Huguenots of France had lost the political ambitions and aristocratic connexions which made them a serious danger in the days of the League and perhaps in the time of Richelieu. They had taken no part in the wars of the Fronde, and Louis XIV in 1666 publicly acknowledged the vigour and success with which they had resisted the party of rebellion during that period. They supported the commercial schemes of Colbert with a force out of proportion to their numbers. Nor did they threaten the Church any more than the State. There were fine orators and some scholars of distinction in their ranks, but their propagandist zeal had waned. They only needed to be left alon« to provide France with a great source of strength both moral and material.

Two forces drove France down the fatal descent, from being the foremost representative of religious toleration to becoming a belated exponent of religious persecution in its most odious character. First, the King's personal feelings counted for something. Religion had come to be a strong and genuine motive with him, and, together with his vanity, impelled him towards the establishment of religious unity. But the Church in France was the strongest driving force. She was at the zenith of her power: her clergy were distinguished by sincerity, learning, and even by social sympathies. But they had always regarded the Edict of Nantes as an insult, and passionately desired its withdrawal, or, if that were not attainable, its restriction within the narrowest possible limits. The assemblies of the clergy, held every five years, continually demanded fresh measures of persecution. The fact that the clergy of France were about the same time engaged in a serious controversy with the Papacy as to the question of Gallican liberties made them all the more anxious to prove their orthodoxy by measures against the Protestants; and it is upon them that the chief responsibility must fall.

The end of the struggle was not foreseen. Neither King nor clergy had any intention of abolishing the Edict from the first They desired '

merely to harass the Protestants by the most rigid interpretation of the Edict and by the withdrawal of all royal favour from the despised sectaries. This course had been suggested so early as 1655 by Gondrin, Archbishop of Rheims, and the King began to act on it in the first year of his personal reign; for, in 1661, commissioners were sent round France to enquire into the administration of the Edict, and henceforth the liberties of the Huguenots were curtailed at every point. Thus, in 1661, toleration was withdrawn from the Pays de Gex (conterminous with Geneva) on the ground that it had not been a part of French territory at the time of the issuing of the Edict. Yet in that territory there were 17,000 Protestants, while the Roman Catholics numbered only 400. During the following year the action of the State troubled the Huguenots in many ways; but in 1666 a notable and open attack upon their privileges ensued. The General Assembly of the Clergy in 1665 had drawn up an address to the King suggesting certain liberties of which it might be possible to deprive the Huguenots, while still maintaining the letter of the Edict. Most of the proposals of the clergy were accepted by Louis XIV in the Edict of 1666, which may be taken as opening the era of persecution. It professed to maintain the Edict of Nantes; but each of its sixty clauses embodied some unjust decision against the Huguenots.

Henceforth the liberties of the Huguenots were curtailed by a hundred different methods, open and secret. Two may be taken as representative. In 1666 those of the Huguenots who accepted Catholicism were allowed three yeajs in which to pay their debts; and in 1669 the "Chambers of the Edict," established in 1598, were suppressed. The position of the Protestants became grievous in the extreme; but for the present Louis XIV was not prepared to go further. The Elector of Brandenburg had protested against the Edict of 1666, and in 1669 Louis XIV withdrew many of its clauses. The Protestants were still oppressed by indirect persecutions of every kind; but the years between 1669 and 1680 were a period of comparative peace. During much of it, foreign affairs were claiming the King's attention; Colbert's influence was still strong; and thus no positive legislative enactments of importance are recorded against the Huguenots. But signs of coming danger were not wanting. The clergy maintained a war of pamphlets against them, and demanded "the destruction of the hydra." Turenne's conversion was a serious blow; for, so long as the first soldier in France was one of them, his fellow-Huguenots felt secure from the worst. The Government, moreover, was rigorously excluding from its service, even from the lowest grades of it, all Protestants. Even Colbert had to bow to this policy, the danger of which he realised. But the most important move in these years of comparative peace was the institution, in 1677, by Pi-lisson, himself a renegade Huguenot, of the "treasury of conversions." A considerable sum of money was put at the disposal of the

agents of the Crown wherewith to purchase the adhesion of Huguenots. It was claimed that this means had been successful in procuring over 58,000 conversions by the year 1682.

The year 1681 marks the beginning of the end. The Peace of Nymegen had left the King's hands free to attend to domestic concerns. About the same time Madame de Montespan's influence with the King came to an end; and, though there is no evidence to connect Madame de Maintenon with the policy of the Revocation, her rise meant the strengthening of religion and the weakening of political interests in the King's mind. It is the special characteristic of the tragedy of the Revocation that so many good men and good impulses contributed to induce the King to commit his criminal and suicidal blunder. In June, 1681, was issued an Edict unsurpassed in the history of religious persecution for its mixture of hypocrisy and cruelty. It declared that children of Protestant parents might declare themselves converted to Catholicism at the age of seven. The Edict, which at first sight seemed merely ridiculous, proved in its working a terrible weapon of religious coercion. Any trivial acts or words could be interpreted as implying adhesion to Catholicism; then came the invasion of Protestant households and the forcible abduction of children. All appeals to the King were in vain. He had perhaps not yet determined on the revocation of the Edict; but he told Ruvigny, "the deputy general of the Reformed Churches," that he was henceforth "indispensably bound to effect the conversion of all his subjects and the extirpation of heresy." The attack became hotter during the following years, and the violations of the words of the Edict itself grosser. In 1682 a pastoral from the leaders of the Church in France was ordered to be read in all places of Protestant worship, in which the continued obstinacy of the Huguenots was threatened "with evils incomparably more terrible and deadly" than they had suffered up to the present. Protestants were excluded from most trade-guilds, from the financial service of the State and from the King's household. Their places of worship were closed in great numbers, usually on the plea that they had received back converts to Catholicism. Their colleges and schools were abolished. When they attempted to meet on the sites of their ruined temples, this was interpreted as rebellion and punished with barbarous severity. It is reckoned that, by 1684, 570 out of the 815 French Protestant churches had been closed. Between 1665 and 1685 nearly 200 edicts were issued dealing with "*la religion prétendue réformée?* and nearly all of these curtail some liberty or impose some new constraint: here they destroy a church; there they compel midwives to baptise the children of Huguenots in the Catholic faith, if their life is uncertain. One edict orders that a seat shall be placed in all Protestant "temples" for the accommodation of Catholic officials; another, that no Protestant minister may reside for more than three years in the same place. Already the Huguenots had begun to

stream in thousands to foreign countries in search of the security and livelihood which France denied them.

But the Government was not satisfied with legal chicanery and indirect pressure. In 1681 Marillac invented the method of the *dragonnades.* The quartering of soldiers on private persons was habitually practised in France. It was **a** grievous burden to whomsoever it befel; but, when the soldiers were quartered specially on Protestants and received a hint that their excesses would be overlooked by their officers, it became, for the sufferers from it, **a** martyrdom. But in 1681 the Government was not ready to adopt as its own the procedure of Marillac, which raised difficulties with foreign Governments, and vastly increased the tide of emigration. When, therefore, Ruvigny reported the iniquities which were being transacted in Poitou, the King disowned Marillac and shortly afterwards recalled him. But in 1685 Foucault was directed by Louvois to use the same methods in Beam. Tens of thousands of Protestants saved themselves from outrage and torture by verbal adhesion to the religion of their persecutors. Then the same system was extended from Beam to other provinces where Protestantism was strong. But the Edict of Nantes still remained on the statute-book, and the Government pretended to observe it.

The farce soon ceased. Every influence at Court was in favour of the Revocation. Chief among the King's counsellors in the matter were his confessor, the Jesuit Pere La Chaise; Harlay, the Archbishop of Paris; Louvois, the Minister of War; and Le Tellier, the Chancellor, the father of Louvois. Madame de Maintenon was admitted to conferences on the treatment of the Huguenots, and found her position, as an ex-Huguenot, a difficult one. She tells us that her advice was always for moderation. " We must not hurry; we must convert, not persecute." There was **a** period of hesitation, in which the question of policy and legality was considered. The Court adopted the view that Protestantism in France had almost ceased to exist, and that the Protestants had, of their own free will and uncoerced, flocked to reunion with the Catholic Church. Pere La Chaise promised that the completion of the work would not cost **a** drop of blood, and Louvois held the same opinion. The accession of James II to the English throne removed all danger on that side. Thus Revocation was determined on. The Edict was signed by the King on October 17, 1685.

The Edict of Revocation declares in its preamble that the best and largest part of the adherents of the Protestant faith have embraced Catholicism, and that, in consequence, the Edict of Nantes is no longer necessary. That Edict therefore and all other Edicts of Toleration were repealed. All meetings for public worship were henceforth interdicted to Protestants. Their ministers were exiled ; their schools closed. No lay Protestants were to leave the kingdom; any attempt at departure was to be punished by sentence to the galleys for men, by " confiscation

of body and goods'" for women. The last clause stated that all who still remained adherents of the Protestant faith should be allowed to dwell "in the towns and other places of the kingdom—without let or hindrance on account of their religion." But this provision, whatever meaning it was intended to' bear, proved utterly futile. While the pulpits and the literature of the day were declaring that heresy had died down of its own weakness, won over by the beauty and the truth of Catholicism, the agents of the Government were well aware that it was still the faith of many thousands. The work of the *dragonnades* began again, and was conducted more ruthlessly than before. The emigration of Protestants, which had been going on for ten years, now assumed proportions still more alarming. In spite of all prohibitions and the condemnation of great numbers of Huguenots to the .living death of the galleys, vast numbers streamed across every frontier. Certain districts, such as the Pays de Gex, were nearly depopulated; others, such as Normandy, where nearly the whole of the commerce and industry had been in the hands of the Huguenots, were reduced by the emigration to great poverty. Brandenburg, once so valuable an ally of the French King, was foremost in giving an asylum to the refugees. So strong was the feeling in England that even James II could not restrain it He was compelled in March, 1686, to promote a public collection for the benefit of the French refugees: and *a* very large proportion of them found a home in England.

In France, the chorus of contemporary approval of the King's action was almost unbroken by criticism: though a little later Vauban and Saint-Simon both expressed their hearty abhorrence of the methods employed and their fear of the consequences. But among later historians no apologist has been found for these proceedings. The strength of France was diminished and the strength of her enemies increased. It made the Elector of Brandenburg a more determined opponent than he had been before; it contributed to the overthrow of James II three years later, whereby England became the most tenacious of all the enemies of France; it ruined the industrial and commercial projects of Colbert; and it added to the military and commercial efficiency of other countries, more especially of Brandenburg-Prussia and England. The King had said that he would complete the conversion of the Huguenots, " even if it cost him his right hand "; and the disaster was not smaller than what is implied by the metaphor. It was, moreover, soon obvious that the Revocation and its consequences had done nothing to strengthen the Church in whose cause it was undertaken. Rather, it contributed unmistakably to the rise of the anti-clerical movement of the next century, which made the repetition of such an incident for ever impossible in Europe.

Soon after the beginning of the War of the Spanish Succession, a rising in the south-east of France revealed how complete had been the

failure of the Government to extirpate Protestantism. The hills and forests of the district of the Cevennes afforded shelter to **a** population which still cherished the Huguenot faith, in spite of all measures taken against them. Persecution deepened their faith into fanaticism and mysticism ; voices were heard in the air ; men and women were seized with convulsions, and prophesied of the iniquities of the Church of Rome and her coming overthrow. Such incidents had taken place during the War with the Grand Alliance ; and they were intensified when the conclusion of peace in 1697 brought further sufferings on the district. When the outbreak of the War of the Spanish Succession again turned the attention and the resources of the Government to the frontiers, the exasperation of the peasants broke out into a rising which for four years (1702-5) proved an annoying and dangerous addition to the burdens of the foreign war. It began with the murder of the Abbé du Chayla—a notorious persecutor—in 1702. Immediately it assumed dangerous proportions. The peasants, nicknamed *Camisards* by their opponents (from their habit of wearing a shirt over their clothes in nocturnal attacks), found leaders, well suited to the nature of the country and the character of the people, in Roland and Cavalier. Roland's was the greater and nobler personality ; but it was upon Cavalier that attention was riveted towards the end of the struggle. He was not more than eighteen years old at the beginning of the rising ; but he showed extraordinary gifts, both for the simple strategy that the occasion required and for the maintenance of discipline. The struggle was conducted with great barbarity on both sides. The royal troops hunted down the *Camisards* like vermin, without regard to age or sex. Marshal Montrevel, who succeeded the Count de Broglic in command of the royal forces, destroyed houses, farms and crops, and reduced the population to the extreme of starvation. But, as the rebels did not surrender, Montrevel was withdrawn and the conduct of operations was entrusted to Marshal Villars, the most successful of the soldiers employed by France in the War of the Spanish Succession, and a man of great tact and diplomatic powers. He at once adopted a more conciliatory policy, and in May, 1704, secured an interview with Cavalier at Nîmes. Much to the indignation of his comrades, who still remained in arms, he was induced to surrender by the offer of command in the royal armies and promises vague and illusory of toleration for the Protestants. He actually entered the royal army : but, convinced of the bad faith of his King, he escaped and joined the allies. He died in 1740, Governor of the Isle of Jersey, and a major-general in the British service. After his surrender the resistance in the Cevennes soon collapsed. Roland was killed in **a** fight. Protestantism still lingered, and was still subject to cruel persecutions. It was not until 1710 that the last of the *Camisard* leaders was hunted down ; but Protestantism was never really extirpated from the valleys of the Cevennes.

The remainder of the reign of Louis XIV exhibits little of general interest in the domestic policy and development of France. The long struggle of the Dutch War had thrown the finances into confusion; and now, after a peace of only nine years, France entered upon what was practically twenty-five years (1688-1713) of warfare against a vast European coalition. War and diplomacy monopolised the attention of the Government during all the period, and the internal administration shows us little more than the reaction of the great struggle. One result of the War with the Grand Alliance was the utter destruction of the municipal liberties of France. Colbert had already interfered with the towns, but his interference had been directed against abuses and carried out in the interests of justice and efficiency. He found the municipal finances in confusion, the taxes often employed for the pleasures of the magistrates, the rich throwing a large part of their proper burdens on the shoulders of the poor. Colbert submitted the municipal accounts to the inspection of the royal *intendants*; he scrutinised all claims to fiscal privilege, and forbade all improper employment of town revenues. Careless as he always was of popular liberties, and blind to the advantages of self-government, he often interfered in the elections, imposed candidates of his own, and annulled the popular choice where he disapproved of the result But it was after Colbert's death that the decisive blow was struck, and for motives far lower than his. In 1692 the War with the Grand Alliance was straining the resources of Prance, and the Government had recourse to expedients of every kind. Chief among these was the sale of offices; and this evil practice received an indefinite extension, when by the Edict of 1692 it was applied to municipal magistracies. The King declared that it was his intention to create mayors in all municipalities, whose offices should be for life and hereditary. His action was justified in a preamble of amusing sophistry by the explanation, that " having no longer any reason to fear successors, they would exercise their functions without passion and with the freedom which is necessary to secure equality in the assessment of the public burdens." The same process was carried still lower in the municipal scale by an Edict of January, 1704, which declared that aldermen and all other municipal magistracies should be brought under similar rules ; and again the change was justified on the ground that an annual tenure of office was insufficient to acquaint men with the duties of their office and to make them useful to their fellow-citizens. The real motive was financial. The sale of these offices was a valuable source of income to the Crown and a terrible burden on the population. The Government, which during the next century grew almost continuously weaker, could not renounce an expedient so easy and elastic. In 1706, "alternative mayors" were created that there might be two offices to sell. During the eighteenth century the right of free election was seven times sold to the municipalities of France and seven times taken away again.

Municipal government sank lower and lower in France until the Revolution came.

Colbert died in 1G83; Louvois in 1691. After the deaths of these powerful men the King's government grew more and more personal, and his dislike of independence in his servants greater. Le Pcletier was at the head of the finances from 1683 to 1689; Pontchartrain from 1689 to 1699 held the control of the finances as well as other posts; and by his position, though not by his abilities, recalled the situation of Colbert; Chamillart succeeded to the control of the finances in 1699, and was followed in 1708 by Desmarcts, a nephew of Colbert. The losing struggle which France fought against Europe during these years brought confusion on her finances and ruin on her manufactures. Yet the very pressure of her necessities made her look at times in the direction in which, at the time of the Revolution, she found at last an escape from her financial embarrassments. Thus in 1699 the *capitation* was imposed. This was in name an income-tax that should have been paid by the whole population of France, privileged and unprivileged. But the *regime* of privilege was too deeply rooted, not only in the laws but in the habits and ideas of the country. The *capitation* was arbitrarily assessed by the *intendants,* and in some districts of France they avowed that they made the tax press on the unprivileged with a weight nearly ten times as great as that which it brought to the nobility. For instance, in the Orléanais the noble paid only a hundredth part of his income, the unprivileged an eleventh part. The *capitation* was withdrawn at the time of the peace and reestablished during the War of the Spanish Succession. But it was not enough, and in 1710 the *dixième* was established; an income-tax which should have fallen on all incomes without exception. But, as before, the privileged managed in many instances to elude it, and the bankrupt Government of France supported existence by means of *affaires extraordinaires*—that is to say, temporary expedients such as the sale of offices, forced loans from the clergy, debasement of the coinage, loans, lotteries, anticipations of revenue. And, in spite of all, the balance during the Spanish War was increasingly against the State.

As the glory of the *Grand Monarque* passed under heavy clouds he became increasingly intolerant of criticism and opposition; but the situation was so serious that criticism made itself heard. Fe'nelon had been tutor to the Duke of Burgundy, and we may see from *Tilimaque* what were the ideas with which he had tried to inspire his pupil. A warm spirit of humanity breathes through that and all Fe'nelon's writings; but his sympathies are with the aristocratic and feudal past, and his influence, if it had made itself felt in public affairs, would have told in favour of a restoration of the power of the nobility. His political ideas are expressed, not only in *Téîémaque,* but also in *L'Examen de conscience sur les devoirs de royauté,* which he composed

for the Duke of Burgundy, and in the *Mémoires concernant la guerre de la succession d'Espagne.* But, though all his writings imply ,& criticism on the absolutist system of Louis XIV, it is in a letter which he wrote to the King, probably in 1691, that the most hostile judgment is expressed. The fate of the letter is somewhat mysterious, and it is improbable that so bitter an indictment ever reached the eyes or the ears of the great King. In this letter he denounced the Dutch War as the source of all the others ; he derided the King's military preparations, and directly attacked the ideals and the character of the King. "You are praised to the skies," he wrote, "for having impoverished France, and you have built your throne on the ruin of all classes in the State."

Before the end of the reign men of practical knowledge attacked the King's government with even greater energy. Pierre Le Pesant, Sieur de Boisguillebert, was a magistrate at Rouen. He published in 1697 a book called the *Détail de la France* and another the *Factum de la France,* which is little more than a repetition of the conclusions of the first, in 1707. He writes with vigour and occasionally with humour. His books are occupied to a large extent with theoretic problems of political economy, as to which he shows himscF in advance of Colbert. But historically the most valuable part of his book is the picture that he gives of the working of the actual financial system of France, its clumsiness, its inefficiency, its tendency to discourage industry. The Crown, he tells us, derives little advantage from the system and the people lose the whole value of their labour. He was not content with pointing out the evil ; he also suggested remedies. His suggestions fall into line with the general tendency of economic thought during the eighteenth century, to which he gave a powerful impulse. He demanded the abolition of pecuniary privilege, the establishment of free trade in com, the removal of custom houses to the frontiers. His proposal for immediate application in the *Détail de la France* was an extension of a reformed *taille* to the privileged classes. In the *Factum de la France* he goes further and suggests a *capitation,* which should amount to a tax of ten per cent, on all incomes, whether derived from land or other x-esources. The books were little read; but Boisguillebert procured an interview with Chamillart, who seemed inclined to accept some of his ideas. Yet, when the reforms were postponed on the ground that the war made them impracticable, Boisguillebert published a bitter ironic attack on the Minister under the title of a *Supplement* to the *Détail de la France.* This brought upon him the suppression of his books and his own exile from Rouen (1707).

But criticism of the methods of government could not be repressed, and in 1707 Vauban published his *Projet dune dîme royale.* After Turenne and Louvois the military glory of Louis XIV's reign owed most to Vauban ; and he showed a moral courage and a social feeling that rank him, in truth, much higher than either of the other two. The *Dîme royale* is, in fact, a treatise on taxation, proposing to make a clean sweep of the

whole existing arrangements and to substitute a simpler system, which, by abolishing privilege, should be less burdensome to the people and more useful to the King. The preface justifies the search for a new system by showing the effects of the present one and contains an often-quoted passage. "From all the researches that I have been able to make during several years of close application I have come to the clear conclusion that one-tenth of the people is reduced to beggary and does as a matter of fact live by begging ; of the nine-tenths remaining, five cannot give alms to the first tenth because they are very little better off ; of the other four-tenths three are in far from comfortable circumstances, in the tenth that still remains there cannot be more than 100,000 families.'" There is a good deal of confusion both in the arrangement and the style of the book; but its central contentions are placed beyond doubt. Vauban aimed at the destruction of the *regime* of privilege and the adoption of an income-tax on land and property, without privilege or exemption. He wished to sweep away the existing taxes, oppressive by reason of the exemptions allowed and the method of collecting them. He compared the ease with which the ecclesiastical tithe was realised and the absence of complaint against it with the vast expense and the constant irritation produced by the *taille.* He would, therefore, adapt the methods of the Church to the needs of the State and suggests the following taxes :—(1) a tax of from five to ten per cent, on all land, without regard to privilege ; *(2)* a graduated tax on incomes not derived from land : the working-classes of France not to pay more than 3^ per cent.;.the incomes of the clergy to be taxed equally with those of other classes; (3) a modified salt monopoly; (4) a remodelled system of customs, which should be collected only at the frontier. But Vauban's attempt to circulate the book privately among his friends aroused the anger of d'Argenson and Pontchartrain. The book was condemned by royal edict, and the shock of disgrace hastened Vauban's death (1707).

The end of the Spanish War brought to France some return of military glory ; but her finances were hopelessly exhausted and her old King suffered from one shattering blow after another which fell on his domestic circle. No royal family could seem more firmly established than his. Maria Teresa had only borne one son to Louis XIV, who received the traditional name of Louis. But the King had three grandsons ; Louis the Duke of Burgundy, Philip, Duke of Anjou (since 1700 Philip V of Spain); and Charles, Duke of Berry. The Duke of Burgundy was happily married to Maria Adelaide of Savoy, and had two children. Yet suddenly, in addition to all her other disasters, France was threatened by a difficult question of succession. The Dauphin died in April, 1711. He had been completely effaced by his father; and men welcomed the prospect of the accession of the Duke of Burgundy, who had been the pupil of Fénelon and had adopted many of his aristocratic liberal ideas. Men repeated with astonishment and hope his saying

"that a King is made for his subjects, not the subjects for the King.[11] Had he lived to inherit the throne there would have been an attempt made to alter the development of France, probably in a reactionary feudal direction. But, in 1712, the Duke of Burgundy and his charming wife and eldest son were all carried off by a mysterious disease which seems to have been smallpox, though it roused at the time suspicions of poison. The Duke of Berry, the third of the King's grandsons, died in 1714. The second, Philip, was King of Spain, and his claim to the French throne was expressly renounced by the Treaty of Utrecht. Any attempt to revive this claim would be the signal for a renewal of war. The direct heir to the throne was Louis, Duke of Anjou, who was afterwards Louis XV. He was two years of age, and of feeble health. And if the boy were to live, according to all the traditions of France the Regency would come into the hands of the Duke of Orleans. All eyes were fixed on him; and his name awoke the wildest suspicions and fears. He had fought with distinction in Spain, and possessed a keen and inquisitive intellect. But he was of an indolent and self-indulgent nature, plunged in vice and drunkenness, openly opposed to the doctrines and neglectful of the practices of the Church. Lo"is XIV and Madame de Maintenon saw with alarm the prospect of power coming into his hands, for it would mean a complete reaction against the policy which the dying monarch had pursued in Church and State both at home and abroad. Hence arose the last intrigue of the reign. The King's fondness for his illegitimate children had been manifested throughout the latter part of the reign. And now it was determined to give the reality of power to the Duke of Maine, the son of Madame de Montespan and the pupil of Madame de Maintenon. He had shown himself unsuccessful and incapable in war; but it was determined to make him master of France after the King's death. Tradition made it impossible to deny to the Duke of Orleans the title of Regent; but the custody of the young King was to be in the hands of the Duke of Maine and a council of regency was to be established by the will of the King, so arranged that the present ***regime*** would be prolonged and Louis XIV would still rule France from his grave. But the King and his wife miscalculated the forces against them. The age was weary of the long and now disastrous reign; men were more attracted by the known opposition of the Duke of Orleans to the reigning policy than frightened by his reputation. Thus the King's schemes were foredoomed to failure, when, after a reign of seventy-two years (the longest reign recorded in history) he died on September 1, 1715.

CHAPTER II.

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF LOUIS XIV.

(1661-97.)

THE prominent position occupied in Europe by France under Louis XIV from the death of Mazarin in 1661 to the Treaty of Ryswyk in 1697 affected in a marked though varying degree the politics of the whole of Western Christendom. In examining the causes and results of the rise of France to this position, a distinction must be drawn between the earlier and the later portion of the period. Till 1688, Louis succeeded in many of his aims, and during these twenty-seven years he secured for France territorial acquisitions of enormous value. After 1688, he was opposed by a European Confederacy against which he barelymanaged to hold his own. Nevertheless, in 1697 France still stood forth not only as the nation most advanced in the arts of civilisation, but also as the most powerful of European States, and a danger to the balance of power among them.

The supremacy which France had thus attained in both arms and arts, and the partial success which had attended Louis' policy of territorial aggression were due to many causes, chief among which were the consistent internal policy of the two great Cardinal Ministers and the political condition of the chief European States. Richelieu and Mazarin had, after infinite labour, reduced the nobility to obedience and laid down the lines on which the development of France should proceed. At home, religious toleration, the reduction of provincial autonomy, and the subordination of the *Parlement* of Paris to the royal power; abroad, alliance with England and the United Provinces, and encouragement of the independence of the Princes of the Empire—such was the substance of the political legacy bequeathed by the two far-sighted Cardinals to the young King.

It remained for Louis to take advantage of the political weakness of the great European States and, following the policy of the Cardinals, so to strengthen the monarchy that no Power or combination of Powers could by whatever means weaken its foundations. In carrying out this scheme Louis was aided by a variety of circumstances. England under Charles II

and James II made no effective resistance to French projects; while the Empire was as disunited as ever, and many of its members continued more jealous of the power of the Emperor than they were of that of France. Moreover, the sudden recovery of Turkey under the Kiuprilis kept the east of Europe in a state of continual alarm; nor was it till the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699 that the perennial menace to the Habsburg dominions was sensibly lessened. But the most alarming fact that Europe had to face was the fall of Spain from the position she had held under Charles V and his successors till the Peace of the Pyrenees. The disappearance of Spain from among the great European nations aided in a marked degree the rise of France under Louis XIV.

At the time of Mazarihs death the political outlook for Fiance was promising. Louis XIV's marriage with Maria Teresa, the Spanish Infanta, brought with it possibilities of which time could alone detennine the value. By the Treaty of the Pyrenees, France had strengthened herself on her north-eastern frontier by the acquisition of Avesnes, on the side of the Pyrenees by finally securing Roussillon, between Sambre and Meuse by the cession of Philippeville and Marienbourg, and in Lorraine by that of Bar, Clermont, Stenay, Pun, and Jarmctz. The Duke of Neuburg, the ally of France, had obtained Jülich; French troops had acquired the right to march through Lorraine; the League of the Rhine still more or less looked towards France for guidance.

The aspirations of the French nation were, however, by no means satisfied. The frontier of the Rhine had not yet been secured, and the Spanish Netherlands had not been conquered. Much, therefore, remained to be done; and by Louis XIV and his most astute advisers the Peace of the Pyrenees was regarded as merely a truce.

Till the War of Devolution in 1667, Louis contented himself with making elaborate preparations, with secretly helping the Portuguese, with concluding alliances in 1663 with Denmark, and in 1664 with Brandenburg and Saxony, and with taking an active part in the same year in the internal conflicts of the Empire. With the opening of the War of Devolution France entered upon a period of conquest and expansion, and till 1688 success on the whole crowned her efforts. From 1688, however, to the Treaty of Ryswyk in 1697, Louis XIV found himself confronted by an almost united Europe, and for the first time since the days of Mazarin a definite check was inflicted on French arms and French diplomacy. Nevertheless, throughout these years France held the foremost place in Europe. Had Louis XIV contented himself with following the policy of Richelieu, France would have been spared many disasters. But both in his home and foreign policy he aimed at ideals which in certain respects resembled those pursued by the Emperor Charles V.

No serious opposition to Louis' schemes was to be expected from Spain. That country was slowly but steadily declining in power and

influence. Spain had made a brave show during the Thirty Years' War and the succeeding eleven years; but the revolt of Portugal, the alliance between the English Commonwealth and France, the loss of Jamaica, and the humiliating terms of the Peace of the Pyrenees, were alike proofs of weakness. The failure of Philip IV, between 1661 and 1665, to reconquer Portugal was still more significant. Portugal could only collect 13,000 men to oppose two Spanish armies, one of 20,000, and the other of 15,000 men. But Charles II of England, who in 1662 had married a Portuguese Princess, placed an auxiliary force under the command of the able "Comte" Frederick Hermann "de Schömberg," who had several years earlier entered the Portuguese service on the recommendation of France; and the Count of Castel-Melhor, who owing to the imbecility of the young King Alfonso VI was at the head of affairs, showed conspicuous energy. At Evora, Don John of Austria, the chief Spanish Commander, was worsted, and at Amcgial, on June 8, 1663, his army was, mainly through the gallantry of the English auxiliaries, disastrously defeated.

In 1665 Count Caracena, who had superseded Don John, headed a Spanish army which had been reinforced from Italy and Flanders, and besieged Villa Viciosa. On the approach of the Portuguese and English forces under Marialva and Schömberg he advanced, and on June 17, gave battle at Montes Claros, where he suffered a crushing defeat. Philip IV had failed, and recognised the humiliating character of his failure. On September 17, 1665, he died, overwhelmed with a sense of Spain's ruin and degradation, leaving the crown to his son Charles II, who was only four years old.

During the reign of Charles II Spain sank to the lowest point ever touched in her history. The causes, both external and internal, of her decadence can be traced back to the days when she was governed by the Emperor Charles V and have been discussed in earlier volumes of this *History*. Under the rule of Charles II no steps were taken to arrest the decline that had become almost irretrievable. The last representative of his race, Charles II was small in stature, with large blue eyes, light hair, and a white skin. His health was always deplorable; and, as he grew older, he was frequently attacked by fainting fits. But, though he was so irresolute that he could settle nothing without advice, he was not wanting in intelligence, and the last act of his reign showed that in his own way he had the interests of Spain at heart.

On his accession Charles II was under the care of his mother Maria Anna, sister of the Emperor Leopold; as he grew older, he became more and more indifferent to all his duties; unlike Louis XIV, he detested the cares of government, and rarely attended a Council. "If it was necessary that he should be a Prince," said the Venetian Ambassador, "he ought to be a Prince of the Church." He married twice, first Marie-Louise of Orleans, who died in 1689, and after her Maria Anna of Neuburg,

sister of Eleonora Magdalena, third wife of the Emperor Leopold, and of Maria Sophia, who married King Pedro of Portugal. To the Queen-Mother and to Charles' second Queen must in some measure be attributed the misfortunes of the reign. The Queen-Mother was in close alliance with her confessor, Father Nithard, a German Jesuit. Both were unpopular in Spain, but they were able to expel from Court Don John of Austria, an illegitimate son of Philip IV, who was a man of no capacity and eaten up with vanity. In 1669 Nithard was forced to retire, but his place was taken by Fernando de Valenzuela, who supported the cause of the Queen-Mother. After failing in 1675 to carry out a *coup d'etat,* Don John proved successful in 1677. Valenzuela fled; the Queen-Mother was sent to a convent at Tours; and Charles married in August, 1679, Marie-Louise of Orleans. Don John's triumph was brief, for he died in September, 1679, having outlived his popularity.

His death was followed by the return of the Queen-Mother and the triumph of the Austrian faction. Till April, 1685, the Duke of Medina-Celi made vain attempts to check the anarchy and misery which prevailed in Spain, and which was not lessened by the struggles at Court between the Austrian and French parties. In "April, 1685, the Count of Oropesa succeeded Mcdina-Celi and managed to carry out some reforms. He was a member of the Austrian party, and on the death of Marie-Louise of Orleans assisted the Queen-Mother in bringing about the marriage of Charles to Maria Anna of Neuburg. The new Queen soon turned against Oropesa, who fell in 1691, his duties being transferred at first to the Count of Melgar, Admiral of Castile. The rapacity of the Queen and of her German followers made her very unpopular and prepared the way for the triumph of French influences in 1701. Thus, from the death of Mazarin in 1661 to the Treaty of Ryswyk in 1697, Spain was unable to offer any effective resistance to the schemes of Louis XIV; the European balance was considerably affected by her disappearance as one of the great Powers.

The Empire as a whole cannot be said to have realised the danger which threatened it from the ambitious projects of France till the formation of the Grand Alliance in 1689. The Augsburg Alliance of July, 1686, though it united in it a considerable number of Estates, including both Spain and Sweden for their German possessions, was only an extension of the Luxemburg Alliance of June, 1682, which had been confined to the Emperor and the Franconian and Upper-Rhenish Circles. Moreover, the Emperor Leopold was not able to offer any effective opposition to Louis. Till 1672 he was outwitted by French diplomatists, and, after fighting against Louis from 1672 to 1679, was glad to make peace. The Hungarians, too, instigated in part by the diplomacy of the French *"Defensor Hungarian"* had risen against Leopold under Count Emeric Tdkolyi (1677-82). Till 1689 the Estates of the Empire could not be relied upon to offer a united opposition

to the French monarch. From the Peace of Nymegen in 1678 their suspicions of the real aims of the German policy of Louis began to assume a definite shape; but the long war between Austria and the Turks which broke out in 1682 and lasted till 1699 prevented Leopold from using the strength of the Empire against its most dangerous adversary.

During the period from 1661 to 1670, the weakness of the Empire, the decadence of Spain, and the embittered war between England and Holland, enabled Louis XIV to formulate and carry out an aggressive policy, deliberately calculated to extend the boundaries of France and to strengthen and consolidate her position in Europe. The only Power which showed similar aggressive tendencies was Turkey. Under Mohammad IV (1648-87) and the Kiuprilis, the gradual decline of Turkey was checked; and, from 1656 to the siege of Vienna in 1683, the Ottoman Empire like the French kingdom enjoyed a period of success. The attacks of the Turks upon Transylvania (1661), upon Hungary (1663), upon Candia (1669), and upon Poland (1672-8), indeed, aided the projects of Louis XIV; for, by diverting eastwards the attention of the Poles and Austrians, they weakened the Emperor's power of resistance to the French aggressions.

In the west, too, the years from the death of Mazarin in 1661 to the invasion of the Low Countries by France in 1667 constitute a period in which events favoured Louis, and facilitated his preparations for taking his first step towards the establishment of his claims upon the succession to the Spanish monarchy. As the Spanish throne was not then vacant, Louis contented himself with asserting his claim to the immediate possession of the Spanish Netherlands. It was based upon the so-called *jus devolutionis*—a local custom of Brabant and Hainault, by which, though a man might have married more than once, the children of his first marriage succeeded to his property. Since Maria Teresa, the consort of Louis XIV, was the only surviving child of Philip IV's first marriage, Louis claimed the whole of the Low Countries; though in the course of his negotiations with Spain in 1662 he had declared his willingness to be satisfied with instant possession of Hainault, Cambray, Luxemburg, and Franche Comte.

The negotiations with Spain were resultless; but Louis never ceased his efforts to carry out his object. Already in April, 1662, he had entered into friendly negotiations with the leading statesman of the United Provinces, John de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, and had concluded a treaty guaranteeing all the Dutch possessions in Europe. He had hoped at the same time to arrive at some arrangement with regard to the Spanish Netherlands. The plan of equal partition between France and the United Provinces was eventually rejected by de Witt, who preferred that the Spanish Netherlands should be erected into an independent Catholic republic, or remain under Spain if the latter Power

entered into a close alliance with the free Provinces. To Louis, who, like Mazarin, desired the annexation to France of the Spanish Low Countries, none of de Witt's suggestions were acceptable; and the death of Philip IV of Spain, on September 17, 1665, seemed a suitable opportunity for pressing the supposed claims of the King of France. But in March, 1665, war had broken out between England and Holland; and Louis was, by the treaty of April, 1662, bound to aid the Dutch. Though they were able to assert their supremacy at sea, the alliance of Charles II of England with the warlike Bishop of Mlinster resulted in his raising a large army and overrunning the province of Overyssel. De Witt, however, succeeded in persuading Louis XIV to carry out his treaty engagements, though the behaviour of the French troops nominally hostile to the Bishop of Munster tended to increase the dislike felt by the Dutch for their allies. In January, 1666, Louis, fearing that de Witt might conclude peace with Charles II, reluctantly declared war against England. The French alliance affected the fortunes of Holland in a variety of ways. It strengthened the hands of the Dutch, who, early in 1666, won a series of diplomatic successes. Denmark concluded an alliance with them; Sweden was induced not to unite with England. At the same time, some of the German Princes became fearful of the results of a too close dependence of the United Provinces upon France. In October, 1666, the United Provinces were enabled, through the influence of the Great Elector—who had in February, 1666, threatened the Bishop of Munster—to form a Quadruple Alliance with Brandenburg, the Brunswick-Luncburg Princes, and Denmark.

England was thus left practically without an ally, and the Dutch were free from the necessity of placing too much reliance upon France. During 1666 the war between England and the United Provinces continued with varying results. In 1667 two important events took place. On March 31 Charles made the first of his secret treaties with Louis XIV, agreeing not to oppose a French invasion of the Spanish Netherlands, on the understanding that the French fleet withheld all assistance from the Dutch. But the calculations of Charles were upset in June, 1667, by the Dutch attack on the English ships in the Thames and Medway—which compelled Charles to agree to the Treaty of Breda on July 31, 1667. For the United Provinces peace was absolutely necessary, since on May 24 French troops had crossed the frontier of the Spanish Low Countries, and the War of Devolution had begun.

For this war Louis' preparations had been carefully made. By a treaty with Portugal, concluded in March, 1667, it was arranged that hostilities between that country and Spain should continue; by the treaty of 1662 with the United Provinces their hands were tied; and by the secret treaty of March 31, 1667, Charles II had bound himself not to enter into an alliance with the Emperor against Louis XIV during the year 1667. Secure of a free hand in the Spanish Low Countries,

Louis ordered his troops to cross the frontier (May 24, 1667). The southern portion of the Spanish Low Countries was speedily overrun; and Lille, the most important of the Belgian cities, was taken (August 27).

This rapid success alarmed Europe, and signs of opposition to France at once appeared. Spain hastily recognised the independence of Portugal (February, 1668), and, freed from all necessity of continuing her attempts to reconquer that kingdom, endeavoured to secure the assistance of the Emperor Leopold in the Low Countries. Her efforts were in vain. Louis, by the able diplomacy of his ambassador Gravel, contrived to induce the Imperial Diet in October, 1667, to abstain from active assistance to the Spanish Low Countries (which technically formed part of the Circle of Burgundy, one of the ten Imperial Circles); but he was unable to succeed in bringing about by the same means the continuance of the League of the Rhine beyond its formal term (August, 1668); when, after much negotiation, it came to an end. Further, by means of his able agent de Gremonville, Louis not only persuaded the Emperor Leopold to withhold all assistance from Spain, but actually induced him to agree to a treaty, signed on January 19, 1668, for the eventual partition of the Spanish monarchy between himself and Louis, should King Charles II, as seemed probable, die without children.

So far, the success of the French King had been remarkable and unchecked. Having secured by various means the neutrality of Brandenburg, and that of Sweden, and having encouraged the war between England and Holland, Louis had met with no serious resistance in his subjugation of the Spanish Low Countries. By the beginning of 1668 Spain was isolated and the alliance, or at all events the quiescence, of the Emperor secured. But it was these extraordinary successes of Louis which brought about the formation of the coalition between England, the United Provinces, and Sweden, almost distinctively known as the Triple Alliance.

Some such coalition was justified, not only by the French invasion of the Spanish Netherlands, but by the French conquest of Franche Comte", which was effected in February, 1668. On January 23 England and the United Provinces concluded an alliance which in April was on certain conditions joined by Sweden. Louis had thus to face a formidable adverse combination. The importance of the Triple Alliance lies in the fact that it was the "first formal expression of European resistance to the aggressions of Louis'"—the first attempt to check a Power which continued to dominate Europe till the Treaty of Ryswyk. Spain and Portugal were now at peace (February, 1668), the influence of England being paramount in the latter kingdom; and Louis could no longer rely upon the abstention of Spain from active measures in the Low Countries. Moreover, by consenting to make peace, he would lose little, and would

break up the coalition which was being formed against him. By his recent secret partition treaty with the Emperor Leopold, Louis was eventually to receive as his share the Low Countries and Tranche Comte. Though his pride caused him to resent the necessity of yielding to the Triple Alliance, Louis in the end agreed to come to terms with England, Holland, and Sweden. On May 2, *1668,* the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed. In this compact Louis strengthened his north-eastern frontier by the acquisition of certain fortresses in the Netherlands with their districts. Franche Comte, Cambray, St Omer, and Aire were given up by the King of France; but by the secret partition treaty with Leopold it had been arranged that on the King of Spain's death all these were to be incorporated in the French dominions.

In face of the growing hostility of Europe Louis showed wisdom in agreeing to the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle and in adopting a waiting policy. Yet Europe was far from being united ; Brandenburg and other German States were jealous of the Emperor; England and the United Provinces regarded each other with hostility; Sweden was ready to fall in with the highest bidder. Some twenty years had yet to pass before the chief European States, recognising the danger which threatened them from France, were found prepared to sink minor differences in a united effort to reduce the power of the aggressive French monarch. Louis XIV, however, bitterly resented the necessity which forced him to agree to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapcllc, and from the moment of its signature seems to have resolved to gain his ends in the Spanish Netherlands by means of a direct attack upon the United Provinces. This decision ran counter to the policy to which the French monarchy had adhered since the days of Francis I. For it was distinctly opposed to the principle of pursuing Catholic interests at home and Protestant abroad, which had enabled France to secure allies against the Emperor among the German Protestant Princes. Louis, however, was bent on the reduction of the Spanish Netherlands; and the surest means to that end seemed to be found in the overthrow of the Dutch Republic. The magnitude of this blunder became more and more apparent, as the reign of Louis XIV proceeded. " In Holland," writes Mignet, " the old political system of France suffered shipwreck."

In order to achieve the end which Louis proposed to himself, the overthrow of the new combination which had led to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was necessary. The task was at once undertaken. "The years between 1668 and 1672," writes Camille Rousset, "were years of preparation; when Lionne was labouring with all his might to find allies, Colbert money, and Louvois soldiers for Louis." The task of breaking up the Triple Alliance itself, however, did not prove to be one of insuperable difficulty. For a short period after the formation of this Alliance western Europe remained in a condition of uneasy peace, while the obnoxious compact was being rapidly undermined.

The three partners in it were ill-assorted, and without any real ground of agreement. Sweden had little to fear from Louis. Her interest required constant watchfulness as towards Denmark and northern Germany. With Denmark Sweden was in an almost unending feud; while by her successes in the Thirty Years' War she had acquired possessions in northern Germany, which could not be regarded as definitively united to the Swedish monarchy. The rise of Brandenburg already threatened the stability of the arrangements made by the Treaty of Westphalia in the north-east of the Empire. Moreover, Sweden was a poor country, and her Government was ready to unite with any Power that ofFered regular subsidies, especially if combined with military assistance for the defence of Swedish Pomerania. Prom England and Holland no adequate help either in money or men could be looked for in the event of an attack upon Swedish Pomerania by any German Power. It was therefore not surprising that Sweden was easily detached from the Triple Alliance and made a treaty with Louis on May C, 1672. Charles II of England had already by the Secret Treaty of Dover, signed on June 1, 1670, deserted the Triple Alliance and promised to join Prance in a war against the Dutch Republic.

The Triple Alliance was thus broken up, and, four years after its conclusion, Louis XIV was able to invade the United Provinces. Till 1688 constant attempts were made to form coalitions against Prance; but, owing to the policy of Charles II and James II of England, to the Franco-Swedish Alliance, to the necessity of defending Germany and Hungary against the Turks, to the divisions existing among the various German States and to their suspicions of the Emperor, no organised opposition was possible.

Unfortunately for the peace of the whole continent, the aggressions of Louis XIV in the west, which definitely began in 1672, coincided with the attempts of the Turks to dominate eastern Europe. In 1656 the appointment of Mohammad Kiuprili as Grand Vizier marked the beginning of the sudden revival of the Ottoman power, of which some account will be given in a later chapter. His successor, Ahmad Kiuprili, continued his policy of reform at home and aggressions abroad. With the help of Louis XIV, who sent a French force to his help, the Emperor Leopold defeated the Turks in the battle of St Gothard on August 1, 1664, and concluded the Truce of Vasvar on August 10. Vienna was saved; but the hold which the Turks had established over Hungary remained unshaken, and a compromise was arranged with regard to Transylvania. The outbreak of war between Turkey and Venice resulting in the capture of Crete (September, 1669) showed that the ambitious aggressive policy of the Ottoman power was as dangerous to the integrity and peace of eastern as tliat of Louis XIV was to that of western Europe. In 1669 the Polish Diet elected not the French candidate,

the Count Palatine Philip William of Neuburg, but Michael Wisniowiecki, the national candidate, who was married to Eleonora Maria, the sister of the Emperor Leopold, and looked to him for support.

It was impossible to hope for a united resistance to the French King, so long as there was a possibility of a Turkish attack upon Vienna, an opportunity for which was afforded by the disturbed condition of Poland. In 1672 that country was invaded by Ahmad Kiuprili; but the Turks were defeated by John Sobieski both before and after he had, in 1674, succeeded the weak Michael on the Polish throne. In June, 1674, Louis XIV made a treaty with the new King, who, in consideration for French subsidies, promised to support the malcontents in Hungary against the Emperor. The war between Poland and Turkey was brought to an end by the Treaty of Zurawna, concluded under French mediation on October 27, 1676. But, though by this treaty Ahmad Kiuprili, who died three days after its conclusion, left his country in a position in eastern Europe not very unlike that occupied by France in western, his alliance with Poland was of little benefit to Louis XIV; and in 1683, when Vienna was besieged by the Turks, it was the King of Poland who bore away the glory of the rescue. While, however, John Sobieski was defending eastern Europe during the years 1674-7, the Emperor, even though aided by Spain, the Dutch, Brandenburg, and Denmark, proved unable to place any substantial check upon the ambitious policy of Louis XIV.

In 1670 Louis had been resolved to win eventually the Imperial Crown, to secure part of the Spanish possessions, and to conquer the United Provinces. On February 17 of that year he had concluded a treaty with Ferdinand Maria, Elector of Bavaria, whose daughter, Maria Anna, was to marry the Dauphin, providing that in the event of the Emperor's death every possible effort should be made to secure his own election to the Imperial throne. The Treaty of Dover of the same year, followed by the formal detachment of Sweden from the Triple Alliance (April 14, 1672), left the United Netherlands open to a French attack; while the secret partition treaty concluded with the Emperor in 1668, followed by a treaty of neutrality in 1671, left it in the power of Louis to renew his occupation of Franche Comte. Sweden had been gained by the payment of 400,000 crowns and the promise of an annual payment of 40,000 crowns. In return, Sweden undertook, in concert with Denmark, to close the Baltic to the Dutch fleet and to land a force in the north of Germany. Like the alliance with England, that with Sweden proved of great value to France during the ensuing war. On December 31, 1669, Louis had made a secret treaty with the Elector of Brandenburg, who, in return for subsidies, to which was afterwards added the promise of the province of Spanish Gelders, undertook to aid France in conquering the Spanish Netherlands, and to support the interests of France in all the affairs of the Empire. Behind the plan of

conquering first the United Provinces and then the Spanish Netherlands lay, therefore, the design of securing for Louis a position of authority and power such as had been held by Charles the Great.

The Devolution War had thus not only disunited Europe, but had been followed by unexpected developments. In more or less intimate connexion with the rivalry of France and Spain, which, at the time of the death of Mazarin, was the most momentous fact in European politics, and remained such throughout Louis XIV's reign, arose other important questions. In 1668, Louis had, as has been seen, concluded with the Emperor a secret partition treaty, which was to come into force in the event of the death of Charles II of Spain. Would that treaty hinder the Emperor from opposing the schemes of Louis with regard to the United Netherlands, Flanders, the German lands on the Rhine, and Poland, or interfere with his intrigues in Hungary ?

Though the League of the Rhine was no longer in existence, Louis had, as has been seen, entered into separate treaties with several of the German Powers, such as Bavaria and Brandenburg. Would they remain loyal to their alliance with France, should Louis adopt an aggressive attitude towards the Empire? By the Treaty of Dover England had been detached from the Triple Alliance. But would the English people consent to support the action of the French King, when once they realised the import of his ambitious schemes, and would they allow the national interests of England to be subordinated to the designs of Charles II for the maintenance of his personal power?

Thus, at the opening of the French war with the United Provinces in 1672, the European situation was extremely complicated. For a time each of the various States seemed to pursue its separate interests regardless of the welfare of Europe; and the diplomacy of the period was more than usually tangled. Yet the policy of Louis had never been clearer. For a successful attack on the Dutch it was necessary, after breaking up the Triple Alliance, to secure the alliance or neutrality of the Emperor and of as many German Princes as possible. The Treaty of Dover had placed at Louis' disposal the English fleet, which alone could render useless the Dutch navy; the treaty of April 14,1672, had secured the invaluable help of a Swedish army in northern Germany. Treaties with Minister, Cologne, Hanover in July, and with Osnabriick in October, 1671, provided for the unhindered passage of French troops; and on December 18, 1671, the Emperor Leopold, fearing that Louis might stir up the Hungarians to rebellion, and encourage the German Princes to combine against him, promised neutrality so long as Louis abstained from attacking Spain or the Empire.

Alone among the chief German Princes, the Great Elector, whose strong Protestant feeling contributed to his decision, declined Louis' proposals, and in February, 1671, concluded a treaty with the Dutch Republic, to become effectual in April, 1672, by which he promised

armed assistance. Spain also, in December, 1671, signed a treaty with the States-General for mutual defence; and the Elector of Mainz, though he maintained friendly relations with France, also resolved to support the Dutch.

Early in 1672 a powerful French force was collected at Charleroi, and on May 5 it was joined by Louis XIV in person. The invasion of the United Provinces at once took place, while the forces of Luxemburg, Cologne, and Miinster occupied Overyssel and besieged Groningen, which they failed to take. Meanwhile, the French overran the southern portion of the United Provinces; but on June 18 the dykes were cut, and the sluices opened in front of Amsterdam, which was thereby saved. Louis' failure to overrun Holland synchronised with the defeat of a French force which endeavoured to overcome Zealand; moreover, on June 7 a combined Anglo-French fleet had been defeated by de Ruyter in the battle of Southwold Bay. On July 6 and 8, William of Orange was proclaimed Stadholder of Holland and Zealand; on August 1, as will be narrated in a subsequent chapter, the French invasion came to an end, and Louis returned to St Germain, having conquered Gelders, Utrecht, and Overyssel; on August 20, John and Cornelius de Witt were murdered at the Hague.

These events created profound alarm in Europe, although for some years the attitude of the various European Powers with regard to the French aggressions was uncertain, and their opposition betrayed great lack of vigour. On June 23, 1672, the Emperor Leopold concluded an alliance with Frederick William of Brandenburg, and on October 27 another with the States-General. This coalition, sometimes called the Great Coalition of the Hague, did not prove very effective. Turenne's successes on the lower Rhine and the Weser, and his march upon the Elbe, forced Frederick William to make peace on June 6, 1673, and thus deprived the Dutch of their most valuable ally. A peace conference which met in June, 1673, at Cologne having proved a failure, the Emperor formed a second Coalition, which was joined in the autumn of 1673 by Spain and the Duke of Lorraine, and in 1674 by Denmark, the Elector Palatine, the Brunswick-Liineburg Dukes, and on July 1 by the Great Elector. Further, the English Parliament forced Charles II to abandon his alliance with Louis, and to make peace with the Dutch, on February 19, 1674.

In June, 1672, the States-General had offered Louis Maestricht and its dependencies, a number of fortresses stretching from the Meuse to the mouth of the Scheldt, and six millions of *livres*. By the advice of Louvois, Louis had rejected this offer. At the beginning of 1674 the only Dutch towns in his possession were Maestricht and Grave. Nevertheless, in spite of his mistakes, and notwithstanding the number of his foes, Louis in 1674 won some brilliant successes. In June Franche Comte was conquered, on August 11 Conde checked William of Orange

in the battle of Seneff in Flanders; while on the Rhine Turenne conducted a most brilliant campaign. He defeated the Imperialists on June 16 at Sinsheim, driving them across the Neckar; and then, acting in accordance with the orders of Louvois, he devastated the Palatinate. A further vactory at Enzheim on October 4 had no definite result, as a fresh concentration of his adversaries, reinforced by 20,000 Brandenburgers, forced Turenne to retire into winter-quarters in Lorraine. His enemies thought that the campaign was over and took no precautions. This was Turenne's opportunity; and, in spite of the opposition of Louis and Louvois, he determined to reconquer Alsace. In December, 1674, he carried out his brilliant Vosges campaign, which closed with the defeat of the Great Elector on January 5, 1675, at Colmar, and the expulsion of the enemy from the country on the left bank of the Rhine.

In 1675 Turenne continued his successful campaign, out-manceuvring the Imperialist general Montccuculi, and forcing him to retire to Sasbach to the east of Strassburg. There, on July 27, 1675, Turenne fell, and with his death the great successes of the French ended. Though Conde preserved Alsace for France, the Due de Crequy was defeated on the Moselle on August 11, and Trier and Philippsburg were lost. The Swedes, on whose intervention in Brandenburg the French had placed high hopes, had on June 18 been decisively defeated in the battle of Fehrbellin by the Great Elector and forced to beat a disastrous retreat. The campaigns of 1676 and 1677 were generally favourable to France. The towns of Conde and Bouchain were taken by Louis in 1676; and in 1677 Valenciennes, Cambray, and St Omer fell into French hands. William of Orange also suffered a disastrous defeat at Cassel, and Christian V of Denmark was overthrown by the Swedes at Lunden. In the Mediterranean the French fleet was on the whole successful. There Duquesne fought engagements off Stromboli (January 8, 1676) and Catania (April 22) with a Dutch fleet under de Ruyter; but both battles remained undecided. The death of de Ruyter, however, was of immense advantage to the French, who for a time remained supreme in the Mediterranean.

In 1678 all the Powers were ready for peace. On November 15, 1677, William of Orange had married Mary, daughter of the Duke of York; and on January 10, 1678, a treaty between England and the Republic was signed. It seemed that at last France would encounter the united opposition of the two countries. But William's hopes were almost immediately disappointed; for the treaty was never ratified, owing to the resolution of the Republic, in consequence of its suspicions of the terms of the treaty of January 10, to make a separate peace with Louis. In May William, convinced of the treachery of Charles, who the same month signed a secret agreement with Louis, consented to negotiate.

But Louis' attempts to gain undue advantages suddenly changed the

whole situation. Charles was compelled to tear up his secret agreement with Louis and to sign, on July 26, a treaty with the Dutch. Recognising the strength of public opinion in England and Holland, Louis finally agreed to make peace with the Republic on August 10, 1678; France ceding Maestricht and the Dutch incurring no loss. A second treaty, relating to commerce, abolished the onerous tariffs of 1667 and restored the more moderate of 1664.

On August 14 William of Orange and Luxembourg fought before Mons, then invested by the French, the battle of St Denys. Both generals knew that peace had been concluded, but William had no official knowledge of the fact.

A treaty between France and Spain was signed on September 17. Spain was not in a condition to continue the war. Her King Charles II had attained his majority on November 6, 1675. This event was soon followed by the overthrow of Fernando de Vnlenzuela, who, with the Queen-Regent, now fell into disgrace, and by the temporary ascendancy of Don John of Austria, the King's illegitimate brother. Don John, however, soon became unpopular, and, finding himself surrounded by internal difficulties, was anxious for peace with France. Spain yielded Franche Com te, Valenciennes, Aire, St Omer,Cassel, Bailleul, Poperinge,Warneton, Ypres, Cambray and the Cambresis, Bouchain, Conde, and Maubeuge, all of which were regarded as necessary for the defence of the French frontier. France on her part restored to Spain, Courtray, Oudenarde, Ath, Ghent, Binch, Charleroi, and the duchy and town of Limburg.

With the Emperor and Empire peace was signed by France on February 26, 1679. Louis restored Philippsburg, but kept Brcisach and Freiburg. " To Duke Charles V of Lorraine, his duchy was restored on certain conditions, namely, that France should keep Nancy, Longwy and Marsal, and control the four principal roads traversing the country. The Duke refused to accept these conditions, and the duchy remained in French hands till the Peace of Ryswyk. These four treaties are known as the Peace of Nymegen, and were supplemented by the Treaty of St Germain-en-Laye between Brandenburg and Sweden, and by the Treaty of Fontaincbleau between Denmark and Sweden. The first of these treaties was signed on June 29, 1679. During the war with Sweden the Great Elector had, besides winning the battle of Fehrbellin, taken Stettin and Stralsund. But, the Emperor having in the name of the Empire agreed to the restoration of Sweden's German possessions, Frederick William was compelled to give up to the Swedes nearly all his conquests in western Pomerania. By the Treaty of Fontainebleau signed on September 26, 1679, Denmark also restored to Sweden the conquests made in Scania and the Baltic.

The Treaties of Zurawna and Nymegen reestablished peace in Europe, which now enjoyed a short period of rest. Though the Treaty of Nymegen had in a general way reaffirmed the terms of the Peace of

Westphalia, France was in a far stronger position in 1678 than in 1648. Spain in 1678 was in a condition of decadence, while the Empire was not only involved in troubles in Hungary, but was seriously threatened by the resurrection of Turkey. Moreover, though the League of the Rhine no longer existed, the suspicious attitude of the German Princes towards the Emperor was not as yet thoroughly changed. This suspicious attitude was encouraged and strengthened by Louis, who, by adroitly distributing pensions to certain Princes and influential personages in various German States, secured if not their active support at any rate their neutrality.

In its origin the war was an attempt of Louis to conquer and destroy the United Provinces. It had developed into a European struggle, and its end had been that the United Provinces had secured the abolition of the hostile tariffs of 1667, and had gained Maestricht without losing any territory, while Louis secured Franche Comté and some towns in the Spanish Netherlands. Louis' object in entering the war had not been attained, and his triumph was far from being complete. Moreover, he had roused the suspicions of Europe, and the attitude of the German Princes towards France in 1678 was very different from what it had been in 1658. Nevertheless, the concert of Europe was partial and ill-cemented, and, although peace had been made, could not be other than short-lived in face of the jealousies of the various States which the fear of France had temporarily united. The conclusion of the Peace of Nymegcn in 1679 seemed, with reason, to the French people to mark a fresh triumph on the part of their King. In their eyes Louis XIV had brought additional glory to himself and his country^ which had never stood so high in the eyes of Europe, nor had appeared so strong or so great.

At the Peace of Nymegen Louis reached the greatest height of his power. A large part of the Spanish Netherlands had been added to France, Freiburg in the Breisgau had been retained, Franche Comté had been definitively conquered. One of Louis' great aims since 1661 had been to enlarge and to fortify the boundary of France. Though he had not acquired the whole of the Spanish Netherlands, and though he had failed in his attempt to destroy the Dutch Republic, Louis could at any rate view with satisfaction the extension of the French frontier towards the Rhine, the acquisition of sixteen fortresses in the Spanish Netherlands, as well as the possession of Franche Comté. With the King of England he had made a treaty in May, 1678, which had nullified the effects of the marriage of William of Orange with thé Princess Mary. Till 1689 England remained a cipher in European politics and offered no opposition to the execution of Louis' schemes. There seemed to be no obstacle to the attainment of the main object of Louis' policy—that the Bourbon House should take the position hitherto occupied in Europe by the Habsburgs. This implied the

enlargement of the kingdom of France, the recognition of Louis as the defender of the Church, the acquisition, if possible, of the Imperial Crown for the French Kings. A French Empire, extending over the Continent, was to be the crowning result of Louis' efforts. In 1679 and during the succeeding ten years such a result seemed capable of realisation. The Mediterranean was practically a French lake; England under Charles II and James II showed no desire to oppose Louis' aims ; central Europe was divided; the Emperor Leopold was powerless; a Turkish invasion of Austria was imminent.

Till the Peace of Nymegen, Louis had directed his chief attention to Spain, and, taking advantage of her weakness, had enlarged and strengthened the French frontier on the north-eastern side of France. After 1679, Louis was chiefly interested in his plans for strengthening his position in Germany, with the view of ultimately securing the Imperial Crown. Till 1697, Spanish affairs fell into the background; nor do they again become prominent till the era of the Partition Treaties. The time seemed opportune for a further attempt on the part of Louis to push forward his candidature for the Imperial Crown. The treaty concluded with Bavaria in 1670, by which the Elector had promised to advance Louis' claims to the Imperial dignity in the event of the Emperor Leopold's death, had roused opposition in Germany, and for a brief period "the Empire stood united for its Emperor." But the Peace of Nymegen found Germany again disunited, and the reputation of the French King at a greater height than ever. The times were therefore propitious for a new attempt on the part of Louis to secure, in the event of Leopold's death, the Imperial dignity. In October, 1679, by a secret treaty with Louis, the Elector of Brandenburg engaged, in the event of the Emperor's death, "to secure the election of his Most Christian Majesty."

The danger to Europe was real and unmistakable, for the jealousies and selfishness of the various European Powers rendered them blind to the true meaning of Louis' ambitious policy, and unwilling to combine in the defence of the liberties of Europe. Hardly had the Treaties of Nymegen been signed than Louis entered upon a fresh phase of the policy which he hoped would gain for him the Imperial Crown. It was necessary in his opinion to strengthen France on her north-eastern and eastern frontiers. Lorraine was practically in his hands ; the possession of Alsace and Luxemburg would complete the *"ceinture de frontières?* and, in Louis' opinion, would give greater weight to his influence in Germany, whenever the Emperor Leopold should die, or whenever it should be attempted to make his son Joseph (who was born in July, 1678) King of the Romans. Placing his own interpretation upon certain clauses in the Treaty of Westphalia, and adopting the view that the German Charles the Great was in reality a French Charlemagne, Louis resolved that "what once belonged to France continued to be by right the

inalienable possession of the French Crown though it had been sold, exchanged or given away." At Metz, Besancon, Breisach, and Tournay "Chambers of Reunion" were set up, for the purpose of adjudging to France certain territories and towns on the left bank of the Rhine. What these Courts did not declare to have been ceded to France at the Peace of Westphalia was held to be a "dependency,"[1] and under this head came Luxemburg and Strassburg. By means of these two fortresses the French King would have the three Spiritual Electors of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier as well as the Elector Palatine in his power, so that by means of them he would be able to carry through without much trouble his election to the Roman Kingship. On March 22, 1680, the *Parlement* of Breisach gave the support of legal authority to Louis' claim of absolute sovereignty over Alsace; on September 80, 1681, French troops occupied Strassburg, and on the same day a French force seized Casale. Two of the places which were "deemed essentinl for the rounding-off of French territory" had fallen into the hands of Louis; it only remained to occupy Luxemburg, in order to make France practical mistress of the Netherlands.

The first reply to these aggressions was seen in the opposition in England and Holland to Louis' siege of Luxemburg, which began in November, 1681. So antagonistic were the Dutch to the idea of the town falling into French hands, that, in spite of their dread of the outbreak of a fresh European war, William of Orange was instructed to march to the relief of Luxemburg, whenever its capture by Louis seemed imminent. The outbreak of such a war would have enlisted public opinion in England in opposition to Louis, who at that moment desired above everything to avert a European conflagration. In order, therefore, to tranquillize public opinion in Holland and England, Louis consented early in 1682 to raise the siege of Luxemburg.

Louis had indeed endeavoured to win over Charles to consent to the French occupation of Luxemburg; and, in 1680, the King of England had refused to be united with William of Orange in laying the foundations of a general alliance against France. Thus Charles, if left to himself, would no doubt have consented to be gained; but on the question of Luxemburg the English nation was peculiarly sensitive, and Charles realised that the occupation of the fortress by Louis would probably rouse great indignation in England, necessitating the summoning of Parliament. There was thus, as Ranke says, a close connexion between the siege of Luxemburg and the internal affairs of England. Charles II himself professed to believe Louis' assurance that he merely wished to dismantle the place, not to use it "as a point whence to attack others." He therefore undertook to reassure Louis' opponents on this point, but insisted that while the negotiations were proceeding Louis should not by a strict blockade force the surrender of Luxemburg. During the negotiations the divergence between the views held by William of Orange and those

held by Charles II and James Duke of York became very apparent. William desired to preserve " the balance of power in Europe by means of English intervention,'" and he was supported by the Spaniards. On the other hand, the English King saw no objection to the French conquest of Luxemburg, so long as the fortress was razed; and in the United Netherlands his views were supported by a small party of the opponents of William. To Louis it was of the utmost importance that the English Parliament should not be summoned. It would undoubtedly support the views of William of Orange; and, in the event of the European war which seemed likely to follow the French occupation of Luxemburg, England would side with Louis' enemies.

At that moment Hungary and Austria were threatened by a Turkish invasion, and Louis with great acutcness declared that, in order not to hamper the German Princes in their efforts to resist the Ottoman forces, he had withdrawn his troops from Luxemburg. The real motives which induced him to take this step were, therefore, not avowed, and the French King gained the credit for moderation and for taking a keen interest in the welfare of Christendom.

The year 1682 was thus marked both by the preparations made by the Emperor to resist the threatened invasion of Germany by the Turks and by a great political activity on the part of Louis XIV, as shown by his treaty with Denmark and his intrigues in Sweden, Poland, Hungary and Holland, and by his attempt to secure the independence of the Gallican Church. Throughout this and the following years the general uneasiness in Europe caused by Louis' activity and pretensions .steadily increased. A notable instance of the effects was the "Association" formed at the Hague in February, 1688; the origin of which is to be found in efforts set on foot by Charles XI of Sweden and William of Orange- in 1681, directly after the seizure of Strassburg and Cosalc, for the maintenance of the Treaty of Nymegen, and which was joined by the Emperor and the King of Spain. It was rcnderetl ineffective by the Turkish advance on Vienna. That advance, followed by the siege of the Austrian capital, roused the interest of Europe and enlisted its sympathy on behalf of the Emperor. John Sobieski and the united Polish and German armies saved Vienna in September, 1683, and the opportunity for Louis to come forward as the defender of Christian Europe against the infidel had passed away. This success, which once more placed Austria in the centre of the resistance to the infidel, imparted fresh confidence to the Spaniards, who, in December, 1683, declared war against France. Luxemburg was at once seriously besieged by the French troops, and was taken in the beginning of June, 1684. It was impossible for the Emperor, with the Turkish War on his hands, to oppose the French successfully; and on August 15 the Truce of llatisbon was concluded by Leopold and the Empire with Louis.

By this "truce" it was arranged that for twenty years Louis should continue to hold, in addition to Strassburg, all the places assigned to him before August 1,1681, by the Chambers of Reunion. The Spaniards were compelled to make large concessions to France, including the transfer of many villages in Hainault and Luxemburg, and the establishment of a Spanish protectorate over Genoa; while the Dutch, finding it impossible to secure any united opposition to Louis, accepted a twenty years' truce. It was necessary for the Emperor, who was engaged in his great struggle with the Turks; it was acceptable to Louis, who confidently anticipated that the armistice would be converted into a general peace, and that all the territory and places made over to him provisionally would become permanent portions of the French kingdom.

So far, Louis had owed much of his success to the neutrality of England. Charles II had consistently refused to unite with William of Orange and Spain in checking the French aggressions on the north-eastern and eastern frontiers. Louis was thus freed from all fear of an attack on his flank, and enabled to concentrate all his attention upon his aggressive schemes with regard to Germany and the Spanish Netherlands. The sole chance of successfully resisting these schemes lay in a close alliance between England and the continental enemies of the French King. Charles II had thus facilitated the execution of several of Louis' most important designs; it remained to be seen whether James II, who succeeded to the English throne in February, 1685, would be equally friendly to the French projects. Owing to Charles II's compliant attitude, France was in 1685 obtaining a position of incontestable preponderance in continental Europe, nor had the monarchy ever seemed so strong at home. It was in 1685 that Louis felt able to expel the French Protestants and to establish religious uniformity. Under him France had become a Power "uniform in its nationality and ecclesiastical system, with well-defined frontiers, admirably armed for offence and defence, both by land and sea." Previously to the succession of the Stewarts, English monarchs had for the most part earned out a policy of antagonism to France. From 1672 onwards, it is manifest that English foreign policy should have followed similar lines. The rivalry of England and France on the sea was becoming serious; the colonial interests of the two countries were certain to clash; the Protestant feeling in England was deeply moved by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and was inclined to sympathise with the opposition of the Dutch and of several of the German States to the aggressive policy of Louis XIV. For three years, however, England was compelled to stand by and watch the preparations for establishing French predominance in Europe.

These three years (1685-8) proved to be decisive in the history of England and France not less than in that of Germany and Holland. James II, owing to his change of religion, showed himself to be more closely attached to France than had been Charles II. His self-confidence