

THE EASTWARD MARCH OF POWER  
AS INFLUENCED BY BRITISH  
FOREIGN POLICY

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THE EASTWARD MARCH OF POWER  
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by

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# THE EASTWARD MARCH OF POWER

## PART I

### PORTUGAL

That is not dead which can eternal lie  
And with strange eons even death may die.

H. P. Lovecraft

While the first great civilizations and cultures originated in Asia we of the Western World are in the habit of looking to Europe as the Master-Star of History. That Europe which, though now fallen upon evil days, we still hope, as Churchill does, may yet regain some of its ancient grandeur and prestige. Vain hope, for that great tide of power and culture which swept from Asia to the Gibraltar straits is ebbing now. It has been ebbing for centuries slowly but surely Eastward, back towards its source as the river seeks the sea. Thus the cycle will be completed and that which was in the beginning will be in the end.

Some of course will point to the United States as an extension as it were, of European culture and influence. The tide, they will say, ceased not at Gibraltar but on the American Pacific coast. Certainly the United States is a lusty child of Europe, as indeed the entire Western Hemisphere is. But even the might of America can at best delay, and not avert, the Eastward March of Power. In any case this work is concerned with Eurasia, and more specifically Europe, in the period of modern nation-states



which followed the break-up of the Holy Roman Empire and the decline in the influence of the Church of Rome. This period of nation-states we are still in. There are signs, however, that it is drawing to a close.

It was upon the Iberian Peninsula that the seal of Power first impressed itself. The now comparatively tiny and insignificant nation of Portugal led all the rest.

Alfonso the Third is to be considered first King of the Portugal which we see in the maps of the present day, for the result of his warring and treating was the final delimitation of the country. "He became in reality sovereign of Algarve as well as of the land between the Minho and the Tago."<sup>1</sup>

Alfonso the Third was the first ruler since Count Henry who had any acquaintance with life outside Portugal. Hitherto contact with the rest of the world had been limited to transactions with Rome, intermarriages with Spanish houses, and commercial intercourse with the western parts of France, England, and the Low Countries. Broadly speaking Portugal had been isolated from the main European currents, and education, in particular, remained restricted. Bishop Paternus had founded a school in Coimbra, which was later moved into the monastery at Santa Cruz; the abbey

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<sup>1</sup>W. A. Salisbury, Portugal and its People, p. 53, 1893.

of Alcobaca gave instruction in grammar, logic, and theology. But there was nothing that resembled a university, and the few administrative positions that demanded some instruction were usually filled by graduates of Bologna. In Alfonso the Third's own life the influence of his stay in France is only perceptible, but his son Denis received the most complete education yet given to a Portuguese King. His tutors were a Frenchman, Aymeric d'Ebrard, and a Portuguese, Domingos Anes Jardo, who founded a college in Lisbon which probably formed the nucleus of the university. The effect of this was soon extended to the whole court. With the end of the reconquest and the pacification of the Kingdom the nobles must find other occupations as well as warfare, and accordingly Dom Denis and his circle turned to versification. Following his grandfather, who had already adopted the Galaico-Portuguese speech as that most suited to express the themes of Provençal poetry, Denis wrote many poems in the language of the Contigas, though their content is amorous rather than pious. Not only in verse but also in prose, Portuguese developed towards linguistic maturity, for now for the first time documents began to be drawn up in the vernacular instead of in Latin, and Denis ordered his grandfather's *Siete Partidas* to be translated into Portuguese. In Twelve-Eighty-Eight various ecclesiastics represented the desirability of the establishment of a General Study in the Kingdom, and eighteen months later the University was founded in Lisbon, its



existence being confirmed by a bull of Nicholas the Fourth dated August the Ninth, Twelve-Ninety. The clergy took the responsibility of finding the salaries for the professors. Twenty years after the proposal for its creation, the University, now equipped for the study of canon and civil law, dialectics, grammar and medicine, was shifted to Coimbra, receiving various privileges. "However it later returned to Lisbon and was only finally established in Coimbra by John the Third in Fifteen-Thirty-Seven."<sup>2</sup>

After considerable bloody civil strife over the succession to the throne Alfonso the Fourth was crowned in Thirteen-Twenty-Five. The suspicious temper he had shown as expectant monarch manifested itself afresh after his accession. He decreed the exile of Alfonso Sanches, who, according to agreement with his father, resided in Portugal. In vain did his brother protest his loyalty. His declarations were discredited. Alfonso Sanches therefore raised an armed force for the support of his claimanture to withdraw from Portugal. "The royal troops sent to expel him were worsted; and Queen Isabel, hearing how matters stood, interfered at this juncture, and procured a treaty by which Alfonso Sanches retained his right of residence and property in the country."<sup>3</sup>

The wife of Alfonso the Fourth's son, Pedro, was

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<sup>2</sup>H. V. Livermore, A History of Portugal, pp. 152-153, 1947.

<sup>3</sup>W. A. Salisbury, Portugal and its People, pp. 60-61, 1893.

murdered by courtiers for political reasons with the permission of the King and this resulted in renewed civil strife.

Alfonso the Fourth died soon after the civil war, and Pedro acceded to the Throne in May, Thirteen-Fifty-Seven. He at once proceeded to take vengeance on Ines murderers. Two of them had been signatories to the peace of Thirteen-Fifty-Five, but later escaped into Castile. Already in Thirteen-Fifty-Eight a treaty with Castile was under consideration, and in Thirteen-Sixty it was followed by an agreement to extradite certain refugees in both Kingdoms. "As a result Alvaro Goncaloes and Pedro Coelho were handed over to Pedro and executed at Santarem; their hearts being drawn, one through the chest, the other through the back. The third murderer made good his escape."<sup>4</sup>

Pedro was a wild and eccentric ruler, judging all criminal cases personally and often administering punishment himself. Despite his peculiarities the ten years of his reign were good years for Portugal.

When Ferdinand, son of Pedro and Queen Constance, began to reign in Thirteen-Sixty-Seven, everything promised well. He himself was a young man of considerable personal

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<sup>4</sup>H. V. Livermore, A History of Portugal, pp. 160-161, 1947.



attractions. He was esteemed the handsomest man of his time, and had a bearing most graceful and Kingly. For feats of strength and agility he had few equals. He was noted for generosity. His manner to his inferiors was affable, and won him golden opinions from the commons. He had understanding, too, for State business, and a power of quickly unfolding feasible plans. The growth of the nation and its commercial prosperity had filled the royal treasury; and Portugal had, in Thirteen-Sixty-Seven, no quarrel in hand with other nations. Never had a King a smoother path before him than Ferdinand. Yet there was hardly anything he touched, during his sixteen years reign, which he did not mar. He flung away many advantages to which he had fallen heir. He greatly reduced the wealth accumulated by his ancestors for the necessities of the crown, entangled the country in foreign war, and generally mismanaged affairs at home. The reason for his failure was his instability of character. He laid out schemes and left them; gave orders one day, and countermanded them the next; made promises, and lightly broke them. He ignored recent treaties of alliance, and bound himself without scruple, when he pleased, to the enemies of his former friends. He took no trouble to investigate the gravest matters. "So his projects often miscarried, being founded on imperfect knowledge."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>W. A. Salisbury, Portugal and its People, p. 68, 1893.





Ferdinand indulged in wars with Castile and brought Portugal's affairs to a sorry pass. With his death that famous Burgundian House under whose auspices Portugal had advanced from next to nothing to a position of national solidity and respectability came to an end. The House of John of Avis was next to appear upon the scene after a bitter civil war. Fierce and successful fighting against Castilian invaders, and a victorious campaign against Ceuta took up most of his reign. "On August, Fourteen-Thirty-Three, the Forty-Eighth anniversary of the Battle of Aljubarrota, he succumbed to a long illness during which Prince Duarte had born the brunt of the Government."<sup>6</sup>

The reign of Edward, eldest of John's sons, was a very brief one, only five years long, and full of misfortune. Like his four excellent brothers he had been well trained by his mother. The depth of his religious convictions, impressed upon him by the precept and example of Philippa, was revealed by the whole tenor of his life. His statements and promises were so reliable that "the word of the King", was a current synonym for truth. In public he was mild and unaffected, and his private life was entirely admirable. "He dressed simply, and restricted to the utmost the expenses of his household. His inclination to learning had been sedulously cultivated, and in his orations, wherein he displayed an extraordinary

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<sup>6</sup>H. V. Livermore, A History of Portugal, p. 184, 1947.



fluency, which obtained for him the sobriquet of 'The Eloquent', he was able to draw upon a large fund of literary wealth."<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately his reign was not a happy one for Portugal. Famine and Plague troubled the land. A serious military disaster occurred for the Portuguese at Tangier in warfare against the Mohammadians and eventually his five year reign was cut short by death from the plague.

The Regencies of Queen Leonor and Dom Pedro during the minority of Alfonso the Fifth were turbulent and full of Civil Strife which ended in the death of Dom Pedro.

Alfonso the Fifth engaged in futile and disastrous wars in an effort to obtain the Crown of neighboring Castile as well as that of Portugal. In this project he sought the aid of Louis the Eleventh of France. Like most other men he got little good out of the treacherous fox of the House of Valois, and in the end his projects came to nothing.

John the Second, who succeeded Alfonso the Fifth, had seen the effects of his father's prodigality and felt keenly the need to assert the authority of the monarchy. He took a severely Machiavellian view of his duties; and if he returned to the cortes-legality of Dom Pedro the Regent, it was as policy rather than on principle. His

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<sup>7</sup>W. A. Salisbury, Portugal and its People, p. 96, 1893.



appearance, and to some extent his character, recall those of Henry the Eighth of England, the same thickset, bulky frame, and dog-like expression of the beard-fringed features, the same conception of personal headship of the State, fondness for show tempered by regard for wealth, love of fine dress and majesty, addiction to hunting, hawking, riding, dancing and swimming. Broad-shouldered and red-faced, his hair was slightly rufous; and when he was angry his eyes became bloodshot, which the chronicler found very terrifying. Extremely devout in an emotional way, and absorbed by his affection for his two sons, he knew how to harness his passions to the State. "For his motto he adopted the words 'by thy law and for thy people'."<sup>8</sup>

Explorations and discoveries which had been initiated long before by Prince Henry the Navigator were carried out. The Congo was discovered and the Cape of Good Hope was doubled by Portuguese Mariners. With the death of John the Second the line of Avis came to an end.

The next heir to the Portuguese Crown was Manuel, cousin of John the Second, and younger brother of that Duke of Visew who had gone to his long account by the same short way he had intended for the King. Manuel, a boy of fourteen at the time of his brother's death in Fourteen-Eighty-Three, became by that event second Duke of Visew; but the King, desirous of obliterating, if pos-

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<sup>8</sup>H. V. Livermore, A History of Portugal, p. 211, 1947.

sible, every memorial of the tragedy, abolished in the same year the Dukedom, and created for his cousin the new title of Duke of Beja, by which style he was known till his accession to the throne. "As if to atone, in so far as that could be done, for the murder, though he did not choose to call it a crime, the King treated the boy with the greatest tenderness, gave him the best tutors whom he could find, and endowed him with the confiscated estates of Visew, while he blotted the hateful peerage out of existence."<sup>9</sup>

In the first year of his reign Manuel announced the pardon of those nobles who had been in exile since Fourteen-Eighty-Four. To the new Duke of Braganza alone, he restored some fifty cities, towns, castles and other properties. The society over which he presided was one in which the nobility came to play a new part, as a court circle, the ornaments of and ministers to the magnificence of the King. "These nobles constituted the Seventy-Two Families whose shields are still to be seen in the Sola dos Brases of the Sintra Palace."<sup>10</sup>

Manuel at first dealt leniently with the Jews, freeing many who had been enslaved earlier. But Spanish influence forced a revision of his policies and the Jews were either converted to the faith or driven out of Portugal.

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<sup>9</sup>W. A. Salisbury, Portugal and its People, p. 116, 1893.

<sup>10</sup>H. V. Livermore, A History of Portugal, p. 222, 1947.

A similar policy of conversion or expulsion was followed with regard to the Moors and as a result Portugal lost many of its quietest, most industrious citizens.

During Manuel's reign Portuguese power was on the upgrade. Vasco da Gama reached India by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Pedro Cobral reached Brazil, which he named Santa Cruz. Portugal also established colonies in Asia. In Africa too considerable victories were won in wars against the infidel. Except for his mistaken policies regarding the Jews and Moors Manuel may be said to have been a good King for Portugal.

In Fifteen-Twenty-One King Manuel died. His eldest son, at once crowned as John the Third, was a man whose natural disposition was melancholy, and unfortunately the severe domestic afflictions allotted to him thickened the gloom with which his spirit was shrouded. His country was during his reign at the very zenith of its prosperity, and neighboring monarchs might well envy the King of Portugal; but his home was desolated by the early removal of nearly all of his large family. "Three years before his own death he saw carried to the grave his only remaining son, who was cut off at the age of sixteen and a half."<sup>11</sup>

Unhappily John the Third, as a result of his sorrows, fell increasingly under the influence of the Church,

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<sup>11</sup>W. A. Salisbury, Portugal and its People, pp. 122-123, 1893.





to which he turned for comfort. His clerical advisors persuaded him to introduce the horrors of the Inquisition, which had long ruled in Spain, into Portugal. The Jesuit Order also became very influential in Portugal at this time. Promptly great searchings and sniffings out of heretics and backsliders, particularly directed against those Jews and Moors which had accepted Christianity to avoid expulsion from Portugal, got under way.

John the Third died of apoplexy on June Eleventh, Fifteen-Fifty-Seven. There was no royal testament, but a council of notables appointed the Queen, Catarina, as regent, this being declared the last will of the late King on the evidence of some unsigned notes taken down by his secretary. Catarina was a Spaniard, and a sister to Charles the Fifth, who at once despatched from Yuste an ambassador to investigate the Portuguese succession and also sent Francis Borgia on a secret mission to Lisbon. "The Commissary General of the Society of Jesus could discreetly begin negotiations for the Crown of Portugal to pass to John the Third's other grandson, Prince Carlos of Spain in the event of Sebastian's, the son of John the Third, death,"<sup>12</sup>

The people of Portugal did not care for the Queen, however, and were determined to maintain their independence. The Queen was regent during Sebastian's minority, he having

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<sup>12</sup>H. V. Livermore, A History of Portugal, p. 251, 1947.

been born shortly before the King's death; and called to her aid in ruling the realm the Cardinal-Infant Henry, who was a creature of the Jesuits. The policies of this Society forced the Queen into a convent and brought the young Sebastian's mind completely under its influence.

When the Society then found the Cardinal-Infant a little intractable, they resolved to produce the young King as acting ruler, and so compel the regent's resignation. Sebastian was now only fourteen, but the Jesuits managed to overbear all opposition to the premature assumption of sovereignty on the part of Sebastian, and had him proclaimed in Fifteen-Sixty-Eight, six years before the time appointed in his father's will, as sole administrator of the affairs of Portugal. It was with very bad grace that the Cardinal submitted to be laid in his political coffin, but nothing could withstand the will of the Society. "The game was in their own hands thenceforward, they thought, and they proceeded to play it with the utmost regard for their propaganda."<sup>13</sup>

Great was the evil inflicted upon Portugal by the Jesuits. Indeed of all the Great Powers to be mentioned in this work Portugal may be said to be the only one that did not either owe its downfall to, or receive sore blows from, Britain to a large measure. It was the Jesuits who

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<sup>13</sup>W. A. Salisbury, Portugal and its People, pp. 131-132, 1893.

filled the young Sebastian's mind with curious and fatal notions. He neither married nor had children because the Jesuits had told him that such desires of the flesh were not becoming to a saintly individual. So Portugal lacked heirs. Under the urging of the Jesuits he undertook a mad crusade for the faith against the powerful Moslem Hordes in North Africa and there was slain in battle. With his death the royal line may be said to have come to an end. True the Cardinal Henry ruled for two short years after his death but that cipher cannot really be called a King even if he did have the title. A more ruthless and practical personality, that of Philip the Second of Spain, had long eyed Portugal greedily. Seeing Portugal without legitimate heirs, following the death of Henry, Philip, with the Duke of Alva, that eater of blood, entered Portugal in Fifteen-Eighty-One to enforce his own claim. After some opposition from Antonio, the Prior of Crato, Philip took over all of Portugal. Thus Portugal became part of Spain and was dragged down with Spain later when that proud Empire fell. True Portugal later became independent, but that was only to exist as an appendage of British Foreign Policy. Power had shifted East to Spain.

## PART II

## SPAIN

And all our Pomp of Yesteryear  
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre. - Kipling.

Spain's power as a modern, united State dates from the union of the Houses of Castile and Aragon by the marriage of Isabella to Ferdinand at Valladolid on the morning of the Nineteenth of October, Fourteen-Sixty-Nine.<sup>1</sup> This event, followed by the defeat of the Moors at Granada on January the Second, Fourteen-Ninety-Two determined Spain's upward path.

Geography, too, played its role. Flanked by the Mediterranean on one side and the Atlantic on the other with the Pyrenees separating her from France and forming a not inconsiderable barrier to the military forces of that day. Thus the boundless energy of a proud and warlike people was released upon the world.

The results of that energy we all behold today. From the discoveries of Columbus, the conquests of Cortez and Pizarro, to the colonization of South America we can see the Spanish influence. Spain today is a burnt out candle, a charred wick, but the shadows of her past greatness live after her. The Spaniards at the time of the nation's glory were admirable military material. Sober and temperate they were more easily provisioned than any European troops except the Turks. They could stand great

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<sup>1</sup>John Abbott, The Romance of Spanish History, p. 150, 1869.



climactic changes and were celebrated for their marching powers. "In a warlike age such qualities were important for decisive success."<sup>2</sup>

But all things carry within themselves some weakness or weaknesses. While the faults of the Spanish character were many their main frailty may be said to be the excessive influence of the Church in all of their affairs. Religion is not to be condemned but Spain at the period of its greatness was priest-ridden in the worst sense of the word. Yet even so there is a nobility in their struggles and in the blows struck in the name of God, which the modern world would do well to heed.

Spain reached the apogee of her power under the Emperor Charles the Fifth. Charles came to the Throne as a foreigner, an outsider. He had been born in Ghent and the first sixteen years of his life had been spent in Flanders. He knew no word of Spanish and was ignorant of the customs and mentality of his people. His counselors and courtiers were Flemish noblemen who regarded Spain as a plentiful source of supplies, and sought to use the power of the young King to enrich themselves. "Charles' representative in Spain, Cardinal Adrian of Utrecht, had alienated many of his subjects, and the number of Flemings who accompanied the King accentuated this bad feeling."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Martin Hume, Spain, Its Greatness and Decay, p. 29, 1940.

<sup>3</sup>Catherine Moran, Spain, Its Story Briefly Told, p. 99, 1930.

As a result there were uprisings against this outlander who despite his Spanish blood was not recognized as a true Spaniard. These risings were crushed, however, and Charles became ruler of not only Spain, but of France and Germany as well, having been elected Holy Roman Emperor. Charles showed a conciliatory spirit towards his subjects that spoke well for his statesmanship. It was during the reign of Charles that the great explorations abroad were undertaken. Undoubtedly Charles the Fifth was one of the mightiest Monarchs Europe had ever seen. While Europe knows of him as Charles the Fifth Spain itself knew him as Charles the First since he was the first Charles of that particular royal line to occupy the Spanish throne though it had occupied other thrones before that time. He is unusual among the really great leaders of History in that at the high water mark of his power he voluntarily gave up all of his vast powers to enter a monastery. The scepter of his power he passed on to his son Philip the Second.

Philip was twenty-nine when he came to power and it was a mighty, powerful Empire that he inherited. And yet despite a beginning so auspicious it was under Philip that Spain was destined to begin her long and slow decline. That excess of zeal in religion, which has been mentioned before, together with the deficiencies of Philip's own character played a part; but it was the ominous shadow of Britain, then considered a rather unimportant group of islands, which darkened Spain's future and, as we shall

later see, Europe's also.

The Reformation, which initiated the decline of the Church of Rome, laid the basis for the decline of the greatest Catholic Power, Spain. "It spread from Germany among the Flemish provinces, nobility and people, Catholicism, with its kindled imagination, poetic sensibilities, and pageant-like accessories, lost its sway over these simple, practical, reason-loving people with the exception of the Flemings, and freedom of speculative inquiry established itself among all classes in the Spanish provinces in the Low Countries."<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile in Spain the Inquisition reached new heights of horror under Philip who sincerely saw himself appointed to carry out God's will on Earth. These unhappy practices were carried to the Netherlands but they found little favor there. "Spain might be lurid with the martyr-fires of Protestantism. Granada, Barcelona, Toledo, and Seville might be wrapped in the smoke of the torment of Lutherans; church holidays, Sundays, and public squares might be made cheerful with the agonies of multitudes dragged from the dungeons of the Inquisition; and one by one the gentle lights of Christianity be extinguished by the fingers of the priests; in the Netherlands the love of toleration had rooted itself and no power on Earth could trample it out."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>James A. Harrison, Spain, p. 465, 1895.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 467.

A little more toleration, a little more humanity, would have kept the Low Countries for Spain. But toleration and humanitarianism were notably lacking in Philip's character. Cold, stern, and unloving he rigidly followed in the path that in his view was that which God had ordained for him.

And yet Philip's reign was not entirely without glory. Perhaps too much credit for that glory should not go to Philip but Spain's prestige was undoubtedly enhanced. There was, for example, the tremendous victory of Don Juan of Austria over the Turks at the naval battle of Lepanto on October Seventh, Fifteen-Seventy-One. Many historians hold that this engagement marks the turning of the tide in the struggle against Islam. "Had Philip acceded to the repeated demands of Don Juan and despatched reinforcements to him in Sicily, had he taken the advice of old and tried soldiers such as the Duke of Alva, to follow up the victory by chasing the Turk from the seas, by burning the forests which supplied him with wood for his galleys, and thus carrying the prestige of Christian arms into the adversary's own country, it is highly probable that the Turk would have been finally expelled from Europe and the whole course of history altered then and there."<sup>6</sup>

In the meantime other military activities of a less glorious nature were going forward in the Low

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<sup>6</sup>

Catherine Moran, Spain, Its Story Briefly Told, p. 126, 1930.

Countries. If Charles the Fifth had been unpopular with the Spanish people at first because he was not sufficiently Spanish and smacked too much of the Low Countries, Philip was extremely unpopular in the Low Countries because he was far too Spanish, lacking the geniality and accessibility of Charles, and more bigoted than his famous father. When the heretical doctrines of Luther and Calvin reared their heads in the Low Countries, Philip, with his renowned knack for doing the worst possible thing, sent the Duke of Alva to restore the true faith by force and terror.

Alva was a strange character. "Of great military excellence, with skillful and daring qualities as a general, a consummate tactician, a formidable antagonist in field and cabinet, of faultless judgment in his military combinations, keenly and wholly foreseeing and calculating upon precisely the points where his opponents would fail, immovable amid the blazing and starving nation around him, a commanding figure of cruelty, serene amid imminent peril, a potent chieftain everywhere except against the unconquerable Dutch, Alva's audacity, inventiveness, and desperate courage rang through Christendom."<sup>7</sup>

Alva failed in the Netherlands, so did all of his successors. The courage and determination of the Dutch rank high among the reasons for that failure but even

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<sup>7</sup>James A. Harrison, Spain, p. 510, 1895.

these were perhaps not as important as the intervention of Britain. Following their eternal policy of keeping the Continent weak and divided even this early, the English cast their baneful influence upon Europe. Not, of course, that it was a case of evil for evil's sake. The survival of that "Tight Little Isle", it was felt by its inhabitants, was contingent upon a weak and divided Europe. A United Empire of all the European states would outstrip Britain in commerce, in industry, and in sea-power. Thus soon the English would be utterly at the mercy of the ruler of the Continent. Philip was the most powerful Monarch of the time so it was against Philip and Catholicism and with the Netherlands and Protestantism that Elizabeth of England fought. We will see this phenomenon again and again as we continue on through History. A phenomenon which in the end has brought to ruin not only Europe but Britain herself.

Finding the English Queen in alliance with the Low Country heretics enraged Philip. He had hoped before to unite Spain and England by marriage with Elizabeth but the Virgin Queen had always put him off. Consequently he finally came to the conclusion that he couldn't wait any longer. The complete crushing of England would contribute to the overthrow of William of Orange, the leader of the Netherlands, and deal a crushing blow to heresy everywhere. Therefore, with the blessing of the Pope, Philip laid claim to the English Throne and instantly prepared to



make good his claim by force of arms. In May, Fifteen-Eighty-Eight, the great fleet, one hundred and thirty ships in all, set sail from Lisbon under the command of the Duke of Medina Sidonia. This Armada met with bad weather from the start. As it swung up the Channel, Drake emerged from Plymouth and harried it into Calais. Here for days the Duke of Medina Sidonia awaited the arrival of the army of Alexander Farnese which he was to convey to the English shores did not come, and after waiting in vain Medina Sidonia sailed out of Calais once more. He was met by the English Fleet of light, swift craft suitable for navigation in those narrow, stormy seas. The cumbersome Spanish ships were hustled into disorder, fire ships were sent among them to increase the confusion and they fled to the North Sea. Having rounded the North of Scotland, they were overtaken by a shattering storm in the wild Atlantic waters off the coast of Ireland which wreaked destruction upon them. There sailed back to Spain only sixty-five of the great galleons. "It was a shattering blow to Spain's naval power, and although the war with England continued spasmodically for another ten years, the supremacy of Spain on sea, so gloriously manifested at Lepanto, passed irrevocably to England."<sup>8</sup>

So the tide turned. Not that Spain collapsed completely upon this defeat. Spain was still a greater,

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<sup>8</sup>Catherine Moran, Spain, its Story Briefly Told, pp. 126-127, 1930.

richer, and, in many ways, more powerful nation than England. She was still looked to as the first Power of Europe. But the downturn, the slow, gradual process of decay, had begun. The stubborn rebellion of the Netherlands played its part without a doubt, and so did the Church. Much may be blamed upon the character of Philip the Second himself. Bigoted, narrow minded, despotic, he lived and breathed murder, as we know by his attempted killing of Elizabeth, Henry of Navarre and John of Olden: Barnveld, the great burgher; by his assassination of Egmont, Hoome, and William the Silent. False, hypocritical, mendacious, and faithless he was. Illiterate, petty-minded, and full of cant, he could not spell, tell the truth, or be sincere, if it had cost him his life. "His entire reign was consumed in accomplishing infinite nothing."<sup>9</sup>

Yet with all these factors taken into account we must remember always that there was England; England which supported the rebellion in the Low Countries. England which dealt a deadly blow to Spanish sea-power. Some historians may see in the struggle of Elizabeth with Philip a glorious and victorious contest of freedom against despotism. But one should look deeper. Philip and his Inquisition were bad enough it is true, but the long ensuing period of division and strife which Europe has had to undergo and is still undergoing, shows us the picture

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<sup>9</sup>James A. Harrison, Spain, p. 531, 1895.

of an even greater and more permanent evil. For the Inquisition would have died out in time.

Other defeats were administered to the Spaniards besides the destruction of the Armada during the reign of Philip the Second. The League against the Huguenot King, in which Philip had joined, was defeated, and the Spanish contingent of picked cavalry cut to pieces by Henry of Navarre in the famous battle of Ivry in Fifteen-Ninety. Philip was forced to acknowledge the well-won title of Henry the Fourth to the Crown of France. "In the Netherlands, the son of the murdered Orange, Maurice of Nassau, was entering on that career of success in which he defeated the Spaniards on many a hard-fought field; the fleets of the Netherlands were victorious on the sea, and the independence of the Dutch Republic had become an accomplished though not yet a formally recognized fact."<sup>10</sup>

Philip the Second died and his son Philip the Third came to the Throne. The dying King's last injunction to his son bade him to rule with justice and be true to the Holy Catholic Faith. The war with Holland was interrupted for a time by a truce, and that with England ended on the accession of James the First. But, war or peace, there were always Dutch and English privateers, pirates one might call them, hovering about the Spanish Main, looking

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<sup>10</sup>James Champlin Fernald, The Spaniard in History, p. 102, 1898.

for a town to sack or a galleon to scuttle. Peace was made with France; the heir apparent married a French Princess, and Louis the Thirteenth a Spanish Infanta.

"There was some fighting with the Turks, there were some acts of piracy committed against the Venetians, but nothing of any great note."<sup>11</sup>

The character of Philip the Third as it appeared to his contemporaries has been outlined by John Sobieski, father of John the Third of Poland, who travelled through Spain in the year Sixteen-Eleven. He writes: "Philip the Third, a very pious monarch and a devoted servant of God; his whole time was taken up with his devotions and with hunting and expeditions." With greater inclination for private than for public life, he left the Government of the country to the Prince of Lerma who directed everything as though he were the King. "The affection the King held for him and the confidence he placed in him were so great that at one time this Prince was absolute sovereign of all Spain."<sup>12</sup>

Among the lesser, but not the least important, causes of Spanish decline may be recorded the policy of the Spanish Throne towards the Moors and the Jews. Philip the Third is noted as the Monarch who expelled the Moors

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<sup>11</sup>Henry Dwight Sedgwick, Spain, p. 208, 1925.

<sup>12</sup>Catherine Moran, Spain, Its Story Briefly Told, p. 131, 1930.

from Spain as Ferdinand is noted as the King who brought about the expulsion of the Jews. It is said of Philip the Third that everything else he did to harm the Kingdom sinks into insignificance in comparison with the expulsion of the Moriscos.

The motives behind this measure sprang from popular prejudice. Rumor reported, and in part truthfully, that there was always danger of an insurrection, and that the Moriscos gave aid to foreign enemies, to Turks, to the French, and especially to raiders and pirates from the Barbary Coast. This fear was deepened by their rapid growth in numbers. In Valencia, for instance, the Moorish population had increased during twenty-five years above forty per cent; they married young, they never became monks, they did not emigrate to America and none were killed in war. The expulsion caused a very serious economic loss. The historian Lafuente says that the Moriscos were virtually in control of agriculture and commerce, of the mechanical occupations and useful arts; that they were economical, sober, excessively frugal, and consequently much better off, in spite of the enormous taxes laid on them, than the Spaniards who were less laborious and greater spenders. He quotes Cardinal Richelieu, who said that it was the most rash and barbarous measure known to History. "No wonder that it is the custom among Spanish historians to lay much of the blame for Spanish decadence upon bad

Government."<sup>13</sup>

It cannot be maintained, however, that the expulsion of the Moriscos was the main cause of the decline of the prosperity in Spain. A traveller in Andalusia, where the Moriscos formed a large part of the population, describes the country a few years after the event in the following terms: "Everywhere the eye rests on extensive woods of lemon trees, olives, cypresses, date palms and on vines which produce very good wine." This would support the assertion that the South was soon repopulated by people from the Pyrenees, and the Spanish prejudice against working on the land was at least temporarily overcome. The depopulation of Spain had begun long before the Moriscos were banished, and as early as Sixteen-Hundred and Two the Cortes at Valladolid complained of the constant decrease in the population of Castile. "The causes for the decadence, which from now on become more and more apparent, must be sought elsewhere."<sup>14</sup>

Despite all this, however, Spain was still a Great Power. The Spanish Army was still regarded as virtually invincible in the open field. The Spanish Fleet was still of great importance in international politics. Had one forceful personality appeared at the time, either a King

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<sup>13</sup>Henry Dwight Sedgwick, Spain, pp. 221-222, 1925.

<sup>14</sup>Catherine Moran, Spain, Its Story Briefly Told, pp. 135-136, 1930.



or a King's favorite, the tide might have been turned despite the corruption and inefficiency of the Spanish political system. But alas, only little men appeared upon the stage. The Kings were, for the most part, mere puppets operated by their favorites. Court extravagance and general economic distress in the country as a whole characterized the rule of these latter day monarchs.

In February, Sixteen-Twenty-One Philip the Third fell ill of fever, and felt that the hand of death was upon him. All that his Church could do to save his life was done. The Virgin of Atocha was brought, the body of Saint Isidore carried to the King's bedside, and all the realm was prostrated in prayer for the Monarch, who, idle and pleasure-loving though he was enjoyed, personally, the love of his subjects. Like that of his father, his death-bed was one of rigid devotion, regret for lost opportunities, and faith in divine forgiveness. That he saw now how disastrous his government had been is certain. During his last hours he referred to it more than once. "A fine account we shall give to God of our Government", he said on one occasion; and on another, "Oh if Heaven would please to prolong my life, how different should my conduct be." Too late, too late like most of his House. On the Thirty-First of March, he breathed his last, grasping firmly in his hand the coarse crucifix which had been held in the dying grip, and had lain upon the dead breasts of his father and grandfather. In the twenty-three years

of his reign he had missed the splendid opportunity of resuscitating Spain. He had no world-wide ambitions to which he needed to sacrifice his country. What was wanted was honest administration, patience, economy, industry, and restraint; and all might have been well. These were the very qualities which Philip the Third lacked. "Inoffensive, devout and well meaning, his indolence, extravagance, and carelessness handed over his suffering country to incompetent favorites who well-nigh bled it to death."<sup>15</sup>

Philip the Third was succeeded by his son Philip the Fourth. As in the reign of his father worthless favorites ruled, while a profligate King squandered the money of the people in lavish entertainments and luxuries. Much has been written about the visit of Charles Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles the First, accompanied by the Duke of Buckingham, at his court; whither the young Prince had come disguised, to see the Infanta, Philip's sister, whom he thought of making his Queen. Probably she did not please him, or perhaps the alliance with Protestant England was not acceptable to the pious Catholic family of Philip. "At all events Henrietta, sister of Louis the Thirteenth of France, was his final choice, and shared his terrible misfortunes a few years later."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Martin A. S. Hume, Spain, Its Greatness and Decay, pp. 222-223, 1940.

<sup>16</sup>Mary Platt Parmele, A Short History of Spain, p. 127, 1898.

Now alas for proud and great Spain Philip the Fourth was no improvement over his father. Valasquez has told a good deal about the royal court, and far more vividly than the historians. You see in this great artist's paintings the clever, crafty, astute, shallow Conde-duque de Olivares, conscious of his own astuteness but not of his shallowness. "There he hangs forever on the telltale walls of the Prado, the King's favorite, accompanying the feeble King down the road of life, with his long moustachios upturned, his little fantailed beard, and his general air of a successful Bowery merchant."<sup>17</sup>

Olivares was not entirely without gifts but the problems before him were far too much for him. Wars broke out with Holland and with France. A powerful Spanish fleet of seventy ships and ten thousand men was almost destroyed by the Dutch on October Twenty-First, Sixteen-Thirty-Nine. Four-fifths of the Spaniards were lost, and only seven of their ships escaped into Dunkirk. The Spaniards had taken refuge in the Downs to escape the Dutch Admiral Tromp; and simultaneously the Spanish agents and the Dutch addressed Charles the First of England on the subject. He pointed out to the former that they could not remain in English waters forever and he began to bargain as to what Spain would do for the Palatine if shelter were afforded to her fleet. But before an arrangement could be

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<sup>17</sup>Henry Dwight Sedgwick, Spain, pp. 247-248, 1924.

made Tromp took the matter into his own hands and boldly attacked the Spaniards whilst their ships lay on the Kentish coast. The Spaniards asserted that the English themselves lent him what help they could; and Admiral Pennington was imprisoned for not protecting them. This blow ended prematurely Spain's renewed attempt to become a great naval power. Every nerve had been strained by Olivares to strengthen the Spanish navy, and not without success. "The loss now sustained was never completely recovered, and Spain's hold upon the sceptre of the sea was loosed forever."<sup>18</sup>

To top it all off at the close of the reign of Philip the Fourth the Spanish Kingdom was further darkened by the loss of Portugal. "In Sixteen-Sixty-Four, the Lusitanians recovered and proclaimed the Duke of Braganza King."<sup>19</sup>

Faster and faster the process of decline went forward. Vain pride and empty pretensions of power marked the Spanish State in this period.

In France Richelieu allied himself with Protestant States against Spain as, in the previous century, France had allied herself with Turks and pirates. The contest was long and indecisive, and by Sixteen Forty-Three the

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<sup>18</sup>Martin A. S. Hume, Spain its Greatness and Decay, pp. 242-243, 1940.

<sup>19</sup>Mary Platt Parmele, A Short History of Spain, p. 128, 1898.

deaths of Richelieu and Louis the Thirteenth and the fall of Olivares could have given peace, but Philip's ministers insisted on a continuation of the war. The result was the Battle of Rocroy, in that same year, where Melo, governor of the Low Countries, met Conde, and Spain's glory in the field came to dust. For more than a century the Spanish infantry had been respected and feared all over Europe as the nearest known approach to invincibility. Rocroy was the land counterpart of the defeat of the Armada. "Again the imponderables were more serious than the material loss and no later victory, although there were plenty, could obscure the inevitability of Spain's military decline."<sup>20</sup>

Conditions may have been bad during the reign of Philip the Fourth but following his death they went from bad to worse. Philip on his death-bed left his wife Mariana of Austria regent during the minority of the new King Charles the Second, who was but four years old. All Spain needed, even at this late date, was peace, rest, and freedom from foreign entanglements, in which the Peninsula itself had no concern whatever. Boldness, patriotism and common sense might still have saved the prosperity and happiness of the citizens, though illusive national and dynastic claims would have to be abandoned. But an evil fate at this crucial moment condemned Spain to the

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<sup>20</sup>William C. Atkinson, Spain, A Brief History, p. 120, 1934.

rule of a Princess, who, though possessed of considerable ability, was absolutely dominated by those very traditions which had been the cause for many disasters. Ambitions, intriguing and imprudent, she cared nothing for Spain and everything for the Empire. "An Austrian to the finger tips, she had been for years before Philip's death plotting for the predominance of her kinsmen; she weakened the bonds of friendship with France which had been cemented by the marriage of Louis the Fourteenth and Maria Theresa."<sup>21</sup>

Charles the Second himself was a child of poor health and given to nervous disorders all of his short life. With such hands at the wheel the Spanish ship of State veered and wallowed. Corruption and inefficiency became more and more prevalent at the Court. Throughout the country in general economic and moral conditions went from worse to terrible.

When Charles was fifteen years of age, he had, by the royal law, attained his majority. This weak puny boy thus, by the law of hereditary descent, became the absolute Monarch of a nation numbering from eight to twelve million inhabitants. His mother, with tears and blandishments, still governed her feeble child. It is difficult to record these facts without feeling indignation. And yet it has been well said that every nation has as good a government as it deserves. The people of Spain by now were so de-

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<sup>21</sup>Martin A. S. Hume, Spain, Its Greatness and Decay, pp. 284-285, 1940.

based that they were satisfied. They were delighted to witness the agonies of heretics burned at the stake.

"They would have fought with desperation, nobles and peasants alike to defend their King against any one who should attempt to introduce free institutions."<sup>22</sup>

While Spain was withering under her misfortunes France was growing mighty. The Eastward March of Power which had shifted the scepter of might from Portugal to Spain now carried it from Spain to France. Britain, too, was growing in Power but Britain was in the curious position of being outside of Europe and yet able to interfere in its affairs. The English Channel was a valuable asset. But Louis the Fourteenth, the great sun King was more the center of all eyes than Britain. Britain and France tended to rise together until a series of frightful collisions ensued which initiated the decline of French power.

But back to Spain. Despite her sorry circumstances there was life in the Tiger yet. Indeed the other powers considered Spain important enough to fight a war over the Succession to the Spanish Throne. The dying King had decided in favor of Louis of Anjou which choice furthered ambitions of Louis the Fourteenth to dominate Europe. England, pursuing her traditional policy of keeping the

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<sup>22</sup>John S. C. Abbott, The Romance of Spanish History, pp. 342-343, 1869.



Continent from being consolidated under one head, opposed this choice and allied herself with Austria in a war to prevent Louis of Anjou from coming to the Throne.

There was fighting in Flanders, in Italy, and on the high seas. After ten or a dozen years of war, peace was made among the various combatants. "The Treaties of Utrecht and Rastatt carved up the Spanish Empire in Europe; Philip the Fifth was acknowledged King, but the Crowns of France and Spain were to be always separate; Gibraltar should belong to England; Sicily to go to Savoy; the other Spanish possessions in Italy together with Flanders, Luxembourg, and Sardinia, were handed over to the Austrian Habsburgs."<sup>23</sup>

Alas and alas how the mighty had fallen. Spain had retained her pride and her Church but her great power was broken forever. Faint traces of that power lingered on for a time in South America, and in the southern sections of the North American Continent. The Spanish navy and the Spanish nation were still considered a valuable makeweight in the international game of power politics. But the initiative had shifted from Spain to others.

Yet even now there were forces within the nation tending towards a renaissance. If the terrible catastrophes of the preceding years can be said to carry any blessings

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<sup>23</sup>Henry Dwight Sedgwick, Spain, pp. 283-284, 1925.

one could say that it was probably a great blessing for Spain that from the bloody War of the Spanish Succession a Bourbon, and not a Habsburger had come forth victor. Philip the Fifth was in some sense a r  juvenation, a personification of the lost youth of Spain; the upholder of a new system of government, a new scheme of administration, and a new mode of warfare. "The measures and principles which had raised France under Colbert and Richelieu to the most brilliant of European ascendencies, the vigorous and stirring initiative of a united government, the promotion of trade and commerce, the unsparing abolition of abuses, in however limited a manner employed by him, at least brought Spain from its stagnant condition, opened a period of reform, and launched the country, under Ferdinand the Sixth and Charles the Third, on a career of comparative prosperity."<sup>24</sup>

Charles the Third represented the last flicker of life in the corpse, however. Under his successor, Charles the Fourth, the final long decline began. Spain was caught between the eternal determination of Britain to keep Europe weak and divided and the rising power of France. Eventually the Spaniards became a weak and despised appendage of their powerful Eastern Neighbor. "Charles the Fourth was a fool, a coward, a hen-pecked

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<sup>24</sup>James A. Harrison, Spain, p. 569, 1895.

contemptible bigot."<sup>25</sup> He was completely under the influence of the Queen who turned the Spanish court into a den of vice. In this last final fatal act of the Spanish tragedy Spain was ground to dust between the upper millstone of an adamantine Britain and the nether millstone of a rising, powerful France. The only thing that stands out creditably in this whole shoddy curtain performance is the desperate heroism of the Spanish people.

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<sup>25</sup>James A. Harrison, Spain, p. 628, 1895.

## PART III

## FRANCE

Speak of me as I am, nothing extenuate  
Nor set down ought in malice. - Othello by  
Shakespeare

The true story of a nation, like the true story of a man, can only be suggested out of a habit of impartial truth-telling, joined to a sympathetic understanding. Both truth and understanding call one's attention to the repeated times when France had been a leader in the paths of progress and had made great contributions to the common treasure of mankind.

While France had had many Kings to rule her before him her rise as a modern nation-state may be said to date from the reign of Louis the Eleventh of the Valois line. He it was who brought France under the absolute control of the Crown and crushed the power of the great feudal lords. The personal character of Louis was not an engaging one, but it fitted him well for his assigned task. "He was an individual on whom neither war nor pleasure seemed to have any effect; a cold blooded, watchful, unscrupulous tyrant, whose steps, like the Tiger's, were noiseless, and whose object was only known by the rapid spring when he had got within distance, and the shriek of his victim."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>James White, History of France, p. 12, 1901.

Louis, was crowned King on the Eighteenth of August, Fourteen-Hundred-and Sixty-One. He commenced his reign by a serious mistake. He dismissed his father's trusted and experienced councillors and replaced them with new men of low degree.<sup>2</sup> He was firmly convinced of his own divine right to rule without hindrance or limitation although it was his habit to take full advice before he decided upon action. "Every week regularly he touched for the King's evil, or scrofula, any who came to be healed; a royal miracle which was supposed to attest the divine function of Kings."<sup>3</sup>

Unlike many other Kings Louis the Eleventh cared nothing for state or splendor. He wore the meanest and most shabby clothes and an old hat, surmounted by little leaden images of the Saints, which he would take down and invoke to help him. For though his religion was good nothing, since it did not keep him from committing any crime, he was wonderfully superstitious. "He must really have been taught, like all of his Church, that the Saints did not bestow benefits, and could only be asked to intercede for them, but he not only prayed to them directly but to their images; and it actually seems that he thought that if he told one image of the Blessed Virgin of some

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<sup>2</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, p. 271, 1899.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Van Dyke, The Story of France, p. 234, 1929.

crime, or made it some promise, it was a different thing from telling another."<sup>4</sup>

Louis initiated his reign by showing a positive genius for making everybody angry. Perhaps this was due to the influence of his amateur councillors but it very nearly cost him both his crown and his head at the very beginning of his rule. Among his other irritating activities he raised taxes from one million, eight hundred thousand to three million livres, curbed the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris and reduced the power of the Church.

The aristocracy was still more seriously threatened. The King commenced bestowing titles of nobility with a freehand upon persons of low birth; and he put restrictions upon the feudal rights of hunting, to defend agriculture against the havoc made by aristocratic amusements. "He also revived against the feudal lords certain feudal dues which had not been claimed by the late King, and demanded immediate payment of them."<sup>5</sup>

The object of all this was, of course, to break down the power of the great feudal lords. The nobility saw the object of the King, and took up arms to prevent the extinction of their order and the diminution of their individual power. A cry is never wanting when people are

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<sup>4</sup>Charlotte M. Yonge, Young Peoples History of France, pp. 246-247, 1879.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, p. 272, 1899.

determined to quarrel, and as the feudal chiefs could not, with any decency, state openly the reasons of their opposition they placed it upon the two grounds of the sacrifice of French ecclesiastical liberty by the abrogation of the Pragmatic Sanction, and the intolerable weight of taxation which the new King had imposed. "This, therefore, was called, rather inappropriately, the War of the Public Good".<sup>6</sup>

The greatest antagonist of Louis the Eleventh was his ostensible vassal, Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, whose father had fought his father for years. Charles had inherited and acquired a rich territory running across northern France into the Netherlands. "He was as false and as cruel as Louis but lacked the other's common sense and capacity to estimate what was possible."<sup>7</sup>

This struggle was mainly between the King and the nobles. Some historians have attempted to range the burghers and middle class alongside Louis as opposed to the nobles. It is true that Louis assumed the aspect of a friend of the common man when it suited his purpose, and he granted certain privileges to the middle class. Indeed he has often been called the burgher King. But it must be remembered that one of the grievances against him, proclaimed by Charles the Bold and his cohorts, was high taxes. Indeed the nobles

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<sup>6</sup>James White, History of France, p. 179, 1901.

<sup>7</sup>Paul Van Dyke, The Story of France, pp. 235-236, 1899.





appealed to the burghers to rally to their side because of these self-same high taxes.

In his attempt to crush the league which had been formed against him Louis was completely defeated. That defeat was the most fortunate thing that could have happened to him. It taught him where his real strength lay. Henceforth he fought his enemies not by force of arms, but by craft.

He fairly earned the name he afterward received of "the universal spider", for certainly no spider ever weaved more subtle webs or caught more victims. He fomented jealousies and quarrels which dissolved the league. Then he dealt with the chief men individually. "He bought the loyalty of one, he coaxed that of another, he locked up a third like a wild beast in an iron cage, and kept him there till his rebellious heart was broken."<sup>8</sup>

In the end with faction destroyed by the executioners ax, and Charles of Burgundy dead in a ditch at Nancy in January Fourteen-Hundred and Seventy-Seven, Louis was at last master of the situation. He could now pit his diplomacy and his undiluted strength against Charles' daughter, the Duchess Mary, whose hand he failed to secure for the Dauphin, as well as her gallant husband, Maximilian, from whom he succeeded in filching Artois and the Burgundian

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<sup>8</sup>Darrrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 118, 1917.

duchy. Other substantial acquisitions betray the hand of the master, whose will abashed feudalism no longer dared to dispute. "Maine, Anjou, Provence were annexed to the Crown, before whose luster that of the great families paled into insignificance, and whose supremacy was no longer threatened by that fatal system of appanages which had nurtured feudal factiousness and civil strife, and which the States-General had condemned at Tours in Fourteen Sixty-Eight."<sup>9</sup>

It is an interesting sidelight on this early struggle for the unification of the French nation that the English were already there, even thus early, trying to prevent that self-same unification from coming about. In this particular case Charles of Burgundy had invited Edward of Britain to aid him in his struggle against Louis. The British were very eager and landed on the coast of one of Charles' feudal holdings. If Charles had not changed his plans for some reason it might have gone ill for Louis then and there. It is but a minor example of the constant, dragging, fatal influence of Britain upon that doomed, harried Continent of Europe.

There was no dignity in the closing scene of the rule of the great feudal nobles in France. The sword was turned into a white rod or a silver stick, and the descendants

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<sup>9</sup>James Mackinnon, The Growth and Decline of the French Monarchy, p. 96, 1902.

of Oliver and Roland walked backwards in grand processions, dressed in the livery of their master, and quarrelled for precedent in the offices of the court. "Nothing but the sound of a historical name remained to distinguish the De Coucis and Montmorencies from the herd of titled and landless adventurers who vied with each other in the depth of their obeisances in the antechamber of the King. A nobility derived from Charlemagne was of the King. A nobility derived from Charlemagne was a sure passport to the scaffold."<sup>10</sup>

Thus we can see the beginning of the process which led to the miserable, parasitical aristocracy which existed in the days of Louis the Sixteenth over three hundred years later. And we see the reason for the French Revolution. The greater part of humanity will endure the rule of a mailed warrior, be it ever so cruel, so long as the warrior keeps to his function of fighting man and protector. On the other hand the British aristocracy showed an ability to administrate the affairs of the British Empire which the French aristocracy never developed. Mankind will submit to the rule of the blood-thirsty Tiger or the cunning Fox; but never for long to that of the Pig which merely eats.

Louis the Eleventh had more of the fox in him than of the tiger. He was small in his outlook, and he was as free from generous impulses as a spider patiently waiting

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<sup>10</sup>James White, History of France, p. 199, 1901.

for blundering flies to entangle themselves in the web he has woven. Many feared him, some respected him, the burghers were mildly grateful to him, but, so far as we know, no man or woman ever loved him. The last year of his life, Louis the Eleventh lived shut up in a strong castle whose guards had orders to shoot at anyone who approached the walk. "He grew jealous of everybody and even afraid of his son in law, his daughter and his own son, for, in the end, the fear he had inspired mastered his own heart."<sup>11</sup>

Here we see the difference between the French and the British political evolutions. In France all opposition was crushed by the King and the government became an unrelieved autocracy. In Britain, on the other hand, the great nobles imposed certain restrictions upon the Crown in the famous Magna Carta. It is true that under Edward in Britain the power of the great nobles was weakened and Warwick the "King maker" was slain but royal authority never became absolute in Britain and as unrestrained as in France. Even today when all the Kings have long since departed you can see, even in the Continental countries which have a democratic form of government, a subservience to the central authorities and a control and power over the individual which one did not see in Britain, at least not until recently and which one does not yet see in the

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<sup>11</sup>Paul Van Dyke, The Story of France, p. 239, 1929.

United States of America. For example it has been said that one of the reasons for the German successes in France in World War Two was the fact that all authority was concentrated at Paris, and the lesser officials in the outlying sections of France were simply paralyzed and inactive in the face of the Blitz without instructions from the central government from which they were cut off.

Louis the Eleventh was succeeded by Charles the Eighth, his son. Charles the Eighth was in truth the antithesis of his father and his sister. He was as rash, superficial, and romantic as Louis was cunning and calculating; he had none of his sister's masculine strength of will, sense, and seriousness of purpose. "But his work was done for him, and there was no reaction to impede the pursuit of those adventurous enterprises which appealed to his imaginative, sanguine temperament, though this temperament unfitted him to be a great ruler, it enabled him to play a meteoric role in History".<sup>12</sup>

Anne of Beaujeu, his sister, who was married to a brother of the Duke of Bourbon, was a more worthy child of the sagacious Louis than the frivolous boy. She ruled by her influence over her brother, but never showed that she ruled. "Wise regulations were issued in his name, bold steps taken without apparent hesitation, a firm system established, and France soon felt that a strong hand was

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<sup>12</sup>James Mackinnon, The Growth and Decline of the French Monarchy, p. 110, 1902.



at the helm and anticipated great things from so auspiciously commenced a reign."<sup>13</sup>

While Louis limited his aggressive policy to a moderate extension and strengthening of the frontiers, his son aimed at the conquest of Italy. He became a competitor for the Crown of Naples, in virtue of his inheritance of the claim of the House of Anjou, and the Crown of Naples was but a stepping-stone to the domination of the whole Peninsula. "Italy was menaced by the Spaniards, the Germans, and the Turks; and Charles, egged on by his favorite Stephen de Vesc, and his finance minister, William William Bricconnet, was of the opinion that he had a better title than any of his rivals."<sup>14</sup>

His sister, Anne, had not lost her good sense and she advised the King against these dubious schemes; so did his wisest councillors and warriors. "But Charles was in the first flush of youth, was surrounded by ardent young men eager for adventures, and the war party won out."<sup>15</sup>

What a sad commentary upon absolutism that the pig-headed stupidity of one man and his servile flatterers could prevail against not only the interests of the common man, who, it seems, was never much considered in those

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<sup>13</sup>James White, History of France, p. 204, 1901.

<sup>14</sup>James Mackinnon, The Growth and Decline of the French Monarchy, p. 110, 1902.

<sup>15</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, p. 307, 1899.

days, but even against the advice of his own high officials and a member of his own family. Yet even today, in this vaunted age of Democracy, is it not still true that a few men or perhaps even one man can plunge the world into war?

So Charles, not satisfied with ruling at home, endeavored to conquer an additional realm in Italy. He began a war which was not to be concluded until nearly half a century after his death. He was crowned King of Naples, to which title he next added the empty ones of King of Jerusalem and Emperor of the East. Shortly after, he returned to France, where his death brought his cousin Louis the Twelfth to the Throne. "The expedition of Charles the Eighth to Italy amounted to nothing in itself, but it is important to note it, since it marks the beginning of those French wars for foreign conquest which, in the end, were to have far reaching results."<sup>16</sup>

Louis the Twelfth was different, fortunately, from Charles the Eighth. He was now in his thirty-seventh year, tall and well made; his courage had been shown in many fields, for he had been distinguished in the Italian expedition, and displayed the valor of a Paladin, as well as the unselfishness of a hero in the defense of Novarra. "His talents were well-known, though hitherto the use he had applied them to was not uniformly good; and nobody

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<sup>16</sup>Darrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 126, 1917.



doubted that, if he devoted himself to the duties of his high office, he would ~~raise~~ his country to a station it had never reached before."<sup>17</sup>

"Mentally and morally Louis the Twelfth was rather a weak man, unstable and unwise; but he was really concerned for the welfare of the French people, and under his mild, economical administration they prospered."<sup>18</sup>

In foreign policy Louis the Twelfth is a pupil of the school of Louis the Eleventh and Macchiavelli, Ferdinand and the Borgias, a school bereft of conscience and honor but unlike Louis the Eleventh, he was unable even to be successful in his rogueries. He lost Milan; was even threatened with the loss of France, and would have been hard pressed to save his Kingdom from partial disintegration if only his enemies could have united heartily to play, at his expense, the game of spoliation which he had joined them in playing at the expense of Italy. "Could he have been content to rule as a model sovereign over his own territories, History would have had the novel experience of re-echoing, with hardly a jarring note, the chorus of praise which his numerous contemporary panegyrists sang in his honor."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>James White, History of France, p. 209, 1901.

<sup>18</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, p. 313, 1899.

<sup>19</sup>James Mackinnon, The Growth and Decline of the French Monarchy, pp. 114-115, 1902.

Louis the Twelfth died son-less and was succeeded by his cousin who became Francis the First. Francis the First inherited not only the Crown of France, but what has been called the "haunting obsession", of Italy. Within seven months of mounting the Throne, he was leading an army across narrow passes of the Alps where the rocks had to be blasted to make way for his one hundred and fifty cannons. Attacked in the plains of Italy by the Swiss fighting for the Pope, he beat those hitherto invincible troops in a two days fight so fiercely that one of his generals said none of the other eighteen pitched battles of his life had been more than child's play in comparison. After this victory, which gave him an enormous military reputation, he made a series of treaties. A concordat with the Pope divided the patronage of the French Church between the Papacy and the Crown. He concluded with the Swiss a "perpetual peace", which was a defensive alliance the same year he made peace with Spain. "A general treaty of reciprocal protection was signed by the Emperor and the Kings of Spain and France. The series of Italian wars, begun a quarter of a century before, was closed."<sup>20</sup>

The treaties of Fifteen-Sixteen and Fifteen-Seventeen did not, however, procure for Europe any prolonged period of peace. "The 'Italian' wars of Fifteen-Twenty to Fifteen-Fifty. Nine were different in character from the first

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<sup>20</sup>Paul Van Dyke, The Story of France, pp. 249-250, 1929.

series: they were less frequently fought on Italian soil; they were more far-reaching in scope and significance; they were complicated by the emergence of an ecclesiastical issue; and the stake at issue was no longer the balance of power in Italy, but the balance of power in Europe."<sup>21</sup>

With the death of Maximilian, Emperor of Germany, in Fifteen-Nineteen the post of Holy Roman Emperor was vacant. The three candidates for this high office were Henry the Eighth of Britain, Charles the Fifth of Austria and Francis the First of France. Tremendous efforts were made by all concerned to bribe the electors.

The seven electoral princes met at Frankfort, June Seventeenth, Fifteen-Nineteen to choose an Emperor. Charles had had the foresight to gather an army and station it very near by, well-knowing the helpful influence of cold steel, while Francis had trusted entirely to money, and had no troops at hand. Charles was put in nomination before the Diet by the Archbishop of Mayence, Francis by the Archbishop of Treves. "Rival intrigues were kept up, the troops were a clog to debate, and finally, by way of compromise, Frederick of Saxony was unanimously elected. He declined the honor, made a speech in favor of Charles, and Charles was unanimously elected."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, p. 60, 1944.

<sup>22</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, pp. 334-335, 1899.

Since the time of Charlemagne and the Caesars no sovereign had been able to gain control of such an immense territory as that which the Emperor Charles the Fifth now possessed. Francis the First felt that so formidable a neighbor was a constant menace to himself and his people. Placed as his Kingdom was between the armies of Germany and Spain, both of whom obeyed one directing and absolute will, France was like the wheat between the upper and the nether millstones, which a single energetic movement might suffice to crush. "One look at the map will show the position and the danger."<sup>23</sup>

It was decided to offset this danger by, Napoleon-like, attacking Charles' Italian possessions. In Fifteen-Twenty-Four Francis, who could not get Italy out of his mind, crossed the Alps with a powerful army to conquer the Duchy of Milan. At Pavia he was attacked by the Imperial army, defeated with great slaughter, wounded and taken prisoner. In the battle he played the part of a brave soldier but a poor general, for he showed the same sort of bull-headed courage which had been so fatal to the French chivalry in the wars of the previous century. "The disaster was complete and he wrote to his mother that "nothing was left to him except his honor and his life."<sup>24</sup>

Such a disastrous day had not loomed over France

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<sup>23</sup>Darrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 130, 1917.

<sup>24</sup>Paul Van Dyke, The Story of France, p. 251, 1929.

since Agincourt. Francis was worried about honor and its loss as we have noted. But the calm young man at Madrid had a different estimate of honor. He had his rival brought into Spain, and kept him in severe confinement. He had the soul of a pawnbroker, and resolved to make the most of his given word. A new advantage promised itself when the sister of Francis, the fair and fascinating Margaret of Alencon, hurried to Madrid to console her imprisoned brother. Her safe-conduct was valid only for three months, and Charles consulted his almanac to see the exact day of its expiration. In the meantime Margaret exerted all her powers. The Spanish nobles were won over by so grateful and fascinating a pleader; Charles himself appeared to yield, and Margaret might have been deceived. But as time went on, preparations were made for her arrest, and emissaries were reported to be gathering between her and the borders. Warned of these proceedings, the Duchess hurried from Madrid, and put the Bidossoa River between her and the magnanimous Emperor, on the very day her safe-conduct came to an end. Charles was now at the summit of his ambition. He had Italy at his feet, and his enemy in his hands. But a premature assurance of success was the rock on which he split. He neglected his instruments now that the work was done he offended Henry the Eighth by his silence, and Wolsey by the coldness of his letters; the Pope was afraid of so powerful a neighbor; Pescara was disgusted by so ungrateful a master, the Bourbon was disappointed at the breach of his engagements. "Nobody continued heartily in

the cause of a man who was so evidently "concentrated all in self."<sup>26</sup>

Francis submitted to the terms dictated by Charles, and which were of a most stringent character, involving the surrender of Burgundy and other provinces, as well as of several of the principal cities in Flanders also, to renounce all claim upon Navarre and to pay Henry the Eighth a large debt which Charles owed him. It appears that he made no objection to these terms, intending to repudiate them, on the ground of duress, as soon as he could do so with impunity. This opportunity presented itself subjected him to the only charge of perfidy, or breach of faith and honor, ever leveled against him. He returned to Paris, leaving his two sons as hostages, and soon after his arrival the Viceroy of Naples was sent by Charles the Fifth to require a ratification of the Treaty of Madrid, and a fulfillment of its several stipulations. By way of answer the viceroy was invited to assist at an audience of the deputies from Burgundy, who were sent there to protest against the cession of that province, and the viceroy received an announcement in support of Francis from the Holy League, so called by Pope Clement the Seventh, with all the Italian states and Henry the Eighth of England, who had combined to prevent the Emperor from obtaining possession of Milan."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>James White, History of France, pp. 234-235, 1901.

<sup>27</sup>William Tooke, The Monarchy of France, pp. 367-368, 1855.

Rome was sacked by the Imperials. Pope Clement the Seventh was himself taken prisoner in Fifteen-Twenty-Seven; but after the war had dragged on aimlessly for another year a treaty was negotiated on August, Fifteen-Twenty-Nine at Cambrai between Louise of Savoy, the Queen-Mother of France and Margaret of Austria, the aunt of Charles the Fifth and Governor of the Netherlands. La Paix des Dames "left the Emperor completely master of Italy. France renounced all claims upon Flanders and Artois, but recovered the Duchy of Burgundy. The Emperor might have been less willing to make peace with France had he not been beset with anxieties at home. In Fifteen-Twenty-Nine the great Turkish Sultan, Sulieman "The Magnificent", having overrun Hungary was knocking at the gates of Vienna. "Vienna resisted him and the Sultan accepted his repulse as final but the moment had been critical for Germany and indeed for Christendom."<sup>28</sup>

The Treaty of Cambrai marks the beginning of the most ruinous period of the policy of Francis: in it he sacrificed his allies to what seemed to be his private interests, showing a selfishness which recoiled sharply on his own head. In the Treaty of Madrid he had sacrificed France by giving up the Duchy of Burgundy, and had sent his children into captivity that he might himself get free: at Cambrai he sacrificed his Italian allies without a word; no consideration of honor as of royal faith availed

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<sup>28</sup>Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, p. 61, 1944.

to stay his hand. By these two treaties France was excluded from Italy, her earthly Paradise, a penalty which had in it the wholesome cleansing power of most misfortunes; had she heroism enough, enough of strength and honest industry, enough of purity and simplicity, she might still make her own home, the France which teemed with blessings, a better Paradise for herself. Unfortunately, the French nation was left to its fate, whereas the Court with the eagerness of childhood pursued its Italian ambitions. While it strove to conquer Italy, Italy was completely and banefully mastering it: during these days the Court becomes thoroughly Italianised. Francis himself, true to one love only, the love of letters, was fascinated by the Italian side of the Renaissance; he thought that all true culture must come thence. Consequently, Italian influences ever increased in strength, and with them grew the idea that at any sacrifice France must recover her foothold in the Peninsula. For this unsubstantial object she thrust from her true greatness. Had there been by the side of Francis a Richelieu to shape a sound foreign policy how different the outcome would have been. "Unfortunately for France her ruler was as ill "provided" with advisers as he was weak of grasp and character."<sup>29</sup>

Old and worn out with labors and debaucheries of every kind, the King, at fifty-two, felt all his energy

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<sup>29</sup>George W. Kitchin, A History of France, Volume II, pp. 220-221, 1897.



decaying. Henry the Eighth had closed his troubled reign in January of Fifteen-Forty-Seven. Francis brooded over the event as if it had some mysterious connection with his own fate. Fevered and ill at ease, he hurried from place to place to shake off the dark presentiment; but journeys, and hunting parties, and more elegant relaxations, were all in vain. "The body would no longer move, and on the Thirty-First of March in the same year, he followed his rival to the tomb."<sup>30</sup>

While Henry the Second, the son of Francis the First, was still enjoying the festivities attendant upon his accession to the throne, a revolt occurred in Guienne, caused by an arbitrary increase of the salt tax. The people of Guienne contended that they were exempt from this tax by ancient privilege. Francis the First had disregarded the privilege and enforced the tax. The people rose against it, and Francis had marched against them with his army. Unable to resist further, the people had humbled themselves and prayed pardon. Francis handsomely forgave them for being ill-humored on account of an illegal tax, and let them off with a fine of two hundred thousand francs. The illegal tax, of course, was left in force, and, just before his death, Francis had increased it. The spirit of dissatisfaction again spread, and led to the revolt already mentioned. The peasants, goaded to madness, broke out into deeds of lawlessness. The director-general of the salt-

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<sup>30</sup>James White, History of France, p. 244, 1901.

tax was slain, and two of his collectors were beaten to death and their bodies thrown into the river. "Go wicked salt-taxers, and salt the fish of the Charente", cried the infuriated mob as they cast the dead men into the stream."<sup>31</sup>

This revolt against royal authority was punished with atrocious severity by Henry's military officials who had been sent to put down the rebellion.

Henry the Second had, in Fifteen-Thirty-Five, married Catherine, the daughter of Lorenzo de Medici. His wife, however, possessed no influence over him, as he was altogether governed by his mistress, Diana of Poitiers, the widow of the Chevalier Beeye, seneschal of Normandy, a woman of exquisite beauty and extraordinary talent. She was eighteen years older than the King, who had made her Duchess of Valentinois. During his life it was she who was to all intents and purposes the real Queen of France. His first acquaintance with her was when she solicited and obtained the pardon of her husband, who had been condemned to die for treason."<sup>32</sup>

It is interesting to note this continually recurring French phenomenon, that of petticoat operation behind the scenes. It is particularly strange to one who knows the

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<sup>31</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, pp. 294-395.

<sup>32</sup>William Tooke, The Monarchy of France, p. 376, 1855.

curious French attitude toward the fair sex. This attitude is a strange combination of contempt and admiration. One has to read the works of such French authors as Guy de Maupassant to get an idea of French ideas. On the one hand we have one of de Maupassant's characters stating that women have brains very much like monkeys, and on the other hand we have the French tradition of chivalry and the memory of the immortal Joan. Under French law no woman could ever rule the nation as Elizabeth and Victoria ruled Britain. It is only recently that French women obtained the right to vote. In the home the French husband is master. And yet when Frenchmen had become demoralized and French rulers weak, degenerate and corrupt it was a Joan of Arc who led them into battle, and provoked the British to an act that will reverberate down through the centuries to their everlasting shame. Alas there are more decreditale episodes than the glorious age of Joan of Arc. Pompadour, and Du Barrey are also in the books. As a sidelight my fellow countrymen may note that the Europeans often laugh at Americans for being dominated by our women-folk. And the French are not the least forward in making this claim.

Under Henry the Second the Kingdom at first had peace; although Paul the Third pressed Henry to resist the predominance of Charles, who, since the Battle of Muhlberg, had become all powerful, the King would not move. He also won a political triumph over England. Somerset, the Protector, wishing to secure the hand of Mary Queen of Scots for the

young King Edward the Sixth, then only five years of age, had marched an army northwards, and defeated the Scots at Pinkie. In opposition to this rough way of wooing the young beauty, the French also came as suitors, sending a force to support Mary of Guise, the Regent, her mother, against the English. By help of these troops, and with the good-will of the Regent, Mary of Scots was safely carried over into France, to the great delight and triumph of Henry the Second. He bade his envoy in London go to the Protector, and tell him that the little Queen was affianced to Francis the Dauphin, and that Scotland, sceptre and Crown, had been handed over to him, Henry, for his sons profit; whereof he held himself bound, by duty and obligation, to protect that Kingdom as though it were his own. This was not a declaration of war, though it came very close to it: it was saying that the Calvinistic party in Scotland must hope for nothing; that the English Calvinists had failed to win the day, and that the high Catholic party, carrying off the Queen, had secured Scotland also to the faith. So they thought, and, for a while, their policy seemed to prosper; but the Scottish people were too stubborn and too much in earnest to be ruled in this manner; and Mary of Scots was destined to pass her life amid intrigues, the sport of other interests than her own, and at last to perish, because it was impossible for her to reconcile her claims and those of the Catholic party with the wishes of England and the safety of England's

Queen."<sup>33</sup>

Later, however, Henry went on with the war with the Emperor, Charles of Spain, and would not let the French bishops go to Trent, where Charles was trying to get together a council of the Church, to set right the evils that had led to the separations. Henry had one very able general, Francis de Lorraine, Duke of Guise. "He sent this general to seize the city of Mely, which he declared he had a right to and there Guise shut himself up and stood a siege by the Emperor himself, until disease and famine created such havoc in the besieging army that they were forced to retreat."<sup>34</sup>

In all this one of the most interesting points is the fact that the most Catholic Majesty of France and the most Catholic Majesty of Spain were in conflict with each other instead of being united against the Protestant States of Germany. The new rising spirit of nationalism was producing divisions and weakening the power of the Church even without the influence of Protestantism. The possibility of European unity under the Pope was fading. All of the desperate efforts of Charles could not put Humpty Dumpty together again. Quite aside from Martin Luther the Princes of Europe were more interested in their ambitions for personal power and the expansion of their

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<sup>33</sup>George W. Kitchen, A History of France, Volume II, p. 266, 1897

<sup>34</sup>Charlotte Yonge, Young Peoples History of France, pp. 301-302, 1879.

nations than in submission to Rome. And Henry the Eighth of England was the first among the Princes of Europe to fling off the control of Rome. Here we see Britain, as usual, aiding in the breaking up of European cohesion. Other Monarchs, Catholic as well as Protestant, were not slow in following his example. The rule of a universal theocracy over the people of Europe became an obvious impossibility.

Henry the Second met his end at the festivities attending the marriage of the Queen of Scotland to his son. Tournaments were held from morn till eve, and on the Twenty-Nineth Henry held the lists against all comers, and challenged the Knights of France and Spain. He resisted the attack of his first assailant, the Duke of Savoy, who courteously turned his spear and retired. The Duke of Guise was likewise gracefully repelled; the two best generals in the service of France felt the skill of the Monarch's arm, and ladies and nobles vied in their show of admiration. But a big rough Scotchman, of the name of Montgomery, advanced as the third assailant, and by some mismanagement did not succeed in giving the King the best of the shock, but shook his feet out of the stirrups. Henry insisted on another course. Montgomery obeyed, and held the lance so straight, so firmly pointed, that it broke in his opponents visor, and a splinter went into his eye. A shrill cry was all the spectators heard; but the King lay forward on his horse. "He was taken off and visited by the best

surgeons; the wood had penetrated to the brain, and on the tenth of July he died."<sup>35</sup>

Henry had been on the whole a lightheaded and dissolute Monarch. The latter part of his reign saw both the French military disaster at St. Quentin when Spanish and English forces under Philip the Second defeated the Constable Montmorency and then threw away an opportunity to take Paris, and the French victory at Calais shortly afterward: History must give Francis blame for the first and little credit for the second.

Francis the Second, who succeeded to the Crown, was but a boy of fifteen, and in feeble health. The situation was critical. France was divided between two mutually hostile religious parties both eager for power. "The greater part belonged to the old Church, but a strong minority, including many influential men, were Calvinists."<sup>36</sup>

The Dauphin, now Francis the Second, devoted to his young wife, Mary Stuart, naturally leant towards his uncles, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine. They were suspected already and not without reason, of aiming even at the Throne of France, in case the sickly children of Henry the Second left no issue. They drew out a pedigree, which showed them descended from Charles

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<sup>35</sup>James White, History of France, p. 262, 1901.

<sup>36</sup>Darrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 144, 1917.

the Great: they had old claims on the Throne of Naples. For the time, however, they were content to have Francis crowned and saluted as King of France and England: the royal couple quartered the arms of the two Kingdoms. They also entered into communications with Philip of Spain, for they were strict Catholics in policy who condescended to promise his support. Although this foreshadowed the combinations of the League, it was not very sincere at the time; for Philip was seriously alarmed by the pretensions of Mary Stuart to the English Crown: England and Scotland joined with France would have been a very powerful combination, and a menace to his authority in the Netherlands, if not in Spain. "It was in consequence of this fear that Philip allowed Queen Elizabeth's succession to the English Throne to pass unchallenged and unopposed."<sup>37</sup>

Francis the Second was a sickly youth as has been mentioned before and he soon passed on. While the nation was afflicted by the death of Henry the Second, it regarded that of his eldest son as a deliverance, and but for the pity which so premature an end excited, it was glad to be rid of poor Francis. Not only was he mentally weak and apathetic; he had earned for himself a share in the odium of the regime of his wife's uncles, who now became the malcontents in opposition to the Government, and who had not the philosophy to practice in adversity the self-denial which they had demanded of their opponents

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<sup>37</sup>

George W. Kitchin, A History of France, Volume II, p. 295, 1897.



when they were out of office. Power being to their ambitious minds as breath to their lungs, they became the focus of intrigue and sedition against the Government of Charles the Nineth, or rather of his mother, Catherine. Of Charles, who was only eleven years old, great hopes were entertained. He was altogether, according to the Venetian ambassador, who retails the general opinion, an admirable boy, handsome of figure, with specially beautiful eyes, like his father, easy and graceful in deportment. A lad of talent, too, and very affable; but not robust, being easily fatigued, and only applying himself to his books in obedience to his mother, though fond of painting and sculpture. "His passion was war and stories of war, and his governor only spoke to him of conquests."<sup>38</sup>

For ten years, from Fifteen-Sixty to Fifteen-Seventy Catherine de Medici was the real ruler of France. Commonly regarded as the typical product of Renaissance Italy, a monster of cruelty and craft, devoid of all moral sense, and intent only on the pursuit of selfish aims and the satisfaction of personal ambition, Catherine has been gravely misjudged. Had circumstances been more favorable she might well have left a more savory reputation. "She did not, indeed, shrink from shedding the blood of heretics, particularly if heresy involved treason; she could look on with satisfaction at the massacre of Saint Bartholomew,

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<sup>38</sup>James Mackinnon, The Growth and Decline of the French Monarchy, p. 185, 1902.

though more gladly would she have identified herself with the tolerant sentiments of Michel de l'Hospital, for whose appointment as Chancellor she was responsible."<sup>39</sup>

The terrible religious struggles within France involving the Catholic ruling party and the Huguenots should not evoke too loud outcries of horror and self-righteousness in our present time. Today we have struggles between the Communists and the Fascists, the Reds and the Reactionaries which, our newspapers tell us, are equally bloody. Some might say that then it was religion and that today it is politics and economics, but it must be remembered that in those days religion was closely mixed with both political and economic beliefs. And people took religious matters much more seriously than they do today. So actually what we have today is really the same old struggle dressed up in different clothing, at least in some respects.

The historian of the wars of religion, whenever he shall appear, may perhaps consider them as comprising three distinct periods, each of which has an aspect and a hero peculiar to itself. The first would embrace the ten years which elapsed between the seizure of Orleans by Conde in Fifteen-Sixty-Two and the massacre of Saint Bartholomew in Fifteen-Seventy-Two, years memorable for the successful treacheries of Catherine de Medici. The second period, commencing from that fearful tragedy, and terminating with

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<sup>39</sup>Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, p. 67, 1944.

the assassination of Henry the Third, in August, Fifteen-Eighty-Nine, would exhibit the triumph and the fall of the great Commander of the Catholic League, Henry, the second Duke of Guise. The third period would be that of the gallant struggle of Henry the Fourth against the Leaguers and their foreign allies, and would conclude with this purchase of the Crown of France by the abandonment of the faith to the defense of which his life had been so solemnly consecrated both by his mother and by himself.<sup>40</sup>

Henry the Fourth was a man of energy and courage as well as of ability. He compared very favorably with his weak and often cowardly predecessors and was of decided Protestant leanings. Unfortunately for France he was assassinated by a Catholic. His name was Francis Ravallae, a fanatic, though in the calmest possession of his senses, a man of incredible firmness of mind, who bore all the tortures of his trial and execution without departing from the silence he had enjoined himself. No art or cruelty could extract a confession of his confederates were, if any he had. "All he revealed was merely his hatred the Protestant faith, and zeal to force the professors of it to recant on pain of death."<sup>41</sup> Thus we see the example of the monk, Clement, who struck down Henry the Third being

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<sup>40</sup>James Stephen, Lectures on the History of France, p. 432, 1852.

<sup>41</sup>James White, History of France, p. 307, 1901.

followed by this misguided zealot.

The dagger that slew Henry the Fourth inflicted a terrible blow against the welfare of France. The nation lost its chief guide and support before it had acquired strength and unity to take care of itself. Henry's son, Louis the Thirteenth, was not yet nine, and according to French custom, his mother, Marie de Medici, a foreigner by birth, became ruler during his minority. "The Queen-Mother soon found that her ideas of Government and Sully's did not agree, and she dismissed her deceased husband's friend and counselor, after his twenty year's service to the state, in order that she might be free to carry out some petty schemes of marriage for her children."<sup>42</sup>

Under the leadership of Conde agitation was soon begun for the calling of the States-General, mainly as a result of the atrocious mismanagement of the nation's affairs by the favorites of the Queen-Mother. The deliberations of this Assembly, which met at Paris on the Twenty-Seventh of October, Sixteen-Fourteen, are of more than ordinary interest, in view of the fact that it was to be the last meeting of the Estates before Seventeen-Eighty-Nine and that many of its demands anticipated those of the National Constituent Assembly. In some respects, indeed, the Parliament of Sixteen-Fourteen might be mistaken for the Parliament of Seventeen-Eighty-Nine. The deliberations

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<sup>42</sup>Darrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 170, 1917.

reveal the same jealousy and mistrust between the two higher orders and the Third Estate, the same spirit of antagonism between the privileged and the non-privileged classes, the same fear, on the part of the Third Estate, of being controlled by a reactionary combination, the same advocacy by the middle-class representatives of national as distinct from social interests. There are notable differences, of course, and the most notable, perhaps, is the utter impotence of the Third Estate to beat down the opposition either of the higher orders or of the court. "Nevertheless, the attitude of the popular deputies reveals an ominous prophecy for the future and the popular orators of Seventeen-Eighty-Nine will only re-echo in some of their noblest passages the patriotism and the sense of human rights vindicated by the popular orators of Sixteen-Fourteen."<sup>43</sup>

In Sixteen-Sixteen the boy-King was married to Anne of Austria, and another of the notable women of this women's period appears on the stage. The Princes, Huguenot and Royalist, became more and more turbulent; for this marriage offended and, as they thought, menaced them: a scattered uneasy warfare began; Concini, the Queen-Mother's favorite, again met them with the old weapons, and by the treaty of London bought off the malcontents. Conde obtained five strongholds, with offices and money for his adherents: large payments were made to all the chief nobles. "The

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<sup>43</sup>James Mackinnon, The Growth and Decline of the French Monarchy, p. 272, 1902.

Council was reformed, and the young Bishop of Lucon, whom the Regent admired and the Marshal Ancoe thought to use, became a member of it."<sup>44</sup>

Thus France continued uneasy because of the conspiracies of the great nobles and the weakness of the King and the Corruption of his favorites. A strong man was needed and a strong man France got in the person of Armand de Richelieu. Though destined originally for the army, Richelieu, for family reasons, abandoned that career for the Church, and at twenty-two was consecrated Bishop of Lucon, a See recently vacated by his brother. As a deputy for the clergy to the States-General of Sixteen-Fourteen he attracted attention by a great speech in support of the ultramontane views of his Order. In Sixteen-Sixteen he was admitted to the Council of State, and entrusted with the departments of Foreign Affairs and War. These appointments he owed to the favor of the Queen-Mother whose temporary exile, following the assassination of her favorite Concini, he shared. In Sixteen-Twenty-One, however, a reconciliation between the King and the Queen-Mother led to the recall of Richelieu, and in Sixteen-Twenty-Four he became First Minister to the King. "Until his death in Sixteen-Forty-Two he ruled France."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>George W. Kitchin, A History of France, Volume II, p. 493, 1897.

<sup>45</sup>Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, p. 80, 1944.

Louis the Thirteenth, who had abdicated all active functions of Government in favor of his domineering minister lived at this time a retired, isolated, melancholy life, estranged from his Queen, and without power or influence. He had lately formed a platonic liaison with one of the Queen's maids of honor, Mademoiselle de Hautefort. This young lady, indignant at the King's degradation, strove to rouse him from his apathy, and encouraged him to shake off his absolute dependence on the Cardinal. Richelieu, informed of this cabal against him, spared no pains to supersede Mademoiselle de Hautefort in the royal affections; and Louis, unable to resist, discarded his friend in favor of Mademoiselle de Lafayette in whom the Cardinal expected to find a docile instrument of his policy. The influence of the new favorite, however, was exerted still more decidedly against him; Louis began to show signs of returning intelligence and vigor, and the jealous minister, in alarm, employed such agency to work upon the scrupulous conscience of Mademoiselle de Lafayette as to induce her to take the resolution of retiring to a convent. She executed her purpose in May, Sixteen-Thirty-Seven; but the King continued to visit her in her seclusion, and her influence over his mind was augmented rather than diminished. The intrigues against Richelieu continued, and Louis seems to have entertained serious thoughts of dismissing him, when an incident occurred which disconcerted his enemies and restored his supremacy. The Cardinal discovered a clandestine correspondence carried on by Louis' wife, Anne of Austria, with the court

of Spain, the Cardinal-Infant at Brussels, and other enemies of France. Anne's confidential messenger was arrested and thrown into the Bastille, and the Queen, in extreme terror, made a full avowal of her guilt to Richelieu, and signed a solemn engagement never again to commit a similar offense; whereupon the minister promised in return to mediate for her a complete reconciliation with her husband. This was accordingly effected, and the good genius of Richelieu once more triumphed in the re-establishment of cordial relations between the royal pair. The Jesuit Coussin, the King's Confessor, was dismissed, and Louis discontinued his visits to Mademoiselle de Lafayette. These occurrences led to an event of highest importance to the welfare of the Kingdom. After a childless union of more than twenty years', Anne of Austria found herself in a condition to give an heir to the Throne. To the great joy of the nation, a dauphin, who afterward became Louis the Fourteenth, was born at Saint Germain on the Fifth of September, Sixteen-Thirty-Eight. This event reduced the mischievous Gaston of Orleans to comparative insignificance, and greatly strengthened the reins of Government in the grasp of Richelieu. "The King's health, always feeble, was now much impaired, and the Cardinal had already begun to count upon obtaining the Regency in the prospect of his death."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>William H. Jervis, The Students History of France, pp. 401-402, 1862.





He did not obtain the Regency, however. Richelieu died in December, Sixteen-Forty-Two, victorious at home and abroad. Under his administration the principalities of Roussillon and of Sedan had been added to France, and her armies had won important victories in Spain, Italy, and Germany. "So completely was his masterful influence established that even after his death the minister he had recommended was chosen as his successor, and his policy faithfully carried out as long as the King lived."<sup>47</sup>

As far as the King is concerned the greatest admirer of royalty cannot pay much tribute to the memory of Louis the Thirteenth. The few respectable qualities which he had were altogether neutralized by corresponding defects, while for those vices which he pursued with energy no counterbalance could be found. He was not slow of comprehension; but his feebleness of mind was so incurable that he was always the slave of the judgment or will of others. He was not destitute of courage; but, though fond of war, and often at the head of his armies, he was so utterly deficient in energy that he never distinguished himself by a single military exploit; and the greatest proof of resolution he ever showed was the indifference with which he heard of or witnessed the sufferings of others. The weakness of his constitution did not allow him to imitate the debaucheries of his father; but he exceeded him in his ill-

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<sup>47</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, p. 503, 1899.

treatment of the Queen, and as a son he was even worse than as a husband; while, in his relations to others, he had so little steadiness of principle, or even feeling, that of love or friendship he was completely incapable. To the commanding genius of Richelieu he owes it that posterity has not assigned him a place among the worst of Kings; but though in a Constitutional Monarchy, like that of Britain, the posthumous reputation of a sovereign must in a great degree depend on the actions and wisdom of his councillors, an absolute Monarch cannot be allowed to shine by a borrowed light. "To say that such a Prince was absolute over the rest of his subjects, but a slave to his minister, is to say that he was a nonentity; and he who is such as a King can hardly fail to be worse as a man."<sup>48</sup>

As we have said before Anne of Austria, surprisingly enough, followed Richelieu's advice regarding his successor. Both in character and methods Mazarin and his predecessor were strikingly contrasted. Richelieu was a typical French aristocrat, strong, stern, haughty, and overbearing. Giulio Mazarin was a middle-class Italian, a trained lawyer, a pupil of the Jesuit College in Rome, apprenticed to diplomacy in the service of the Papacy, not less determined than Richelieu in pursuit of his ends, but pursuing them by more subtle and pliable methods. Physically a coward, adroit rather than strong, Mazarin first came to France as Papal Nuncio in Sixteen-Thirty-Six, but became a naturalized

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<sup>48</sup>Charles Duke Yonge, A History of France Under the Bourbons, pp. 366-367, 1866.

Frenchman in Sixteen-Thirty-Nine, was taken into Richelieu's service, and on the latter's death succeeded him as Minister. For the first five years of his ministry, Mazarin's attention was concentrated on the war with Spain. He was fortunate enough to be served in the field by two of the most brilliant soldiers of that age: the young Duc d'Enghien, and Marshal Turenne. The former, the Great Conde, was the eldest son of the Prince of Conde. Turenne was of even more illustrious descent: a son of the Duc de Bouillon, a nephew of Maurice of Nassau, and a grandson of William the Silent. Conde's brilliant victory at Rocroi in Sixteen-Forty-Three dealt the death-blow to the military power of Spain, and put the Netherlands at the mercy of France. A great victory won by Conde and Turenne at Nordlingen in Sixteen-Forty-Five gave France the supremacy in the Upper Rhineland. Beaten to their knees in Germany, in Alsace, and in the Netherlands, with Naples in revolt and Portugal independent, the Habsburgs were ready to make peace, which was concluded by the Treaties of Westphalia on October Twenty-Fourth, Sixteen-Forty-Eight. The Thirty Years War was ended. The line then drawn between Catholics and Protestants was permanent; the Holy Roman Empire came virtually to an end; the Swedes were substantially rewarded, but the richest harvest was reaped by the laborer who had gone into the field only at the eleventh hour. France acquired Breisach and Alsace, and the three Lorraine Bishiprics, Metz, Toul, and Verdun, passed formally into her keeping. She was allowed to garrison Phillippsburg,

and between that fortress and Basle there were to be no fortifications on the eastern bank of the Rhine. "In short the Rhine, guarded at the source and the mouth by two stout bastions, Switzerland and the Netherlands ceased to be a German river."<sup>49</sup>

Worn with years and labor, regretted by the Queen, and respected, from the force of youthful habit, by Louis, Cardinal Mazarin died in Sixteen-Sixty-One. Cabals, plots, opposition, were all at an end, and the reign of Louis the Fourteenth may be said to begin at this date. He has fifty-four years of life and authority before him, and in the course of that time the whole state of European society will be changed. After the troubles of the Fronde in France and the Great Rebellion in England, which may be named more by way of contrast than of resemblance, one of those ebbs which occasionally occur in the advancing tide of liberty and progress made itself perceptible in both nations. The supporters of the Grand Remonstrance, the men of Dunbar and Marston Moor, fell at the footstool of the falsest, basest, meanest of Monarchs and buffoons; while the intriguers of the boudoir, and traitors of every party, the followers of De Rety and sycophants of Anne, rose to a higher sort of servitude, which was almost dignity, when they bent their foreheads to the ground at the audiences

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<sup>49</sup>Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, pp. 84-85, 1944.

of the pompously-worded and gorgeously-arrayed potentate, who already professed to represent in his own person the glory and majesty of France."<sup>50</sup>

As Richelieu left his friend Mazarin to succeed him, so Mazarin in turn left one of his friends, a provincial governor named Colbert, to take his place. The Cardinal had not found his office unprofitable, having accumulated a colossal fortune as report said, by plundering the state. Just before his death in Sixteen-Sixty-One he said to the King, then twenty-three, "Sire I owe everything to you, but I believe that I pay at least part of the debt in leaving you Colbert."<sup>51</sup>

Louis the Fourteenth actually believed that France was as much his own individual dwelling; God had given him the Crown, the Kingdom, and the People. Of this he was sure, and nothing ever occurred to shake his faith. Some shadowy notions he had about the property having been given to him in trust, but the execution of the trust was a matter which lay between him and God. Parliaments had no voice in it. The people had nothing to do with it. "Even the grandees, although in his splendid way he bade them come to his court and shine as lesser luminaries around himself, the central sun, were made to understand that they drew all their radiance from him, the source of the

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<sup>50</sup>James White, History of France, p. 345, 1901.

<sup>51</sup>Darrrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 186, 1917.

light, he being the fountain-head of honor, power, and privilege."<sup>52</sup>

At the end of six years of peace Louis began to think himself strong enough to engage in war; or at least to hold that imperious and menacing language towards other states which is its almost certain forerunner. And it was consistent with the good fortune which hitherto, and for many years yet to come, attended Louis in all his designs, that one change in the administration which took place in Sixteen-Sixty-Six, though it was not apparently dictated by any warlike intentions, contributed in a pre-eminent degree to render the arms of France formidable. Le Tellier, who found the regulation of the internal affairs of the Kingdom a labor sufficiently onerous for any single individual, obtained permission to transfer the war department to his son Louvois; and the new secretary at once applying himself zealously to the duties of his office, speedily developed talents of the highest order. If he had not been unfortunately, of a peculiarly jealous disposition, jealous not only of his colleagues, but even of the officers who were to execute his orders, he would have been one of the greatest ministers in his department that the world has seen. And as it was, his large views, his foresight, his lucidity of arrangement, his energy, and force of will, long counterbalanced even that great defect.

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<sup>52</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, p. 512, 1899.

He had the wisdom on entering upon his office to consult Turenne as to the reforms which were still needed in the army. With the aid of that great officer's experience, he rapidly placed the whole force on a far more effective footing than even his father, had been able to. And Louis, who was a good judge of men's talents and characters, and a sufficiently diligent man of business to be fully aware of the industry displayed in his service, and of the effects produced by it, soon perceived his value, and the degree in which his own power was augmented by the ministers peculiar genius.<sup>53</sup>

Louis felt some irritation against the Dutch because they had taken part with Sweden and Britain against France in an earlier quarrel. Consequently after temporarily manuevering the British upon his side Louis declared war upon Holland. For a time it seemed that it would go hard with the Dutch but other Powers intervened and in the end the Netherlands came off virtually unscathed.

The real foe, however, was not Holland but Britain. This fact Louis readily recognized. The first phase of the prolonged conflict between France and England developed on Irish soil. James the Second, though supported by a French army, was decisively defeated by William of Orange in the battle of the Boyne, and James fled back to France. The victory of the Boyne was, however, balanced by the defeat of the British Navy off Beachy Head. Admiral

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<sup>53</sup>Charles Duke Yonge, The History of France Under the Bourbons, pp. 212-213, 1866.



Tourville's great victory gave the French command of the Channel for two years. "In May, Sixteen-Ninety-Two the loss was retrieved by Russell's victory at La Gogue, but in Sixteen-Ninety-Four an expedition against Brest was repulsed with heavy losses."<sup>54</sup>

Their initial clash continued until the Treaty of Ryswick, which represented merely a truce between a rising, powerful France on one side and Britain and her allies on the Continent on the other. The real battles were yet to come.

We have seen that Mazarin had planned the King's marriage with Maria Theresa, daughter of the King of Spain, in the belief that in time his master would become ruler of that country by the union of the two Crowns. This now seemed likely to be accomplished for the King of Spain had died childless and had left the Throne to a grandson of Louis, which was practically the same as if he had left it to Louis himself. In his exultation at the prospect, the French Monarch exclaimed, "The Pyrenees are no more", for in imagination he now saw all barriers leveled, and Spain henceforth a dependency of France."<sup>55</sup>

Other nations failed to sympathize with this idea

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<sup>54</sup>Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, p. 97, 1944.

<sup>55</sup>Darrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History.

however, and first in the lists was Britain, Britain which was determined that no great Power should dominate the Continent. The War of the Spanish Succession, as it has been called, soon ensued and at the Battle of Blenheim in Bavaria.

The Danube in this part of its course is already broad and deep; and the plain-land on its left or northern shore is of no great width, being soon bounded by wooded hills running parallel to the stream; out of these low heights come little rivers, which descent through marshy banks at right angles to the Danube. One such rivulet joins the main stream at Hockstett another, the Nebel, runs in at Blenheim. It was above this latter, from the woods to the Danube, that the French and Bavarians posted themselves facing towards the east, and awaiting the allies. The Elector of Bavaria had the left wing, round Lutzingen, a little village close to the woods; in the center lay Marsin behind Oberklaw, with a small force pushed across the rivulet and occupying Niederklaw on its eastern bank: Tallard had the right wing and had crammed the village of Blenheim with his troops. Their dispositions were faulty in more ways than one; thus, the French were quite separated from the Bavarians; they all, except Marsin's men in Niederklaw, lay too far from the river, on the rise beyond, where they could not defend the passage, or make full use of the difficulties of the ground; and lastly, far too many of their troops were cooped up in Blenheim and other villages.

Though they numbered in all nearly sixty thousand men with ninety guns, the twenty-six battalions and twelve squadrons in Blenheim, with the troops posted in the other villages, much reduced their available force; and when it came to the push their infantry were too weak successfully to dispute the allied advance. The allies on their side of the Nebel had about fifty thousand men and sixty six guns: Prince Eugene was on the right, with his Imperials, facing the Elector and Marsin; Marlborough to the left, with the English and Dutch, stretching from the Danube till he touched Eugene's left, having opposite him Marsin and Tallard: through the center of his position ran the high road which leads from Hockstett to Donauworth, crossing the Nebel by a bridge just below which are some water-mills on the stream. On the Thirteenth of August, Seventeen-Four, General Cutts began the battle by taking Niederklav and the mills, and clearing away the French from the eastern bank of the little river; after this the English pressed forward, got across the stream and attacked Tallard in front and Blenheim on their left flank. While Marlborough made good progress here, Prince Eugene higher up the stream, could make no impression on his opponents: their position was very strong, and all his efforts seemed vain. Towards evening, however, Marlborough after great efforts succeeded in storming Tallard's position, the key of the battle, and, driving him back, cut him off from Blenheim, whence his strong reserves tried to get out to his rescue; they were

too late, for the English had worked around them and firmly held them in the village. The action had been chiefly one of artillery and cavalry. Just as the battle had passed this critical point, Tallard himself, being shortsighted, fell in with a troop of English horse, and was made prisoner: his cavalry, having been cut in two by the English, fled in panic; part got safely to Hochstett, while the rest, bending to their left and hard pressed in the rear by the enemy's horse, came unawares to the Danube, dashed into the stream, and perished almost to a man. The French right being thus disposed of, Marlborough turned Tallard's guns on Marsin who soon discerned that he was no longer safe, and that he and the Elector must draw off, if they would avoid being surrounded and ruined. They effected their retreat in good condition to the Black Forest; Tallard's army was almost annihilated. After dark, the regiments in Blenheim, about ten thousand strong, convinced that their friends had left the field, capitulated and the great battle was over. "The French call it the second battle of Hochstett, in England it has ever been known as the great victory of Blenheim."<sup>56</sup>

While France was by no means completely crushed by this defeat and the war continued for some time afterward it represented a turning point such as that of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Britain had intervened to prevent Philip of Spain from ruling all Europe, now she called a

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<sup>56</sup>George W. Kitchin, A History of France, Volume III, pp. 307-308, 1897.

check to Louis of France. After Blenheim French arms, on the whole, fared ill. Nevertheless French diplomacy retrieved much of the loss at the treaties of Utrecht and Rastatt which terminated the War of the Spanish Succession.

From the standpoint of France, it is impossible to ascribe greatness to the reign of Louis the Fourteenth. There is no comparison, if we except the first few years of admirable promise, between it and those of Henry the Fourth and Louis the Twelfth, in respect of the welfare of the people. This, and not the meretricious splendours of royalty, is the true test of royal grandeur. The widespread unpopularity of the dying Monarch is not ascribable to mere popular fickleness and ingratitude. It is only too well founded in the wretchedness of the people. The most indulgent critic cannot get over the fact that his rule had for long years been fatal to the interests of the nation. The misery of France is a melancholy commentary on the practical effects of the theory of the unlimited power of the Monarch, elaborated by Bossuet in his "Politique" and embodied by Louis in his Government. Give a single individual, by hereditary right or otherwise, unlimited dominion over a nation, and if that individual be an unenlightened, ambitious, vainglorious potentate like Louis the Fourteenth the results must be disastrous. "War, extravagance, despotism, poverty, starvation form the epitome of nearly half a century of the system which identifies in theory and practice the

State with the Monarch."<sup>57</sup>

During the minority of Louis the Fifteenth, following the death of Louis the Fourteenth, the Duke of Orleans, a good-natured profligate, acted as Regent. From personal reasons, the Duke formed an alliance with England and Holland. "Subsequently a quadruple alliance was formed between England, Holland, Austria, and France against the schemes of Spain to get control of the French Crown."<sup>58</sup>

In Seventeen-Twenty-Three the vain ceremony was gone through of taking Louis the Fifteenth, in his fourteenth year, to a Bed of Justice, and proclaiming his majority. He had been consecrated at Rheims the year before. The office of Regent was now at an end, but the influence of Orleans remained as prime-minister. It is pleasant to get to the close of so disgraceful a period as the Regency of Philip and the career of Dubois. "That unregretted adventurer came to his end, brought on by his debaucheries in August, Seventeen-Twenty-Three; and in four months he was followed by his congenial pupil, who died of apoplexy on the Second of December."<sup>59</sup>

The accession of Louis the Fifteenth marked the beginning of the decadence of the Monarchy. Paradoxically,

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<sup>57</sup>James Mackinnon, The Growth and Decline of the French Monarchy, pp. 471-472, 1902.

<sup>58</sup>Darrrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 208, 1917.

<sup>59</sup>James White, History of France, p. 392, 1901.

however, it was with a feeling of relief that Frenchmen learnt that the King under whom the Monarchy had reached its apogee had passed away. Louis the Fourteenth, supremely anxious to perpetuate his policy, had provided by will for a Council of Regency during the minority of his great-grandson, then a sickly child of five. "His nephew, Philip, Duke of Orleans, was to be a nominal Regent but Louis the Fourteenth intended that real power should be vested in the Duc de Maine, his bastard but recently legitimized son by Madame de Montespan."<sup>60</sup>

The wars that France engaged in under Louis the Fifteenth did not on the whole go well for her. India and North America were lost to the implacable British. The French Court gave an illusion of culture, prosperity, and civilization on the surface but there were fissures underneath. Immorality, atheism, financial disintegration were the order of the day. The famous saying, "After us the Deluge", comes down to us from that mad era.

Like a bevy of bacchanals, maddened with wine and garlanded with flowers the old French noblesse reeled to its doom, riotously gay to the last. "It was as though a carnival, rollicking through sunny avenues, had met the Pale Horse and its rider at the turn of the street, and the shouts of revelry had changed to shrieks of fear and

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<sup>60</sup> Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, pp. 104-105, 1944.

pain, as light, life, and joy were stricken down by swift appalling Death."<sup>61</sup>

After the death of Louis the Fifteenth, Louis the Sixteenth came to the Throne. It might have been thought that Louis the Sixteenth was mounting the Throne under peculiarly favorable circumstances, since he could not fail to be contrasted with the last sovereign; and not only was it impossible for anyone to be so worthless as not to shine by such a juxtaposition, but in those moral excellencies which, in peaceful and ordinary times shed a lustre on a Crown, he might have challenged a comparison with the worthiest of his predecessors. With the passive virtues of piety, humanity, justice, patience, and fortitude, combined with a sincere love for his people, he was amply endowed. It must be confessed, on the other hand, that of intellectual ability, and of those more active qualities which, though perhaps hardly attributes of the intellect, are nevertheless indispensable to a statesman and ruler of a nation, he was nearly destitute. He had no decision, no energy, no steadiness of purpose, no force of character. Though honestly anxious to select the best ministers he often allowed his judgment to be overruled, and, with respect to those to whom he did intrust his affairs, when they were peopled he had not discernment to assist or to

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<sup>61</sup>Thomas E. Watson, The Story of France, p. 695, 1899.



prompt them, when they saw their way he had not vigor of mind to support them. Unhappily his lot was cast at a time when the vices of his predecessor and the inveterate errors of the Government had made talents as well as virtues requisite to encounter the difficulties and dangers with which the State was surrounded. The finances were in a state of inextricable disorder and hopeless embarrassment.

The destitution of the lower classes, and in the agricultural districts of all but the very highest, was universal and insupportable. The discontent was, as a matter of course, at least co-extensive with the distress; and even of those who were not exasperated by personal privations, three most influential classes were as bitter against the Government as those who were. "The lawyers were indignant at the suppression of the Parliaments, the clergy resented the expulsion of the Jesuits; while the literary men were hostile to all institutions which, by their mere existence, seemed to stand in the way of their theories, whether political or religious."<sup>62</sup>

There was a period of confusion and struggle in which various measures were tried and discarded. Abroad and successful war against Britain was conducted on the side of the infant American Republic. This war further drained the country's finances, however, and made the approaching crash even more inevitable. Finally the States-

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<sup>62</sup>Charles Duke Yonge, The History of France Under the Bourbons, pp. 399-409, 1867.

General, consisting of an assembly of the Three Estates, Clergy, Nobility, and Commons, was called, and the Furies were unleashed.

Relying for its success on the striking nature of its services, the Monarchy entrusted itself to the hazards of the States-General in all innocence and in all good faith. The moment for doing so was singularly ill-chosen. "France, which had enjoyed half a century of unclouded prosperity, had been suffering for some months from an economic crisis of exceptional severity, and the effects of this seemed all the more painful because the country had become accustomed to well-being and a comfortable existence."<sup>63</sup>

As might have been expected the States-General got out of hand. Things went from bad to worse and the death-knell of the French Monarchy was sounded by the taking of the ancient fortress-prison of the Bastille on July Fourteenth, Seventeen-Eighty-Nine in a furious attack.

The attack was led by veteran army soldiers. The commander of the fortress had only a feeble garrison and could not hold out. After five hours of fighting, he capitulated. The mob expected to find the dungeons crowded with political prisoners, as they formerly had been. They found only seven prisoners; five of these were ordinary criminals and two were lunatics, probably sent there for safe-keeping. "The truth is that the Bastille had long since ceased to be

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<sup>63</sup>Pierre Gaxotte, The French Revolution, p. 89, 1902.



the "Cave of Horrors", which popular imagination still supposed it to be."<sup>64</sup>

With the fall of the Bastille the French Revolution had begun in earnest and wild work they made of it. The King and Queen lost their heads as did many of the Revolutionists themselves before it was over. France intended to spread the new ideas of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity throughout all of Europe. France consequently came to grips with the Monarchies of Europe.

From her Tight Little Isle Britain considered all this excitement on the Continent and decided that she didn't like it, didn't like it at all. Consequently Britain sided with the crowned heads of Europe in a titantic struggle against France that did not really end until Waterloo, many, many years later.

The advent of Napoleon Bonaparte represented one of those instances when the voiceless masses of the people spew to the surface a natural leader; a man with a will in him to rule or die. Such men can shake Empires into dust or raise new ones. Starting out a mere artillery corporal he rose to the position of the Emperor of France and ruler of much of Europe. His rise may be said to represent the final great flaring up of French power on the Continent. A flaring which like an exploding star blazes up fiercely and then, forever, dies away.

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<sup>64</sup>Darrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 232, 1917.

As for Napoleon himself, he was a ruler with more despotic authority than Cardinal Richelieu, and a more implacable hatred of popular freedom than Louis the Fourteenth. Yet the implements of tyranny had become so defective by the disuse of a few years, the traditions of unreasoning submission and divine right had been so washed out by the blood of the Revolution, that the position of France was infinitely happier, both in its present circumstances and its future prospects, than at any other time before. The dominance of the priest, the insolence of the noble, the exactions of the farmers-general, the exemption of favored orders, the uncertainty of law, the galling inequalities of social ranks, had all passed away. If taxation pressed, it was at all events equal in its pressure. It did not spare the chateau to fall with tenfold weight upon the cottage even conscription made no invidious distinctions, but fell on all alike. The French were contented with the equality about which they had raved so loudly, even when they discovered it was an equality of submission. But there were reasons which justified a strong and repressive Government, arising from the very novelty of their emancipation from former wrongs. If they had been allowed to riot in their ill-consolidated liberties, the Austrians and Russians would very soon have encamped upon the Seine. The curtailment of their theoretical rights was compensated for by the protection of society from the outbursts of discontent. It was a temporary sacrifice to secure their eventual

claims; and over all that might be disagreeable in their political condition, there was thrown the halo of military renown. "The Frenchman consoled himself with the reflection that he might be trampled on a little at Versailles and Fontainebleau, but that he was immensely feared at Vienna and Berlin."<sup>65</sup>

So we see that the excesses of Revolution brought forth a Strong Man as is so often the case. And this Strong Man, this Man of the People, was a far more rigorous tyrant than the mild mannered Louis the Sixteenth, whom the people had beheaded, had ever been. He was efficient, however, and the people did not starve under him. Instead they were killed off in his numerous wars. But it is far more interesting and exciting to be killed in wars and various foreign expeditions than to eke out your life in wearisome toil and grinding poverty. Today we hear much about the militaristic and aggressive tendencies of the Germans. And we sympathize with the French who have so often been their victims. But in those days no people were more attached to military glory than the French. And no people suffered more from the victorious French armies than the Germans.

Napoleon's many victorious campaigns made him master of most of Europe either through outright conquest or through treaties of alliance. But Britain, that ancient

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<sup>65</sup>James White, History of France, pp. 486-487, 1901.

festering thorn in Continental Europe's side, still held out bitterly against the Emperor and refused to accept French domination of the European mainland. Napoleon resolved to invade England under cover of the protection of the French and Spanish fleets commanded by the French Admiral, Villeneuve, who departed for the battle, which took place off the Cape of Trafalgar, on the Twentieth of October near Cadiz, Spain.

Villeneuve had thirty-three ships of the line French and Spanish, the latter being for the most part in bad repair and badly manned. The French ships were in better condition, but still inferior to the English, whose admirals, particularly Nelson, had won the same supremacy by sea which Napoleon and the French leaders enjoyed on shore. Nelson himself now met Villeneuve with twenty-seven vessels well equipped and commanded, among them seven fine three-deckers. Villeneuve deployed his forces in a long line, keeping no reserve. Nelson formed two columns, intending to break the French line at two points, and overwhelm one part before the other could come to the rescue. He and his first lieutenant, Collingwood, led the columns and fell upon the French and Spanish in advance of the other English ships. While Collingwood attacked the rear-guard, Nelson, with his flag-ship, the Victory, penetrated the French center, first cannonaded Villeneuve's flag-ship, the Bucentaur, and then attacked the French ship Redoubtable, commanded by the brave Captain Lucas, boarding it in a sort of hand-to-hand fight. In so close a contest Nelson lost the advantage of his superior ordnance. The French

swept his deck with a hail of shot and shell from the tops and shrouds of the Redoubtable. Suddenly Nelson was seen to totter and fall; a ball had pierced his body and broken his spine. "I'm done for!" said he; "the French triumph at last!" He just escaped the grief of seeing his flag-ship taken prisoner. Captain Lucas and his crew were on the point of boarding the Victory, when the English ship Temeraire, coming to the Victory said, poured a frightful volley of grape into the French ship. A third English vessel joined the Victory and Temeraire, and the Redoubtable, conquered by numbers, yielded only when her whole crew was wounded or dead. Nelson was fatally wounded; but his idea lived and triumphed. His two attacking columns cut off and surrounded a part of the Franco-Spanish line, and with a less number of vessels than the foe, the English proved superior in power at the decisive points, while at least a third of the Franco-Spanish fleet, the advance guard, took no part in the action. The French vessels engaged fought with desperate courage: the English carried the day by the rapidity with which they aided each other, and by the superiority of their fire. "The wretched Villeneuve, overpowered by several English ships, after four hours' struggle yielded, his ship being but a wretched hulk strewn with the dead and dying."<sup>66</sup>

The defeat at Trafalgar did not break Napoleon by

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<sup>66</sup>Henri Martin, A Popular History of France, Volume II, pp. 226-227, 1878.



any means but historians, looking backward, can see in it a turning point. As long as the British sat securely offshore blockading, stirring up discontent and rebellion on the Continent, landing her armies to aid any people fighting against France, Bonaparte's rule could never be secure. As Britain's policy of blockade forced Napoleon to issue decrees boycotting all British trade with the Continent the European nations grumbled. Russia refused to give up trade with Britain and Napoleon was forced into the disastrous Russian campaign. Spain was in a continuous state of revolt and British armies operated on the Iberian Peninsula with Portugal as their base. A coalition in which the German states were prominent was formed against Napoleon. In the first week of October in Eighteen-Thirteen the allies took the offensive. Blucher crossed the Elbe and marched on Leipsig, where on October Sixteenth to Nineteenth, Eighteen-Thirteen, one of the decisive battles of the world was fought. "After three days terrific conflict the French were compelled to retreat in confusion. Leipsig broke the military power of Napoleon."<sup>67</sup>

The allied forces invaded France from both north and south. Paris could not defend itself. The enemies' hosts passed through her gates. They placed Louis the Eighteenth, brother of Louis the Sixteenth, on the Throne. Napoleon was forced to abdicate, and, it is said, took

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<sup>67</sup>Darrd Henry Montgomery, The Leading Facts of French History, p. 285, 1917.



poison, but without effect. "He was now sent an exile to rule over the island of Elba, in the Mediterranean."<sup>68</sup>

Napoleon, however, having ruled Europe could not content himself with an island and he soon returned to France where he was received with wild acclaim by the French armies which were sent to capture him by the Government. Back in power he hastily rallied his forces for the struggle with the tremendous forces which soon would be hurled against him. At Waterloo Napoleon met the British commander Wellington in a last great battle with his deadly English foes and their allies. Waterloo went down in History as one of the greatest victories that had ever crowned British arms. For many successive hours the imperturbable line of red-coats had stood the charges of the furious battalions which fought under the eye of the Emperor, and felt that the glory of France was intrusted to their keeping. The squadrons of horse, the discharges of artillery, and finally the Old Guard, had made no impression on the soldiers of England. And when the decisive moment came, and the distant guns of the Prussians proclaimed that Blucher was at hand, the great word was given, the inert masses had remained immovable so long, rose up with a shout that reached the ears of Napoleon, and the irresistible bayonets poured on. Down in dreadful power swept the regulated torrent of horse

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<sup>68</sup> Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, p. 182, 1944.

man; and the French, surprised and terrified, were huddled into broken heaps. The day was won. "Napoleon turned his horse in bitterness of despair, and silent, moody, and bewildered at the frightful scene, made his way to Paris before the intelligence of his disaster had arrived and gave up the struggle as hopeless."<sup>69</sup>

The fall of Napoleon marked the final turning point of French power on the Continent. True for a long time afterward France was regarded and feared as a great Power, but the spark had gone out, the flame had been extinguished. While the Eastward March of Power did not shift completely to Germany until Eighteen-Seventy there were already rumblings of a new unity and a new national spirit east of the Rhine. A spirit which had been born out of French aggression and fed by British support. The defeat of Louis the Fourteenth by Marlborough represented merely the defeat of the French Monarchy. The defeat of Napoleon by Wellington represented the defeat of the French people.

France was now to submit a second time to the indignity of accepting a dynasty imposed on her by the bayonets of foreign armies, and that under circumstances far more degrading and offensive to the national vanity than before. The allied generals absolutely refused to listen to any propositions for an armistice until they were under the very walls of Paris. Negotiations were opened with the Duke

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<sup>69</sup>James White, History of France, p. 527, 1901.

of Wellington and Blucher, and on the Third of July, Eighteen-Fourteen a convention was signed at Saint Cloud by which Paris was to be surrendered to the allies within three days, and the French army, evacuating the city, was to retire upon the Loire. By the Seventh the whole army had withdrawn from Paris, of which the allies immediately took possession; and on the next day Louis the Eighteenth re-entered the city, attended by five Marshals, escorted by his household, and surrounded by foreign battalions. His reception was by no means universally cordial; the partisans of the old regime shouted and congratulated, but the populace were for the most part gloomily silent, or muttered suppressed murmurs of indignation. "Talleyrand was declared president of the council of ministers; and the King was induced, sorely against his will, to bestow the department of police on the regicide Fouche, the despicable traitor who had duped and betrayed all parties in succession, but who was now felt, both by the allies and the ultra-Royalists, to be too important and dangerous a personage to be offended."<sup>70</sup>

Louis the Eighteenth was followed by Charles the Tenth whose reactionary policies soon cost him his Throne. He was replaced by Louis Phillipe, a moderate bourgeois Monarch. The series of revolutionary disturbances of Eighteen-Forty-Eight led to the overthrow of this Orleanist Monarchy and the establishment of a Republic. Louis Napoleon followed

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William H. Jervis, A Students History of France, p. 662, 1862.

this uprising as his great namesake had followed the first great French Revolution. Louis Napoleon embarked upon a program of dictatorial power at home and imperialist expansion abroad. In Eighteen-Seventy he came to grips with a newly risen Germany. The decisive battle came at Sedan. "After desperate fighting he was compelled to surrender with eighty thousand Frenchmen; the Emperor Louis Napoleon became a prisoner of war."<sup>71</sup>

Power had shifted East, to Prussia.

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<sup>71</sup>Sir J. A. R. Marriott, A Short History of France, p. 235, 1944.

## PART IV

## GERMANY

Very Dark and Very Bright is Pan  
 And he made the World to suit his Fancy  
 Made it of Blood and Fire.  
 Of Beauty and of Shadows  
 And his Symbol is the Sword  
 Peace comes but the Sword Returns. - From the  
**Ancient Greek.**

Germany as a modern nation-state came late to the table and so her story is considerably shorter than that of France and Spain. Her impact upon Western, and indeed upon World Civilization has certainly not been any the less because of this, however, and perhaps future historians may rate her influence as more profound, in the long run, than that of her predecessors.

While the forces of national unity, militarism, and patriotism had been gestating in Germany since the Napoleonic Wars it was not until the German States under the leadership of Prussia and its redoubtable Premier, Bismarck, defeated Louis Napoleon of France in the Franco-Prussian War of Eighteen-Seventy that the Reich stood forth before the World as a Great Power on the European Continent. The war broke out in Eighteen-Seventy in a somewhat unexpected manner. A Hohenzollern Prince had been chosen as King of Spain, and France, alarmed at this requested Prussia to secure his withdrawal. Bismarck gave unsatisfactory replies, and his alteration of the famous "Ems telegram" made war inevitable. While, during the four years, Eighteen-Sixty-Six to Eighteen-Seventy, Bismarck

had been preparing for war by bringing all the German armies under the control of Prussia and in other ways, Napoleon had been negotiating with Austria and Italy, and plans for joint action against Prussia had been discussed at Vienna and elsewhere. "When, however, it came to war, no assistance was forthcoming from these quarters, and France, quite unprepared, as it proved, had to face alone the onslaught of Prussia and her allies."<sup>1</sup>

The French went into the war with a kind of foolish, arrogant confidence. After some preliminary engagements the French forces fell back on Sedan. On September the First, Eighteen-Seventy, was fought one of the decisive battles of the World, a battle that dethroned a dynasty and changed the form of Government in France. The French General Mac Mahon took up a defensive position near Sedan. Here some protection at least was offered by the winding Maas on the west and south, and by the Givonne on the east. None the less it proved a death trap: the French called it la souriciere. "Fighting from early dawn to evening the Germans gradually surrounded them; drove them down at Bayeilles and La Moncelle, from Daigny, Haybes, and Givonne, from Floing, Illy, and Saint Menges, and from the sheltering Bois de la Garonne; crowding them into such a narrow space that manœuvring became impossible, then, finally, after a significant pause to see if they were not ready to save

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<sup>1</sup>A. W. Holland, Germany, p. 285, 1914.



further horrors by surrender, trained their heavy cannon on the worthless old fortress and on the chaotic mass of men, horses, cannon, and vehicles that overflowed the streets."<sup>2</sup>

Fighting continued for some time after Sedan but the French military power had been shattered. After the capitulation of Paris on January Twenty-Eighth, Eighteen-Seventy-One, Bismarck at once made possible free election of a French National Assembly. "He considered it to be to the interests of Germany and of Europe that a new, stable, and generally recognized French State should emerge to make peace and to assert itself against internal subversive forces."<sup>3</sup>

Bismarck succeeded in founding the Reich even before peace was concluded. On January Eighteenth, Eighteen-Seventy-One King William was proclaimed German Emperor in the Hall of Mirrors of the Palace at Versailles. It was a simple ceremony, military in tone, with far reaching consequences for World History. Very few contemporaries knew how distasteful the preliminary negotiations had been. Although Bavaria certainly wished to continue cooperating with the North German Federation; she wanted both a narrower and a wider federation; in other words, she wanted to save as much of her own statehood as possible, either

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<sup>2</sup>Ernest F. Henderson, A Short History of Germany, p. 433, 1917.

<sup>3</sup>Hubertus zu Loewenstein, The Germans in History, p. 322, 1945.

with or without Wurttemberg. This Bavarian policy prevented the joint entrance of the South German states into the Federation. Tedious special negotiations and a series of separate treaties were necessary. Wurttemberg also tried to gain territorial and other advantages. The final result was so-called reserved rights for Bavaria and Wurttemberg in connection with jurisdiction over mails, railroads, financial administration, and army command. "In addition Bavaria was given the right, of making her own treaties and received the permanent vice-presidency of the federal council, as well as assurance of consent of that council in case of Bavaria declaring war, and finally the right to levy her own taxes on beer and brandy. Baden and Hesse-Darmstadt entered the Federation without special privileges."<sup>4</sup>

Bismarck's basic thought in the twenty years after he completed its unification derived from Germany's geographic situation. He held that Germany, with its long land borders in the East and West, was compelled to a defense on two fronts and thus ill-adapted to a policy of expansion. Only a strong army could settle the danger of a war on two fronts. If one substitutes Navy for Army, one has the present situation of North America. To Bismarck, overseas acquisition and a large Navy at the time seemed dangerous, since German talents did not lie in this direction and Britain would never concede naval equality to the strongest military power. Alliances with Russia and Austria, friendship with

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<sup>4</sup>Veit Valentin, The German People, p. 480, 1946.

France, little or no rivalry in foreign continents, these seemed to him to be the best guarantees for the security of the Reich. For this reason, he at first lent no support at all to the colonial aspirations; even later his support was limited; Kool Peters, Luderitz and Wormann were the pioneers in the field. "Not until the middle Eighties did he sanction and himself undertake a colonial policy."<sup>5</sup>

Although public opinion was certainly not among the more obvious of the determining factors of Bismarck's foreign policy after the establishment of the Empire, his attitude toward it had momentous consequences both to himself and to Germany after his fall. Not until the problem of Germany's relations with Russia and Austria became acute, when popular sentiment threatened the nice balance which he wished to maintain between these powers, did he show much appreciation of its importance. Through the press bureau of the foreign office and in his speeches to the Reichstag he gave a good deal of attention to the education of opinion in regard to the proper solution of this fundamental problem. The results, though difficult to estimate, were doubtless considerable, but even more important was his success. The nationalist sections of the middle classes united with the Conservatives in an unquestioning support of his foreign policy, but it was nevertheless under Bismarck that a cleft developed between the official conduct

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<sup>5</sup> Emil Ludwig, The Germans, p. 351, 1941.

of German policy and a section of public opinion that neither he nor his successors ever bridged. For the most part, neither the Progressives nor the Social Democrats, who were making good their claim of speaking in the name of the working classes, accepted his aims and methods as those which were required by the country's true interest. While the former applauded his strong speech against Russia, February Sixth, Eighteen-Eighty-Eight, their reaction would have been different if they had been aware of the Reinsurance Treaty; neither of these opposition parties had any sympathy for the principles of Machtpolitik and both saw Germany's salvation in a diplomatic association with the Western Powers. They also agreed in condemning Bismarck's use of the press. The existence of official and semi-official newspapers was a standing grievance; but even more offensive was the publication of alarmist communications, the famous Kaltwasserstrahlen, during periods of international tension. Innumerable protests were direct against the practice of exaggerating foreign dangers to drum sentiment for increases in the army and to secure pliant majorities in the Reichstag. By his abandonment of the Kulturkampf, Bismarck neutralized the Centrists criticism to a considerable extent, but his domestic policy, especially in its refusal of any concession to the principle of ministerial responsibility and in its reliance upon indirect taxes, which bore most heavily upon the working classes, continued to alienate liberal opinion. Taxation and military service bore most heavily

upon the masses, but their spokesmen were refused any real voice in German policy at home or abroad. Instead, Bismarck dismissed them lightly as Reichfeind or as sentimentalists who were incapable of understanding the realities of international politics. No wonder that his dismissal was accepted not only with indifference but even with the hope that it would mean a change for the better. If he was largely responsible for the divorce between German policy and the masses, his influence upon the nationalists had serious consequences. He knew that every country must pay for the windows broken by its press; Germany eventually paid the bill for Bismarck's use of the press for alarmist purposes in the form of a public opinion that was increasingly susceptible to panic and hysteria. "He was responsible to no small degree for the conviction that the chauvinists would always dictate France's action in a crisis, an assumption which inevitably militated against a cool steadiness in relations with her, and for the ingrained suspicion that England would never be a reliable friend."<sup>6</sup>

On March Fifteenth, Eighteen-Ninety, the great statesman who had hitherto guided Germany's destiny was compelled to tender his resignation, and the youthful Emperor instantly accepted it. It was the outcome of a long and bitter struggle for power, scarcely noticed by the general public, but watched and abetted by those concerned with suspense, dismay, and often with impatience. Undoubtedly

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<sup>6</sup>E. Malcolm Carroll, Germany and the Great Powers, pp. 339-341, 1938.

Bismarck wished to retain his office, even against his sovereigns will, and regarded it as ~~the~~ duty of his colleagues to support him unreservedly in the struggle. It was not sheer thirst for personal rule which drove him to this course, but the firm conviction that in the personality of the Emperor William the Second there were serious dangers for Germany. The Kaiser, however, wished to rule in person. He felt that the Chancellor's position, and the way in which he sometimes advocated his wishes, were incompatible with his Monarchical dignity and vocation. This, and this alone, was the real root of the hostility between the ~~two~~ men, not their divergent views on social and political questions, nor even the irreconcilable differences in their general outlook; for the Kaiser had no firm and wide political outlook, but was swayed by momentary moods and impulses, arising from the popular feeling. Even questions of foreign policy played a very secondary part in this great conflict. It has sometimes been alleged that there was an insurmountable difference of opinion over the scope and purpose of the Austro-German Treaty, and over the attitude of Germany towards Russia's Bulgarian plans. As a matter of fact it was not so much that they held conflicting opinions on these questions as that the Kaiser was annoyed that dispatches relating to alleged Russian preparations for attack had not been brought to his notice at the right time. It is true that Bismarck had repeatedly deplored and criticised the Kaisers acts and speeches because of their effect on

foreign policy. "But these things were not of decisive moment."<sup>7</sup>

With the fall of Bismarck German diplomacy entered a new, and for the Germans, an unfavorable era. Bismarck had followed a policy of maintaining close ties with both Britain and Russia. The Kaiser gradually abandoned both policies. The decrepit Russian Monarchy proved less of a threat to the Reich than Bismarck had anticipated but England, ah England proved fatal indeed to the German Empire.

The Kaiser was at one time very friendly with the Russian Czar and actually addressed him by his first name. For a time, too, there was talk of an alliance between Germany and Britain. But the forces of national fears and antagonisms combined with the unfortunate personality of the young Kaiser would brook no denial.

The revolution that occurred in Anglo-German relations at the turn of the present century has generally been attributed to three main factors: first, economic rivalry; second, the German naval program, signifying her entrance into the field of Weltpolitik; and third, a tendency in certain sections of the press to magnify national differences and fan the flames of ill-will. Each of these factors, to the exclusion of others, has been stressed as the chief cause of friction.

The anti-English trend that now became evident in

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<sup>7</sup>Erich Brandenburg, From Bismarck to the World War, pp. 20-21, 1933.

German foreign policy was advanced primarily by the very able Privy Councillor von Holstein, who became more and more a leader in foreign policy because of his energy and his zest for effecting combinations. Holstein was a monomaniac, infinitely superior to the average diplomat, egoistic and almost abnormally absorbed in his own world of ideas and in his official duties, which so completely sequestered him that in the long run he lost contact with reality and also flexibility of action, the very qualities that had been responsible for Bismarck's greatness. Holstein was personally disagreeable. He delighted in irritating, casting slurs, and even spreading slanders; in administering every variety of subtle poison; and he was corrupt in money matters. This man, in a position to know the state of international politics better than anyone else, exploited his knowledge in speculations on the stock exchange and thus presented the unusual phenomenon of corruption in Prussian-German officialdom. Curiously enough, Holstein did not become at all rich, but died in relatively modest circumstances; he had at any rate savored the true gambler's joy, which is simply to gamble. "And his fate in matters of foreign policy was the same as in his money ventures; all his diabolical plotting ended in undramatic bankruptcy."<sup>8</sup>

The tremendous growth of German man power and industrial capacity during the Wilhelmian era was not accompanied

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<sup>8</sup> Veit Valentin, The German People, p. 521, 1946.



by a corresponding extension of democratic institutions, as the Empire remained a semi-autocracy, the middle and lower classes being excluded from any share in the Government. There was not even an attempt to lift Bismarcks stigma on democrats, socialists, Catholics, Poles, Danes and Alsatians, although these "enemies of the Empire" mustered six and one half out of twelve and two tenths million voters in Nineteen-Twelve. The policy of either exterminating or reconciling the foreign nationalities within the Empire was already doomed to failure when the last pre-war Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, made a last attempt to solve the problem. In Nineteen-Eleven Alsace-Lorraine was at last given a constitution which brought the country, for forty years treated like a backward mandate, nearer to the standard of a self-governing colony; but the notorious Zabern incident of Nineteen-Thirteen revealed that neither the arrogance of the Prussian officers nor the hostility of the population had undergone a change. The Zabern incident also confirmed the conviction of all progressive elements that the actual power in Germany was vested in the military caste, which used the civil authorities only as a convenient screen. Similarly sterile was the Prussian policy towards the Poles, who numbered about ten per cent of the population. The laws of expropriation were made severer but the Junkers failed to realize that it was no longer the Polish squires, but the Polish artisans and peasants, who formed the backbone of national resistance, so that the anti-Polish laws remained for the

most part ineffective. "Bethmann eventually decided not to apply them, but he could not replace them by anything better."<sup>9</sup>

With autocracy at home and militaristic imperialism abroad the road to war loomed ahead. France brooded, thinking of revenge. Russia was estranged from the Reich. Britain was aroused by German naval preparations. Italy, as always, was wavering. And the Kaiser was not a cool, calculating leader like Bismarck but an unstable, emotional sentimentalist.

Nevertheless, when the War broke out in the summer of Nineteen-Fourteen, the German people were taken by surprise as were all the other nations. As a nation the German people had neither expected nor prepared for the War as they did twenty-five years later, but unlike all the other peoples they exhibited joyous enthusiasm instead of alarm. The great training school that had lasted, first three hundred, and then again forty, years had held this nation in armed expectancy. The Germans, all the many millions of them, resembled a professional fire-fighting force in which every man leaps out of bed at night at the first warning bell to hasten to his long-prepared place known to him from a hundred practice-tests. "All the other nations ran to their places like members of a volunteer fire brigade, with signs of confusion and terror."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> S. H. Steinberg, A Short History of Germany, pp. 250-251, 1945.

<sup>10</sup> Emil Ludwig, The Germans, p. 412, 1941.

A clear-sighted German diplomacy and a strong Civil Government not under the thumb of a politically incompetent High Command might have brought the War to an early and honorably close. For this it would have been necessary to pay careful attention to the sentiments of the United States. Indeed, no other single event affected the family of European nations, a family, despite war, more deeply than did the appearance of American divisions on the Occidental stage. "Had America remained neutral, a negotiated peace, which should always be the aim of statesmanship, might have been concluded with its cooperation, provided, of course, that the Entente did not have reason to expect eventual American intervention."<sup>11</sup>

Astonishingly enough the Supreme Command failed in several decisive situations. In the beginning the great offensive against France collapsed, not from a lack of troops, but because of inadequate strategy. After tremendous losses the attack on Verdun in Nineteen-Fifteen ended in German defeat. But the Battle of Tannenberg and the break-through at Gorlice were heroic feats. German striking-power was most effective in the East, against the inadequately organized and poorly led Russian armies, and in the Balkans. In the West the Allies were more than able to hold their own. Germany was scarcely able to compete with their mass of war equipment, let alone to outstrip it. And the German Navy proved a great disappointment.

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<sup>11</sup>Hubertus zu Loavenstein, The Germans in History, p. 396, 1945.

The cruisers were much too weak to protect overseas trade, which was choked off by the British blockade. Submarines alone were able to challenge the blockade and to maintain a kind of counter-blockade. But Tirpity had been reprehensibly remiss. He had let the construction of V-boats lag in favor of the battle-fleet. The Reich had invested more and more funds in the building of dread noughts in spite of warnings of naval experts, particularly Admiral Karl Galster. These dreadnoughts had in the first place made war with England inevitable through the very fact of their existence; in the second place they had worked against the enlargement and equipment of the land army; thirdly they were not able to inflict any notable injury on the English fleet in all the course of the war. "The only great naval battle of the World War, the Battle of Jutland, brought no clear cut decision."<sup>12</sup>

After two years of war, though there was no reason whatever to anticipate defeat, the civilian heads in Berlin and Vienna began to realize that a decisive victory was impossible, and that it might be wise to explore the possibilities of peace. It was suggested by Burian, who had succeeded Berchtold at the Ballplatz, that the Central Powers and their Allies should lay their cards on the table. The German Chancellor, who had never been dazzled by military success, favored the plan of approaching the enemy: but he vetoed the notion of a public declaration of terms, on

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<sup>12</sup>Veit Valentin, The German People, p. 564, 1946.

the ground that the offer of a compromise, unless it brought peace in its train, would dishearten a people attuned to the loftiest expectations and prepared for further sacrifices to attain them. It was therefore agreed that the four Allies should invite the Entente to a discussion as soon as Roumania, who had entered the struggle on the Twenty-Eighth of August, Nineteen-Sixteen, received a decisive defeat. "Meanwhile the hands of the Government were strengthened by the Auxiliary Service Bill, which compelled all male citizens between seventeen and sixty to perform duties required by the State."<sup>13</sup>

These cautious peace feelers were rejected by the Allied Powers. There was really very little real will for peace on the part of either side at the time. England and the other Allies looked forward to the intervention of America which came in the end. And so the War went on.

By Nineteen-Seventeen the impossibility of victory in a war on two fronts was evident to the well-informed. No doubt Ludendorff organized defense excellently. But as a politician he was pursuing an unattainable and chimerical aim, that of winning the peace. The army was exhausted and the fleet powerless. The nation had obtained obvious military successes, but no decision. The Russian front had collapsed, it was true. But the coalition of the Western nations, Britain, France, the United States, and their allies,

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<sup>13</sup>George P. Gooch, Germany, p. 141, 1925.

was perfectly capable of beating Germany without Russian aid. Such was the supreme consequence of the mistakes accumulated by the Bismarckian and Wilhelmian system. The Kaiser's power and the prestige of the military nobility were ruined for all time. "One last effort, the offensive of Nineteen-Eighteen, and the great system, ill-led, and broken by the final and inescapable disintegration of its forces, collapsed, vanquished and humiliated."<sup>14</sup>

On the uncereemonious disappearance of royalty and royalists, a Council of People's Commissars took over the fluttering reins of Government, but, as it was composed of evolutionary and revolutionary socialists in equal proportion, it was divided against itself and incapable of taking energetic steps in any direction. Simultaneously with the Council of Peoples Commissars, 'Worker's and Soldier's Councils', modelled on the Russian Soviets, sprang up all over Germany; and, at the same time, particularist movements displayed great vigor not only in the federate states proper, but also in the Rhineland and to a lesser degree in Hanover, Slesvig-Holstein, Hesse-Cassel and Silesia. The first problem which the new authorities had to decide was whether Germany should be organized as a Soviet Republic or a democracy. The Independent Socialists, vying with the recently established Spartacus League, forerunner of the Communist party, advocated

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<sup>14</sup>Edmond Vermeil, Germany's Three Reichs, p. 217, 1945.

dictatorship of the proletariat. The right-wing Socialists stuck to their democratic convictions, and, supported by the Central Congress of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils and the Federal Governments, they carried the day. Writs for the election of a Constituent National Assembly were issued, and universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage was granted to all men and women over twenty years of age. Thus thwarted, the champions of the proletarian revolution took up arms; irregular gangs of so-called sailors fought the remnants of the old army which had placed themselves at the disposal of the Government. "The fighting in Berlin during which the radical members withdrew from the Council of Peoples Commissars, ended with a complete victory of the Government; and on the Nineteenth of January the elections for the National Assembly took place in good order, the Communists abstaining."<sup>15</sup>

It is no exaggeration to say that the fate of the Revolution was sealed by the Berlin fighting in Germany in January. Someone has said that it was the German Revolutions Battle of the Marne, in any case, the radical Left had been crushed. The fires of the Revolution in the provinces were **extinguished** in the same way during the succeeding months. "The Socialist Government triumphed but behind their backs it was the officers that were triumphant, and they now applied themselves to the task of turning the wheel, to use Noske's phrase, ever faster, towards the restoration of

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<sup>15</sup>

S. H. Steinberg, A Short History of Germany, p. 264, 1945.

the old militarist and aggressive Germany."<sup>16</sup>

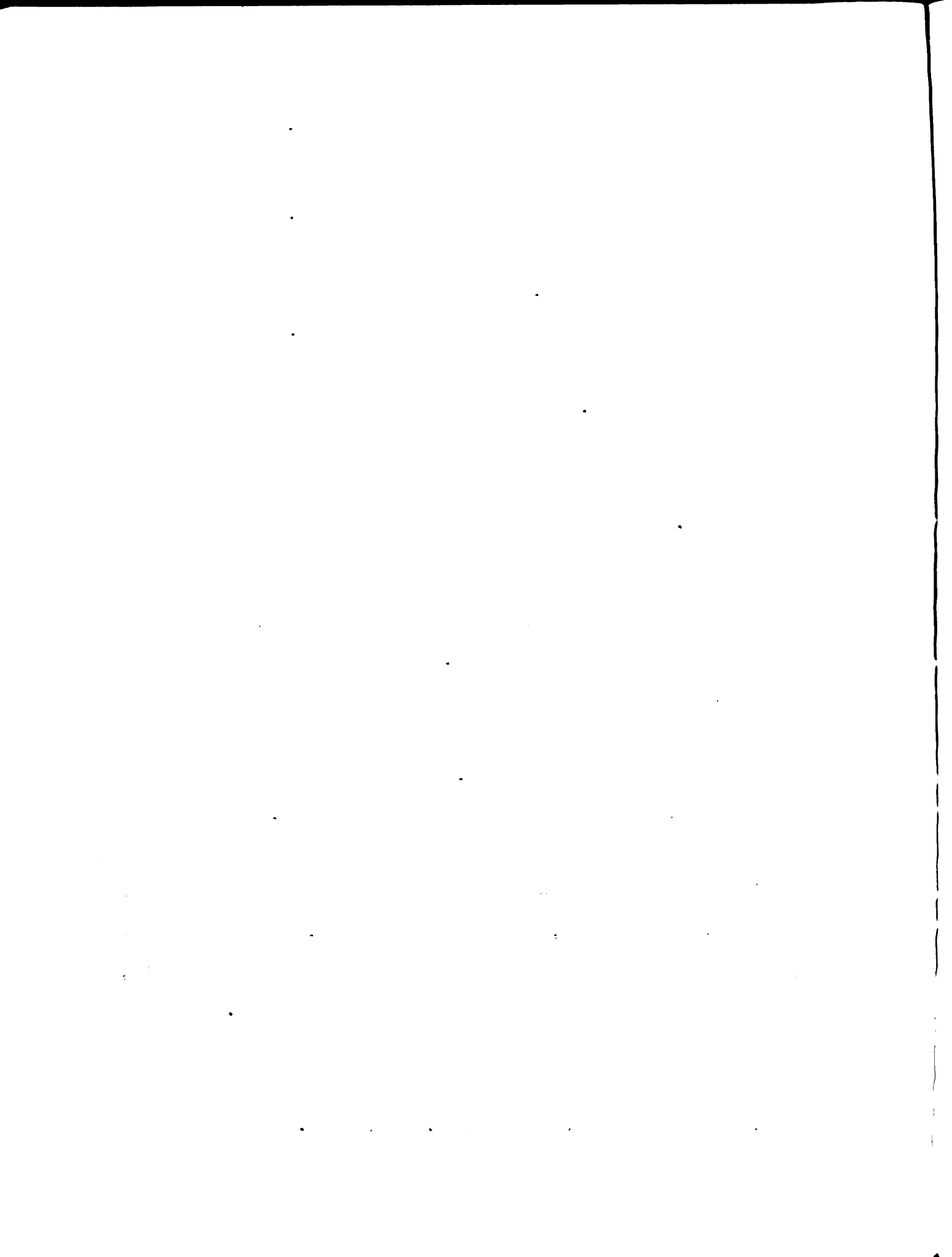
The new Republican Government had to accept the onus of the Versailles Treaty and of War Guilt. Germany seemed ruined but actually the basic elements of German strength were as yet unharmed. The colonies she had lost were of little value to Germany when she had them. She retained the Ruhr and the major part of the country was unoccupied by Allied armies. But the reactionary elements in Germany desired revenge and did their best to prepare for a new war and throw the blame for defeat in the old one on the Republic.

The spiritual father of the Weimar Constitution was Professor Hugo Preuss, the well-known jurist, but his two main ideas were not realized. He wanted a centralized state, with Prussia dissolved into her historical components and the other individual states developed into bodies capable of administering themselves. The Reich was to make all decisions, even down to municipal elections. This new Reich was to be based in every respect on the national consciousness of a self-directing people, it was to be democratic, centralized, and parliamentary. A storm of objections arose against this fundamental view of Preuss's, patterned on the institutions of western Europe. It became evident that German particularism had not disappeared

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<sup>16</sup>Wladyslaw Kulski, Germany, p. 238, 1945.





with the Princes and their courts. A new and extraordinary form of particularism emerged, with separate parliaments, local dignitaries, officials and gentry, coteries and cliques. Although there was hardly an instance in which the individual states still showed the old tribal character, they still laid claim even to these old and venerable interests. The astonishing fact emerged that in so artificial a dynastic structure as Baden, for instance, a new kind of local patriotic spirit had developed; and it now took over the heritage of the lost dynasty with obstinate self-confidence. In Prussia, of course, all the old conservative forces of the east, in the name of true Prussianism, undertook the fight against the breaking-up that threatened. The individual states survived, with limited authority, but with their own parliaments and governments. Half of all the Prussian votes in the council of the Reich were given to the provinces and the other half retained by the state government, so that the Prussian annexations of earlier times were in a sense counterbalanced by giving the annexed territories a sort of autonomy. The Government of the Reich and the Prussian Government now existed side by side, in the same capital, Berlin. Both rested a parliamentary basis and possessed a fully developed bureaucratic structure, though the Prussian state had no president; it would have been preposterous to institute such an office in addition to that of the president of the Reich. The president of the Prussian ministry, elected by the Prussian parliament, was at the head of affairs for that part of Germany. There

was also a Prussian council of state, which represented the interests of the provinces; it was modelled on the council of the Reich. The constitutional setting-off of Prussia from the Reich, which Bismarck had wisely avoided, led to all sorts of administrative difficulties. Here indeed was the weakest point in the new order; do what it would, the council of the Reich was unable to cope with the difficulty. This council under the Weimar Constitution was a revival of Bismarck's federal council. It did not provide parliamentary representation like a Senate, but was a bureaucratic body that naturally leaned toward particularism and red tape. The democratic principle of referendum was introduced by provisions for the optional referendum, on the initiative of the voters, and for the statutory referendum on the initiative of the voters, and for the statutory referendum, on the initiative of the Government. A temporary dictatorship was provided for extraordinary emergencies. The parts of the Weimar Constitution dealing with community life, religion, education, and schools were ample and wisely formulated. The law in regard to officials was drawn up with special care. The whole document was only slightly social-minded. It provided for the introduction of worker's councils and emphasized the freedom to form associations, social welfare, and a minimum of social rights for workers. The principles of private property and the right of inheritance were recognized; control of wages, taxation, and supervision were entrusted to the state; entails were to be done away with. "No one could detect in these cautious

measures a revolutionary attack on the existing order of society or on the ownership of property."<sup>17</sup>

At first things did not go too badly for the Republic but the crash of Nineteen-Twenty-Nine and the death of Stresemann, both of which occurred in the month of October started a chain of events which finally ended in the Nazi Dictatorship and World War Two. Utterly-unable to deal with the rising tide of unemployment, economic chaos, and clamorous attacks from both the extreme Right and the extreme Left the Republic drifted toward dissolution.

How did it come about that almost the whole German nation at once submitted tamely to a regime which meant the complete negation of everything that was best in German life and tradition? Two answers to this question have been put forward. One school of thought maintains that Naziism is nothing but the undisguised expression of the eternal German spirit, whereas the opposite school regards the Nazis as a mad minority which has temporarily imposed its will upon a decent and innocent nation. Neither of these arguments can satisfy the historian. The nation that has produced men such as Gutenberg, Luther, Durer, Bach, Kant, Goethe, Rontgen, and Robert Koch cannot be described as an abomination to the rest of the world, unredeemed and unredeemable. The very fact that the Nazis have maintained

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<sup>17</sup> Veit Valentin, The German People, pp. 589-590, 1946.

themselves in power only by the brutal methods of the concentration camp and the omnipresent Gestapo clearly shows that they do not represent the German nation as a whole. "On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the vast majority of the people either openly hailed, or at least raised no objections to the political aims and methods of Hitler and his henchmen, from the abolition of the fundamental rights of man in Germany, to the cold extirpation of millions of men, women, and children."<sup>18</sup>

The Nazi Government set out to erase the shame of Versailles, Communism, the Jews, Democracy, and a number of other things which it seemed to find objectionable. After sensational bloodless diplomatic triumphs in the Saar, the Rhineland, Austria, and Czechoslovakia the Third German Reich in collaboration with its most un-Aryan, but pleasingly ferocious, ally Japan in the Pacific and with Italy in the Mediterranean launched World War Two with the attack on Poland. Britain and France finally had to fight and the last tragic act for Germany in the Eastward March of Power had begun.

An hour before the fearful attack that would lay Poland waste was set in motion, Hitler called a learned aide and asked the question. "Who was Genghis Khan?" "In all truth memories associated with a famous ancient scourge of mankind pale into insignificance when one tries to estimate the blood and tears which in these our days an un-

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<sup>18</sup>S. H. Steinberg, A Short History of France, p. 278, 1945.

successful Austrian painter, become dictator of Germany, has exacted of mankind. History will, one thinks, hold him and some of his henchmen solely and fully responsible for the outbreak of the greatest war in human annals. It may be that he did not envisage a world-wide conflict, even though his diplomats and officers had reached a kind of agreement with Japan and were busily fomenting trouble in India. The purpose of these and kindred maneuvers may have been to keep Great Britain and the United States occupied until the Third Reich should have grown strong enough to control for a century or more the destinies of mankind. Humanity may never possess the information on which to base an accurate and realistic appraisal of Hitler's true purpose. But it will remain forever evident that the democracies, for all their faults and failures, wanted no new holocaust of the peoples and were therefore ready to make costly sacrifices. "Hitler, on the other hand, plotted a war of vengeance and of conquest. He was the conscious builder of the world's doom."<sup>19</sup>

The sensational German successes which followed the outbreak of the war are recent history. Following his alliance with Russia, in which he emulated Napoleon, Hitler overwhelmed Poland, conquered Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France and stood on the English channel. Once again a powerful European conqueror confronted Britain, the Old Man of the Sea.

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<sup>19</sup>Shuster and Bergstraesser, Germany, p. 214, 1944.

What would Britain do? The part she played in Nineteen-Forty deviated not by a hairbreadth from the line she had always followed. It was in conformity with the clearest historic traditions of Great Britain, who has never ceased to oppose to the ambitions of conquerors an insurmountable barrier. But it is not enough to say that the German army came up against the inflexible resistance of a country separated from the Continent by a broad arm of the sea. It must be borne in mind that if Britain, then defenceless, had been eliminated from the war by a German invasion, the enemy would have had every chance of winning against Russia. Moreover, the British resistance permitted the formation and consolidation of the alliance of Russia, the United States, and the British Empire. In other words, it is thanks to British heroism that there was built up, in face of the Hitlerite ambitions whose unlimited scope we know, the new Triple Entente, the association of Powers that needed only time to crush Germany beneath its blows. The supreme hour of destiny had struck. The British people and its Prime Minister realized it. "They gained incomparable greatness by that Battle of Britain, which saved the world and made possible the liberation of France."<sup>20</sup>

Finally, again like Napoleon, Hitler quarreled with his little-trusted ally, Russia. Hitler felt that Russia was a threat to him. He needed security in the East if he

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Edmond Vermeil, Germany's Three Reichs, p. 375, 1945.





wanted to conquer the West. A Russia hostile but defeated seemed to him more desirable than a false friend who was fully prepared. So he attacked Russia. The climax of the war had come. The fact that Russia was kept busy in Europe heightened Japan's readiness to strike. Japan made use of the European situation to push her own program in Asia, and she flung a deadly challenge to the United States. "America's entrance into the war gave it its global character."<sup>21</sup>

The disastrous defeat suffered by the Third Reich is well known. Bombed from the air by Britain and the United States from the West the Reich armies in the East encountered vast spaces, ice, snow, desperate guerilla resistance, Cossacks, the frightful nameless spawn of Central Asian deserts, and constantly replaced Russian armies. In Nineteen-Forty-Five the Reich collapsed under invasion from both East and West. Power shifted East again. Russia's Red Star was rising.

## PART V

## RUSSIA

There can be no truce with Adam. - Zad.  
The Bear that Walks like a Man. - Kipling.

The Russians were always late in everything they did. Perhaps their geographical situation and their long domination by the Mongol Golden Horde had something to do with it. Whatever the reason, Russia lagged behind the other European nations and kept many Asiatic features, some of which she retains to this day. Even up to comparatively recent times Russia was regarded by the more enlightened nations of Europe in much the same light as a barbarian nation. The man who first set to work to Europeanize Russia and to transform the ancient, half Tartar realm into a modern nation-state was Peter the Great.

Soon after Peter's assumption of power there came a clash between the two opposing forces of the time in Russia, desire for progress and conservative clinging to traditions of the past. The occasion for conflict was a vacancy in the Patriarchate. "The Reform party, under the leadership of the young Tsar, put forward the progressive Metropolitan of Pskov, while the Old Russian party supported the claim of the Bishop of Kayan, a strong Conservative, to whom a shaved chin was a sure sign of heresy."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sonia E. Howe, A Thousand Years of Russian History, p. 36, 1915.

Peter vigorously overcame all obstacles at home and ruthlessly suppressed conspiracies and plots directed against him by his sister Sophia. He personally travelled abroad in disguise to learn all he could of the ways of more advanced nations. Often he worked as a common laborer. In many ways he exemplifies the crude but tremendous half-barbarian vigor of the Russian people.

The great duel between Peter and the gallant but reckless Charles the Twelfth was now to begin. Peter had thoroughly realized the need of an outlet to the sea. He only partially succeeded at Azov, and was now to try his luck in the Baltic, which was at that time practically a Swedish lake. Sweden possessed in fact Finland, Ingermanland, Esthonia, Livonia, and Pomerania. Peter cast longing eyes upon the Baltic provinces, and was eager for an opportunity of carrying into effect the schemes which had been cherished by Ivan the Fourth, and by his father Alexis. Such an opportunity was soon forthcoming. John Reinhold Patkul, who was destined subsequently to expiate, in so cruel a manner, his efforts in behalf of his native province, had been deputed by the Livonian nobles to carry a complaint to Charles the Eleventh, the father of the celebrated Swedish King. The King affected to receive the petition with favor, but in a few days caused Patkul to be declared guilty of high treason, and condemned to death. Patkul, however, escaped, and thenceforward set himself to wreak vengeance upon the oppressor. "He proposed to Augustus the Second of

Poland a plan by which Sweden should be simultaneously attacked on all sides. Poland was to take Livonia and Esthonia, Russia, Ingria and Karelia; and Denmark, Holstein."<sup>2</sup>

Charles the Twelfth, on learning the danger, put an abrupt end to his amusements, returned to Stockholm, asserted his authority, organized his military resources, and invading Denmark and advancing to Copenhagen, forced the King without delay to an ignominious treaty at Travendal, by which Denmark retired from the coalition; this peace was concluded on August Eighteenth, the day before Peter declared war. Charles had now to deal with Poland and Russia. Taking Russia first and using his military position, which gave him a base almost everywhere on the south coast of the Baltic, he appeared in Livonia. Peter meanwhile was besieging the town of Narva. He had destroyed the streltsy, and his program of reorganizing the Russian army on the European model was still only at its beginning. The covering Russian force was under a foreigner, the Duc of Croy, who had been lent to Russia from Vienna. The foreign generals had not the confidence of their Russian troops; the old medieval militia of Moscow was no match for western opponents; supply, transport and the medical service were chaotic or non-existent, units failed to appear or even to materialize at all, and there was always a constant flow of desertions. The Russians were encamped without any

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<sup>2</sup>William R. Morfill, A History of Russia, p. 27, 1902.

regular military positions, and on November Nineteenth in the midst of a snow storm the fearless young King was upon them. The Russians had an overwhelming superiority in numbers, but once the Swedes had cut into them, nothing but isolated resistance was possible. Sheremeteo, in command of the cavalry, could have enveloped them, but instead retreated as best he could across the Narva; a bridge which collapsed drowned numbers of Russians under the eyes of their enemies. Medals were struck for the victorious King, one side showing the flying Tsar, and bearing the legend, "He brought down three at one blow."<sup>3</sup>

The year after the defeat at Narva, Cheremetief attacked the Swedish general Slipenbach near Ehresfer in Livonia. The Russians were the more numerous, but it was an advance to conquer the Swedes, even at odds of three to one. Out of seven thousand men Slipenbach lost thirty-five hundred, and only three hundred and fifty prisoners were taken, a fact which proves the fierceness of the fighting. This "eldest of Russian victories" was celebrated at Moscow in which the arms, guns, and banners of the vanquished filed past. Cheremetief was created field-marshal, and Peter exclaimed, "Glory be to God! One day we shall be able to beat the Swedes." The same year seven Swedish vessels were repulsed by the fleet of the Tsar. "In Seventeen-Two Cherementief again defeated Slipenbach at Hammelsdorff, took from him all his artillery, and killed six thousand out of his eight thousand men."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Bernard Pares, A History of Russia, p. 190, 1944.  
<sup>4</sup> A History of Russia, pp. 12, 13, 1804

The Swedes still held the advantage, however, defeating Peter's ally Augustus the Second of Poland and making peace with all their German enemies. The great desire of Charles, however, was the complete defeat of the Russians.

At the head of more than forty thousand admirable and seasoned troops he marched to Grodno, on the river Niemen, where he came in contact with the Russian rearguards. At this moment grave disturbances broke out in Russia, first the revolt of the Bashkir Tartars along the whole middle course of the Volga; then that of the Cossacks of the Don, which embraced all the country from Tambov to Azov. These caused the utmost embarrassment to Peter, as he had to detach forces to deal with them. But not only was Charles marching straight on Moscow; his general, Loewenhaupt, with another sixteen thousand men and large supplies of ammunition and food, was coming from Livonia to join forces with the main army under the King. So anxious was his position that Peter tried to negotiate, but Charles refused. The Russian army gradually retreated before him. Charles crossed the Berezina, and at Golovshchino met a force of twenty thousand Russians who only gave ground after a stubborn fight. He reached the Dnieper at Mogilev, and advanced as far as Mstislavl. At Dobroe, to the south of Smolensk, he again attacked the Russians, but it was an even fight, and he himself, had a narrow escape from death. But it was already the end of September, the winter began early, and he was in want of supplies. He was advised to retire on

Mogilev, and there await Loewenhaupt's arrival. But, true vagabond and adventurer that he was, having no fixed plan, he suddenly decided to turn due south towards Little Russia, presumably lured by its traditional abundance and relying on the fickle support of the weathercock Mayeppa. The Cossacks of Little Russia had chosen this opportunity to turn and fight against the Tsar. Their Hetman was now the Byronic Mayeppa, who had been appointed to this office by Sophia and Golitsyn. The Cossacks of the Dnieper had for some time been alarmed at Pete's energetic use of his despotic power and at his evident determination to unify all the military forces of the Empire, and to bring them up to the disciplined standard of a regular army, and under the control of the central authority. They acutely anticipated ~~an~~ increase of hard work and a decrease of leisure as the result. Mazeppa had long been dallying with suggestions emanating from Stanislas Lesycyzniski to betray Peter without committing himself to disloyalty. He had been repeatedly traduced to the Tsar but Peter chose to trust him, and paid no heed to delations. "But when both Swedes and Russians began to verge southwards he had to make up his mind on which side he would fight, and he chose the first."<sup>5</sup>

Mayeppa's plot failed to secure him the desired aim: the majority of Cossacks did not join him, as anticipated, and the small number he could lead to his ally the King of Sweden was but a negligible quantity. "At the battle of Poltava in Seventeen-Nine Charles the Twelfth was beaten,

<sup>5</sup>Raymond Beasley, *Russia*, pp. 223-229. 1918.

and the way to Russia's final success was opened up: she now stepped into the place hitherto occupied by Sweden as a first class Power."<sup>6</sup>

The battle of Poltava has always been reckoned one of the decisive battles of the world. It signified two things: first, the fall of Sweden from her purely accidental position as the leading power in Northern Europe, which she owed entirely to the genius of Gustavus Adolphus; and secondly, the assumption of that place by Russia. Up to this time. Peter had been regarded by the other Europeans with mingled feelings of astonishment and contempt; now, however, there manifested itself a universal inclination to court him, especially shown among the petty German potentates. But not only did Peter thus establish his position towards the other European Powers, he also by this brilliant victory, so gratifying to Russian pride, reconciled his own subjects to the reforms which had been introduced and the high-handed manner in which they had been carried out. At the beginning of his reign he was not without moments of peril at the hands of the Streltsy, who met with a great deal of support among the clergy and represented a faction which had never been entirely suppressed. The course of Peter's action had been throughout in direct opposition to the prejudices of his countrymen and now the disaffected ones began to group themselves round his divorced wife and rebellious son. It is easy to understand that they fancied, as we read in the

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<sup>6</sup>Sonia E. Howe, A Thousand Years of Russian History, p. 94, 1915.



contemporary bilini, that there was only a spurious Peter who was ruling over them and that the real orthodox Russian Tsar had been spirited away to Stegohn, or Stockholm, and was kept prisoner there. "Perry the English engineer employed by Peter tells that papers were found about the streets threatening his assassination."<sup>7</sup>

a Peter's works were many and vigorous. He built Saint Petersburg, now called Leningrad, on the Baltic coast. He modernized and European nation-states. True to his unconventional tastes he put away his first wife and married Catherine Skavronsky, a Lithuanian servant girl. Peter's son, Alexis, was a great disappointment to him, and was frequently embroiled in the plots against him inside Russia. Eventually Peter had Alexis executed.

The succession was thus left open. Peter had by Catherine two daughters, Anne and Elizabeth; he had also had two infant sons named Peter and Paul, who all died in early childhood. For him the question of the permanence of his reforms preceded every other interest. He therefore took an extraordinary step which was to cause endless trouble after him. In a decree of February, Seventeen-Twenty-One, he declared that the sovereign in the future had the right to choose his successor, thus reducing the Russian Empire to the situation which prevailed in Rome during its decline

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<sup>7</sup> William R. Morfill, A History of Russia, pp. 51-52, 1902.

and fall. Having claimed this power, he never made use of it. Continuing his vigorous spade work to the last, at the end of Seventeen-Twenty-Four he contracted a severe chill while engaged in saving the lives of some drowning sailors. This illness was aggravated by his attendance at the ceremony of blessing the waters in January Seventeen-Twenty-Five. His powers left him very suddenly. While he was writing his last instructions, pen and paper dropped from his hand. His daughter Anne was sent for to take them by word of mouth, but all he could say was: "Give all to-" "The succession was left to be disputed by force."<sup>8</sup>

At the death of Peter the Great the nation was divided into two parties: one supported his grandson, Peter Alexievitch, then twelve years old, the other wished to proclaim Catherine the Livonian. The Golitsynes, the Dolgoroukis, Repnine, and all Old Russia desired to place the Crown on the head of Peter Alexievitch; but those who owed their elevation to Peter the First, those who were involved in the trial of his son; Prince Menchikof, Admiral Apraxine, Boutouoline, the Chancellor Golovkine, Jagoujinski, the German Ostermann, Tolstoi, the Bishop Feofane, and the members of the tribunal which had condemned the Tyarevitch, all felt their only hope of salvation lay in Catherine. They were the more capable and the more enlightened; they held the power actually in their hands, directed the administration and commanded the army. Their adversaries felt that they must be content

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<sup>8</sup> Bernard Pares, A History of Russia, p. 214, 1944.

with a compromise. Dmitri Golitsyne proposed to proclaim Peter the Second, but only under the guardianship of the Empress-widow. Tolstoi opposed this, on the ground that it was the most certain means of arming one party against the other of giving birth to troubles, of offering hostile factions a pretext for raising the people against the Regent. He proved that in the absence of all testamentary disposition, Catherine had the best right to succeed Peter the First. She had been solemnly crowned, and had received the oaths of her subjects; she was initiated into all the State secrets, and had learned from her husband how to govern. The officers and regiments of Guards loudly declared in favor of the heroine of the Pruth. It was at last decided that she should reign alone, and absolute, by the same title as the dead Tsar. No doubt it was a novelty in Russia, a novelty even greater than the Regency of Sophia. Catherine was not only a woman, but a foreigner, a captive, a second wife, hardly considered as a wife at all. "There was more than one protest against a decision which excluded the grandson of Peter the Great from the Throne, and many raskolniks, suffered torture rather than take the oath of allegiance to a woman."<sup>9</sup>

The accession of Catherine was aggreat triumph for the followers of Peter the Great and ostensibly a pledge that his work would be carried out. As a matter of fact, it was merely a confirmation in power of those who already

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<sup>9</sup> Alfred Ramband, The History of Russia, pp. 53-54, 1904.

possessed it, and a guarantee that their pastimes would not be interfered with. Catherine herself was entirely frivolous, and was able fully to indulge her craving for pleasure in the protective sunshine of military favor. The bureaucracy decreed themselves a prolonged holiday from all serious work, a relaxation amply justified by their unwonted exertions in the last reign. But this millennium was short-lived. Catherine's motto was an adventurous and merry life, but having combined this with consistently imprudent living she had undermined her health. "After a prodigal reign of a little over two years she died in May, Seventeen-Twenty-Seven."<sup>10</sup>

During her reign she drew various members of her family, simple Livonian peasants, into the court, made her sisters and brothers-in-law Counts, and arranged marriages for their children. On her death bed she appointed the grandson of Peter the Great, Peter Alexievitch, as her successor; but he was to rule under the Regency of a Council, which was to consist of her two daughters, Anna and Elizabeth, the husband of the former, the Grand Duke of Holstein, and the members of the High Privy Council. By this arrangement the claims of the two great factions were to be reconciled. The hitherto omnipotent Mentchikov, or "The Prince", as he was called took good care to keep the young Tsar well under his eye: he made him live with him in his own palace, and forced him to become engaged to his daughter, who

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<sup>10</sup>Raymond Beazley, Russia, p. 256, 1918.

was several years his senior. "In his unbridled ambition Mentchikov went so far as to sign his letters to Peter the Second simply "your father", in anticipation of the Tsar's becoming his son-in-law."<sup>11</sup>

Menshikov's ascendancy, however, was of short duration. In August, Seventeen-Twenty-Seven he compelled the Duke of Holstein with Anne, his wife, to quit Russia. In May of that year the Emperor had made him Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces, and he forthwith began to be courted by foreign potentates, the German Emperor giving him an estate in Silesia. But by degrees his arrogance became intolerable, and the boy Tsar, who was now beginning to feel his feet, entered into a contest with him which could only end in one way. At first Menshikov was deprived of his various offices. Then he was arrested and ordered to be confined in his own house. This last blow gave rise to an apoplectic stroke. "At length he was commanded to quit Saint Petersburg and to live upon his estates in the Ukraine, his departure from the capital being more like a triumphal procession than that of a man in disfavor with his sovereign going into exile."<sup>12</sup>

The Dolgoroukis now had the boy in their own hands. He was betrothed to the daughter of Prince Alexis, also his senior, for whom he had no more liking than for his earlier fiancée. He disliked Saint Petersburg and moved

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<sup>11</sup>Sonia E. Howe, A Thousand Years of Russian History, pp. 125-126, 1915.

<sup>12</sup>W. R. Morfill, A History of Russia, p. 115, 1902.

his capital to Moscow; there, though he declared **himself** to be of age, he took no part in public business, and spent all his time in hunting. "He appears to have wanted to shake himself free of the Dolgoroukis, when he suddenly died of a severe chill at the age of fifteen, on the very day which had been fixed for his wedding."<sup>13</sup>

There then came to the Throne Anne Ivanova, who was then thirty-five years of age. In her youth she had lived in the dreary court of Mittau, a bride sought for her duchy, the political plaything of the four Northern courts, despised by Menchikov, and receiving orders and reproaches from Moscow. The bitterness of her regrets and her disappointments was painted in her severe countenance, and reflected in her soured and coldly cruel character. A head taller than the gentlemen of her court, with a hard and masculine beauty, and the deep voice of a man, she was imposing, and even terrible. The aristocratic attempt of Seventeen-Thirty had made her mistrust the Russians, and she felt that a project less exclusive and more clever than that of the High Council would perhaps have had a chance with the Russian nation. By precaution, and from taste, she surrounded herself with Germans, Biren or Biron at the head of them, a Courlander of low extraction, whom the ducal nobility had refused to admit amongst them, and whom she created Duke of Courland and Prince of the Holy Empire.

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<sup>13</sup>Bernard Pares, A History of Russia, pp. 220-221.

She made Loewenvald manager of court affairs, Ostermann chief of the foreign administration, Korff and Kayserling of the embassies; Lusey, Munich, Bismarck, and Gustav Biren of the army. It was in Germany that she chose to seek for her successor, Anne, daughter of Catherine Ivanova, Princess of Mecklenburg, with her husband, the Duke of Brunswick Bevern, and their little Emperor, Ivan the Sixth. The Germans ruled in Russia just as the Tartars had formerly done; and a new word, Bironovchtchina, expressive of the new regime, was coined on the model of the old Tartarchtchina. But if the Germans were triumphant, was it not the fault of the Russians themselves? The 'eaglets' of Peter the Great had torn each other to pieces. Menchikov had ruined Tolstoi and Jagoujinski, and was in his turn destroyed by the Dolgoroukis, themselves victims, with the Golitsynes, of the national hate. Besides all this, the strangers who took their posts and filled the place they had left vacant were far more laborious and more exact than the natives. "The Russians had still to pass through a hard school to acquire the qualities they lacked."<sup>14</sup>

Anne died on October Twenty-Eighth, Seventeen-Forty, and the vexed question of the succession again emerged. She had not considered it necessary to remarry, but she did appoint a successor. This was her great-nephew, Ivan Antonovitch, at this period aged two months. This infant was the child of her niece Anne Leopoldovna. It will

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<sup>14</sup>Alfred Rambaud, The History of Russia, p. 61, 1904.

be recalled that in Seventeen-Sixteen Peter the Great, engrossed in the sport of European dynastic intrigue, then new to Russian royalty, had married his second half-niece Catherine, the sister of the Empress Anne, and, like her, presumed daughter of his half-brother Ivan the Fifth, to Charles Leopold, Duke of Mecklenburg. To them was born a daughter, called Anne, in Seventeen-Eighteen. After much hesitation, and after having already proclaimed as her successor the son of this niece, if one should be born, the Empress Anne, in Seventeen-Thirty-Nine, married her to Prince Antony Ulrich of Brunswick-Bevern. Expectations were fulfilled, and their son Ivan was born in Seventeen-Forty, two months before the death of his great aunt the Empress Anne. He duly succeeded her and reigned for thirteen months as Ivan the Sixth, hypothetical great-grandson of Ivan the Fifth. Neither of his parents was distinguished by any ability, and moreover they were hardly on speaking terms with one another. On her deathbed Anne therefore confided the Regency with autocratic powers to the unspeakable Biron. "But while the Russian nobility and their spokesmen, the regiments of the Guards, had tolerated Anne, the prospect of Biron as Regent was more than they could stand, especially as it was known that he distrusted the Guards, whose ranks, it must be remembered, were solidly filled with noblemen, and that he intended to transfer these aristocratic privates as officers to other regiments in the provinces and fill their places with ordinary recruits!"<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Raymond Beazley, Russia, p. 267-268, 1918.



Elizabeth, who was finally chosen as Queen by a coup at least brought a breath of relief after foreign rule. She took as her motto the program of her father, Peter. The Swedes were quickly driven back and the frontier of Russia in Finland was advanced further westward. Elizabeth herself was a curious blend of the old and the new. With a large frame, an easy going nature and a lively disposition, living in apartments which were always untidy, possessing as many as fifteen thousand dresses, seeking her pleasures in the simplest company such as old peasant women, very Russian and assiduously Orthodox, she at the same time left her mark on Russian history by an edict abolishing forever the death penalty, though it was retained later for military and sometimes for political offences. Choosing as one of her principal advisers Count Ivan Shuvalov, a man of high integrity and great enlightenment, she helped him to carry through a notable program of education. This included the foundation of the first Russian university, that of Moscow, in Seventeen-Fifty-Five. In Elizabeth's reign Russia began to find better models for culture than the petty stilted German courts, and to feel the influence of western culture as represented at that time by French literature and thought. "The best of the Russian nobility, such as Count Ivan Shuvalov, felt that Russia needed something more than mere technical knowledge for the performance of state service, that a true education must go deeper and

begin with the training of character."<sup>16</sup>

During Elizabeth's reign Russia participated in Seven Years War during which the armies of Frederick the Great of Prussia were very severely handled by the Russian forces. Elizabeth seems to have taken a decided dislike to the King of Prussia. Berlin was entered and ravaged by Russian forces and only the death of Elizabeth saved the day for Prussia.

Elizabeth was, according to the settlement of the Crown which she had made by virtue of the ukase of Peter, succeeded by her nephew Peter. The genealogy of this man was unfortunate. He had succeeded to his father's duchy of Holstein in Seventeen-Thirty-Nine, and there he might have ended his days in peace, vegetating in petty dignity. At the request of his aunt he came to Russia in Seventeen-Forty-Two. It is singular that the Swedes had, a short time previously, offered him their Crown with a view of propitiating. "They chose, however, ultimately Adolphus Frederick of Holstein, also connected with the Russian royal family, and were thus enabled to secure more advantageous terms in the treaty of Abo, following on the little war which they had with their powerful Slavonic neighbor."<sup>17</sup>

Sophie, Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst was chosen as Peter's wife. As future Empress of Russia she had to change her Protestant faith: she accepted the Greek Orthodox

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<sup>16</sup>

Bernard Pares, A History of Russia, p. 226, 1944.

<sup>17</sup>W. R. Morfill, A History of Russia, p. 190, 1902.

creed and received the name of Catherine Alexeievna. She was later to become Catherine the Great. She was treated brutally by her husband who alienated the Russian people by his adoration of all things German and his policies toward the Church. By a coup d'etat Catherine assumed full power forcing her husband to abdicate and later, it is said, had him killed.

Catherine the Great joined Prussia in the memorable partitions of Poland and she also won several notable victories against the Turks. She followed a policy of limited reform within Russia and with the aid of her gifted minister Potemkin made many progressive changes in the military, cultural, and social life of Russia. She died at the age of sixty-six, of an apoplectic fit and was succeeded by her son Paul the First.

The four years of Paul's reign may be described as one long nightmare to his subjects who went in terror of their lives. In Eighteen-Hundred the Imperial Chancellor wrote: "The ill-humor and melancholy of our master is increasing by leaps and bounds." "Indeed, the arbitrariness of this master was fast driving his ship of State upon the rocks."<sup>18</sup>

Paul began as a vigorous opponent of the French Revolution which was going on at the time. Eventually, however, he joined forces with Napoleon and a coalition

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<sup>18</sup> Sonia E. Howe, A Thousand Years of Russian History, p. 193, 1915.

which, for a time shook the world was formed. Paul antagonized the Russian nobility and people, however, and was killed in a coup that brought Alexander the First to the Russian Throne.

The major event of Alexander's reign was Napoleon's invasion of Russia. Alexander had reversed the pro-French and anti-British policy of Paul and as a result he and Napoleon finally broke. The French swept into Russia in June, Eighteen-Twelve.

A wave of patriotic feeling swept over the country. The wealthy classes made large contributions towards the cost of the war, which became a war of the people, a struggle for the defence of the Fatherland against the invader. Alexander vowed that he would not make peace while a single enemy remained on Russian soil, and, yielding to popular demand appointed Kutuzov Commander-in-Chief of the Armies. Kutuzov knew that he was expected to make a stand against the French but determined to retreat until he reached a favorable position. On September Seventh, a great battle took place at Borodino, in which the losses of both French and Russians were very heavy. Both sides claimed the victory, but Kutuzov saw that he could not hope to keep Napoleon back for long, and abandoned Moscow without another fight. The French entered the city on September Fourteenth. They had expected a long rest and plentiful supplies of provisions, but found only flames, famine, and desolation. Almost the whole population had fled with the army and removed everything that could be of service to the enemy.

Napoleon tried to negotiate with the Russian leaders, but without success. Forced inactivity, starvation, and the terrors of a burning city, led to the final demoralization of the seriously depleted French forces, and after little more than a month in Moscow Napoleon decided to retreat in October. He attempted to break through to the South, in order to avoid the old, devastated route by which he had advanced, but was headed off at Maloyaroslavets and driven back once more onto the main road from Moscow to Smolensk. Fierce rearguard actions were fought at Vyazma and Krasnoe, and only a brilliant stratagem saved the remnant of the French forces from complete annihilation at the crossing of the river Bereyina in November. Winter came on, and the whole country rose against the French as they straggled west. "Harassed from all sides by guerrilla bands and Cossack irregulars, the Grand Army turned into a hungry, frozen rabble, and only a small portion of it was left to recross the Niemen."<sup>19</sup>

The defeat in Russia represented the turning of the tide for Napoleon and for France as it did for Hitler and Germany later. Alexander became the soul of the Coalition against Napoleon and Paris finally was entered by the Allies. After Napoleon's return from Elba and his final defeat at Waterloo Alexander became the moving spirit in the idealistic Holy Alliance which degenerated into an instrument of reactionary repression. Alexander's intentions were better

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<sup>19</sup> Raymond Beazley, Russia, pp. 370-371, 1918.

than those of most Monarchs of that time. But his high minded ideas were merely shrugged off by the other members of the Coalition and the stubborn problems of Russia largely defeated his reform efforts. In his old age he turned toward reaction and grew more deeply mystical. He died in December, Eighteen-Twenty-Five.

By the law of primogeniture, Alexander's successor should have been Constantine, the eldest of his brothers, but in order to marry the Countess Goudsinska, afterwards created Princess Lovicy, Constantine had, in Eighteen-Twenty-Two, declared to Alexander his intention of renouncing the Crown. The Emperor had accepted, and the Empress-Mother had approved, his renunciation; and in Eighteen-Twenty-Three Alexander had drawn up a manifesto which sanctioned the resolution taken by Constantine, and summoned Nicholas, Pauls third son, to the Throne. This act was deposited at the Ouspienski Sobar at Moscow, but was kept secret even from Nicholas himself. When, two years after, Alexander died at Taganrog, Constantine at Warsaw hastened to take the oath of allegiance to Nicholas, but Nicholas at Saint Petersburg thought it his duty to swear fealty himself to Constantine, and to make others do so. It was only on the Twenty-Fourth of December, Eighteen-Twenty-Five, that he received a letter from Constantine in which he repeatedly and formally declared his intention to renounce the Throne. "Then Nicholas published a manifesto announcing his own accession and received the oaths of his subjects."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Alfred Ramband, The History of Russia, p. 226, 1904.

In the long period from Eighteen-Thirty-One to Eighteen-Forty-Eight which forms the major part of the reign of Nicholas, there was enforced silence both in Russia and in Europe. In this dismal period Russia, for Europe, is the Russian Government and Nicholas; and Nicholas stands as the most secure and powerful protagonist of Throne and Altar against all movements of discontented peoples; this was a position forced upon him by Alexander's leading role in Europe. For Europe this was a period of permanent unrest, not least in France, where the bourgeoisie regarded the monarchy of Louis Philippe as their own creation and property. The rapid industrialization of France was raising acute social questions. There had been beginnings of socialist thought in the later period of the first French Revolution, especially during the administration of the Commune in Paris by Chaumette and Hebert and again directly after the fall of Robespierre; these beginnings were followed up by several socialist theorists, from Saint Simon and Fourier to Louis Blanc. In Eighteen-Thirty-Two there was street fighting in Paris roughly suppressed, and in April, Eighteen-Thirty-Four, a strike at Lyons developed into an insurrection, with similar movements of unrest in other large towns. At one moment a Republic was proclaimed in Paris. The failure of the plot of Faesche in Eighteen-Thirty-Five was followed by more repression and more unrest. "Political discontent was chronic in West Germany and in Italy."<sup>21</sup>

During the reign of Nicholas the First the British

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<sup>21</sup>Bernard Pares, A History of Russia, p. 327, 1944.

began to act upon Russia. This came about through the famous "Eastern Question" of the Turkish Straits or Dardanelles. Britain had found Russia useful as a foil for Napoleon but in the Crimean War Britain fought Russia to prevent her expansion and her search for an outlet to the sea. Nicholas died on March the Second, Eighteen-Fifty-Five with the Crimean War still raging.

When the new Tsar, Alexander the Second, ascended the Throne he found the country in a very critical condition. Russia was being exhausted by the drain of war. The English, although their efforts had not been crowned with any very brilliant results, were well furnished with the senews of war; the French had got tired of the campaign which now dragged on. A new element was added by the appearnace of fifteen thousand Sardinians in the field. The English had some success in the Black Sea and Kertch was taken. Previous to this on March the Twenty-Second the Russians made a great sortie from Sevastopol, which was ultimately driven back. "Sometimes clothed in the long grey coat of the ordinary soldier there fell dead into the trenches some officer whose high rank could only be guessed by the decorations underneath it."<sup>22</sup>

When the heavy burden of rulership was laid upon the shoulders of Alexander the Second it soon became apparent that he had been well prepared to carry it with honor. At the first meeting of the Imperial Council which he attended

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<sup>22</sup>W. R. Morfill, A History of Russia, p. 424, 1902.



after his father's death he reminded its members that as holders of the highest position of trust in the Empire they should never forget that it was their duty to set the nation an example of "reasonableness, industry, and honesty."<sup>23</sup>

During the first months of the reign his attention was occupied with the war, which was exhausting the country and bringing financial and political bankruptcy nearer every month. When peace was concluded Prince Gorchakov wrote to the Emperor: "It is fortunate that we have made peace, for we could have fought no longer. Now we can turn our attention to internal affairs." The whole country agreed with him in blaming Russia's internal disorder for her failure in the war. Alexander at once relieved his people of some of the most oppressive burdens imposed on them in the previous reign, and raised their hopes for the future still higher. The censorship rules were so far relaxed that within moderate limits the press could discuss political questions. The prohibition of travel abroad was withdrawn. The position of the universities became easier, and the restrictions on the number of students were removed. These changes roused enthusiasm and gratitude amongst all sections of the educated classes and seemed to promise a complete reversal of Government policy. During these early months Alexander had no definite program of reforms, though he was well intentioned. The abolition of serfdom, the reform

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<sup>23</sup> Sonia E. Howe, A Thousand Years of Russian History, p. 298, 1915.

of the judicial system, the establishment of schools, the freedom of the press, the introduction of municipal and local Government were urgent necessities. At the end of the fifties a large body of opinion was in favor of the abolition of serfdom in the interests of the nation. Some landholders began to realize how unprofitable this serfdom was. In the second half of the Nineteenth Century the defects of the system became very evident. "It was necessary to start at the construction of railways, to encourage the development of various branches of industrial activity and to discover new sources of state revenues."<sup>24</sup>

The Crown purchased from the proprietors the land, with the peasants attached to it, and then bestowed the land upon the peasants with the condition that for forty-five years they should pay to the Crown six per cent interest upon the amount paid by it for the land. "It was the commune or mir which accepted the land and assumed the obligation and duty of seeing that every individual paid his annual share of rental upon the land within his enclosure, which was supposed to be sufficient for his own maintenance and the payment of the Government tax."<sup>25</sup>

Unfortunately due to heavy taxes and the rental payments emancipation proved more of a curse than a blessing to many peasants. All Russia was in political ferment.

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<sup>24</sup>Makeev and O'Hara, Russia, p. 47, 1925.

<sup>25</sup>Parmele, A Short History of Russia, p. 219, 1900.



The Poles were striking for their independence. Alexander was the mildest and best intentioned of men, but the political whirlpool was too much for him. On the thirteenth of March in Eighteen-Eighty he was slain by an assassin's bomb. The reign of Alexander the Third, which followed, was one of oppression, tyranny, and terror until his death.

On the accession of Nicholas the Second the Zemstvos of Russia in a joint address emphasized the need of immediate reform, of a change in policy, of the representation of the people in the Government of the country. No heed was given to this appeal. The general discontent gathered force year by year and captured every class and section of the community. The Japanese War, just as the Crimean War half a century back, revealed but too poignantly the tragic reality of existing conditions, the false illusion of the power of the autocracy, the disastrous consequences of leaving the destinies of the country in the hands of a small group of the higher bureaucracy and a court clique. It was not so much the reckless, senseless character of this clique's amazing adventure in the Far East as the humiliation endured by the whole of Russia in honoring the gambling debt incurred which stiffened the sinews of resistance against this mockery of autocracy. Some members of the Government actually hoped that the War would distract the attention of the nation and of the people from social and political evils at home. They were mistaken. "The Japanese War only intensified a burning resentment and a spirit of

opposition which the old methods of oppression could no longer succeed in stamping out."<sup>26</sup>

The Russian Revolution grew out of all these discontents and tribulations. The catastrophe of the First World War was the final factor in the collapse of the old Russian Empire. As it had been with France so it was now with Russia. Not the Russian people but the Russian Monarchy had been defeated in the First World War. And Revolution followed on defeat.

The Russian Revolution, however, produced no Napoleon, or at least has not done so as yet. A long chaotic period ensued in Russia. Leaders such as Lenin, Stalin, and Trotzky arose. Russia is a vast country and it took a long time for the first phases of the Revolution to be consummated. Moreover the policies of the Soviets created grave schisms and dissensions within the country.

The German invasion of Russia in the Second World War united the country as Napoleon's had done more than a century earlier. Stalingrad was the new Paltava, and with it Power shifted East to Russia where it remains to this present day. The Russian Revolution has not yet run its course. Like the French Revolution before it, it is aggressive, carrying its doctrines to new lands often with armed force. And as ever Britain, now battered and en-

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<sup>26</sup>Makeev and O'Hara, Russia, pp. 93-94, 1925.

feebled but backed by a powerful United States of America, stands in the way. France was embroiled in long and terrible wars with its neighbors and in the end brought to ruin by its Revolution. Will the Russian upheaval follow the same course? Or will not merely Europe but all of Eurasia be united under the new Colossus? Today we stand on the brink of a frightful collision. Men talk of peace but the grim lessons of all of recorded history point not to peace but to war when situations such as today's exist. It has indeed been Europe's curse that Britain was an island. For on that Continent there has been an underlying will to unity, a tendency to coalesce, which worked against all the disruptive forces trying to keep Europe divided. This will to unity, Britain, has made it her business to continually frustrate. And as a result of this constant frustration the manifestations of this will to unity have constantly become darker and more terrible. A Napoleon, a Hitler, a Stalin, have replaced Philip the Second and Louis the Fourteenth. And so the show goes on.

In summary one may say that while many factors have entered into the Eastward March of Power, factors such as birth rate, natural resources, political organization, leadership, geography and so forth it has always been Britain which has been the straw that broke the camel's back. Britain's interference has been decisive in European affairs when the victory or the downfall of a Great Power

hung in the balance. And Britain's influence has always been for the downfall of the Power which had achieved the greatest strength upon the Continent. Had not Britain existed it is very likely that Europe would have long since been united under one head. Probably that unity would have been achieved by the sword but this would not have been unique in history. What Europe has needed and still needs is unity. This unity Britain has steadfastly set herself to prevent. And great has been Europe's woe in consequence.

Today the Soviet Empire is seeking to unify both Europe and Asia under an iron rule which would be more Asiatic than European. And the Anglo-American combination is seeking to prevent this. What if the Russian and the Anglo-American camps destroy each other in homicidal-suicidal frenzy? Will Power shift East again. East to the calm, Bhudda-like, smiling millions of China and Japan? There are ominous signs and portents now in the Far East as decay spreads over the tottering European colonial Empires in Asia. Civilization and Power grew first in Asia when Europe's inhabitants were living in caves. Will it return to Asia again so that the circle will be complete.

Even today, in matters of economics and trade, the policies of Great Britain are disruptive as regards the economic health of the Continent. Some historians see in many of England's struggles a battle against tyranny and oppression and so it may have been for the time. But looked

at from the long view the English monkey wrench in the European machinery has been fatal for Europe and ruinous for Britain herself. How much better off would Britain and Europe be today if both were united under one Empire? It will be argued that the old conquerors were disagreeable fellows but are the new ones any improvement? William the Conqueror overran England; the United States had to have a Civil War to achieve unity. But despite any injustices that may have been inflicted upon the South at the time is not the United States better off as one nation than as two. What if Europe might have been under Spanish or French hegemony in the beginning. Time would have wrought changes as it did with the Normans and Saxons in Britain. But the English would not have a united Europe. So they have fashioned their own and Europe's doom.

Certainly a Hitler and a Stalin are worse than a Napoleon or a Wilhelm the Second. Or must all Western Civilization disintegrate and new centers of power arise in the Orient. A Third World War might not destroy Civilization but it would almost certainly wipe out the domination of the West upon this planet.



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