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THE
CIVIL AND MILITARY
HISTORY OF GERMANY,

FROM THE
LANDING OF GUSTAVUS
TO THE
CONCLUSION OF THE TREATY OF WESTPHALIA.

—◆—
BY THE LATE
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THE death of Gustavus was an event too important to be viewed with indifference by any party, though the sensations produced upon the minds of men varied according to their interests and their passions. Had the conqueror survived to follow up the blow, it is far from improbable that the Imperial crown might have been irrecoverably wrested from Austria: at all events, a long period of years must have elapsed, before she could have sufficiently recovered her strength to interrupt the tranquil-

lity of Europe. We ought not therefore to be surprised, notwithstanding the loss of his ablest general,* the destruction of thousands of his bravest troops, and the ignominy attending a precipitate flight, that Ferdinand should have regarded the battle of Lutzen in the light of a splendid triumph, and that it should have been celebrated accordingly with festive pomp at Munich, Vienna, Brussels, and Madrid.†

Nothing, however, could be more natural, than for those, who, in order to conceal the fatal consequences of a radically defective system, had ascribed their calamities to the gigantic efforts of superior genius, should flatter themselves with the hope, that when the hero was gone, whose commanding spirit had cemented the Protestant Union, disaffections and jealousies would arise, while, instead of attending to the general welfare, each member of the confederacy would confine his views to his own particular interests. Neither Sweden, formidable as she had shewn herself when led to conquest by her heroic king, nor any of the supporters of the Leipsic confederacy, possessed resources extensive enough to enable them singly to combat the colossal power of Austria. Disunion of course could not fail to deprive them of every advantage, acquired at the expense of so much blood and treasure; and, might even expose them to the danger of falling a prey to the still formidable armies of Ferdinand.‡

* Pappenheim.

† Puffendorf v. 1. *On n'eut pas honte, a Madrid et a Vienne, says Bougeant, d'en faire des jouissances presque publiques.*—From this it should seem that the behaviour of Ferdinand was too indecorous to be tolerated even by the pliant conscience of a Jesuit, i. 297.

‡ Puffendorf, *ibid.*

Strongly impressed with the conviction of their own comparative weakness, fatigued by exertions which might possibly lead to no permanent good, and perhaps still influenced by a childish veneration for the forms, and even the defeats of the Germanic constitution, there is great reason to believe, that a considerable majority of the protestant states would have felt delighted at finding a plausible pretext for sheathing the sword; in case the emperor had listened to the exhortations of Wallenstein, who strenuously recommended his publishing an unqualified amnesty, while he at the same time endeavoured by a conciliatory system to appease the general ferment.* Equally misled by his own sanguine expectations, and the preposterous counsels of Spain, Ferdinand appears no longer to have entertained the smallest doubt of speedily reducing his rebellious vassals to unconditional submission, and accordingly determined upon prosecuting the war with redoubled ardour. This fatal delusion was highly agreeable to the Catholic League, who regarded the death of Gustavus as an incontestible proof that Providence had at length declared in favour of the righteous cause.† The riches of Mexico and Peru were profusely squandered to procure recruits in every province subject to the dominion, or the influence of Spain; and, when the treasury of Madrid was unable to answer the extravagant

* 1633. Puffendorf, v. 1.

† Sic æterna providentia (namque humanæ industriæ mors regis minime potest ascribi) ut a principio nostræ narrationis diximus, postquam sibi visum est, satis in peccantes catholicos animadversum, libidini hujus hominis occurrit, cui totius orbis dominium exiguum videbatur. Burgus 421.—placatoque pii Cæsaris orationibus deo, vix trigesimum octavum natus annum, immanem trucemque mortem subierit. Ibid. 423.

demands, the Pope, impelled by holy fervour, permitted Philip to recur to the wealthy ecclesiastics for additional supplies.*

But as the main object of the imperialists was to create a division among the allies of Sweden, conciliatory proposals were separately addressed to some favoured members of the protestant confederacy, accompanied by the warmest professions of friendship, and even signifying a desire to establish with their advice and assistance, such a system for the regulation of all political affairs, as might satisfy the most sceptical, that nothing was more remote from the emperor's thoughts, than ever again to infringe the fundamental laws of the Germanic constitution. Emoluments also of the most attractive nature were held out to Oxenstiern, through the intervention of Arnheim, the ready instrument of every intrigue, provided he should be disposed to sacrifice the interests of his country, and his personal reputation, to views of private ambition. The friend of † Gustavus, however, rejected the bribe with a noble disdain, which excited the astonishment of the Austrian ministers, and served to convince them that political honesty was something more than a poetical fiction.

But while the far greater part of catholic Europe indulged in indecent transports on account of the death of the modern Attila, ‡ Ferdinand was too consummate a master in the science of deceit, not to dissemble his joy, when the bloody garments

* Puffendorf, v. 423. Galetti, i. 300.

† Puffendorf, *ibid.*

‡ The death of Gustavus was ludicrously represented upon the public theatre at Madrid.

of the Swedish monarch were presented to him as trophies of victory.*

To the partisans of Sweden the loss of a leader, whose victorious arm was about to exalt the religion of Luther to a proud equality with that of the Vatican, appeared a calamity which nothing could mitigate; and they would willingly have resigned the laurels obtained at Lutzen, to replace him at the head of their armies. All the aspiring hopes which they expected to see so shortly realized, were in a moment levelled with the ground. Where could another commander be found, endowed with courage and judgment to superintend and regulate such a complex system of policy? Or where could the necessary funds be procured for continuing the arduous contest? With him it was probable that the feeble compact would dissolve, originally cemented, and held together with so much difficulty by the transcendent powers of genius.

Among the Protestants, however, there existed many, whose affliction was not so profound, who had contemplated, with envy, the ascendancy of a monarch of Gothic extraction, the ruler of a people, whom, in humble imitation of Roman arrogance, they affected to despise as barbarians. Superstitiously attached to the cumbrous forms of the Ger-

* *Gustavo Adolpho pugna interfecto exiliere gaudio quicunque cum Cæsare sentiebant; plerique letitia perfusi hostibus insultare; inclamare ea cæde debellatum esse, nullum jam superesse timori locum, ipse (Ferdinandus) immutatus unum dixit, in humilitate progrediamur, demisso rem deo commendemus. Speculum Theopoliticum, xvii. 93.*—Such is the testimony of a Jesuit, who was confessor to Ferdinand, and I leave the reader to determine the degree of credit which such a witness deserves.

—*Hilaresque nefas spectare cruentum,
O bona libertas, cum Cæsar lugent, audant.*

Lucan, ix. 1108.

manic constitution, which they regarded as the most perfect, because it was the most complex, of all civil institutions, they looked with trembling solicitude to the possibility of a change; too proud, or too obstinate, to acknowledge, that the mishapen offspring of erudite labour was capable of the smallest improvements: for though almost every country abounds in men, who, regarding ruin as the inevitable consequence of reform, had rather groan under the pressure of obsolete errors, than undertake the arduous task of correcting them, no people were ever so unconquerably wedded to ancient practice as the Germans, at the period to which we allude. The coercive homage imposed upon the city of Augsburg, appeared to those jealous asserters of Teutonic independence an irrefragable proof that the King of Sweden regarded himself in the light of a conqueror, though he affected to conceal his ambitious designs under the specious veil of universal philanthropy.* No longer doubting of his aspiring to the imperial throne as the ultimate reward of his services,† they were thunderstruck at the idea of being subjected to a sovereign, possessing penetration to discover, and authority to punish, disaffection. These apprehensions were also considerably strengthened by a report circulated with suspicious assiduity, that the victorious monarch intended to bestow the first ecclesiastical electorate upon his favourite Oxenstiern. The horror excited at the bare prospect of

* Puffendorf, v. 2.

† Feuquieres mentions a conversation with Oxenstiern, in which the chancellor made use of the following words: "*s'il, (meaning Gustavus) eut survécu à la bataille, il est certain, que dans six mois il eut entièrement parachevé l'ouvrage,*" namely, the destruction of Austria, l. 36.

beholding the venerable fabric of the empire dismantled by the rude hand of a Vandal, made way for the reception of every calumny which envy could propagate. The fears of the protestants were alarmed at the prospect of beholding the most valuable benefices conferred upon foreigners, and the riches of Germany employed for the civilization of a semi-barbarous nation. By the pious catholics he was represented under the odious character of a heretic, and as more inimical to the papal faith than Julian, Nero, or Dioclesian. But as interest is sometimes a more active passion than piety, detraction omitted not to magnify the detriment likely to accrue to the orthodox church, not only from the certain loss of all the bishoprics and abbacies already occupied by apostate intruders, but also of those which were destined for the remuneration of greedy allies, whom it was impossible to satisfy, except at the expense of the catholic chapters. They further hinted, that a plan was actually in contemplation, for dividing the conquered provinces among the generals and adherents of Gustavus, in imitation of the conduct of his savage ancestors, when they overthrew the empire of the Cæsars.* His behaviour toward the Elector Palatine afforded also a copious topic for animadversion to all who envied his prosperous fortune. By delaying the reinstatement

* When Frederic the Second wrote the following lines, he probably judged of the intentions of Gustavus according to the fallacious standard of his own integrity.

Protecteur redoutable a ceux qu'il a vengé,
 A ses desseins secrets il fit servir la gloire,
 Si la Parque fatale, au soin de la victoire,
 N'eut arrêté sa course, et tranché son destin,
 L'Empire eusse nourri deux maitres dans son sein.

L'Art de la Guerre, Chant III.

ment of that ill-advised prince, his enemies contended, that Gustavus had forfeited every claim to generosity, and even to justice. Honour, they said, required him to restore the Palatinate to its legitimate sovereign, the moment it was rescued from the Spanish yoke. Had he done this? they insultingly inquired. On the contrary, he had eluded the fulfilment of his promise by subtleties and equivocations, totally inconsistent with that virtue which he presumptuously blazoned as the end and foundation of all his actions. From the general tenor of his conduct, it might be fairly inferred, that he regarded the dominions of the unfortunate Frederic in the light of a conquest, which, by the laws of war, he was entitled to retain, or dispose of, at pleasure. The conditions, annexed to the offer of restitution, shewed also, that he considered the restitution as a favour, and not as an indispensable obligation. By the stipulations proposed, that ill-fated prince would virtually become the vassal of Sweden; for, what could be more humiliating than the following demand? that after the termination of hostilities, he should pay an annual subsidy toward the maintenance of an army, no longer required for his protection.

The strong impression produced by these artful insinuations was visible in the conduct of many of the German potentates, who had adhered to the fortune of Gustavus, but who acted, after his death, as if they regarded the dissolution of every political engagement to have been the necessary consequence of that calamitous event. Attending solely to the dictates of personal interest, several of them suffered themselves to be deluded by the perfidious offers of Ferdinand; while others, exhausted by the pres-

sure of a protracted war, felt happy to obtain a temporary respite by the sacrifice of almost every thing except their revenues. Several of the commanders in the Swedish army were princes in the empire, who, though they submitted without reluctance to the transcendent talent of Gustavus, thought it equally degrading to their rank and their abilities to acknowledge the authority of any other leader.* Thus, both in the cabinet and the field, every bond of union being snapped asunder, the situation of those, who still contended for the liberties of Germany, was in appearance truly deplorable.

Some, even among those who owed their independence to the protection of Sweden, presumed to question her supremacy. At the head of these was Bogislaus, Duke of Pomerania, who, forgetting the misery to which his country had been reduced by the rapacity of Torquato Conti, now believed himself capable of defending his territory without the assistance of foreigners. It does not, however, appear, that the vanity or imprudence of this weak old man would have tempted him to quarrel with his defenders, provided they would in future have consented to treat him with the consideration due to an independent ally.† The same policy was embraced by the Elector of Brandenburg, and by the Dukes of Mecklenberg and Brunswick; the latter of whom attempted to form a party in Lower Saxony, equally unconnected with Sweden and Austria. This impolitic attempt would not only have augmented the difficulty of providing recruits; but by occasioning a defalcation in the subsidies destined

* Puffendorf, v. 3. Galetti, 300. † Negotiations de l'euquieres, 67.

for warlike purposes, would have afforded an additional motive for desertion. The meeting of the states was, however, prevented by the spirit and activity of Oxenstiern, who opposed it upon the plea, that the right of convening them was vested exclusively in the Archbishop of Magdeburg, which see being actually occupied by the Swedes, no assembly could be legally summoned without their concurrence.*

Such was the agitation excited throughout the German empire by the death of Gustavus Adolphus; but no sooner had the first impression subsided, than every exertion was made by his surviving friends for the preservation of conquests so dearly purchased.

Oxenstiern received the melancholy intelligence at Hanau, as he was proceeding to Ulm, to attend an assembly composed of deputies from the upper circles. Though overwhelmed at first by the irreparable calamity, which he and his country had sustained, his courage soon rose superior to misfortune; for he felt that the veneration which he entertained for the memory of the illustrious monarch, whose loss he so deeply regretted, ought not to be testified by tears and lamentations, but by manifesting to the world, that though the champion of Protestantism had ceased to exist, his immortal genius still animated his subjects, and would continue to guide them in the career of glory.† He felt also, that the man, who had been particularly honoured with

* Puffendorf, v. 13. Galetti, 301.

† The splendid talents of this extraordinary man extort this involuntary praise from the pious Leticus, "Ingens illud ultra marine sapientie lumen," l. 1128.

the confidence of Gustavus, was the fittest to occupy the vacant place, in which the talents and virtues of the departed hero had shone with such conspicuous brightness. Though his uncommon sagacity anticipated every impediment, which pride or jealousy were likely to create; the desertion of allies, the plots and artifices of unfaithful friends, and the intrigues of those whose unsteady attachment was, perhaps, more dangerous even than open hostility, still he resolved, with patriotic fortitude, never to shrink from the arduous undertaking. Firmly persuaded that the protestant power, if kept together, was fully adequate to the momentous contest, he dreaded the effects of discord and interests, now manifested in every deliberation. But he was also aware, that nothing effectual could be performed, unless he could succeed in collecting the fragments of the protestant confederacy, and unite them in a close and confidential association. That many obstacles would oppose the execution of his schemes it was impossible for him to doubt; but he, at the same time, perceived, that the terror excited by the loss of Gustavus, if properly managed, might prove no less efficacious in attaching the enemies of Austria to the interests of Sweden, than in prompting them to enter into separate treaties with the court of Vienna. To one of those alternatives they must, of necessity, resort; and it was the business of a wise and able statesman to determine the choice in favour of his country. The storm which was gathering, and which, if suffered to collect, was sure to burst with irresistible violence, might, he hoped, be divested to another quarter; but it was only by displaying unshaken confidence, that he could flatter himself to infuse into the breasts of

others the fortitude requisite for making the attempt.*

Yet, while he acknowledged that the edifice must fall in pieces, unless Sweden should retain the entire direction of all military operations, he could not contemplate without secret dismay the many difficulties to be overcome, before he could persuade a nation, so blindly devoted to the splendour of rank, and so vain of its mental acquirements, to submit to the guidance of a foreign gentleman, who had only talents and integrity to recommend him. Yet by renouncing the advantages so dearly purchased, Sweden would not only tarnish her high military reputation, but must abandon the hope of ever obtaining an adequate indemnity for all the treasure and blood which she had sacrificed. And should she be ultimately compelled to evacuate Germany, less ignominy would attach to a compulsive retreat, than to a voluntary abdication of her conquests.†

The sentiments of Oxenstiern fortunately coincided with those of the illustrious statesmen to whom the government of Sweden was committed. After the demise of the king, the crown descended to his daughter Christiana, at that time an infant of six years old; but the administration of affairs was vested in a council appointed by Gusatvus before he quitted Stockholm. No government in appearance could be less calculated to act with vigour and decision, or to maintain the lofty reputation for valour and wisdom, to which the nation had been almost miraculously elevated. Although the war had been chiefly supported at the expense of the Germans, still the po-

* 1633. Schiller, iv.

† Puffendorf, v. 8.

verty of a country, possessing little external commerce, and blessed with few internal resources, was hardly able to bear the constant demands for men, and money, to which their sovereign was constrained to resort. For a while the splendour of victory, though ill calculated to relieve the cravings of hunger, induced a high-minded people to submit to every burthen without a single complaint; but when the horizon was clouded by the death of their sovereign, and they ceased to look forward to an advantageous peace, they became daily more sensible of the pressure of taxation, and more impatient to terminate a contest, from which they no longer expected either permanent benefit, or the precarious advantage of glory.*

Fortunately, however, for the protestant cause, the persons to whom Gustavus had delegated the administration of affairs, were animated by a spirit congenial with his own. In the midst of sorrow the most poignant, they never lost sight of their duty, but displayed fortitude no less conspicuous than that which inspired the bosom of every Roman senator, after the destructive carnage at Cannæ. While with lacerated hearts they deplored the sacrifice which had attended the national triumphs, they were more strongly impressed with the necessity of convincing the world that, the blood of their beloved sovereign had not flowed ineffectually. Assailed by internal as well as foreign foes, and surrounded on all sides by danger, that illustrious assembly magnanimously listened to the dictates of honour, and surmounted every difficulty by their wisdom, perseverance, and energy.

* Puffendorf, v. 7. Schiller, iv.

Notwithstanding the crown had been settled on Christina, in a diet held at Stockholm, in 1627, it was justly apprehended, that the turbulence of faction might interrupt the public tranquillity during the minority of a princess, whose title was by no means so clearly ascertained as not to admit of dispute. And we accordingly find that Ladislaus, who succeeded his father Sigismund on the throne of Poland, spared neither money nor intrigues to form a party in Sweden. His attempts at first were not unsuccessful; convinced that his ancestors would never have lost the gothic sceptre, had they been less blindly attached to the communion of Rome. His friends endeavoured to obliterate the unfavourable impression which still continued to operate to his prejudice, by circulating reports that the children of Sigismund, far from being wedded to the errors of papacy with the same bigoted zeal as their father, might be easily tempted to embrace a religion, which they had always beheld with respect, if not with partiality. A decided aversion toward the Lutheran rites having been the only motive which induced the nation to depart from the established line of succession, justice pointed out the necessity of repairing the injury, in case the cause for exclusion should no longer exist. This conduct, they said, was equally recommended by the soundest policy; because the vessel of the state required a firmer hand, than that of an infant, to guide its course amid the winds and waves which assailed it.*

Convinced that vigorous measures could alone defeat the machinations of the Polish faction, the

* Le Vassor, x. 472.

senate proceeded without the smallest delay to acknowledge the title of Christina; who, being publicly proclaimed with the accustomed solemnities, received an oath of allegiance from all the different orders of citizens. All intercourse with Poland was strictly prohibited, and the act of exclusion, by which the punishment of death was denounced against any one who should propose to recal the children of Sigismund, enforced with additional rigour; and, as an additional security, the alliance with Russia was renewed. It was also enacted, by a decree of senate, that the care of Christina, and the administration of affairs, should be vested in the heads of the five colleges (or departments); considering that it would be highly dangerous to commit the sole management of either to a regent, as had been practised on former occasions. By this prudent arrangement, John Casimir, who had married Gustavus's sister, found himself excluded from all share in the administration. Indignant at being treated with so little respect, he signified his intention of abandoning a country, whose confidence he no longer possessed. This menace was probably intended only to ascertain the degree of esteem in which he was held by the nation; because, when he discovered that his succession was not likely to produce a popular ferment, he suffered himself to be appeased by a complimentary address; and promised to devote his humble talents to the happiness and prosperity of Sweden.*

Having thus laid a foundation for domestic tranquillity, and put the frontier towns in a proper state of defence, the government began assiduously

* Puffendorf, v. 7.

to prepare for the vigorous prosecution of hostilities. Feeling, however, that in the disjointed state of public affairs it would be highly advantageous to conciliate the good opinion of their fellow subjects, they wisely resolved to introduce the most rigid economy in every department, as the only means of alleviating the burthens of the people. According to the forms of the Swedish constitution, no senatorial edict could be permanently established, till it was confined in a general assembly of the states, which being accordingly convened in the following spring, unanimously legalized every proceeding.*

The death of Gustavus allayed the jealousy which his triumphs had excited in Denmark ; and the prospect of uniting the two crowns by the marriage of Ulric, the eldest son of Christian, with Christina, appeared a temptation too strong to be withstood, notwithstanding all the artifice of Ferdinand ; who, as an inducement to Christian to commence hostilities against Sweden, endeavoured to tempt that ambitious prince by the most brilliant prospect of glory.

The danger likely to accrue from allowing Austria to recover her ascendancy, was too sensibly felt by the governments of France, of England, and of Holland, to allow them to continue indifferent spectators of a contest destined to determine that momentous question. Apprehensive that the loss of her warlike monarch might depress the courage of Sweden, the states-general offered to contribute more largely than they had hitherto done to the abasement of Austria. Charles appears to have

* *Le Vassor*, x. 474.

been equally liberal of promises, and equally remiss in fulfilling them.

Though the alarm excited at Paris by the rapid progress of Gustavus seems to have rendered his death an object of triumph rather than of affection,* Richelieu clearly foresaw, that unless Sweden should receive efficacious support, she would be compelled to abandon the contest, and endeavour to provide for her own security at the expense of her ungrateful allies. Upon receiving intelligence of the inseparable misfortune sustained by the protestants at Lutzen, that enlightened statesman did not hesitate what measures to pursue, convinced that no money could be so advantageously expended, as what was applied to the humiliation of Ferdinand. "Gustavus Adolphus," says an ingenious author,† "was called into Germany, not to render himself formidable to the rest of Europe, but to prescribe bounds to the despotism of Austria. Having accomplished the purpose for which he was employed with astonishing celerity, he became himself an object of terror. But no sooner were the fears of those who envied his prosperity effaced by his death, than the gigantic power of the descendants of Rodolph of Hapsburg again excited universal alarm." The truth of this remark was strikingly elucidated by the conduct which Richelieu adopted. In a council held at Rochefort, in presence of the king,‡ he urged the necessity of supporting Sweden by additional subsidies ;

* Constat nunciata Gustavi morte, Parisiis in aula ad magnitudinem lætitiæ nil defuisse, nisi quod ignes festivi non incenderentur. Puffendorf, v. 4.

† Abrégé Chronologique. Ann. 1633., ‡ Feuquieres, i. 70.

but, at the same time recommended, for the present at least, that an open rupture with Austria should be avoided. The opinion of a minister who was never contradicted with impunity, was sure to be received with servile adulation by a sycophantic train of dependents; the only question, therefore, which remained for debate, was the selection of an ambassador, qualified to undertake the important commission of rendering Sweden subservient to the interests of France, and of corrupting the princes of Germany. Though the Marquis de Feuquieres undoubtedly possessed intrinsic merit, he was probably more indebted to the patronage of father Joseph, than to his personal talents for the appointment.*

The projects of Richelieu appear to have changed with the death of Gustavus, whose magnanimity precluded all interested views; while the distresses of Sweden, when her champion was gone, opening an ample field for political speculation, he now flattered himself to obtain, if not the supreme direction of military operations, at least an ample share in all her future conquests. Without pecuniary assistance the ministers of Christina must either be compelled to accept a disadvantageous peace, or to subsist their armies by plundering the catholic princes, to many of whom Louis had secretly promised his protection; and though the cardinal might have beheld with perfect indifference the sufferings of his allies, he knew that his influence with the papal party must depend entirely upon his character for sincerity.† The system pursued at this momentous crisis contributed, per-

* Fouquieres, i. 70.

† Schiller iv.

haps; more than any measure of his brilliant administration, toward establishing that reputation for political sagacity, which he still continues to enjoy. To the plan which he now traced with masterly genius for the aggrandisement of the nation over which he presided, he not only steadily adhered during the remainder of his life, but transmitted it to posterity as a guide and model, in the proud career of ambition. Thus the death of Gustavus, instead of terminating the alliance between France and Sweden, cemented it by additional obligations.

Though the Swedish ministers were no longer terrified at the prospect of being deserted by their allies, they felt that, by attempting to direct the operations of war, moments the most important for active service might be suffered irrecoverably to escape. A leader of talent and integrity was therefore required to reside in Germany, invested with unlimited powers, both with respect to the conduct of military affairs, and the direction of political negotiations. In order to obviate the many inconveniencies resulting from divided authority, it was deemed expedient that the representative of the Gothic crown should be armed with dictatorial sway; and, lest the want of magnificence should depreciate his consequence in the estimation of a people, so superstitiously devoted to rank, it was resolved he should never appear in public, unless environed with the splendour of royalty. This determination was no sooner embraced, than every eye was directed to Oxenstiern, the friend and confidential adviser of the sovereign, whose loss they so bitterly deplored; because he was not only versed in the intricate politics of the

German courts, and familiarly acquainted with the views, the characters, and the interests of those who directed the helm of every European state, but had been minutely informed of the most secret designs, which his beloved master had meditated, even when first they presented themselves, like formless shadows, to the eye of intellect.

That able minister was no sooner made acquainted with the death of Gustavus, than he hastened to Frankfort, and calling together the deputies of the different circles, who had previously met for a different object, requested their advice with regard to the measures most proper to be adopted, at a crisis so truly calamitous. Finding them, however, so totally overpowered with grief and dismay, as to be utterly incapable of useful deliberation, he suggested the necessity of allowing the diet convened by the king to assemble at Ulm, in which every question connected with German politics might be debated with greater propriety. The wisdom of this plan being universally approved, he promised to visit the northern courts, in order to ascertain how far they might in future depend upon the co-operation of Brandenburg and Saxony.

We have repeatedly seen, in the preceding pages, the vanity of John George presumptuously aspiring to become the head of the protestant party, and even venturing to contend for that exalted station with the transcendent talents of Gustavus. It was, therefore, highly improbable that he should voluntarily resign his claim, when the impediments were lessened, which prevented its completion. To this fatal pretension it was necessary for Oxenstiern to oppose all the weight and influence of

Sweden, because if carried into execution it could not fail to have given a fatal blow to the confederacy. But still it was evident, that the greatest delicacy was required in conducting a negotiation, the object of which was to transfer the authority to which the elector aspired, into the hands of another, as much his inferior in every factitious distinction, as he excelled him in wisdom and probity.

Before his arrival at Dresden, Oxenstiern was invested with the important commission of lieutenant-general and plenipotentiary of the crown of Sweden, with absolute control over all the armies employed in Germany, and the most ample powers for negotiation. Together with this appointment he received instructions respecting his future proceedings. After explaining the determination unanimously embraced, of continuing hostilities till a peace should be obtained, both safe and honourable for the Swedish nation, the senate signified their resolution of adhering faithfully to every engagement contracted by Gustavus Adolphus. But, in return, they required an absolute promise from every member of the League, never to accede to any treaty except with the knowledge and approbation of the confederates. In case the protestants in general should manifest an inclination to terminate the contest, they professed themselves ready to enter into a negotiation, provided the conditions were such as a victorious people had a right to expect. But should their allies prefer a more dignified system, and determine never to sheath the sword till they should have extorted from Austria a full confirmation of all their immunities, the chancellor was instructed to attend particularly to

the protection of the maritime towns, and especially of those in Lower Saxony, that they might be maintained in defiance of every effort, till an adequate indemnity could be procured. Should any attempt be made by the German princes to sacrifice Sweden for their own aggrandizement, Oxenstiern was directed to employ every means in his power to counteract such ungrateful proceedings. Under similar circumstances the assistance of France would become doubly important, and must be purchased even by the cession of Alsace. It might also be advisable to propitiate England by restoring the Palatinate to its legitimate sovereign; and to tempt the mercantile cupidity of the Dutch with part of the Electorate of Cologne. Meanwhile, the Swedish troops being concentrated between the Elbe and the Oder, where all the fortresses were still in their possession, might divide the efforts of their enemies, till terms should be offered, to which honour might unblushingly subscribe. These latter instructions, as the reader will perceive, applied only to a case of the extremest necessity; but the spirit of a people accustomed to victory, could ill brook the idea of permitting the blood of their beloved monarch, and of all his gallant associates in the cause of glory, to have flowed ineffectually.*

Delighted at finding the sentiments of the senate so completely in unison with his own, Oxenstiern proceeded to Dresden, where he was received with every external mark of respect due to the exalted character with which he was invested. But he quickly discovered that outward homage

* Puffendorf, v. 10.

was all that he was likely to obtain, since neither the elector, nor his ministers, seemed disposed to enter into any explanation respecting their future intentions. After waiting in vain for several days, the chancellor submitted to the consideration of the Saxon court the following plans: By the first, it was proposed, that all the alliances contracted with Gustavus should remain in force; that the war should be prosecuted with the utmost vigour, but under the direction of Sweden, assisted by a council composed of delegates from the different circles. According to the second, the Swedes and Germans were to act in separate bodies; the former conducted by a national commander, the latter under the orders of the elector; both conforming, however, to a general plan, and positively engaging upon no account to consent to a peace, from which any member of the union might be excluded. Or lastly, should it appear to the German nation, that they no longer required the co-operation of Sweden, she would not object to withdraw from the contest, upon receiving an adequate compensation for all her sacrifices, and a solemn assurance that she should make a principal in any treaty which might hereafter be negotiated with Austria. Notwithstanding the justice and moderation of these proposals, they by no means coincided with the wishes of John George, whose ill-judging vanity would have regarded every project with equal abhorrence, which tended to limit that unbounded authority to which he presumptuously aspired. Unwilling to give an unqualified refusal, or to bind himself to any specific conditions before he had consulted his colleagues, he evaded the pressing solicitations of Oxenstiern, under pretence that,

upon a subject so highly important to the protestant interest, he could not venture to decide upon any plan without the advice and concurrence of the court of Berlin. Though he wanted sincerity, he was by no means deficient in protestations, but declared his resolution punctually to adhere to every engagement; and never to lay down his arms till the death of his illustrious benefactor should be amply revenged.* Notwithstanding all these professions of gratitude and esteem, the chancellor discovered that the Saxon was decidedly inclined toward the second proposal: for, while his pride shuddered at the prospect of reducing Germany to a state of dependence on Sweden, he could as little endure the humiliating idea of beholding it dismembered even in favour of those, to whose prowess it owed its independence.

Completely satisfied that the Saxon court was equally destitute of courage and inclination to embrace those vigorous measures which were requisite to meet the exigency of the times, Oxenstiern proceeded on his mission to Berlin. Various circumstances concurred to render the reception given him there very different from that which he experienced at Dresden. The anxious desire to recover Pomerania, and to found a powerful monarchy in the north of Europe by the marriage of his eldest son with the heiress of Sweden, were inducements more alluring in the eyes of George William, than all the intrigues and promises of Ferdinand. Impelled by these considerations, far more than by the dictates of rational policy, or by zeal for the religion he professed, the elector entered warmly into

* Feuquieres, i. 38. Puffendorf, v. 11.

all Oxenstiern's projects, and exhorted him to persevere in the arduous task, solemnly protesting, that no earthly inducements should ever persuade him to abandon a country so deservedly dear to every German patriot. In proof of his sincerity, he wrote pressing letters to the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, and the Duke of Wirtemberg, imploring them to exert their influence in their respective circles, in order that the assembly, convened at Ulm, might present to the world the imposing spectacle of rank, of talent, and of numbers.* But, as the example of Saxony must have still greater weight, he declared his intention of visiting Dresden, in the hope of being able in a personal interview to overcome the scruples of his colleague. His eloquence, however, was exerted in vain. John George remained inflexible, and positively declared, that having been elected head of the Evangelical Union by the diet at Leipsic, he would never subscribe to any treaty which tended to diminish the authority conferred upon him by that august assembly.†

While George William was thus ineffectually occupied in combating prejudices too obstinate to be effaced, Oxenstiern regulated with the French ambassador many important points preparatory to the opening of the congress. Feuquieres by his instructions ‡ was particularly directed to conciliate the good opinion of the Swedish chancellor, and to endeavour, if possible, by the most brilliant offers, to attach him to the interest of France, even by the assurance that Louis would do every thing in his power to promote an union between his son and the infant daughter of Gustavus. §

* Puffendorf, v. 12. † Ibid. 14. Feuquieres, i. lxxi. ‡ Ibid. 17.
§ Siri Mem. Recond. 603. Puffendorf also mentions this circumstance,

Feuquieres gives a circumstantial account of his first conversation with Oxenstiern;* from which we learn, that he not only promised to continue the subsidy which had been paid to Gustavus, but even flattered him with the hope of a considerable augmentation, provided he would consent to put into the hands of the French the strong fortresses of Haguenau, Schlestadt, and Brissac. In order, however, so to colour the requisition, that it might create no serious alarm, he took care to announce, in the most unqualified language, that nothing could be further from the intentions of his master than to annex them permanently to his dominions; on the contrary, he professed that the king's sole object in soliciting a temporary occupation, was to enable the Swedes to reinforce their armies with the troop actually employed in garrison service.

To these proposals the chancellor, who immediately penetrated the duplicity of Richelieu, replied with the civility of a courtier, though with the reserve which might be expected, under similar circumstances, from a consummate statesman; declaring, that he should at all times be happy to enter into the views of Louis, and promising to undertake no enterprize of moment without previously informing him of his intention. Satisfied that nothing could be so conducive to future

18. Feuquieres, 17. This paper is extremely curious, as it shews that insincerity was always the characteristic of the Gallic policy; the ambassador being directed almost at the same moment to make proposals nearly of a similar kind to the Elector of Saxony, advising him to take upon himself the directions of the war, with the assistance of Oxenstiern, whom Richelieu appeared anxious to confine to the subordinate capacity of an adviser.

* In a dispatch to the king, i. 30.

success, as the confidence and co-operation of Feuquieres, he minutely explained to him the state of his different negotiations with the northern courts; though he avoided to fetter himself by any specific obligations under pretext, that it would be more satisfactory to their allies, and, consequently, more advantageously to the common cause, to leave their subjects open for future discussion, particularly as a congress was so soon to assemble.*

Gustavus, from his first arrival in Germany, had cherished the wish of uniting all the protestant states of the empire in a general confederacy for the humiliation of Austria; and, notwithstanding he had experienced the most violent opposition from the venality, the fears, or the prejudices of some who assiduously courted his support, he had determined never to relinquish the attempt, while there was the faintest prospect of success. But when the splendour of his victories had encouraged timidity, and silenced disaffection, he thought the moment most opportune for inviting the members of the reformed communion to meet him at Ulm, in Suabia. This assembly having been unavoidably postponed by his death, was transferred to Heilbrun, as a place of greater security; where in spite of intrigues of the Elector of Saxony, a meeting was held no less conspicuous for rank than for talents. Besides, the delegates chosen by the Upper circles,† the following illustrious personages attended: Oxenstiern, chancellor and plenipotentiary of the crown of Sweden; Feuquieres, ambassador from the court of Paris; Anstruther, repre-

* *Le Vassor*, x. 495.

† Franconia, Suabia, Upper and Lower Rhine.

sentative of Charles I. and Paw, minister from the republic of Holland. The Margrave of Baden Dourlach, appeared also in person, and the administrator of Wirtemberg accompanied his nephew, as yet a minor. The Elector of Brandenburg, and the Palatine sent their ambassadors; and their example was followed by many of the minor princes, and almost by all the imperial cities.*

Oxënstiern was too minutely acquainted with the punctilious ceremony of German etiquette, not to foresee the embarrassment likely to arise, respecting the frivolous question of precedency, in an assembly composed of such heterogenous parts; many of whose members had been taught to consider the pedantry of external forms, as no less essential to the character of an accomplished negotiator, than soundness of intellect, dispatch in business, and an intimate knowledge of diplomatic affairs. He flattered himself, however, to have obviated every difficulty, by excluding seats of every kind from the splendid apartment, destined for the reception of the ambassadors; because it would be no longer possible for the vainest, or most captious, to interrupt the deliberations by ridiculous disputes, respecting the honour of occupying an elbow chair. He might, perhaps, also anticipate another advantage from the plan which he adopted, as it was far from improbable, that the conferences might be shortened, when the disputants grew tired of standing. Environed with royal magnificence, the chancellor opened the business in a studied harangue,† explaining the motives which had originally prompted Gustavus Adolphus to call together the protestants

* Puffendorf, v. 28.

† March 21, 1633.

of Upper Germany; as well as those which would have prevented him from presiding over them in person, even had Providence been pleased to prolong his existence. After pathetically lamenting the irreparable loss sustained by the friends of the Reformation, he earnestly recommended to his auditors, as the only means of supporting their independence, perseverance, fortitude, and unanimity. "It is for you, gentlemen," he continued, "to deliberate concerning the measures most likely to preserve the liberties of your country; to procure for Sweden the indemnities which she has a right to expect in return for her numerous sacrifices; to oppose the conclusion of separate treaties, as totally inconsistent with the general welfare; and finally to determine, whether it might not be expedient by a public vote to declare the emperor, and his adherents, enemies of the Germanic constitution. It will be no less incumbent upon you to provide adequate resources for the vigorous prosecution of hostilities; to regulate the number of troops to be furnished respectively by the different members of the Protestant League; to nominate commanders for all the armies; and, lastly, to resolve under whose direction the affairs of the Union shall, in future, be conducted. And I must once more request, in case you continue to avail yourselves of the assistance of Sweden, that you will explicitly specify what remuneration she may ultimately expect in return for her unremitting exertions.*

In order to preclude the possibility of future misunderstanding, Oxenstiern reduced the propositions contained in his discourse under specific heads, and

* Puffendorf, v. 28.

delivered them in writing to the deputies, to be examined by them in their private committees. However urgent the necessity of speedy decision, it was hardly to be expected from an assembly, notoriously influenced by the most opposite interests. For besides the objects already mentioned, Feuquieres was desirous of putting an immediate stop to a treaty proposed to be conducted under the mediation of Denmark, by which Christiern hoped to establish a more equal balance between the northern powers, as well as to obtain considerable advantages for his own family.* Anstruther, on the contrary, appeared indifferent to the issue of the contest, provided the children of Frederic, who was recently dead, were enabled to recover the Palatinate: while Paw was anxious at all events to prevent an accommodation with Austria, because he hoped, that while her forces were occupied in Germany, the Prince of Orange would meet with fewer impediments, in extending his conquests in the Netherlands.

Neither was the behaviour of many of the German members better calculated to satisfy the expectations of Oxenstiern, or to facilitate the progress of the negociation. The Suabian deputies, who were suspected of acting at the instigation of Saxony, proposed to refer the business to a general diet, composed of delegates from all the protestant states, under pretext that the present assembly

* Feuquieres, lxxix. According to Puffendorf, the Danish monarch received from the emperor the promise of a splendid establishment for one of his sons, composed of the secularized property of the church, provided he could procure a favourable peace for Austria, v. 31. This plan is supposed to have been secretly approved by the Elector of Saxony, who was of opinion, that the services of Sweden might be sufficiently recompensed by a pecuniary remuneration.

was incompetent to the decision of momentous questions, being confined exclusively to the upper circles.* This subterfuge might have been attended by fatal consequences, by creating disunion, had it not been combated by arguments more efficacious than any which reason could adduce. Perceiving how little was likely to be effected by addressing the understanding of his auditors, the chancellor resolved immediately to carry into execution a scheme formed by Gustavus, for rewarding his allies at the expense of the church. This determination, he is supposed more readily to have embraced, from the expectation that the German princes, in return for the liberality with which their services were required, might be tempted to consent to his erecting the Electorate of Mentz into a temporal principality for himself.†

This project, however, was successfully combated by the French ambassador, who contended, that nothing could be more impolitic than such an attempt, because it must infallibly raise additional obstacles in the way of peace, since it could hardly be expected, that any thing short of the extremest necessity would ever induce the emperor to subscribe to the secularization of the highest ecclesiastical dignity in favour of a protestant and a stranger. ‡

* Feuquieres, lxxxvii. † Le Vassor, x. 508. Feuquieres, lxxxviii.

‡ The duty of impartiality, says an enlightened historian, (Schiller) compels me to an acknowledgement, but little creditable to the assertors of German independence. Notwithstanding their boasted attachment to justice, and their no less boasted zeal for religion, it is impossible to deny that a great majority of the protestant princes was actuated by less honourable motives. The dread of being plundered, which had originally armed them, was succeeded by an inclination to plunder those whom the

Though probably foreseen by the sagacity of Oxenstiern, the resolutions embraced by the assembly were neither conformable to the wishes of that able minister, nor creditable to the feelings of the Germans: for though the circles were at length persuaded to adopt his plan respecting the vigorous prosecution of hostilities, it was evident from the manner of conducting the debates, that their approbation was not the spontaneous result of magnanimity, but had been extorted by artifice and intrigue. In the situation, however, in which the chancellor was placed, he could not but rejoice at having carried his point, without investigating the cause of his success. To him it was, indeed, the proudest triumph, to see the efforts of Saxony completely frustrated, and a determination embraced to

fortune of war had subjected to their rapacity; and the wish of appropriating to themselves the secularized benefices, found a stimulus more powerful for continuing hostilities than the pious abhorrence of idolatry; or the persuasion, that a Christian may commemorate the death of his Redeemer, without a constant accession of miracles.

The penetration of Gustavus soon discovered the benefit likely to accrue from this selfish propensity, and he was actually preparing to divide his conquests among his allies, had not death prevented him from carrying the plan into execution. What prudence and generosity suggested to the king, necessity imposed upon Oxenstiern, who destined the wealthy abbeys of Fulda, Corvey, Münster, and Paderhorn, to the landgrave of Hesse Cassel; the Franconian sees to Duke Bernard; and the Austrian principalities, in the circle of Suabia, to the house of Wirtemberg. These donations, however, were subject to the humiliating condition of being held as fiefs dependent upon the crown of Sweden. The indignation excited by this disgraceful traffic was augmented by the behaviour of Oxenstiern, who, disgusted with the venality of his pretended friends, contemptuously declared to an importunate claimant, that he would cause the whole transaction to be recorded in the archives of Sweden, in order that posterity might know, that a German prince had stooped to solicit such a favour from a Swedish gentleman; and that it had actually been in the power of the latter to content his avidity.—Puffendorf, v. 30. Le Vassor, x. 508. Schmidt, v. 10.

prosecute the war in conjunction with Sweden, till the rights and immunities of the Germanic constitution should be established on a permanent basis. "In conformity to the desire of his most Christian majesty, and in consideration of the many and important services rendered by Gustavus to the German nation," (for such were the expressions employed) they earnestly requested Axelius Oxenstiern to undertake the direction of all political affairs. In order, however, to alleviate the fatigues of an office, at once so extensive and laborious, a council* was appointed to assist him in the management of the revenue, as well as in regulating the internal economy of the army. "Justly apprehensive that an institution, which was evidently designed to control his authority, and which must consequently tend to frustrate his plans, was calculated to disgust a man of Oxenstiern's character, they deemed it expedient to soften the proposal by an explicit declaration, that it was by no means their intention to subject him to the inconvenience of consulting his colleagues, respecting military operations, which must necessarily be exposed to frequent failures, from the tardiness incidental to collegial deliberations. It was further enacted, that no member of the confederacy should treat with the *common enemy* (for by that title they now ventured to designate the emperor), without the knowledge and approbation of his allies. The advantages of unanimity having been universally recognised, it was wisely established as a permanent principle

* It consisted of seven members, four of whom were to be nominated by the circles, and the remaining three by the Swedish government.

with the league, that no prince, nor state, which had seceded from the communion of Rome, should be permitted to continue an indifferent spectator of a contest so important to every protestant sect ; but that all who attempted to screen themselves from the perils of war under the ambiguous pretext of neutrality, should be treated as enemies, and compelled as such to furnish provisions and money. It was further agreed, that till a general peace, the Swedes should retain possession of the fortresses, which they actually occupied, and that all the troops which might be raised at the expense of the confederates, should take an oath of fidelity to the crown of Sweden.*

These measures apparently received the cordial support of the French ambassador, yet in spite of his concurrence he was strongly suspected of beholding with secret jealousy the ascendancy of Sweden, because it presented an almost insuperable barrier to the ambitious projects of Richelieu, who, after the death of Gustavus, flattered himself to become the guide and arbiter of German politics. But he quickly discovered that it would be no easy task to content the avidity of the nation, which he had undertaken to corrupt. The Margrave of Barden-Dourlach solicited a gratuity of one hundred thousand crowns, under the modest title of loan ; an equal sum was required by the citizens of Nuremberg to repair the damages sustained during the blockade. Other pretensions equally exorbitant were successfully urged from different quarters. But, as the coffers of France

* Fenquieres, xciii. Galletti, i, 303. Khevenhiller, x, 504.

might have been easily exhausted, without satisfying the rapacity of the Germans, Feuquieres endeavoured to elude the demands without forfeiting his credit with the petitioners; alleging, as an excuse for non-compliance, that the subsidies regularly paid to Sweden, and the sums occasionally furnished to Holland, prevented his master from following the dictates of his heart, which prompted him to listen with benevolent attention to all who appealed to his generosity.*

Notwithstanding Oxenstiern had virtually accomplished his purpose, he appeared much dissatisfied at having failed in his endeavours to persuade the diet to issue a public declaration of war against Ferdinand and his adherents. This measure, however, appeared objectionable upon various accounts, but particularly as tending to widen the breach, and to raise insuperable obstacles to an accommodation. But it probably experienced such obstinate resistance, not because it was essentially repugnant to the interests, but because it militated against the prejudices of the nation. The German civilians, of all descriptions of pedants the most zealous adherers to forms, though able to reconcile to the erudite delicacy of their consciences, the crime of actually waging war against the imperial throne, were overwhelmed with consternation at the bare idea of manifesting the determination in a tangible shape, because the annals of the empire could furnish no precedent for so direct an attack upon prerogative.

Neither was this the only source of disquietude to which the chancellor was exposed; for, upon

† Sitt Mem. Rec. vii. 606. Le Vassor, x. 507.

every application for pecuniary supplies, he instantaneously discovered, as twenty emperors had done before, that there is nothing with which the Germans part so reluctantly as with money. Instead of providing funds for the military service, they wasted their breath in useless reflections upon the calamities incidental to war; and when reminded of the evils which must unavoidably accrue from their indecision, they recommended economy in the public expenditure, though there was literally nothing to economize.

The regularity and promptitude of a military government rendered the dilatory ceremonials of a German diet peculiarly offensive to Oxenstiern; who was frequently unable to restrain his impatience, when fettered by the narrow policy of men, who in vain attempted to hide their illiberal feelings under the imposing mask of an inviolable attachment to the practice and opinions of their ancestors. Endowed with a quickness of apprehension, which enabled him in a moment to seize all the various bearings of a question, he was unable to make a proper allowance for the constitutional failings of those to whom tardiness was so habitual, that they regarded wisdom as utterly incompatible with celerity. Nothing, therefore, is more natural than that we should find him accused of irritability by an order of statesmen who would more willingly have contemplated the wreck of the universe, than have consented to deviate, even in the minutest instance, from the pedantry of ancient institutions. The chancellor's impatience served only to augment the evil of which he complained. Every violation of precedent protracted the business which he wished to accelerate, by affording fresh materials

for discussion. Unable to comprehend how weeks could be squandered in regulating an affair, which appeared to him too palpable to admit of debate, he positively objected to proceed any further by written memorials, so precious in the eyes of forensic prejudice, that even the haughty temper of Charles V. was reluctantly compelled to admit them.*

The pomp assumed by the representative of the Swedish crown afforded fresh materials for complaint. The pride of hereditary rank could ill endure the superior splendour of a man of equestrian descent, without reflecting that the state which might ill accord with the condition of a Swedish gentleman, was highly decorous in the minister of a powerful nation, invested with almost regal authority.†

Though it was impossible for a person of Oxenstiern's penetration to mistake the intentions of Richelieu, yet in spite of the conviction, that the ambitious cardinal was desirous of impairing the influence of Sweden, and by rendering her dependent upon the bounty of Louis, to make a nation of heroes subservient to the views of the most pusillanimous of princes, he felt that it would be utterly impracticable, without the co-operation of

* Feuquieres, xciii.

† De Oxenstiernio quid dicam? Ille nobilis transmarini regni, et suæ propriæ conditionis immemor et aliënæ, antambulouibus principibus Germaniæ uti, ab iisdem suam ab utroque latere ambiri rhedam, defecto capite sibi porrigi lavauti aquam, mantile, dapes, et electores ipsos inter aulicos numerari sustinuit, arreeta fronte, ac supercilio quodam castigare, plectere, si quid in Germania, et Germanis adhuc antiqui impetus, et quasi non Succicum aspexisset. Wassenberg Paneg. Ferdin., iii. 196. The panegyrist of an Austrian emperor would be naturally disposed to censure the conduct of a Swede.

France, to compel the Saxon elector to ratify the proceedings of the assembly at Heilbrun, or even to preserve the authority with which he had been invested.

An opinion also prevailed, that Anstruther contributed to foment the jealousy of Oxenstiern, by exaggerating the mischief which might eventually accrue from trusting too confidently to the professions of a prince, whose religion and policy were continually at variance; and whose conduct toward Germany would inevitably change, should caprice, or bigotry, or the hand of death, deprive France of the genius of Richelieu. But on the friendship and perseverance of England, and of Holland, he assured the chancellor that he might firmly rely, because their interests were identified with those of Sweden. These arguments are reported to have made so deep an impression upon Oxenstiern, that he might possibly have been induced to enter into the views of the British cabinet, had not the disputes which prevailed between Charles and his parliament precluded all hope of effectual support on the part of England; and he accordingly resolved, after mature consideration, to renew the treaty of Beeswald.*

The important business having been brought to a happy conclusion, Feuquieres proceeded on his journey to Saxony, in the hope of prevailing upon the two protestant electors to accede to the confederacy of Heilbrun: he also flattered himself, when on the spot, to be able to counteract the intrigues of the landgrave of Darmstadt, then seriously occupied in promoting a separate treaty between the

* Puffendorf, v. 36. Feuquieres, xcv.

courts of Vienna and Dresden. That prince had acquired an almost absolute ascendancy over the feeble understanding of John George, whose daughter he had married; and, being blindly devoted to Austria, had secretly undertaken to mediate a peace, without the intervention of France or Sweden.*

The son-in-law of John George was a formidable antagonist, because he was not only ready to sacrifice both religion and honour at the shrine of ambition, but, according to the confession of an intelligent enemy,† also possessed a quick and penetrating judgment. In the management of any dark and intricate plot, he found an able coadjutor in Wolf, a man of profligate principles, devoted to interest, and sold to Austria, but deeply versed in political affairs, and intimately acquainted with the Germanic constitution.

A negociation, undertaken without the participation of France, was regarded by her enlightened minister as not only derogatory to the dignity of that powerful monarchy, but as likely to prove of essential prejudice to her interests; because it might be expected that the emperor would immediately avail himself of the suspension of hostilities, to assist the Duke of Orleans, whose restless ambition was waiting impatiently for a favourable opportunity to overturn the dominion of Richelieu.

But, before we attempt to make the reader acquainted with the negociations of Feuquieres in Northern Germany, it will be expedient to inquire into the operations of the belligerent armies, after the fatal battle of Lutzen.

* Puffendorf, xcvi. Le Vassor, x. 620.

† Feuquieres.

In the concluding chapter of the preceding volume, we saw Wallenstein overwhelmed with consternation, and flying precipitately toward Bohemia. The night subsequent to his overthrow he took refuge at Leipsic, where he arrived with an escort of only eighty dragoons; but, before morning, he was joined by several thousands, the miserable remnants of that formidable host, with which he had vainly boasted that he could compel Gustavus to fly to his native deserts. Apprehensive of exposing his disheartened legions to a second conflict, while sinking under the depression of a recent defeat, he scarcely allowed them a moment's repose, but continued his march with unabating speed, till he had found an asylum under the cannon of Prague.

Meanwhile the Swedish army, which, independently of the sick and wounded, amounted to little more than twelve thousand combatants, after uniting with a body of five thousand Saxons, obliged the imperialists to evacuate every place which they occupied in the electorate. This undertaking being accomplished, Arnheim prepared with his national troops to follow the Austrians into Selesia; while the Swedes separated into two bodies; one of which, under the command of Duke Bernard, directed its march towards Franconia, while the other, conducted by the Duke of Luneberg and Kniphausen, hastened to intercept the new-raised levies, which were destined to replace the slaughter at Lutzen.

When Gustavus set out on his expedition for the relief of Saxony, he left Barnes and Birkenfeldt to defend his conquests on the Lech, and the Danube; but the inferiority of the force with which they

were entrusted, rendering it impossible for them long to maintain their ground against the Bavarian army, which had acquired an able commander in Aldringer, they were constrained to solicit the co-operation of Horn, at that time occupied in the reduction of Alsace. Notwithstanding the disappointment which ambition must experience in being forced to suspend its triumphant career,* Horn did not hesitate a moment in obeying the summons, and leaving the Rhingrave Otho Louis with a force sufficient to carry on a defensive warfare, he flew to the assistance of Banner. Fearful of injuring his reputation by a fruitless attempt to join his friend, he suddenly turned toward Kepten, in the hope of being able to carry it by assault, before the Bavarian general could interpose. The activity of his opponent, however, frustrated the bold design, and left him no alternative, except to abandon the siege, or to leave the Duchy of Wirtemberg a prey to the torrent, with which Aldringer was preparing to overwhelm it.†

To prevent the enemy from acquiring a decisive superiority in Upper Germany, appeared to Horn a consideration of such infinite moment, that he deemed it expedient to postpone every enterprize, till that important object should be accomplished; but as it was impossible to succeed without the co-operation of Bernard, he earnestly requested him to hasten to his assistance, with whatever troops he could collect.

That gallant prince had opened the campaign by the reduction of Bamberg, and its dependent

* He had taken Colmar, Schletstadt, Benfeldt, and Haquenau.

† Puffendorf, v. 21. Galetti, i. 300.

territory, and was actually preparing to subjugate the adjacent country, which he had been taught by Gustavus to regard as the ultimate recompense of his many important services. But when glory presented its seducing palm, every feeling, save that of exalted ambition, was silenced in the breast of this gallant warrior. Having taken Weissenberg by assault, and defeated a detachment of Bavarian cavalry, under John of Wert, a celebrated partisan, he advanced by hasty marches to Donauwerth. After his junction with Horn, the aspect of affairs was totally altered. Unable to face their united forces, Aldringer abandoned the banks of the Danube, and retreated towards Munich, delighted to have escaped from the ruin which awaited him, at the expense of part of his baggage.*

Though the Bavarian general was considerably inferior to his opponents in numerical strength, still the precipitation with which he retired, accorded so little with his natural character, as to excite a suspicion, that he acted in conformity to the orders of Wallenstein, desirous from motives, which will hereafter be explained, to leave Bavaria open to invasion. The activity of the Swedes was admirably calculated to promote the accomplishment of this insidious project, if such was in reality his intention. The wealthy bishoprick of Eichstadt being overrun and plundered, the whole of the electorate was exposed to hostile incursions, when a storm suddenly collecting in an unexpected quarter, threatened to demolish the magnificent fabric of Swedish glory.

Notwithstanding the wisdom and sagacity with

* Puffendorf, v. 38.

which all the plans of Gustavus were conceived and executed, it cannot be denied, even by his warmest admirers, that the astonishing rapidity with which he advanced from conquest to conquest, ought chiefly to be ascribed to the valour and discipline of his soldiers. The humiliation of Austria had been accomplished by their unrivalled patience, in submitting without a murmur to the most painful privations, and enduring with alacrity the severest fatigues. Instructed by victory, and the merited applause of an admiring world, to regard themselves as something more than automata, which move at the voice of authority, they began gradually to reflect, that the instruments of conquest were naturally entitled to partake in its rewards. The soldiers, who boldly analyze their own weight in the political scale, have already made no inconsiderable progress towards mutiny; and, when the latent sparks are about to kindle, incendiaries are never wanting to fan the flame of sedition. Theoretically speaking, nothing can appear more consistent with retribute justice, than that those who participate in the dangers of war, should participate likewise in its emoluments. No wonder then that a principle, avowedly resting on the foundation of reason, should be received with avidity by a suffering army, when recommended by the eloquence of a popular leader, and sanctioned by the dictates of vanity and interest.

By the partial distribution of the enormous sums collected from the conquered provinces, many of the generals indulged in luxurious plenty, while the common men, either from the irregularity with which they were paid, or from the negligent distri-

bution of provisions, were exposed to unnecessary misery. The unlimited confidence reposed in the paternal love of Gustavus, and the conviction that their distress was the effect of necessity, and not of peculation, respect and admiration, the hope of preferment, or the dread of incurring his just indignation, had suppressed every complaint, even when they were struggling against hardships which human constancy was scarcely able to tolerate; but, when his presiding genius no longer conducted them from triumph to triumph, every privation was felt with keener sensibility. It is probable that the same provident system no longer prevailed in the internal economy of the army, and that neglect and malversation might afford abundant materials for complaints; but, it is probable, also, that every action capable of a sinister interpretation was greatly exaggerated by malevolence, envy, and disaffection. Pfuhl and Mitschafal, whose turbulent tempers had submitted reluctantly to the authority of their sovereign, flattered themselves to extort from the apprehensions of Oxenstiern the complete realization of their most ambitious designs, if backed by a mutinous army. It was requisite, however, first to corrupt the fidelity of troops long accustomed to the severest discipline; but the situation of affairs, since the battle of Lutzen, having been peculiarly favourable to their perfidious schemes, they encountered fewer obstacles than might have been expected; and, professing to be actuated by the most disinterested zeal for the comforts and happiness of their fellow soldiers, they soon acquired an unbounded ascendancy over all their actions.

Arguments addressed directly to the passions

are seldom heard with indifference. The soldiers listened attentively to their seditious harangues, as to the voice of inspiration, when told that, notwithstanding enormous sums were raised every day under pretence of supplying the wants of the army, they were basely reserved for a few chosen favourites, instead of being distributed to recompense the valour of those, who had conquered at Lepsic and Lutzen. "Was this," they triumphantly inquired, "consistent either with generosity, or even with justice?" Though forced to encounter the inclemency of a winter campaign, and to undergo toils and distresses too severe for any except Dalecarlian strength, their patience was still unrequited; and, if they ventured to utter a single complaint, they met with punishment, and not with redress. "The licentiousness of the troops," they said, "afforded a constant theme for censure to the assembly at Heilbrun, but not a word had been uttered in commiseration of the evils they endured; and, though Europe resounded with the fame of their exploits, they were unfeelingly allowed to perish."*

Continually nourished by these inflammatory discourses, a spirit of insubordination was rapidly diffused from rank to rank; and an association was signed by the different regiments, requiring that to each of them should be assigned the revenues of a certain district, as a security for their being paid in future with greater regularity. Four weeks were allowed to examine their demands, at the expiration of which they solemnly declared, that unless they met with ample satisfaction, they would never

* Puffendorf, v. 40. Galletti, i. 310.

fight again under the banners of Sweden, but endeavour to find some more effectual method for redressing their grievances, than by appealing to the justice of an ungrateful nation.*

Neither the exertions of Weimar, nor the severity of Horn, produced the smallest effect; the troops resolved upon carrying their point, wrote letters to the principal officers serving in the other armies, acquainting them with the steps which had been already taken, and exhorting them to follow their example. Fortunately, however, their dispatches were intercepted, and served to shew the extent of the mischief, and the necessity of providing an efficacious remedy, before the contagion was more widely diffused.

To endeavour to allay the tumult by a donative, according to the practice of the degenerate Romans, however destructive of military discipline, was a measure which might have been resorted to, had not the military chest been completely exhausted, and the credit of Sweden so much impaired, that it was impossible for money to be procured.

Among the Swedish commanders the only one who still retained the smallest influence was Duke Bernard of Weimar; and the admiration excited by his undaunted bravery, and conciliating manners, was augmented by the moderation which he alone displayed at a crisis so truly alarming. Though I never met with an insinuation injurious to the reputation of this gallant prince, yet, when I impartially examine his behaviour on the present occasion, I cannot divest myself of the idea, that if he did not secretly encourage the mutiny, he

* Puffendorf, v. 40.

never seriously attempted to repress it. I readily acknowledge, that this imputation may be unjust, but the advantage which he derived from the public distress, and the facility with which he ultimately quelled the insurrection, are circumstances of a very suspicious nature, and, in characters less distinguished for honourable feelings, would be universally considered as conclusive. But, whether he trusted solely to his popularity, or rested his hopes upon a more solid foundation, certain it is, that the storm subsided, as soon as he had settled with Oxenstiern the terms of remuneration. Aware of his consequence, the sagacious Weimar took advantage of the chancellor's distress, for the purpose of securing to himself a splendid establishment in Germany. Gustavus had promised to confer on him a principality in Franconia, composed of secularized bishoprics; and it was upon this engagement that Bernard founded his claim, insisting upon its immediate completion, in case he should be fortunate enough to persuade the troops to return to a sense of their duty. He, at the same time, required the supreme command of all the Swedish armies, with the exalted dignity of a generalissimo. The ungenerous behaviour of Weimar, in attempting to extort from the apprehensions of Oxenstiern, what his gratitude would have readily bestowed, exasperated the chancellor to such a degree, that, in the warmth of his resentment, he threatened to dismiss him from the Swedish service. A moment's reflection, however, served to evince the danger of such an experiment, and Bernard manifesting an inclination to lower his demands, a reconciliation took place; by which the latter obtained the Fran-

conian sees, together with the fortresses of Wurtzburg and Kouigshofen * But the command was refused under the specious pretext, that as his elder brother William had been invested by Gustavus with the title and authority of his lieutenant-general, he might consider the appointment as an insult.

The confidence of Oxenstiern was not misplaced, since by the exertions and influence of a popular commander tranquillity was immediately restored. A sum of money, procured from the German merchants, was distributed fairly among the different regiments, and lands † were allotted to the principal officers, in proportion to their rank and their services. These sacrifices, though made at the expense of the Germans, were nevertheless subject to the humiliating condition, of being held as fiefs dependent upon the crown of Sweden. ‡ Thus terminated an insurrection, which threatened destruction to the protestant cause, and which actually occasioned essential detriment, by creating delay at an important moment, when the greatest activity was requisite.

The necessity of opposing the imperialists in different quarters, again compelled the Swedish commanders to separate. The Rhingrave directed his march toward Westphalia, where Montecuculi, though actually upon the point of taking Andernach, was obliged to abandon the siege at his approach. Nothing else in the least deserving of

* Upon receiving the investiture from the hands of the chancellor, he appointed his brother Ernest governor. Galetti, i. 311.

† To the enormous amount of five millions of dollars. Ibid.

‡ Puffendorf, v. 40.

notice occurred in that part of Germany, except the resignation of Bauditzen, who threw up his commission, after addressing a letter to the Swedish government replete with bitter complaints.* Notwithstanding it was distinguished by no signal exploit, the result of the campaign proved highly honourable to the Swedes, who succeeded in reducing the whole of the Palatinate under the dominion of its legitimate sovereign.†

After various skirmishes with the enemy on the borders of Franconia, Horn was obliged to suspend his operations, that he might hasten to the defence of the duchy of Wirtemberg, again threatened with a visit from the imperialists. Dismayed at the unexpected celerity of his approach, the Austrians retreated to Linden, though closely pursued by the Swedes; who, finding it impossible to induce them to quit a position, in which it would have been extremely hazardous to attack them, resolved to indemnify themselves for all their fatigues by the capture of Constance. Many obstacles, however, conduced to augment the difficulty of the undertaking, and in particular the want of heavy artillery, which had been left at Ulm, because no horses could be procured. Nothing therefore remained, except to transport a battering train from the arsenal at Stuttgart; neither could this be effected in a rainy season, with such expedition as to prevent the Austrians from reinforcing the garrison, with which a communication was still open by water. Horn, however, conducted the attack with so much vigour, that breaches were made in

* Puffendorf, v. 42.

† Puffendorf, v. 47.

various places, and great numbers of the enemy were destroyed; but, as they continued to be masters of the lake, it was impossible to prevent them from pouring in additional troops; so that he was ultimately forced to abandon the siege, after having ineffectually attempted an assault. Notwithstanding this failure was attended with inconsiderable loss, it might have been productive of infinite mischief, in case the catholic cantons had succeeded in their efforts to inflame the jealousy of their confederates, as they left nothing untried to induce the protestants to take up arms in vindication of the violation of their territory, over which a Swedish column had passed, representing the insult as no less prejudicial to the independence of Switzerland, than the tyranny of Gessler, or the pretensions of Albert. Fortunately, however, the energy of the Calvinists impeded the execution of this perfidious design, as they solemnly declared, that in case any exertions should be made in favour of Austria, they would march in a body to the assistance of Sweden.* Indeed, so violent were the dissensions which then prevailed between the opposite parties, that there is great reason to believe, that the evangelical cantons were ready to declare against Ferdinand, the moment Horn had got possession of Constance.†

Meanwhile Bernard had selected a strong position upon the banks of the Danube, from which he was able to protect his Franconian dominions, and to watch the motions of Aldringer, who, with his accustomed activity, had taken advantage of

* Puffendorf, v. 76.

† Puffendorf, v. 78. Gualdo, i. 211.

the departure of Horn to commence offensive operations, and was actually occupied in the reduction of Biberach. Determined, if possible, to impede his design, Weimar broke up in haste with the intention of giving battle to the Bavarians, rather than suffer the town to be captured; but having gained intelligence during his march, that the Duke of Feria was upon the point of joining Aldringer with fourteen thousand Italians, he was forced to relinquish a project, from which he expected to have reaped a full harvest of glory.*

At the earnest solicitation of Ferdinand, Philip IV. King of Spain, had assembled an army in the duchy of Milan, for the purpose of supporting the catholic religion in Germany. The Duke of Feria, an officer of high reputation, being entrusted with the command, was directed to act in conjunction with Aldringer, independently of the authority of Wallenstein. Upon the first news of the approach of this formidable force, Horn ordered Birkenfeldt to join him, and proceeded to Ueberlinger where the enemy was encamped, with the bold resolution of risking an engagement. After an unavailing display of military talents in marches and counter-marches, the contending parties came in sight of each other in the vicinity of Dutlingen, when a battle appeared unavoidable; but, as neither party was disposed to sacrifice the advantage of a well-chosen position, they confined themselves entirely to desultory skirmishes.† Convinced from repeated trials that his antagonist was too prudent to abandon the heights, Aldringer directed his march

* Puffendorf, v. 78.

† Puffendorf, v. 94.

toward Stutgard, in the hope of inducing the Swedish general to follow him ; but, finding this stratagem equally unsuccessful, he hastened to the succour of Brissac, which was upon the point of surrendering to the Rhingrave. Though too weak to resist the overwhelming torrent, Otho Louis conducted his retreat with such consummate skill, that he acquired more glory from the failure of the enterprise, than he could have expected from its entire success. After uniting his forces with Horn and Birkenfeldt, he assisted in compelling the imperialists to evacuate Alsace, where they had begun to render themselves formidable. Thus terminated the expedition of Feria, who died shortly after, and, as it is generally believed, of a broken heart ; too proud to survive the loss of reputation incidental to an inglorious campaign, and too humane to endure the melancholy spectacle of beholding his gallant associates, whom he had flattered with the expectation of immortal renown, falling victims to the severity of a German climate, and the dearth of wholesome provisions.*

The brilliant fortune which attended his colleagues in Swabia, rendering unnecessary the co-operation of Weimar, he prepared to strike a decisive blow, and having deceived the enemy by various feints, unexpectedly presented himself before Ratisbonne.† No place upon the Danube was of greater importance, because, by securing a passage over that rapid stream, it would enable him to carry hostilities to the Tirolian mountains, or to advance with security beyond the frontiers of Aus-

* Puffendorf, v. 94. Galetti, i. 314.

† On the 26th of October, 1633.

tria. Neither would it be possible for the imperialists to establish themselves in Bavaria, if the Swedes were once masters of Ratisbonne. Tilly is said to have estimated this position so highly, that with his latest breath he recommended to Maximilian never to suffer it to fall into the hands of the enemy, while he had a single regiment left for its defence. It is therefore astonishing that the elector, who was seldom deficient in worldly prudence, should have allowed it to remain without an adequate garrison. Yet when invested by the Swedes it contained no more than fifteen companies of regular infantry; a force perhaps sufficient to have prevented it from falling into the hands of the enemy till succours could arrive, had it been seconded by the zeal of the inhabitants. The oppressive government of Maximilian, however, had rendered his name so deservedly unpopular, that every change would have been hailed as a blessing. Besides, the majority of the citizens were ardently devoted to the Lutheran faith, and panted after the moment, when they might again indulge in the uninterrupted enjoyments of their religious profession.

Overwhelmed with consternation at the prospect of losing, by his own inadvertence, a city so essential to the safety of the electorate, Maximilian earnestly solicited reinforcements from the imperial army. The danger of allowing so active a commander as Bernard to make himself master of the Danube, presented itself to Ferdinand in so forcible a light, that he dispatched a confidential officer to Wallenstein, requesting him (for to command was no longer in his power) to detach Gallas immediately, with a force sufficient for the protection of Ratisbonne.

The artful dictator received the messenger with every external mark of respect, and issued orders immediately for Gallas to march; but positively forbade him to attack the Swedes, and even threatened him with instant and ignominious death, in case of disobedience.

Persuaded that a formidable force was coming to his relief, the Bavarian governor refused to listen even to honourable terms of capitulation, declaring his resolution of defending the city to the last extremity. The protestants were disarmed, and closely watched; while the papists were trained to martial exercises, and encouraged by the assurance of a speedy delivery. This hope of course augmented in proportion as Gallas advanced. With anxious expectation of beholding the Austrian standards triumphantly floating in sight of the walls, the catholics flocked to the ramparts, and submitted with patience to the severest fatigues, convinced that their sufferings would prove of short duration. But these pleasing expectations were quickly dispelled by the melancholy intelligence, that the lieutenant of Wallenstein had fallen back upon Pilsen, under pretext that Bohemia was menaced by the Saxons. Every prospect of liberation being thus cruelly destroyed, the governor acceded to the favourable conditions, which Weimar generously offered.†

After the capture of Ratisbonne, that gallant prince no longer confined his ambitious views to the reduction of Bavaria, but looked forward to the glory of being the first to plant the Swedish

† Schmidt, v. 11. Puffendorf, v. 95. Gualdo, i. 238.

standard on Austrian ground, where he doubted not to be joined by the disaffected protestants, justly incensed at being restricted, under the severest penalties, from exercising their religion. Depending chiefly upon celerity for success, because he knew that the emperor had drawn away the troops from Upper Austria to reinforce the Bohemian army, he descended the southern bank of the Danube, while Taufradel scoured the opposite shore, and bidding defiance to the elements, crossed the Iser in presence of John of Werth, and advancing with rapidity to the gates of Passau, made Ferdinand tremble in his capital.*

Many impediments were already overcome, but many still remained to be surmounted, before he beheld his triumphant banners floating on the walls of Vienna. Not even the intrepidity of Bernard could deride the danger with which he was surrounded, when he calmly contemplated his situation. Between the Isar and Munich no fortified town afforded shelter to his army, in the event of any sudden reverse; and the intenseness of the frost rendered it impracticable even for the persevering industry of the Dalecarlians to throw up intrenchments. Defended by strong and numerous castles, the country before him presented obstacles which his sanguine temper had led him to overlook, while his rear was actually threatened by Gallas, whom Wallenstein, unable any longer to oppose the emperor's will, had reluctantly permitted to advance.† To add to his distress, intelligence arrived that the army of Friedland was in motion,

* Galetti, i. 315.

† Galetti, i. 315.

Puffendorf, v. 97.

either with the intention of interrupting all communication with Ratisbonne, or of cutting off the column under Taufradel. But as he found that it was still separated from Gallas by a considerable space, he formed the bold resolution of attacking Wallenstein, before he united with his lieutenant. This plan, no less worthy of admiration on account of the daring courage with which it was embraced, than for the consummate skill with which it was carried into execution, was rendered abortive by the vigilance of his opponent, who having gained intelligence of the enemy's approach, and being occupied with projects far more important in his own estimation than the security of Austria, retired into the mountains of Bohemia. The severity of the season rendering it highly impolitic to expose his troops any longer to unnecessary hardships, the Duke of Weimar thought proper to terminate a campaign, in the course of which he had displayed the highest military talents.*

While the war was sustained with so much ability by Horn, Weimar, and Birkenfeldt, in southern Germany, the Swedish arms acquired scarcely less reputation in Westphalia and Saxony. After an obstinate resistance the Duke of Luneberg reduced the strong fortress of Hameln, and obtained a signal victory over the imperialists at Oldendorf. This brilliant exploit was in a great measure due to the valour and activity of Waseburg, a natural son of Gustavus Adolphus. All the baggage belonging to the Austrian army, together with the seventy-four standards, and the greater part of their artil-

* Galetti, i. 316.

lery, fell into the hands of the victors. These, however, were conquests of little consequence, when compared with the acquisition of Paderborn and Osnabruck, the former of which surrendered to the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, the latter to the gallant Kniphausen.*

Thus ended the campaign, in a manner no less glorious to the warlike talents of Sweden than unexpected and humiliating to Austria, who saw with astonishment, that notwithstanding the loss of their heroic leader, the Swedes continued triumphant in every quarter.

* Puffendorf, 82. After the surrender of Osnabruck, the temporalities were given to Waseburg, as the merited recompense of his exertions. Galetti, i. 319.

CHAP. XVII.

Conspiracy and Death of Wallenstein.

IN reviewing the transactions of the preceding campaign, no circumstance is more calculated to excite astonishment, than the strange inactivity of Wallenstein. After the death of Gustavus, no commander remained upon the political theatre who could vie with him in the estimation of the world; yet no sooner had the fall of his illustrious antagonist apparently left him without a rival, than he suddenly sunk into obscurity. Instead of attempting, in conformity to his aspiring character, to obliterate the impression of his recent defeat, he shut himself up in Bohemia, indifferent to the fate of the papal religion, and deaf to the solicitations of Ferdinand. Giving unbounded scope to a temper naturally severe, he instituted at Prague a military tribunal, for the purpose of investigating the behaviour of all the officers, who fought under his banners at Lutzen. Those who were convicted of cowardice, or of disobedience to orders, were condemned to the scaffold, and executed immediately, with marks of infamy far more dreadful in the estimation of a soldier, than the most painful death: *—while those who had distinguished them-

* Siri Mem. Recond, vii. 636.

selves for bravery, or intelligence, were rewarded with princely munificence. To the memory of Pappenheim, and all who fell in that fatal battle, he caused monuments to be erected, under pretext of recovering the tarnished honour of the Austrian arms; he ordered levies to be made in every part of the empire, which still acknowledged the authority of Ferdinand; while, in order to procure resources for the prosecution of hostilities, the provinces were exposed to enormous contributions. Yet when the armament was completed, and the pious impatience of the orthodox church anticipated the destruction of heresy, he did nothing commensurate with his gigantic preparations, nor gratifying to the wishes of his admirers. Instead of being the first, as they imagined, to take the field, he was the last of any to draw the sword, and even then directed the operations of the war in such a manner, as to render Silesia the seat of hostilities.*

A tranquil spectator of events, which threatened to overturn the power of Austria, he remained quietly in his palace at Prague, till it was no longer possible, even for his most zealous adherents, to frame a plausible excuse for his inactivity. His behaviour toward most of the imperial ministers was no less unaccountable. Instead of endeavouring to gain them by bribes and caresses, which, considering their characters, would have been no difficult task, he subjected their estates to heavy impositions; and, when they ventured to remonstrate, or produced titles of exemption from every species

* Galetti, i. 321. Schiller, iv. Schmidt, v. 9.

of taxation, he either disdained entirely to notice their complaints, or treated them with haughty indifference. Notwithstanding he received unquestionable intelligence that the courts of Spain and Bavaria were labouring incessantly to undermine his authority, and representing all his actions in a suspicious light; instead of counteracting their machinations by the assistance of his friends, or vindicating his loyalty by splendid exploits, he furnished them with additional weapons for the attack by the mysterious silence which he preserved.

In order to understand the actions of this extraordinary man, and to account for the numberless inconsistencies with which they abound, it is necessary constantly to bear in mind, that while he was inflamed by an ambition, which no honours could satisfy, and no perils restrain, he frequently stopped short in the midst of his career, to the astonishment of all who were strangers to his credulity; because his astrologer declared that the constellations were unpropitious. For in his bosom superstition was a passion more active even than pride; and the haughty chieftain, whose arrogance presumptuously disdained all human control, was thus rendered the dupe of an Italian juggler.

Though certainly endowed with abilities superior to the generality of mankind, Wallenstein, from various circumstances, had acquired a reputation considerably beyond his deserts; and, without attempting invidiously to derogate from his merit, it may fairly be asserted, that there was more of eccentricity in his character than of real heroism. Far more confident in the vain predictions of Senni, than in the suggestions of courage, or the resources

of genius, he appears frequently to have mistaken the motives of those in whom he confided, by supposing them more accessible to the dictates of gratitude than to the impulse of interest, or of ambition.

Notwithstanding he is reported to have laboured for many years in arranging the machinery for the stupendous work, designed to crown him with immortal renown, it was found completely defective in many essential points, when the day arrived for setting it in motion. That he was unprepared it is difficult to suppose; yet, it is far from improbable, that he may have been ultimately hurried into the disclosure of his projects at an unfavourable crisis; because it was impossible for him safely to suspend the blow, when he had received unquestionable proofs that his treachery was suspected at Vienna. The decline of his favour at the imperial court was evidently manifested by different circumstances, but by none more strikingly than by the following:—It was a leading article in the treaty of Znaim, that no negotiation should be undertaken without his approbation; nor any army exist within the precincts of the empire, independently of his authority. He therefore learned, with a mixture of surprise and indignation, that a conference had been held at Leutmaritz, in Bohemia, for the purpose of concluding a separate peace between Saxony and Austria.* But he was still more exasperated that a Spanish army had actually entered Swabia, without his having received official advice; because he

* Questenberg and the Bishop of Vienna acted as plenipotentiaries on the part of Austria, while the Landgrave of Hesse Darmstadt represented the elector.—Galletti, i. 323.

not only regarded the transaction in the light of a personal insult, but considered it likewise as a preparatory step to his own degradation.* These were humiliations too mortifying for the lofty spirit of Wallenstein to endure; and he hastily determined, without further hesitation, to throw aside the mask, and immediately to vindicate his injured honour, by a memorable revenge.

Of all the possessions subject to the dominion of Austria, none was at that time exposed to more imminent danger than Silesia. Three powerful armies were preparing to overrun it in different quarters. After experiencing every possible vicissitude of fortune, the elder Thurn, at the advanced age of eighty, was entrusted with the command of the Swedish troops, while Arnheim, at the head of the Saxons, and Burgodorf of the Prussians, prepared to lay waste that fertile province, in retaliation for the atrocities committed by the Austrians in Misnia. As Wallenstein beheld their operations with callous indifference, the entire conquest of Silesia might have been easily effected, had not the jealousy which subsisted between the Swedes and Saxons prevented them from acting in concert. There was also much apparent foundation for the opinion which prevailed, that the general of John George abstained intentionally from every enterprise likely to be attended with decisive results; and an authentic historian, whose testimony is entitled to the highest credit, scruples not to assert, that he was actually a pensioner of Austria.†

Thurn, on the contrary, would have preferred

* Guazzo, l. 215.

† Puffendorf, v. 46.

the glory of planting the protestant standard on the battlements of the imperial capital, to all the boasted wealth of Potosi. Nothing, therefore, could be more natural, than for him to accuse Arnheim of disaffection, when, by studied delay, he permitted the enemy to escape. The intimacy which subsisted between the Saxons and Austrians was also calculated to excite the most unfavourable suspicions in the breast of a veteran, who thought it impossible that men, contending in defence of religion and of freedom, should treat the destroyers of both with hospitality. But when he beheld the imperialists openly permitted by a blockading army to remove their most valuable property, he no longer doubted the perfidy of his colleagues, and thought his personal safety precarious. At length, however, after much altercation, Arnheim consented to advance in conjunction with the Swedes, for the purpose of giving battle to the imperialists. Yet in spite of his superiority, Wallenstein refused to quit his intrenchments,* where it was impossible for the allies to attack him. The vanity of Thurn, who presumptuously ascribed the caution of the Austrian commander to the dread of again facing the formidable cohorts by which he had been defeated at Lutzen, prevented him from discovering that, if he were permitted to escape, it was only because a victory was likely to prove no less prejudicial to his adversary than a defeat.

After the armies had remained in sight of each other for several days, an officer was sent by the Duke of Friedland to propose a conference to Arn-

* The Austrians amounted to forty thousand, while the allies had not more than twenty-five thousand.

heim. The Saxon instantly accepted the invitation, and, attended by a Swedish and Prussian colonel, repaired to the tent of Wallenstein; who, after expressing his wish for a general peace, concluded by proposing an armistice.

Such was the situation of affairs when Feuquieres arrived at Dresden, his journey having been accelerated by the ungrateful intelligence of the secret negotiation at Leutmeritz, in which Ferdinand was said to have offered most advantageous terms to the two protestant electors,* provided they would dissolve their connexion with Sweden. But this was a dereliction of every meritorious feeling, for which neither the venality of Saxony, nor the pusillanimity of Brandenburg was as yet prepared. The sketch of a treaty, however, was at length produced; probably only with the view of ascertaining the real intentions of Ferdinand, because it was impossible to believe that the Austrian power was sufficiently humbled, for terms so disgraceful to be accepted.

After objecting to any except a general peace, the electors required "that the emperor should dismiss from his councils certain persons, already designated as objects of suspicion to the protestants; that he should reinstate the children of the unfortunate Frederic, in the full enjoyments of their legitimate rights; that he should renounce every claim to the sees of Magdeburg, and of Halberstadt, in favour of a prince of the house of Saxony; that he should cede to John George a part of Bohemia, in acquittal of the debt which has been

* Saxony and Brandenburg.

formerly mentioned; and finally, that he should surrender the whole of Silesia to be equally divided between the sovereigns of Dresden and of Berlin, under the title of indemnity for all their losses."*

After providing for themselves with so much liberality, it would have been highly disgraceful to have neglected the interests of Sweden; but they flattered themselves to escape the imputation of ingratitude, by inserting a clause so loosely worded as to be capable of almost any interpretation,† by which the Catholic League undertook to satisfy the pretensions of Sweden.

Such are supposed to have been the general outlines; but, as no public documents substantiate the fact, it ought not to be received without every necessary allowance for the exaggerations of party. It was, however, evident, from the mystery with which the conference was conducted, that the objects in view were equally hostile to the interests of France and of Sweden; and this conviction sufficed to stimulate the exertions of Fœtquieres, whose vanity was wounded by the idea of a treaty undertaken without his concurrence.

Notwithstanding he was treated with the highest distinction, he soon discovered that external respect was the utmost to which he could aspire, unless he resorted to the means employed by Austria with so much success. His proposal to the elector of ratifying the acts of the Swabian diet met with a positive refusal, upon the plea that the proceed-

* This demand clearly shews, that the acquisition of Silesia was one of the earliest objects, to which the ambition of Prussia aspired.

† *Le Vassor*, x. 524.

ings of that assembly were in direct violation of the Germanic constitution. Neither was he more fortunate in his endeavours to prevail upon John George to accede to the alliance recently contracted between the courts of Paris and of Stockholm. But, as the prudence of the elector was unwilling to offend two powerful nations by an unqualified rejection of their offers, he attempted to palliate his conduct by the equivocal declaration, that it was impossible for him to decide upon a point of such infinite consequence to all the protestant states, without previously consulting his allies. He made no secret of his having consented to accept the mediation of Denmark; on the contrary, he earnestly recommended to Louis to send a plenipotentiary to Breslau. But being apprehensive of the consequences likely to ensue from suffering the ambassador to depart in disquiet, he concluded with the assurance, that he would never abandon the protestant cause, notwithstanding the ingratitude with which he had been treated.*

In spite, however, of his pretensions to disinterested patriotism, it soon became evident, that although John George was insensible of the powers of eloquence, he was not equally indifferent to the suggestions of avarice. A few hours reflection having served to convince him, that he might possibly derive more important advantages, from the friendship of Louis, than from that of Ferdinand, he sent a message to Feuquieres, offering to propose such conditions at the congress at Breslau, as the pride of the emporor could never accept,

* Feuquieres, i. 225.

provided France would contribute to the expenses of the war by a liberal subsidy.*

Delighted to discover the low price at which the honour of Saxony was estimated, the ambassador, though unauthorized to offer any pecuniary assistance, was too well acquainted with the liberality of Richelieu to hesitate in acceding to this demand. Considering his negotiation prosperously terminated, he was actually preparing to set out for Berlin, when intelligence arrived of the conclusion of an armistice in Silesia. An event so unexpected, and so apparently hostile to the protestants, could not fail to excite in the breast of Feuquieres the strongest suspicion of duplicity. This opinion was strengthened by the assurance which he received from the Saxon ministers, that Arnheim had acted entirely upon his own responsibility, in consenting to a suspension of hostilities. These injurious doubts were however quickly dissipated, when all the circumstances attending this extraordinary transaction were confidentially communicated to the ambassador; † from which it appeared, that Wallenstein had explained his intentions to his ancient friend, with a frankness bordering upon indiscretion. Confiding in the prediction of his favourite Senni, he openly declared, that his object in soliciting an interview was to establish peace upon a fair and solid foundation. Then lowering his voice, he said in a whisper to the Swedish colonel, " In case the emperor should refuse to accede

* One hundred thousand six dollars was the sum required, about twenty thousand pounds sterling.—Feuquieres, l. 234.

† Ibid, cv.

to my proposal, we may perhaps discover a way to oblige him."

The powers entrusted to the Saxon general being inadequate to a negotiation of so much importance, he proposed that the armistice should be limited to a fortnight, a period which would allow sufficient time for communicating the plan to all the parties most deeply interested in the event. In a second conference with Thurn, Friedland is reported to have opened himself with still greater freedom, and to have undertaken, in addition to his former offers, to restore their violated privileges to the Bohemians, and to put the exiles in possession of their confiscated estates. He further proposed, that the Jesuits should be irrevocably banished from Germany, as the instigators of those oppressive acts, of which the friends of the Reformation so justly complained;* and, that the crown of Sweden should receive an ample indemnity for all its sacrifices. And, "should the emperor" added he, "object to ratify the treaty, I will march to Vienna, and force him to comply."

This bold avowal of treachery overwhelmed with astonishment the veteran patriot, who could scarcely persuade himself that a proposal so gratifying to his feelings was not intended as an artful deception; but, while he was deliberating in what manner to reply, the duke resumed his discourse, and the mystery was clearly explained. Amid his magnificent schemes of retribution and glory, this dispenser of states had been by no means inattentive to his personal interests; but, out of the wreck of

* Puffendorf, v. 66.

dismembered Austria, had providently reserved Bohemia and Moravia for his own remuneration. But, in order to palliate the enormous demand, he pretended that the latter was intended solely as a compensation for the loss of Mecklenberg, which justice commanded him to restore to its legitimate sovereign.*

This mighty project, to the attainment of which the views and ambition of this extraordinary man had been invariably directed for many years, was thus suddenly disclosed to an ancient enemy, with an excess of confidence, for which nothing can account, except the extravagant belief, that when the planets announced a favourable issue to any undertaking, it was impossible for man to prevent its completion. This presumptuous trust in the co-operation of fortune led Wallenstein to act upon many occasions with a degree of imprudence which a mind less devoted to mystic illusions might easily mistake for madness. The most impenetrable secrecy could alone lead to success, and yet his plan was imparted to every court whose assistance he was anxious to secure. While engaged in a treaty with the Swedes and Saxons, he opened a negotiation with Feuquieres through the intervention of Kinsky, a Bohemian noble, at that time residing at Dresden. Strongly disposed to assist in the organization of any plot, which could tend to the humiliation of Austria, the ambassador heard with regret, that a project requiring the utmost circumspection had been already unfolded to various persons of different nations and charac-

* Puffendorf, v. 66.

ters.* Most of the Saxon ministers were publicly known to be in the emperor's pay; how then could it be expected that Ferdinand should long continue ignorant of a secret, which he was so deeply interested to discover? Yet, notwithstanding the sagacious representative of Louis appears from the first to have entertained no sanguine hopes of success, he wisely resolved not to discourage an enterprize, the failure of which could not be attended with positive injury to France; but which, if unexpectedly conducted to a prosperous issue, seemed likely to give an irrecoverable blow to the power of Austria, and he accordingly promised every possible assistance on the part of France and her allies.†

It is probable, that Richelieu regarded the transaction in a similar light, as he sent directions to Feuquieres, not only to continue the negotiation, but to stimulate Wallenstein by the flattering prospect of attaining the highest dignities to which his unbounded ambition could aspire. "I am particularly delighted," said Louis in a letter to his ambassador, "with every thing which you have communicated respecting the Duke of Friedland, and I will willingly employ my arms and authority, in order to seat him upon the Bohemian throne, and even to procure for him a still higher degree of elevation.‡

This dispatch deserves our serious attention, because it shews the unlimited ascendancy of Richelieu. The king formerly scrupled to assist the unfortunate Frederic in his rash attempt to obtain the crown of Bohemia, because he founded his

* Feuquieres, i. 202.

† Ibid. cxi. Le Vassor, x. 548.

‡ Ibid. Feuquieres, 258.

pretensions upon popular suffrage; and he now did not hesitate to engage his royal word in support of a rebel.* It is probable, however, that this difference of opinion arose entirely from the opposite characters of the men, by whose advice he was directed at the periods alluded to, as Louis in fact had no decided character of his own. Luines, blindly devoted to the Spanish court, intentionally sacrificed the honour of France to views of private emolument, while the ambitious cardinal aspired to immortalize the name of Richelieu, by exalting his country upon the ruins of Austria.

The attention requisite for the management of this delicate affair detained Feuquieres at Dresden much longer than he had originally intended. A more intimate acquaintance with the habits of John George served only to convince him, that no dependance could be placed upon his promises. The subsidy at first produced considerable effect, but the impression grew daily weaker; and, in spite of the advice and intreaties of the ambassador, the

* The following letter written to Wallenstein by Louis, with his own hand, is no less curious. Feuquieres, 290.

Mon cousin, l'affection que vous temoignés pour le bien des affaires, et le repos de la chretienté, m'a été si agreable, que je n'ai pas voulu differer plus long temps a vous en faire connoitre mon ressentiment, et le desir que j'ai d'en voir bientot sortir les effets. Maintenant que l'occasion s'en presente, j'ai donné charge au present porteur de vous visiter de ma part, et vous confirmer toutes les assurances possibles de ma bonne volonté, et de l'estime que je fais de votre personne. Il vous fera entendre mes plus particuliers avis et sentimens sur les affaires d'Allemagne, ensuite desquels je serai bien aise de voir ressuir les bonnes intentions que vous avés pour les affermir, contre ceux qui les voudroient troubler. Je vous prie de prouder entiere creance en ce qu'il vous dira en mon nom, et de ne point douter que tous vos interets ne me soient en telle consideration, que vous scauriés desirer; vous assurant que j'en aurai un soin aussi particulier que des miens propres.—Chantilly, 17 Juillet, 1633.—What must have been the poor king's feelings, when compelled to subscribe his royal name to so palpable a falsehood!

elector continued to act with his wonted duplicity; for, while he carried on a clandestine correspondence with Austria, and flattered Wallenstein with the hope of effective support, he ordered Arnheim to put an end to the armistice, without even communicating his intentions to Feuquieres. A project tending directly to diffuse toleration and freedom, and to avenge the wrongs sustained by Bohemia, was certain of finding a zealous advocate in the patriotic feelings of Thurn, who hastened to communicate the grateful tidings to Oxenstiern. Accustomed to weigh all political occurrences in the scale of reason, and never to allow the sanguine suggestions of hope to mislead his imagination, the chancellor received the intelligence with a degree of indifference, which excited the astonishment of his enthusiastic friend. It was in vain for the latter to expatiate upon the resources of Wallenstein, and to explain the motives which urged him to rebel; the scruples of Oxenstiern were insurmountable. Even supposing Friedland to be disposed to act with sincerity, he doubted his ability to prevail upon the army to espouse the cause of a traitor. The project also appeared to him far too extravagant to be attempted by any one, except a desperate adventurer, who had neither fortune nor reputation to forfeit. Such temerity, in his opinion, was totally irreconcilable with the phlegmatic character of Wallenstein; and as he knew his honesty to be much more problematical than his prudence, he felt inclined to exculpate the duke's understanding at the expense of his sincerity.*

* Galetti, i. 325. Le Vassor, x. 552.

These suspicions were augmented by a proposal from Arnheim, to place some of the best disciplined regiments in the Swedish service at Wallenstein's disposal; a request which Oxenstiern regarded as plainly indicating premeditated treachery.

The contradictions apparent in Friedland's behaviour toward the different powers with which he negotiated, were by no means calculated to efface this unfavourable impression. For, at the very time when he courted the alliance of Sweden, and even requested her assistance in the execution of his design, he told Arnheim that it would be fruitless ever to expect a durable peace, unless all foreigners were driven out of Germany. Another instance of duplicity still more unpardonable was displayed in an ineffectual attempt to surprise the citadel of Newark before the truce had expired.* When apparently most eager to accomplish the destruction of Austria, he unexpectedly declared that he would instantly break off the treaty, unless the allies would consent to put him in possession of Breslau, Schweidnitz, and Glogau.† Having augmented his forces at the expense of the Saxons, whose troops he found means to corrupt, and supplied his camp with provisions and gunpowder, by the want of which he was greatly distressed, he put an end to the armistice without deigning to allege the smallest excuse for its sudden infraction, and invested Schweidnitz, which must inevitably have fallen, had he not been prevented by a deluge of rain from continuing the siege.

* Galetti, i. 325.

† Puffendorf, v. 66.

Instead of availing himself of his superiority to overwhelm the allies, he unexpectedly renewed the negotiation; and the moment his enemies were lulled into security, as unexpectedly broke it again. These inconsistencies arose from various causes, but chiefly from the double, and almost contradictory project, of ruining at once both Sweden and Austria; because, so long as either power continued to be formidable, it was impossible for him to acquire that unlimited sway to which his boundless ambition aspired. His superstitious belief in judicial astrology contributed also to give to all his actions an air of caprice, which was nearly allied to infatuation. He became enterprising or cautious, active or indolent, not as the exigency of the moment appeared to require, but as Senni and the planets prescribed. Dissimulation besides was so engrafted on his nature, that he could with difficulty resolve to act with candour, even when sincerity was the most obvious policy.

As Arnheim was absent at the recommencement of hostilities, the command of course devolved upon Thurn, who flew with celerity to the relief of Schweidnitz; where Wallenstein, defended by a triple intrenchment, derided his impotent vengeance.*

The facility with which Friedland at all times succeeded in deceiving Arnheim, according to the remark of an able historian,† could not have been greater even had it been voluntary. This Oxenstiern saw with profound regret, yet he was unable to apply an adequate remedy, without hazarding a

* Puffendorf, v. 68. Galetti, 326. These events occurred in July.

† Puffendorf, v. 68.

rupture with the elector. Firmly persuaded that Wallenstein was insincere, and that his only object was to divide the allies, and to sacrifice them progressively to his own interested plans, the chancellor could hardly be persuaded to listen with patience to the various projects successively offered to his consideration. Determined never to endanger the prosperity of Sweden, by pursuing a chimera, he positively refused to place any troops under the orders of Holk, who was appointed by Wallenstein to take possession of Passau and Upper Bavaria, while he, at the head of an irresistible force, carried terror and desolation to the gates of Vienna. Meanwhile the Duke of Weimar was required to occupy the rest of Bavaria, while Horn opposed the cardinal infant.*

It cannot be denied that this plan was traced with a masterly hand, and, if carried into execution with equal ability, might have given a blow to the Austrian power, from which it would never have recovered. The scruples of Oxenstiern, however, were not to be overcome; so that the only concession to which he would listen, was to send reinforcements to Bernard; but to this he probably consented, not so much for the purpose of enabling him to co-operate with Holk; when Wallenstein should think proper to throw off the mask, as to place him in a situation of greater security, against any treacherous designs which the Austrian generalissimo might entertain.†

Whether Friedland was offended at the caution of Oxenstiern, or despaired of being able to overreach him, it is now impossible to ascertain; but,

* Puffendorf, v. 71.

† Ibid.

in a moment of impatience, he again broke off the negociation,* and recommenced hostilities with redoubled activity. Holk, bursting into Misnia with the impetuosity of a torrent, laid waste the fertile fields with fire and sword, and, after compelling Leipsic to open its gates, obliged the elector, whose forces were occupied in the conquest of Silesia, to seek a precarious asylum within the walls of his capital. Upon the renewal of the armistice, that sanguinary chieftain was hastening to deposit the fruits of his rapacity in some Bohemian fortress, when he was suddenly arrested by the hand of death, at Altenburg, in Saxony, the victim of his licentious amours. Terrified at the dreadful prospect before him, with his parting breath he vainly implored the consolatory succour of that religion, whose ministers he had insulted in the hour of prosperity, with a ferocity no less inhuman than what they had experienced in the early ages of the church, from the most savage persecutors of Christianity.†

The behaviour of Wallenstein, at this important crisis, is marked by so many and such striking incongruities, that no researches can furnish a satisfactory clue to inquiry. No sooner had he prevailed upon Arnheim once more to suspend hostilities, than he shewed a disposition to penetrate into Lusatia, while he caused a report to be circulated, that Piccolomini was approaching in a different direction, for the purpose of joining him under the walls of Dresden. The Saxon general, for whose imprudence it is hardly possible to account, without supposing him to have acted in con-

* In August, 1633.

† Puffendorf, 83. Khevenhiller, xii. 602.

cert with the Duke of Friedland,* immediately evacuated Silesia, under pretence of defending the electorate. This was precisely what his adversary desired, who accordingly suffered him to continue his march without molestation, while he surprised the Swedes in their camp before Steinau. Having defeated the cavalry, and surrounded the infantry, he summoned Thurn to surrender at discretion, and allowed him only half an hour to decide, whether he would lay down his arms, or rashly endeavour to cut his way through an army at least eight times as numerous as his own. Humanity forbade the fruitless attempt, and the Bohemian patriot in consequence consented to the conditions prescribed, upon receiving a promise, that all the officers should have permission to depart unmolested. These terms, however, were not observed with fidelity; and, by the shameful infraction of a solemn convention, Thurn fell into the hands of the Austrians. With sanguinary impatience the emperor and the Jesuits anticipated the gratification of beholding the opponent of tyranny and persecution expiate upon a scaffold, amidst the severest pangs which their implacable malice could invent, the unpardonable crime of having ventured to assert the liberties of a people, whom they had condemned to the most humiliating servitude. But, to defraud superstition of her choicest victim was to Wallenstein a triumph, which no inducements whatever would have tempted him to forego, even had it been consistent with

* This supposition acquires additional force from the testimony of a Saxon officer, who had been frequently employed during the negotiation, and who declared, upon his death-bed, that the whole treaty was an infamous deception.—Puffendorf, 86.

prudence to exasperate a man so intimately acquainted with his perfidious designs.

“What would you have me do with the madman?” answered Wallenstein, in his justification of his conduct, when upbraided with his generosity toward the Bohemian patriot. “Would to God the Swedes had no better officers. Such generals as Thurn are more advantageously placed at the head of an opposing army, than pent within the walls of a dungeon.”*

This apology had so much the appearance of study, that it tended still further to strengthen the unfavourable reports which were circulated by his enemies at Vienna. Of this Friedland was aware; and, being unprepared as yet to throw off the mask, he thought it expedient to evince his loyalty by vigorous exertions. The defeat of the Swedes was speedily followed by the capture of Glogau, Francfort, and Leignitz. Schatgotsh was entrusted with the blockade of Brugg, while Illo and Gotz were ordered to penetrate into Pomerania, where they executed their commission with so much address, that they made themselves masters of Landsberg.† The Duke of Friedland, at the head of another column, took Gorlitz by storm, and compelled Bautzen to surrender at discretion.‡

From various occurrences, however, it was easy

* Schmidt, v. 11. Schiller, iv. Galetti, i. 330. When Thurn endeavoured to palliate his own imprudence, in allowing himself to be surprised by the Austrians, Oxenstiern, after listening attentively to his justification, gravely replied: “Though I sincerely lament your misfortune, I am far more concerned for my own imprudence, in having entrusted you with so important a command. Ibid.

† In October, 1633. Puffendorf, v. 103.

‡ Ibid. 101.

to perceive, that it was not the intention of Wallenstein to conquer Saxony, but that he meant only, by alarming the two Protestant electors, to compel them to abandon the confederacy. With this view, he proposed to evacuate their territories, provided they would consent to a separate peace; but the duplicity of his behaviour had so entirely destroyed every degree of confidence, that they chose rather to encounter the horrors of war, under their rudest forms, than to trust to promises made only to delude. In this meritorious resolution they were encouraged to persevere by the exhortations of Oxenstiern, who, while he assured them of speedy and effectual support, magnified the danger to which they must be exposed, by putting their dominions under the protection of a man by whom they had been so often deceived.*

The promised succours, however, might have arrived too late, had the exasperated chieftain been allowed to pursue his sanguinary projects of revenge. But the capture of Ratisbonne, and the approach of Weimar to the Austrian frontier, imposed on him the necessity of suspending his operations in Northern Germany, that he might march to the defence of Bavaria.†

With the result of his proceedings upon this occasion the reader is already acquainted. There is much reason, however, to suppose, that the movements of Arnheim, on the borders of Silesia, were undertaken at the suggestion of Wallenstein, desirous of finding a plausible pretext for abandoning the banks of the Danube, and thus punishing Maximilian, whom he had never forgiven.

* Puffendorf, v. 103.

† Galetti, l. 332.

After an ineffectual attempt to recover Francfort upon the Oder, the general of John George was compelled, by the severity of the season, to relinquish an enterprise, rashly undertaken in opposition to the opinion of Banner.*

His open defiance of the imperial authority supplied the enemies of Wallenstein with fresh and ample materials to blacken his reputation; and even induced Ferdinand himself to examine more attentively the alarming reports, which were spread with industrious malice. Friedland had hitherto defended his conduct in its most vulnerable part, by the most ingenious of artifices—a partial disclosure of his projects. When accused of carrying on a clandestine correspondence with the enemy, he readily admitted the fact; but pretended that the sole object of those secret conferences, which were represented as treasonable by his enemies, was to restore permanent tranquillity to Europe. This farce, however, had been so often repeated, that it failed at length to produce the desired effect. No change was discernible in the political horizon; and the imperial troops remained inactive, while the Swedes carried desolation to the frontiers of Austria, and occupied the greatest part of Bavaria. The complaints of Maximilian became louder than ever, when he discovered that they were no longer received with indifference; but when he perceived that the emperor was seriously alarmed for the safety of his capital, he declared his resolution of accepting the mediation of France, unless Wallenstein was dismissed, and a commander appointed, in whose fidelity the catholics might confide. These

* Khevenhiller, xii. 1110. Galetti, 333. Puffendorf, 105.

representations were backed by the Spanish ambassador, with arguments still more efficacious; as he officially announced, that so long as Friedland continued to retain the command, no further subsidies must be expected from Madrid. Even the Prince of Eggenberg, and others among the Austrian nobles, who enjoyed the confidence of Ferdinand, and had hitherto defended the ambitious duke, on a sudden withdrew their support, when they found that, in return for their unshaken attachment, he loaded their property with heavy contributions.

These repeated attacks could hardly fail of producing a deep impression upon the mind of a sovereign, who was too well acquainted with the interested character of man, to place much faith in political honesty. Desirous, however, of obtaining some positive proof of disloyalty, before he discarded a general to whom he was certainly indebted for the preservation of his crown, whose power he dreaded, and whom he knew to be incapable of brooking the slightest affront, he sent several confidential persons to Wallenstein's camp, who, under pretence of transacting important business, might scrutinize his actions; and, if they discovered that he was really treating with the enemy, might ascertain how far the other generals were implicated in the conspiracy. Their inquiries, however, tended only to augment the emperor's embarrassment; because Wallenstein had employed the salutary precaution of carrying on his intrigues by oral communication, and had almost always made use of a foreign agent. Hence, though little doubt could be entertained of his criminality, it fell far short of legal conviction.

Whether, from the grateful remembrance of

former services, or from the dread of offending an implacable enemy, Ferdinand resolved to make one effort more; and chose for the mission a Spanish friar, who had formerly enjoyed the confidence of Wallenstein, and actually occupied the important office of confessor to the Queen of Hungary. The ostensible object with which he was charged was, to remonstrate with Friedland upon his temerity, in refusing to send reinforcements to the Spanish army, according to the imperial mandate; but he was secretly empowered to employ the arms of religion, or the influence of gold, as either appeared most conducive to the desired discovery. So far as outward respect was calculated to gratify the vanity of the monk, he had reason to be satisfied with his reception; but he quickly perceived, that the courtly director of the conscience of a Castilian princess must not aspire to the confidence of Wallenstein. Though, in the calm moments of reflection, the dictator assumed an air of reserve, yet he could not so entirely master his feelings as to conceal the tempest which raged in his bosom; and he frequently burst forth into bitter invectives against the ingratitude of princes, and the folly of subjects, who trust to their promises for reward.

Hopeless of being able to penetrate the designs of this mysterious criminal, the friar directed his researches to different quarters; and at length, by the irresistible temptation of a mitre, extorted the important secret from an ambitious member of his own fraternity, confessor to one of the rebels.* This fact being established upon such solid evidence, as to leave no possible scope for incredulity,

* Klevenhiller, xii. 1131.

it became indispensable, by vigorous measures, to counteract the mischief before the mine was ready to explode.*

Wallenstein, on the other hand, received daily proofs that his plans were suspected, if not actually penetrated. Convinced that the smallest delay might now be attended with irretrievable ruin, he could discover no alternative but a throne or a scaffold. A perfect stranger to fear, and naturally impetuous in all his resolutions, he still hesitated on what to determine, though it is impossible to allege any motive for his decision, except that the stars might be unpropitious; or, according to a favourite expression of his own, "because the fortunate instant was not yet arrived." The exigency of the moment, however, no longer admitting of delay, it was on his courage and genius that he was reduced to depend, in spite of the predictions of astrology.†

Satisfied that the success of his undertaking must be ultimately determined by the voice of the army, he studied to secure the co-operation of the most popular officers, by loading them with additional favours. To Tersky he allowed the emoluments of eight different regiments,‡ together with the command of all the cavalry. In addition to the liberality of his military promotions, he promised to divide among his adherents some of the richest province of Austria. Though he endeavoured to gain the suffrage of all whose assistance he regarded as useful, yet the persons in whom he chiefly confided were Tersky, Illo, and Kinsky, men of boundless

* Khevenhiller, xii. 1131.

† Schiller, iv.

‡ Five of cuirassiers, two of infantry, one of dragoons: Khevenhiller, 1134.

ambition, enterprising courage, and zealously devoted to their aspiring chief from interest, gratitude, and affection.

But while he attempted by acts of kindness to subjugate the minds of all who served with distinction under his banners, he artfully laboured to undermine their allegiance by the lowest intrigues. Knowing Illo to be a man of inordinate vanity, he advised him to solicit from the imperial court the illustrious rank of Count of the Empire, and promised to second the application. Far, however, from fulfilling this promise, he privately suggested to the minister the necessity of a refusal, under pretext that his assent might expose him to a variety of similar claims, which could neither be granted nor rejected with safety. This hint having been attended with the desired effect, afforded a fresh opportunity for Wallenstein to rail at the ingratitude of the imperial court, and thus to inflame the resentment of Illo.†

Kinsky, Illo, and Tersky were so blindly devoted to their generous patron, that there was probably nothing they would have hesitated to undertake, which could have promoted his interest or his glory. But Friedland had calculated erroneously, in supposing that the liberality with which he rewarded merit, would be always attended with similar results; and had mistaken the reverence inspired by his exalted station for an inviolable attachment to his person. It became necessary, however, immediately to ascertain what dependence he might place upon the affection of the army, and Piccolomini was the first upon whom he made the danger-

• Carve, 83.

ous experiment: when warned by Tersky to beware of the crafty Italian, he confidently replied, that he was sure of Piccolomini, because they were both born under the same constellation. Imprudently regarding an accidental coincidence as an unquestionable sign that their destinies were united by such indissoluble ties, that no vicissitude of fortune could separate, he rashly disclosed his intentions to a man, whose interested soul was prepared to sacrifice every thing to ambition. To him he opened his mind without the smallest reserve, telling him that, weary of serving an undeserving master, he had embraced the resolution of abandoning Ferdinand to the disastrous fate which awaited him, and that by uniting his forces with those of the allies, he was preparing to shake the power of Austria to its very foundation. Though allured by the promise of splendid rewards, Piccolomini regarded the favour of Ferdinand as a more certain road to preferment, and determined, in consequence, to adhere with fidelity to the imperial throne. But apprehensive of alarming the jealousy of Wallenstein by apparent indifference, he affected to enter into all his projects, pointing out the dangers which he had to encounter in attacking a power of such gigantic dimensions. These arguments, as he expected, made little impression. Friedland ridiculed his fears, declaring that he had long expected the prosperous hour, but that all the heavenly bodies now combined in announcing a fortunate issue, and that his confidence in the augury was so unshaken, that, rather than abandon the glorious enterprise, he would put himself at the head of a thousand horse, and march directly to Vienna.*

* Schiller, iv.

The artful Tuscan, having discovered enough to serve as a basis for his own exaltation, professed himself ready to hazard his life and fortune in support of the arduous undertaking, and then retired to dispatch a confidential messenger with intelligence of the conspiracy to Ferdinand.

Flattering himself with having secured Piccolomini's aid, Wallenstein prepared for the decisive step, that was to establish his fortune for ever. Resolved to bring the attachment of all the other commanders to a speedy trial, he ordered them to meet him at Pilsen,* in Bohemia. The ostensible motive for the summons was to demand their opinion, how far it might be consistent with the dictates of prudence, to undertake the siege of Ratisbonne in the depth of winter, or to send the best disciplined regiments of cavalry to reinforce the Spanish army, at a time when they were constantly threatened themselves by Banner, Arnheim, and Weimar.

These questions were presented by the artful Illo in such a light, that no answer but one could be given, and the generals accordingly declared unanimously, that it would be impossible to comply without exposing the army to unnecessary hardships, and perhaps to irretrievable ruin.

Finding the sentiments of his auditors in unison with his own, Illo expatiated at large upon the many wonders achieved by the valour of the soldiers, and the inimitable talents of their commander. "The services of both," he said, "had proved them deserving very different treatment from that which they experienced from the court of Vienna. The emperor (and he mentioned it with shame and

* In January, 1634.

regret) had become the slave of a Spanish faction, which, if suffered to proceed in its nefarious projects, must infallibly strip the Austrian monarchy of all its renown, and reduce its illustrious chief to an abject dependence upon priests and friars. Of all the emperor's subjects, the Duke of Friedland alone had ventured to resist their authority, impelled by a paramount sense of duty, and a patriotic feeling for the honour of Germany. This spirited opposition, so becoming the character of their magnanimous leader, had excited the hatred of the whole cabal. While he continued to guide the imperial armies, they felt that there was a power, still existing in Austria, which they could never expect to control. Hence arose their anxiety to remove him, that the chief command might be transferred to the King of Hungary, whose docile inexperience they hoped to manage with greater facility. Whatever fraud, or artifice, or hypocrisy, could devise, was directed to the accomplishment of this momentous object, compared with which, even the destruction of the troops by famine and disease, or the entire wreck of Austrian greatness, were regarded as points of trivial importance. It was solely with a view to weaken the army that reinforcements were required for the cardinal infant; a demand no less inconsistent with their personal safety, than derogatory to the Duke of Friedland. From a similar motive the troops were refused an asylum in Bohemia, and commanded to undertake the siege of Ratisbonne, at a season of the year, when the intenseness of the cold, and their own shattered condition, enjoined the necessity of repose. Without magazines, or money to prepare them, where could provisions be procured? Their

general's wealth, immense as it was, was already exhausted, because the sums allotted by their sovereign for the maintenance of his armies, had been perfidiously applied to other purposes through the influence of the Jesuits, who now openly interfered in every department. Thus the miserable soldier, after all his toils, was allowed to perish from hunger, that they might revel in luxury. Abandoned by the emperor, to whom he had sacrificed his health and his fortune, it was no longer possible for Wallenstein, without debasing his character, to retain the command: since he was reduced to the alternative of either tendering his resignation, or permitting himself a second time to be degraded; and he had accordingly resolved upon adopting the former; because it appeared less repugnant to his elevated notions of honour.*

These sentiments, when blazoned by the factious eloquence of Illo, could hardly fail to produce a powerful effect upon the minds of men, the greater part of whom were devoted to their general from the grateful recollection of former favours, or the hope of speedy promotion. Convinced that the latter is usually the more active principle, Illo proceeded to paint in vivid colours the loss which every officer must personally sustain, in case the Duke of Friedland should retire. "Where," said he, "must we look for a recompense of all our fatigues, when he, who witnessed our exertions, and admired our valour, has no longer the power to requite us? Who will reimburse the enormous sums which we have expended in raising regiments, when the hero, at whose instigation they were equipped, shall be deprived of the means of remuneration."†

* Khevenhiller, 1142. Gazetti, l. 335.

† Puffendorf, vi. 14.

Illo, having now touched the master-key which vibrated directly to every heart, was interrupted by an almost unanimous cry, that they would never separate from their general; and a deputation, composed of four of the principal officers, was immediately chosen, to wait upon Wallenstein, and earnestly to solicit him, in the name of the whole army, not to desert the faithful companions of his glory in that trying moment of distress. Friedland was too great an admirer of theatrical effect to yield without apparent reluctance; and it was not till he had been urged by repeated intreaties, that he condescended to signify his assent. This pretended sacrifice of ease and inclination, to the happiness and security of others, seemed to merit an adequate return; and Illo accordingly suggested the propriety of an agreement to be entered into by all officers of rank, never to abandon their generous leader, but, on the contrary, to consecrate their lives and fortunes to his defence. Fearful, however, that a declaration so unequivocal might terrify the delicate consciences of those, whose ideas of loyalty were more exalted than his own, the following clause was inserted as a palliative: "So long as Wallenstein shall continue to exercise the power, with which he is entrusted for the emperor's service." Every possible objection being now removed, the generals assented without one dissentient voice.

Had it been the intention of Illo to act with sincerity, no time could have been more proper for signing the resolutions; but his object could be accomplished by artifice alone, and he accordingly invited the chiefs of the army to a magnificent entertainment, where, he said, the business might be

transacted more commodiously. Before supper was announced, the engagement was read, but the signature was deferred till after the repast.* As it was Illo's design to intoxicate his guests, the most delicious wines were served in profusion, which they were encouraged to drink to excess. Believing his purpose to have been completely effected, he produced the paper, to which most of the company subscribed their names, without troubling themselves to examine the contents. A few, however, more cautious, or more sober, than their companions, discovered, to their astonishment, that the paragraph was omitted by which their obedience was rendered conditional. This alteration having justly excited suspicion, several positively refused to subscribe. Confounded at finding the stragem discovered, Tersky, boiling with indignation, drew his sword, declaring that he would regard every person, who should hesitate to fulfil his promise, in the light of a perjured traitor. The whole assembly was now thrown into the utmost confusion, and the lives of many were menaced. Tranquillity, however, was at length restored; and prudence for a moment getting the better of loyalty, the declaration was signed by every one present, without the exception even of Piccolomini.*

Though Wallenstein had apparently carried his point, the prospect before him was far from cheering, because the opposition of many of the most distinguished characters evidently proclaimed that it would prove no easy task to undermine a power

* Galetti, i. 336.

† Schmidt, v. 11. Galetti, *ibid.* Fenquieres, cxxix. Lotichius, ii. 142. Khevenhiller, 1143.

founded upon opinion, and rendered venerable by time, which folly idolized, religion respected, and patriotisin tolerated. Upon examining the signatures, by which a haughty nobility had withdrawn their allegiance from their legitimate sovereign, and for ever degraded themselves, in the estimation of those who were accustomed to view them with reverence and awe, as the guardians of honour, and the champions of religion, it appeared that many of the names were so illegibly scrawled, as almost to indicate dishonest intentions.* Yet, blindly con-

* Le Vassor gives the substance of the oath, but without mentioning his authority, xl. 398.

Pilsen, January 12, 1634.

We, the undersigned, make known by the present, that having received certain information that his Serene Highness the Duke of Mecklenberg, Friedland, and Sargans, had resolved to retire from the service, in consequence of the intrigues and calumnies of his enemies, we considered the loss of so experienced a commander as not only likely to occasion the ruin of the army, but as highly injurious to the interests of his imperial majesty, as well as to those of the catholic religion. Having devoted our lives and fortunes to his highness's service, with the view of obtaining, through his recommendation, an adequate recompense for all our exertions, we felt that our hope must be irrecoverably frustrated, in case we should be deprived of his patronage. Alarmed at the misfortune which threatened us, we deemed it expedient most humbly to represent to his highness the wretched condition to which the army must be reduced, should he persist in the resolution of abandoning it. As our father, we implored him not to deprive us of his paternal care. Touched by our intreaties, he at length consented to retain the command; and further promised, to take no decisive step in this important affair, without having previously apprized us of his intentions, and obtained our consent. In return for this condescension, we jointly and individually do engage, upon oath, to continue faithful to his highness, and to shed the last drop of our blood in his defence. We further swear, that if any one among us shall prove unfaithful to this solemn engagement, not only to regard him in the light of a perjured traitor, but to deprive him of his possessions, and of his life, as a punishment due to his baseness. In confirmation of which, we have subscribed our names.—The account given by Coxe, who professedly copies from Petzel, varies little from the version of Le Vassor.

riding in the ascendancy of genius, or the treacherous prediction of his astrologer, he still flattered himself with being able, by perseverance and courage, to surmount every impediment which obstructed his progress, without reflecting, that an abyss was actually yawning before him; from which, if he advanced a single step, it was hardly possible for him to escape. Pride also forbade him to recede, and presumptuously whispered, that he had proceeded too far to retreat with either honour or safety. He was, besides, too well acquainted with the relentless temper of the Jesuits, to hope for forgiveness from their royal pupil. These considerations having determined him to pursue his plans with unshaken fortitude, he again assembled the generals, and publicly signified, that their want of confidence in his protestations had forced him to resume his former project, of descending immediately to a private station. The officers no sooner heard this resolution, than they retired to deliberate in secret; but, after a few minutes consultation, declared their readiness to renew the engagement, as it then stood, earnestly imploring their haughty chieftain to attribute what had passed the preceding evening to the effects of ebriety.*

Wallenstein's hopes again revived, and messengers were dispatched to the different armies with copies of the agreement, in order that all the officers might have an equal opportunity of expressing their attachment to their commander. This measure he thought would enable him to judge how far he might depend upon their concurrence, and he secretly resolved to secure the persons of those who

* Khevenhiller, 1142.

should display any marks of disaffection. Pressing solicitations, at the same time, were sent to Gallas and Aldringer, requiring their attendance at Pilsen, that they might be consulted upon business of the utmost importance. This summons was instantly obeyed; but, as in the course of their journey information reached them of Wallenstein's intended conspiracy, the Bavarian general stopped short at the castle of Franenberg, under pretext of a sudden indisposition, while his more resolute companion continued his route, in order to ascertain the extent of the danger, and, if possible, to find means to elude it.

The disagreement of historians respecting the minuter details of this extraordinary business, throws insuperable difficulties in the way of a writer who aspires to accuracy as his most enviable praise. Some authors assert, that Piccolomini carried the first intelligence of the conspiracy to Vienna, though they do not explain the means by which he escaped from Pilsen, without exciting the suspicion of Wallenstein. The following, however, appears the more probable account, because it is more consistent with the artful character of a man deeply versed in the wiles of intrigue. Desirous of affording unquestionable proofs of loyalty, whilst apparently acting a disloyal part, the wary Tuscan transmitted a regular narrative of every transaction which could tend to substantiate the criminality of Friedland, to Francis and Matthias of Medici, the emperor's nephews, who were sent to study the art of war under the favourite general of Ferdinand. Justly alarmed for their personal safety, in case the treachery of Piccolomini should be discovered, they intreated permission to pass the carnival at Prague;

a request to which Wallenstein the more readily assented, because he was delighted at removing his illustrious pupils, whom he regarded as spies upon his actions. No sooner, however, had they quitted the camp, than they dispatched Guicciardini to Vienna, who, giving ample scope to a vivid imagination, depicted the impending danger with all the exaggeration of a poetical fancy, representing the Bohemian army as actually in a state of insurrection, while the troops stationed in the vicinity of the capital were prepared to second their diabolical projects, by assaulting that city.

This alarming intelligence being confirmed from different quarters, convinced the ministers of Ferdinand that no alternative remained, except to take off the traitor, or to perish the victims of his perfidious designs. A council was accordingly summoned, at the house of the Spanish ambassador, which, being composed entirely of Wallenstein's enemies, was exempt from all troublesome scruples. But, as it was possible that the emperor, either from principle or policy, might hesitate at the idea of assassination, it was resolved to assail him with every argument most capable of exciting his apprehensions, as a parent, a sovereign, or a bigot. The representative of Philip was selected to urge the necessity of adopting such vigorous measures as the magnitude of the peril required. By the artful commendation of the patience with which Ferdinand had so long tolerated the presumption of an insolent subject, and the exaggeration of the favours with which he had loaded him, he endeavoured to convince the indignant monarch that he had already exceeded the utmost bounds of gratitude, even when operating upon a mind most feel-

ingly alive to its exalted precepts. Having thus satisfied his conscience, (an easy task) he proceeded to work upon his other passions, by shewing that justice was a duty no less imperious than generosity. "The empire," he said, "was betrayed; the Bohemian sceptre nearly wrested from the grasp of its sovereign; and Vienna filled with secret conspirators, who waited only for the concerted signal to begin the work of devastation, by setting fire to the city, plundering the inhabitants, and massacring the imperial family." The interests of religion were not forgotten: on the contrary, the stability of the Catholic worship was represented as so closely identified with the existence of Ferdinand, that they must prosper or perish together.

It may easily be conceived, that such a picture of misery would not be presented ineffectually to the eyes of a prince, whose scruples were probably the result of decorum, rather than the genuine effusions of benevolence. A commission accordingly was immediately sent to Gallas, Piccolomini, and Aldringer, empowering them to seize the person of Wallenstein, and of his principal adherents, either alive or dead, and declaring them rebels and traitors. By another proclamation the troops were absolved from their oath of allegiance to the Duke of Friedland; and pardon was offered to all who had signed the engagement, with a very few exceptions, provided they immediately returned to a proper sense of their duty: remunerations were also promised to officers of every rank proportioned to their services. The chief command was conferred upon Gallas; and the soldiers were forbidden, under the severest penalties, to obey any or-

ders which were not subscribed by him, or one of his colleagues.*

However honourable the commission entrusted to Gallas, it was neither safe, nor easy of execution; because, at the time when he received it, he was actually in the power of the person he was chosen to supplant—a man no less vigilant in detecting, than implacable in punishing, treachery. The most trifling inadvertence might conduct him in a moment to the scaffold. Without the concurrence of strong and active coadjutors, no hope could be cherished of ultimate success: yet the greatest caution was requisite, not to expose himself to detection by an ill-placed confidence. After all that had past, by what inducements could he tempt an aspiring rebel to relinquish the prospects which opened before him, if he merited the approbation of Wallenstein, and to throw himself entirely upon the mercy of a sovereign, who had never been conspicuous for his clemency? and, without the co-operation of a numerous party, it would be madness to insult the authority of a general, long an object of the profoundest veneration, surrounded by multitudes blindly devoted to his service, armed with every attribute of exalted power, and no less prompt than able to punish.

Convinced, by these considerations, that it was utterly impracticable to carry into execution the emperor's order without the support of an army, he panted for an opportunity of consulting Aldringer, to whom he was nearly connected by marriage, and upon whose judgement he confidently relied. Yet he was apprehensive of the conse-

* Galetti, 339.

quences of an attempt to quit the city without the permission of Wallenstein. The protracted absence of his friend, however, luckily afforded a plausible excuse. The Duke of Friedland, surprised at his delay, communicated his suspicions to Gallas; who, seizing with avidity this favourable opportunity of making his escape, offered immediately to repair to Frauenberg; and, in case Aldringer's absence should proceed from any motive except indisposition, he promised to exert his influence to bring him to Pilsen. Wallenstein was so pleased with this mark of attachment, that he sent Gallas in his own carriage to Frauenburg, where the Bavarian general had been joined by Maradas. Friedland's plans were so nearly brought to maturity, that scarcely a moment was left for deliberation. They, therefore, hastened to assemble every regiment upon whose fidelity they could depend, displayed the new commission received from the emperor, seized Budweiss and Tabor, both important posts; and, having cashiered a few disaffected officers, obliged the garrisons to take a fresh oath of allegiance. Having thus secured a firm footing in Bohemia, Aldringer repaired to Vienna for further instructions; while Gallas flew to the army in Upper Austria, which was threatened by the active genius of Weimar. It is a most remarkable circumstance, that all these changes were effected without the knowledge of Wallenstein. This partly proceeded from the vigilance of Piccolomini, who remained at Pilsen to watch his motions, and, by unremitting attention, prevented the arrival of any intelligence which might tend to awaken his jealousy. But no management could have succeeded in protracting the delusion,

unless it had been seconded by his own extravagant confidence in astrology. This strange infatuation rendered him an easy tool in the hands of the treacherous Tuscan, whose proposal to go in search of Gallas, when Wallenstein complained of his want of punctuality, was accepted as a pledge of fidelity. A man less presumptuously blind would have detained Piccolomini, as an hostage for the fidelity of his friend; but to have doubted the veracity of a person, whose destiny the unerring voice of Nature had so clearly identified with his own, would have been equally inconsistent with his pride and with his prejudices. Instead of opposing his departure, he lent him a carriage of curious construction, that he might perform the journey with greater speed and convenience. Piccolomini travelled with the greatest expedition; and, having overtaken Gallas at Liptz, it was concerted between them, that, while the latter observed the motions of the Swedes, the former, at the head of the light cavalry, should attempt to surprise the powerful rebel.*

The credulity of Wallenstein at length gave way to the most alarming conjectures, when he found himself deserted by Piccolomini also; and received information that the Spanish envoy had secretly withdrawn himself from the camp, followed by Diodati, an officer of promise, with the whole of his regiment. Far, however, from resigning himself to the dictates of despair, his fortitude augmented with the danger. As the surest means of counteracting the mischief, he issued a proclamation forbidding the troops to attend to any mandate,

* 1631. Le Vassor, xl. 407.

unless signed by Tersky or Illo. Preparations were likewise made for securing Tabor and Budweiss; but they were unfortunately frustrated by the activity of Gallas. By a subsequent ordinance the whole army was directed to assemble at Prague, where he determined to erect the standard of rebellion, and to assume the title of King of Bohemia. An account of these proceedings was immediately transmitted to the Duke of Weimar, who was earnestly entreated to favour their execution. Wallenstein further proposed to surrender Pilsen as a pledge of his sincerity; and, after uniting his forces with the Swedes and Saxons, to march directly to Vienna. But this eccentric hero had so long sported with the credulity of mankind, that his honour was questioned, even when the necessity of his situation would have constrained him to act without duplicity. No protestations were, therefore, sufficient to remove the suspicions of Bernard, who equally doubted the veracity of the commander, and the influence which he possessed over the army.*

While waiting with impatience for the issue of his negociations with the enemies of Austria, Friedland was overwhelmed with the fatal intelligence that Prague, and all the other Bohemian fortresses, had been occupied by his active opponents; that he was betrayed by the generals, abandoned by the soldiers, and publicly denounced as a traitor. At this tremendous crisis, when a spirit less firm would have sunk under the troubles with which it was assailed, his constancy never forsook him; for he felt secure, that neither ingratitude nor treachery

* 1634. Puffendorf, vi. 15.

were able to deprive him of those gigantic resources which are the offspring of genius; and that, although proscribed and betrayed, the name of Wallenstein alone was still sufficient to make the emperor tremble in his capital. Determined never to debase his former fame by unmanly submission, he dispatched the Duke of Laurenberg with fresh proposals to the Swedish army, sent another confidential officer to Oxenstiern at Francfort, and secretly conveyed a part of his treasure to Pirna in Saxony. Having thus left nothing to chance which prudence could provide, he resolved to transfer his quarters to Egra; that, by approaching the frontiers of the Upper Palatinate, he might facilitate his junction with Weimar.

While Wallenstein, still indulging the most delusive hopes, was occupied in preparations to meet the storm, a plot was contrived for his destruction, by the villainy of men who owed their fortune to his patronage and generosity. The emperor's proclamation, by declaring him a rebel, and setting a price upon his head, was sure of being attended by two important results; because it not only held out to avarice a seductive temptation, but even afforded a pretext, which Jesuitical casuistry might possibly torture into something like an excuse for ingratitude.

Among the officers particularly distinguished by Wallenstein were Butler, Leslie, and Gordon; the two former Irish, the latter a native of Scotland. These men, having been progressively raised from the lowest stations, to the rank of colonels, were indebted to their general for all they possessed; and he consequently persuaded himself that he might depend upon their attachment, under

every vicissitude of fortune. Gordon, who had recently been appointed governor of Egra, was summoned to Pilsen, where he was strictly interrogated respecting the strength and political sentiments of the garrison; and being flattered with the hope of still higher promotion, as the recompense of his steady adherence, he was instructed to prepare for the immediate reception of the army. The heart of Wallenstein, however, was so overloaded with resentment, that he vented his fury with querulous imprudence. The ingratitude of Ferdinand, and the venality of his ministers formed the constant topic of his conversation; and he frequently burst forth into bitter invectives against both, without ever reflecting how far it was safe to confide in the discretion of those to whom he addressed his complaints.* In one of these unguarded moments he disclosed his secret designs to Leslie, without even concealing his projected union with the Swedes; with whose assistance he boasted that, in the course of a single campaign, he should be able to drive the house of Austria out of Germany, which they had too long insulted by the rigour, or degraded by the imbecility of their government. In confirmation of these assertions, he produced a letter from the Duke of Weimar, in which that gallant prince announced his speedy arrival, and requested him to send an escort of cavalry to conduct Birkenfeldt in safety to Egra.†

This important secret having been communicated by Leslie to Butler and Gordon, they abandoned the plan (which they are supposed originally to have entertained), of seizing their commander, and

* Carve, 97.

† Ibid.

his principal adherents, and sending them prisoners to Vienna. The danger appeared too urgent to admit of the smallest delay, because the presence of Weimar might defraud their avidity of the promised reward. They in consequence preferred with the prudence of fiends to cut up the evil by the roots; for by assassinating Wallenstein, Illo, and Tersky, they were certain of preventing their escape.

This diabolical scheme was no sooner embraced, than preparations were made for its immediate execution; which was conducted in a manner every way conformable to the characters of its authors, and the almost unexampled atrocity of the design. In order that nothing might be wanting to consign the assassins to everlasting infamy, a banquet was chosen as the scene of murder, in the horrid expectation that valour might fall an easy prey, when indulging in the delights of convivial intercourse. Under pretext of celebrating the arrival of their illustrious leader, a splendid entertainment was given by Gordon, in the castle of Egra, to which Illo; Tersky, Kinsky, and Niemar, were invited.* It is generally believed that Wallenstein was solicited to honour the governor with his company, but that the agitation of his mind rendering him more averse than ever from social festivity, he declined the invitation.

Previously to the arrival of their devoted victims, a select body of soldiers, under the command of Devorenx, was stationed in a chamber adjoining to the supper room,† prepared upon receiving the

* On the 15th of February, 1634.

† Delegere ex fidelessimis militum pauculos quos gloriæ socios esse commode posse putarent.—Carve, 104.

concerted signal, heroically to rush upon the defenceless guests, and to murder them in violation of the rites of hospitality, so sacred even in the eyes of the most barbarous nations. Every avenue leading to the citadel was strictly guarded by detachments of Butler's dragoons, while other parties paraded the streets, that they might be ready to crush any tumult in its infancy, in case the Tersky cuirassiers, who were quartered in the town, should rise in defence of their gallant commander.

Totally unconscious of the impending danger, Tersky and his three friends indulged in hilarity in the pleasures of the table, while the Duke of Friedland's health was repeatedly drank with shouts of applause. Supposing himself surrounded by none but confidential friends, all equally interested in Wallenstein's fortune, and rendered loquacious by wine, Illo boasted triumphantly, that the fate of Ferdinand would be shortly decided; and that, before a week should elapse, the injured hero, who had so long supported the glory of Austria, would be placed at the head of an army, far more formidable than any which he had hitherto commanded. The signal for attack being now given, the drawbridge was raised, the doors were fastened, and the apartment was filled with armed soldiers. Giraldini and Devoreux entered at their head, exclaiming triumphantly, "Long live Ferdinand II." while Leslie and Butler seizing the candles, held them aloft to guide the assassins in the bloody business. The tables being overturned amid the general confusion, the astonished guests flew to their swords suspended behind them; but, before he was able to assume a defensive attitude, Illo received a

mortal wound.* Tersky, however, was more alert, and placing his back against the wall, slew three of the assailants before he fell, and with his dying breath upbraided Gordon with his treachery, in terms which must have penetrated any heart less recreant to the call of honour. Though Kinsky resisted with manly spirit, he was dispatched with greater facility. Niemar, meanwhile, found an opportunity of escaping unperceived by the murderers, but being discovered by the guards as he was attempting to pass the outward gate, he also was inhumanely massacred.

Friedland's lieutenants having been thus treacherously murdered, Devoreux (for whom, according to the expression of Carve, the *glory* of murdering Wallenstein was reserved) having broken his sword in the scuffle, snatched a partisan from the hand of a common soldier, and taking with him thirty ruffians, as savage as himself,† proceeded to the general's quarters. While his friends were perishing by the swords of assassins, Wallenstein was occupied in consulting the planets, in company with his confidential astrologer; by whom he is reported to have been warned of the approaching danger with a prescience at least highly suspicious. But so great was his infatuation, that notwithstanding the confidence which he was wont to repose in the predictions of Senni, he rejected the augury with disdain, relying more firmly on his own good fortune than on the motions of the heavenly bodies.‡

* Some writers attribute this vigorous resistance to Illo, but I have chosen to follow the testimony of Carve, who, having been chaplain to Devoreux, may be supposed to have heard the minute details of this infamous transaction from the mouth of the master-ruffian.

† Two were Scotch, one was a Spaniard, and all the rest were Irish.

‡ Schiller. Schmidt.

Upon knocking rudely at the gate, Devoreux was admonished, by a page in waiting, to beware of disturbing the duke, who had just retired to his bed-chamber. "Friend," said Devoreux fiercely, "this is no time for repose," and he rushed into the house with his followers. The door of Wallenstein's apartment being locked, the leader of the banditti asked for the key, which not being brought he attempted to burst it open. The duke, upon hearing the report of a musket, fired accidentally by one of the soldiers, ran to the window to call the guard, when his ears were assailed with shrieks and lamentations. They were the cries of conjugal affection, uttered by the wives of the slaughtered generals, imploring vengeance upon their base assassins. The height of the window rendering it impossible to escape, he called aloud for assistance: the massive door, which had hitherto resisted the efforts of its numerous assailants, at length gave way, and a host of ruffians, armed with swords and halberts, burst impetuously into the chamber. The duke was alone, and standing near a table in his night-gown. It is a singular circumstance, that there was neither sword nor pistol in the room; and, what is still more extraordinary, the door was not defended by a single centinel, though he was usually guarded by an hundred soldiers. "This," says Harte, "looks as if he was not conscious of any design against his life." But does it not rather afford a strong presumption, that his attendants were implicated in the plot, and had purposely left him destitute of defence? It is clear, however, that he did not entertain the smallest mistrust, or he would otherwise have been surrounded by Tersky's horse, who were blindly devoted to his service

“ Art thou the traitor,” asked Devoreux sternly, “ who art preparing to join the enemies of thy country, and to dethrone our beloved sovereign ?” The pride of Wallenstein disdained a reply. Upon being told that a few short moments would be granted him for prayer, he uncovered his bosom, stretched forth his arms in dignified silence, and receiving the partisan of Devoreux in his heart, expired without uttering a single groan, or even betraying the slightest emotion.* The dead body, enveloped in a sheet, was instantly conveyed to the citadel, where, on the following morning, Butler assembled the officers belonging to the garrison, and described to them the nature and extent of the conspiracy, as well as the measures adopted to defeat it. We may easily believe that he did not omit to point out the perfidy of the rebels, and his own patriotic courage, in colours best calculated to excite indignation, and conciliate esteem ; and finding his auditors more easily appeased than he had reason to expect, he obliged them to take a fresh oath of allegiance to Ferdinand.†

This sanguinary revolution was scarcely completed, when a messenger announced that Lauenburg might be hourly expected with intelligence of the highest importance. A troop of horse was immediately sent to meet him ; the commander of which received him with the profoundest respect, and continued to converse with him upon indifferent topics, till they arrived within sight of the gates,

* *Ita orbis probrum, Caesarisque infamis proditor, justissima Dei manu vindice scelus suum dignissima morte luit.* Carve, 207. After this we may conclude, that there is no crime in the black catalogue of human enormities, for which servility or bigotry will not find an excuse.

† Carve, *ibid.*

when he abruptly informed him of the change which had taken place in the political horizon since his departure, and that in consequence he must be sent a prisoner to Vienna. Confounded at an event which endangered his life, Francis Albert is said to have offered the colonel a large reward, provided he would permit him to escape, But the bribe being rejected, he was conducted to Lyra, where he is accused of having basely purchased the privilege of existing with ignominy, by consenting to betray the Swedes. In a letter to Wismar, he assured him, that every thing having succeeded beyond their most sanguine expectations, the Duke of Friedland would be ready, upon his arrival, to commence offensive operations against the emperor; and he was in consequence entreated to hasten forward with the utmost celerity.* How far coercion might be requisite to prevail upon Lauenburg to employ treachery upon such an occasion, it is immaterial now to examine. It is sufficient to know, that Bernard avoided the snare; but whether he owed his safety to personal sagacity, or to the fortuitous concurrence of circumstances, no writer has deigned to inform us.†

* Puffendorf, vi. 19.

† For the narrative of the conspiracy and death of Wallenstein I have consulted Lotichius, Puffendorf, Schmidt, Carve, Schiller, Le Vassor, Bougeant, Fenquieres, Galetti, and Gualdo.

The following satirical epitaph, which has considerable merit, is generally ascribed to Father Joseph:

Vitam privatam odit animus regius,
 Magnanimus ardua molitur;
 Ambitionis nec meta, nec regressus,
 Aut pereundum, aut regnandum;
 Non judicanda eventu, quæ ratione acta sunt;
 ACTIONES SUNT VIRTUTIS, EVENTUS FORTUNE.
 - Justum erat, ut sceptrum regium quæret,

Nothing now remained for the murderers except to receive the disgraceful recompense of their villainy; and Butler and Devoreux accordingly travelled with the utmost expedition to Vienna, that they might be the first to communicate the grateful intelligence to the emperor. They found him at his devotions, perhaps soliciting the vengeance of Heaven upon the man to whom he was indebted for the preservation of his sceptre, and whom in return he had forsaken and proscribed. The instant he saw them, he threw down his chaplet, and quitting the church made signs for them to follow him; when he had reached the palace, he threw a magnificent chain of solid gold round Butler's neck, as a token of imperial favour, to which a medal of himself was suspended, desiring him to wear it constantly in remembrance of an emperor, whom his prudence had rescued from inevitable destruction. A few days after he conferred upon him the title of count; thus prostituting the highest

Qui Cæsarem dedit,
 Quod fecit, licet,
 Quia fecit, ut regnaret,
 Cæsarem cadentem erexit Walstein,
 Cæsar erectus prosternit Walstein,
 Qui in adversis socium habuit, in prosperis servum non sustinet;
 Voluit perdere, quem non potuit remunerari;
 Nimum meritum odium peperit:
 Dum victoriam alteri parat
 Invidiam sibi struxit.
 Gloriam dedit imperio, imperium sibi ruinam,
 Vitam, opes, amicos, pro Cæsare toties exposuit,
 Vitam, opes, amicos Cæsar semel abstulit:
 Vita cessat, fama durat.
 Quis neseit tua virtute partum, auctum, firmatum imperium?
 Nihil aliud injustum fecisti,
 Nisi quod ingrato nimum fideliter serviebas.

honours as the price of blood, appointed him one of his chamberlains, and conferred upon him some of the confiscated estates belonging to Wallenstein and his associates. To the other conspirators he was equally bountiful, thus rendering murder a profitable speculation, and confounding all distinctions of moral rectitude.

While he profusely lavished the wages of iniquity upon the most worthless of mortals, Ferdinand attempted to palliate the turpitude of his own conduct by the despicable tricks of hypocrisy. But neither the theatrical display of fictitious sorrow, (for he is reported to have shed tears while listening to the circumstantial details of Wallenstein's death,) nor the expiatory sacrifice of three thousand masses, which were said for the soul of his murdered protector in the cathedral of Vienna, nor the studied apology, with which he insulted the sense and feelings of mankind, though deeply tinctured with Jesuitical casuistry,* were able to efface the indelible stain. So long as ingratitude shall continue to excite abhorrence, or truth remain the favourite object of historical investigation, posterity will remember that Ferdinand II. was preserved from utter destruction by the valour and genius of Wallenstein, and that when firmly seated on the imperial throne, he commanded his assassination.

The absurd, and even sometimes contradictory, ac-

* A circumstantial narrative of the conspiracy, adorned with every fictitious extenuation which sophistry could devise in vindication of guilt, was published by the court under the following title. "Ausführlicher und gründlicher Bericht der Friedländischen und seiner adherenten Prodition ac, in offenen druck gegeben aus sonderbare der Röm. Kais. Majest. Befehl."

consations alleged against Friedland in the imperial apology, have induced some writers to doubt the reality of the conspiracy, and to imagine it the fabrication of an ungrateful monarch, in order to deliver himself from a powerful subject, whose services he could never have adequately recompensed. This supposition, however, is attended with many inconveniences, which it is neither possible to reconcile, nor easy to overcome. For it obliges those, by whom it is adopted, to treat the overtures of Wallenstein to the different powers hostile to Austria, as stratagems invented to deceive his opponents, or to weaken the attachment subsisting between them; in the hope of ultimately accomplishing the ruin of the Swedes by a series of perfidies almost unprecedented in the annals of human perversity. Unable to deny that the life of their hero was closed in open rebellion against the imperial throne, they endeavour to prove that he was compelled to erect the standard of treason by the paramount duty of self-defence; boldly assuming in his justification, that no alternative remained, except to perish ingloriously by the hand of the executioner, or to vindicate his honour by arms. Though we readily admit that he was driven almost to despair by the jealousy of the Spaniards, who dreaded his influence over the mind of Ferdinand; by the envy of Maximilian, no less offended by his pride, than humiliated by his talents; and by the resentment of the Jesuits, who feared his understanding, because it was superior to the prejudices of the age, and never forgave his deriding their authority, and unmasking their ambition: yet it seems impossible to acquit him of premeditated treachery, without believing the letters of Feuquieres

to be spurious—a supposition not easily admitted. So early as the month of April, 1633, a correspondence was opened between the French ambassador and the dictator of Germaay,* through the intervention of Kinsky, a brother of the general who perished at Egra, which was continued, though not without occasional intermissions, till finally interrupted by the fatal catastrophe which terminated the glory of Wallenstein. The sagacity of Feuquieres was not easily deluded: on the contrary, he appears, from his own dispatches, to have received the first overtures, made by the Duke of Friedland, with a diffidence bordering upon incredulity; and to have prosecuted the negotiation with unremitting caution, never rashly committing himself, nor hastily rejecting the proposals of an enemy, because he was more celebrated for craft than for candour.†

In a letter to the king, which though it bears no

* Feuquieres, i. 153.

† The following dispatch dated from Chantilly, 16th Juillet, 1633, and signed by the king is well worthy of attention. The passages, which I shall extract, will clearly prove, at least in the opinion of Richelieu, that the projects of Wallenstein had some foundation.

“Le Roi fait presentement une puissante armée, qui s'avance sur la frontiere d'Allemagne, qui servira beaucoup pour tenir les Espagnols en jalousie; si *Friedland* juge apropos, quelle entre en Alsacc, pour faire une puissante diversion, sa Majesté le consentira.” From this passage it appears that Wallenstein was already consulted in what manner to employ the forces of France most advantageously.

“Si *Friedland* a besoin de quelque argent, le roi donne ordre au sieur Feuquieres de lui offrir cent mille ecus presentement, et sa Majesté lui permet d'aller jusqu'à cinq cent mille francs.” Something probably was to be done for this bribe, as ministers in those days were less generous, or less prodigal, than at present.

“Si ledit *Friedland* veut entrer en un traité, et qu'il se veuille obliger a entretenir sur pied trente mille hommes de pied, et quatre ou cinq

date was probably written in the beginning of May, Feuquieres mentions the arrival of a gentleman from Kinsky, to signify that his terms had been accepted by Wallenstein. The proposals alluded to in this dispatch, were delivered to Kinsky by the French ambassador, at an interview which took place at Dresden.*

This delicate negotiation induced the latter to

mille chevaux, ou au moins une armée considerable pour s'opposer aux desseins de la maison d'Autriche, qui pourroient empêcher la liberté commune, et le repos de la Chrétienté, outre les diversions puissantes que S. M. prépare de tous cotés, S. M. s'obligera a fournir au dit duc un million de livres par an." From this clause it may be inferred, that the negotiation had already made a considerable progress.

"En ce qui regarde le second article, S. M. trouve apropos que Friedland commence sa declaration, en se rendant maitre de la Bohême, et entrant delà en Autriche; se remettant toutefois en la maniere qu'il jugera plus convenable, de temoigner publiquement par quelque acte d'hostilité, qu'il se separe des interets de la maison d'Autriche."

"Selon que ledit sieur Feuquieres verra jour en cette affaire, il fera entendre au dit duc que S. M. estime être utile pour le bien public, qu'il soit roi de Bohême, comme étant un royaume occupé contre les loix du pais par la maison d'Autriche; le roi s'offrant d'y employer tout ce qui dependra de lui et de porter ses amis pour établir, et maintenir Friedland en cette dignité.—Negotiations de Feuquieres, ii. 1.

* Ibid. i. 155. The whole of this paper merits attention; I must confine myself, however, to a single extract. After enumerating the various insults and injuries to which Wallenstein had been exposed, by the ingratitude of those whom he had faithfully served, the ambassador continues in the following words:

"Toutes ces raisons, et plusieurs autres, leurs donnent sujet de s'étonner qu'après s'être soumis, il y a quelque tems, a entendre a un accommodement avec le roi de Suède, qu'il connoissoit d'une lueur si altiere, et ambitieuse, qu'il ne pouvoit souffrir auprès de lui personne qui eut le moindre ombre de credit, et qui se portait par tout en personne, il laisse perdre une si belle occasion, qu'il a aujourd'hui en main du pouvoir, avec sureté et honneur, non seulement assurer sa fortune, et so maintenir dans l'autorité, rang, et dignités qu'il possède, mais s'élever a une couronne, dont la possession lui seroit assurée par l'appui de si puissans amis, qu'il auroit plutôt lieu désespérer de passer plus avant, que de craindre d'en decheoir.

protract his stay at the court of John George, where Kinsky usually resided, because he regarded the affair as too important to be delegated to the discretion of a subordinate agent: he was, besides, extremely desirous that it should be conducted, as much as possible, by oral communications; that in case the plot should miscarry, no written documents might exist to authenticate the interference of France. Various circumstances also occurred to awaken the suspicions of Feuquieres, who was aware, that the man who courted his friendship, esteemed duplicity and artifice as the inseparable characteristics of superior genius, and had seldom failed to employ those favourite instruments, even upon occasions when he might have accomplished his purposes with equal facility, by pursuing the more obvious tracks of sincerity.*

After what has been said, it would be difficult to deny the existence of a conspiracy to elevate Wallenstein to the throne of Bohemia, without countenancing a capricious system of scepticism, which, though supported by the splendour of continental erudition, is no less subversive of the utility, than derogatory to the true dignity of history.

Every thing in Wallenstein was marked with eccentricity; and to appreciate him according to any established standard, is entirely to mistake his character. Accustomed to compare himself with men, whose understandings and acquirements were entirely obscured by the dazzling splendour of his own abilities, he seems to have regarded genius as an exemption from all general rules, and to have

* These doubts are expressed in a letter to the king, dated from Dresden, 17th June, 1633.—*Negociations de Feuquieres*, i. 246.

formed an exclusive system for the regulation of his own actions, independent of human control.— Looking down with contempt upon the majority of those who obtruded themselves upon his notice in the path of life, and considering them as beings whose subordinate faculties subjected them, like puppets, to be turned and twisted, as best suited his lofty designs, his ideas of morality grew lax and uncertain, depending more upon the caprice of the moment, or the urgency of the occasion, than upon the ordinances of religion, or the admonitions of conscience. No less indifferent to the lofty precepts of Pagan philosophy, than to the milder obligations of Christianity, he ridiculed plain dealing as the unerring symptom of a contracted intellect, and disdained sincerity as the humble virtue of a recluse.

It is probable, however, that his intercourse with Gustavus Adolphus was at its commencement sincere; but when he found his overtures treated with indifference, his pride took fire, and he panted after an opportunity for punishing the insult by a memorable revenge. To overturn the colossal power of Austria, and compel the Swedes to evacuate Germany, were not enterprises too vast for his aspiring ambition to grasp at; and the difficulty of reconciling two such contradictory undertakings, occasioned a thousand inconsistencies in his behaviour, which it is impossible otherwise to explain. Add to this, that his faith in judicial astrology was so unbounded,* that he either prosecuted a plan with

* This characteristic weakness is beautifully painted by Schiller, in all the splendour of animated versification.

Die himmlischen gestirne, machen nicht
Bloss tag und nacht, frühling und sommer—nicht

unremitting ardour, or suspended it even at the moment of completion, according as the configuration of the heavenly bodies excited him to activity, or announced the necessity of delay. This of course gave to all his actions an appearance of artifice and caprice, peculiarly calculated to excite suspicions injurious to his honour, even at a time when those suspicions were totally destitute of solid foundation.

Yet with all his eccentricities, and all his faults, Wallenstein deservedly occupies an eminent station in an age distinguished for splendid talents, and characterized by extraordinary events.* For it is no scanty eulogium to have been the only commander, in the service of Austria, capable of retarding the progress of Gustavus Adolphus.

Den sa'mann bloss bezeichnen sie die zeiten
 Der aussaat und der aernte. Auch des menschen thun
 Ist eine aussaat von verhängnissen,
 Gestreuet in der zukunft dunkles land,
 Den schicksalsmachen hoffend übergeben
 Da thut es noth, die saatzeit zy urkunden,
 Die rechte sternenstunde auszulernen,
 Des himmels HAUSIR forschend zu durchspüren,
 Ob nicht der feind des wachens und gedeihens
 In seinen ecken schadend sich verberge.

Die Piccolomini, Act ii. Sc. 6.

* Among his other great and brilliant qualities, his patronage of men of genius ought not to be forgotten. During his retirement, he is said to have courted Grotius, with a view of engaging him to write the history of his life.—Herekenahon.

Edicto vetuit, ne quis se præter Appellen
 Pingeret, aut alius Lysippo cuderet æra
 Fortis Alexandri vultum simulantia.

Horacc, Ep. l. ii. 1.

CHAP. XVIII.

The projects of Richelieu being disconcerted by Wallenstein's death, he endeavours to regain the friendship of Oxenstiern, and opens a negotiation with Holland.—Fluctuating politics of Saxony and Brandenburg.—Views of Denmark and Poland.—Distress of Oxenstiern for want of resources to continue the war; he convenes an assembly of the Protestants at Francfort; duplicity of France; intrigues of Saxony.—The King of Hungary assumes the command of the imperial army; crosses the Danube, and after taking Ratisbonne besieges Nordlingen. Horn and Weimar attempt to relieve it, and are defeated with dreadful slaughter.—The Protestant party overwhelmed with confusion.—Magnanimous behaviour of Oxenstiern and the Swedish government.—Richelieu determines to assist the Swedes with all the resources of France, and endeavours to obtain the chief direction of the war.—Assembly at Worms. The French compel the imperialists to raise the siege of Heidelberg.—The Elector of Saxony negotiates with Austria.

OF all the distinguished characters contemporaneously figuring upon the political theatre, none appears to have regretted the murder of Wallenstein so sincerely as Richelieu; for it destroyed, in a moment, the expectations which he had founded upon the revolt of the Bohemian army. Louis, however, beheld his fall with different sentiments. For although the ascendancy of that powerful minister had compelled him almost openly to patronize rebellion, his influence had failed to eradicate the prejudices of royal birth; so that at the very time when he espoused the cause of Friedland, he secretly detested his treachery. After reading a dispatch, announcing the catastrophe which had happened at Egra, he exclaimed, in the presence of a numerous court, "Would to Heaven! that every

traitor might experience a similar fate." This imprudent declaration having been communicated to Richelieu, he was unable to conceal his chagrin at finding the heart of his master not totally depraved, and peevishly said, "It would be advisable for the king to grow a little more circumspect in public."*

The cardinal was so accustomed to uninterrupted prosperity, that he could not behold, without the most poignant regret, the fabric which he had raised for the subversion of Austria, so unexpectedly levelled with the ground. And his disappointment was heightened by the apprehension that Wallenstein's death might produce a disadvantageous change in the policy of Holland. For though he was well assured that their hatred of their ancient oppressors was no less inveterate than his own, he was far from reposing equal confidence in their firmness; but seriously dreaded, that under the influence of a momentary panic, they might be tempted to conclude a permanent peace, or what would be equally adverse to his aspiring projects, a long armistice, with the court of Madrid. These fears, it must be admitted, were not destitute of foundation; for there actually existed a powerful party in the united provinces, which, with pertinacious adherence to the maxims of Barnewelt, were ready to seize any opportunity of terminating the contest; because they considered war highly dangerous to the independence of their country, by throwing into the hands of the Prince of Orange an accumulation of authority, totally inconsistent with the principles of a republican constitution.

* *Le Vasseur*, xi. 419. *Feuquieres*, cxxxi.

To encourage the opposite faction, as well as to inspire its leaders with military ardour, Charnacé was ordered to repair to the Hague, where he executed the commission entrusted to his care with his usual zeal and sagacity. For although he failed in his endeavours to persuade an enlightened people to sacrifice their real interests to the ambition of an ally, he negotiated a treaty as advantageous as the cardinal had reason to expect. In consideration of the payment of two millions of livres, the states general engaged to continue hostilities for another year; and further promised, never to enter into any treaty without previously consulting the King of France, and including him, if so inclined, in the negociation. Louis, at all events, agreed to guarantee the treaty; and in case of its violation on the part of Spain, to assist the Dutch with a powerful armanent. By an additional clause it was stipulated, that in case his Christian majesty should prefer the declaration of war against Philip, to the payment of an annual subsidy, the republic should never sheath the sword, unless with his entire approbation; any conquests, which might be made in the Low Countries, were to be divided between the contracting parties, so as to give perfect satisfaction to Louis.*

To the conclusion of this arrangement it is probable that Richelieu was impelled no less by the prospect of personal advantage, than by the wish of aggrandizing his country. Thoroughly persuaded that the leading principles of his administration were not only highly disagreeable to the feelings, but even totally inconsistent with the prejudices of

* This treaty was signed on the 15th of April, 1634.—*Le Vassor*, xiii. 73.

his master, he knew that his power in a great measure depended upon involving his country in such a series of difficulties, as would render his services indispensable. The timidity of Louis, which had so often obstructed the completion of his ministers plans, served now to facilitate their execution; since it afforded an opportunity for the cardinal to alarm his fears, by exaggerating the dangers to which the kingdom would be exposed, in case Ferdinand should be left at liberty, after the destruction of the protestants, to unite his gigantic resources against France.*

These representations acquired additional force from the conduct pursued by Olivares, who, irritated by the assistance so openly granted to Holland and Sweden, was indefatigable in his endeavours to persuade Philip and Ferdinand, that they would suffer less from actual hostilities, than from allowing Louis to employ the treasures of France in aid of their enemies, without exposing himself to the slightest inconvenience. This spirited advice produced a sensible change in the behaviour of Philip, who not only concluded a treaty with the Duke of Orleans, by which he promised to assist him with a powerful army, but sent a formidable fleet into the Mediterranean, apparently for the invasion of the coasts of Provence, whenever a favourable opportunity should occur. Fortunately, however, for Louis, the execution of this project was prevented by a violent tempest, which drove several of the vessels upon the coasts of Sardinia, and compelled the remainder to return to the Spanish harbours.

* Le Vassor, xii. 144.

Another source of uneasiness to the ambitious cardinal was the dread of having lost the confidence of Oxenstiern, whom he had imprudently neglected of late, in the expectation of acquiring immortal glory by accomplishing the downfall of Austria, without the co-operation of Sweden. Persuaded that Wallenstein would be able singly to give the fatal blow, he flattered himself with the hope of reducing the Swedes to an object of subserviency to France; and even aspired to behold the representative of Christina confounded among the crowd of his numerous clients, and acting in the capacity of a subordinate agent.*

The probable loss of his influence with the German nation had been no less a cause of bitter disquietude to Oxenstiern. Neither could he disguise from himself that Wallenstein and Richelieu, if acting in concert, might succeed in overturning the power of Austria; an event which must necessarily render Sweden dependent upon them for her future remuneration. And it was probably with a view of averting this disgrace, that he resolved at last to assist in the execution of a project, which he had always treated as chimerical; and ordered Bernard to unite his forces to those of Friedland, the moment the latter had actually raised the standard of revolt. By the chancellor therefore the failure of the plot could hardly be regarded as a misfortune; for it totally reversed his political prospects, by rendering him once more an object of veneration to all who were hostile to Austria.†

In the volatile mind of the Elector of Saxony it excited even a stronger sensation; and he again

* Puffendorf, vi. 18.

† Fouquieres, i. cxxxviii.

flattered himself with being placed, through the influence of France, at the head of the protestant confederacy; in which case he would have ratified without the smallest hesitation the proceedings of the assembly at Heilbrun. No sooner however was the command of the imperial army entrusted to the eldest son of Ferdinand, than John George again relapsed into that state of indecision which had been so often mistaken for treachery. Though ostensibly the ally of Christina, all his measures were conducted with so little intelligence, that far from affording her effectual assistance, he frequently embarrassed the operations of her generals.*

The Elector of Brandenburg had hitherto manifested more favourable sentiments; but Oxenstiern had mistaken his motives, if he attributed his conduct to patriotism; as it proceeded entirely from the expectation of marrying his eldest son to the daughter of Gustavus. No sooner, however, did he discover that the Swedish government were averse from the alliance than his ardour abated, and instead of the firm support which he had promised to their views, he changed his political creed altogether, involving himself without further consideration in the intricate policy of the Saxon court.

The mysterious silence so studiously preserved by Denmark and Poland, created almost equal alarm; for it was no secret to the world that the emissaries of Ferdinand were indefatigable in their endeavours to induce the sovereigns of both those countries to unite with the two protestant electors, in an attempt to bring about a general peace, upon conditions consistent with the interests and dignity of the

* Consult the dispatches of Feuquieres, ii. 286.

imperial diadem.* From the characters of the mediators, the result of their labours might have been easily foreseen, and it accordingly became an object of infinite moment to France and Sweden to frustrate the project before it arrived at maturity. The skill and experience of a consummate negotiator were eminently requisite upon this occasion, and Feuquieres in consequence would probably have been selected for the delicate mission, had he not been detained at Francfort by a multiplicity of business which claimed unremitting attention. It became necessary therefore to appoint another ambassador in the person of the celebrated Claude de Mêmes Comte d'Avanx, who had already given distinguished proofs of diplomatic ability in the management of various negotiations in Italy.

To a casual observer it may appear that the cardinal for once was mistaken in his policy, and that the surest method of disconcerting these clandestine intrigues, would have been the immediate commencement of hostilities. That this would have proved the most dignified conduct it is not possible to deny; but the adoption of it required more disinterested courage than Richelieu possessed; for notwithstanding the fortitude which he displayed on many trying occasions, he could never contemplate the loss of power, without a puerile emotion of dismay.

That the moment was peculiarly favourable for a rupture with Spain, his perspicuous judgment clearly discovered. Blind even to the fatal lessons of experience, the court of Madrid continued to pursue the same impolitic system in every province

* Feuquieres, i. 140.

untainted by the contagion of freedom, by which Holland had been goaded to revolt. Hence serious discontents prevailed in various parts of the Netherlands, which rendered an attack upon that quarter an object of more than common alarm. The duchy of Milan had been drained of troops to render the appearance of the cardinal infant more formidable in the eyes of the German nation; and it was far from improbable, that the native powers might be tempted to assist in the subjugation of Lombardy, by the hope of partaking in the spoil. Even the northern frontier of Spain was not inaccessible, while France was so strong on the side of the Pyrenees, that little fear was entertained for her safety.

These were unquestionably most forcible arguments in favour of immediate hostilities; yet on the other hand motives of equal cogency suggested the expediency of postponing the conflict. The declining health of the king precluded the hope of a long reign; and in case of his decease in the midst of a war, the most dreadful confusion might ensue. And even supposing the event of the contest to be as glorious for France as the most sanguine expectations could anticipate, that very success might pave the way for the downfall of Richelieu, should Louis be induced to listen to the suggestions of bigotry and malevolence. These never lost an occasion of representing the minister's projects as wild and chimerical, describing him as a man who was actually sacrificing the real interests of the state to his own inordinate vanity, and subjecting the people to intolerable burthens in pursuit of objects which were scarcely attainable, and which at all events it would be impossible to

accomplish without deranging the finances, and crippling the industry of the nation.

These considerations determined him, even if he could not ultimately avoid a rupture with Austria, at least to postpone it as long as possible; he endeavoured therefore to amuse the courts of Madrid and Vienna with illusory offers, which served at the same time to deceive the king, who was thus led to believe, that the continuation of hostilities was entirely owing to Olivares. Resolute however to be prepared for every contingency, the cardinal augmented the army by numerous enrolments, and stationed camps near the frontiers; a precaution which disconcerted the projects of the Spanish minister, who, no less insincere than Richelieu, had entered into the treaty with no other view than that of delaying the preparations of France, that he might avail himself of the confidence which he inspired, for an irruption into Languedoc or Guienne.*

It is unnecessary to pursue this artful texture of intrigue and duplicity, through all its tortuous intricacies. It will be sufficient to observe, that after a long display of diplomatic address, the pope ineffectually proffered his mediation.

Meanwhile the negotiations of D'Avaux were prosecuted with ardour in the northern courts; and as few things were more essential to the future welfare of the allies, than a good understanding with Denmark, his first efforts were exerted at Copenhagen; where, after encountering numberless difficulties from the interested policy of Christian, he ultimately extorted from him a verbal promise (for

* *Le Vassor*, xii. 146.

the king positively refused to enter into a written obligation), ardently to second the endeavours of his Christian majesty for the restoration of tranquillity to the empire. He further engaged, whenever a congress should assemble, to instruct his ambassador to co-operate with the French plenipotentiaries for that purpose, and in the interim to exert all his influence with the Elector of Saxony, to prevent him from concluding a separate peace with Austria.*

Having thus softened in appearance the animosity of Christian, he continued his journey to Stockholm, to encourage the Swedish government to continue the war with unabating activity, until Ferdinand should be compelled to treat upon terms consistent with the liberties of Europe. For the attainment of an object so highly desirable, he was instructed to propose a still more intimate union between the two crowns, upon conditions apparently advantageous to Sweden. But in order to obtain a greater influence with the members of the regency, it was requisite to persuade them that Louis, in supporting the protestant parts, was not impelled by interested motives; and he accordingly disclaimed, by the mouth of his ambassador, all views of private aggrandisement, solemnly declaring, that the only possession he wished to preserve, were the three bishoprics in Lorraine, already incorporated with his kingdom; but with regard to any other conquests which might be made in the prosecution of hostilities, he professed himself ready to restore them.*

This studied display of justice and moderation,

* *Le Vassor*, xii. 183.

† *Ibid.* 185.

was intended by Richelieu to cover the design which he secretly meditated of indemnifying France for all her exertions, by the extension of her frontier to the Rhine and the Moselle. But versed as he was in the science of deceit, the cardinal was unable to conceal this magnificent plan from the penetration of Oxenstiern, who had long suspected the purity of his motives, and whose doubts were at length converted into certainty, by a proposal for assembling a numerous army on the banks of the Rhine, to the formation of which Louis offered to contribute a powerful reinforcement, provided either Strasburgh or Mentz should be put into his hands, as a place of security for his military stores, or of refuge in case of distress.

Although there existed but little hope of finally terminating the disagreement between Sweden and Poland, yet it was highly important to prolong the armistice about to expire. D'Avaux consequently received instructions to leave nothing untried to effect it. But in proportion as an amicable arrangement would have facilitated the execution of the splendid schemes, which Gustavus had left as a legacy to his people, it appeared adverse to the prosperity of Austria. And Ferdinand accordingly encouraged Ladislaus to avail himself of the tranquillity which his country enjoyed, in asserting his pretensions to the crown of Sweden. The intimate friendship which had subsisted between the emperor and Sigismund, the father of Ladislaus, gave his opinions so much influence with the cabinet of Warsaw, that Richelieu despaired of accomplishing his purpose, unless he could persuade the young monarch, who had recently lost his consort, to marry a princess nearly connected

with Louis; and he proposed Marguerite of Gonzaga, daughter of the Duke of Mantua, who would have joyfully accepted a regal crown, as she could no longer indulge the most distant hope of espousing the Duke of Orleans.*

The result of his negotiation will be hereafter explained; but previously to a continuation of the subject, it becomes essential to direct our attention to another quarter. In spite of the extensive authority with which Oxenstiern was invested, he found his powers of action considerably narrowed by a variety of circumstances, against which it was ineffectual to struggle. Exhausted by war, and alternately a prey to the depredations of the belligerent armies, the southern circles grew daily more weary of the contest. Every application for money was consequently received with the indifference of men, who calculated that they were sacrificing convenience and comfort in pursuit of a chimaera: nor was the difficulty of procuring supplies the only evil resulting from this sudden change of opinion. Under pretext of asserting the rights of the Palatine, an armament was equipped with the assistance of England and Holland, which instead of supporting the fortune of Sweden, tended essentially to embarrass her operation.† This ruinous measure served as a precedent to many members of the confederacy, who unmoved by the exhortations of Oxenstiern, seemed determined henceforward to regulate their conduct by the dictates of interest or caprice.

Although Louis was the only remaining ally from whom effectual succour could be expected,

* *Le Vassor*, xii. 190.

† *Puffendorf*, vi.

yet it was hardly possible for the chancellor to examine his pretensions without sentiments of jealousy and mistrust. The character of Richelieu, though eminently distinguished by many splendid qualities, was totally destitute of real magnanimity; and it is highly probable that, whenever he accidentally performed a generous action, he was stimulated by the expectation of an adequate return, and not by the genuine impulse of sensibility. This selfish policy was calculated to awaken the most injurious suspicions in the bosom of Oxenstiern, whose behaviour was regulated by more exalted principles, and who clearly perceived, that the only certain method of securing the co-operation of France, was to render it her interest to be faithful. Convinced that she aspired to extend her dominions to the banks of the Rhine, and that the moment she accomplished her ambitious design, she would abandon a contest, in which Richelieu had embarked in direct opposition to the prejudices of his master, the chancellor resolved that nothing short of the most urgent necessity should induce him to consent to the cession of Philipsburg, which, on account of the infinite importance of its situation, the cardinal was most anxious to obtain.*

A report was also generally current in Europe, which met with considerable credit, that, in case of Ferdinand's decease before the election of a King of the Romans, Richelieu had formed a scheme for placing the imperial diadem upon the head of Louis; and that he intended to reward himself for this important service with the Electorate of Treves. From the known character of the king, no less a slave to

* Puffendorf, vi. 16. Le Vassor, xii. 196.

superstition than Philip or Ferdinand, the protestants had little reason to flatter themselves with any amelioration of condition, should the cardinal accomplish his design. It was therefore incumbent upon Oxenstiern to regulate his proceedings in such a manner, that Sweden might still be in a situation to vindicate her independence, even should the aspiring prelate succeed in his most extravagant projects of aggrandisement.

It might, indeed, have been expected, that rational policy would have suggested alike to England and to Holland, the necessity of seconding the efforts of a power fighting in defence of toleration; but this was by no means the case; and their conduct upon this occasion does little credit to the sagacity of either government. Charles the First, perhaps, might have something to allege in his excuse; for his time was so fully occupied by domestic contentions, that he had little leisure for interference in continental politics. Besides, the intimate union subsisting between France and Sweden was a motive sufficient to diminish sympathy, which a generous nation might be imagined to feel for a people asserting, like itself, the rights of mankind. But the real interests of the Dutch were so intimately blended with those of the Swedes, that the most cordial co-operation might have been justly anticipated. Yet, to our astonishment, we find those mercantile sovereigns of fens and marshes so much degenerated from that magnanimous spirit which frustrated the vengeance of Philip and of Alva, as to prefer the acquisition of a few miserable bailiwicks,* to the humiliation of a potentate, whose

* The Dutch are supposed to have fixed their eyes on the see of

prosperity was incompatible with that of Holland. There is also reason to believe, that many of the leading men were secretly jealous of the glory of Sweden, because she adhered to the doctrines of Luther, whose tenets they contemplated with pious abhorrence.*

However great the embarrassment arising from the above mentioned causes, the chancellor had still severer difficulties to encounter, from the weakness and obstinacy of his German allies; the greater part of whom grudged every shilling they were obliged to contribute to the prosecution of a contest, which, if it ultimately terminated in favour of Austria, was certain of proving far more injurious to themselves than to Sweden. We have already seen the vanity of the Saxon elector deeply wounded by the ascendancy obtained by a hero whom nature had endowed with those transcendant qualities which inspire universal admiration, and he submitted of course, with increasing reluctance, to the authority of Oxenstiern. Exasperated at finding the supreme direction of the war committed to the guidance of a foreigner, he secretly resolved to revenge the affront by concluding a separate peace with the emperor. In the eagerness of resentment, he no longer endeavoured to disguise his intentions; but publicly spoke of his protectors in a tone of irritation, which plainly indicated, that he had already forgotten his profound obligations to Sweden. "It well becomes the chancellor," he would ironically remark, "to require an indemnity from the

Bremen—for the attainment of which they were ready to sacrifice their allies.

* *Le Vassor*, xii. 198.

German nation, after the magnanimous declaration repeatedly made by Gustavus Adolphus, that the glory of delivering an oppressed people from servitude was the only recompense to which he aspired.*

Notwithstanding his profession of unshaken attachment, George William of Brandenburg became daily more a convert to the principles of his colleague, whose interested character was more analagous to his own than the persevering fortitude of Oxenstiern. His venal friendship might, perhaps, have been conciliated for a time by the cession of Pomerania, which, after the death of Bogislaus devolved to him, according to the established rules of succession; but which was far too important, from its situation, to be relinquished by Sweden during the continuance of hostilities.† The retention of Wismar, which Banner had strengthened with additional fortifications, was no less an object of jealousy to the Dukes of Mecklenburg, whose gratitude would have led them to support the claims of their protector to an adequate indemnity, provided it were not obtained by any sacrifice of their own possessions. The pretensions of Sweden to a permanent establishment on the Baltic proved equally alarming to the Hanseatic confederacy, who, with the miserable policy of mercantile statesmen, preferred the extension of commerce to the preservation of freedom.

Of all the German princes in the interest of Sweden, Bernard Duke of Weimar was most eminently gifted with every brilliant quality which can adorn an accomplished soldier. But his un-

* Le Vassor, 200. Puffendorf, vi. 2.

† Ibid.

bounded ambition, the usual concomitant of splendid genius, was an incessant source of disquietude to Oxenstiern; because he possessed, in an uncommon degree, the confidence of the soldiers, whose attachment he had gained by popular manners, no less than by heroic exploits. Upon Horn and Banner the chancellor could firmly rely under every vicissitude of fortune; but, unfortunately, the Germans, who greatly outnumbered the native Swedes, were blindly devoted to their national commander. Such was the situation of Oxenstiern when called upon to oppose the operations of an army continually augmenting in numerical force; as Ferdinand, no longer apprehensive for the safety of his eastern frontier, had drawn considerable reinforcements from Croatia and Hungary. Italy also had been drained of troops, that the heir of the Austrian monarchy might open with lustre his military career.* Without this previous information, it would be hardly possible adequately to appreciate the consummate talents of Oxenstiern; for never, perhaps, was the genius of man destined to struggle against greater difficulties. Notwithstanding the interested opposition of the elector, the states of Lower Saxony assembled at Halberstadt, under the presidency of Ulric, Duke of Brunswick,† determined to unite with the southern circles in vindication of their national privileges; and, in a spirited address, invited Westphalia and Upper Saxony to become members of the confederacy, as the only means of resisting a power which menaced the subversion of the Teutonic constitu-

* Puffendorf, vi. 2.

† February 5th, 1634.

tion.* Regarding this as a symptom of increasing popularity, the chancellor repaired to Francfort with additional confidence, where a general assembly had been convened, to decide how far it might be prudent to accept the mediation of Denmark, or to put France in possession of Philippsburg.†

Feuquieres, who attended during the whole of the session, exerted all his influence to facilitate the execution of that splendid plan which Richelieu had long meditated for the aggrandisement of a country, no less insulted by his pride, than elevated by his genius. In the accomplishment of this scheme he had many difficulties to encounter, as well from the prejudices of the German princes, as from the secret opposition of Oxenstiern. For, notwithstanding the harmony which apparently subsisted between France and Sweden, they frequently thwarted each other's measures by clandestine intrigues.‡ This want of unanimity was particularly visible during the whole of the negociation for the occupation of Philippsburg—the cession of which was considered by the chancellor likely to have an additional obstacle to peace; for he clearly foresaw, that, at a general congress, the court of Vienna would listen to the pretensions of Sweden to a permanent establishment on the Baltic, rather

* Galetti, i. 356. Puffendorf, vi. 7.

† Lotichius, ii. 17. Puffendorf, vi. 355.

‡ This want of intelligence is manifested in a letter from Feuquieres to Bouthillier, dated from Francfort, 1st of May.—“ Nous ne nous trouvons pas peu empêchés, M. de la Grange et moi, de la sorte dont nous avons a nous conduire a l'égard du dit chancelier, auquel la fierté, et l'orgueil brutal fait perdre le jugement. Parceque si d'une part nous voulons le gagner par la persuasion, son humeur mefiante, couverte, et insolente nous ôte tout moyen de nous ajuster avec lui, &c.” ii. 227.

than consent to the dismemberment of any hereditary possession; and he was no less convinced that France, notwithstanding her boast of disinterested friendship, would never voluntarily relinquish a fortress, no less important from its strength than from its situation. For these reasons, he never lost an opportunity of explaining to the deputies the danger likely to accrue to Germanic independence, from permitting a neighbour, no less enterprising than Austria, to cross the Rhine.

Feuquieres, having penetrated the chancellor's intentions, retorted by the counteraction of his favourite project for secularizing the electorate of Mentz.* His wishes, in this respect, accorded exactly with German prejudice; and he found little difficulty in persuading the diet, that it would be impossible ever to reconcile the Catholics to a measure, no less inconsistent with their temporal interests, than repugnant to their religious attachments.

The invincible tardiness of forensic deliberation having been augmented by studied delays, the French ambassador at length deemed it requisite to stimulate the assembly, by presenting to their imagination a lively picture of the impending danger. "On their exertions," he assured them in a studied oration, "depended the fate of the Protestant party; because union and activity could alone enable it to withstand the gigantic efforts of Austria. Peace," he said, "was unquestionably the leading object of all their desires; but, to render it both secure and honourable, it must of ne-

* The duplicity of Feuquieres is incontestably proved by his own dispatches, ii. 317.

cessity be general. It would otherwise be nothing more than a fallacious truce; and, instead of procuring any solid advantage to the parties engaged, it would allow leisure for the enemies of freedom and toleration to prepare for the execution of their perfidious designs."

Apprehensive of the consequences, should Sweden be alienated by open opposition to her pretensions, he exhorted the diet to take into immediate consideration the meritorious services of Gustavus Adolphus, and to requite them in a manner no less satisfactory to the feelings of Sweden, than consistent with the gratitude of Germany. He also advised them to confer upon Oxenstierna some signal mark of national favour, in return for his unremitting exertions. Having thus paved the way, as he imagined, for the easy attainment of his own favourite scheme, he ventured to require the possession of Philipsburg; but, as a necessary palliation, accompanied the demand with a positive promise of its restoration at a general peace.*

The fallacy of an engagement, evidently subjected to no control except that of moderation and honour, afforded an opportunity for the adherents of Saxony to inveigh against the avidity of the allies, in attempting to dismember the German empire, notwithstanding Gustavus had repeatedly disclaimed all views of interest, and published to the world, that his object was to prescribe limits to the despotism of Austria. "The principle now asserted," they said, "if carried into execution, will render the condition of the German people more hopeless than ever; because they must submit to

* Feuquieres, ii. 353.

gratify the cupidity of those, who assume the honourable appellation of friends and protectors, after having glutted, for years, the rapacity of their enemies." This system of confiscation is not only inconsistent with every former profession, but is carried to an almost unprecedented excess: for while Sweden demands the cession of Pomerania, and of the most valuable harbours upon the Baltic, and France insists upon the possession of the Alsace, the ministers of those powers, sharing their conduct after these dangerous models, demand retributions for their individual exertions. The ambition of Oxenstiern will be satisfied with nothing less than the secularization of the first ecclesiastical electorate, while the pride of Richelieu unequivocally aspired to the coadjutorship of Spires and Treves.* "Will it not be safer," they asked, "to terminate hostilities with our legitimate chief, to unite with him in maintaining the integrity of the empire, instead of suffering it to be devoured by rapacious foreigners?"

From an assembly distracted by such opposite interests neither concord nor expedition could be expected. Wearied out by contradiction and the pedantry of forms, the chancellor determined to quit Francfort, in hopes that the diet might be tempted to act with greater freedom, when uncontrolled by extraneous authority. His absence, however, served only to embitter the virulence of his opponents, who availed themselves of it, to indulge in unrestrained invective. No longer awed by the dignity of that illustrious statesman, the Saxon deputies proposed the immediate dissolution

* Puffendorf, vi. 46—48. Le Vassor, xii. 216.

of the confederacy of Heilbrun, and the exclusion of foreigners from the administration of public affairs; leaving every sovereign in future, at perfect liberty to regulate his conduct by the established constitution of the empire, or by his own immediate interest. This proposal, however, being instantly rejected with merited indignation, John George directed his ministers to alter their mode of attack; and, instead of openly opposing the Swedish government, to embarrass their proceedings by studied delays, in expectation that the diet might be thus induced to separate without coming to any specific resolution.

As no question appeared so likely to create dissension and jealousy, as that respecting indemnities, the Saxon representatives were instructed to demand an express declaration from Oxenstiern of his future expectations. Aware of the fallacious design, that able politician judiciously attempted to avert the blow, by stating to the assembly the impropriety of wasting these precious moments in discussions which could not possibly lead to any satisfactory issue; since nothing was more probable, than that the province allotted for the remuneration of Sweden, might, at the conclusion of the ensuing campaign, be no longer at the disposal of her allies. This prudent conduct acquired him so many friends, that he found himself, upon this occasion, supported by several persons really adverse to the pretensions of Christina; because they dreaded the consequence of offending a power, whose protection appeared more necessary than ever in the actual situation of affairs.*

* *Le Vassor*, xii. 224. *Puffendorf*, 45.

Though aware of the motives which influenced their conduct, Oxenstiern did not scruple to avail himself of the change, because he perceived that it would be extremely difficult, if not totally impracticable, for Sweden to retire from the contest, with either honour or advantage, except at a general congress; whereas, if every member of the confederacy were suffered to conclude a separate peace, she might be reduced to accept a pecuniary recompense, and even think herself fortunate in obtaining it.*

This sagacious design was, however, finally disconcerted by the persevering malignity of Saxony, who, by repeated applications, at length extorted from Oxenstiern a reluctant explanation of the ultimate views of his government. After having established the principle that Sweden was justly entitled to indemnity, three methods of effecting that important object presented themselves to the choice of the diet: first, a territorial cession; secondly, a solemn engagement to aid the Swedish nation, whenever their assistance should be required, with a force equal to that which Gustavus Adolphus had defended the protestant cause; and, thirdly, the payment of a sum of money, proportionate to the services performed.†

Either of the latter would have been accorded, without the slightest opposition; but the former must necessarily be attended by a sacrifice, for which German pride was as yet unprepared. The dread, however, of encountering the resentment of Ferdinand, unaided by a single ally, compelled the assembly to behave with specious delicacy; and we

* Puffendorf, 45.

† Ibid. Lotichius, ii. 185.

accordingly find them attempting to conceal ingratitude under the mask of necessity. With dexterous selfishness they endeavoured to provoke the Swedes to a contest of generosity, by artful insinuations, that, however desirous they might be to comply with the wishes of Christina, yet they could not but consider it far more consistent with those elevated sentiments, which might be expected to animate the daughter of Gustavus, to accept, as an indemnity, some conquered province, instead of claiming a reward at the expense of those whom her father had assisted with such noble disinterestedness.

Although these objections were more specious than solid, Oxenstiern was still anxious to evade the subject, because he clearly foresaw, that the disclosure of his views upon Pomerania would mortally offend the Elector of Brandeuburg. He accordingly contented himself with observing, that the remote situation of the conquered provinces must necessarily render them valueless to Sweden; but that they might be usefully employed as compensations for the territory to be ceded, and, if properly applied, might render the exchange essentially beneficial to all parties.

It being impossible any longer, even for his most zealous partisans, to mistake the real object to which he aspired, the debates assumed a more violent character than ever; so that the summer was wasted in discussions, unproductive of any satisfactory result. At length the fatal intelligence of the almost total destruction of the Swedish army, before the walls of Nordlingen, created such general consternation, that the deputies fled precipitately, regardless of the counsel, or of the safety,

of an ally, whose ruin they regarded as inevitable.*

After the assassination of Wallenstein the supreme command of the Austrian forces was conferred upon the King of Hungary, in conformity to the wishes of the Spanish court, rather than from the impulses of paternal affection. But, as the inexperience of youth was ill calculated to contend against warriors trained in the school of Gustavus, Gallas and Piccolomini were rewarded for their treachery, by being selected to check his juvenile ardour, and, possibly, to act as spies upon his actions; an office for which they had shewn themselves perfectly qualified, by their desertion of the Duke of Friedland.

It is worthy of remark, that the fall of that popular chieftain was attended by none of those disastrous consequences which his zealous admirers predicted. An ill-concerted attempt to excite a mutiny in the Silesian army was frustrated by the vigilance of Gallas, who appears to have conducted himself with great sagacity, and to have entirely disconcerted the plans of the disaffected, without the necessity of a recurrence to capital punishments.

In order to counteract the great exertions of Austria, the most cordial unanimity was requisite among the allies; but, unfortunately, since the fall of their immortal leader, little harmony had prevailed in their councils. A fatal misunderstanding was known to exist between Horn and Weimar; the cause from which it proceeded has never been clearly explained. Both probably were culpable;

* Puffendorf, vi. 49.

yet it may naturally be inferred, from the opposite characters of the parties concerned, that the fire of youth and pride of birth may have treated the experienced valour of Horn with less attention and deference, than his many services entitled him to expect. The plan formed by the Duke of Weimar, for carrying hostilities into the heart of Bohemia, before Gallas should have time to organize his forces, was accordingly opposed by the Swedish general, under pretext that it would be hazardous imprudence to entangle themselves in a country, where they did not possess a single fortress, and were totally destitute of magazines. Instead of harassing the soldiers by fresh fatigues, at that inclement season, he urged the necessity of allowing them to repose in winter quarters, till the return of spring, and of employing the interval in the levy of reinforcements, to meet the enemy with at least equal resources. In conformity to this scheme, he proposed that the troops should be cantoned in the Swabian towns, in such a manner, as to be ready at all times to take advantage of the weakness, or negligence, of the enemy, or to protect the Duchy of Wirtemberg from attack.*

Disappointed in his expectations of delivering Bohemia, Weimar found himself compelled to adopt a defensive system, and accordingly retired to a strong position in the vicinity of Ratisbonne, where he kept the Bavarians in check. Horn, meanwhile, was not inactive. After cutting to pieces four Bavarian regiments, and defeating the Austrians at Wangen, he took Biberach, Kempten, and Mildenheim.† These successes proved so decisive, as com-

* Galetti, i. 347.

† Ibid. Puffendorf, vi. 26.

pletely to frustrate the efforts of the enemy to recover their superiority in that quarter, and even to expose them to the additional loss of Philipsburg, Neuburg, and Friburg.*

In Hussia affairs were more equally balanced. Melander, after sustaining a severe repulse, was upon the point of surrendering to the victorious Austrians, when he was fortunately extricated from all his difficulties by the active valour of Luneburg;† who, after having liberated him from impending captivity, enabled him to reduce several places of considerable consequence.

These brilliant successes would have essentially contributed to the conquest of Bohemia, had the elector listened to the solicitations of Weimar, who earnestly intreated him to attempt its subjugation, in concert with Banner. This plan, by occupying the attention of the Austrian commanders, and drawing away their troops from the banks of the Danube, must have laid Bavaria open to the enterprising genius of Bernard, and might even have enabled him to carry his triumphant arms to the gates of Vienna.

But, instead of active co-operation, the Swedish generals could obtain nothing from Arnheim except bitter complaints of the indignity to which his master had been exposed, in being deprived of the honours with which he had been invested by the assembly of Leipsic. After eluding their demands upon the most frivolous pretences, he required, as a preliminary to any exertions, that the elector should be placed again at the head of the confederacy; a distinction, he said, to which he was

* Puffendorf, vi, 24.

† Ibid.

equally entitled by his rank, his experience, and his services.*

It is fair to conjecture, that Ferdinand knew that nothing was to be apprehended from the Saxons; for it is highly improbable that he would otherwise have neglected the security of an hereditary province, to concentrate all his efforts in Bavaria. And, indeed, we actually find a secret negociation commenced about this time, under the mediation of Spain, for the amicable adjustment of all existing differences between the courts of Vienna and Dresden. Thoroughly acquainted with the venality of the Saxon ministers, and the despicable policy of their sovereign, Ferdinand not only aspired to a renewal of amity, but even ventured to insult the degraded elector, by proposing to unite their respective forces for the expulsion of a people, to whom John George was indebted for his political existence, as an independent member of the empire.† From some unknown cause this negociation terminated abruptly; when Arnheim, no longer able to allege the most trifling excuse for further delay, was reluctantly forced to put his army in motion, and to commence his operations by the siege of Zittaw. The disgrace attending the loss of this important possession determined the Austrians to make a vigorous effort for its relief; Colorado having received instructions to hazard a battle, rather than suffer the place to be taken, found Arnheim encamped in a strong position in the vicinity of Leibnitz, where he awaited the enemy in perfect confidence. The conflict, though sharp, was

* Galetti, i. 352. Gualdo, 273. Puffendorf, vi. 51.

† Galetti, 353.

soon decided ; and the defeat of the Austrians was quickly followed by the loss of Crossen, Glogau, and Francfort, the latter of which surrendered to Banner.*

By this important victory Silesia and Moravia were exposed to hostile incursions, and might have been reduced with the greatest facility. Banner, however, now plainly discovered, that he could expect no assistance from the mercenary jealousy of his allies. The Prussians indeed still preserved the external semblance of civility ; but the Saxons, unmindful of every obligation, and elevated by their recent success, insisted in a tone of apparent hostility upon the immediate evacuation of Silesia. Too proud to solicit an ungrateful friend, and too weak to defy his resentment, he formed the resolution of marching immediately to the succour of Ratisbonne, for the safety of which he entertained the most serious apprehensions.

By the acquisition of Straubingen, which had lately surrendered to the Bavarian forces, a passage over the Danube was secured, by which the Austrians were enabled to join Maximilian under the walls of Ratisbonne.†

Supremely anxious for the security of a place, the reduction of which had greatly augmented his military reputation, the Duke of Weimar earnestly solicited assistance from both Horn and Birkenfeldt. From the jealousy of the latter, however, no succour could be obtained ; while the former contented himself with inverting Landshut, insisting

* The battle was fought in May, 1634. Khevenhiller, 1251. Puffendorf, vi. 58.

† *Ibid.* 64.

that a diversion was calculated to produce all the advantages without incurring the hazards of a battle. Nothing, he maintained, could be more conducive to the success of the campaign, than for the imperialists to consume their strength in sieges, while the Swedes were exposed to little fatigue. To risk an engagement, under such circumstances, he thought utterly inconsistent with prudence; since by waiting until the enemy were completely exhausted by the laborious service in which he was engaged, an opportunity of giving him battle to advantage would infallibly occur. Although these arguments appeared inconclusive to the impatient valour of Bernard, the fall of Landshut, and the death of Aldringer, who perished gloriously in attempting to relieve it, served fully to establish their validity.*

Notwithstanding the vigorous resistance made by the garrison, the fall of Ratisbonne was inevitable, unless an army could be collected sufficient to compel the imperialists to raise the siege. Under such circumstances it became essential to balance the value of the fortress, as well as the disgrace attending its capture, against the danger of attending its relief. The loss of a battle might materially injure the reputation of Sweden, but inactivity was no less detrimental, for it was liable to be represented under the character of indifference to the fate of a faithful ally; or at least to be construed into a tacit confession of inferiority. These considerations appeared so decisive to the judgment of Oxenstiern, that he directed Horn

* Lotichius, ii. 237. Puffendorf, 64.

to march to its assistance with the utmost expedition.

The expectation of Banner's speedy arrival rendered Weimar less attentive than he would otherwise have felt to the movements of Horn; for he foresaw, that if the latter partook in the peril, he would likewise participate in the glory; whereas the former, who had hitherto been entrusted with only subordinate commands, could never be regarded as a rival. Necessity, however, at length compelled the gallant Saxon to assume a different tone; but just as a junction was effected with the Swabian army, intelligence arrived of the surrender of Ratisbonne. The behaviour of Horn at this important crisis entitled him to the highest applause, because he magnanimously sacrificed his personal feelings to the urgent necessity of public affairs.

Perplexed by a variety of contradictory reports, respecting the future intention of the enemy, according to some of which, they were preparing to inundate the duchy of Wirtemberg, while by others they were represented as directing their steps towards Bohemia, to cut off Banner, the Swedish generals harassed their troops by marches and counter-marches, at a season when they were incessantly exposed to inclement weather, and frequently destitute of wholesome provisions. Finding it, however, impossible to penetrate the enemy's designs, they deemed it expedient to separate; the Duke of Weimar undertook to defend the banks of the Danube, while his more experienced colleague fell back upon the Lech, whence he might be able to watch the Spanish army, rapidly advanc-

ing through the Tirolian mountains towards the seat of hostilities.*

The vigour and decision, so strongly characterizing all the enterprises of Sweden, during the life of Gustavus, appeared suddenly transferred into the counsels of Austria. Convinced that internal dissensions would prevent the concert and promptitude of the protestants, the King of Hungary hoped, by pursuing the advantages already obtained, to expel them entirely from the southern provinces of Germany. Having formed a plan with this view, and detached a strong column to protect Prague, he returned unexpectedly into Swabia, took Donauwert by assault, and invested Norlingen, before which the Spaniards were appointed to join him.†

The Swedish commanders were now reduced to the most perplexing dilemma. To remain inactive spectators of the triumphs of Austria, without an attempt to check her rapid career, would have been no less prejudicial to their political interests than derogatory to their military reputation; since by destroying the confidence of the German people, it undermined the foundation upon which their hopes of ultimate success most confidently rested. Yet the position of the enemy was naturally so strong, as not to be attacked without the utmost danger; and if a battle was imprudent in their present situation, it could not fail of being attended with still greater peril after the junction of the Spaniards. No considerations of prudence, however, were sufficient to restrain the ardour of

* Puffendorf, 64.

† Ibid. 70.

Bernard ; and Horn, having consented, though with manifest reluctance, to an united effort for the relief of Nordlingen, it was determined to advance within a few miles of that city, in the hope that their presence might encourage the garrison to a vigorous resistance, and embarrass the operations of the besieging army.

Had this plan, recommended by the sagacity of Horn, been steadily pursued, it would probably have speedily reduced the imperialists to the utmost distress from the want of provisions ; for nothing was easier than for the Swedish cavalry to intercept their convoys, necessarily drawn from a distance. Besides, the approach of winter must have prevented the infant from prolonging his stay in Germany ; because the safety of the Netherlands, already threatened by the restless ambition of Richelieu, required his presence ; and, had he retarded his march, the equinoctial rains might have rendered the roads impracticable to heavy artillery.

All these considerations were repeatedly urged by the provident Horn, in opposition to the impatience of Bernard, who, intoxicated with victory, deemed nothing too hard for Swedish courage to achieve, and arrogantly treated the suggestions of prudence with studied contempt.* Thus wisdom, as frequently happens in great political discussions, proved too feeble to contend against presumption ; and Horn, was constrained by an irresistible force to

* Puffendorf, 70. Horn's narrative of the battle given by Le Vasseur, xii. 246 ; and to be found also in the Memoires de Montresor, ii. 96. Gualdo, i. 303.

engage in a conflict, of which his sagacity anticipated the fatal results.

It must, however, be allowed, that the distress of the garrison admitted not of the smallest delay, although Horn with chivalrous bravery had forced a passage through the Austrians, and after throwing reinforcements into the town, exhorted the citizens collected on the ramparts to brave every danger, solemnly promising effectual assistance before six days were expired.* But should they find it impossible to hold out that time, they were instructed to make known their urgent distress by a signal made from the tower.†

The period appointed for their liberation expired, but neither Kratz nor the Rhingrave arrived. Overwhelmed with consternation at the failure of the promised succours, the magistrates found means to convey a letter to Weimar, in which, after painting their distress in the most affecting colours, they positively declared that no alternative remained, except to throw themselves unconditionally upon the mercy of the enemy, or to see their streets inundated with slaughter. This report was in great measure confirmed by the governor, who expressed his apprehension of being too weak to repel a vigorous assault. Unwilling to hazard the safety of the army before the arrival of Kratz who was daily expected, Weimar once more had recourse to exhortations; and, by way of encouragement, engaged upon the honour of a soldier, to encounter every danger for the preservation of the city, before six other days should elapse.‡

* August, 14th, 1634.

† Puffendorf, 70. Horn's Narrative.

‡ Puffendorf, 72.

The wants of the citizens, and their prospect of relief, were probably known to the besiegers, who, by redoubling their fire, reduced the garrison to such distress, that repeated signals were made, indicative of the most imminent danger. In this extremity no choice was left but to risk an engagement before the junction of the Rhinegrave, though he was known to be within a few days march, or to sacrifice a rich and populous city to the bigotry and resentment of an obdurate foe, and by betraying their inability of resisting the Austrians, to destroy the confidence of their allies.

It being evident that the fate of the approaching battle must chiefly depend upon the occupation of an eminence, commanding the camp of the imperialists, it was resolved to attack it by night. Yet notwithstanding every precaution that prudence could adopt, various impediments arose, which prevented the troops, employed in that dangerous service, from acting with the requisite concert. Some regiments of infantry mistook their way, and the cavalry were obstructed in a narrow defile by the heavy artillery. This unfortunate delay having allowed time for the enemy to take possession of the height, it was deemed expedient to wait for the return of day, before any attempt should be made to dislodge them; because (I follow precisely the statement of Horn), "although the Austrians were actively engaged in throwing up intrenchments, the nature of the soil, which was hard and rocky, must prevent any considerable progress in so short a space."

At the first dawn of morning,* Horn at the head

* August, 27. O.S.

of the right wing commenced the engagement; but at the very moment he was preparing to ascend the hill, he was unavoidably compelled, by an unfortunate accident, to change the whole plan of attack, which could not be effected without considerable loss, because the troops were exposed in an uncovered situation to the enemy's batteries. The necessary arrangements, however, being at length completed, the impetuosity of the assailants became irresistible, and the intrenchments were forced at the same moment on opposite sides by two different brigades. The collision occasioned by this event was productive of much confusion; and at the instant when regularity was restored, several barrels of gunpowder, abandoned by the enemy, having suddenly exploded, increased the disorder in a tenfold degree. The moment was favourable for a general charge, and the imperial cuirassiers availing themselves of it with admirable skill, compelled the Swedes precipitately to abandon their conquest. Panic struck, they retreated to a considerable distance, so completely disheartened, that neither the exhortations, the threats, nor the example of Horn, could induce them to repeat the attack.

Convinced that the loss of that important position must be attended by utter destruction, the undaunted Swede advanced at the head of fresh brigades, but all his skill and intrepidity were rendered abortive by the steady resistance of his opponents.

Bernard contemplated this waste of blood with sorrow and dismay, and immediately detached two favourite regiments to his heroic colleague. The yellow brigade, so eminently distinguished at the

battle of Lutzen, now gained additional glory; seven times they endeavoured to scale the hill in face of the enemy's artillery, and seven times they were forced to retreat with ranks thinned, yet still unbroken.

The impossibility of recovering that decisive position, having been fully substantiated by many fruitless attempts, it only remained to abandon the enterprize altogether; and, if possible, to extricate the army from all its difficulties without additional slaughter. Having embraced this resolution, with the approbation of his colleague, who promised with the cavalry to cover the retreat, Horn conducted his operations with such consummate ability, that he would have completely succeeded in the arduous undertaking, had Weimar been able to fulfil his engagement with equal punctuality.

Already had the artillery gained the village of Arensberg (I copy the expressions of the unfortunate Horn), where he intended to leave a body of musketeers till the troops could form on the opposite hill, the van had already reached the appointed spot, and even the rear had arrived within three hundred paces of the hamlet, when the left wing being suddenly put to flight, several squadrons of horse galloped furiously into the valley, exclaiming that every thing was lost. This panic being instantaneously communicated to the infantry, they joined in the flight with precipitate confusion, notwithstanding all his endeavours to rally the fugitives *.

The consternation now became irretrievable. All resistance being over, a most horrible carnage en-

* Le Vassor, xii. 265. This account corresponds exactly with that of

sued.* The greater part of the Swedish infantry, so long the terror and the admiration of Germany, was either cut to pieces, or taken.† All the baggage, artillery, and three hundred standards fell into the hands of the conquerors. Several officers of distinction were likewise captured; and among others the gallant Kratz, who was cruelly condemned to suffer death on a scaffold, for having quitted the Bavarian service without the elector's permission. But the most fatal loss sustained by the allies was that of Horn, whose superior talents were regarded by the conqueror with so much jealousy, that nothing could induce them to ex-

Puffendorf, who probably employed Horn's admirable narrative as the foundation of his own.

* Non pugna amplius, sed strages. Puffendorf, 75.

† Schiller computes the loss of the Swedes at no less than twelve thousand slain: Puffendorf reduces it to half that number; while Khevenhiller supposes it to have exceeded eight thousand (1220). Of the comparative strength of the belligerents he give the following statement, which bears all the characteristic marks of accuracy. (1217.) Exclusively of Hungarians and Croats, a numerous body, more formidable from their ferocity than from their discipline, the Austrian forces consisted of seven thousand cavalry and five thousand infantry; the cardinal infant commanded twelve thousand foot and three thousand horse; the reinforcements, led by the Duke of Lorraine, comprised six thousand men, of whom one half were cavalry: the whole, therefore, of the imperial force amounted to twenty thousand foot and thirteen thousand horse. The Swedish army was much less numerous, as Bernard had only five thousand foot and four thousand five hundred cavalry; Horn's division did not exceed two thousand three hundred infantry and four thousand horse, and Kratz brought with him only three thousand of the former, and eight hundred of the latter. To these may be added six thousand troops from the duchy of Wirtemberg, making together sixteen thousand foot and nine thousand three hundred horse. The loss of the victors is said not to have exceeded twelve hundred men. Lotichius, as usual, exaggerates the evils sustained by the protestants with pious mistatement. Had he been present at the action, no doubt he would have seen a legion of angels devoutly employed in exterminating heresy; as it is, he contents himself with comparing Ferdinand to Alexander, not the pope, but the Macedonian. ii. 262.

change him. The Duke of Weimar escaped with the utmost difficulty : his horse having been killed, he must inevitably have surrendered, had he not been instantly provided with another charger. His person, however, was all that he preserved : his whole equipage fell into the hands of the enemy ; so that he had literally nothing left, except the clothes which he wore during the battle.

Contemporary historians mention the intrepidity displayed by the cardinal infant in the highest terms of admiration. Exposed for a considerable time to the hottest fire, his life was often in danger. One of his attendants was slain by his side, and another dangerously wounded ; his attention to the latter, whom he kindly assisted in quitting the field, did infinite honour to his humanity. Neither ought the following anecdote to pass unnoticed. After the decision of the battle, he found the house which he had previously occupied entirely filled with wounded soldiers. Calculating with the proud indifference of courtiers that vulgar lives are of trifling value when compared with the comforts of royalty, his attendants gave directions for their instant removal ; but their master having been fortunately apprised of their intention, issued an order that no one should be disturbed, benevolently preferring to take up his quarters in a miserable hut, where there was hardly space for a bed and a table, rather than add gratuitously to the sufferings of those, who had gallantly bled in defence of their country. Of the King of Hungary's exploits scarce any thing is known ; we may therefore fairly conclude, that his behaviour afforded few materials even for the ingenuity of flattery to embellish. Of all the imperial commanders, the most distinguish-

ed for valour and skill were John of Wert and the Duke of Lorraine ; particularly the latter, who is represented, in a letter from the Marquis de Bassomperre to his uncle the marshal, as having been every where almost at the same moment, superintending the execution of every movement, and even performing it himself, with a rapidity and precision no less admirable than the judgment by which it was dictated.*

The battle of Nordlingen was attended by consequences scarcely less fatal and decisive than that of Leipsic. The almost total annihilation of her veteran infantry (for the greater part of the prisoners immediately entered into the Austrian service) in the opinion of the world, gave a deadly blow to the power of Sweden ; while the imperial arms, which had been gradually sinking into contempt and obscurity, instantaneously recovered their ancient lustre, and became once more objects of admiration or terror, to all who either trembled or rejoiced at their ascendancy.

The surrender of Nordlingen, the necessary consequence of this splendid victory, and the entire dispersion of the protestant forces, afforded an opportunity, or at least a pretext, for the imperial army to separate. It is the natural effect of unexpected good fortune, to elevate weak minds to such a pitch of presumption, that they no longer appreciate events by the scale of probability, but contemplate them through the delusive medium of vanity. Infatuated by success, the Austrian generals appeared so entirely occupied by what they had performed, that they wanted leisure to consider

* *L'Événement*, xii. 269.

whether any thing still remained to be accomplished. Instead of following up the blow, and pursuing the fugitives, now utterly incapable of resistance, they divided their forces, as if the only employment deserving attention were to seize the towns abandoned by the enemy, and the exemplary punishment of rebels and heretics, to satiate avarice, resentment, and bigotry.

It is urged, in their justification, that the court of Vienna was extremely desirous for the Spanish troops to winter in Germany, that they might assist in establishing the despotism of Austria upon a foundation too solid to be ever shaken by the disloyal efforts of patriotism. The infant, however, declined the invitation, as utterly inconsistent with his duty; alleging, in excuse, that the unquiet situation of affairs required his immediate presence in Flanders. It was, nevertheless, generally believed, that his hasty departure proceeded from a very different motive. Exclusively occupied in providing for the wants of their native troops, the Austrians were indifferent to the sufferings of the allies, whom they ungenerously left to perish with hunger, or to feed upon the carcasses of the horses slain in battle; inhumanly refusing them the smallest portion of the provisions abundantly stored in the magazines at Nordlingen. The mortality occasioned by this barbarous treatment having reduced the Spanish army to so low a state, that it was no longer possible for the cardinal to attempt the relief of Brissac, still invested by the Swedes, he proceeded to Cologne by hasty marches, without expecting the return of a courier, dispatched by the emperor to the King of Spain, intreating that his brother might be permitted to continue with his

forces in Germany; and, as he probably anticipated the answer, he was anxious, by an early separation, to prevent the possibility of compliance.*

The cardinal's example seems to have been regarded by the imperialists as a precedent for general imitation. Inattentive to every thing, except his own private advantage, the Duke of Lorraine directed his course towards the Brisgau, in the hope of being able, amidst the prevailing confusion, to recover some part of his dominions. After the secession of their friends, the Austrian commanders were too weak to engage in any enterprise of magnitude, and were compelled, for the present, to confine their exertions to the southern circles, from which they expected, before the return of spring, to drive the feeble remnant of the enemy's force.† With this view, a part of the Bavarian army was destined to clear the banks of the Danube, while Piccolomini undertook to scour the country as far as the Mayne, and John of Wert prepared for the plunder of the Upper Palatinate. Meanwhile the King of Hungary established his winter quarters in the duchy of Wirtemberg, where he was actively employed in the collection of magazines, and indulged his vanity on the brilliant prospect of a name immortalized by the conquest of Lorraine and Alsace.‡

Overwhelmed with consternation at the rapid approach of an implacable foe, the Protestant diet was no sooner informed, that a hostile column had entered Achauffenburg, than they resigned themselves

* *Siris. Mem. Rec.* viii. 161. *Mercure Francois.* ad. ann. 1634.

† *Puffendorf.* vi. 82. *Galetti.* i. 370.

‡ *Ibid.*

entirely to the dictates of despair, accusing Oxenstiern of having deceived them by unfounded promises, and thus exposed them to those dreadful calamities, which they now anticipated as the punishment of rebellion. Yielding, without reflection, to the impulse of fear, many fled with precipitation to Strasburg, abandoning their possessions to the discretion of a victor, from whose clemency they had little to expect. Moderation, however, if not inspired by the genuine impulse of the heart, might have been suggested by rational policy; but when his religion was concerned, Ferdinand instantly laid aside the dignified character of a sovereign, to assume the violence and ferocity of an inquisitor. Fortunately, however, for the happiness of mankind, it is the nature of tyranny, when carried to excess, to frustrate its own malignant designs; and we accordingly find the severity, experienced by the cities which attempted by submission to appease his resentment, operated as a salutary warning to others, and encouraging them to recur to a desperate resistance, rather than expose themselves to the bigotry of an implacable conqueror.

Unanimity alone could have enabled the protestants to withstand the torrent which threatened to overwhelm them. Yet, unfortunately, the dissensions, long prevalent among the different commanders, were greatly increased by adversity; while the troops were exposed to such intolerable hardships, that all military discipline was destroyed.

In the midst of this tremendous storm, which shook the power of Sweden to its very foundation, and menaced to strip her of every acquisition of her former victories, except the proud recollection of conscious desert, Oxenstiern alone appeared firm

and undaunted; for he knew that the best method of encouraging his allies was to display an example of fortitude. Though endowed with vigour of intellect and firmness of character, to brave the rudest shocks of adversity, he could not contemplate, without secret dismay, the many perils by which he was encompassed. Every expedient accordingly, that prudence could suggest, was successively tried, to prevent the defection of those perfidious friends, who only wanted an excuse for their treachery. Convinced that no efforts, commensurate with the magnitude of the danger, would proceed from the pusillanimity of a league, which even during the brightest period would have preferred the precarious security of a truce to independence, purchased by a sacrifice of the paltry gratifications which vanity and selfishness cherish. The immediate dissolution of the confederacy of Heilbrunn appeared, therefore, in the eyes of that sagacious politician, an inevitable consequence of the recent defeat, and he distinctly foresaw, that the greater part of its members would rather trust to the clemency of an inveterate bigot, than to the fortune of arms, for their preservation.*

What indeed could be expected from the magnanimity, the gratitude, or the honour of men, who had invariably manifested the strongest disposition to abandon Sweden on every advantage or occasion. Fortunately, however, the chancellor possessed an understanding so intuitive, that he penetrated in a moment the selfish projects of his pretended partisans, though disguised under the delicate garb of flattery, or adorned by the specious

* Puffendorf, vi. 82. Galetti, i. 76.

garb of patriotism. Had he retired into Saxony, according to the suggestions of those who affected the greatest anxiety for his personal safety, there is little doubt that those dear and disinterested friends would have availed themselves of his absence to throw themselves unconditionally at the emperor's feet, and have artfully endeavoured to palliate their ingratitude, by accusing Sweden of desertion in the trying hour of distress. By abandoning the provinces contiguous to the Rhine, he must of course have been intercepted from all communication with France, the only power possessing either ability or inclination, to afford substantial assistance to the enemies of Austria.*

Satisfied, by repeated trials, that no reliance could be placed upon the courage of the Germans, Oxenstiern confined himself to topics more analogous to their feelings than patriotism, urging the necessity of assuming a martial attitude, which, even should they disapprove, a perseverance in hostilities might be conducive to the attainment of peace, upon safe and honourable conditions.†

Persuaded, also, that if Sweden should ever retire from the contest with undiminished power and unsullied renown, it must entirely proceed from her own exertions, his first concern was to provide for the security of her possessions on the Baltic; for he justly considered them as no less essential to her present safety, than to her future prosperity. The preservation of these required no additional supplies; he accordingly returned a considerable sum remitted from Stockholm, and recommended the regency to withhold, for the present, the reinforce-

* Puffendorf, vi. 82. Galetti, i. 76.

† Ibid. Galetti, i. 373.

ments demanded by Banner, because they would be insufficient to replace the recent losses, and might be wanted for the internal defence of the kingdom, should the King of Poland object to a prolongation of the truce about to expire.*

While the friend of Gustavus was thus honourably employed in supporting the fabric cemented by the blood of his master, dispatches arrived from the Swedish government, conceived in a strain of manly firmness, which would not have disgraced the Roman senate after the battle of Carnæ. Notwithstanding the difficulties they had to encounter, they declared their resolution to persevere in the contest with unabating activity, and exhorted the chancellor to support his misfortunes with unbending fortitude. The richest and most populous of the imperial cities, they said, were secure in the possession, or true to the alliance, of Sweden; the armies under Banner, Lüneburg, and the Rhinegrave, were still unbroken, and though the confederacy had received a dreadful blow, the misfortune was by no means irreparable.†

Animated by reflections so completely in unison with his own magnanimity, Oxenstiern redoubled his efforts to recruit the army, and provide magazines for the ensuing campaign. Convinced that the exhaustion of the southern circles required a temporary respite, he resolved to transport hostilities into those provinces, whose sufferings had been comparatively small, and whose resources were but little impaired. Orders were therefore issued for the Duke of Weimar, and the Rhinegrave, to cover the Duchy of Wirtemberg; and, at all events,

* Puffendorf, vi. 32. Galetti, i. 373.

† Puffendorf, 77.

to impede the progress of the enemy, until the assemblage of a force sufficient to check their triumphant career.* Couriers were also sent to the northern armies, exhorting them to march with the utmost expedition to protect Franconia, while Banner was directed to take a position in the vicinity of Egra, where he would be ready to act as circumstances should require. The Elector of Saxony was also earnestly solicited, by a vigorous diversion, to occupy the imperialists either in Bohemia or Silesia.†

Had the activity of the allies corresponded in the least with the wishes of Oxenstiern, a plan traced with such masterly skill might have given a different turn to affairs. But the chancellor's complaints were heard with indifference, or even with delight. The supineness of the confederates was invincible; and even men, naturally superior to dishonest practices, were so dilatory in their proceedings, as to allow time for the enemy, by the occupation of the rivers and principal passes, to render the junction of the different corps extremely dangerous, if not altogether impracticable. The greater part, however, were engaged in occupations far different from the assertion of Germanic independence. The negotiation at Pirna had already made considerable progress, and Arnheim and his master were, with unblushing perfidy, devising plans, not for the defence, but for the ruin, of their ancient protectors. The Duke of Luneburg's strength was directed entirely to reduce Minden, the acquisition of which, in his estimation, would more than compensate the loss of Franconia. The Landgrave of

* Puffendorf, 77.

† Ibid.

Hesse Cassel was alone disposed to act with fidelity, but without the co-operation of Luneburg, he was too feeble to undertake any enterprise of magnitude, and that assistance he was unable to obtain, though he repeatedly solicited it with the utmost anxiety. The other states of Lower Saxony appeared either totally indifferent to the impending danger, or destitute of means to repel it. The militia of Bremen (a scanty resource) was indispensably requisite for the bishop's security, while the forces of Brunswick were reserved exclusively for the conquest of Wolfenbüttele.*

A serious difficulty also arose, in selecting a commander for the army of the upper circles; to which station Horn had been destined by general suffrage. Two competitors aspired to that important office—Duke Bernard and the Palatine Christian; but the latter disdained submission to a superior, and the former refused to acknowledge an equal; it was extremely difficult to decide the contest without serious offence to one of the parties. Various causes, however, concurred to favour the Saxon, but none so much as his popularity with the soldiers. Hopes also were entertained that his unbounded ambition, would animate him to attempt, by some splendid achievement, to obliterate the stain of his recent defeat! Offended at a decision which his pride considered partial, Christian immediately quitted the army, and retired to Worms in disgust.†

Desirous to merit this new distinction by increased activity, Weimar hastened to join his broken

* Puffendorf, 87. Galetti, i. 377. Schmidt, v. 13.

† Puffendorf, 78.

army, which, after the most horrid atrocities committed during their march, had gradually collected at Heilbrun. Though reinforced by the Rhinegrave with several regiments, he was compelled to abandon Wirtemberg, and retire to the vicinity of Francfort, where he expected to receive the necessary supplies, and by his presence to animate the wavering congress to fresh exertions.

The proximity of a broken and mutinous army, was, however, far better calculated to create apprehension, than to inspire courage. The cavalry, indeed, had sustained no material injury; but most of the regiments of infantry were reduced to perfect skeletons, and were pervaded by a spirit of insubordination, which even the popularity of their general was unable to control: with loud and menacing cries, both officers and men insisted upon the instant liquidation of all arrears, declaring themselves resolute, never to move from their present quarters until that demand should be complied with. The credit of Sweden was so reduced, that it was impossible for money to be procured. Supplies had hitherto been drawn with tolerable facility from Stutgard, but the whole of the duchy had submitted to Austria, and its sovereign was a fugitive at Strasburg. The communication with Augsburg, Ulm, and Nurenberg, was entirely intercepted, and few of the other imperial cities had either inclination, or ability, to furnish contributions.*

Though too weak to encounter the enemy in the field, even had the troops been better disposed, the lofty spirit of Oxenstiern revolted from the idea of quitting a country, where his presence was more

* Puffendorf, 78.

essential than ever. As he could not be persuaded to abandon a post, at which honour and duty commanded him to remain, a plan was suggested to intrench the army under the walls of Francfort; but the execution of the project, had it been in other respects feasible, would have required more time than the activity of the enemy seemed inclined to allow; who, once possessed of the bridge at Mentz, might have prevented the Swedes from receiving supplies, and even greatly impeded their retreat. These considerations induced the chancellor to yield to the wishes of the army, and to remove his head quarters to Mentz.*

The utter impossibility of prolonging the contest without the assistance of those foreign powers, whom policy or religion induced to favour the protestant cause, became every day more apparent to Oxenstiern; and he accordingly availed himself of the present opportunity to renew his application at the different courts avowedly hostile to Austria. Count Gualdo, to whose authority I have frequently referred, was dispatched to the senate of Venice, which had secretly countenanced the projects of Gustavus, and even assisted in the equipment of his army. The danger to which the republic, and even the whole of Italy, might be eventually exposed from the ambition of Ferdinand, should he reduce the German people to abject submission, was painted by the historian in such animated colours, that it was hardly possible for any man to listen without emotion, who prized the blessings of freedom.† Subsidies were also solicited from the government of Holland, who were at the same time

* Puffendorf, 79.

† Ibid. 80.

requested to prevent the imperialists from passing the Rhine, which it was commonly believed they would attempt. But it was upon the enterprising minister of the timid Louis that Oxenstiern depended for effectual support; and he embraced the resolution with extreme reluctance, constrained by the imperious dictates of necessity, to carry into effect the long meditated scheme of an intimate union with France, although he clearly foresaw, that it must be purchased by sacrifices which he could not contemplate with indifference.

The period was now arrived, when the magnificent plans of Richelieu were rapidly advancing to maturity. Nothing he was persuaded, except the most urgent pressure of calamity, would prevail upon Sweden to surrender Alsace, and he therefore beheld her humiliation with secret delight; because he felt secure, that the extension of his mighty arm would at any time restore the equilibrium of power, or even make the balance preponderate to the disadvantage of Austria.

Sweden triumphant was an object of jealousy; but recent misfortune had transformed her into an object of compassion. The cardinal accordingly explained to Louis, that no alternative remained, but either instantly to become a principal in the war, or to witness the destruction of the German protestants; an event most fatal to the prosperity of France, because it would enable both branches of the Austrian family to unite against her their gigantic resources. It was not from assistance doled out with economy, he said, that any permanent benefit would accrue. Such a system would be no less derogatory to the honour, than prejudicial to the interests, of his country. If not vigorously

supported by the only power, whose resources were adequate to the task, distress must soon compel the Swedes to withdraw from the unequal conflict; neither could it be doubted, that the emperor would readily accede to any reasonable terms of peace, provided they would abandon his rebellious vassals to the resentment of his implacable bigotry. The king, he insisted, would be much disappointed, if he flattered himself, by the affectation of pacific dispositions, to avert the storm which threatened his territories. The line of conduct already pursued towards the protestants was sufficient to exasperate Austria; and were he now to adopt a more conciliatory system, his forbearance would be ascribed to stupidity alone, not to moderation, or justice.

To a mind more alive to the dictates of humanity, or more sensible to the calls of honour, Richelieu would probably have assumed a tone of loftier argument; but the motives urged were exactly in unison with the feelings of the man he wished to persuade, whom it was more easy to intimidate than to convince.

This sudden revolution in the councils of France was immediately demonstrated by the most vigorous exertions in every department of government.—Thirty thousand men, under the joint command of Brezé and La Force, were directed to watch the banks of the Rhine, from Brissau to Coblenz, with positive instructions to give battle to the Spaniards, should they attempt to force a passage. The Duke of Rohan, restored to royal favour, without derogating from the exalted purity of his character, was placed at the head of another army, commissioned to protect Alsace. The ambassadors of Louis

were, at the same time, instructed to inform the members of the Catholic League, that their master could not behold with indifference the command of their forces entrusted to the Duke of Lorraine, a prince decidedly inimical to France, and ever ready to assist her disaffected nobles in the execution of their most pernicious designs; and further to declare, that unless that versatile prince were immediately removed, his majesty must of necessity regard the refusal as indicative of hostile intentions. An attempt was also made to weaken the connexion between Bavaria and Austria: but the artificers employed, far from producing the desired effect, served only to cement their union.

It was evident, however, that nothing could be effected essentially beneficial to the common cause, unless the Germans should be roused from the apathy of despair. Feuquieres was therefore directed to convey to Oxenstiern, a positive assurance that Louis was actively employed in preparatiours for the commencing of hostilities against Austria, and would rather call forth all his resources, than suffer Sweden to be deprived of advantages, to which she was so justly entitled; and, as a proof of sincerity, to offer a reinforcement of fourteen thousand French, to act under the orders of the confederacy.* In return for this mercenary display of magnanimity, the confederates were required, at their own expense, to maintain an army of eighteen thousand foot, and ten thousand horse; and, in addition to Philipsburg,† (surrendered to France

* Feuquieres, i. 164.

† The cession of Philipsburg has been invariably represented by the partizans of Austria, and even by the laborious Schmidt, as an act of the basest profligacy on the part of Oxenstiern, who is accused of sacrificing

before the battle of Nordlingen) and the Alsatian fortresses too hastily confided to the precarious honour of a French garrison by the Rhinegrave, to deliver up Benfeldt, and promise to co-operate in the reduction of Brissac, to be placed at the disposal of Louis. An illusory clause, that they should all be restored at a general peace, was proposed as a palliative. No treaty was to be negotiated, and no truce concluded, without the approbation of their Gallic ally. The remaining articles, though of minor importance, were all essentially advantageous to France; for they guaranteed the possession of the valuable bishoprics of Mentz, Toul, and Verdun, of Pignerol in Italy, as well as the sovereignty of the Valteline to the Grisons.*

The object of Richelieu, who aspired to the glory of rendering the Rhine an insuperable barrier to the ambition of Austria, and of reducing Sweden to an abject dependence upon France, was too apparent to escape the penetration of a minister, less gifted with discernment than Oxenstiern. With indignation he perceived, that under the hypocritical semblance of generosity, the cardinal laboured with indefatigable industry to render Sweden the dupe of his insidious policy; and that while he openly professed the most ardent desire of enabling her to obtain an honourable peace, he was secretly cabal-

the honour of the country, which he professed to defend, to the private interests of Sweden. But the impartial reader will probably contemplate the conduct of this illustrious statesman in a different light, convinced that without the interposition of France, the protestants must have been compelled with unconditional submission to throw themselves at the emperor's feet, who would have considered himself acting with Christian benevolence, had he permitted them to redeem their forfeited lives at the expense of their property, their independence, and their religion.

* *Le Vassor* xi. 284. *Puffendorf*, 60. *Schmidt*, v. 13.

ling to rekindle the flames of war, in the hope of extending his own authority, and augmenting the power of his sovereign.* Yet, however great his repugnance to patronize a measure tending directly to diminish his own influence, and even to render the protestant confederacy instrumental in forwarding the cardinal's projects, necessity still enforced a reluctant consent.† Upon a subject which embraced such various interests, he deemed it expedient to consult his allies; and as the right bank of the Rhine no longer afforded a safe asylum, he selected Worms as the most convenient spot for a congress.‡

Oxenstern now discovered the prodigious effect which fortune produces upon the minds of men. The claims of gratitude were so entirely obliterated, that the time appointed for opening the diet was suffered to elapse, without the appearance of any person of higher dignity than a count. Being joined at length by the Margrave of Baden, and the Duke of Wirtemberg, he determined immediately to enter upon business, and began by explaining the necessity of providing resources for the prosecution of hostilities, or of beholding every vestige of Teutonic independence effaced, and all the princes of Germany subjected to the lawless will of despotism.§

The answer returned to this animating appeal was, probably, such as the chancellor anticipated; as it consisted in professions of unbounded devotion to the cause of religion and freedom, declared an

* Schmidt does not scruple to assert, that among the papers seized by the Spaniards in the electoral palace at Treves, a *projet* was found for obtaining for Louis the imperial crown, in the event of Ferdinand's demise. Schmidt, v. 13.

† Schiller, iv.

‡ December, 1634.

§ Puffendorf, 91.

unshaken resolution to adhere with fidelity to all their engagements with Sweden, and concluded with lamenting, their utter inability to furnish the army with any thing besides a scanty supply of provision.*

The next question submitted to the diet regarded the alliance with France. Leffler and Streiff, two German civilians of high reputation, commissioned to negotiate with Richelieu, had in many instances departed from their instructions; but as the alterations had been uniformly prescribed by the cardinal, Feuquieres endeavoured by threats and promises, and forced interpretations, to prevail upon the assembly to accept the treaty without further discussion; an attempt which ultimately succeeded. But when the instrument was submitted to the Swedish chancellor, he positively refused to sign it, alleging in his justification, that several clauses, applicable to questions of the utmost importance, were so inaccurately worded, as to be liable to different, and even opposite constructions. He further complained, that the interests of Sweden had been scandalously neglected; that after she had patiently sustained the whole brunt of the war for so long a period, and sacrificed the life of a beloved monarch in defence of the independence of Germany, it was an equal insult to his honour, and to the understanding of the nation, to propose the acceptance of a diminished subsidy, or an ignominious submission to a foreign commander.† The firmness

* Puffendorf, 92.

† By one of the articles the chief command was allotted to the Duke of Weimar, with the uncontrolled direction of all military affairs, the appointment or removal of all inferior officers, the unfettered dispensation of rewards and punishments, and the disposal of the booty acquired. Galetti, i. 385.

of Oxenstiern could not be shaken by the customary arts of intrigue; and, as the perseverance of the ambassador was equally obstinate, the former determined, as his last resource, to send a diplomatic agent to Paris, who might vindicate his conduct, and procure a revision of the objectionable articles. The person selected was the celebrated Grotius, who having been cruelly prevented from dedicating his transcendent abilities to the service of Holland, sought that distinction in the service of Sweden, which the injustice of his own country refused.*

No other business of moment appears to have been transacted in this assembly, which separated not before the month of March in the following year; when the negotiations at Pirna continuing to advance with alarming rapidity, Oxenstiern thought it expedient to dissolve the diet, and to repair in person to Dresden.†

While Sweden and her allies were thus sedulously labouring to secure the co-operation of France, the Austrian commanders availed themselves of the consternation universally prevalent throughout protestant Germany, to reduce the towns on the Neckar. Intimidated by menaces, or tempted by the promises of John of Wert, the city of Heidelberg opened its gates; but the citadel, erected on a perpendicular rock, afforded an asylum to the Swedish garrison, and mocked the impotent fury of the conqueror.

The danger of allowing the enemy a permanent establishment in the heart of the Palatinate, awakened the vigilance of the French marshals;‡ but whilst they were busied in preparations for crossing

* Puffendorf, 92.

† Ibid. vii. 8.

‡ Breze and La Force.

the Rhine, Feuquieres unexpectedly produced an order from the king, who prohibited an attack, anxious to avoid a rupture with Austria, until his own armaments were completed. The propriety, however, of succouring Heidelberg was readily admitted by the ambassador, and he proposed to the Duke of Weimar to undertake its relief with the Germans.* The danger of exposing an army, upon which his future fortune entirely depended, alarmed even the intrepid Bernard: but Feuquieres, regardless of his objections, positively insisted upon immediate compliance, under the penalty of forfeiting his master's protection. But as he foresaw that the haughty Saxon might spurn at a demand delivered in so authoritative a style, he held out to the officers such seducing prospects of remuneration and glory, that they clamorously insisted upon being instantly led against the enemy.† The perplexing dilemma, in which he found himself involved, forced tears from the eyes of the gallant Weimar, who upbraided Feuquieres with cruelty, in reducing him to a situation where no alternative was left between victory and utter destruction. "Who," said Bernard in the bitterness of grief, "who will furnish me with the means of retrieving my honour, should I sustain another defeat? Who will supply me with money for the discharge of my ransom, should I fall into the hands of the enemy?‡

These considerations had made so deep an impression, that no arguments were able to overcome his scruples, until Feuquieres undertook, in the

* After the death of the Rhinegrave, Bernard had been joined by the whole of his little army.

† November, 1631.

‡ Feuquieres, l. 170.

name of the king, the care of his future fortune, promised to assist him with money to raise another army; should the enemy prove victorious, and further engaged, that he should be redeemed from captivity at his master's expense.*

The enterprize, however, was attended with far less difficulty than the Duke of Weimar expected, as the imperialists abandoned the siege upon intelligence of his approach. Too happy to have saved an important fortress without endangering his future prosperity, he quitted the banks of the Neckar to take up his quarters in Wetteravia. No sooner had he decamped, than the Austrians again took possession of the city, and compelled the garrison once more to seek an asylum in the castle. The perseverance of the enemy having seriously alarmed the protestant diet, they unanimously appealed to the French ambassador for more effectual aid, and urged their suit with so much solicitude, that he could not in prudence neglect the application. Weimar was again required to join the army, that the French might assume the title of auxiliaries, a subterfuge unworthy the character of Richelieu; but the marshals, indignant at the idea of even nominal subjection to a foreigner, suffered the most inviting opportunity to escape of capturing several of the best disciplined regiments in the imperial service. The ridiculous vanity of enjoying exclusively the glory of rescuing Heidelberg, induced them to enter into a hasty convention, by which the Austrians were permitted to retreat with all their baggage and artillery.†

* Feuquieres, l. 170.

† Le Vassor xii. 294. Feuquieres, 170. Laboureur. Histoire de

This misfortune on the part of the Austrians was amply compensated by brilliant successes in other quarters. The city of Augsburg, no less conspicuous for its attachment to the doctrines of Luther, than valuable for its commercial prosperity, was reduced to the utmost extremity. Yet, notwithstanding the devastation of famine and pestilence, and the havoc occasioned by the Austrian artillery, it scorned to surrender till the following spring;* and even then, though compelled to subsist upon food the most disgusting to human delicacy, obtained terms highly gratifying to military pride, from the generosity or prudence of the victors.†

Meanwhile Piccolomini continued his conquests in Franconia without experiencing the smallest opposition. The wealthy Margraviates of Bareuth and Anspach were now open to the enemy's incursions, and the inhabitants, absolved from their allegiance to their protestant sovereign, by the vicarious authority of the King of Hungary, were obliged to purchase an exemption from plunder by an oath of fidelity to the emperor.‡ Thus the whole country between the Mayne and Danube was again subjected to the dominion of Austria. Hesse was exposed to the rapacity of the Croats, under their sanguinary leader Isolani, whose callous heart was alike insensible to the helpless caducity of age, and to the innocent caresses of infancy. Equally deaf to the complaints of an unfortunate ally, and to the

M. de Guebriant, 70. Such is uniformly the statement of the French historians; Puffendorf on the contrary asserts, that the Austrians were surprised during the siege, and compelled to retire precipitately with considerable loss, after leaving all their cannon behind, vi. 100.

* March, 1635. † Puffendorf, vii. 19. ‡ Ibid. vi. 102, 103.

dictates of honour, the Duke of Luneburg confined his exertions to the reduction of Minden; and continued to act, upon every occasion, as if he considered himself liberated from every engagement, and independent of human control.* Concentrating his strength in the vicinity of Bremen, he no longer condescended to disguise his intentions of separating entirely from the Swedes, and even refused them the most trifling assistance, upon the precarious plea of inability, at a time when his native troops endured scarcely any privations. Availing himself of the distress thus gratuitously created, he clandestinely endeavoured to seduce the soldiers from the Swedish standard, by the prospect of being paid with greater regularity, and more abundantly provided with necessaries.†

The intreaties of Banner, and the occupation of the principal fortresses, could hardly extort from a selfish, or impoverished people, the smallest portion of sustenance. The behaviour, and even the language of the Lower Saxons, unequivocally indicated, that the protection of Sweden was regarded as a burthen, from which they were anxious to be released; and, if some of their princes still preserved the outward forms of amity, it was from prudence, not from affection. Hence their policy fluctuated continually with the tide of fortune: one day they recommended an immediate negotiation with Spain and Austria, and the next day servilely crouched for support to Oxenstiern. Fearful, however, that either might be attended with danger, the majority attempted to steer between the opposite extremes, and hoped, by sheltering themselves

* Puffendorf, vi. 102, 103.

† Ibid. 105. Galetti, i. 383.

under the wing of Saxony and Brandenburg, to establish an interest which might enable them to appease the resentment of the conqueror, and possibly obtain more advantageous conditions, whenever a congress should assemble.*

Convinced that little confidence was due to the professions of men, whose actions were directed by no established principle, but varied with the suggestions of interest or fear, Banner deemed it advisable to retire into Thuringia, where the inhabitants were known to be more favourably disposed, and the country was better calculated for defensive operations.

Much, however, as he had reason to mistrust the states of Lower Saxony, the conduct pursued by the two protestant electors was an object of still greater alarm. Abandoning himself to the guidance of a venal administration, George William, of Brandenburg, demanded from Oxenstiern an explicit declaration of the future intentions of the Swedish government with regard to Pomerania. Unwilling, however, to trust intirely on the equity of his claim, or the justice of his ally, even while the negociation was pending, he is said to have carried on a clandestine correspondence with the disaffected nobles, in the expectation of extorting by treachery, what he was too weak, or too timid, to attempt by arms.

The views of John George were more notoriously hostile. Upon receiving intelligence of the unfortunate battle of Nordlingen, he immediately raised the siege of Prague, and evacuated Bohemia. Anticipating the ruin of his ancient protectors, he flattered himself, by his ingratitude, to recover the

* Galetti, i. 363.

† Puffendorf, vi. 106.

friendship of Ferdinand, and perhaps to acquire some temporary benefit in return for the sacrifice of every feeling, which claimed his veneration as a sovereign, a patriot, or a soldier. The failure of the treaty commenced at Leutmeritz, and, interrupted by the impetuosity of Banner, was almost immediately followed by another negotiation at Pirne. Anxious to veil the baseness of his designs with the prostituted garb of humanity, and fearful of attracting the enmity of Sweden before he had secured the protection of Austria, the elector circulated a report, that his only object was to restore the tranquillity of the empire. Although it required a degradation of intellect almost beneath the stretch of human imbecility, to believe a tale so improbable, yet it was swallowed by multitudes, with generous credulity, because it accorded with their wishes, and flattered their timidity.

Broken down by the ferocity and duration of the contest, the prince, the peasant, the priest, and patriot, united in a general clamour for peace, without troubling themselves to inquire how far the conditions on which it was attainable were consistent with honour or safety. It is, however, observable, that no country perhaps, in any period of the world, had suffered more severely from the scourge of arms, than Germany since the reign of Matthias. All the miseries inflicted by the incessant animosities of those feudal tyrants, who feasted on plunder, and revelled in blood, were trivial compared with those to which she was actually exposed. Extensive tracts, which had formerly presented to the delighted eye the grateful spectacle of industry, abundance, and civilization, were now converted into dreary solitude, whose fields, aban-

done by the laborious husbandman, lay desolate and uncultivated. For what inducement could stimulate activity, when the passage of a regiment in a single day might sweep away the produce of months of incessant fatigue? Castles, villages, and towns, reduced to ashes, afforded melancholy subjects for reflection. Bereft of every comfort, and even of every necessary of life, the pillaged inhabitants were reluctantly constrained to unite with the incendiaries, because the only prospect of procuring subsistence was by retaliation upon their weaker, or less desperate neighbours.

Thus every bond of civil society was rent asunder, and confusion universally prevailed, from the foot of the Alps to the coasts of the Baltic. All reverence for age, all respect for religion, all ideas of morality, were gradually eradicated from the heart of man. No law was regarded but that of violence; no instrument was employed except terror. The presumption of anarchy disdained control, and trampled with impunity upon every institution.*

The general solicitude for peace affording a specious pretext for duplicity, the Elector of Saxony flattered himself that, should his countrymen cease to suffer from the rapaciousness of the belligerent armies, they would hardly consider the means by which this happy exemption was obtained. In this dastardly system he was secretly encouraged by the Landgrave of Darmstadt; and it was, in a great measure, owing to the ascendancy acquired by the latter over an understanding debilitated by illiberal pleasures, that the remonstrances of Sweden were

* Schiller, iv. Schmidt, v. 13.

disregarded. But, to the short-sighted elector, the promise of an archiepiscopal mitre,* for his second son, proved a temptation too seductive to be withstood. With such an allurements constantly before his eyes, every other consideration was forgotten. All the wishes of Ferdinand were instantly acceded to, and the main sacrifice of probity, honour, and gratitude, having been hastily consummated at Pirna, the city of Prague was selected as a more convenient spot for the ultimate arrangements of the treaty.†

* That of Magdeburg.

† Galetti, 384. Puffendorf, 107.

CHAPTER XIX.

Internal distress of Sweden: she endeavours to ascertain the sentiments of the Germans respecting her future remuneration; timid and selfish policy of the protestants.—The Swedes renew the truce with Poland, and determine to continue the contest with Austria.—Wise and spirited conduct of Richelieu.—The seizure of the Elector of Treves followed by a declaration of war on the part of France; vigorous measures adopted in consequence.—Conduct of the Elector of Saxony.—Treaty of Prague.—Ingratitude of the German princes.—Oxenstiern visits Paris, where he concludes a treaty with Richelieu: active preparations of France for commencing hostilities.—Character of Olivares.—The French enter Flanders.—Cardinal La Valette selected to command the army in Germany.—The Duke of Weimar subsidized by Louis XIII.—Affairs in the North.—Hostile behaviour of John George.—Consequent difficulties to which Banner is exposed.—The Swedish army mutinies: means employed in reducing the insurgents to obedience.

ALTHOUGH the Swedish government had hitherto braved the storm collecting in Germany with courage truly heroic, it did not contemplate with equal serenity the prospect of a rupture with Poland. The truce concluded with the chief of that turbulent aristocracy was about to expire, and it was greatly to be apprehended that Ladislaus might be induced, by the influence of Austria, to renew his pretensions to the crown of Sweden. Every circumstance of external policy was propitious to such an attempt. The war between Russia and the republic had suddenly terminated in a treaty; more honourable to the latter than her most sanguine friends could have expected; while the glory acquired against the northern barbarians had silenced

the complaints, and stopped the preparations of the Ottomans.*

The picture so forcibly drawn by the Swedish historian, of the internal situation of his own country, might convince the most sceptical politician, that the determination of the regency to purchase peace by the cession of Prussia, was suggested by the most laudable policy. While living in amity with the court of Warsaw, Sweden had little to apprehend from the ambition of Denmark; but, in the event of a Polish war, it was much to be dreaded, that Christian might avail himself of the opportunity to attack the infant daughter of Gustavus; or, at least, to require some territorial sacrifice, as the price of forbearance. The patience of the people was also nearly exhausted by forced enrolments and fiscal exactions. Dazzled by the blaze of military triumphs, they had submitted to every burthen without opposition, and almost without complaint; but, with the first serious reverse, the unsubstantial phantom faded away; and they began seriously to inquire, whether the standards which floated in the cathedral at Stockholm, the proud memorials of national prowess, were not acquired too dearly, at the expense of commerce, manufactures, and agriculture.

Convinced that all the forces which Sweden could embody would be requisite for her internal defence, in the event of a rupture with Ladislaus, the regency was anxious to terminate the contest with Ferdinand, before the armistice with Poland expired; justly considering, that in one contest the national independence was at stake, while, in the

* Puffendorf, vi. 116.

other, they were fighting, a glorious occupation, for the liberty and religion of strangers.*

Justly impressed with the necessity of providing for the internal security of the country over which they presided, before they advocated the cause of universal toleration, the council of regency directed Oxenstiern to ascertain what compensations were destined to Sweden by the Protestant confederacy, in return for the services received. Any territorial acquisition in either Saxony, particularly if contiguous to the shores of the Baltic, would be regarded as a sufficient indemnity, neither would a pecuniary remuneration be rejected. But; should the poverty or parsimony of the Germans cavil at this equitable demand, the chancellor was instructed to conduct the negotiation in such a manner, that no just cause might be afforded for speculative ingratitude to withhold the merited reward. Submitting all subordinate considerations to the discretion of that consummate statesman; they requested that every engagement, into which he might enter, might be reserved for the revision of the senate. Persuaded, too, that conciliation is the wisest policy in most situations, they authorized him, if necessary, to relinquish Pomerania, provided the abandonment of that valuable province could alone prevent the desertion of Brandenburg.†

Yet, notwithstanding the extensive powers with which he was invested, so many difficulties arose at every step, that Oxenstiern could hardly indulge a rational hope either of continuing the contest with undiminished reputation, or of terminating it with honour and advantage. The fatal consequences of the recent defeat were daily illustrated by the in-

* Puffendorf, vii. 1.

† Ibid.

difference of pretended friends, or the desertion of treacherous allies. The dread of offending a warlike people, whose vengeance was speedy and terrible, had hitherto operated as a bond of union between the different protestant states; but no sooner was the venal band, who courted the friendship of Sweden from selfish motives, persuaded that her resentment might be braved with impunity, than they unfeelingly threw aside the mask, and published to the world, with unblushing profligacy, that, while loudly declaiming against the tyranny of Ferdinand, and extolling the magnanimity of Gustavus, they had been plotting to pilfer some pitiful toll, or caballing for the conquest of a contemptible bailiwick. But, gloomy and desperate as the picture appeared, the most sanguine imagination could hardly anticipate a favourable change. On the contrary, the prospect might gradually deteriorate, but scarcely presented to a rational mind the most distant hope of amelioration. It is the consequence of adversity, in all political concerns, to engender adversity. The progression is rapid, and might almost be calculated with mathematical precision.

Oppressed by the arms of Bavaria and Austria, and cut off from all communication with Bernard, or Banner, the upper circles were prevented, even had they been favourably disposed, from contributing to the prosecution of hostilities. The insincerity of Brandenburg was no longer doubtful; and, with respect to Saxony, the best that could be hoped was to prevent her from throwing her weight into the opposite scale.*

Deserted by her allies, an object of reproach

* Puffendorf, 2.

even to those, who, without her support, would no longer have enjoyed freedom to deliberate how far it might be prudent to provoke her resentment; crippled by the magnitude of her exertions, and trembling at the prospect of approaching famine, the melancholy consequence of successive years of sterility, as well as of efforts disproportioned to her natural resources, the condition of Sweden was truly deplorable.

Yet, tremendous as were the difficulties which she had to encounter by continuing the war, others equally formidable attended its sudden abandonment. In return for the sacrifice of so much blood and treasure, to obtain nothing but hatred and disgrace, was a humiliation too poignant to be endured. Neither was it less painful to the feelings of a high-minded people, to be compelled submissively to supplicate for peace, after having so lately been placed in a situation imperiously to dictate its conditions. The negotiations at Pirne might possibly lead to a general congress; and, though they were abandoned by most of their German allies, the interests of France were so closely interwoven with those of Sweden, that, unless Richelieu should depart from the system so long pursued with advantage and honour, the balance of power might again be restored.

These reflections presented themselves so forcibly to the understanding of Oxenstiern, that they convinced him of the necessity of persevering in hostilities, unless terms should be offered by the Austrian court not inconsistent with honour to accept. That this determination was dictated by the soundest policy, not by irritation or despair, will be clearly established by subsequent events.

But, as no exertions of courage could possibly avail, unless a rupture with Poland was prevented, the Swedish government wisely resolved, by prudential concessions, to procure a renewal of the armistice. The possession of Prussia was almost equally important to both nations. While occupied by Sweden, it presented a bulwark to the ambition of Ladislaus, which it was dangerous to assail, and difficult to overcome; but, once transferred to her hereditary rival, it would afford constant opportunities for interrupting her domestic tranquillity; and abundant facilities for creating a navy, which might soon dispute the sovereignty of the Baltic. Neither was the defalcation of revenue of trifling importance to an indigent people. Yet, when no alternative remained, except the selection of evils, it became necessary to decide in favour of that which presented the fewest inconveniencies; and an enlightened administry, accordingly, preferred the cession of Prussia to the evacuation of Germany. For they prudently calculated, that the war with Poland must be sustained entirely by national exertion, and that defeat might be attended with inevitable destruction; whereas, the German war was in great measure fed by the resources of Germany; and, even in the event of a failure, the glory of perseverance could not be effaced;* while, from the nature of the contest, the consequences must prove more disastrous to others than to themselves.†

Eager to take advantage of the distress of Sweden, Ladislaus readily consented to open a negoti-

* Turpius haud vinci quam contendisse decorum.

† Puffendorf, vi. 128.

ation at Stummersdorf in Prussia, under the mediation of Holland, England, and France; which, after various subterfuges on the part of the king, ultimately terminated in conformity to the wishes of the Swedish government.* The neutrality of Poland, however, could not be obtained without a considerable sacrifice of territory—a circumstance which was considered, or at least represented, by the Austrians, as a satisfactory proof that her spirit and power were rapidly declining.†

The commencement of this year was clouded by events the most inauspicious. The defeat under the walls of Nordlingen was almost immediately followed by the surrender of Philipsburg,‡ surprised by the Austrians, who, advancing silently upon the frozen ditches, were actually masters of the principal works, before the smallest alarm was created. The loss of a fortress, acquired by France at an enormous expense, and crowded with artillery and military stores, was a severe mortification to Richelieu, who, to satisfy the scruples of the king, had exaggerated its importance in every respect, and represented its strength as unassailable.§

The same disastrous fortune attended the confederates in other quarters. Impatient to obliterate the impression produced by his temerity at Nordlingen, Weimar formed a plan for surprising Mansfeldt in his winter quarters; but the Austrians, having received information of the design, fell back upon Achaffenberg; where, having been joined

* The armistice was prolonged, in the month of September, 1634, for six-and-twenty years. *Ibid.* 137.

† *Ibid.*

‡ January 24th, 1636. § *Le Vassor*, xii. 243. *Puffendorf*, vii. 14.

by a strong reinforcement under John of Wert, they compelled the Swedes to retire to Franckfort.*

Overwhelmed with consternation at finding their projects thus unexpectedly frustrated, and exasperated at the barbarity of the Austrian commanders, who, in an infamous proclamation, forbade their troops to give quarter to the French, La Force and Breze held a conference with Oxenstiern, in which it was decided to postpone every attempt for the recovery of Philipsburg, till the rigour of the winter was more abated. To regain possession of Spire, recently captured, appeared, however, an easier task; and, the co-operation of Weimar having been a third time required, that city surrendered, after a feeble resistance, with a garrison of nearly seven thousand men—the greater part of whom immediately entered into the service of the allies.† The severity of the frost, and the difficulty of supporting a numerous army in an impoverished country, determined the French to retire into Lorraine, that they might leave the extensive plains between Spire and Landau to support their hungry allies.‡

The acquisition of Spire, though it furnished an opportunity for amusing Louis and the Parisians with public festivities, appeared to the enlightened judgment of Richelieu a very inadequate compensation for Philipsburg. He now clearly perceived, that it would be nugatory to expect any important services from the armies of France, acting as auxiliaries. Such a part, too, was repugnant to the enterprising spirit of that haughty statesman, who

* Puffendorf, vii. 12. Galetti, l. 386. † Ibid. 388. ‡ Ibid.

aspired to immortalize his name by the humiliation of Austria. But this magnificent scheme of glory and of power could not be accomplished without calling into action the immense resources of the nation over which he presided, and conducting the war with a vigour and decision never displayed by the successors of Charlemagne. Had he been unfettered by prejudice, and uncontrolled by faction, he would have commenced hostilities without further reflection; but the scruples of Louis, the animosity of Mary, and the jealousy of a turbulent and discontented nobility, were continually thwarting his projects; and it was consequently an object of essential importance to persuade the feeble understanding of his master, that, by violating every principle of moral rectitude, he merited the appellation of just; and that, by patronizing in Germany the religion which he persecuted with unrelenting severity in France, he acted consistently with the dictates of reason, and conscientiously discharged every duty allotted by Providence to sovereigns.

While deliberating how best to effect his purpose, he was unexpectedly furnished with a satisfactory plea for drawing the sword, by the very power he meant to attack. The Elector of Treves, as we have formerly seen, had placed his dominions under the protection of Louis. This intimate connexion with the enemies of Austria, excited serious apprehensions at Vienna, lest he should be prevailed upon to oppose the election of a King of the Romans; a measure which Ferdinand had expected to accomplish with the utmost facility, when Saxony and Brandenburg should be appeased. In order to render his compliance with

the emperor's wishes a matter of necessity, if not of inclination, the following plan was devised, though it could not be executed without shamefully violating the sanctity of religion in the person of a prelate, no less venerable for age than for virtue. The atrocity of an act is seldom an objection to the needy. Emboldened by poverty, and little anxious to separate the blending shades of guilt and obedience, provided promotion was the recompense of success, a native of Liege undertook to carry off the elector from his archiepiscopal palace; and having torn him from the bed to which he was confined by a severe fit of illness, he conducted him a prisoner to Luxemburg. Few events could have occurred more agreeable to the wishes of Richelieu; as it was exactly calculated to alarm the scruples of Louis, to whom it was represented by the minister, and his friends, not only as injurious to the rights of civilized society, but as a sacrilegious profanation of religion. An ambassador was immediately dispatched to Brussels to demand instant and ample reparation, and when the cardinal infant pleaded inability to return a decisive answer till instructions should arrive from Vienna or Madrid, a herald was sent with a declaration of war against Spain in all its ancient formalities.*

Though industriously magnified by the policy of Richelieu, it cannot be denied that the behaviour of the Spaniards, with respect to the elector, was no less repugnant to the common principles of justice, as practised by civilized nations, than it was inconsistent with the character ostentatiously arrogated by the Austrian family, of the devoted cham-

* 1635. *Le Vassor*, 379.

pions of the catholic worship. Unwilling to lose so fair an opportunity of exciting the indignation of Europe, the ambassador of France was directed to inculcate in every court the pressing necessity of a general league for the chastisement of a prince, who no longer respected the rights of sovereigns, the laws of morality, or the ties of religion. Senneterre was in consequence instructed to promise the reinstatement of the Palatine, upon condition that Charles the first would abandon Spain, by which he had been so often deceived. The re-establishment of his nephew, which it was folly to expect from the justice, or the generosity of the Austrian court, was a powerful incitement in the eyes of a prince, who was neither inaccessible to the feelings of honour, nor deaf to the cry of humanity. Yet it must be admitted, on the other hand, that prejudice and policy were equally adverse to the aggrandizement of France, and that any acquisition she might be enabled to make on the coasts of Flanders, could hardly be contemplated with indifference by a nation, which regarded commerce as the basis of permanent prosperity. These considerations presented themselves to the mind of the king with so much force, that he determined to steer a middle course, and, for the present at least, to remain a tranquil spectator of the contest, in which his neighbours were about to engage; reserving to himself the liberty of declaring for either party, as his future interest might render it expedient. In order to give due weight and consistency to the system pursued, a fleet was required in the channel, and the equipment of a fleet was expensive. But as the king had embraced the fatal resolution of governing without the

aid of a parliament, a tax was imposed, under the title of *ship-money*, by an extraordinary exertion of the royal prerogative. This expedient, however, proved far less productive than the monarch expected; because this exercise of authority being totally inconsistent with the established principles of the English constitution, many people refused with meritorious patriotism to submit to the imposition, notwithstanding it had been sanctioned by the suffrage of a corrupt and prostituted magistracy.*

A simultaneous effort was made by the President Bellicre, invested with the dignity of ambassador extraordinary, for the purpose of uniting the Italian states in a general confederacy against Spain. The result, however, of that minister's intrigues were far from corresponding with the expectations of Richelieu. The systematic caution, which constituted the leading principle of Venetian policy, was not to be shaken by the brilliant chimeras of hope, though presented to the senate under the most inviting form with which rhetoric or artifice could disguise them. The example of a government so deservedly celebrated for sagacity, decided the conduct of Tuscany, whose peaceful sovereign, no less in conformity to the suggestions of inclination, than to the dictates of prudence, wisely refused to encounter the danger of being speedily driven out of a terrestrial paradise on the banks of Arno, for the precarious prospect of pilfering a few acres of territory on the craggy summits of the Appenines, or the pestilential shores of the Mediterranean.† Too feeble to oppose the

* Rapin vii. 452, quarto edition.

† Siri. Mem. Recond. viii. 336.

inclination of Louis, the Duke of Modena acceded to every proposal with the apparent cordiality of a friend, though he secretly resolved to regulate his behaviour as personal interest should prescribe.* In the youthful temerity of the Duke of Parma, the ambassador found a ready ally, eager to manifest his conversion with the zeal of a neophyte. He tore down the Spanish arms from the Farnese palace at Rome, and substituted the lily in their place, thus attempting to cover political impotence under a puerile display of hostility. Victor Amadeus had already suffered too severely from the ambition of France, to behold with indifference her further aggrandisement in Italy; but the loss of Pignerol no longer permitting him to follow his own inclination, he affected to listen to Bellievre's proposal with the greatest complacency. But while professing the utmost readiness to second the pretensions of Louis, he endeavoured by the usual arts of intrigue to protract the negotiation, in the hope of being enabled by some vicissitude of fortune to assert his independence, or at least to sell his concurrence more advantageously. Perceiving, however, that subterfuges were no longer in season, he consented at last to sign the treaty, though with the fixed resolution of observing it no longer, than an imperious necessity should prescribe.†

The advantages resulting to the court of France from this convention were far more apparent than substantial. The venality of the Duke of Savoy was so public, that no person could seriously sup-

* Le Vassor, 385.

† *Ibid.* 386. The duke was required to furnish ten thousand foot, and fifteen hundred horse.

pose him capable of a moment's hesitation, when called upon to decide between honour and interest. But the alliance with Holland* was of a different description, and promised to be attended with the most favourable results. As the object of the treaty was decidedly hostile to Philip, it was agreed to attack the Spanish Netherlands with an army sixty thousand strong, to be furnished in equal proportions by the allies. This intended invasion was to be preceded by a manifesto, exciting the inhabitants to throw off the Spanish yoke, and promising to assist them in the formation of an independent commonwealth. Generosity, however, in the conduct of states, is little more than a political bubble; and though frequently assumed by a powerful nation, as a plea for interfering in the domestic concerns of its weaker neighbour, it is seldom, if ever, gratuitous; and it frequently happens, that the plea assigned for the grossest violations of justice, and humanity, is that of philanthropy. Such was precisely the language of Richelieu. The infant republic would be destitute of a marine, and of course be incapable of defending an extensive long line of coast against the nautical skill of the Spaniards. For this deficiency, however, a remedy was provided by the mercenary magnanimity of their patrons; Louis generously undertaking to occupy all the maritime towns to the westward of Blankenberg, together with Namur and Thionville; while the liberality of Holland, less voracious, was satisfied with protecting Dam, Hulst, Gueldres, and Stewenwert.†

* Signed at Paris on the 8th of February, 1635, by Bullion, Bonthilier, and Charnacé, on the part of France; and by Paw and Knuyt, on that of the Republic.

† Le Vassor, 372.

But as it was far from impossible that the dull loyalty of the Flemings might remain insensible to the blessings with which they were threatened, a treaty of partition was settled, by which the valuable provinces of Hainaut, Namur, Luxemburg, Artois, and Flanders, were allotted to France, while the Dutch contented themselves with the acquisition of Brabant, Mecklin, and Antwerp.

This convention was so repugnant to the interests of Holland, that on her side at least it was probably from the commencement illusory; and intended solely for the purpose of compelling Philip to renounce all further pretensions to the sovereignty of the United Provinces. The Prince of Orange, and the other leading men, were far too sagacious to think the French more desirable neighbours than the Spaniards.

The death of the Archbishop of Bremen proved a serious calamity to Sweden, because he had invariably conducted himself with the sincerity of a friend, and the disinterested zeal of a patriot. Justly suspicious of the increasing power of Denmark, Oxenstiern took advantage of a contest respecting the disposal of that valuable see, to urge the policy of waiting for a general peace, before the claims of the different competitors were determined. The influence of Sweden was however sunk so low, that Frederic of Denmark obtained the mitre, to which it must be admitted that he was legally entitled; having been elected by the canons during the life of his predecessor, in conformity to the practice* of the German chapters.

Though insensible to the remonstrances of the

* Puffendorf, 23. Galetti, 391.

Saxony states, Banner did not continue long in Thuringia, being constrained to march with the utmost celerity to the defence of Magdeburg and Halberstadt. At the commencement of the year, the Elector of Saxony collected his forces on the banks of the Elbe, apparently for the purpose of undertaking some important expedition, but really with the design of compelling the Swedes to evacuate Lower Saxony. Too cautious, however, to recur to violence, so long as artifice or persuasion could avail, he proposed a conference to Banner, whom he hoped to intimidate, if he could not corrupt. Intreaties and threats were alternately tried to induce him to return into Thuringia; but that intrepid chieftain peremptorily declared that nothing should induce him to abandon his quarters, and that in case any one should attempt to compel him by force, "he might possibly burn his fingers."* To this spirited answer John George replied in softened language, and though they parted without coming to any satisfactory agreement, it was evidently with less acrimony than they met. The Swedish general, however, so far carried his point, that he kept tranquil possession of the disputed see.

Desirous of sanctioning ingratitude by popular suffrage, the elector summoned the states to meet at Dresden, where he imparted to them the conditions of the armistice concluded at Pirna. But, instead of being hailed as the guardian and deliverer of Germany, he discovered that the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty had made a deeper impression upon the minds of his subjects, than upon

* Puffendorf, 24.

that of their sovereign. They accordingly expressed an earnest desire, that no clause might be inserted in the future treaty prejudicial to the daughter of Gustavus, to whose generous support they professed themselves indebted for the freedom of unbiassed discussion. The reinstatement of the children of the unfortunate Palatine they regarded as essential to the national character. But, above all, they requested, in case peace should be concluded with the emperor, that the elector would rigidly adhere to a system of neutrality, which they considered as the only one he could possibly adopt without eternally tarnishing his reputation.*

But neither the urgent remonstrances of a generous people, the promises of France, nor the exhortations of Sweden, were sufficient to prevent that imbecile prince from following the dictates of vanity, though gratified at the expense of personal character, and even at the hazard of overturning the liberties of Germany, and ruining the protestant religion.† Such was his eagerness to terminate hostilities, that he readily acceded to every demand, notwithstanding the imperial ambassadors took advantage of his weakness to alter many of the most important articles concluded at Pirna. On the 20th of May the instrument of dishonour was signed at Prague. Being anxious, however, to screen his reputation from the charge of apostacy, the elector invited all the protestant princes to become parties to a treaty, respecting the conditions of which, though involving interests of the highest importance, they had never been consulted, and which they could not but consider rather in the

* Kievenhüller, xii. 1387.

† Galetti, i. 336. Puffendorf, vii. 9.

light of an amnesty, accorded by a triumphant foe, than in that of a convention, intended to provide for their future security. Notwithstanding the object in view was avowedly to establish the tranquillity of Germany on a sure and permanent footing, they had been rigidly excluded from the debates. The grievances complained of by the Lutheran states had undergone a hasty discussion, and the privileges of the members of the Germanic constitution had been decided with arbitrary precipitation; and to these regulations they were called upon to subscribe, without being permitted to revise them, and were even informed, that the smallest hesitation would be regarded as a mark of disaffection. An army was assembling with all convenient speed, to bring the remnants to a proper sense of their duty.

The edict of restitution "was unquestionably the chief, if not the only, point, which the venality of John George was not prepared to relinquish; but there his personal interest was too deeply implicated to allow him to act with indifference. Yet as imperial pride revolted at the idea of cancelling a decree, to which it still attached the greatest importance, an expedient was adopted, which secured the elector against any diminution of revenue during his own life, and probably during that of his children, and equally screened the vanity of Ferdinand from the disgrace of confessing an error. Without formally abrogating the unpopular edict, it was mutually agreed to suspend it, and that all the ecclesiastical revenue, which had been progressively secularized, since the convention of Passau, should continue in the possession of the present occupants during the term of forty years;

before the expiration of which, a congress should assemble, to be composed of an equal number of members of both communions, by whose prudence and wisdom that momentous question should be finally settled. But in case the intervention of insurmountable obstacles should preclude the possibility of an amicable arrangement, it was further stipulated, that each party should preserve those identical rights, to which they were entitled in 1627.* Ferdinand, however, thought it necessary to justify his motives in a studied manifesto, addressed to the court of Rome, in which he declared that nothing, except the dread of exposing the catholic faith to utter destruction, should have prevailed upon him to enter into any compromise with heresy.†

The elector indeed might hide from himself the motives by which he was actuated, but from the world he could not conceal them. The rich see of Magdeburg, as the reward of apostacy, was ceded to Prince Augustus of Saxony, a younger son of John George, who in return consented, that the Archduke Leopold William should occupy Hal-

* Schmidt, v. 14. Galetti, 397. It is natural to suppose, that these concessions proved extremely repugnant to the prejudices of Ferdinand; and we accordingly find, that before he could be prevailed upon to give his assent, he submitted the case to the consideration of a council, composed of divines, two of whom were invested with the Roman purple. Many weeks were wasted in puerile discussions, whether consistently with his duty as a faithful son of the church, the emperor might suffer the revenues of the clergy to remain at the disposal of heretics. This important question would in all probability have been neverdetermined, had not one sensible man been fortunately found, in an assembly composed of ten theologians. Cardinal Dietrichstein, who was blessed with an enlightened understanding, and a judgment unwarped by professional prejudice, contemplated the subject in its real light as a question of policy. By his indefatigable exertions he ultimately gave a reluctant assent; and thus prevented them from adding to the long catalogue of crimes and of follies, which governments have committed through bigotry.

† Schmidt, *ibid*,

berstadt; a scandalous compromise, which clearly evinced, that the interests of religion, however magnified by hypocrisy, were subordinate to those of ambition. The example of the leader served as a precedent to all, who were mean enough to regard territorial acquisitions as compensations for forfeited honour. The Dukes of Mecklenburg, though indebted to Swedish valour for every thing they possessed, shewed little reluctance to abandon their benefactors, when they found it advantageous to the ungrateful. It is by no means extraordinary, that amid this shameful dereliction of every noble principle, the claims of the family of the unfortunate Palatine should be totally neglected. This ungenerous treatment is usually ascribed to the animosity subsisting between the followers of Luther and those of Calvin, who mutually regarded each other with that pious abhorrence, which is too often observable in rival sects.

The recovery of Pomerania was presented as a temptation to the avidity of Brandenburg, and proved too seducing to be resisted. It was further agreed between Ferdinand and the elector, that all their conquests should be mutually restored; and that in case France or Sweden should object to peace upon the inglorious terms upon which it was offered, they should be forcibly compelled to accept it, by the united forces of Austria and Saxony. These are the most prominent features of that memorable dereliction of honour and honesty, denominated the treaty of Prague. All the other stipulations were of minor importance, and are hardly deserving of notice.

The Duke of Wirtemberg, and the Marquis of Baden, were alone excluded from the amnesty, un-

der pretence that, as the immediate vassals of Austria, they had incurred the guilt of treason. This, however, was regarded only as a temporary expedient, to enable the emperor to retain possession of their dominions till a general peace, when they might serve as a compensation for that part of Lorraine, which was occupied by France.*

This treaty being intended by the contracting parties to give a permanent form to the Germanic constitution, every question relating to their private concerns was settled by secret, or at least separate articles. Among these, the most striking was the surrender of Lusatia to the electoral house, accompanied by a clause which provided for the toleration of the catholic worship in that province, as well as in Silesia.

A measure embracing such various interests, must of course be received with very different feelings by the members of the empire, according as they were influenced by opinions and attachments. Yet, notwithstanding the earnest desire of peace, which pervaded every class of society between the Alps and the Baltic, the most prevalent sentiment was that of discontent. The protestants complained that their interests had been sacrificed,† and their religion degraded; while the catholics inveighed with all the bitterness of disappointed pride against the indulgences granted to their rivals. The foun-

* Schmidt, v. 14.

† Schmidt, the pensioned champion of Austria, pretends that the elector did every thing in his power to obtain for the protestants the free exercise of their religion, in the hereditary provinces of Austria; but that he was compelled at last to relinquish that important point, upon a principle established by the members of the reformed church, "that the religion of the subjects ought always to conform to that of their sovereign." *Cujus est regio, ejus est religio.*—Schmidt, v. 14.

dation, they said, of the orthodox church had been sapped, by permitting the revenues, originally designed for the support and propagation of the true faith, to be appropriated to the encouragement of heresy. But, however opposite the opinions entertained by individuals respecting the policy of terminating hostilities, no diversity of sentiment appears to have existed with regard to the conduct of the elector, who was universally stigmatized as the venal tool of Austrian despotism, and a traitor to the liberties of his country.*

Yet injurious as this treaty confessedly was to most of the protestants, so great was the terror inspired by Austria, and so diminished the confidence reposed in Sweden, that it was accepted by a great majority of those, who had most strenuously resisted the ambition of Ferdinand. The States of Lower Saxony, at the persuasion of the Duke of Brunswick, acceded to the humiliating offer. William, Duke of Weimar, was easily induced to follow their steps, in spite of the remonstrances of his brother. Many also of the imperial cities, regarding the secession of their leaders as an unquestionable proof of the ruin of Sweden, thought themselves fortunate to escape from the overwhelming storm, by following the general current.† Impelled by a latent sentiment of honour, or by the hope of obtaining more favourable terms, the Elector of Brandenburg for some time withstood the intreaties of Saxony, and the flattering promises of Austria ;

* His conduct was too contemptible even for a Jesuit to defend. *Jamais acte ne fut plus defectueux, ni plus contraire a la liberte Germanique.*—Bougeant, i. 223.

† Ulm, Francfort, Nuremberg, &c. Galetti, i. 399.

and it was entirely through the intrigues of a venal minister, who taking advantage of the jealousy of his master's disposition, alarmed him respecting the fate of Pomerania, that he ultimately abandoned Christina.*

Though the Landgrave of Cassel at first appeared doubtful on what to resolve, it is probable that his indecision proceeded from policy, and not from irresolution. It was material to the success of his future plans, that he should retain his conquests in Westphalia, from which his principal resources were drawn, and which he would have been called upon to evacuate the moment he accepted the treaty. Duke Bernard and Weimar could hardly aspire to the honour of being regarded in the light of a belligerent, because he had nothing to oppose against Austrian despotism, except hatred of tyranny, persevering courage, and talents which expanded with the difficulties of his situation. As a cessation of hostilities would have entirely destroyed all his prospects of aggrandizement and glory, he treated the convention of Prague with the contempt it so justly deserved.

Yet loud and universal as was the cry of disapprobation, resounding through all the protestant states, none complained with so much reason, or with so much asperity, of the dishonourable behaviour of the Elector of Saxony, as the irritated subjects of Christina. After having rescued John George from inevitable ruin, they found themselves deserted in the moment of distress, and upon the point of being driven out of a country which owed its independance to their exertions, without receiving

* Galetti, i. 399.

even the thanks of its inhabitants. Neither was the amount of the recompense proffered by the parsimony of their ungrateful friends, less insulting to the feelings of a high-minded people, than the insolence with which it was offered. For though the Germans might estimate the blessings of freedom no higher than 2,500,000 florins,* the Swedes disdained the pitiful stipend, as totally inadequate to their services. "The Electors of Saxony and Bradenburg are remunerated for their treachery by the acquisition of provinces," exclaimed Oxenstiern with honest indignation, "and shall Sweden content herself with a pecuniary gratification, after stemming for years the whole torrent of the war, and sacrificing the life of one of the greatest sovereigns that ever merited the admiration of mankind."†

Though mean enough to act a dishonourable part, and callous to the reproaches of conscience, John George was too much the slave of vanity to bear with indifference the censures of the world; and foolishly attempted, in a laboured manifesto, to defend his equivocal conduct. With commonplace lamentations upon the calamities of war, he boldly asserted, that he was justly entitled to the gratitude of his countrymen, for having terminated the miseries which they endured. "To procure a general peace," he solemnly declared, "had long been the object of his ardent ambition; and he doubted not to have accomplished the arduous task, had not his intentions been counteracted by the artifices of those, to whom bloodshed was a profitable traffic, and who listened with apathy to the cries and lamentations of widows and or-

* About £250,000.

† Schmidt, v. 14.

phans, provided they acquired either riches or glory."

The treaty of Prague was regarded by most of the German states as likely to give a decisive blow to the power of Sweden. Even the intrepid Oxenstiern was unable to contemplate, without dismay, the difficulties with which he was surrounded; yet his enlightened understanding was so accustomed to discover a remedy for every evil, instead of yielding unmanfully to the dictates of despair, he anticipated a fund of renovated strength from sources where a genius less energetic than his own would have perceived only ruin and disgrace. The defection of so many of the protestant states, while it deprived Sweden of rich and powerful allies, it at the same time released her from many obligations which it might have been difficult to fulfil; besides, in proportion as her enemies augmented, a more extensive theatre was opened for subsisting her armies by plunder and contributions. The ingratitude of the Germans appeared to Oxenstiern a sufficient excuse for every extremity to which he might resort. No possible reverse could increase the danger; and though the fortune of arms might ultimately compel him to evacuate Germany, he resolved the retreat should not be inglorious.

Convinced that Louis was the only prince from which he could expect effectual support, he embraced the resolution of repairing in person to France; hoping, by the dignity attached to his character, to bring the negociation with which Grotius was entrusted, to a speedy termination; as that able statesman, notwithstanding the acknowledged superiority of his talents, was continually meeting with unexpected impediments from the intrigues

and malice of his own countrymen. Desirous of avoiding the irksome ceremonies of etiquette, so precious in the estimation of courtiers, and so contemptible in that of a sage, the chancellor no sooner arrived at Metz, than he sent a courier with letters to Richelieu, expressing the keenest regret that the necessity of his mistress's affairs, compelled him to forego the gratification of visiting Paris, where he should have been delighted to offer his personal homage to the king; and requesting the cardinal to send some confidential person to meet him on his way to Holland, with whom he might converse on many important topics, which were equally interesting to both nations; and from whom he might learn the sentiments of that enlightened minister, respecting the operations of the ensuing campaign.*

The motives which actuated the conduct of Oxenstiern did not escape the penetration of Richelieu; yet his inclination to converse with that celebrated personage, to appreciate his talents in a personal interview, perhaps the hope of being able, by superior address, to procure the ratification of the treaty concluded by Loffler, and even to persuade him to consent to the cession of Benfeldt, got the better of every consideration, and determined him most pressingly to solicit the illustrious stranger to continue his journey to Compiègne, where the court was at that time assembled. Unwilling to offend the proudest of mortals by apparent neglect, Oxenstiern resolved to accept the invitation, and was received by the king with the most flattering marks of distinction. In regulating the ceremonies to be observed, at his first interview with Richelieu, a

* 1635. Le Vassor, xii. 362.

thousand ridiculous difficulties occurred; but the prudence of the chancellor getting the better of his pride, he consented to gratify the cardinal's vanity, by allowing him to assume in his own apartments the dignity of a sovereign. The visit was next day returned by Richelieu; who in order, as he pretended, to wave all forms, appeared in boots, and unattended by his usual retinue.*

It was the main object of the latter to procure the ratification of the treaty of Paris; but all his endeavours proved ineffectual, as Oxenstiern shewed himself equally inaccessible to flattery or intreaty. The chancellor, on his part, was no less solicitous to engage France in open hostilities with Austria, and was willing to sacrifice all minor considerations to the attainment of that important object. The views of both parties thus coinciding, respecting a question of the utmost moment to both, a treaty was concluded on the following terms: "that neither France, nor Sweden, should terminate hostilities, nor even consent to an armistice, without the consent of its ally; that in the provinces occupied by the Swedes, the Roman catholics should meet with no molestation in the exercise of their religion; and that their clergy should be left in the uninterrupted enjoyment of their revenue." This latter clause was subject to the proviso, that the same indulgence should be granted to the Lutherans; and also, that countries subject to an ecclesiastical sovereign, should not be protected by the amendment. It was further stipulated, that no place, at that time in the possession of either crown, should be restored to the enemy unless by mutual agree-

* *Le Vassor*, xii. 362.

ment. In case France should recover any of the town, heretofore in the occupation of Sweden, they were to be immediately surrendered to Christina. Both crowns engaged to continue their assistance to the German protestants, and if necessary, to employ the whole strength of their kingdoms for their protection. They further promised, whenever a congress should assemble for the purpose of peace, mutually to aid each other in obtaining those objects, which were essential to the prosperity of their respective countries; leaving the regulation of subsidies for future discussion, as well as the consequent service to be performed.*

These important questions having been settled to the satisfaction of both parties, Oxenstiern was permitted to indulge his curiosity with a cursory inspection of Paris, where crowds of spectators collected in every street, in expectation of catching a hasty glimpse of that extraordinary phenomenon—a patriotic statesman. Proceeding to Dieppe, he was received on board a Dutch squadron, which waited to escort him to Holland, where he met with every attention capable of gratifying a man, ambitious of personal distinctions. But this was far from satisfying the generous feelings of the chancellor, whose leading passion was the aggrandizement of his country. Regarding his journey as an evident symptom of the declining power of Sweden, and sufficiently occupied in opposing the ambition of Spain, the states prudently declined increasing the danger by a rupture with Austria.†

No sooner had Richelieu embraced the resolution of appearing as a principal in the war, than every

* Puffendorf, vii. 52.

† Ibid. Le Vassor, xii. 308.

preparation was made for supporting the contest with vigour and activity. Every thing in a moment assumed a hostile appearance. Barraut, the representative of Louis at the court of Madrid, was suddenly recalled, and the Spanish ambassador, Benavides, received instructions to quit Paris, without the usual ceremony of an audience. Four armies were assembled with the greatest expedition.—Marshals Breré and Chatillon were destined to cooperate with the Prince of Orange, in an attack upon the Spanish Netherlands. The Duke of Rohan was ordered, by occupying the passes in the Valteline, to cut off the communication between Italy and Germany, in order that Austria might be prevented from interrupting the operations of Crenquy, in the duchy of Milan. On the side of the Pyrenees, the cardinal confined himself to a defensive system, while a formidable force was collected on the Rhine, under the orders of Cardinal de la Vallette, a younger son of the celebrated Duke d'Epernon, so famous for his courage and gallantries.*

Whatever may have been the feelings of Philip respecting a rupture with France, it is certain that his minister was full as little inclined to pacific measures as Richelieu. The influence of Olivares at the court of Spain was no less unbounded than that of the cardinal at Paris: his principles were equally despotic, and his pride was to the full as revolting; but in strength of understanding, political sagacity, and every quality which constitutes an enlightened statesman, he was infinitely inferior to the cardinal. Far more conspicuous for pre-

* Le Vassor, xii. 378.

sumption than for prudence, the minister of Philip thought no difficulties too mighty for his genius to overcome, and panted after an opportunity of entering the lists against a man, whom he equally envied and hated. Richly endowed with all the versatile talents of intrigue, he seems to have mistaken cunning for wisdom, and to have flattered himself with the glory of first shewing the world, that prudence and penetration were no match for duplicity. Notwithstanding his projects almost invariably failed, he continued to believe himself the most sagacious of mortals; because he was hourly told so by his numerous flatterers, and found himself able to preserve his authority, in spite of the murmurs of a discontented people, and the almost incalculable errors of his administration. Yet if we impartially attend to the monstrous prejudices which prevailed in the country over which he presided, and even infected the judgment of more enlightened nations, perhaps we may admit that the presumption of Olivares was not quite so preposterous as it at first appears.

The power of Spain, though rapidly declining under the weakness and bigotry of the Philips, still existed entire in the opinion of all, who considered the produce of the Peruvian mines as more essential to the prosperity of a nation than commerce, or agriculture, or political wisdom. While the strength of Spain was gradually undermined by the folly or violence of its rulers, that of France augmented in a proportionate degree, though it required the penetrating judgment of Richelieu to discover the magnitude of her internal resources, and all his vigour to call them into exertion.

Hostilities, as usual, were preceded by mani-

festoes, in which each party endeavoured to exculpate himself, and to throw the blame of aggression upon his adversary. The atrocious violation of the laws of nations in the person of the Elector of Treves was the most forcible argument adduced by France in defence of her conduct; while the Spaniards insisted, with greater reason, that the archbishop's captivity was eagerly caught at as a covering for the ambition of Richelieu; who, even if that turbulent spirit had been suffered to continue his clandestine intrigues without interruption, would not have been deterred from carrying into execution those hostile projects which he had long meditated in secret.

Chatillon and Breré, having assembled an army, twenty-five thousand strong, on the frontiers of Champagne, proceeded towards Luxemburg, near which they expected to meet the Prince of Orange; but illness prevented him from fulfilling his engagement. That province was laid waste with fire and sword, in conformity to the instructions of Richelieu, who hoped that the inhabitants might throw themselves on the protection of France, when abandoned by their ancient masters; as if cruelty and oppression were ever likely to produce any feeling except detestation.

The cardinal infant no sooner discovered the enemy's intention, than he took the necessary precautions to prevent its execution. After reinforcing the garrisons which were most exposed, he placed the remainder of his troops under the orders of Prince Thomas of Savoy, who had recently entered into the service of Philip. To have defeated the French before their junction with the Dutch would have exalted the reputation of the Spanish arms,

and given courage and confidence to their adherents; but great was the danger of hazarding a battle, when a defeat must have been attended with the loss of the Netherlands. This consideration determined the general to avoid an engagement, unless an opportunity should occur of attacking the enemy to great advantage—an event which very shortly arrived. The indolence and inattention of the hostile commanders, combined with their want of intelligence, which led them always to move in separate bodies, inspired Prince Thomas with the well-founded hope of being able to defeat them separately; or at least, after crippling one division, to compel the other to seek safety in a hasty retreat.* This project, which displayed considerable ability, was nearly crowned with success. Unwilling to share with his colleague the glory of victory, the presumption of Breré was upon the point of conducting his troops to certain destruction, when Chatillon, luckily arriving to his assistance, compelled the Spaniards to retire precipitately.†

This fortunate occurrence appearing to Richelieu to presage the most brilliant results, he anticipated the conquest of the Spanish Netherlands as the necessary consequence of his success; and, possibly, looked forward to the subjugation of Holland as no improbable event, when he should no longer require the co-operation of that wealthy republic for the accomplishment of his magnificent designs. This delusion, however, was of short duration, as he soon discovered that the loyalty of

* Le Vassor, 424.

† Ibid. *Memoires de Puysegur*, 1635. The battle was fought in the vicinity of Avein, a village in the bishopric of Liege.

the Flemings was proof against every seduction. Blindly attached to the papal communion, they trembled for their religion in case they should fall under the dominion of Holland; and they were too well acquainted with the despotic principles of Richelieu to suppose, that they should acquire any additional privileges by confiding in the promises of Louis. The brutality of the French toward the inhabitants of Tirlenont, when carried by assault, served also to confirm them in the resolution of adhering to Spain with unshaken fidelity; for what advantages could they expect from the government of a prince, who, while he ostentatiously affected the character of a protector, had treated them with savage barbarity? The gratuitous cruelties committed by the French excited universal abhorrence, and inspired the Flemings with a firm determination of defending their country to the last extremity.*

Irritated by disappointments and offended pride, Richelieu resolved, if possible, to effect by terror what he had been unable to accomplish by artifice. For this purpose he directed the commander to lay siege to some populous city; and, if it refused to surrender upon honourable terms, to abandon it, when taken, to pillage—hoping that the dread of sustaining a similar fate might deter others from attempting to resist it.

After threatening Brussels, the French, in conjunction with the Prince of Orange, invested Louvain; but the intrepidity of the garrison, vigorously supported by the loyalty of the citizens, soon convinced the assailants, that the conquest of Flanders

* Le Vassor, 445.

was an arduous task, and required resources far more extensive than those with which they were entrusted. Totally unprovided with magazines, they relied for supplies upon the fertility of the country which they had undertaken to subdue, and on the gratitude of a people, whom they hoped to seduce by the fallacious offer of freedom; but, the former being quickly exhausted by profusion, and the latter having totally failed, no expedient remained for feeding the army, except that of drawing provisions from France and Holland at an enormous expense. The distress of the allies gave fresh courage and animation to their opponents. Prince Thomas, after uniting with Piccolomini, no longer confined himself to a defensive system; but harassed the enemy, by continual skirmishes, till he reduced them to the alternative of either perishing with hunger, or abandoning an enterprize, in which they had so rashly engaged. The loss of Schenk, a strong fortress, which commanded the navigation of the Rhine, and which was surprised by the Spaniards, obliged the Prince of Orange to postpone every idea of conquest, till that important possession should be recovered.* Abandoned entirely to their own resources, oppressed by hunger, and diminished by disease, the French retired disgracefully to winter quarters—too happy to escape total destruction.†

Hitherto we have been fortunate enough to present to the reader an united series of events. The Swedes have been constantly the most conspicuous

* *Le Vassor*, 568.

† *Ibid.* 574. According to Bougeant they embarked in Holland, and returned by sea to France in a most shattered condition, *i.* 248.

figures in the picture, and their allies have appeared as scattered groupes, acting indeed in a subordinate character, yet concurring to adorn and illustrate the grand design. But from the period when France became a principal in the war, the difficulty of the undertaking augments; as the operations of Banner on the Elbe, or the Oder, have almost as little connexion with those of Weimar and Le Vallette, on the Rhine and the Danube, as the achievements of Britain in Spain and Portugal with the battle of Borodino, or the burning of Moscow. It is, therefore, impossible any longer to preserve that harmony in the disposition of our figures, which gives grace and interest to every historical composition.

Richelieu (for, in speaking of any transaction during the busy reign of Louis XIII. it is ridiculous to mention an insignificant puppet that disgraced the dignity of a throne) having set his heart upon reducing the Spanish Netherlands under the dominion of France, was not to be discouraged by any disasters. In order, however, to insure a more prosperous issue to his exertions, he saw the necessity of occupying the imperial forces so fully in Germany, that none might be spared for the protection of Flanders; and he accordingly appointed the Cardinal de la Vallette to the command of the army, designed to co-operate with the Duke of Weimar; who, by the energy of his character, and the inexhaustible resources of genius, had given new life and animation to the protestant party in the upper circles; while Oxenstiern was occupied in counteracting the dangerous projects of Saxony in the provinces contiguous to the Baltic. The persevering courage of Bernard, superior to every vicissitude of fortune, beheld, without yielding to

the dictates of despair, the storm which collected in every quarter; and, when totally ruined, in the opinion of the world, he promised, in a confidential letter to Louis, to compel Gallas to evacuate the left bank of the Rhine, provided he received a reinforcement of eighteen thousand men. "Without the assistance of a similar force," he said, "it will be impracticable for me to prevent the fall of Mentz; by the capture of which I shall lose ten thousand of the best disciplined infantry in Europe. My whole force will then be reduced to seven thousand, the greatest part of whom will inevitably abandon my standard, when I can no longer lead them to glory or fortune."*

The interest of Weimar was so intimately connected with that of France, that the minister of Louis did not hesitate a moment to grant his request; besides, he was apprehensive that, if Bernard should be deserted by his master, he might be tempted to listen to the offers of Ferdinand, who would have regarded no concessions as extravagant, which could have attached to his service so able a general. Desirous also of rewarding the attachment of La Vallette,* and knowing that the din and tumult of arms were more congenial to his inclination than the mild vocations of the gospel, he procured a dispensation from the pope, permitting his colleague in the sacred college to exchange his red hat for a helmet. Notwithstanding the facility with which the court of Rome yielded to the caprices of Richelieu, papal infallibility was no longer suffi-

* *Le Vassor*, xlii. 38.

† The unshaken attachment, or rather servility, manifested by the son of the haughty Epernon, in his behaviour towards Richelieu, so far exceeded the bounds of moderation, that he was satirically called "*Le Cardinal Valet*."—*Ibid.*

cient to reconcile piety to the incongruous spectacle of beholding a pillar of the orthodox church uniting with a heretic, for the humiliation of a sovereign who was justly considered the most strenuous champion of the catholic faith. Neither was the selection of the general less repugnant to the feelings of military men, whose pride was offended at beholding a prelate, educated in the intrigues and dissipation of a voluptuous court, preferred to commanders grown grey in camps, who united the useful lessons of experience to the luminous principles of theory. No sooner, however, was the cardinal invested with the staff of command, than a new difficulty arose respecting the treatment which the episcopal general should receive from his protestant colleague. The dignity of the church was at stake, and both Richelieu and La Vallette were equally interested in asserting it. Yet the services of Weimar were of too great importance to allow of his being treated disrespectfully, and they were perfectly aware, that none of the members of "the Confession of Augsburg" were disposed to admit the extravagant pretensions of the sacred college, which arrogantly disputed the right of precedence with the electors and princes of Germany. The understanding of Bernard, however, looked down with contempt on the ridiculous squabbles of etiquette, and he readily consented to gratify the vanity of his colleague, by every demonstration of outward respect, provided he was allowed to retain the uninterrupted direction of military affairs; a privilege which the prelate, however presumptuous, was not sufficiently arrogant to contest.*

* Le Vasser, xiii. 42.

Too feeble to withstand the overwhelming force of the imperialists, the Duke of Weimar beheld, with unavailing sorrow, the fall of Kaiserlautern, where his military stores were collected; and was actually trembling for the fate of Deux Ponts and Mentz, when the French reinforcements arrived. Without losing a single moment, he began his march, with the resolution of giving battle to Galas; but the Austrian general no sooner heard of his approach, than he retired with the utmost expedition.† Delighted with the prospect of acquiring laurels at so easy a rate, the cardinal imprudently assented to a proposal for driving the enemy out of the palatinate, without reflecting upon the difficulty of supporting an army in a country already impoverished by war. No sooner, however, had the Saxon prince succeeded in drawing his colleague into a situation so perilous, that he almost despaired of ever again tasting the charms of Parisian society, than he seized the opportunity of requiring an augmentation of subsidy, or at least the liquidation of all arrears.

Though seriously alarmed at his colleague's demand, La Vallette attempted, by every artifice, to evade it. But the duplicity of his intentions being too obvious to escape the penetration of Bernard, he urged his suit with still greater importunity, persuaded, that by firmness he should extort from the timidity of Richelieu more than he could expect from his gratitude.

The Duke of Weimar's behaviour at this important crisis, though not reconcileable with exalted magnanimity, was unquestionably dictated by the

* Bougeant, i. 249. Le Vassor, xiii. 53.

soundest policy, and justified by the example of the ablest statesman. All his hopes of obtaining the sovereignty of Franconia were now destroyed; and, without an immediate supply of money, every splendid dream of future glory must necessarily prove equally fallacious. The pride of Richelieu, though justly offended at the idea of compulsion, still caught with avidity at the opportunity which fortune afforded, for depriving Sweden of one of her ablest commanders. The annexation of Alsace to the dominions of France was also the leading object of his ambition; and, in order to stimulate the Saxon to undertake its reduction, he promised to erect it into an independent principality, and to confer it on him with the title of landgrave; and, that he might be the better enabled to carry this plan into execution, his subsidy was augmented to four millions of livres.

Though the understanding of Bernard was too acute to repose much confidence in an engagement of such a nature, yet he suffered himself to be apparently deceived; and having succeeded in obtaining the necessary supplies, he resolved to trust to the decisions of fortune, and his own admirable talents, for the event, in full persuasion that, if he should wrest that valuable province from the dominion of a foe, he should be able to defend it against the avidity of an ally.*

The commencement of the campaign inspired Richelieu with the most sanguine hopes of success. After forcing the imperialists to raise the siege of Mentz, the allies advanced in triumph to Franckfort,

* Schiller, iv.

hoping by their presence to inspire the citizens with courage, or at least to prevent their secession.

Gallas, meanwhile, having drawn reinforcements from all the neighbouring garrisons, was preparing to cut off their retreat; and, as they were considerably reduced by famine and disease, it was much to be apprehended, that the smallest delay might be attended with utter destruction. Convinced that it was alone by decision and activity that he could effect his escape, Bernard embraced his resolution with that quickness of intellect, which is the invariable characteristic of genius. Having deposited the sick in the hospitals at Mentz, committed his baggage to the flames, and buried the heavy artillery, he directed his march through the chain of mountains which separate the Palatinate from Lorraine.

It is impossible to paint in adequate colours the rage and disappointment of the Austrian general, when he discovered that the enemy had decamped; because he could not deny that the facility, with which they had avoided the snare, was in great measure owing to his own inadvertence, in having neglected to occupy the defiles. Anxious, if possible, to repair the error, he commenced the most active pursuit, sending forward his cavalry to harass their rear, in the hope of being able by some fortunate occurrence to bring on a general engagement. After ineffectually sacrificing a great number of men, he had the mortification of seeing, from a neighbouring eminence the unbroken columns of the enemy enter Mentz without material loss, notwithstanding they had endured incredible hardships, during an uninterrupted march of thirteen days. This retreat is regarded by all competent

judges, as no less glorious to the warlike talents of Bernard, than the most splendid victory could have proved; and Gallas himself was compelled to acknowledge, that it was by far the most brilliant display of military genius which he had ever beheld.*

Desirous to retrieve his reputation by some signal exploit, Gallas hastened to join the Duke of Lorraine, who, in conjunction with Colleredo and John of Wert, was opposed to the French under La Force. The decisive superiority of the enemy compelled the latter to remain in a defensive posture, till reinforced by Weimar, La Vallette, and Angouleme, the latter of whom was entrusted with a numerous body of recruits. The balance again inclining in favour of the allies, Gallas prudently avoided a battle, though repeatedly insulted by Weimar. The remainder of the campaign accordingly passed without producing any event, which merits the historian's notice. Yet in spite of all the sacrifices, and all the exertions of France, the result proved unquestionably favourable to the imperialists, who acquired the important fortresses of Frankenthal and Mentz, after Bernard's retreat, while the allies were reduced to the barren honour attending a brilliant retreat.†

In northern Germany the political horizon grew every day darker, so that it required all the energy and fortitude of Banner to support himself in a situation, which presented only the choice of difficulties. The spirit and liberality of the imperial cities was rapidly declining, and they almost uni-

* Bougeant, i. 251. Puffendorf, vii. 91. Histoire du Maroschal Guebriant, by Laboureur, i. 9, 10, 11. Guebriant was actually present, and distinguished himself greatly during the retreat.

† Bougeant, i. 251.

versally manifested a strong inclination to abandon a cause, which no longer presented the prospect of augmented freedom, nor tempted them with the hope of commercial prosperity. The ingratitude of Saxony unfortunately served as a precedent for every meanness. The army of Banner, composed for the most part of native Germans, shewed evident marks of discontent, when they found themselves excluded from the general amnesty, unless they instantly laid down their arms. Another consideration, which tended materially to spread disaffection among the mutinous troops, was the apprehension of serving without pay; and they accordingly demanded, with sedition and audacity, to whom they were in future to look for their stipends. Unable to return a satisfactory answer, and too honest to give a deceitful one, Banner took advantage of the arrival of Oxenstiern, to order the colonels to join their regiments, persuaded that, when they no longer acted in concert, they would in great measure cease to be formidable.* This artifice however might not have produced the desired effect without the concurrence of the chancellor, who having assembled most of the principal officers, admonished them of the danger to which they might be exposed, if they rashly confided in the promises of Austria, by whom they had been so often deceived; and explained to them with an energy, which carried conviction to the most prejudiced mind, that their only hope of being rewarded for all their toils, was by remaining faithful to their engagements with Sweden. No permanent recompense, he said, could possibly be

* Puffendorf, vii. 91.

expected while hostilities continued ; and the only means of obtaining an honourable peace was to persevere in the contest with unabating resolution. Having listened attentively to all he said, the leaders required some days for reflection, before a definitive answer was returned ; but in the course of a week they unanimously signified their determination to adhere invariably to the fortune of Sweden, provided Oxenstiern would engage not to enter into any treaty with Saxony, unless with the approbation of the generals. To these conditions he readily assented ; and as a further proof of sincerity, consented to the appointment of six delegates, who were allowed permission to be present at every deliberation respecting the establishment of peace, and were ordered minutely to attend to the interests of the soldiers, lest they should be sacrificed to political considerations.*

It is an observation no less common than true, that the quarrels of friends are the most inveterate ; and the truth of this remark was scarcely ever exemplified in more striking colours, than during the conflict between Sweden and Saxony. By the treaty of Prague the elector (for presumption is usually an attendant on folly) undertook to compel his ancient protectors to evacuate Germany ; an engagement which he was particularly anxious to fulfil, because their departure was necessary to his obtaining possession of Magdeburg, which Oxenstiern refused to surrender.†

Though resolutely determined to meet the storm with unbending fortitude, the chancellor would have preferred to disperse it. But while he pru-

* 1635. Puffendorf, vii. 58.

† Ibid. 63.

dently endeavoured to sooth John George by caresses and flattery, he lost no time in assembling an army sufficiently powerful to brave his resentment; and the truce with Poland fortunately placed a considerable force at his disposal, for the most part composed of native troops, upon whose courage and fidelity he could rely.

The arrival of these afforded a seasonable relief to the representative of Christina, as the elector had recently promulgated an order, enjoining all his subjects, engaged in the service of Sweden, immediately to join the national standard, and promising to reward them for their early compliance with a liberality proportionate to their deserts. This paternal exhortation was followed by an imperial monitory, menacing all Germans, who rejected the proffered clemency of Ferdinand, with exemplary punishment. Interest and fear, the two passions which operate most powerfully in influencing the conduct of men, being thus called into action, it was hardly to be expected that gratitude should be sufficient to repel the attacks, when no longer stimulated by the prospect of glory.*

Having assembled his troops in the vicinity of Dresden, John George advanced within sight of the Swedish camp, signified to Banner that the exhausted state of the electorate no longer affording provisions sufficient for the maintenance of its inhabitants, he requested him to remove to some other spot, where he might meet with more abundant resources; adding, that notwithstanding the distress to which his people were reduced, he

* Puffendorf, vii. 64.

should still be ready to assist his ancient friends to the utmost of his ability, provided they would evacuate the see of Magdeburg, which had been recently ceded to him by the emperor. Unwilling to provoke immediate hostilities by a positive refusal, though secretly resolved never to relinquish a station of so great importance, while he possessed the means of defending it, Banner artfully availed himself of the absence of Oxenstiern, as a plea for delaying his answer.*

The situation of the armies, now posted within less than a league of each other, rendered it difficult for Banner to prevent the German officers from communicating with their friends in the electoral service; because he was apprehensive of employing rigorous measures, lest they should add to the evil of which he complained. Availing himself of the opportunities which these interviews afforded, John George attempted to corrupt their fidelity by the basest acts of intrigue. In this sinister attempt he was warmly assisted by Bauditzen, whom we have formerly seen in the service of Gustavus, but who was now become the inveterate enemy of Oxenstiern, because he had refused to comply with his exorbitant demands. Those who were open to the seductions of avarice were tempted by an augmentation of pay; but to the generous, the high-minded, and the humane, addressing himself in a language more congenial to their feelings, the elector deplored the calamities to which Germany was exposed through the obstinacy of Banner and Oxenstiern, who sacrificed

* Puffendorf, vii. 64.

the peace and prosperity of Europe to their own inordinate ambition. The views of the emperor were artfully described as inoderate, just, and pacific, and he was represented as ready to treat with the Swedes upon equitable terms, provided they would consent to evacuate the empire, so long the theatre of their cruel depredations. "It was by no means the wish of the German nation (he said) to send them away unrewarded, though Gustavus Adolphus had nobly disclaimed every idea of private emolument. On the contrary, he should propose to give them a million of florins, or allow them to retain possession of Stralsund, or some other place of equal importance, till the debt should be entirely liquidated."*

The loyalty of the troops was so much shaken by these ungenerous attacks, that Oxenstiern determined either to bind the elector by a specific engagement, or to manifest to the world his duplicity. And he accordingly sent a confidential agent with the following proposals, as the basis of a treaty. "That the crown of Sweden should receive a pecuniary remuneration, proportionate to the extent of her services; and, till the money was actually paid, should occupy Pomerania, or some other province of equal value. That to all the adherents of Christina, without any exception, their sequestered property should be restored, and ample security given, that they should never in future be molested on account of their religious or political principles. That the troops should receive a satisfactory recompense for all their exertions. That a defensive alliance should be formed between Sweden and the

* Galetti, i. 404. Puffendorf, vii. 65.

protestant princes of the empire, including the electors of Saxony and Brandenburg; and that France and Holland, if so disposed, should become parties to the treaty. And, lastly, that as soon as the preliminaries were signed, the archiepiscopal territory should be evacuated; but that the city of Magdeburg should be retained till the treaty was ratified.*

From the moderation of Oxenstiern it was easy to infer how greatly his prospects were clouded. This change was too striking to escape even the elector's observation; and, as his vanity immediately led him to suppose, that he might trample with impunity upon a fallen people, he began disingenuously to cavil respecting the amount of the sum to be given by Germany, as well as the manner in which it should be paid. It is unnecessary to enter into any further detail of the pitiful subterfuges employed; it will be sufficient to observe, that they were in every respect worthy of their despicable author, and that they furnish posterity with a perfect epitome of baseness, ingratitude, and imbecility.†

The character of Oxenstiern was in no wise calculated for such an experiment to succeed; and indeed, it appeared from the preparations which the elector was making, that he himself entertained very little expectation of such an event. Without waiting for an answer to his last proposal, he ordered his army to cross the Saal, while the Swedes retired before him. Notwithstanding every indication of an hostile disposition, the German officers still affected to believe, that the treaty had been suspended on the part of Sweden, not because it was

* 1635. Puffendorf, 66.

† Ibid.

essentially prejudicial to their interest, but because it was defective in some trifling forms ; and they in consequence demanded permission to send two delegates to the elector, in order to ascertain his final determination. Notwithstanding the danger of permitting a constant intercourse to be maintained with an enemy so ready to avail himself of every artifice, yet the inconveniences attending a positive refusal appeared still more alarming to Oxenstiern, and he accordingly preferred to grant, with apparent facility, what he could not consistently with prudence refuse. The delegates repaired to the Saxon camp, and, being admitted to a conference, inquired of the elector the motives for which his army continued to advance, in spite of his pacific assurances, and requested him to signify, in unequivocal terms, what was in reality his future intentions.

John George replied, that though he held himself responsible to God alone, he felt no hesitation in declaring, that his present purpose was to regain possession of a country, unjustly retained by the Swedes, and which belonged to his family before Gustavus Adolphus invaded Germany. The dispute between himself and the Swedish government, he said, was entirely of a private nature, and in no respects connected with those important objects for which they had jointly contended. Under these circumstances he insisted, that it was a duty incumbent on all to return to the national standards, instead of abetting his enemies in their ambitious designs for the subversion of his glory and authority.

Though these arguments were accompanied by insinuations respecting the advantages likely to accrue from obedience, the officers declared with becoming spirit, that they were bound to the Swedes

by the strongest obligations of duty and honour, and could not abandon them till some satisfaction was made them for all their sacrifices in defence of the independance of Germany.*

Had this declaration been scrupulously observed, the situation of Oxenstiern would have been much less perplexing. But, notwithstanding the army professed unshaken fidelity, it was impossible to conquer his fears, when he was informed that the German officers continued to hold clandestine consultations. That the object in view was decidedly hostile to the interests of Sweden might be inferred from the rigid secrecy observed. But while he was endeavouring to penetrate the mystery, it was suddenly developed by the conspirators themselves, who with Winkel and Sperreuter at their head, informed him that they could no longer, consistently with their feelings, draw their swords against the Elector of Saxony; and some of them even proceeded so far as to require their immediate discharge. The same spirit of insubordination gradually diffused itself among the lower ranks, and rendered the soldiers, not only neglectful of duty, but inattentive to every thing except plunder.

Meanwhile the Saxons advanced, in the hope of being able to cut off their retreat, or at least to intercept the reinforcements expected from Prussia. Convinced that so long as the Swedes should keep possession of the principal fortresses which commanded the Baltic, they need not despair of ultimately obtaining a favourable peace, Banner suggested a plan for this purpose; in conformity to which, the chancellor marched with part of the

* Puffendorf, 67.

army to Wismar, while the general remained on the banks of the Elbe, in order to prevent the Saxons from disturbing the operations of Oxenstiern.*

It would be an unnecessary trespass upon the reader's patience, to occupy him with a detail of every difficulty to which both these illustrious persons were exposed; or minutely to enumerate the various artifices employed by them to prevent the desertion of the German officers. To avoid coming in contact with the Saxon army, Banner successively evacuated most of the towns on the banks of the Saal; but to the sacrifice of Domitz he could not consent, while a hope of defending it remained. The conduct of the siege had been committed to Bauditzen, who, expecting to meet with no opposition, had not only left his heavy artillery behind, but had detached his cavalry upon another expedition. In this situation he was surprised by Rudwen, one of Banner's lieutenants, who attacked the Saxons with so much impetuosity, that they were instantly thrown into confusion; and, being pursued by the Swedish horse, the greater part was either slain or taken prisoners. This victory proved of incalculable advantage; because it not only inspired the loyal regiments with additional courage, but contributed essentially to bring back the disaffected to a proper sense of duty.†

Reinforced by the troops from Polish Prussia, which were no longer required for its defence, Banner allowed no repose to the Saxons, and even after their junction with the imperialists under Marazini and Hatsfield, supported the contest with a degree of equality, which, considering the enormous supe-

* Galetti, i. 408. Puffendorf, vii. 70.

† Ibid, 97.

riority of the foe, is calculated to excite the astonishment of posterity. When he found himself too feeble to face them in the field, he selected his positions with such consummate skill, that the enemy was afraid to attack him; occasionally bursting like a torrent upon their foraging parties, intercepting their convoys, or beating up their quarters.*

Though infinitely glorious to the reputation of Banner, these splendid exertions of desultory valour lose much of their interest when contemplated at a distance, and at a period of the world in which the events of ages are wonderfully condensed in a single campaign. Accustomed to view the operations of armies upon a grander scale, we forget that it is possible for greater talents to have been displayed by Gustavus or Banner, in the passage of a river, or the defence of a town, than were required to march from the Rhine to the Vistula in the course of an autumn, or to overturn in a single battle the colossal fabric of a great military empire.

* Galetti, 416. Puffendorf, vii. 99. 101. 111, 112.

CHAP. XX.

The Pope offers his mediations to the belligerent powers, who are all equally averse from accepting it, though professing an inclination for peace. Their artful conduct upon this occasion.—Plenipotentiaries appointed by Austria, Spain, and France to meet at Cologne.—Objections started by Holland and Sweden. Fresh treaty between the latter and Louis.—The war renewed. Battle of Wittstock. Operations of the French. Siege of Dole. Invasion of Piccardy by the Spaniards.—Gallas enters Burgundy.—Spirited conduct of Richelieu.—Election of a King of the Romans.—Death of Ferdinand II.

THE unprosperous issue of the first campaign, in which France was openly engaged, induced Urban VIII. to offer his mediation to Louis, whom he hoped to induce, by the terrors of religion, to withdraw his assistance from the promoters of heresy, and to enter into a treaty with Austria. In this undertaking he was abetted by father Joseph, who, unable to resist the temptation of a cardinal's hat, secretly counteracted the projects of Richelieu, by insinuating to the king, the absolute necessity of terminating a contest, which, by loading his people with intolerable burdens, must ultimately alienate their affections. Simultaneous efforts were likewise made by several of the German princes, to inspire the Swedes with pacific sentiments; because it was evident, that in case either power could be persuaded to retire from the theatre of war, it would be impossible for the other long to continue hostilities.*

* 1636. Puffendorf, viii. 3.

The difficulty of the attempt proved, however, infinitely greater than the house of Barbarini imagined; as the views and pretensions of all the belligerents were much too extravagant for them to listen at present to any reasonable terms of accommodation. Elated with the victory obtained at Nordlingen, the courts of Madrid and Vienna again looked forward with confidence to the fortunate period, when they should be enabled to prescribe the conditions of peace to an humbled confederacy. Neither was Richelieu in reality more pacifically inclined; for, notwithstanding his hopes had been hitherto disappointed, he was too well acquainted with the resources of his country, and the declining state of the Spanish monarchy, to entertain a doubt that perseverance, on the part of France, must ultimately triumph. Though firmly resolved to prosecute hostilities, till the power of Austria should be shaken to its foundation, he felt the necessity of shaping his course according to the prejudices of the times. Desirous of silencing the clamours of faction, continually exclaiming against the ambition of a priest, who, in order to gratify his inordinate pride, deluged Europe with Christian blood; and convinced that, amidst a variety of such discordant pretensions, no expedient could be devised for restoring tranquillity, he thought it expedient to assume the mask of humanity, and to declare himself an advocate for negotiation. Though almost certain of directing the feeble understanding of a monarch, who wanted resolution to support his own opinion, when it contradicted the wishes of his minister, he entertained serious apprehensions that Sweden might be reduced by the pressure of distress, or tempted by the prospect of a permanent establish-

ment in Germany, to listen to the overtures of Ferdinand. For these reasons, it is probable, that he would not have objected to a general congress, in which the pretensions of all the belligerents might be submitted to full and impartial discussion. But he laboured assiduously to prevent his allies from engaging in separate negotiations with Austria; and justly considering, that the conduct of Sweden would serve as a precedent to most of the Lutheran states, he resolved so completely to identify the interests of the two nations, that they might both be animated with the same spirit and resolution.*

This plan, however, in its execution, presented greater obstacles than the cardinal had anticipated; because the desertion of her friends, and the consequent failure of her resources, had contributed materially to lower the expectations of Sweden, and would have rendered peace a most acceptable blessing, provided it could have been obtained without the sacrifice of honour; † and for these reasons she listened to the offers of Richelieu, with a degree of indifference, which was equally calculated to mortify his vanity, and excite his suspicions. These sentiments being known to the mediating powers, ‡ they flattered themselves that it might be easy to augment this jealousy, by artfully insinuating, that it was the intention of France not to continue hostilities one moment longer than her private interest should prescribe; but that when satisfied herself, she would immediately abandon the pro-

* Bougeant, i. 257. Grotii epistolæ passim. Le Vassor, xiii. 190.

† *Senatui jam satius videretur aliquid mediocri, quam nihil, accipere.* Puffendorf, viii. 6.

‡ The King of Denmark and the Dukes of Mecklenburg.

testants to the resentment of the emperor, without the smallest compassion for their sufferings. That this imputation was not entirely destitute of foundation, the Swedish governments was disposed to disbelieve; yet, though too cautious to repose unlimited confidence in the promises of a nation, never very remarkable for political honesty, they were too well acquainted with the duplicity of Christian, to suppose that his advice proceeded from friendship.* Neither were the professions of Austria less an object of jealousy to Oxenstiern, who could hardly be persuaded that the emperor was sincere, as it was his obvious policy to divide his enemies, in order that he might avail himself of their disunion, to terminate the contest by separate treaties; a mode of negotiation far more favourable to his views than a general congress.

But, as it was by no means impossible that declining health might inspire Ferdinand with the wish of restoring tranquillity to Europe, before he quitted the world, lest, in case he should die without securing to his son the imperial crown, that splendid possession might be irrecoverably lost, the chancellor determined to conduct himself with the utmost circumspection.† It became necessary for him, however, cautiously to conceal his intentions from Richelieu, till circumstances should have finally decided his conduct. If peace could be obtained upon honourable terms, he thought that it would be inconsistent with prudence to reject it; but in case the negotiation should terminate unsuccessfully, he resolved to accept the offers of

* Puffendorf, 9.

† Ibid. 6.

France, and unite himself with her more closely than ever.*

The prospect of escaping from the calamities of war, created so general a sensation of joy, that the belligerents were compelled, after various subterfuges, to designate a time for assembling the congress. This, however, was attended with considerable difficulty, because France positively refused to treat without Holland and Sweden, neither of whom would accept the mediation of Urban. As an expedient most likely to remove this impediment, it was proposed, that an ambassador from the republic of Venice should be joined with the pontifical legate. This plan, however, proved far from satisfactory to the two protestant courts, who clearly foresaw, that the interested policy of the Venetian senate would lead it to favour the pretensions of a power, from whose resentment it had much to apprehend, at the expense of a people, whose remote situation must render its feelings an object of indifference, or of a rival commonwealth, whose commercial prosperity excited the envy of Venice. In determining the place for the plenipotentiaries to meet, the same want of unanimity appeared. Desirous of excluding the papal court from all share in the negotiation, the states general pretended, that the complicated forms of the Batavian constitution required the treaty to be conducted within the territory of the republic; because nothing could be concluded without the unanimous consent of the whole confederacy, and no resolution could be embraced by any of the provinces, without previously consulting every town possessing a vote in

* Bougeant l. 260. Le Vassor, xiii. 205.

the provincial assemblies. This objection it was thought might be entirely obviated, by selecting some neighbouring city; and Liege, Maestric, Spire, and Cologne, having been successively named for that purpose, the pope fixed upon the latter, and directed his legate, Cardinal Ginetti, to repair thither without loss of time.*

The nomination of plenipotentiaries to the approaching congress, proved another source of delay; because none of the powers being seriously disposed to terminate hostilities, a thousand objections were daily started, more futile, if possible, than those which arose from the ridiculous cavils of diplomatic etiquette, or a pedantic veneration for antiquated ceremonies. The courts of Madrid and Vienna professed themselves ready to appoint their ambassadors, the moment France should have set them the example; while Louis waited impatiently for a precedent from the house of Austria, to make known his intentions on that important subject. Disgusted with excuses which were for the most part destitute of solid foundation, the pope earnestly intreated the three great catholic powers, to deliver to him in writing, under the promise of secrecy, the names of their intended negociators. Unable to devise any further objections, the emperor designated the Bishops of Bamberg and Wurtzburg, Fugger, president of the aulic council, and Kutts, an accomplished courtier, who long had held a distinguished post in the imperial household. The King of Spain selected the Duke of Alcala, the Counts Ognato and Monterey, the Marquis of Mirabel, Don Francisco de Melo, Don Antonio

* Puffendorf, viii. 82.

Ronquillo, chancellor of Milan; and Rose, president of the council in the Spanish Netherlands. Louis signified his intention of employing the Marshal de Brerè, the Comte d'Avaux, the Marquis de Feuquieres, and the Baron de Charnacè. It must not be inferred from this swelling list, that such hosts of ambassadors were actually to contend upon the diplomatic stage; but that, out of the catalogue, a convenient number should be chosen, for the management of this important negociation.*

These preliminaries being settled, Ginetti departed for Cologne; and, on his way thither, presented to the Venetian senate a papal brief, requesting them to appoint a minister, to act as mediator for Holland and Sweden. Highly gratified at an invitation which cast fresh lustre upon the declining grandeur of the republic, the senate immediately selected Pesarò, one of the most accomplished members of that illustrious order. After passing through Ratisbonne, where a diet was assembled for the purpose of electing a King of the Romans, Ginetti proceeded with uninterrupted diligence, and made his public entry into the city of Cologne on the 24th of October. For some time, however, he was suffered to remain in pompous solitude, as no plenipotentiary appeared from any of the belligerents, though out of respect for the pontifical legate, great preparations were made in all the catholic courts, as if the only remaining cause of delay proceeded from a wish of accoutring their representatives with more than common splendour and dignity.

As no steps were taken by Richelieu, in order to

* Le Vassor, xiii. 199.

ascertain the intention of Sweden and Holland, respecting the appointment of ambassadors, it was generally supposed, that he believed them weak enough to confide their respective interests to the skill and integrity of the French plenipotentiaries. It is, however, far more probable that, foreseeing the impediments likely to arise, he took no pains to remove them, because he was satisfied they would retard the progress of a treaty, which he was desirous should fail on any grounds, except those of his personal opposition.

The intervention of the protestants, however, was not required for the accomplishment of the cardinal's design, as he found in the pride and presumption of Olivares abundant materials for effecting his purpose. Every question relative to the rank and precedence of the different courts, the titles to be accorded to the protestant states, and the ceremonies to be observed by the royal ambassadors, could not have been debated with greater virulence, had the glory and happiness of the civilized world depended entirely on the form or the position of a chair, or the regulated number of salutes.

But, had it even been practicable to appease these puerile squabbles by the controlling empire of reason, it soon became evident, that the Swedes would never submit to be bound by a treaty, from the conduct of which she was excluded. Determined not to descend, by any weakness of its own, from the exalted height to which Sweden had been raised by the valour and wisdom of Gustavus Adolphus, the government of Stockholm disdained to admit the superiority of France; and, in support of their claim to equal rank, alleged the declaration of the Archbishop of Upsal to the council of Bale,

where he boldly insisted upon the right of precedence, because the monarch he represented was unquestionably the most ancient of any in Europe.*

Fresh difficulties occurred respecting the passports for the ambassadors; because the imperial ministers inserted clauses, either derogatory to the honour of the hostile powers, or subversive of the object which they were ostensibly intended to promote.

Though openly professing the most violent indignation, Richelieu was secretly delighted to find, in the presumption of Austria, a covering for his own duplicity. And he accordingly lamented, to his credulous master, the necessity of protracting the sufferings of mankind, or of submitting to indignities too degrading to be endured by one of the greatest monarchs in Europe. Assuming a character more agreeable to his episcopal duties, than that under which he had hitherto appeared, he urged the necessity of fixing upon some other place, where the protestants might carry on a separate negotiation, under the mediation of Pesaro; and pointed out the cities of Lubec and Hamburgh, as particularly calculated for that purpose. He further suggested the propriety of permitting Holland and Sweden to send unaccredited agents to reside at Cologne, to whom the plenipotentiaries of France should be directed to communicate the progress of the negotiation, and without the concurrence of whom the king should solemnly engage to take no definitive resolution.

Richelieu must, however, have entertained a very erroneous opinion of the sagacity of his contempo-

* La Vassor, xiii. 202.

aries, if he believed them likely to be deceived by such shallow artifices. His professions and actions were too openly at variance for the former to produce much effect. Indeed, from the very commencement of the negociation, it does not appear that Oxenstiern was disposed to attach the smallest credit to the professions of any of the parties; and, convinced that it was fruitless to cherish the expectation of obtaining an honourable peace, till some material change should take place in the relative situation of the belligerents, he wisely resolved to prosecute hostilities, in conjunction with France, till the house of Hapsburg should be reduced to greater moderation.*

These considerations having determined him to renew the negociation, Chaumont was invited to meet him at Wismar, where, after various altercations, a treaty was concluded between the two crowns, by which they mutually covenanted to employ all their forces against the house of Austria. Notwithstanding, it was evident to all mankind, that interest and ambition were the instigating motives with both parties; yet it appeared desirable to hide those passions beneath the prostituted veil of philanthropy; and they accordingly professed themselves actuated by the most disinterested patriotism, and resolved to restore the Germanic constitution to its ancient independance, or gloriously perish in the attempt. They further declared themselves ready to sheath the sword, the moment they should have secured to the protestants the uninterrupted exercise of their religion, delivered the commerce of the Baltic from all arbitrary restrictions, and

* *Le Vassor*, xiii. 252. *Puffendorf*, viii. 41.

compelled Ferdinand to treat upon terms of equality. For the accomplishment of these objects, it was stipulated that Christina should direct all her efforts against the hereditary provinces of Austria, while Louis should act with corresponding vigour upon the Rhine and the Necker. All the states, which still adhered to the convention of Heilbrun, were taken under the protection of the confederates, who declared their intention of prosecuting hostilities, till their allies should recover the territories of which they had been stripped by the arbitrary decrees of the emperor. No endeavours were to be spared, which might tend to bring back to a just sense of their duty all who had been tempted, by the threats or promises of Ferdinand, to subscribe to the treaty of Prague; but, in case they should continue deaf to the mild suggestions of reason, they were no longer to be regarded in the light of misguided friends, but treated with all the severity of military execution. The security of the empire, against the dreadful consequences of religious persecution, being the ostensible object of the contest, no alteration was to be attempted, by either party, with regard to the forms of the established worship; but all the inhabitants of the conquered countries were to be indulged in the rational privilege of adoring their Creator as their consciences dictated, whether they adhered to the splendid pageantries of popery, or preferred the patriarchal simplicity of the reformers. No peace was to be concluded except by mutual consent. The subsidy was regulated at a million of livres, and the treaty was to continue for three years, unless the war should terminate sooner.*

* 1636. Galetti, i. 421. Le Vassor, xiii. 261.

Notwithstanding several articles in the treaty, and particularly that by which Sweden was precluded from entering into a negotiation, except in conjunction with France, were far from according with the inclination of Oxenstiern, yet he could not but feel, all circumstances considered, that he had obtained for his country terms full as advantageous as she was entitled to expect. Indeed, so great were the difficulties to which he was reduced from pecuniary distress, that, without the assistance of Louis, it would have been impossible to provide either clothing or food for the armies.*

No sooner were his finances recruited, than the chancellor prepared to open the campaign with the most vigorous exertions. Determined no longer to confine his operations to the coasts of the Baltic, but to act simultaneously with three different armies on the Weser, the Elbe, and the Oder; he entrusted the second, as the most important command, to the genius of Banner, with positive instructions to take the field the first moment the season would permit. Wrangel, at the head of a numerous body of new levies, was directed to watch the Prussians on the banks of the Oder, where he would be ready either to march to the assistance of Banner, or to carry devastation into the hereditary dominions of Austria. The troops destined to oppose the imperialists in Westphalia were placed under the orders of Lesley, an officer of experience, and unimpeachable fidelity.*

Notwithstanding the desertion of most of her German allies, the condition of Sweden was materially improved since the renewal of the convention

* Puffendorf, viii. 14. Galetti, i. 421.

† Puffendorf, 15.*

with France. Though certainly weakened in point of numerical strength, by the defection of those who had trusted to the clemency of Ferdinand, she found herself at liberty to act with greater decision, than when her councils were distracted by discordant interests and opinions, the unavoidable consequences of an extensive confederacy. No longer subjected to the inconvenience of sparing the territories belonging to the cities which adhered to "the Confession of Augsburg," she was enabled to procure more abundant supplies, when employing the authoritative language of a conqueror, than when soliciting assistance under the character of a friend. Oxenstiern, in consequence, shewed little inclination to pardon the runagates, though he deemed it impolitic to reject their petitions with a public avowal of implacability, lest the Germans should refuse to follow his standard, when they found it raised in unqualified defiance against every member of the empire.*

While Oxenstiern was guiding the political machine with infinite prudence and sagacity, Banner conducted the operations of war with no less ability. Though greatly inferior in numbers to the Saxons, the want of provision was the most serious difficulty which he had to encounter; because it frequently obliged him to relinquish an enterprize, from which both profit and glory might have accrued. The archbishopric of Magdeburg had suffered so cruelly from the devastations of war, that it was incapable of furnishing the necessary supplies, even before it was visited by the Saxons. The distress of the inhabitants soon extending to

* Puffendorf, 15. Galetti, 422.

those by whose rapacity or profusion it was occasioned, the elector was constrained to postpone his design of recovering that valuable province; and, being desirous of removing the theatre of hostilities to a distance from his hereditary states, he directed his march towards Pomerania, in full persuasion that he should be followed by Banner. That sagacious commander, however, was not so easily diverted from his purpose; instead of following the course prescribed by his antagonist, he burst unexpectedly into the electorate, with the destructive fury of a torrent. The miserable peasantry were now destined to encounter the unbridled violence of his indignation. Exasperated at the ingratitude of an unfaithful ally, he inflicted upon his subjects every complicated evil, which it was possible for barbarity to inflict, when stimulated by resentment, and armed with unbounded authority.

The object of Banner, with respect to Pomerania, was now accomplished. The elector returned with the utmost celerity to the defence of his capital, but, dreading to encounter the prowess of a foe, whose triumphs he had repeatedly witnessed; and, finding that his approach produced no alteration in the conduct of the enemy, he preferred to remain a tranquil spectator of the ruin of his country, rather than expose himself to the hazard of a battle.*

Impressed with the necessity of rescuing a prince, the tool and abettor of his ambitious designs, Ferdinand directed Hatsfeld, one of his ablest generals, to hasten to the elector's assistance. After the

* Puffendorf, 23.

junction of the Austrians with the electoral army, their united force became too formidable for Banner to encounter; and he therefore thought it expedient to cross the Elbe, after reinforcing the garrison of Magdeburg.*

No sooner had the Swedes abandoned Magdeburg than it was invested by John George, so impatient to obtain the recompense of his treachery, that he would not have regretted the loss of half his army, to have ensured its immediate possession. The vigour and activity with which he prosecuted the siege, soon reduced the garrison to such pressing distress, that they were induced to capitulate before Banner was in a situation to make any attempt for their relief.†

Few events could have occurred more injurious to the interest or to the reputation of Sweden; because she not only lost an important station, where military stores might be placed in security, but displayed to the world a melancholy proof of declining prosperity. Too proud to endure the humiliating change, Banner resolved to obliterate the disgrace by some fresh and brilliant achievement. Lesley was accordingly ordered to join him; and Wrangel requested to send all the troops that could be prudently spared;‡ yet so diminished were the host which had spread terror and desolation from the Baltic to the Alps, that after calling in every detachment, no more than sixteen thousand combatants could be mustered;§ and with this diminutive force Banner gallantly resolved to give battle to the enemy, though nearly double in num-

* Puffendorf, 25. Galetti, 426.

† Puffendorf, 29, 30.

‡ Ibid. 56.

§ Nine thousand horse and seven thousand foot. Ibid.

ber;* because he had certain intelligence they were in daily expectation of considerable reinforcements.†

Yet so prevalent was the dread of Swedish discipline, that the allies remained immovable in their camp at Wistock; a position so strong, that all attempts to force it were hopeless. Nothing therefore was left for the Swedish general except to turn them; but this was an undertaking of considerable danger, because it unavoidably obliged him to divide his force, and of course left one part exposed to an overwhelming attack, while the other was performing a circuitous march.‡ Had the allies been apprised of his intention in time, it would have been hardly possible for Banner to have escaped; but many hours elapsed before they ventured to abandon the heights; so that just as they were anticipating an easy victory, Lesley unexpectedly appeared in their rear, and by a desperate charge threw them into confusion. The route became general, and was attended as usual with horrible slaughter. The infantry, comprehending several of the choicest regiments in the Austrian service, was almost literally destroyed. One hundred and fifty standards, the greater part of the artillery, the whole of the baggage, including the plate and field equipage of the elector, fell into the hands of the conquerors.§

Far, however, from displaying immoderate trans-

* Sixteen thousand cavalry and fourteen thousand infantry.—*Theatrum Europæum*, iii. 635.

† Under Gotze and the Duke of Luneburg. Puffendorf, 57.

‡ Twenty-fifth of September, 1636.

§ Schmidt, v. 14. Puffendorf, viii. 58. Galetti, i. 430. According to the author of the history of Guelman, the elector was the first to quit the field, as he had done at Leipsic, 73.

port, or insulting the vanquished with the insolence of triumph, the Swedes hailed their success with temperate joy, as the prelude and presage of returning tranquillity; for they were convinced by experience, that the only road which led to the temple of peace, was through the arch of victory.

Though Banner was prevented by want of provisions from pursuing the enemy with his wonted activity; and thus allowed them to collect their scattered troops, and to receive reinforcements from various quarters, the Swedes still derived many important advantages from the victory. Their military character, which had gradually declined since their defeat at Nordlingen, again obtained its ancient celebrity.

Considerably weakened by their success, and worn out by unremitting fatigue, the Swedes wanted repose, and Banner accordingly would have willingly placed them in winter quarters, but he could not endure the idea of quitting the field, till he had convinced the world that he did not retire from fear of the enemy. For this purpose he directed his march towards the capital of Thuringia, which, forgetful of the generous behaviour of Gustavus, had abandoned the interests of his daughter. By the conquest of Erfurt, he flattered himself to secure a few months tranquillity in Misnia, the only province in Saxony which still afforded the smallest resources. The possession of Torgau however appearing equally essential to the accomplishment of his design, he hastened to its defence the moment he heard that it was in danger.*

Meanwhile the Landgrave of Cassel, whose at-

* December, 1636. Puffendorf, 64.

tachment had not been shaken by adversity, having assembled an army with the assistance of France, delivered Osnabruck and Hanau, the latter of which was upon the point of surrendering to Lamboy.*

Leaving Banner secure under the cannon of Torgau, it becomes requisite once more to conduct the reader to the banks of the Rhine, that he may be enabled to determine how far the achievements of France corresponded with the magnitude of her preparations.

Notwithstanding the events of the last campaign had totally disappointed the expectations of Richelieu, he was convinced that the failure proceeded entirely from extraneous causes, and not from want of internal resources. But, as the intellect of Louis was far better calculated to judge of positive facts, than to appreciate the merit of more remote speculations, it was necessary for the cardinal to attribute the reverses which his arms had experienced, not to any radical defect in the original plans, nor to the want of revenue, or of men; but the cowardice, or incapacity of the commanders. The sacrifice of a general, or even the loss of an army, would have appeared to Richelieu a trifling consideration, provided it enabled him to carry a point of essential importance to his interest, or his glory.

While folly persists with incorrigible obstinacy in a system of error, rather than submit to the degradation of acknowledging that she was deceived, it is the characteristic of wisdom to derive a salutary lesson from the careful examination of her own mistakes. However anxiously he might desire to

* Puffendorf, 40.

conceal the faults, into which a sanguine disposition had betrayed him, Richelieu was sensible, that by embracing too many objects, he had been prevented from acting in any quarter with the vigour essential to success. Having in consequence determined to circumscribe his efforts within narrower limits, he laid aside for the present his intended attack upon the Spanish Netherlands, that he might be able to prosecute the war with preponderating energy in Italy or Germany.

Having opened the campaign with the recovery of Saverne, a strong fortress in Alsace, which had been lately taken by surprise, the Duke of Weimar was preparing to carry hostilities into the Austrian territory, when he was suddenly constrained to change his plan by events which we are about to describe.

Terrified at the idea of becoming subject to a nation, which refused to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome, and believed it possible for the ceremonies of religion to be performed without a constant succession of miracles, the inhabitants of Franche-Comté, when first they beheld the Swedes on their frontier, had spontaneously courted the protection of France. Notwithstanding the infinite importance of such an acquisition, the cardinal listened to the proposal with affected indifference, because the supplicants had addressed themselves to the Prince of Condé; for so intolerable was the arrogance of this haughty prelate, that he preferred losing the opportunity of annexing to the crown a most valuable province, rather than suffer another to participate in the glory inseparable from such an acquisition. A little reflection, however, sufficed to convince him that he had acted imprudently;

and he in consequence endeavoured, when the fortunate moment was irretrievably lost, to repair the error of which he had been guilty. The fatal consequences of the battle of Nordlingen having effaced the dread of contamination, from the intercourse with heretics, the people of Franche-Comté not only rejected the proffered amity of Louis, but even in direct violation of an existing treaty, supplied the emperor's troops with provisions.

Eager to obliterate the impression of his own inadvertence, Richelieu resolved to obtain by arms, the country which he had refused as a voluntary present. Persuaded that it would be impossible for the emperor to spare a force sufficient for its defence, and having learnt from his spies, that all the places of strength were destitute of stores and ammunition, he flattered himself that they would fall an easy conquest. Under this conviction, he arranged a plan for the approaching campaign; by which it was settled, that the Prince of Condé, who was appointed to command in the duchy of Milan, should take Dole in his way thither; an enterprize which, according to the cardinal's calculation, would occasion hardly any delay. When this was effected, Condé was intrusted to proceed with the utmost expedition into Italy; and, having employed the summer in driving the Spaniards out of Lombard, he was to return in the autumn to consummate his exploits by the reduction of Salins and Besançon.*

The preparations carrying on by the French in Burgundy did not escape the observation of their neighbours, who, penetrating the real object for

* Bougeant, i. 286.

which the armament was assembling, prepared with activity for their defence. The siege of Dole was undertaken, but little progress made; because every succeeding day was signalized by a desperate sally, and their works regularly destroyed as they advanced. Priests, magistrates, and burghers, every age, and every sex, kept up a continual shower of stones and grenades. Armed with hammers and iron bars, when no swords nor pikes could be procured, they frequently penetrated into the trenches, and either carried off, or spiked the artillery. These were obstacles which presumption might easily overlook; but there were others which prudence was bound to foresee, the neglect of which occasioned the failure of the undertaking. Fully persuaded that the town would open its gates, upon receiving a summons to surrender, the army had marched with so small a supply of ammunition, that before the expiration of a fortnight all their powder was expended. Condé was therefore reduced to the cruel alternative of abandoning the siege with disgrace, or of hazarding an engagement with the Duke of Lorraine, who was advancing rapidly with a powerful force to give battle to the besiegers. But while hesitating with himself on which to decide, he was suddenly extricated from all his embarrassment, by an order from Paris to raise the siege, and march instantly to the protection of the capital.*

The attention of Richelieu had been so completely engrossed by the brilliant chimeras of imaginary conquest, that he totally overlooked the internal security of the kingdom, and never recol-

* Bougeant, i. 268.

lected, that while he was preparing to pour the torrent of war into every province subject to the dominion of Austria, the northern frontier of France was by no means secure against invasion. While one army was occupied in the investment of Dole, and another was taking measures for passing the Rhine, in those days an arduous undertaking, the cardinal infant made a sudden irruption into Picardy, where most of the fortresses, either through unpardonable negligence, or from a presumptuous contempt for the enemy, were in want of many articles essentially requisite for their defence, and entrusted for the most part to commanders, who were equally deficient in character, courage, and conduct. Yet however inadequate the means they possessed, they were unquestionably sufficient, if wisely employed, to have impeded the progress of the Spaniards. But so dastardly was the behaviour of their respective governors, that La Cappelle capitulated on the seventh day, and Catelet surrendered on the fourth. Tremendous was the devastation occasioned by an army, composed of the refuse of the various nations acknowledging the supremacy of Austria; a few only of whom had been regularly trained up to the science of arms, while the far greater part, impelled either by avarice, lust, or superstition, had taken up the profession, not because it conducted to rank and celebrity, but because it facilitated the indulgence of every passion, which vilifies and debases human nature. Taking advantage of the panic, which their inhumanity excited, these barbarous hordes hurried forward with unremitting celerity towards the capital, where they expected to meet an ample reward for all their toils,

in the plunder of palaces, and the violation of beauty.*

The consternation excited in every breast by the anticipation of misery the most acute, to which a civilized people can be exposed, augmented at the arrival of every courier who successively brought intelligence of the retreat of Soissons, who had been sent to dispute the passage of the Somme, the capture of Roie and Corbie; and the ravages committed in the open country, even under the walls of Pontoise. Abandoning themselves entirely to the impulse of fear, the delicate Parisians, forgetful alike of pleasure and property, fled in every direction, to seek an asylum in the remotest provinces of the kingdom.†

Richelieu was scarcely less alarmed for his personal safety, than for that of the country which he governed; because it was equally difficult to conceal from the king the real situation of affairs, or to account for the danger which threatened the capital, after amusing his vanity with the flattering prospect of surpassing all his predecessors, since the days of Charlemagne, in power and military renown.‡ But as the cardinal was satisfied, that the most certain means of inspiring others with courage was by setting an example of fortitude, he

* Bougeant, i. 268.

† Histoire du Mareschal Guebriant, i. 12. *Mercure Francais* ad ann. 1636.

‡ It is hardly credible, that a minister endowed with eminent talents should have suffered the kingdom to remain in so defenceless a state; yet we are assured by Montresor, a man of honour, that all the force, which could be collected for the protection of Paris, did not exceed six thousand men, while John of Wert and Piccolomini were advancing a the head of thirty thousand.—*Memoires de Montresor*. This account is confirmed by Bassompierre.

affected the appearance of unruffled security; and, though perfectly acquainted with his own unpopularity, and the consequent danger to which he might be exposed, he hastened to Paris, where his presence contributed to the return of confidence and tranquillity, by animating the timid, emboldening the brave, and exciting fresh vigour and activity in every department of the government. The peasants collected from every quarter were employed in repairing the fortifications which had been totally neglected since the civil wars; the nobility, summoned from their distant castles, flew with alacrity to the defence of their sovereign; the merchants and manufacturers, terrified at the prospect of beholding their warehouses a prey to the avidity of Pandours and Croats, contributed with liberality to the necessities of the state; the servants and apprentices were enrolled and instructed in the use of the musket, and every house was required to furnish a soldier with all his equipments. Accustomed insensibly to the pageantry of war, Paris was soon converted into a camp; and, as military prowess grew every day more fashionable, each citizen became, or fancied himself, a hero. Availing himself of the enthusiasm which his minister had excited, the king raised the royal standard at Compeigne, and soon found himself at the head of fifty thousand men; a formidable host, if the troops which composed it had been as conspicuous for valour as for the splendour of their accoutrements.

So long as the Spaniards proceeded in an uninterrupted career, they continued their march; but no sooner did they discover that the consternation, excited by their savage rapacity began to subside, and that they could not advance without

encountering an army more numerous than their own, than they clearly perceived that no permanent benefit was likely to accrue from the enterprise; but that the wisest plan they could adopt, would be to regain the Netherlands, while a road was still open for their retreat. The moment for action had been suffered to escape. If they had marched directly to Paris, after the capture of Corbie, it is far from improbable, that they might have glutted their rapacity with the riches and magnificence of a court, and the dismay and confusion which universally prevailed.* The safety of the capital, however, has been ascribed by historians to various causes, and among others to the policy of the Duke of Bavaria, who is supposed to have given secret orders to his general, John of Wert, to counteract the projects of the Austrian commanders, lest the destruction of the metropolis should reduce France so low, that she might be no longer in a condition to afford protection to the Germans. It was the obvious policy of that ambitious prince, to preserve an equal balance of power between Louis and Ferdinand, and he was too well acquainted with his real interests, to assist in giving to either scale a decisive preponderance.†

While John of Wert and Piccolomini were ravaging Piccardy with fire and sword, Gallas, at the head of a formidable army, had entered Burgundy, for the purpose of uniting with the Spaniards, under the walls of Paris, and sharing the spoils of the capital. The want of success, which had hitherto attended all the operations of Condé, rendering it unsafe to trust him with a command of the

* Bougeant, i. 270. Le Vassor, xiii. 393. † Ibid. xiv. 106.

highest importance, he was subjected to the disgrace of beholding another general selected for the defence of a province, of which he was the governor. His patience and loyalty, or the meanness of his disposition, were not, however, of a nature to be easily moved; for, provided he was permitted to glut his insatiable avarice, he might be insulted with impunity.*

The partiality of Richelieu for the incongruous union of the sword and the mitre was never demonstrated more strikingly, than in selecting the son of the gallant Gernon, for the protection of the kingdom at this disastrous crisis; though he prudently determined by the choice of a colleague for La Valette to guard against the evils likely to arise from the unrestrained indulgence of friendship.

The name of Weimar inspired more confidence than could have been effected by all the consecrated banners, that all the Roman pontiffs ever bestowed. Anxious to participate in the glorious task of repelling the invaders, every soldier sought to merit the approbation of the gallant Saxon, by perseverance, activity, and obedience. Though defended alone by a miserable wall, the little town of St. Jean de Lore retarded the progress of the imperial army for several days, and by its obstinate resistance exposed it to hardships

* "I prefer the safety of the kingdom, and the happiness of obliging the Cardinal Duke, to every earthly consideration," said Condé with a spirit which would have done honour to his heart, had it been inspired by loyalty, or patriotism; but which was calculated to produce a very different effect, when it was known to proceed from the basest servility, and an eagerness to indulge the almost peurile vanity of Richelieu.—*Le Vassor* xlii. 410.

which contributed materially to its destruction. The valour of the governor was fortunately seconded by the operation of nature. A tremendous hurricane, accompanied with torrents of rain, caused the Soane to overflow with such irresistible fury, that the besiegers would have been happy to preserve their lives, at the expense of all their baggage and artillery; but, notwithstanding the celerity with which they broke up their camp, great numbers were swept away by the inundation.*

The war in Italy produced little that merits the attention of posterity, except a sanguinary and indecisive battle between the French and the Spaniards on the banks of the Tesino; in which the gallant Toiras terminated his glorious career, with the intrepidity of a hero, and the resignation of a Christian. "Italy," says the learned Grotius, "took delight in exalting the virtues and abilities of that illustrious commander; neither was France a stranger to his merit, though, from the treatment which he received, one might naturally suppose her to have been so."†

Notwithstanding the result of the campaign proved neither commensurate with the emperor's expectations, nor adequate to the magnitude of his exertions, yet upon the whole the events of the current year were decidedly favourable to the house of Austria; which, by the treaty of Prague, was enabled to secure the reversion of the imperial crown, the brightest gem which it possessed. In a diet held at Ratisbonne in the month of June, the King of Hungary was raised to the exalted dignity of King of the Romans; but the business was con-

* Puffendorf, viii. 76.

† Epist. 605.

ducted with so little regard to the forms of the Germanic constitution, that it afforded room for France and Sweden to dispute the validity of the election.*

Though it were ridiculous to suppose, that the opposition of powers, not immediately connected with the Germanic confederacy, could either invalidate, or retard the proceedings of the diet, yet it cannot be denied, that their arguments rested on solid foundations, and that the ceremony was defective in many points, which had ever been regarded as essential. By the "Golden Bull" it is required, that a successor to the imperial throne shall be chosen at Francfort, and not at Ratisbonne, and that all the electors shall be unanimous; but neither of these enactments were attended to.

The distracted situation of public affairs made it impossible for the diet to meet at Francfort, and of course a plausible pretext was afforded for transporting the ceremony to Ratisbonne. But the imprisonment of one elector, and the illegal exclusion of another, furnished grounds for more valid objections. The Archbishop of Treves remained still in confinement, and the rights of Palatine had been transferred to the Duke of Bavaria, but the title of the latter to the electoral dignity had never been formally recognized, except by the dependents of Austria. The votes of Cologne and Mentz were subject to the suspicion of the grossest venality, because both those princes were publicly known to receive public pensions from Spain; and the latter had even been enabled by the bounty of Phi-

* Puffendorf, viii. 94.

lip to appear at the diet with an equipage and retinue proportioned to his elevated station. It was also admitted that the deputies from Saxony and Bradeburg had exceeded their powers: besides, the assembly had been expressly convened for the purpose of considering the most probable means of restoring tranquillity to the empire, and not for the election of a future sovereign, an omission deservedly censured. Another unconstitutional act, of which the dissenting parties justly complained, was the surrounding of the city, during the deliberations of the diet, with Austrian troops, a measure evidently intended to awe the deputies into servile submission; and which of course prevented them from exercising that freedom of discussion, without which no election can be valid.* These deviations from ancient precedents were probably greatly exaggerated by the opposite party, who accused the adherents of Ferdinand of having joined in a conspiracy with the court of Spain for overturning the liberties of Germany.

The behaviour of the Pope upon this occasion is an object of curious research, because it clearly demonstrates that the principles and policy of the court of Rome remained the same as in the darkest ages of superstition. Though too feeble to assert those arrogant claims, which rendered Hildebrand the terror of Europe, his successors were as yet too proud to relinquish them. Urban accordingly dispatched three different briefs to his nuncio at Ratisbonne. By the first of which he permitted the protestants, or, as he insolently termed them, the heretical electors to vote; by the second he conde-

* Puffendorf, ix. 55. Galetti, i. 454.

scended to authorize Ferdinand to proceed to the choice of a King of the Romans, though, according to the style of the pontifical court, he was himself invested with a superior dignity, having never been crowned by the Pope, by whose hands alone the successors of St. Peter insisted, that the sacred title of emperor could be conferred. And by the third he declared the election valid, notwithstanding the absence of the Archbishop of Treves. Being, however, perfectly aware, that in spite of the affected piety of Ferdinand, he would treat these insolent pretensions with merited contempt, Urban did not allow the messenger to leave Rome till the 23d of December, when he knew the election would be ended.*

Scarcely had Ferdinand settled this important affair, than he ended his boisterous career. For several months previous to his death, and particularly during the period of his residing at Ratisbonne, his strength had visibly declined. For these reasons he departed for Vienna the moment the election was over, leaving his son to superintend all minor concerns. But, instead of finding the benefit his physicians predicted from repose and retirement, his malady rapidly increased, and he expired on the fifteenth of February, † in his fifty-ninth year, and was succeeded by his son Ferdinand III. who, together with his sceptre, inherited his prejudices both religious and political. ‡

Few characters have been transmitted to posterity in more opposite colours, than that of Ferdinand II. § By the Roman catholics he is regarded in

* Le Vassor, xiv. 129.

† 1636.

‡ Schmidt, v. 15.

§ According to the testimony of a Jesuit, he was "plein de moderation et d'équité; habile, ferme et entreprenant dont la mémoire est encore re-

the light of a saint, and adorned with every virtue, which the most prolific invention can bestow; † while, by the protestants, he is represented under the odious character of a sanguinary despot, no less inimical to religious toleration than to civil freedom. Neither portrait is accurately correct; yet, after a candid investigation of his principles and actions, during a turbulent reign of eighteen years, we feel disposed to regard the latter as far more resembling the original than the former. Impressed with the most extravagant ideas of the royal prerogative, and taught from his cradle to consider the tenets of Luther, as no less subservient of regal authority than inconsistent with orthodox piety, it would have required an understanding far more comprehensive than that with which Ferdinand was endowed, to have withstood the contagious example of Philip II. and contemplated the changes which took place

vercè de ses peuples pour les grandes qualités qu'ils admisoient en lui, et surtout des catholiques pour sa *pietè*. I would substitute the word bigotry in the place of piety. *Bougeant*, i. 272.

† His great panegyrist, the pious Lotichius, supposing it impossible that so holy a person should be suffered by Providence to quit the world, without disturbing the order of nature, most gravely informs us that the subjects of Ferdinand were repeatedly warned of the grievous loss they were about to sustain by a series of miracles. "Tantum nou gentilium imperatorum obitus omnibus misse præsignificatos auctores sunt Suctonius, Herodianus, et alii. Quid igitur mirum, si dicamus etiam Ferdinandi II. fatum non sine omine fuisse? Prout autem deo, hominibusque grata in edito ejus enituit pietas. Ut ipse, ut aula ipsius sacrorum deo præberent templum, consimiliter ab edito temploque hujus Cæsaris præsignata mora est. Nam propriè non. Feb. circiter horam sextam vespertinam, turris templi, intra Viennam a Scotis nomenclaturam adepti, oitra ullam æris, ventorumque tempestatem, caelo sudo, corruit, sed citra noxam ullam." ii. 428.

So it would have done
At the same season, if his mother's cat
Had kitten'd.—*Shakspere*.

Lotichius, however, had never studied our immortal bard.

in the church, with the candid judgment of a philosopher.

The erroneous system pursued in his education, imprinted on his mind a propensity towards bigotry, which decided his character through life, and led him to confound the duties of a monk with those of a sovereign.* Thus his piety assumed the gloomy hue of superstition, and induced him to persecute with inquisitorial severity all who questioned the infallibility of the Roman pontiff, or preferred the evangelical simplicity of the primitive church, to the idolatrous pomp of the Vatican. A slave to the vindictive passions of the Jesuits, and adopting their interests as those of the Almighty, he believed himself acting conformably to the divine command, while he kindled a war the most disastrous of any that ever desolated Europe, and rendered himself the scourge of mankind.†

* Eleonora conjux ejus audita fuit sic integerrimè sentire super imperatore suo, ut tametsi Ferdinandum intra lectum cum puella deprehenderet, illum tamen impudicitie arguere nefas esse duceret, Ibid. I leave the reader to judge whether this declaration ought to be regarded as a proof of the wife's credulity, or of the husband's continence.

† All this, however, appeared perfectly right in the estimation of Lotichius, who probably considered the death of a heretic as the most acceptable sacrifice that Heaven could receive. "Nullus ab hujus alloquio recessit, qui benignitatem tanti imperatoris non prædicaret." Poor Lotichius seems totally to have forgotten the unfortunate Palatine, his miserable family, and the whole Bohemian nation, who would have unanimously protested against such unqualified praise. Lotichius, however, was not his only admirer. Nani, a writer of a very different class, excuses his errors by attributing them entirely to the temper of the times. "Ma le virtù erano sue; i difetti s'ascribbero alla fortuna, ed ai tempi. Hist. Venet. x. 676.

CHAP. XXV.

Death of Bogislaus, Duke of Pomerania. Disputes concerning the succession between the Swedish government and the Elector of Brandenburg, who in consequence unites with the emperor.—The hopes of peace revived by the accession of Ferdinand III.; his views and character.—Banner opens the campaign by the siege of Leipsic, but is compelled to raise it, and to retire to Torgau; where, being reduced to the greatest distress, he attempts to gain Pomerania, and displays in the undertaking extraordinary talents.—The French act with little energy in Germany; and in Flanders with little success.—The Duke of Weimar restrained by the neglect of his ally.—Defection of the Grisons, and of the Duke of Parma.—These losses followed by the deaths of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel and of the Dukes of Savoy and Mantua. Consequences produced by those events.—Fresh negociations between France and Sweden.—Characters of D'Avaux and Salvinus.—Splendid campaign of the Duke of Weimar in 1638; he takes Lauffenburg, Seckingen, Walshut, and Rheinfeld, after defeating the imperialists in three successive engagements.—Siege and capture of Brissac. He refuses to surrender his conquests to France; his death and character.—Cabals formed by different powers for the purpose of gaining over his army, which ultimately accepts the offers of Louis.

THE death of Bogislaus, Duke of Pomerania, proved of essential disadvantage to the Swedes; because the vast importance of that province, as a military station, rendering it material to their future security, they insisted upon retaining it till a general peace, in virtue of the treaty concluded by Gustavus, upon his first arrival in Germany. This arrangement by no means according with the views of the Elector of Brandenburg, he maintained that his right to its immediate occupation reposed upon a convention of anterior date, and could not be invalidated by a more recent agreement, much less by

a compact bearing evident marks of compulsion. Finding however that his arguments were treated with neglect, he determined to assert his pretensions by the sword, and in order to secure himself against every reverse, he concluded an alliance with the young emperor, and admitted Austrian garrisons into all his towns.*

Notwithstanding the transient cloud which thus overspread the political horizon, the prospects of Germany were unquestionably brightened by the death of an emperor, who had repeatedly declared, that rather than live a tranquil spectator of the triumph of heresy, he would perish, together with all his family, on a scaffold: for though the son inherited many of his father's defects, he certainly possessed them in a mitigated form; being less implacable in his resentment, less subservient to the artifices of the Spanish court, less enslaved by superstition, and consequently more susceptible of impressions, which might lead to the termination of hostilities. Yet at the commencement of his reign no alteration was visible in the general system of Austrian policy; so that in spite of his pacific professions, it was easy to discover that, for the present at least, no peace could be expected, except upon conditions, which it was impossible for Sweden, consistently with honour, to accept.

The confidence so deservedly reposed in the splendid talents of Banner determined the regency to allow him to conduct the operations of the ensuing campaign with unfettered liberty; admonishing him only not rashly to hazard an engagement. He was further instructed to omit no opportunity

* Puffendorf, ix. 47. Coxe, i. 921. Bougeant, i. 274. Galett, i. 422.

of strongly inculcating, that the misery occasioned by the duration of the war ought not to be ascribed to the ambition of Sweden, as the adherents of Austria falsely asserted; because the attainment of a safe and honourable peace was now the sole object for which she contended.*

Eager to fulfil the expectations of an admiring country, Banner quitted his cantonments in the middle of winter, suddenly appeared before Leipsic, and was actually preparing to storm the town, when he received intelligence that Hatsfield, with thirty thousand men, was hastily advancing to give him battle. Too prudent to risk his own reputation and the safety of an army (perhaps the last that Sweden might be able to equip) against a force so superior, he reluctantly consented to abandon his prey, at a moment when his harassed troops were about to obtain an ample remuneration for all their fatigues. From the camp of Torgau, a place of perfect security, he sent out detachments of cavalry in every direction, who carried desolation to the very gates of Dresden, and indemnified themselves for the loss of the plunder of Leipsic by levying contributions in Misnia.†

Though he had nothing to fear from the prowess of the enemy, Banner was exposed to perils of a more terrible kind; because, while they conducted to almost certain destruction, they were unalleviated by the prospect of glory. Enabled by their numbers ‡ to cut off the Swedes from all communication with the adjacent country, from whence they were accustomed to draw their supplies, the

* 1627. Puffendorf, ix. 2.

† Ibid. iii. 6.

‡ While Banner had no more than 16,000 men, the imperial army amounted to at least double that number.

imperialists boasted of having reduced their antagonists to the dreadful alternative of either laying down their arms, or perishing the victims of their obstinacy. In order more certainly to accomplish their purpose, Maracini was sent to occupy Spremburg, while Gallas hastened from the banks of the Rhine to assist in an enterprise, destined to cover the arms of Ferdinand with everlasting renown, and to establish for ever the supremacy of Austria.*

Undismayed by the threats or the preparations of the foe, Banner intrepidly resolved to maintain his position, till joined by Wrangel, whom he had ordered to march to his assistance. But the near approach of Gallas and Isolani, with numerous reinforcements, compelled him suddenly to alter his plan, because the imperial army, in conjunction with them, might have proved sufficiently strong to force his entrenchments.

The pages of history afford very few instances of military talents comparable to those displayed by the Swedish commander during his retreat to Pomerania. Indeed, such were the dangers which he had to encounter, and such the dexterity with which he eluded them, that, while examining the sober records of truth, we can hardly persuade ourselves that we are not perusing the fabulous exploits of a Rinaldo, a Tancred, or an Orlando. Determined to prove to the astonished world, that nothing is too arduous for courage to achieve, he crossed the Elbe in presence of the enemy, without losing any part of his artillery. Three days afterwards the whole army forded the Oder with equal

* Schmidt, v. 16. Galeffi, l. 438.

facility—many of the cannon, which must otherwise have been abandoned for want of horses, being drawn by the soldiers. Having thus effected his passage without the smallest accident, he directed his rout toward Lansberg, where he expected Wrangel with a considerable reinforcement. But, instead of meeting with friends, he found the enemy in possession of the only road by which it was practicable to traverse the morasses that extended before him. The situation of the Swedes was now become so critical, that all the fortitude of Banner was requisite to support him. Behind them lay a poor and devastated country, incapable of affording the smallest supplies; on their left flowed the Oder, every pass of which was attentively guarded by Bucheim; and in their front were placed the impregnable fortresses of Kustrin and Lansberg, the river Wartha, and a considerable body of Austrians. Poland alone could afford them shelter; but how could they trust to the generosity of a sovereign, whose enmity toward Sweden had been openly evinced by repeated acts of hostility.* Inflamed with indignation, at being left to perish ingloriously, Banner vented his fury in bitter complaints against the perfidy of Louis, for having neglected his promise to occupy the Austrians by a strenuous diversion in Swabia. "Should we ever be engaged," said he angrily to Beauregard, "conjointly with Germany in a war with France, the passage of the Rhine would not be attended with half the difficulties we experience at present." The representative of Louis of course undertook to justify his master, and to vindicate the national cha-

* Gualdo, i. 458.

acter; but Banner was deaf to every argument, and continued to upbraid him with want of sincerity, and even of prudence, because the prosperity of France was intimately connected with that of Sweden. No efforts of valour could possibly save him, unless he should be able to engage the enemy to abandon the Oder. For this purpose he publicly declared his resolution of braving the dangers which might await him in Poland, rather than suffer his gallant companions to perish with hunger, or tarnish his fame by a disgraceful capitulation. Preparations were even made for carrying this project into immediate execution; orders were issued for the soldiers to observe the strictest discipline during the march, and to pay for every thing they wanted with the most scrupulous attention. But as it was possible that this might be regarded as a feint, he determined at once to obviate every doubt, by sending forward his wife, whom he tenderly loved, together with the wives of the principal officers, and the most valuable part of his baggage. An Austrian prisoner was offered a considerable bribe to procure him guides, on whose intelligence he might rely, as he pretended to be totally unacquainted with the country in which he was about to engage. The German, as he expected, conveyed this intelligence to the imperial commander, corroborating the account with so many particulars, that it was impossible to doubt his veracity. Impatient to seize on every pass, they instantly quitted their position. Banner was no sooner apprized of their departure than he suddenly changed his direction, and crossed the Oder, near Hustrin, with all his artillery, before the imperialists were aware of his intention. No sooner, however, were they made acquainted with

the retrograde movement of the Swedes, than they endeavoured to repair the error of which they had been guilty; but, upon gaining sight of the river, they beheld, to their confusion, the hostile army secure on the opposite bank, and making the air resound with shouts and acclamations, and songs of triumph. This dexterous manœuvre, according to the prevailing spirit of the age, was celebrated in a satirical print, representing the Austrian generals attentively occupied in tying up the mouth of a sack, in which the Swedes were inclosed, while Banner cut a hole at the opposite end, and thus effected his escape unobserved.*

Notwithstanding Banner had extricated himself from a situation so perilous, that his ruin was regarded to be inevitable, yet, upon his arrival in Pomerania, he had still to contend against various difficulties, which required all his patience and perseverance. For, though the high reputation of the Swedish arms had not degenerated under the conduct of Wrangel, yet the weakness of the force committed to his care had curbed his aspiring genius. After ineffectually attempting, by the arts of persuasion, to prevent the defection of the Elector of Brandenburg, he threatened to take up his quarters in Berlin, unless put in immediate possession of Kustrin. Had he adhered to the menace with inflexible firmness, this demand would undoubtedly have been complied with, but he, unadvisedly, listened to the intercessions of the magistrates and clergy; and, by this want of decision, allowed time

* This masterly retreat is circumstantially described by Laboureur, whose information was collected from Beauregard, who accompanied Banner during this expedition. *Hist. de Guebriant*, iv. 1.

for their sovereign to complete his preparations, when he positively declared, that, rather than surrender the last of his fortresses, he would expose himself to every hardship. Wrangel was, therefore, obliged to content himself with a moderate contribution, as the price of forbearance; which having been punctually discharged, he made an attempt upon Francfort on the Oder; and, having failed through want of resources, sheltered himself under the cannon of Stettin.*

In this situation he received directions from Banner to join him at Torgau; but his force was so much reduced,† that he could not, with prudence, expose it in a country which had been previously occupied by the enemy. Neither would it have been advisable to abandon Pomerania, where the elector was exerting all the arts of intrigue, in order to seduce the inhabitants from the oath of allegiance, which they had formerly taken to Sweden.‡ The presence of Banner not only relieved him from a heavy responsibility, but secured him against the apprehension of immediate danger. But, as the inferiority of their forces imposed the necessity of a defensive system, Banner selected a strong position in the vicinity of Stettin, while Wrangel encamped on the banks of the Peene.§

The change which had taken place, though it contributed materially to the security of the troops, had done little toward promoting their comfort. Completely exhausted by hunger and fatigue, they were unequal to the smallest exertions; neither

* Puffendorf, viii. 67. Galetti, i. 459.

† At that time it did not exceed three thousand five hundred men.

‡ Puffendorf, ix. 11, 12, 13, 14.

§ Galetti, 440.

were the privations of the officers less distressing, because they had been under the necessity of leaving their baggage at Torgau, and, what added to their discomfort, was the want of money to procure themselves any alleviation. Banner, however, looked forward with confidence to better days, persuaded that the Austrians would soon be constrained, by want of provisions, to abandon Pomerania. Being resolutely determined to avoid a battle, the war of course was reduced to the scientific display of military talent, in a variety of marches and counter-marches, which, while they raised the reputation of the Swedish commanders, did little toward terminating the contest. Gallas, convinced, after repeated trials, that the resolution of his opponent was immutable, was actually preparing to evacuate the province, when he received private intelligence that the wants of the enemy were even greater than his own; and that, if it should be practicable for him to retain his position a few days longer, some decisive advantage might be expected.

The authority of Banner was rarely exercised with a lenient hand, and his present distress was by no means calculated to inspire moderation. The cruelty with which he treated the wretched inhabitants having effaced the recollection of every former benefit, the Swedes were surrounded by spies, who secretly transmitted an account of all their movements to the imperial generals.

It is scarcely possible for any exertion on the part of a commander to preserve discipline in an army receiving neither pay nor provisions. The Swedes were much degenerated from that admirable system of decency and regularity for which the soldiers of Gustavus were so celebrated. Even

officers of rank became daily more remiss in their duty. These circumstances having been accurately reported to Gallas, he formed a plan for surprising the Isle of Usedom, an important acquisition; because it would cut off all communication between Banner and Wrangle, and render the navigation of the Oder no longer secure for Swedish vessels. This project was no sooner embraced than preparations were made for its immediate execution; and the enterprise was conducted with so much ability, that it was crowned with the completest success. The posture of affairs was now entirely reversed; because the Austrians, being masters of the open country from Damgarten to Wolgast, they were no longer in want of provisions, while the Swedes were reduced to the most cruel extremities.*

All the towns in Upper Pomerania, except Anklam, Greiffenwald, and Stralsund, had opened their gates to the imperialists; and it was a subject of anxious solicitude to Banner, lest those also should be unable to resist. Fortunately, however, the very cause from which the superiority of his opponents arose, contributed to hasten their departure. The exhaustion of Germany was now so dreadful, that no province could long support a numerous army, so that Gallas, after many fruitless attempts to bring on an engagement, was compelled to seek more abundant resources in Westphalia and Saxony.

Convinced that he should be left in perfect tranquillity till the return of spring, Banner hastened to avail himself of the temporary respite, to indulge

* Puffendorf, ix. 21.

his soldiers with a little repose. Relieved from the toils and anxieties of an active campaign, all the energies of his mind were now exerted in providing for the wants, restoring the health, and improving the discipline of his army. And, as he was fully aware that many of his plans had been betrayed to the enemy, he published an order, prohibiting any person to remain at Stettin, who refused to renew his oath of fidelity to Sweden.*

The possession of Pomerania was of too great importance for Sweden to have objected to any sacrifices, which could prevent it from falling under the dominion of Austria. To this momentous object the attention of Banner had been invariably directed during the last campaign, and for this purpose he had braved every danger and difficulty, which nature, or Austria, could oppose. The national resources, however, were no longer adequate to such gigantic exertions; and, notwithstanding the talents of Banner and Oxenstiern, and the obstinate valour of the troops, it was scarcely possible to contemplate the probable issue of another campaign without the most serious alarm. Yet, gloomy as the horizon appeared on every side, the surrounding clouds were suddenly dispersed by the splendid achievements of the Duke of Weimar.†

On the part of France the contest was conducted with so little vigour, that Banner, in truth, had sufficient cause to complain of her remissness in fulfilling her engagements. The conduct of Richelieu, in allowing the war to languish in Swabia, has been imputed to various causes. By some writers, it is attributed to want of resources for carrying into

* Puffendorf, ix. 24.

† Schiller, iv.

execution his mighty designs; while others suppose him to have been so entirely occupied with domestic intrigues, and in endeavouring to humble the pride of Olivares, that he regarded the operations of the army on the Rhine as an object of comparative indifference. Others again pretend that Father Joseph, mostly entrusted with the management of foreign affairs, secretly favoured the Duke of Bavaria, with a view of conciliating the sovereign pontiff, and procuring a seat in the conclave. With this view, he is accused of having kept back the supplies, which were destined for the Weimerian army,* and by this treacherous conduct to have occasioned the fall of Hermenstein, which surrendered to the imperialists, under John of Wert, after a skilful and obstinate resistance. This misfortune was shortly followed by the loss of Hanau, which Bernard in vain attempted to relieve.

The unpardonable negligence with which his subsidies were remitted, incensed the gallant Saxon to such a degree, that he frequently threatened to make peace with the emperor. Previously, however, to opening the campaign, he made an excursion to Paris, to solicit the payment of his arrears, as well as to remonstrate against the hardship and indignity of being burdened with a colleague, who, though comparatively a novice in the art of war, affected an insolent superiority over a consummate general, descended from one of the most illustrious families in Europe. The services of Weimar were too important for the cardinal to have ventured to offend him, even had the sacrifice required been greater. But the ascendancy of genius was grown

* Puffendorf adopts this latter opinion, 38.

no less irksome to the favourite of Richelieu, than the arrogant pretensions of the Roman purple were disgusting to the pupil of Gustavus. An independent command was accordingly promised, together with numerous reinforcements.*

Many weeks, however, were suffered to elapse before the promised succours arrived; but, immediately after their junction, it was proposed by Hallier, the French commander, to march into Franche-Comté, where the Duke of Longueville, in conjunction with the Count of Guebriant, had opened the campaign with some little éclat.

Though the genius of Weimar was no longer fettered by the presumptuous incompetence of a churchman, he quickly discovered that, in some respects at least, he was likely to suffer from the change, because his wants and wishes were little consulted, when the friend of the minister no longer shared in his triumphs. These disappointments, however, so far from abating his ardour, stimulated him to greater exertions: with his diminutive army he crossed the Saone in presence of the Duke of Lorraine, and, after compelling that gallant prince to retire, reduced several towns and castles.

It was Bernard's intention to have followed up this success by the capture of Besançon, where he expected to find a valuable booty; but want of provisions constrained him to relinquish a project, where both gain and glory were the rewards of victory. Enraged at the neglect with which he was treated, he commissioned the Governor of Colmar to represent his distress to the king in person. "I clearly perceive," said he, with great emotion, as

* *Le Vassor*, xiv. 260.

he parted from Manicamp, "that it is the cardinal's intention to abandon me, as he has done the Duke of Rohau; but, if I am doomed to perish, he shall never deprive me of the consolation of falling like a man of honour." Manicamp, with the candour and courage of a soldier, repeated these expressions of sorrow to Louis, who, for once, taking upon himself to act with the authority of a sovereign, directed the arrears to be immediately discharged, and promised considerable reinforcements.*

To contract an engagement, however, was far easier for Louis, than to prevail upon his minister to fulfil it, when concluded without his consent. Deprived of the succours, for which that monarch had pledged his royal word, Weimar was reduced to the painful necessity of abandoning all his forts on the Rhine, and of retiring for security to a strong position in the neighbourhood of Basle, where he remained in tranquillity during several weeks, in spite of the remonstrances of the catholic cantons.†

While the war was thus suffered to languish in Alsace, through the treachery, the incapacity, or the negligence of those who presided over the councils of France, Richelieu was busily employed undermining the power of Spain. Two armies were assembled, for the purpose of penetrating into the Spanish Netherlands, and of retaliating all the evils recently inflicted by the Pandours and Croats, upon the wretched inhabitants of Piccardy. La Vallette, in conjunction with his elder brother, the Duke of Candale, was sent with a formidable force, to carry devastation into Flanders and Brabant, and, if pos-

* 1637. *Le Vassor*, xiv. 264. *Puffendorf*, 89.

† *Le Vassor*, 265.

sible, to erect the Gallic standard on the walls of Brussels. After taking Cateau-Cambresis, Landrecy, and Maubenge, and spreading terror and desolation to the gates of Mons, the cardinal suddenly returned and invested La Capelle, which was still in the hands of the Spaniards. The cardinal infant being joined by Piccolomini, with reinforcements from Germany, formed a plan for surprising Candale, who imprudently remained in the vicinity of Maubenge, while his brother was occupied in the siege of La Cappelle. The duke was so confounded by the sudden appearance of an enemy, at a moment when he believed himself in perfect security, that, leaving his troops under the direction of Turenne, he flew to the cardinal for advice. To this extraordinary proceeding, on the part of a general, the preservation of Maubenge may be ascribed.* After saving the town by his exertions and valour, Turenne directed all his movements with such admirable skill, that he joined the cardinal without the smallest loss; from whom he received that unbounded applause which his extraordinary services merited.† Nothing remarkable occurred during the rest of the campaign, because Piccolomini manœuvred with so much ability, that it would have been difficult, even for leaders of greater sagacity than Candale and La Valette, to have obtained any decisive advantage.‡

The prowess of Chatillon, who commanded in the duchy of Luxemburg, was displayed in the capture of a few insignificant places; all of which, except Danvilliers, were recovered by the Spani-

* *Le Vassor*, 396. *Bougeant*, i. 281. *Mercur* Francais, xxi. 360, &c.

† *Le Vassor*, 364.

‡ *Ibid.* 368.

ards, when the severity of the weather obliged the French to retire into winter quarters.

The Prince of Orange, who undertook by a vigorous diversion to facilitate the operations of his allies, contented himself with the reduction of Breda, which he wisely preferred to the investment of Dunkirk, notwithstanding it was strenuously recommended by Richelieu; because, exclusively of its importance as a military station, it possessed additional attractions in the eyes of the prince, as forming part of his hereditary domain.* This valuable conquest was, in some measure, balanced by the loss of Venlo and Ruremonde, both of which surrendered to the cardinal infant.

Thus the sanguine expectations of Richelieu were frustrated; yet, severely as he felt the disappointment, the little progress made in the subjugation of Flanders, was not the only mortification which he was destined to undergo. The defection of the Grisons, who had hitherto followed the fortune of France, could not but appear a very serious misfortune to the minister of Louis, not only on account of the advantage which the enemy might derive from that event, but because he was sensible, that the mischief was, in great measure, occasioned by his own inadvertence. Though shamefully neglected by an ungrateful court, Rohau had successfully opposed the superior armies of Spain, which, when unable to dislodge him by military skill, effected his removal by intrigue. No man more readily availed himself of the arts of corruption than Olivares; and, provided he ultimately accomplished his purpose, he was totally indifferent to the in-

* Bougeant, 283.

struments which he employed. The simplicity of a people, unaccustomed to the wiles of political deceit, is open to every impression. Hence the emissaries of Olivares found it easy to persuade the honest inhabitants of the Valteline, that it must be a question of the utmost indifference to them, on which side the balance of war should preponderate, provided they were allowed to till their fields, and prune their vineyards in uninterrupted tranquillity. Neither was it more difficult to convince them, that their unlettered integrity being perfectly competent to the regulation of all their domestic concerns, they wanted no foreign interference. To the unsophisticated understanding of an Alpine peasant no language is so persuasive as that of freedom. The Spanish agents addressed them with the cordiality of friendship, their counsels were apparently those of disinterestedness, and their artifices of course proved successful. Incommoded by the continual passage of troops, they were impatient to escape from the burden; and, in conformity to the suggestions of their pretended friends, sent deputies to Inspruck, to intreat the archduchess to mediate a reconciliation with Austria. Too happy to procure such useful allies, Ferdinand readily consented to gratify their wishes, by confirming their independence; permitting them to guard their forts and defiles with their native militia, and solemnly engaging, that the governor of Milan should in future respect their neutrality. This treaty having been ratified with every requisite formality in a popular assembly at Coire, the Duke of Rohan was called upon to evacuate the territory belonging to the Grison's league, and given to understand that, in case of refusal, compulsory measures would be resorted

to. With his diminutive force, it would have been madness in Rohan to have attempted to resist this peremptory demand, when backed by the legions of Spain; and he was, therefore, compelled to abandon a country, in the defence of which he had displayed such transcendent abilities, as might have placed him upon a level with Turenne and Condé, had they been exhibited on a more conspicuous theatre.*

Since the commencement of hostilities between France and Spain, the Duke of Parma had been exposed to continual outrages, from the domineering insolence of the generals of Philip, who were delighted to take up their winter quarters in one of the most fertile provinces of Italy. From these acts of oppression, the duke grew anxious to deliver his subjects; but he, at the same time, entertained too elevated notions of honour, to act with ingratitude toward a power, for which he professed the warmest attachment. Desirous of reconciling contending duties, he requested permission from Louis to enter into a negociation with the court of Madrid; and having obtained it, concluded a treaty, by which he was allowed to continue neuter, upon condition of admitting a Spanish garrison into the citadel of Sabionetta, in confirmation of his upright intention.†

These events were rapidly followed by others scarcely less prejudicial to France. The demise of the sovereigns of Mantua and Savoye was attended with serious evils, because both of them had espoused the Gallic cause with equal ardour, though in-

* 1637. Bougeant, i. 284.

† Ibid.

fluenced by different motives: for, while the former was actuated by the impulse of gratitude, and the force of education, the latter was instigated by political interest, a principle more analogous to the feelings of statesmen, than of the ties of affection. Both these princes being succeeded by infants, their widows were entrusted with the administration of affairs during the minority of their children. The Duchess of Savoye, a sister of Louis, adhered to her native country in every vicissitude of fortune; thus conforming to the judicious system of policy recommended by the example of her departed husband. Her constancy, however, was attended with considerable inconvenience both to herself and to her subjects, as the plan which she pursued was violently opposed by her two brothers-in-law, both of whom were blindly devoted to Philip.*

The Duchess of Mantua, on the contrary, was far from adopting the political principles of her husband, though she found it expedient, at the commencement of her administration, carefully to conceal her predilection for Austria; because the French, being actually in possession of Casale, might easily have deprived her of all share in the government. The determination which she embraced of connecting herself with a power, regarded by the late duke with abhorrence, ought not however to be imputed to fickleness, or caprice; but to a decided aversion for the arrogance of a nation, which even when deigning to confer an important favour, often contrives, by the insolence

* Prince Thomas commanded the Spanish armies in the Netherlands, and his brother Maurice had obtained a cardinal's hat through the interest of Spain. *Le Vassor*, xiv. 318. *Siri Mem. Record*, viii.

with which it is bestowed, entirely to cancel the obligation.*

In the course of the same year, the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel was suddenly called away from the tempestuous scene in which he had acted so conspicuous a part.† To commemorate the expressions of universal regret with which he was accompanied to the grave, is the most glorious tribute that history can offer to his virtues. It is the province of flattery to exaggerate merit, and of friendship to conceal, or diminish defects; but tears and lamentations proceed from the heart—the language of truth and affection. Few princes have been endowed with greater, or more amiable qualities. He was sincere in his professions, a rigid observer of every engagement, and so scrupulously guided by the dictates of honour, as to be incapable of deserting a fallen friend, even when ambition and interest combined to inculcate the hateful lesson of treachery. Trained to arms by that illustrious patriot, Maurice, Prince of Orange, he attained to such an eminence in that difficult art, as to have been placed, by the discerning eyes of Gustavus Adolphus, nearly on a level with Bernard, Duke of Weimar. Though the loss of such a man, and particularly at such a crisis, must have been regarded as a public calamity by every admirer of wisdom and probity, it fell less severely upon the protestant party, because his

* Le Vassor, xiv. 311. Bougeant, i. 285.

† According to the prevailing prejudices of the age, the death of this illustrious prince was ascribed to poison, even by the enlightened historian of Sweden. “Dum obsidio Stichesæ adsidet, gravi morbo correptus extinguitur, incertum fato, an alieno scelere. Laurellius medicus fatebatur, Melandro auctore, aut saltem conscio, venenum ipsi propinatum fuisse.” Puffendorf, ix. 31.

widow Amelia, appointed to govern during the minority of her son, adhered with fidelity to all his engagements; and, in endeavouring to fulfil them, displayed talents and virtues, which have been rarely surpassed in any sex, or station. With a courage and constancy unusual in woman, she maintained possession of the sovereign authority, in spite of the intrigues of the Landgrave of Darmstadt, and in defiance of the armies and artifices employed by Austria, to terrify, or seduce her from her duty.*

Nothing could be more gloomy than the prospect of Sweden, at the conclusion of the preceding campaign. Shut up in an impoverished corner of Germany, without money, credit, or influence, it was difficult even for the unshaken fortitude of Banner, not entirely to give way to despair. Indeed, such was at that time the situation of Oxenstiern, that peace would have appeared to him the most acceptable blessing which it was in the power of Providence to bestow.† But the pretensions of Austria were so extravagantly high, that it was in vain to expect it, notwithstanding her pacific professions. That the court of Vienna had every inclination to engage the Swedish government in a separate treaty, the chancellor was fully convinced; but he had too much foundation for mistrusting the motives of Ferdinand, to engage in a measure, which, if it terminated unsuccessfully, might deprive his country of the only ally on whom she could confidently depend for assistance. These considerations determined him to adhere to his engagements with France; but, as several articles in the treaty of Wismar were reserved for future discussion, and all of

* Bougeant, i. 285.

† Puffendorf, x. 1, 2.

them were subject to the condition of being ratified or rejected by Christina, he thought the moment favourable for obtaining additional advantages.— Being anxious, however, to convince the world that Sweden was no less impatient than any of the belligerents, for bringing the contest to a speedy conclusion, he thought it adviseable to declare, that she was ready to accept the mediation of Venice, provided the emperor would consent to the protestant negotiation being conducted at Hamburgh.*

Satisfied that this concession would rather tend to impede than to accelerate peace, he at length embraced the resolution of confirming the alliance between France and Sweden, by additional obligations, and appointed Salvius to conduct the negotiation.

The French writers, for the most part, accuse the chancellor of duplicity with regard to the treaty of Wismar;† and in support of the charge, they pretend that no fresh discussions were necessary upon a subject, all the bearings of which had been amply provided for by Chaumont. But, without wasting our time in examining a question of little importance to the present generation, we shall content ourselves with observing, that the character of Oxenstiern is no less remarkable for veracity than for wisdom; whereas the policy of Richelieu was of that ambiguous nature, which requires the fascination of splendid success, to rescue it from the imputation of villainy. It is probable, however, that the Swedish government, before uniting itself inseparably with the Parisian court, was desirous of ascertaining how far the cabinet of Vienna was

* Puffendorf, x. 3.

† Bougeant, i. 301.

sincere in its offers, and had every reason to believe, that the only object of the latter, in proposing a separate treaty, was to create jealousy and disunion among the allies.*

Chaumont, having been recalled, was replaced by D'Avaux, an able and experienced negociator. Displeased to find the interests of France in the hands of so skilful a statesman, the emperor endeavoured to persuade the magistrates of Hamburg, that it was inconsistent with their duty, as members of the Germanic confederacy, to allow the accredited agent of a hostile power to reside within their walls, for the ostensible purpose of carrying on a correspondence with the enemies of their legitimate chief. The arrogance of a pretension, so obviously inconsistent with the franchises enjoyed by a city, whose government was republican, could not fail to alarm the vanity of men, educated in all the prejudices of commercial prosperity, and who probably regarded the pre-eminence of wealth, as the proudest, and most palpable of all terrestrial distinctions. The imperial remonstrances accordingly met with the contempt they so richly deserved. Though Ferdinand had been unable to carry his point by the gentle arts of persuasion, he was by no means disposed to relinquish his design, and actually found means to introduce into the city a number of soldiers in disguise, who had positive orders to carry off D'Avaux, whenever an opportunity should occur, without the smallest regard for the constitutional privileges of an imperial city, or the rights of ambassadors as universally recognized by civilized nations.†

† Puffendorf, ix. 60.

† Bougeant, 304.

Terrified at the dangers to which they might be exposed from the just indignation of France, should this nefarious stratagem succeed, the senate immediately communicated to D'Avaux the discovery which they had made, earnestly intreating him to provide for his safety, by retiring to some place of greater security. Banner also is said to have given him similar advice; but the representative of Louis determined to remain at his post, convinced that his flight might prove no less prejudicial to the interests of his country, than it would be derogatory to the dignity with which he was invested. But, being too prudent to court gratuitous difficulties, he promised to remain secluded at home, till the storm should blow over; and, as this wise resolution entirely disconcerted the plans of the conspirators, he soon found himself at liberty to resume his functions without fear of interruption.*

The conspicuous situations which both D'Avaux and Salvius are destined to occupy, during the negociations at Munster and Osnabruck, impose the necessity of introducing the reader to a more intimate acquaintance with both. Claude, Count D'Avaux, was deeply versed in all the intricacies of diplomatic affairs, and had uniformly conducted himself with so much dexterity, that he was justly regarded as a perfect adept in the science of political intrigue. Yet, great as was the reputation which he had deservedly obtained, it was far less than his vanity challenged. And the better to support his pretensions to unparalleled excellence, he is said to have laboured with indefatigable industry, in order to conquer his natural defects; in which

* Bougeant, 305.

attempt his efforts proved so successful, that notwithstanding his conception was slow, and his enunciation embarrassed, yet, when prepared for business by previous study, he expressed his opinions with such admirable clearness and facility, that they acquired all the lustre of spontaneous eloquence. His peculiar excellence, however, appears to have consisted in the most perfect self-possession, and a perspicuous arrangement of his ideas; though his excessive vanity prevented him from attending sufficiently to those with whom he conversed, to understand all the peculiarities of their character.*

Quickness and penetration were striking features in the portrait of Salvius. Descended from parents, conspicuous neither for the splendour of rank nor the endowments of fortune, he had been accustomed from his cradle to a state of dependence, and an affectation of humility which never entirely left him, even when his ambition was gratified with the highest distinctions. After finishing his studies at the university of Upsal, he visited most of the northern courts, in pursuit of that knowledge which is more useful to a statesman, than the visions of Plato, the metaphysics of Aristotle, or the laborious dullness of their numerous commentators. Upon his return to Stockholm, an aged widow, whose fortune gave charms to wrinkles and vulgarity, became enamoured of the accomplished traveller, and with her hand conferred independence. His uncommon attainments soon attracted the notice of Gustavus Adolphus, who determined to avail himself of his diplomatic talents, whenever an opportunity should

* Galletti, ii. 84. Bougeant, i. 237.

occur. This favourable opinion was fully justified by subsequent events, because, whatever may have been his failings in private life, Salvins was deeply versed in every science essential to the character of a consummate statesman. His understanding was clear and comprehensive; his language correct and elegant. Dissimulation, however, was become so habitual to him, that even where he appeared to disclose his sentiments with the unreserved familiarity of friendship, he never uttered a syllable inconsiderately; so that, while by apparent frankness he drew out the secrets of his less wary associates, he concealed his own with impenetrable mystery. Warmly devoted to the interests of his native land, he laboured indefatigably to promote its fame and prosperity; less perhaps from an elevated sentiment of patriotism, than because he was convinced, that his own advancement and reputation were inseparably connected with the elevation of Sweden. But even this attachment, ardent as it appeared, is supposed not to have been proof against the seductions of gold. Indeed, such was his eagerness in accumulating wealth, that he is reported never to have acquired a single friend by an act of generosity. It is also remarkable, that even when filling the highest situations, he was never able to shake off the recollection of his humble birth, or to appear quite at his ease in the presence of the great hereditary nobility. Yet, when acting abroad as the representative of Christina, he was so ridiculously tenacious of the most trifling privileges, that he would contend almost as urgently for the right of precedence, as for the freedom of the Baltic, or the possession of Pomerania.*

At the commencement of their conferences, two

* Bougeant, i. 305. Galletti, 87.

important questions presented themselves to the consideration of the plenipotentiaries ; viz. whether the treaty of Wismar should be regarded as obligatory, subject only to certain modifications ; or whether a new negotiation should be begun, without the smallest reference to any former convention. The latter would probably have proved most agreeable to France, because it would have delivered her from the payment of all the arrears, which Richelieu had suffered to accumulate. For the same reason it was natural for Sweden to wish the present discussions to be considered merely as supplementary to the former, and illustrative of those articles which had not been explained with the requisite precision. While this subject was under deliberation, the ratification of Christina arriving most opportunely, left no room for further chicanery ; so that the utmost D'Avaux could accomplish, with all his dexterity, was to defraud Sweden of half the arrears. These preliminary arrangements being thus settled, the duration of the alliance was limited to the period of three years, during which Louis engaged to pay to Sweden an annual subsidy of one million of livres. However moderate this sum may appear, when put in competition with the destructive profusion of modern grants, it proved of incalculable benefit to the Swedes, because it enabled them to remount their cavalry, and to appease the murmurs of a turbulent soldiery, whom distress had rendered mutinous. Another point, which appeared to Oxenstiern of almost equal consequence, was a promise from D'Avaux that his master should immediately publish a declaration of war against Austria ; a formality hitherto omitted, though hostilities had been prosecuted with sanguinary

zeal during two successive campaigns. After mutually engaging never to enter into separate treaties, it remained to decide at what place, and in what manner, both countries should negotiate, whenever the emperor should be induced to realize his pacific professions. This being a question of secondary importance, the French ambassador complimented Sweden with the choice of Hamburgh or Lubec,* towns sufficiently contiguous for a constant intercourse to subsist. This concession, however, was accompanied with a stipulation that both powers should treat in concert, though in different places. Respecting Pomerania, considerable difficulties arose, because Salvius insisted that France should expressly guarantee its future possession to Sweden; to which D'Avaux, with reason, objected, that such an engagement might prove an insuperable obstacle to peace. Being fearful, however, of the consequences likely to arise from an unqualified refusal, he artfully eluded the demand, by requiring from Sweden a similar obligation with respect to Lorraine, to which he knew she never would consent.†

The intimate union thus happily established between the most powerful enemies of Austria, proved equally beneficial to both, because it entirely deranged the projects of Ferdinand, who flattered himself that he should create a jealousy between them. This concert also tended materially to the success of their respective claims, whenever a congress should assemble, and thus paved the

* Puffendorf, x. 10.

† The treaty was signed on the 6th of March, 1638. Bougeant, 331. Puffendorf, x. 6—15. Le Vassor, xiv. 523.

way for the permanent establishment of religious toleration throughout the German empire, and the consequent attainment of political power by the protestants.

Such being the unavoidable tendency of this alliance, it is scarcely possible to reconcile the conduct of the court of Vienna with the most obvious principles of policy. No great reach of understanding was requisite to discover, that the only rational system for the emperor to have pursued, was to separate, if possible, the interests of Christina from those of Louis. Neither was this likely to prove an arduous undertaking; because the perilous situation in which the former was placed, might have tempted her ministers to catch with avidity at any proposal, which promised security without the sacrifice of honour. A peace with Sweden would have left Austria at liberty to direct all her resources against France and Holland; and this must necessarily have given a different character to the contest, and might even have enabled the emperor to dictate conditions to his remaining enemies. By yielding a little to the vanity of a nation, whose bravery entitled it to the highest respect, Ferdinand possibly might have avoided those humiliating concessions, to which he was ultimately obliged to subscribe; but by pertinaciously adhering to a contrary system, he compelled his adversaries to consolidate their strength, and thus empowered them to give a fatal blow to the despotic arrogance of Austria. While the wishes of Richelieu were gratified by the obstinacy of Ferdinand, her expectations were raised to the highest pitch by the skill and activity of Weimar. Impatient to shew of what his genius was capable, when no longer fettered by

the incapacity of a churchman, he quitted his cantonments in the beginning of February, and having deceived the enemy by a masterly manœuvre, crossed the Rhine without the smallest impediment, and in defiance of the elements took Lauffenburg, Waldshut, and Seckingen. These conquests, however, being likely to prove of little advantage without the possession of Rheinfeld, he invested that fortress, notwithstanding the numerous obstacles which he had to encounter from its natural strength, the valour of its defenders, and the resolution of the inhabitants, prepared to undergo the severest hardships, rather than submit to the authority of an heretic. The temerity of the enterprise, undertaken at a season so ill calculated for active exertion, excited the emulation of the imperial generals commanding in Swabia, who united their forces with the determined resolution of delivering Rheinfeld.* Bernard, who was ill prepared to resist so formidable an attack, was compelled to take refuge under the fortifications of Lauffenburg, after losing part of his baggage in a sanguinary conflict; in which his gallant friend, the Duke of Rohan, who served as a volunteer in the Weimerian army, received a wound which occasioned his death.†

The fortune of Weimar was sunk so low, that it was absolute destruction not to prove victorious. Under these circumstances he did not hesitate to embrace a resolution so little consistent with the suggestions of prudence, that in case of a failure,

* Savelli, John of Wert, Enkefort, and Sparrenter.

† Le Vassor copies the testimony of Bassompierre, xiv. 495. Galetti, on the contrary, pretends that the imperialists obtained no advantage, besides that of being able to throw succours into the town, 469: and in this he is supported by the authority of Puffendorf, 46.

it would undoubtedly have been attributed to the frantic irritation of despair; but which appeared from the sequel to have been the offspring of reflection, anticipating events with the intuitive perception of genius.

Instead of retiring, after relieving Rheinfeld, the imperial commanders imprudently encamped in an exposed position contiguous to the town, enjoying their triumph in thoughtless security, and indulging their troops in those dissolute pleasures, which are no less prejudicial to health than destructive of discipline. Weimar having received intimation of this disorderly conduct, formed a plan for surprising them in the midst of their festivities. But, as it was hardly possible to cherish any rational hope, unless the army was impressed with the fullest confidence of victory, he assembled the soldiers, and in an animated harrangue, made them acquainted with his design, explaining the reasons with so much plausibility, that by unanimous acclamations they testified their approbation, and demanded to be immediately led against the enemy. The duke was too well acquainted with the prodigies which may be effected by popular enthusiasm, to allow time for their ardour to abate, orders were instantaneously issued for beginning the march,* and such was the celerity with which it was performed, that the imperialists, being surprised at the dawn of day, were quickly thrown into confusion. Roused from their slumbers by the din of arms, the generals ineffectually attempted to repair the disorder; while the soldiers, half naked, or half armed, endeavoured

* March 2d.

to avoid the death which awaited them, by flying precipitately to the woods, abandoning the baggage and artillery. This important victory, achieved without the loss of twenty men, is remarkable for a circumstance perhaps without a precedent in military history—the capture of all the Austrian generals. Having no longer either an army or a commander to oppose him, the victor availed himself of the universal consternation, to make himself master of Rheinfeld, Roteln, and Friburg, and prepared to fill up the measure of his glory by the reduction of Brissac; which was justly regarded as the key of Alsace, and secured a passage over the Rhine to its possessor.*

Anxious to rescue his reputation from the suspicion of negligence, the gallant Wert accused Savelli of cowardice; asserting that he was the first to give the signal for flight, instead of endeavouring by his example to restore order and confidence to the army. This accusation may be easily credited, when we recollect the Italian's dastardly behaviour at Dammin, and the consequent remarks of Gustavus. Yet, however great the disasters which his misconduct occasioned, Ferdinand was deservedly punished for his own folly, in preferring patrician meanness and poltrony to the courage and capacity of a plebeian. Savelli having escaped from the prison at Lauffenburg, in the disguise of a friar, avoided the humiliation of being conducted to Paris, with John of Wert and Enkefort, whom Louis was delighted to exhibit to his subjects in proud memorial of a victory, to the obtaining of

* I have followed Le Vassor, who professedly copies the minutes of Bassompierre, 407.—Puffendorf, 47, 48.

which, if he contributed at all, it must have been only by his prayers. The standards taken from the Austrians accompanied the prisoners to the capital of France, and were deposited in the Cathedral of Notre Dame with military pomp, amid the shouts and acclamations of the populace. Had the king been contented with amusing the Parisians with illuminations and fire works, in return for the sacrifices they made, the delusion at least would have been innocent; but, when he presumed to pilfer the glory of a triumph due solely to the genius of Weimar, he not only subjected his character to the shafts of satire, but was guilty of manifest injustice. Yet so excessive was his joy, or so pitiable his folly, that he received the congratulations of the foreign ministers upon the happy occasion with as much self-complacency, as if he had commanded the victorious army in person. It required all the sense and forbearance of Grotius to act his part with decorum in this ridiculous scene; but the address with which he flattered the royal puppet, extorted from him a promise of speedy reinforcements, to enable Weimar to follow up his success.*

Had Louis applied the money, thus unnecessarily wasted in festive rejoicings, to augment the Weimarian army, the protestants might perhaps have recovered the influence which they enjoyed before their discomfiture at Nordlingen. But neither entreaties nor remonstrances could stimulate Louis to exertions commensurate with the occasion. On the contrary, it was evident, that however great his anxiety to humble Austria, he was no less appre-

* 1638. Gualdo, i. 488. Le Vassor, 409.

hensive of enabling the opponents of the papal crown to rival the orthodox faith.*

Every circumstance combining to elucidate this important truth, Weimar wisely resolved to depend solely upon his own exertion in future. With this view he endeavoured to secure his conquests, by amassing provisions, reinforcing the garrisons, and selecting commanders, on whose skill and fidelity he could rely. This necessarily occasioned a considerable defalcation in the disposable part of his army, but his prosperous fortune soon supplied the deficiency, by attracting crowds to his victorious standard; so that he was in a short time enabled to take the field, at the head of twelve thousand of the bravest troops, that were ever collected in Europe.†

As the strength of Brissac bade defiance to every thing except the pressure of famine, the imperialists had leisure to assemble an army for its relief. The high rank of Savelli being sufficient to cover a multitude of faults, he was directed to act in concert with Grotz, who commanded the Bavarians. And as their united forces would be superior in number to the forces of Weimar, they were instructed, if possible, to bring on a general engagement; but whatever might happen, upon no account to return without throwing supplies into the fortress. Bernard, having lately received a considerable reinforcement, under Guebriant and Turenne, was no sooner informed of the enemy's approach, than he

* This despicable alternation of vanity and superstition, caused Weimar to exclaim in the bitterness of disappointment, "Had I been the ally of the Turkish emperor, he would have fulfilled his engagements with greater fidelity than the Christian King."—*Le Vassor*, xiv. 622.

† *Puffendorf*, x. 49. *Schmidt*, v. 16.

marched out with the intention of giving them battle. The armies met in the vicinity of Wittemwyer, when a sanguinary battle ensued, in which the imperialists were completely defeated. Three thousand waggons, laden with provisions, and intended for the relief of the besieged, diffused joy and plenty throughout the camp of the victors.* The gallant behaviour of Guebriant, which is said to have decided the fortune of the day, so delighted the Duke of Weimar, that upon his return from the field, he embraced the count in the presence of the army, with the most flattering expressions of esteem. "Henceforth," said the grateful Saxon, "I shall regard you in the light of a brother, and our friendship, I trust, will terminate only with our lives."†

A second attempt, under the conduct of the Duke of Lorraine, though highly creditable to the military talents of the commander, was not attended with better success, and was followed by a third and still more desperate attack upon the intrenchments of the besiegers. This enterprise, in which both Goetz and Lamboy displayed greater temerity than skill, was productive of nothing but gratuitous carnage. For, notwithstanding Weimar was prevented by illness from heading the troops, his place was supplied with so much ability by Guebriant, that the duke publicly acknowledged himself a second time indebted to that gallant officer for a most brilliant and decisive victory.

The governor of Brissac, being deprived of every

* Puffendorf, 52. Galetti, 474. Gualdo, 524. Histoire de Guebriant, 81.

† Ibid. ii. 6, 7, 8.

hope of relief, and utterly destitute of food, was forced at length to surrender. According to the author of the history of Guebriant, the garrison had been reduced for several days to eat the leather of their shoes, after having devoured all the dogs, the cats, and the horses. Every horror, related by Josephus in his account of the siege of Jerusalem, was sustained by the miserable inhabitants of Brissac, in at least an equal degree. Indeed such was their distress, that it became necessary for the governor to station centinels in the burying ground, in order to prevent the famished citizens from feeding upon putrid carcasses.

The loss of Brissac* occasioned universal consternation at Vienna, where, for the purpose of concealing their own incapacity, the ministers of Ferdinand accused the unfortunate Goetz of carrying on a traitorous correspondence with the Duke of Weimar. Mansfeld, being appointed to supersede him, was ordered to degrade the devoted victim with every public mark of disgrace, and to send him a prisoner to Vienna, in order that his conduct might be investigated before a military tribunal. The trial, however, never took place, because he luckily found a powerful protector in the Duke of Bavaria, who procured a decree from the diet of Ratisbonne, by which he was fully exculpated.*

“ Brissac is ours, father Joseph!” exclaimed

* The importance of Brissac may be collected from the following passage in the history of Guebriant, where Laboureur says, that in the hands of France, “ elle sera la protectrice des villes libres, l’assurance des princes opprimés, et l’asile certain de tous qui sont proscrits pour s’être opposés à la monarchie, que la maison d’Autriche medite de rendre héréditaire, au prejudice de l’ancienne election des empereurs.

* Le Vassor, xv. 108.

Richelieu exultingly, as he entered the apartment of his dying friend. But it was no longer in the power of ambition, or of glory, to interest the feelings of the expiring monk, whose thoughts were otherwise employed. And if the agonies of conscience, or the convulsions of death, left room for any sensations except those of pain, it was not to terrestrial concerns that they would have been devoted.*

This extraordinary personage has been so long known to the reader, that we shall dismiss him to the tribunal of an infallible judge, with all his faults and imperfections on his head; contenting ourselves with repeating the words of Grotius in a letter to Oxenstiern: After announcing Joseph's death, the Swedish ambassador adds, "He was every thing rather than a friar. Equally detested by the nobility, the people, and his own order, as appears from the invectives with which his memory is loaded, he will indisputably prove a loss to the protestants. Not because he was favourable to them, but because he must necessarily be succeeded by men more decidedly hostile to their pretensions."†

The cardinal's transport, however, began to subside, when he learned that Weimar had taken possession of Brissac in his own name, without the smallest reference to France; and that he had committed it to the fidelity of a German garrison, under the command of Erlach, a Swiss officer of considerable experience, and till then of unblemished integrity.‡

* *Le Vassor*, 109.

† *Grotii epistolæ ad ann. 1638.*

‡ As an unequivocal proof of his intention to keep the place, Bernard caused money to be coined, on which the arms of Saxony were quartered with those of Brissac. *Galetti*, i. 481. *Tenzell's Ernest. Med allen cabinet ii. 532.*

Every temptation, that power could offer, was tried by Richelieu, in order to induce the victor to surrender his conquest. The hand of the rich and beautiful Duchess d'Aiguillon, better known by the name of La Combalet, was proposed as an irresistible allurements; and when Weimar disdainfully rejected the alliance, as unworthy his illustrious descent,* the cardinal would have substituted in the place of his niece, the virtuous and accomplished daughter of Rohan, who inherited his princely domains.† Indeed, so great was the anxiety both of the cardinal and the king, to get possession of Brissac, that it was reported in many of the first societies in Paris, that in case the Duke of Weimar would have relinquished Brissac, and consented to change his religion, he might have married the daughter of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, by far the richest heiress in Europe.

Finding the Saxon inaccessible to the seductions of wealth and of beauty, Richelieu sent directions to Guebriant to assail his ambition by the prospect of power, more extensive and permanent than he was likely to acquire by the unassisted efforts of genius. But, instead of listening to the overture with the eagerness of delusion, the duke boldly demanded the surrender of Colmar, together with all the other towns in the occupation of France, which formed part of the Langraviate of Alsace.

“It is probable,” says Laboureur in the life of Guebriant, “that the Duke of Weimar might have

* “Madame de Combalet,” said the Saxon prince a little un courteously, “possesses every quality that I could desire in a mistress, but hardly one that I should expect in a wife.”

† Puffendorf, xi. 39. Galetti, 482.

agreed to accept the Brisgau as a present from Louis, and to have held it upon conditions no less advantageous to France than prejudicial to Austria. The emperor would then have found in the ablest of the German princes an antagonist, whose animosity no time could mitigate; and who would have rejoiced to wrest a valuable province from the dominion of a sovereign, whose ancestor* had formerly deprived his family of the electoral dignity, by an act of the grossest injustice.†

The acquisition of Brissac appearing to Weimar to ensure the possession of the Brisgau, he is said to have formed a plan for rendering it the capital of a principality, comprehending nearly the whole of Alsace, and part of the duchy of Wirtemberg. While master of an uninterrupted passage over the Rhine, and supported by France, he might bid defiance to the resentment of Ferdinand, though more eager than ever to accomplish his destruction. Giving way to the chimeras of a boundless ambition, he perhaps indulged the fond hope of being one day in a situation to re-establish his family in all its ancient splendour, and even to recover its legitimate rank among the princes of the empire. Some writers pretend that his aspiring spirit aimed at still greater designs. Amelia, the amiable widow of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, whose virtues, accomplishments, and masculine understanding, rendered her worthy to share the affections of a hero, had extensive territories, a devoted people, and a numerous army at her disposal. By uniting her dominions with those which he had already conquered in Swabia, he might have raised himself to a level with

* Charles V.

† Guébriant, ix.

the greatest princes of Germany in riches, power, and authority; and, having thus attained the summit of his wishes, he looked forward to the glory of being placed at the head of an independent confederacy, sufficiently powerful to hold the balance between Sweden and Austria, while it curbed the ambition of France, and by its persevering endeavours obtained for the protestants what his benevolent heart most anxiously panted after—an equal participation of all political privileges.*

The business entrusted to the discretion of Guebriant was unquestionably of the most delicate nature, and required to be treated with the utmost circumspection; yet he no sooner entered upon the subject, than he found it encumbered with still greater difficulties than he expected. In vain he endeavoured to draw from the Saxon an unequivocal avowal of his intentions, because that wary prince eluded the discussion by artfully pretending, that the moment the troops should be comfortably stationed in winter quarters, he designed to pay his respects to the king in person, that he might receive his commands, not only relative to Brissac, but likewise respecting the operations of the ensuing campaign.

This declaration, unsatisfactory as it appeared, was regarded by the sanguine disposition of Richelieu, as indicating a favourable result; and he accordingly endeavoured to accelerate the visit by the most flattering assurances of respect.†

Whether the country which he occupied was so completely exhausted, as to be incapable of affording the necessary supplies; or whether the duke

* Guebriant, 128.

† Le Vassor, xv. 117.

was desirous of favouring a province, which he already regarded as his own, it would be difficult now to decide; but, whatever may have been the motive by which he was actuated, he conducted his army into Franche-Comtè, where he was followed by Guebriant. Notwithstanding the severity of the season precluded the possibility of great undertakings, he would not suffer his troops to be idle; but employed them in the reduction of several places, where they found abundance of stores and provisions. Guebriant, unable to penetrate the mysterious conduct of his illustrious friend, frequently reminded him that he was anxiously expected at Paris. Weimar, however, was never at a loss for excuses; either illness, or business, or a journey to Brissac, to inspect the repairs of the fortifications, afforded a plausible pretext for postponing his departure.

The patience of Richelieu being at length exhausted, he sent orders to Guebriant to press more closely for a definitive answer. When no longer able to elude the unreasonable request, Weimar gravely replied—"To expect me ever to consent to surrender Brissac, is as preposterous as to require from a virtuous maiden the sacrifice of her virginity, or to propose to a man, of unblemished integrity, to sully his reputation by a dishonourable action."*

Fearful, however, of irretrievably offending a monarch, whose assistance was necessary for the accomplishment of his designs, he sent Erlach to Paris, to offer his humble excuses to the king, for not immediately complying with his wishes. The

* Guebriant, ix.

selection of the agent did infinite credit to the discernment of his employer, as he executed his commission with so much address, that he not only appeased the resentment of Louis, but even obtained from him a promise of speedily sending a numerous reinforcement to the army. Some writers pretend that Richelieu found means to corrupt the integrity of Erlack, during his residence in the capital of France, and received from him the assurance of delivering up Brissac, in the event of Weimar's death.*

While the cardinal was exerting all his efforts, in order to deprive a hero of the fruits of his valour, he unexpectedly obtained, by an event the most disastrous to the protestant cause, what he would never have accomplished by intrigue. In the following spring, Weimar, in conformity to the pressing solicitations of Banner, would have opened the campaign at an early period, had he not been detained by the expectation of succours which never arrived, and which were probably promised with no other view than to prevent him from undertaking any enterprise, which might add to his power and reputation. But no sooner had the Bavarians invested Hohenwiel, than it would have proved as easy to have calmed the tempestuous ocean, as to have restrained his impetuous valour. Convinced that his resolution was not to be shaken, Guebriant consented to partake the glory of carrying terror and devastation into the very heart of Austria; an enterprise in which the duke expected to succeed, after forcing the Bavarians to retreat.

Upon their arrival at Huningen, both Weimar

* Le Vassor, 119.

and Guebriant were suddenly taken ill; but the malady of the latter, the consequence of excessive fatigue and anxiety, soon yielded to the powers of medicine while that of the former assumed the frightful character of putridity. Yet, notwithstanding the alarming symptoms which prevailed, he insisted upon being removed to Neuburg, where, on the eighteenth of June, 1639, he expired.

The livid spots, which covered his body, his own declaration at the moment of his death, combined with the advantages which both France and Austria were likely to derive from that melancholy event, excited a strong suspicion of his having been poisoned.* This idea was so prevalent, that his chaplain announced from the pulpit, that his master expired in the firm belief of having fallen a sacrifice to the malice of his enemies. Even the judicious historian of Sweden has sanctioned the report;† and further added, that letters were received at Bale, in Switzerland, from distant countries, (and according to Le Vassor from Vienna) at a time when Bernard enjoyed the most perfect health, to enquire if he were still alive.‡ Grotius, also, who at first discredited the story, changed his opinion,

* That this opinion was embraced by his family, appears from an inscription, placed upon a tomb erected to his memory by one of his brothers, at Gotha. "Decessit pulcherrimo ætatis flore, cum ad annum vite trigesimum quintum implendum dies 28 deessent, morbo correptus maligno, atque venenato."

† Veneno necatum a pluribus creditum; nam neminem eorum qui circa vivum, aut mortuum versati fuerant, iste morbus infecevat. Et chirurgi, dum corpus aromatibus condit, manus paulatim a cranio perstricta, statim intumescibat, mox et brachium tumore corripiebatur, idemque gangrena accedente undecimo post die extinguebatur, nullo ulterius morbi signo, xl. 41. How far these symptoms were indicative of poison I must leave the faculty to decide.

‡ Ibid. Le Vassor, xv. 264.

when minutely informed of every circumstance attending this calamitous incident.

Till the latest moment of his existence, the Duke of Weimar retained his speech and faculties, and employed himself either in regulating his private affairs, in providing for the future welfare of his friends, or in acts of devotion; for, like his illustrious model, Gustavus Adolphus, he was no less distinguished for piety than for valour; yet he frequently lamented that his religion was not sufficiently fervent. His resignation to the will of a superintending Providence was a striking feature in his character; so that he bore good or bad fortune with equal moderation, considering it to be the indispensable duty of a Christian, to submit with resignation to the will of the Almighty, whether it should please him to crown his exertions with glory, or to chasten him with the rod of adversity. From his earliest youth he is said to have manifested the most ardent passion for a military life; which, when he became better acquainted with the political constitution of Germany, was gradually sublimated into a patriotic abhorrence of Austrian despotism, and the most enthusiastic desire of restoring to his country the incalculable blessings of freedom and toleration. Trained to arms in the school of Gustavus Adolphus, he successfully copied his glorious example, and had Heaven vouchsafed to prolong his career, might have rivalled the reputation of his illustrious archetype. To the daring and impetuous courage of a youthful soldier, he united calmness and penetration. His understanding was clear and capacious; his judgment penetrating and acute. To prudence so vigilant, that nothing could escape it, he added a glance so

intuitive, that it seized all the various combinations of an object the moment it attracted his attention. Neither were his external accomplishments, his strength* and agility, and his uncommon proficiency in every manly exercise, less calculated to excite admiration. Dignity and softness were so happily blended in his figure, that he was regarded as a pattern worthy of imitation at the court of Louis, by a race of men who, in all periods of their history, have been vain enough to believe the charms of conversation, and the attractions of grace, exclusively the ornaments of their own nation. But it was not merely to friendship, or rank, that his courtesy was restricted. On the contrary, he invariably conducted himself toward all who approached him with such bewitching benignity, that there was hardly a man in the whole army, who would have hesitated to sacrifice his life, or fortune, in the service of his beloved commander.† Like the King of Sweden he entertained an utter contempt for pomp and ostentation, because he felt, like him, that he possessed stronger claims to the admiration of mankind, than can arise from the

* From the weight and size of his armour, carefully preserved by the reigning duke in his beautiful palace at Weimar, it appears that he must have been both tall and robust. Indeed there are few persons now who would not sink under its pressure.

† In speaking of his humanity, Grotius informs us, that a few days before Weimar quitted Franche-Comté, he was so much affected by the disorderly behaviour of some regiments, that with tears in his eyes he upbraided them for their licentiousness, declaring positively, that his ideas of duty must compel him to abandon them for ever, unless they in future desisted from crimes, which were no less derogatory to his military glory, than inconsistent with his ideas of religion. In another letter he says, "Gravem luctum hæc fert epistola e fortissimi ducis Bernhardi morte, quem prope unum principis dignum nomine habebat Germania."—Grotii Epist. ad Oxenstiernam, ad ann. 1639.

accidental distinctions of birth. Of course he was a decided enemy to flattery, which he regarded as no less insulting to the judgment of him to whom it is offered, than disgraceful to the wretch who employed it.

In the species of warfare in which he was engaged, it was no unusual thing for his troops to be exposed to the severest hardships, and even sometimes to be destitute of almost every thing necessary for their subsistence. But, whenever this was the case, it was his invariable custom to partake with the soldier in his humble fare, and scrupulously to abstain from every indulgence which could not be extended to the whole army. If he had a fault, it was the error of a noble mind—an ambition too towering for his situation. His lofty spirit soared to a height beyond the reach of human exertion. But such is the character of superior genius; whose bold aspirations scorn the shackles of prudence, and which often accomplishes its lofty purpose by means so eccentric, that they appear visionary and chimerical to men of common capacities.

The encomiums of a protestant* may not be exempt from the suspicion of partiality, but the commendation of a papist cannot be liable to the same imputation. Let us, therefore, consult the author of Guebriant's life, who collected his information

* For most of these particulars I am indebted to Galetti, an author more remarkable for accuracy and laborious research, than for beauty of style, or brilliancy of imagination. As an inhabitant of Gotha, he had access to many curious documents preserved in the ducal library, and no doubt received the same indulgence from the Duke of Weimar; of whom it is sufficient praise to say, that he has been ever the generous patron of literature, and was the friend and protector of Goet  and Schiller—of Herder and Wieland.

from persons present at the awful scene he so feelingly describes.—“ When the physicians pronounced that there was no longer the smallest hope of the duke’s recovery,” I copy the sense, though not the expressions of *Laboureur*, “ his attendants were overwhelmed with consternation, while the sick man displayed the same unruffled serenity, with which he would have listened to the news of a victory. After performing his religious duties with a zeal, which would have honoured even the orthodox faith, he employed himself in settling his worldly affairs.* All who had served him in any capacity, being liberally rewarded according to their deserts. He then took leave of his friends and attendants with brotherly affection; imploring them to be consoled for his loss, and to consider their separation of short duration, as he trusted they were destined to meet again in a happier state of existence.†

* The provisions made with respect to his conquests were clear and concise, and calculated to shew, that he considered himself as possessing an undoubted right to dispose of them with the authority of an independent sovereign. “ It is our will and pleasure that no part of the territory, subjected to our dominion by the especial favour of the Almighty, shall be separated from the German empire; and we accordingly direct, that it shall be surrendered to any one of our brothers, who may be disposed to accept it. And we earnestly recommend to the possessor to conciliate the friendship both of France and Sweden. But in case all our brothers should decline the offer, we deem it just that a preference should be given to France, upon condition that in all our fortresses, at least half the garrison shall be Germans, and that they shall be restored to the empire at a general peace. After our death, the army shall be placed under the joint command of General Erlach, Colonel Oheim, Colonel Rosa, and the Count of Nassau.” Among other legacies, he bequeathed to Guebriant his favourite horse, an animal remarkable for strength and agility, which was so highly prized by the count, that he recommended it, on his death-bed, to Louis XIV. entreating that it might be permitted to finish its life in the royal stables. *Le Vassor*, xv. 269.

† After remaining for several years in the cathedral at Brissac, his

No sooner was intelligence of Weimar's death received at Paris, than Richelieu formed a plan for setting aside his will, and getting possession of his army and his conquest. Large sums were accordingly transmitted to Guebriant, that he might be fully armed with the powers of corruption;* while, in order to stimulate him to greater exertions, the dignity of marshal was held out by Des Noyers as the splendid recompense of success.† By way of tempting the officers to betray their trust, they were promised the same rank in the service of Louis, which they had held in the Weimarian army, with the addition of pensions proportionate to their respective situations. The determination of Erlach, however, being justly regarded as the most essential point, both on account of the influence which he was known to possess, and of his being actually master of Brissac, no pecuniary gratification would have been deemed too great to have purchased his suffrage. To a magnificent present was added the assurance of retaining the government of Brissac, provided he would admit into the fortress a sufficient number of French to secure its possession, in the event of his death. Similar proposals were also made to the commanders of the other towns on the right bank of the Rhine; for to those on the left, the Parisian court asserted an indisputable claim, which it would not allow to be controverted.

Aware of the high importance which German prejudice attaches to birth, the cardinal proposed the Duke of Longueville as a worthy successor to

body was removed to Weimar, to be interred among his illustrious ancestors. Galetti. i. 466.

* Guebriant, iii. 1, 2.

† Le Vassor, 272.

the illustrious Saxon; an artifice which tended in a considerable degree to facilitate the execution of his design.

Notwithstanding Erlach appears, from the commencement of the negociation, to have been zealously devoted to France, more difficulties arose in the progress of the business, than either he or the cardinal expected; because the other directors shewed little disposition to be guided either by his example or his advice. Whether the indifference with which they listened to the offers of Richelieu, proceeded from a grateful attachment to the memory of a prince, who had so often conducted them to victory, or was assumed merely for the purpose of enhancing the value of their compliance, it is impossible now to determine; though, from their subsequent conduct, it is probable that their coldness was the result of calculation, and not the offspring of affection.

It would have been totally inconsistent with the dictates of prudence, for the courts of Vienna and Munich to have remained unconcerned spectators of the scene now passing on the banks of the Rhine; where, vying in venality with the Prætorian bands, in the most dissolute period of Rome, the Weimerian army was unblushingly offering its veteran valour to the highest bidder. Yet, it is hardly credible, that the officers should ever have entertained a serious thought of acceding to the proposals of Austria, though they heard them with apparent complacency; because they could not accept them, without forfeiting all claim to political consistency, by undertaking the defence of those very abuses, which they had so long, and so gloriously combated.

Elated by the assiduity with which they were courted by the greatest powers in Europe, some of the officers are said to have proposed the establishment of a military government, consisting of the provinces which they actually occupied, and those which they might eventually conquer. A chimerical project, which the most desperate courage could never have realized, except by an union with the Helvetic Confederacy.*

To the overtures of Sweden, under whose banners they had acquired celebrity and fortune, they might possibly have listened with pleasure, had the finances of Christina been able to satisfy their extravagant demands. But honour and gratitude proved impotent counsellors, when opposed to avarice. Convinced that their poverty must necessarily render all their efforts abortive, the Swedes prudently gave up the contest, pretending to espouse the interest of France; though they secretly favoured the Elector Palatine, who, trusting to the doubtful word of a Stuart, endeavoured to bribe the Weimerian troops with the money which he expected from England. The gold of France was however on the spot, and the German soldiers were too accurate calculators to hesitate between certainty and speculation. Besides, Richelieu discovered an infallible method of stopping the intrigues of the palatine, by causing him to be arrested at Moulins, as he passed through that city under a feigned name, and to be detained in close confinement at Vincennes, till the treaty was finally concluded.†

* Puffendorf, xi. 45—53. Le Vassor, xv. 285.

† Ibid. 288. Puffendorf, 52.

The arrival of Longueville* with a magnificent retinue, and all the splendour becoming his eminent rank, was highly gratifying to the pride of the officers; and a princely donative being opportunely distributed among the soldiers by Erlach, all objections on their part were silenced.

Nothing now remained except to sign the convention, which was executed at Brissac, on the ninth of October, to the inexpressible satisfaction of Richelieu. Agreeably to the wishes of their late heroic leader, it was stipulated, that the army should continue to form a separate corps; and, by way of inducement to them to serve their new sovereign with zeal and fidelity, an assurance was given that all arrears should be immediately discharged, and that they should be paid in future with greater regularity. Upon these conditions they promised implicit obedience to the King of France, and undertook to march wherever the interests of his crown might require. They, however, insisted, that all military orders should be issued by one of the four directors; a concession of little importance, because they would previously receive them from Longueville, as Guebriant and Turenne had formerly done from Weimar.†

* The Germans at first shewed a strong disinclination to be commanded by a Frenchman; but these scruples were surmounted by the magic powers of gold, together with the fortunate discovery that, notwithstanding the Duke of Longueville was born in France, he was nevertheless a Swiss, in consequence of his possessing the principality of Neuchâtel.—Puffendorf, 285.

† Guebriant, iii. 3.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Distress of Banner in Pomerania.—Gallas retreats, after losing the greater part of his army, and is pursued by the Swedes; who, in their return are prevented, by want of provisions, from taking advantage of their superiority. Defeat of Salis at Elsterburg, and of the Elector of Saxony at Chemnitz.—Gallas recalled, and succeeded by the Archduke Leopold William.—Banner ravages Bohemia with unjustifiable ferocity.—Duke of Brunswick declares in favour of Sweden.—The Landgravine of Hesse Casael arms.—Unfavourable position of the Swedish army at the commencement of the following campaign.—Attempts of Austria to engage the Swedes in a separate treaty.—Negotiations between France and the Waywode of Transylvania; causes which occasioned their failure.—Campaigns in Italy, under La Vallette and Harcourt.—Unfortunate attempts of the Elector Palatine for the recovery of his dominions.—Campaigns in Flanders.—Clatillon unsuccessful in an attempt upon St. Omers, in 1638.—Fenquieres defeated the following year before Thionville.—Heslin taken by La Meilleraie.—Campaign of 1640 commences with a variety of disastrous enterprises, but terminates most brilliantly in the capture of Arras.

THE death of the Duke of Weimar was regarded at Vienna in the light of a triumph, because it delivered the emperor from a formidable adversary, who had already given so dreadful a blow to the power of Austria, that she was almost destitute of resources to set bounds to his ambitious designs; and, as Banner was preparing to invade the hereditary states on an opposite quarter, it might not have been impossible for them to have united their forces under the walls of the capital, had not the gallant Saxon been suddenly cut off in the midst of his glorious career.

At the close of the campaign of 1637, we left Banner in Pomerania, resolutely contending against

every difficulty, which the superiority of the enemy, the want of provisions, or the severity of the season, could oppose. Neither were his sufferings alleviated by the return of spring, because vast tracts of country had been left uncultivated; the peasants having fled into Poland, in search of security against the insults and outrages of a licentious soldiery. Neither was it a trifling addition to the general distress, that an epidemical malady had raged among the cattle with such destructive fury, that, unless the Swedish general had compassionately consented to open his magazines, though at the hazard of beholding his own troops the victims of his humanity, the desolation occasioned by the ravages of famine must have swept away the whole population.*

But, however cruel the privations to which the Swedes were reduced, those endured by the imperialists were still severer; so that all the expectations excited in the bosom of Ferdinand, by the transient superiority of Gallas, not only were frustrated, but he had the mortification of hearing, that his generals were obliged to abandon Pomerania, instead of compelling the enemy, as they presumptuously hoped, to surrender at discretion. This step, however mortifying to the vanity of a commander, who had imprudently boasted of certain success, became indispensably necessary, in order to prevent the total desertion of his troops, who, allured by the prospect of alleviated misery, went over by hundreds to Banner. The imperial army was now reduced to such a state of desperation, that not a vestige of discipline remained. No longer

* Puffendorf, x. 18. Galetti, i. 489.

restrained by the dread of punishment, or the reverence inspired by rank, their natural ferocity, at all times the subject of just reprehension, impelled the soldiers to the commission of every crime, which despair or malignity could inspire, even to the murdering and plundering of their comrades.

Gallas has been satirically called, "the destroyer of armies;" not in commemoration of victories obtained by his prowess, but in allusion to the dreadful havoc produced among the Austrians by his negligence and inability. And there is no occurrence in his life in which he more justly deserved that humiliating title, than during the period of his commanding in Pomerania. The force, with which he flattered himself that he should annihilate the Swedes, which consisted originally of one hundred and twenty regiments, was now so diminished, that he could not muster more than fifteen thousand effective men.* Yet even for these no food could be procured in the desolated plains of Pomerania; and he, in consequence, embraced the resolution of leading them into the duchy of Holstein, the only province in Northern Germany whose natural fertility was still unexhausted. Justly alarmed at the approach of such formidable guests, the King of Denmark made haste to assemble an army, in order to assert his independence; but being anxious, if possible, to avoid a rupture with the imperial court, he preferred purchasing tranquillity by a pecuniary sacrifice, to hazarding the ruin of a valuable province, so abundant in every resource; and Gallas, being no less distressed for money than for food, consented to accept a moderate gratuity.†

* Puffendorf, 29.

† Ibid. Galetti, 490.

The summer was already considerably advanced, before Banner received the long expected reinforcements from Sweden. But no sooner had they joined, than he assembled his troops in the vicinity of Stettin, as a prelude to active operation. It was generally supposed that Gallas intended to encamp under the walls of Francfort; a position well calculated for the defence of Silesia, and which so long as he was able to maintain it, must have circumscribed the movements of the enemy. Aware of the difficulties to which he might be exposed, should this project be carried into execution, Banner resolved to impede it, even at the hazard of a battle. Prudence, however, or its synonymous timidity, determined the imperialists to avoid a situation, where a defeat might have been followed with utter destruction, and even victory attended with no adequate advantage. With the celerity of fear they fled toward the Weser, and were pursued by the Swedes with the eagerness of revenge. No efforts, however, could accomplish their overthrow; but, after enduring the most painful privations, they arrived safely on the banks of the Havel, where they chose a position so formidable from its natural strength, that Banner, who had been forced by want of horses to leave his artillery behind, was unwilling to hazard an attack. He therefore deemed it advisable to return into Mecklenberg, as the troops were in the greatest want of repose.*

His enterprising spirit, however, was not designed to continue inactive, and he accordingly commenced the ensuing campaign at an early period,

* Puffendorf, 25. Gualdo, i. 540.

by the destruction of a corps under the orders of Salis, who, being intercepted in his flight towards Bohemia, was compelled to surrender at discretion.*

Notwithstanding the behaviour of the Swedish soldiers had been long a subject of bitter complaint to the wretched inhabitants of Northern Germany, their exactions appeared deserving of gratitude, rather than of reproach, when compared with the excesses of Pandours and Croats. Hence Banner was hailed by universal acclamation as a friend and protector, wherever he came; while the imperialists were followed with execrations and curses, as the inveterate enemies of human repose. It is possible, however, that fear may have contributed, full as much as affection, to ensure a cordial reception to the former; because we are told by the most eloquent of the German historians, that during their residence in the Magdeburgian territory, the Swedes were liberally supplied with wholesome nutriment, though the natives were reduced to such dreadful distress, that they were compelled to chuse between a lingering death and an existence prolonged by the shocking alternative of feeding upon the bodies of their departed relations.†

The defeat of Salis was speedily followed by a splendid victory obtained by Banner in person, over the united forces of Austria and Saxony, commanded by the elector and Masazini. This battle was fought in the vicinity of Chemnitz, a town in the electorate of Saxony, where the allies

* Puffendorf, xi. 5.

† Schüller, iv. Schmidt, v. 16.

were waiting in anxious expectation of the arrival of Hatsfeld. Neither the position of the imperialists, covered by a deep and extensive morass, nor the desperate valour with which they defended it, could save them from destruction. Dispersed and broken they endeavoured to gain the adjacent woods, but being overtaken, and surrounded, had no alternative left, except to lay down their arms, or perish the victims of their obstinacy.*

Following up this success with his wonted activity, the victorious Swede made himself master of Pirna, so celebrated for its impregnable camp,† and then entered Bohemia with resistless impetuosity, where, after reducing Aussig, Leitmeritz, and Melnik, he appeared before the walls of the capital.‡

The repeated failures which had attended all the operations of Gallas, being naturally attributed by the emperor either to want of ability or integrity, he was deprived of his authority with evident marks of displeasure, and was succeeded in the command of the Austrian armies by the Archduke Leopold William, a prince of considerable talents. But as the impetuosity of youth might require the control of age and experience, Hofkischen, an officer of high reputation, was selected as his guide and adviser.

Anxious to signalize his name by some brilliant achievement, before the arrival of his illustrious pupil, Hofkischen was no sooner apprised of Bau-

* Puffendorf, xi. 7.

† La nature s'étoit complue dans ce terrain bizarre a former une espece de forteresse, a laquelle l'art n'avoit que peu, ou rien a ajouter. Oeuvres posthumes du roi de Prusse, ii. 62.

‡ Gualdo, 562.

ner's approach, than he hastened to the succour of Prague, and having collected the troops from the neighbouring garrisons, took post on an elevation which commanded the Elbe, where he immediately constructed a line of batteries, well provided with heavy artillery. The rapidity of the current, the height of the banks, and the formidable preparations of the enemy, were sufficient to have intimidated a commander less intrepid than Banner; but no obstacles, which it was possible for valour to surmount, were capable of retarding his progress. Determined to cross either by stratagem or force, he artfully contrived by a false attack to draw the attention of the Austrians to a different point, when the cavalry having forded the river, the infantry effected their passage in boats under the covert of the night. Deceived and disappointed the Austrian commander attempted to retire to the white mountain, so famous for the destruction of the Bohemian army, and of the ephemeral power of the Palatine; but the impetuosity of the Swedes, when led to victory by their favourite general, rendered abortive a plan, which, if carried into execution, might have placed the defeated army in perfect security. But, instead of obeying the orders of their provident commander with coolness and precision, the troops, attentive only to personal safety, fled with precipitation toward Prague, where they hoped to find an asylum. The confusion which ensued proved fatal; being overtaken by the enemy, numbers fell by the swords of the conquerors, and still more were taken prisoners, and among the latter Hofkischen and Montecuculi.*

* Galetti, l. 495.

Nothing now could have averted the fall of the capital, had Banner been disposed to besiege it. But, after gratifying his officers with the ineffectual ceremony of a summons, he thought it expedient to conduct the army to enterprizes of a less arduous nature. It is probable, however, that this resolution was dictated by policy, and not embraced from want of resources; as he is generally supposed to have been apprehensive, that most of the German soldiers would have abandoned his standard, when enriched by the plunder of an opulent city.

From his subsequent conduct, there is reason to believe, that something must have occurred about this time to inflame his indignation to the highest pitch; though no author, with whom I am acquainted, has explained the cause of his resentment. Banner's authority, as we have frequently remarked, was never exercised with lenity and moderation, but, during the march which he undertook toward the frontiers of Moravia, he appears to have divested himself of all the sentiments of humanity, and to have annihilated every thing which fell in his way, with the wanton barbarity of a savage.

It is a most unwelcome task to dwell upon scenes so revolting to the finest feelings of our nature; but it is only by holding up cruelty to the execration of mankind, that the historian can furnish a rational hope of prescribing bounds to the ferocity of a despot, instructed from his cradle to consider his will as paramount to every civil institution, and accustomed to consign to instantaneous punishment whatever impedes the gratification of sensual appetite, or even excites his capricious displeasure. The person, therefore, who exercises the functions of a

general, without transgressing the precepts of charity, is deservedly entitled to the highest encomiums which historical veracity can bestow, because every thing that encircles him tends directly to efface those tender emotions which fit man for the sympathies of social life, by teaching him to regard the blood of his fellow-creatures not as an object of compassion, but of calculation.

“Plunder,” says an eloquent and enlightened historian,* “was the primary object which attracted the Swedes during their sanguinary progress through Bohemia, the second was universal desolation; so that whatever was too cumbrous to be removed with facility, was unfeelingly committed to the flames.” Upwards of a thousand castles and villages were reduced to ashes, with wanton cruelty. Night afforded no respite to the devoted victims. Guided by the terrific blaze of burning hamlets, the insatiate monsters proceeded in the work of devastation, sweeping away the horses, the cattle, and even the implements of husbandry, with the overwhelming fury of a deluge.

After leaving traces of his inhumanity, which nothing can obliterate, and nothing can extenuate, the rival of Attila (for his ferociousness merits no milder appellation) extended his ravages into Silesia; and would inevitably have proceeded in his destructive career to the gates of Vienna, had not the dread of an intercepted retreat reluctantly forced him to desist.†

Seriously alarmed at the near approach of the torrent, the emperor exerted every nerve and sinew for the defence of his hereditary dominions. The

* Schiller, iv.

† Galetti, 500.

fortifications of Vienna were repaired and augmented; fresh levies were made in all the Austrian provinces; and large sums of money, together with numerous reinforcements, sent with the utmost expedition to the army. Hatsfeld and Piccolomini were ordered to march with all the troops that could be spared from the different garrisons; the former from Westphalia, the latter from Flanders, where his presence appeared no longer essential, because neither the French nor the Spaniards were disposed to encounter the hardships of a winter campaign.*

Such was the situation of the Swedish army at the conclusion of the campaign of 1639; that of the ensuing year did not open with much better prospects. But it was amid the storms and convulsions of an agitated world, that Banner's abilities shone forth in all their natural lustre. Surrounded on every side by powerful armies, if he attempted to advance, he had to contend against the aggregate strength of Austria, marshalled under her ablest commanders; and, if he wished to retreat, all Saxony and Prussia were assembled in his rear, animated by every feeling that can inspire resolution, the love of independence, the thirst of glory, and the insatiate desire of revenge. In this desperate crisis he contrived to reach a favourite position near Melnik, where he hoped to remain till the arrival of Konigsmark, who was hastening with considerable reinforcements from Westphalia.†

Konigsmark was an officer of the highest promise, and had been greatly distinguished at the head of the Westphalian army. Popularity of man-

* Puffendorf, xi. 17.

† Ibid. Galetti; 502.

ners, combined with intrepid courage, had attracted the love and admiration of the soldiers, who were ready to follow him through every danger. Notwithstanding the comparative weakness of his force, his march through Franconia and Thuringia was signalized by a rapid succession of triumphs; so that, in spite of all the obstacles which he had to contend with, he arrived safely on the confines of Bohemia.*

The unexpected success with which the operations of Banner had been attended, during the preceding campaign, produced a sudden change in the opinions and conduct of the Germans; so that many of those, who had abandoned Sweden after the battle of Nordlingen, were again tempted to court her protection. Among these, the most conspicuous for rank and influence was the Duke of Brunswick, who valued his services at so high a rate, that he always believed himself treated with ingratitude by the power to whom he was attached. In the present case, however, he had more foundation than usual for complaint, because the imperial court, in return for the sacrifice of principle and dignity, had issued a decree, commanding him to surrender the rich see of Hildersheim to the Elector of Cologne; and farther, demanded additional contributions for the prosecution of a war, which, being no longer blinded by passion or interest, he began once more to contemplate in its proper light, as subversive of the liberties of Germany.† Severely mortified at the idea of being stripped of a possession, which he probably regarded as the recompense of perfidy, he without hesitation commenced

* Puffendorf, 23. Galetti, 533.

† Puffendorf, 30.

a negociation with Banner, offering, upon certain conditions, to join the confederacy with all his strength, the moment a favourable opportunity should occur.

This treaty had made considerable progress, when the dread of beholding a Swedish army under the walls of his capital, having induced the emperor to lower his pretensions, he consented to suspend the offensive decree, and to leave the duke in possession of the bishopric. This prudent determination was attended with the desired effect; for, though no prince was more anxious to impress the world into an exalted opinion of his justice and liberality, few were greater slaves to vanity and interest than the capricious sovereign of Brunswick. Delivered from the apprehension of an immediate loss, he thought it expedient to wait the issue of another campaign; being resolved to regulate his political attachments according to the decisions of fortune.*

No such pitiful considerations influenced the actions of the Langravine of Hesse-Cassel, or deterred her from adhering, with inflexible fidelity, to the dictates of honour and gratitude. For a considerable time after the death of her husband, the machinations of Darmstadt, the treachery of Melander, and the decisive superiority of the Austrian arms; imposed the necessity of a temporizing policy; because it would have been impossible for her to have followed the suggestions of her magnanimous soul, without exposing her country to utter destruction. She accordingly endeavoured to avert the storm, by entering into a negociation with Ferdinand, which she artfully protracted during several months, with

* Galetti, 504.

such consummate dexterity, that it does not appear that the imperial court entertained the smallest suspicion of her professions. The facility with which the emperor progressively acceded to all her demands soon became a subject of serious disquietude, because it was likely to deprive her of every rational pretext for delaying to ratify the treaty; and it appeared of essential consequence to the stability of her government, that the odium attending the renewal of hostilities should fall entirely upon Austria. No sooner, therefore, was her authority firmly established, than she unexpectedly insisted, that the same unrestrained toleration, which had been previously obtained for her own subjects, should be equally extended to all the members of the empire. A demand so extravagant, as she clearly foresaw, put a stop to all further proceedings; and the refusal afforded, what appeared to her people a satisfactory reason for again uniting with Sweden.*

It is possible, however, that this resolution, enforced as it was by honour and inclination, might not have been adopted with so much haste, had she not been stimulated by the exhortations of Salvius and D'Avaux, and by the promise of a subsidy from France. The immediate consequence of her renovated alliance with Sweden was the removal of Melander from all his employments; a fortunate occurrence, as his interested soul was capable of every baseness.†

Fortunately for the Swedes, the treaty with Amelia Elizabeth was brought to maturity before victory had again forsaken their standards; but, scarcely

* 1640. Bougeant, i. 340.

† Galetti, 504.

had that princess declared in their favour, than she would have had cause to regret her precipitation, had she been capable of repenting the performance of a duty which she owed to the memory of a husband, whose virtues she highly revered. Strong in the conviction of having acted her part with courage and consistency, she prepared to encounter the gathering storm with the intrepid spirit of a heroine; consoling herself with the reflection, that if she were doomed to perish in defence of her independence, her fall would not be inglorious.*

Whether it would have been practicable for Banner to have supported himself in Bohemia, against the superior forces of Austria, is a question which admits of considerable doubt, and which has been differently determined by historians. Certain, however, it is, that he could not have attempted it without hazarding the destruction of his army; because, in the event of a defeat, he might easily have been cut off from all communication with the western circles, and of course utterly precluded from forming a junction with the Hessians and Weimerians, his only remaining allies. These considerations induced him to retire to the heights of Meissen, with so much precipitation, that he abandoned some of his magazines to the enemy.†

It is now time to advert to the operations of the French in Italy and Flanders, where the war was conducted with little ultimate advantage to either party, though attended on both sides with an enormous profusion of blood and of treasure.

The death of the Duke of Crequi, unfortunately killed by a cannon ball, while reconnoitring the po-

* Puffendorf, xii. 6.

† Schmidt, v. 16.

sition of the enemy, made way for the appointment of Cardinal La Vallette, who, in conjunction with his brother, the Duke of Candale, was sent to command the French forces in Italy.* Upon his arrival in Piedmont, the prospect before him presented nothing capable of flattering vanity, or gratifying ambition. By sickness and desertion the army was reduced to a handful of men, without courage, confidence, or discipline; and, to add to his mortification, he was in daily apprehension that the Pope might be tempted to renew the prohibition, by which he had been formerly interdicted from exercising a profession, so totally inconsistent with the duties of a member of the apostolical college. Urbain, however, was contented to remain a silent spectator of his conduct, either through fear of displeasing a powerful monarch, or, what is still more probable, from the malicious desire of beholding the cardinal punished for his temerity by a lesson more impressive than pontifical censures; because the decided superiority of the Spaniards would have rendered it difficult for a general of greater ability to have extricated himself from all his difficulties with credit. The expectations of Urbain were fully realized, as the favourite of Richelieu was compelled to remain a tranquil spectator of the fall of Vercelli, one of the strongest fortresses in Lombardy, which surrendered to Leganes, in spite of the pompous profession of La Vallette, and the gallant resistance of Ognani.†

The military reputation of the warlike cardinal was so completely tarnished by the disgraceful ter-

* *Le Vassor*, xiv. 529.

† *Ibid*, 242.

mination of the Italian campaign, that, without the protection of an all powerful minister, he would have been in danger of being ordered to retire to Rome, there to dedicate the remainder of his life to a vocation more suitable to his talents than that which he had presumptuously undertaken.

The loss of his brother, who died at Carale, added greatly to the distress of the cardinal, who, upon taking the field in the following spring, found the strength of the enemy considerably augmented by the accession of two powerful allies. The younger brothers of Victor Amadeus, having obtained from Ferdinand an imperial rescript, setting aside the testamentary dispositions of the deceased duke, and investing Maurice with the authority of regent, were actively occupied in exciting revolt amongst a turbulent people, by whose assistance they flattered themselves that they should deprive the duchess of all share in the government.

This project would probably have succeeded, could the emperor have been persuaded to send an army into Italy, for the purpose of enforcing his decree; because in that case the Spaniards, by appearing in the humble characters of auxiliaries, might escape the suspicion, which operated powerfully to their disadvantage, of being actuated solely by selfish motives, and intending to annex any conquests they might make to their other Italian dominions.

But the apprehension of enfeebling the German army, would have prevented Ferdinand from listening to this proposal, even had he been satisfied with the proceedings of the Spanish court; instead of being offended with Philip for his want of punctuality, in neglecting to send the reinforce-

ments promised for the defence of Alsace and the Brisgau.*

By a convention, agreed on between the princes of Savoy and the Spanish commander, it was stipulated, that every place which should surrender to the Castilian arms should remain subject for the present to the dominion of Philip; but that those which declared in favour of Maurice should be left entirely at his disposal. A dangerous compact, and one to which no honest man could have assented, who impartially weighed the relative strength of the two countries, and was exempt from the impulse of passion.

These preliminary arrangements having paved the way for the dismemberment of the dominions of Victor Amadeus, Leganes availed himself of the weakness of his opponent, to make himself master of various places upon the banks of the Po,† and even to display his victorious standards before the walls of Turin, where popular inconstancy was well inclined to favour the pretensions of those who were adverse to existing establishments. Terrified at the gloomy prospect before her, and strongly impressed with the folly of her conduct, in having sacrificed splendour and affluence to the wishes of a brother, who did so little to alleviate her distress, the duchess abandoned her capital in disguise, to seek an asylum in France.

The death of La Valette proved a fortunate circumstance both for Christina and Lewis; because Harcourt, who succeeded to the command, by his

* Siri Mem. Recond. viii. 693. Nani Hist. Venet. xi. Le Vassor, xv. 152. Bougeant, i. 370.

† Cencio, Chinavapo, Asti, Coni &c.

skill and audacity, gave a sudden turn to affairs. Scarcely had he joined the army, than he signalized his name by revictualling Casale, reducing Quierasco, and still more by the lustre of a judicious retreat, effected without sustaining the smallest loss, in the face of upwards of twenty thousand Spaniards, who were repeatedly repulsed by less than half that number. These splendid achievements, which terminated the campaign, raised the reputation of Harcourt to the highest pitch, and, by flattering their vanity, appeased the murmurs of a volatile people, whose characteristic versatility forgot the weight of the burthens under which they groaned, amid bonfires, illuminations, and *Te Deums*.† Notwithstanding this fortunate change inspired the public with the most sanguine expectations, they for once were not disappointed. At the opening of the ensuing campaign, indeed, a temporary cloud obscured the glory of Harcourt, who for want of reinforcements was incapacitated from adopting an aggressive system, though his ardent temper could ill endure the discredit attending inactivity. Anxious to take advantage of his present superiority, Leganes again laid siege to Casale, with the hope of reducing it, before the arrival of succours from France. But it was no longer by a member of the sacred college that the Gallic armies were marshalled, neither was it possible for the impetuous courage of Harcourt to suffer a place so essential to the success of his future projects to fall without an effort to relieve it. Assembling his forces with the utmost expedition, he resolved to attack the enemy's lines, though defended by an

* *Le Vassor*, xii. 36. *Bougant*, 371.

army twice as numerous as his own.* The temerity of Harcourt again proved triumphant. Arrived in sight of the Spanish intrenchments, he led the attack in person at the head of the cavalry, while the gallant Plessy conducted the infantry with equal ability. Thrice repulsed by the besiegers, the latter formed his battalions within pistol shot of the trenches, and returning to the charge with resistless impetuosity, soon rendered the victory complete.†

Elated with glory, and strengthened by the arrival of a few additional regiments, Harcourt invested Turin, which, after the departure of Christina, had opened its gates to the Spaniards, and was now defended by Prince Thomas in person. Eager to efface the disgrace sustained before Casale, Leganes having collected a powerful force, made several efforts for its relief; but all his endeavours were rendered abortive by the perseverance and sagacity of his opponent. These repeated failures having disheartened the garrison, they readily listened to the proposals of Harcourt, who, having entered the city in triumph, enjoyed the honour of replacing the sister of Louis at the head of the government, amid the shouts and acclamations of her subjects.‡

About this time the ruin of an army, assembled by the Elector Palatine for the recovery of his dominions, was magnified by the pride and policy of Austria into a victory the most brilliant and decisive, though, in fact, it was no more than the unavoidable result of an expedition, rashly undertaken without adequate resources.

* Bougeant, i. 372. Le Vassor gives him ten thousand men, and estimates the Spanish force at upwards of twenty thousand, xiv. 55.

† Ibid. 61. Nani, xl.

‡ Bougeant, 373. Le Vassor, 179.

No sooner had that unfortunate prince attained the age prescribed by the "Golden Bull," for assuming the functions of government, than he began seriously to reflect upon the most probable means of rescuing his states from the hands of his enemies. But, as he was convinced by the failure of repeated negociations, that no benefit could accrue from again appealing to the justice or the generosity of the emperor; he published a manifesto, a few weeks previous to the death of Ferdinand II. in which he asserted his claims in a tone of dignity and moderation, well calculated to conciliate popularity.* This memorial is supposed to have been originally intended to have been presented to the diet, assembled at Ratisbonne for the election of a king of the Romans; but this project was abandoned by the advice of Charles I. desirous of making one effort more before he had recourse to hostilities. Lord Arundel's remonstrances, however, having proved equally ineffectual with those of his precursors in the diplomatic career, nothing remained for the elector, but patiently to submit to the injustice of Austria, or to assert his pretensions by the sword. The latter decision being most congenial to his character, he endeavoured by the usual modes of negociation to augment the number of his adherents. His chief reliance, however, was placed in the friendship of the English monarch, who promised to assist him with money and troops, in case the emperor should persist in a refusal. But it was one of the greatest misfortunes of Charles's reign, to undertake what he often was prevented from executing. In the present instance it is certain,

* Le Vassor, xiv. 138.

that the unquiet state of Scotland would have found ample employment for much greater resources than that ill-advised monarch possessed: and he consequently appears to have adopted the most unfortunate system which it was possible for imprudence to pursue. When he found himself no longer in a situation to realize the expectations which his nephew had been taught to entertain, he ought to have exerted the influence, which age and experience must necessarily have given him over the mind of a youth, so entirely dependent upon his bounty, in order to induce him to suspend an attempt, which, according to the natural course of human events, could not fail of terminating unprosperously.* Had he entirely withheld all pecuniary supplies, Charles Louis must have postponed the enterprise till a more favourable opportunity should offer; but the king injudiciously preferred, possibly from his eagerness to get rid of an importunate suitor, to advance a trifling sum, which was immediately employed by the unfortunate elector in equipping an inconsiderable armament; which, with the connivance, if not with the actual permission, of the states general, was cantoned upon the frontiers of Holland.

Being now thoroughly satisfied that no additional aid was to be expected from the munificence of his uncle, he turned his attention toward Sweden, flattering himself to find in the magnanimity of Christina a disposition to realize all her father's engagements. He had, however, the mortification shortly to discover, that of all human virtues generosity is

* Le Vassor, xv. 88.

perhaps the most difficult to meet with in the public transactions of nations. Secretly determined to accommodate all differences with the court of Vienna, whenever it could be effected with advantage, the Swedish government was averse to contracting any fresh engagements, which might throw additional difficulties in the way of a pacification; and, consequently, the Palatine obtained nothing but a barren assurance of support, accompanied with the permission to unite his little army, scarcely amounting to two thousand men, with an equal number of Swedish troops, at that time acting in Westphalia. Persuaded that without some signal exploit it would be folly to expect the co-operation of those who were secretly disposed in his favour, the elector determined to commence his operations by the siege of Lemgow, a fortress situated between Harneln and Osnabruck.

Hatsfeld, who commanded the imperial forces in the Duchy of Brunswick, was no sooner apprised of the elector's intentions, than advancing at the head of a numerous column, he compelled him to retire, and even reduced him to the painful alternative of abandoning his artillery, or endeavouring to save it at the hazard of a battle. Having embraced a resolution suggested by despair, Charles Louis drew up his troops in tolerable order to receive the shock of the enemy; but no sooner did they discover the strength of the assailants, than they threw away their arms, and fled without the smallest resistance. Bereft of every hope, and hurried away amid the general tumult, the unfortunate prince determined to seek an asylum in Minden, at that time in the occupation of Sweden; but this could not be effected without crossing the Weser,

a difficult undertaking in face of a victorious army. No boat being near when he reached the river, and his pursuers being already in sight, he ordered his coachman to drive into the water, preferring to expose himself to any dangers, rather than fall into the hands of the emperor. The opposite bank proving so difficult of ascent, that it was impossible for the horses to mount it, the elector leaped out of the carriage, and having scrambled up by the help of a tree, arrived at Minden in a most deplorable condition, without either clothes, attendants, or money.*

In Flanders the success of the belligerent powers was pretty equally balanced, notwithstanding the prodigious exertions of Richelieu, who, justly appreciating the true value of the prize for which he contended, would have readily consented to any sacrifices, which might have enabled him to accomplish his ambitious designs.

In 1638, Chatillon, the favourite general of the year, (for all things in France, even military reputation, are subjected to the influence of fashion) desirous of fulfilling the public expectations, invested St. Omers, an arduous enterprise, but which promised, if successful, an abundant harvest of glory. No laurels, however, were to be reaped; on the contrary, after wasting several weeks in fruitless attempts, he was ignominiously forced to retire, though he had presumptuously boasted in a letter to the king, that no efforts of the enemy could disconcert his designs.†

The disgrace arising from this unexpected failure was in some degree alleviated by the acqui-

* Bougeant, i. 333. Le Vassor, 90. † Ibid. xiv. 605.

sition of Catelet, which was artfully represented by the minister and his friends as a conquest of the utmost importance.

The ill success which attended the siege of St. Omers, having tarnished the reputation of Chatillon, Richelieu availed himself of the opportunity to confer the command on his cousin La Meilleraie, who had lately obtained the important office of grand master of the artillery. Feuquieres, whom we have seen upon various occasions distinguished for diplomatic address, was placed at the head of another army, destined to undertake the reduction of Thionville, while the now unpopular Chatillon was obliged to content himself with the equivocal honour of acting in subordination to two commanders, inferior to himself both in rank and experience. But the anxious desire of regaining the favour of an implacable minister, incapable of forgiving the slightest opposition, induced him to submit with apparent resignation to an arrangement, which an officer, endowed with more exalted feelings, would have regarded in the light of an indelible affront. Though too prudent to manifest the smallest resentment, he was not insensible to the indignity, and is in consequence supposed to have derived a malicious pleasure from the defeat and captivity of Feuquieres.

Bassompierre, adverting to this transaction with his accustomed brevity,* insinuates that Feuquieres was a little too dilatory in his preparations, and seems of opinion, that this delay was the principal cause of his failure. And certain it was, that the month of May was considerably advanced, before

* Journal de Bassompierre, ii.

he was in a condition to appear before Thionville. Yet even then the garrison was so inadequate to its defence, that he was suffered to commence the siege in uninterrupted tranquillity. Piccolomini, however, by his subsequent activity, made ample amends for this apparent neglect; and, advancing at the head of an overwhelming force, attacked the besiegers in their entrenchments with such impetuosity, that they were almost immediately broken and dispersed. All the baggage and artillery belonging to the French fell into the hands of the conquerors, together with a prodigious number of prisoners,* among whom was the general himself, who, being severely wounded, was conducted to Thionville, and treated with the greatest humanity.†

Whether the defeat of the French was intentionally promoted by the jealousy of Chatillon, as the partisans of Feuquieres insinuated, or ought entirely to be ascribed to the superior skill and resources of his antagonist, it would be useless now to examine. Few events, however, could have proved more conformable to the views and wishes of Chatillon, to whose talents the minister was obliged to recur under the pressure of immediate distress, and he was accordingly directed to collect the remains of the scattered army, and to endeavour, by every means in his power, to stop the further progress of the enemy. Elated with success, Piccolomini

* Siri Mem. Recond. viii. 773. Bougeant, i. 367. Le Vassor, xv. 223.

† "Thus it was," said Piccolomini in his dispatch to the emperor, "that the Marquis de Feuquieres fulfilled his promise of entering Thionville."

is said to have formed the design of marching directly to the relief of Hesdin, now upon the point of surrendering to the king in person, who had been carried thither by the cardinal to witness the triumph of La Meilleraie. Subsequent events having induced the Austrian general to relinquish his intention, he attempted to storm Mouron, a small town on the Meuse. Two unsuccessful assaults having sufficed to convince him, that the enterprise would be attended with greater difficulty than he at first imagined, he retired upon the approach of the French, unwilling to hazard his brilliant reputation for an object of so little importance.*

The capture of Hesdin, in which Richelieu had contrived deeply to interest the vanity of his master, rendered Louis less sensible, than he would otherwise have been, to the loss recently sustained before Thionville. No sooner had the town capitulated, than he entered in triumph by one of the breaches, and standing on the fragment of a ruined bastion, delivered a marshal's staff to La Meilleraie, in token of his joy and approbation.† This conquest was followed by that of Ivoy, the fortifications of which were destroyed.

The importance of the Spanish Netherlands was so justly appreciated by the penetrating judgment of Richelieu, that no difficulties were sufficient to discourage him; on the contrary, the obstacles which retarded his progress, served only to stimulate him to greater exertions. By a subsidiary

* Bougeant, 368. Le Vassor, 242.

† "Action," remarks Sirot, "qui n'a point d'exemple dans notre histoire."

treaty, he obtained from the Dutch a positive assurance, that early in the following spring, the Prince of Orange should open the campaign, by investing either Dam, or Bruges; while another army, in the pay of the republic, acted on the opposite frontier. The king, on his part, undertook also to enter Flanders in two different directions; and, in conformity to this engagement, instructed La Meilleraie to occupy the country on the banks of the Meuse, while Chaunes and Chatillon were employed in the conquest of Artois.

Having assembled his forces in the vicinity of Merières, the former commenced his operations by investing Charlemont; but was soon compelled by the inclemency of the season, and the want of forage, to relinquish the enterprise. An attempt upon Marienburg proved equally unfortunate; so that La Meilleraie had the mortification of beholding his troops so completely exhausted by suffering and fatigue, as to be incompetent to the exertions of active service.

As two successive failures were not to be effaced in the eyes of Richelieu, except by some decisive advantage, La Meilleraie was ordered, after uniting his broken forces with Chaunes and Chatillon, to besiege the capital of Artois.

Meanwhile the Prince of Orange had been equally foiled in every undertaking. After considerable delays, occasioned by the prevalence of contrary winds, he at length effected a landing in Flanders: but as he was preparing to pass a navigable canal in the road to Bruges, he was attacked by Fuentes, with so much vigour, that he deemed it expedient to abandon the project, and remain inactive till he saw the result of

the various expeditions undertaken by his Gallic allies.*

But no sooner was he informed that the Spaniards were marching to the relief of Arras, than he conceived that it might be practicable for him to get possession of Hulst, before the enemy were in a condition to oppose him. Contrary, however, to his expectations, Fuentes again appeared in his way; but his efforts were attended with less favourable results, than on the former occasion, as he was obliged in his turn to retire, after sacrificing numbers ineffectually.

The retreat of the Spaniards led the Prince of Orange to believe that he should have no further obstacles to encounter; but in this supposition he was disappointed. Every place had been kept in so good a state of defence, that it was impossible for him to make the smallest impression. Despairing of being able to accomplish any thing in Flanders, he laid siege to Gueldres, the conquest of which was thought likely to prove a less difficult enterprise: but, before he was prepared to open the trenches, the summer was greatly advanced. Exposed to continual torrents of rain, and frequently in want of wholesome provisions, the troops perished by hundreds, so that it would have been highly imprudent to have encountered the formidable force, which was hastening to the relief of the garrison.

The sanguine expectations which had been entertained by the French, were naturally productive of the bitterest disappointment, when those hopes were entirely frustrated. Consulting their vanity much more than their understandings, they vented their

* *Le Vassor*, xvi, 96.

spleen in unmerited sarcasms upon the conduct of their illustrious ally, unjustly accusing him of having acted in collusion with the Spaniards, though it is highly improbable, that he would have sacrificed so many of his bravest soldiers, had his object been only to deceive his confederates by a fictitious display of activity.*

It is natural to suppose, that the most trifling error committed by a minister so universally odious as Richelieu, would always be represented in the most unfavourable light by the watchful malice of his enemies. No wonder, then, if the repeated miscarriages of La Meilleraie should have furnished abundant materials for animadversion, and have been publicly censured as the necessary consequence of an ill-judged partiality towards a man, who had little to recommend him to royal favour, except his connexion with the cardinal. As the vigilance of Richelieu did not often slumber, he was no stranger to the danger to which he might be exposed, unless he retrieved his credit with the king, by the lustre of some splendid achievement. He determined, therefore, for the present, to leave his cousin La Meilleraie to defend himself as well as he could, convinced that he should be able, at no distant period, to make him ample amends for the sacrifice. Assuming, for once, the language of modesty, instead of issuing his orders with peremptory pride, he requested Chatillon to deliver his opinion respecting the future operations of the campaign, contenting himself with observing, that the king earnestly wished some siege of importance to be undertaken. The general, in reply, stated, that

* 1640. *Le Vassor*, 98.

Lillers might be taken with little difficulty, but that its capture would be proportionably unimportant; that Bethune also might be reduced, with the force which was actually at his disposal, provided the Spaniards were prevented, by a powerful diversion, from interrupting the siege; but that it would be highly imprudent to attempt the conquest either of Aire, or Arras, with less than twenty-five thousand men; and even then, that it would be requisite for the Prince of Orange to occupy a considerable part of the Spanish forces; while another army must be stationed on the frontiers of Champagne, to prevent the arrival of reinforcements from Germany.*

The glory which must accrue from the capture of a city, considered by the Spaniards impregnable, induced Richelieu to decide in favour of Arras; and as he could not but regard his own reputation as deeply interested in the success of a measure, sanctioned by his unqualified approbation, he prudently resolved that no exertions on his part should be wanting, which could in any respect tend to promote it. Enormous magazines were accordingly formed on the frontiers of Piccardy; new levies were made in all the provinces, and adequate sums provided for the payment of the army.

No enterprise, in which the cardinal was ever concerned, appears to have interested him so deeply, nor was any conducted with equal ability. All the movements of the different columns intended to cooperate in this arduous undertaking, were combined with such admirable precision, that they simultaneously arrived at the place of rendezvous; and,

* *Le Vassor*, 100.

when assembled, amounted to twenty-five thousand foot and nine thousand cavalry;* as appears from a relation published by the court, after the termination of the siege, generally attributed to Richelieu. This piece is constructed with considerable ingenuity, as, without ever mentioning the name of the minister, it artfully attributes to him the chief merit of the enterprize, under pretext of ascribing it to the indefatigable activity and persevering courage of the king, whose virtues it celebrates with such exaggerated praise, as might almost be mistaken for irony.

After the arrival of the troops, not a moment was lost in commencing the lines of circumvallation, which were nearly completed in three weeks, though they embraced an extent of fifteen miles; and, in a fortnight more, all the other works were brought to a state of the utmost perfection, under the immediate inspection of Chatillon, who was eminently distinguished for his accurate knowledge in every branch of fortification.

To have suffered a place of such infinite importance to fall, without an effort for its relief, would have been inconsistent with the character of the cardinal infant: but, as an armament proportionate to the magnitude of the enterprize could not be collected in a moment, he ordered Lamboy to advance to the vicinity of Arras, for the purpose of interrupting the labours of the besiegers. With the assistance of the cavalry from the adjacent garrisons, he was instructed also to scour the country, and to endeavour, if possible, to intercept the enemy's convoys in their way from Piccardy. These orders be-

* On the 13th of June, 1640, they appeared before Arras. *Le Vassor*, 106.

ing executed with the greatest punctuality, not only straitened the French in their quarters, but kept them constantly on the alert.*

The moment his preparations were sufficiently advanced to allow of his taking the field,† the cardinal infant removed to Lille, where all the different corps were assembled. It was generally believed to have been his intention to attack the lines of the enemy; but opinions were so divided in a council of war, that he was reduced to the most distressing perplexity. The Duke of Lorraine, as well as Lamboy, who commanded the Austrians, agreed with the prince in opinion, and urged the necessity of carrying it into execution, before the French had completed their labours. This proposal, however, was warmly combated by Sylva and Rose, (who were placed by Olivares as spies upon the cardinal's actions) under pretence that a defeat must be unavoidably attended with the most disastrous consequences, and might even occasion the loss of the Netherlands. They therefore advised the adoption of a more prudent system, contending that, without encountering the smallest risk, the French might be compelled either to abandon the siege, or to hazard a battle, with evident disadvantage. Both opinions were supported by such plausible arguments, that the Spanish prince was at a loss on which to resolve; he was, besides, apprehensive of the consequences to which he might be exposed, should he fail in an enterprise, undertaken in direct opposition to the confidential friends of a minister, no less proud or revengeful than Richelieu. Determined, however, to be governed by events, he ad-

* Siri Mem. Recond. viii. 803.

† About the end of June.

vanced to S. El y, a small town about two leagues distant from Arras.

The near approach of an army, of equal strength with their own, could not fail to excite considerable anxiety in the breast of the hostile commanders. Impelled, either by the natural impetuosity of their tempers, or by the malicious desire of counteracting the plans of Chatillon, whom they equally envied and hated, both Chaunes and La Meilleraie insisted that it would be disgraceful, in the highest degree, to remain in their intrenchments, exposed to the insults of a presumptuous foe, by whom their patience might be imputed to cowardice. They accordingly proposed instantly to advance, and offer battle to the Spaniards. This project, it must be confessed, had nothing to recommend it except its temerity; because, even if successful, it must unavoidably have occasioned a temporary raising of the blockade, and of course would have afforded a convenient opportunity for the enemy to throw supplies into the town. Chatillon therefore declared, that nothing less than a positive order from the king should induce him to quit his position. The dispute, however, was conducted with so much asperity, that it appeared advisable to dispatch an officer to Dourlens, to explain to Richelieu the exact state of affairs, and leave to him the decision of the question. The cardinal returned for answer, "that to determine a point of so much delicacy, must require a more intimate knowledge of military affairs, than it was possible for him to possess. But that, in the whole course of his reading, which was tolerably extensive, he did not recollect to have met with a single instance of any army having ever abandoned its lines, with a view of giving battle to

an enemy, unless constrained by imperious motives. He therefore should content himself with simply observing, that when the king entrusted them with the command of his forces, it was in the full persuasion that they were perfectly competent to the task. His only object, he said, was the reduction of Arras; but whether that was accomplished by fighting, or not, was to him a matter of perfect indifference. He, however, advised them to remember, that if they did not succeed, they must answer for the failure with their heads.*

Chatillon's plan being now sanctioned by the highest authority, his colleagues submitted without further opposition. But, though he had no longer to contend against petulance and envy, he had no trifling obstacles to encounter. The transport of provisions for so many mouths, was an object of serious concern, because escorts, consisting of several thousand men, were indispensably requisite for their protection; and, even with the assistance of these, it was not always possible to secure them. The loss of a convoy was invariably productive of general distress; so that it not unfrequently happened that, for several days, the soldiers were absolutely destitute of bread; and even that the stock of ammunition was exhausted. Circumstantially to detail the consequent skirmishes would prove a gratuitous trespass upon patience; I shall therefore hasten to an action, so decisive in its results, that it determined the fate of the garrison.

Having received information that Chaunes and La Meilleraie were gone to cover a convoy, the cardinal infant resolved to avail himself of the oppor-

* *Le Vassor*, 112.

tunity for attacking the enemy's lines. The Duke of Lorraine, on the contrary, recommended that their first efforts should be directed against the detachment, and that, after cutting off the marshals, which he regarded as certain, they should fall upon Chatillon, who, weakened by the defeat of his coadjutors, would be no longer in a condition to resist. Had either project been carried into immediate execution, a fatal blow might have been given to the besiegers; but the tools of Olivares, after determining the prince to persevere in his original plan, contrived to create so many unnecessary delays, that they allowed time for Chaunes and La Meilleraie to rejoin the army, after conducting the convoy to a place of security.* Fortunate it was for Chatillon that they came so opportunely, as the conflict proved sharp and sanguinary, and, unless the fortune of the day had been suddenly changed by their arrival, must have terminated in favour of the Spaniards.

While busily employed in repelling the enemy, Chatillon was informed that his son had fallen: "He is fortunate," said the marshal, with the dignified calmness of a Spartan, "in having terminated his life thus gloriously."† Luckily, however, the wound did not prove mortal; so that the veteran commander enjoyed the honour due to his patriotism, without losing a son so deserving of his affection.

Notwithstanding the failure of this attempt entirely disconcerted all the plans of the Spaniards, they did not yield themselves up to despair; but,

* *Journal de Bassompierre*, ii. Nani, xi. *Gualdo*, ii. 182.

† *Le Vassor*, 145.

After the surrender of Arras, the two armies continued, for some time, to watch each other; the French posted near the walls of the captured city; the Spaniards in the neighbourhood of Bethune; a position well calculated for preventing the enemy from extending their conquests on the side of Flanders, as well as for annoying their foraging parties.*

While carefully following the operations of the different armies, our attention has been divested from the various negotiations carrying on by the belligerent powers. To these it is now proper to return.

The renewal of the alliance between France and Sweden excited the utmost anxiety at Vienna; and the imperial ministers at length became sensible of the error which they had committed, in permitting the treaty to be brought to maturity, without the smallest attempt to interrupt it. Desirous, however, of concealing their own unpardonable negligence, the offspring of pride and incapacity, under the bustle of ostentatious activity, they sent various negotiators into different parts of the empire, flattering themselves that the multiplicity of business they engaged in, might pass with the world for an indisputable proof of comprehensive views and luminous judgments.

In consequence of the intimate union which now subsisted between France and Sweden, Salvius had positive instructions to take no step of consequence, without the knowledge and approbation of D'Avaux. Yet notwithstanding the confidence with which he was apparently treated, the latter

* Le Vassor, 158.

was by no means exempt from disquietude; because he knew from experience that, in private life, a man may enjoy the reputation of unblemished integrity, whose ideas of morality are far less austere, when great political interests are concerned. This anxiety was considerably increased by the arrival of Curtz, vice chancellor of Germany; the motive of whose journey to Hamburgh, though studiously concealed, was not long a secret to D'AvauX. Whether seriously engaged to accede to the emperor's overtures, or desirous only of retarding his gigantic preparations, the Swedish plenipotentiary evinced little reluctance to treaty; on the contrary, he attended to the proposals of Curtz with a degree of complacency, not perfectly consistent with his professions. There is, however, great reason to believe, that neither the Swede, nor the Austrian, was acting with sincerity, but that they were each endeavouring, by every artifice of diplomatic finesse, to overreach the other; because, the moment they proceeded to the discussion of their respective claims, they differed so widely upon every point, that no hope of approximation remained. The imperial minister, whose main object appears to have been the exclusion of France, insisted that the treaty should be conducted at Lubec, and be totally independent of the proceedings of the congress at Cologne. Salvius, on the contrary, declared, that the engagements, recently contracted with France, not only precluded the possibility of a separate negotiation, but absolutely required that both treaties should commence simultaneously, and keep pace in their progress with each other.*

* Bougeant, i. 343.

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