

Tanniers and that of Sars, and all the woods, and all the space which lay between, fenced in with levelled trees and bristling with cannon. "It was the most deliberate, solemn, and well ordered battle I have ever seen," writes Blackadder, the Scotch Puritan Colonel, "a noble and fine disposition, and as finely executed, every one was at his post, and I never saw troops engage with more cheerfulness, boldness, and resolution—for myself, I never had a more pleasant day in all my life." And never was there a more bloody day; never was the "Cockpit" more uselessly saturated with human blood—eleven thousand Dutch fell at Tanniers alone. "Almost the whole Dutch force lay extended on the ground," is Eugène's graphic account of it. One regiment loses eight-tenths of its officers—Tullibardine is killed, Eugène wounded, Villars wounded—all day long through woods, hedges, villages, holes, triple entrenchments, and abattis, the fight goes on, wherever the ground is open the French Maison du Roi and the Allied Cavalry furiously mingle, and far into the afternoon, Europe toils against France, and half a dozen nationalities strew Malplaquet with their dead, because, the Pyrenees are thought very necessary mountains.

"I think it is not too much to estimate the loss of both armies, at forty thousand men," says Eugène; "those who were not killed died of fatigue; I gave some rest to the remains of my troops, buried all I could, and then marched to Mons." Marched to Mons and took it after twenty-seven days of siege; La Tour St. Wadru, you may be sure, rung out its welcome to the Germans, and dozed off into silence again—and what says Villars of this fight at Malplaquet? "If it pleases God," he writes to the king, "to favor your Majesty with the loss of another such battle, your enemies will be destroyed." He did not err much.