

The War between these two nations had continued for the Period of 25 years, and it was thought that the losses of Spain in its prosecution, added to the many and great advantages she was forced to abandon by the treaty of Peace, would provide sufficient security against the restless spirit of Dominion which, at that time appeared to absorb every other pursuit of the Spanish Court.

In fact, by the Munster and Pyrenean Treaties, Spain lost many of her possessions, her resources were diminished, and enervated by the strong and convulsive exertions she had made during an arduous and almost general conflict which had lasted for more than a Century, she was fast sinking in the scale of Power.

After the death of Philip the fourth of Spain, Lewis the 14th considering it a favorable opportunity to enforce his unjust pretensions to the Dukedom of Brabant, the Counties of Hainault and Namur, besides several other portions of the Low Countries, invaded them at the head of a Powerful army in 1667. Prompted even at that early period, by those views of aggrandisement which were one day to stimulate him to attempt Universal Dominion, Lewis waved all consideration of honor or justice, and as well by Machiavelean arts, as by the sword, he strung every nerve to render himself master of the destinies of Europe, by reducing Spain to the narrow and desolating exigency of becoming subservient to his schemes; aided by incomparable talents and abilities in every department of state, his plan was almost realised, when the Triple League already spoken of, was opportunely concluded, gave arrest to the imperious Monarch's ambitious career, and Peace to Europe.

It is evident therefore, that En-

gland manifested, by her conduct, in these Treaties that, the due preserving the Balance of Power, was her constant pursuit; and according as the scale varied too much in favor of one or other of the contending Parties, the same Policy governed her measures. All Europe rejoiced at the conclusion of the Triple League; France, by the succession of two able, designing, and highly ambitious Ministers, Richelieu and Magazin, had acquired a greatness of Power truly formidable. Notwithstanding the fears this power naturally gave rise to, about the year 1671 the triple League was broken, thro' the ascendancy of certain religious principles which at that time engross'd the English Court; and in March 1672, War with Holland was again proclaimed, but very much against the advice of Parliament: so that in the year following the Lords and Commons represented to the King that, "France was profiting by this unnatural contest, and was increasing, by the means of England, in power, strength and reputation:" they advised a speedy treaty with the United Provinces, in order to a solid and lasting Peace. The inclinations of the Court were unfortunately not found to correspond with this salutary advice. It was not till the year 1677, that the apathy which had palsied the nation, the Lethargy which had so long intranced its Councils began to subside. Reflecting upon the immense treasure of blood and money expended by their ancestors to keep the Continental Powers within their due and moderate limits, with what acrimony did the people revile themselves for basely administering to the plans of France by assisting her to erect an Empire far more alarming, than the most excessive growth of the Spanish Monarchy! For some time after the restoration, the Court was drown'd in luxury, and plung'd into