CHAPTER VIII.

principally by the two great statesmen, Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin, who, by drying up the fountains of civil dissension, and concentrating the reins of authority in the hands of the government, raised that monarchy to the rank which its position, its population, and its internal resources, had assigned it among the powers of the Continent.

Mazarin left the kingdom in a flourishing state to Louis XIV., who, aided by the counsels and assistance of the famous Colbert, became the patron of letters and the fine arts, and finished the work which was begun by his prime minister. Nothing could equal the ardour which inspired that prince for military fame. France would have been prosperous under his reign and respected even by all Europe, had he kept nothing else in view than the true interests and happiness of his people; la he was ambitious of that sort of glory which is the scourge d mankind, the glory of heroes and conquerors. Hence there is sulted a long series of wars, which exhausted the strength ad resources of the state, and introduced a new change in its p litical system. The same States which had formerly make common cause with France against Austria, now combined against the former, to humble that gigantic power which seeme to threaten their liberty and independence.

[In these alliances the maritime powers voluntarily took par and, having less fear than the others of falling under the ye of a universal monarchy, they joined the Confederates meet for the protection of their commerce-the true source of the influence and their wealth. They undertook the defence of the equilibrium system, because they perceived, that a State whit could command the greater part of the continental coasts, mit in many ways embarrass their commerce, and perhaps been dangerous to their marine. They soon acquired a very influence in the affairs of this system, by the subsidies m which from time to time they furnished the States of the 0 tinent. From this period the principal aim of European po was their finances and their commercial interests, in plat religion, which had been the grand motive or pretext for preceding wars. With this new system began those abuse commercial privileges and monopolies, prohibitions, imp and many other regulations, which acted as restraints on me liberty, and became the scourge of future generations. It then that treaties of commerce first appeared, by which e trading nation endeavoured to procure advantages to itse the expense of its rivals; and it was then that the bellig powers began to lay restraints and interdicts on the comm of neutral States.

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The first war that ro which Louis XIV. und laims which he advance esa, over several provinc illy the dutchies of Bra lechlin, the marquisate ounties of Namur, Hains esis, which he alleged h volutionis, according to that right, the property st marriage, when their eresa, Queen of France ge of Philip IV. King cessor in that monarchy ge. Louis XIV. contend ond marriage, the proper cted by the right of dev t, after the death of her succession. In opposimiards alleged, that the ely on custom, and appli linot be opposed to the atained the indivisibility of le succession to Charles course of the campaign es masters of several citi res, Furnes, Armentieres y, Courtray, Oudenarde ving winter, they got po and several princes hav e restoration of peace, th elle; but the principal sc e, where Louis sent the with the States-General rated by the famous T

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