The revolt in the Low Countries was inevitably favoured by both France and England. Philip was consequently drawn into intervention in the religious wars of France *(q.v.)* and into war with England, which culminated in the great Armada *(q.υ.)* of 1588. His relations with England were further complicated by the exten­sion of English maritime enterprise to the New World (see Hawkins, John; and Drake, Francis). In the Mediterranean he was equally forced by his position to take a part in resisting the Turks (see Malta: *History\*,* and Lepanto, Battle of). But the key to his whole policy must be sought in his relations to his Flemish subjects. With his absolutist tendencies he was bound to wish to govern them as he did Castile, and the prin­ciple of religious toleration, which was not understood by any prince in Europe with the exception of the prince of Orange, William the Silent *(q.υ.),* was peculiarly impossible for him. His reign was therefore one long struggle with forces which he was unable to master.

The burden of the struggle fell with crushing effect on his Spanish dominions and peculiarly on Castile. Aragon, which was poor and tenacious of its rights, would give little; Catalonia and Valencia afforded small help. The Flemish revenue was destroyed by the revolt. The Italian states barely paid their expenses. Resources for the incessant wars of the reign had been sought in the taxation of Castile and the revenue from the mines of America. They were wholly inadequate, and the result of the attempt to dominate all western Europe was to produce bankruptcy and exhaustion. In his internal government Philip was fully despotic. He made no pretence of consulting the Cortes on legislation, and though he summoned them to vote new taxes he established the rule that the old were to be considered as granted for ever, and as constituting the fixed revenue of the Crown. The nobles were excluded from all share in the administration, which was in the hands of boards *(juntas)* of lawyers and men of the middle class. All business was conducted by correspondence, and with a final reference to the king, and the result was naturally endless delay.

The first years of the reign of Philip II. were occupied in concluding the last of his father’s wars with France, to which was added a very unwelcome quarrel with the pope, arising out of his position as duke of Milan. He was unable to avoid sending an army under Alva against Paul IV., and was glad to avail himself of the services of Venice to patch up a peace. On the Flemish frontier, with the help of an English contingent and by the good generalship of Philibert of Savoy he defeated a French army at St Quentin on the 10th of August 1557, and again at Gravelines on the 13th of July 1558. But he did not follow up his successes, and the war was ended by the signing of the peace of Cateau Cambrésis on the 2nd of April 1559. The exhaustion of his resources made peace necessary to him, and it was no less desirable to the French government. Philip’s marriage with Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry II. and of Catherine de Medici, together with their common fear of the Reformation, bound him for a time to the French royal house. In August 1559 he returned to Spain, which he never left for the rest of his life. The outcry of the Cortes, whether of Castile or of the other states, for relief from taxation was loud. In some cases the king went so far as to levy taxes in what he acknowledged was an illegal manner and excused under the plea of necessity. By 1567 the revolt in the Netherlands was flagrant, and the duke of Alva was sent with a picked army, and at the expense of Spain, to put it down. In the following year the tyranny of the Inquisition, encouraged by the king who desired to purge his kingdom of all taint of heterodoxy, led to the revolt of the Moriscoes, which desolated Granada from 1568 to 1570, and ruined the province completely. The Moriscoes had looked for help from the Turks, who were engaged in conquering Cyprus from Venice. The danger to Spain and to the Spanish possessions in Italy stimulated the king to join in the Holy League formed by the pope and Venice against the Turks; and Spanish ships and soldiers had a great share in the splendid victory at Lepanto. But the penury of the treasury made it impossible to maintain a permanent naval force to protect the coast against the Barbary pirates *(q.v.).* Andalusia, Murcia, Valencia, Catalonia and the Balearic Islands were subject to their raids throughout the whole of the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1581 Philip annexed Portugal, as heir to King Henry, the aged successor of Dorn Sebastian. Philip endeavoured to placate the Portuguese by the fullest recognition of their constitutional rights, and in particular by favouring the *fidalgos* or gentry. The duke of Braganza, whose claims were better than Philip’s, was bought off by immense grants. Spain seemed now to have reached a commanding height of power. But she was internally exhausted. Her real weakness, and the incompetence of her government, were shown when open war began with England in 1585. While a vast armament was being slowly collected for the invasion of England, Drake swept the West Indies, and in 1587 burnt a number of Spanish ships in their own harbour of Cadiz. The ruinous failure of the great Armada in 1588 demonstrated the incapacity of Spain to maintain her pretensions. In 1591 the support given by the Aragonese to Antonio Perez *(q.v.)* led to the invasion of their country by a Castilian army. The constitutional rights of Aragon were not entirely suppressed, but they were diminished, and the kingdom was reduced to a greater measure of submission. In his later years Philip added to all his other burdens a costly intervention in France to support the league and resist the succession of Henry IV. to the throne. He was compelled to acknowledge himself beaten in France before his death on the 13th of September 1598. He left the war with England and with the Netherlands as an inheritance to his son.

The period of one hundred and two years covered by the reigns of Philip III. (1598-1621), Philip IV. (1621-1665) and Charles II. (1665-1700), was one of decadence, end- ing in intellectual, moral and material degradation. The dynasty continued to make the maintenance of the rights and interests of the House of Austria its main object. Spain had the misfortune to be saved from timely defeat by the weakness of its neighbours. The policy of James I. of England *(q.v.),* the civil wars of Charles I. *(q.υ.),* the assassination of Henry IV. of France, the troubles of the minority and reign of Louis XIII. *(q.υ.)* and the Fronde *(q.v.),* preserved her from concerted and persistent foreign attack. After a futile attempt to injure England by giving support to the earl of Tyrone in Ireland (see Tyrone, Earls of) peace was made between the powers in 1604. In 1609 a twelve years’ truce was made with the Dutch. But the temporary cessation of foreign wars brought no real peace to Spain. In 1610 fears of the help which the Moriscoes might give to a Mahommedan attack from Africa combined with religious bigotry to cause their expulsion. The measure was thoroughly popular with the nation, but it was industrially more injurious than a foreign invasion need have been. The king was idle and pleasure-loving. He resigned the control of his government to the duke of Lerma *(q.υ),* one of the most worthless of all royal favourites. The expenses of the royal household increased fourfold, and most of the increase was absorbed by the favourite and his agents. The nobles, who had been kept at a distance by Philip II., swarmed round the new king, and began to secure pensions in the old style. The pillage was so shameless that public opinion was stirred to revolt. Some of the lesser sinners were forced to restitution, and in 1618 Lerma fell from power, but only because he was supplanted by his son, the duke of Uccda, a man as worthless as himself. In that year was taken the step which was destined to consummate the ruin of Spain. The Thirty Years’ War began in Germany, and Spain was called upon to support the House of Austria.

The death of Philip III. on the 21st of March 1621 brought no real change. His son, Philip IV., was an abler man, and even gave indications of a wish to qualify himself to discharge his duties as king. But he was young, pleasure-loving, and wanted the strength of will to make his good intentions effective