well aware that Marlborough was ascending the Rhine, thought that a diversion on the Moselle was intended, and the feeble warnings of Marsin, who half suspected the real purpose, were disregarded. Villeroy remained in Brabant for fear that Overkirk would take a few towns in his absence.

Marlborough calculated that as he progressed up the Rhine the French would collect to prevent his crossing, instead of them- selves passing over to join the elector and Marsin. Thus the expedition would reach the Neckar mouth, without its true purpose being suspected, and once there Marlborough would vanish from the ken of the defenders of the Rhine, to reappear on the Danube where he was least expected. On the 12th of May the army crossed the Meuse at Ruremond, on the 23rd it reached Bonn, on the 29th Mainz. On the 1st of June the puzzled French noted preparations for bridging the Rhine at Philipsburg. But two days later the English had turned to their left into the valley of the Neckar. On the 10th of June Prince Eugene and on the 13th the margrave appeared at the duke’s headquarters to concert operations. It was arranged that the margrave was to join Marlborough and that Eugene should command the Stollhofen and other forces on the Rhine, for Tallard, it seemed, was about to be joined by Villeroy@@1 and Marlborough knew that these marshals must be kept west of the Rhine for the six weeks he allowed himself for the Bavarian enterprise. The margrave’s army duly joined Marlborough’s on the 22nd of June at Ursprung, 12 m. north of Ulm, where the elector and Marsin were encamped. The endurance of Marlborough’s corps, as displayed in the long march from Rure- mond, was not the least extraordinary feature of the operation. For 18th-century troops such performances were generally provo­cative of desertion, and involved the ruin of the army that at­tempted it. But Prince Eugene, we are told, was astonished at the fine condition of the army. On the French side meantime all was perplexity, and it was not until a week after the margrave and Marlborough had united that a decision was arrived at by Louis XIV., in whose eyes the feeble corps of Eugene sheltered in the lines of Stollhofen constituted a grave menace for Alsace and Lorraine. Villeroy’s main body from the Meuse had after its first hesitations followed up Marlborough, in readiness for the supposed Rhine and Moselle campaign, and was now about Landau. Tallard with the smaller half of the united armies was to advance by Breisach and to “ try to capture Villingen.” Villeroy was to watch Eugene’s corps, or rather the Stollhofen- Bühl position, and the small Moselle corps was to remain west of the Rhine. This meant conceding both the initiative and the superiority in numbers to Marlborough.

The duke had now manoeuvred himself with brilliant success from one theatre of war to another, and had secured every advantage to himself. His method of utilizing the advantage showed his mastery of the rules of the strict game that, with the instinct of a great captain, he had just set at nought. From before Ulm he sidled gradually along the north side of the Danube in the hope of finding an unguarded passage. He and the margrave exercised the general command on alternate days, and when on his own day he arrived opposite Donauwörth, knowing Louis’s caution, he thought that direct attack was better than another two days’ extension to the east. Moreover he needed a walled town to serve as a magazine instead of Nördlingen, which he had used of late but which could not serve him for operations over the river. In the late afternoon of the 21st the army was flung, regardless of losses, against the entrenched hill of the Schellenberg at Donauwörth, where the elector had posted a strong detachment. The attack cost 6∞o men, but it was successful, and of the 12,000 Bavarians on the hill only 3000 returned to their main body, which had now moved from Ulm to Lauingen. Passing the river, the allies besieged and took the small fortress of Rain, and thence moved to the neighbourhood of Augsburg, thoroughly and deliberately devastating the countryside so as to force the elector to make terms. The best that can be said of this barbarous

device, more or less legitimate in the days when the quarrel was the people’s as much as the prince’s, is that Louis XIV. had several times practised it. Its most effective condem- nation is that military devastations, in these purely political contests, were entirely unprofitable. Louis had already found them so, and had given up the practice. In the present case the acts of the allies only confirmed the elector in his French sym­pathies, while at the same time Marlborough’s own supplies ran short, his convoys were harassed and his reconnaissances impeded. The movements of the two armies were but trifling. Marlborough, though superior, was not decisively superior, and his opponents, well entrenched near Augsburg, waited for Tallard and (in vain) for Villeroy. Marlborough marked time until Eugene should join him.

There were now five armies in the field, two allied and three French. The centre of gravity was therefore in Villeroy’s camp. If that marshal followed Tallard, even Eugene’s junction with Marlborough would not give the latter enough force. If Tallard alone joined the elector and Eugene Marlborough, the game was in the hands of the allies. But none of the possible combinations of two armies against one were attempted by either side. Eugene did not venture to leave Villeroy’s front to attack Tallard, who was marching by Kehl-Villingen-Ulm on Augsburg, but when he knew that Tallard was on the move he slipped away from Villeroy to join Marlborough. In turn, Tallard and the elector, aware of Eugene’s march, could have left Marlborough to his sieges and combined against Eugene, but they were well content to join forces peaceably at Augsburg. Worst of all, Villeroy, in whose hands was the key of the situation, was the nearest to Versailles and the least capable of solving the knotty problem for himself. When the king bade him follow Tallard to Villingen he hesitated, and when he had made up his mind to try, Louis had changed his and ordered him to detain Eugene (who was already far away) in the Stollhofen lines. The last stage of the campaign was brief. Marlborough and Eugene had in mind a battle, Tallard and Marsin a war of manœuvre to occupy the few weeks now to be spun out before winter quarters were due. The two allied armies met in the Danube valley on the 6th of August. If the enemy remained on the south side Eugene was to cross, if they recrossed to the north bank Marlborough was to follow suit. The margrave Louis of Baden had been sent off to besiege Ingolstadt as soon as Eugene had come within a safe distance. The 18th-century general relied far more on himself than on the small surplus of force that his army, in the con- ditions of that time, could hope to have over its opponent. When therefore the French and Bavarians were reported opposite Eugene on the north side, Marlborough crossed at once, and without waiting for the margrave the two great soldiers went forward. On the 2nd of August (see Blenheim) they attacked and practically destroyed the armies of Tallard, Marsin and the elector.

The campaign of 1705 was uneventful and of little profit to either side. Marlborough’s army had returned to the Low Countries, engaging *en route* in a small campaign in the Luxem- burg and Thionville region, which was defended with skill and success by Villars. Villeroy had also returned to Brabant and retaken Huy. With him was the now exiled elector of Bavaria. On the 18th of July, after a series of skilful manœuvres, Marl­borough forced the lines of Brabant at Elissem near Tirlemont, but not even the glory of Blenheim could induce the Dutch deputies to give him a free hand or the Dutch generals to fall in with his schemes. King Louis was thus able to rein­force Villeroy betimes from Villars’s Lorraine army, and the campaign closed with no better work than the razing of the captured French entrenchments. On the Rhine Villars, with a force reduced to impotence by the losses of Blen- heim and the detachments sent to Villeroy, carried on a spiritless campaign about Hagenau and Weissenburg against the margrave Louis. In Italy alone was there any serious encounter. Here Vendôme’s army and a fresh corps from France were engaged in the attempt to subdue Victor Amadeus and his new Austrian allies (Starhemberg’s, originally Eugene’s army), and they were

@@@1 Even Villeroy it appears rose to the situation thus far, but the king only allowed him to send 25,ooo men to Tallard.