the growing power of the United Provinces : he pretended that they had made ſeveral attempts upon the counties of Stirum, Culemberg, Bentheim, and Eaſt Frieſland; that they had ſeized on Ravenſtein on the Meuſe, and ſeveral other places belonging to his biſhopric. In his own defence he concluded a treaty with France, and prevailed on the elector of Cologne to follow his example. By ſigning a treaty with theſe two princes, the king opened a way to Holland by the Meuſe and the Rhine ; he eſtablished by this means places of arms and magazines in a country diſtant from his own dominions, and ſecured a retreat in caſe his enterpriſe proved abortive. With reſpect to the emperor, every ar­tifice was uſed to keep him neutral ; and indeed his own inclinations co-operated but little in favour of the Dutch, whom he regarded as ſubjects revolted from the princes of his family, and in posseſſion of ſeveral places belonging to the empire. In Sweden, Louis’s negociations were equally ſucceſsful ; for here he prevailed ſo far with Charles XI. as to obtain a ſtipulation, that if the emperor, or any of the princes of the empire, joined their forces to the Dutch, a Swediſh army ſhould march into the very heart of Germany and join the French, in order to force thoſe princes to obſerve the treaty of Weſtphalia.

Of all the Germanic body, the elector of Brandenburgh alone intereſted himſelf for the ſafety of the States-general. The peace of Weſtphalia had prevented this enterpriſing prince from extending his dominions in Germany, and re­taking Pomerania from the Swedes. He had long aſpired at the ſtadtholderſhip of Holland ; and though that office had been for six years ſuppressed, yet he flattered himſelf, that in caſe of a war he might obtain it, perpetuate it in his family, and in time reduce Holland by dint of force, intrigue, and ſtratagem. With this view, he rejected the propoſals of ſeveral princes of the empire, and even thoſe of France, endeavouring by every poſſible method to insinuate himſelf into the friendſhip and confidence of the States. In the end he concluded a treaty with them, whereby it was ſtipulated that he ſhould aſſiſt the republic with 25,000 men. Beverning, the Dutch ambassador at Madrid, diſconcerted all the ſchemes of France at that court, and en­gaged the queen of Spain to furniſh money and troops for the defence of the United Provinces. Thus was the face of Europe wholly changed. France and England, who had contributed largely to the raiſing and aggrandizing the re­public, were now incited to deſtroy her; while Spain, which for an age had been endeavouring to ſuppreſs her, was arm­ing for her ſupport. Pierre de Groot, the Dutch miniſter at the Hague, was employed to penetrate into Louis’s deſigns ; he gave his conſtituents notice that he foreſaw a ter­rible ſtorm ready to fall upon them, which they might nevertheleſs break by ſeaſonable ſubmiſſions and proper acknow­ledgments. Upon this the States wrote to the king, endeavouring to appeaſe his wrath ; but finding him inexorable, they prepared for receiving him, and provided for the ſecurity of their provinces. But the long peace the republic had enjoyed deſtroyed her ſtanding forces, and little confi­dence could be repoſed in her new levied ſoldiers.

As ſoon as matters were ripe for execution, Louis or­dered an army of 100,000 men to file off towards the Rhine. Before the opening of the campaign, and previous to his declaration of war, he divided his army into four columns ; commanding one in perſon, with the marshal Turenne under him. Another was led by the prince of Conde, aſſiſted by the marſhals Humieres and Bellefonds ; the third was head­ed by Crequi ; and the fourth marched to Weſtphalia under the conduct of the duke of Luxemburgh, to join the biſhop of Munſter. As the marſhals Crequi, Bellefonds, and Humieres, refuſed to receive orders from Turenne, they were baniſhed ; but after six months exile, were recalled, at the inſtance of the whole body of marſhals in France, upon their making proper ſubmiſſions.

Such an army drawing towards their frontiers could not but terrify the Dutch, now torn with civil factions. The partiſans of the Orange family were for aboliſhing the per­petual edict, and raiſing William III. to the dignity en­joyed by his predecessors ; but the De Witt faction oppoſed him violently, though they could not prevent the young prince from being choſen captain general and high admiral. Many perſons hoped that William’s new dignity would in­cline his uncle Charles II. to return to the triple alliance : but that hope was fruſtrated by the conduct of his majeſty ; who, in conjunction with the moſt Chriſtian king, declared war againſt the States-general on the 7th day of April. A month after, the elector of Cologne and biſhop of Mun­iter followed the example of the two kings. The Dutch put themſelves in the best poſture of defence that circumſtances would admit. Maeſtricht was strongly garriſoned ; the prince of Orange had assembled an army of 25,000 men, with which he advanced to the banks of the Issel, and the Dutch fleet cruiſed off the mouth of the Thames to prevent the junction of the naval forces of England and France, which amounted to 150 ships. All Europe watch­ed the firſt motions of two powerful kings, ſeconded by the beſt generals of the age.

His moſt Chriſtian majeſty joined his army at Charleroy. It was compoſed of 23 companies of *gens d'armes,* life­guards, muſqueteers, and light-horſe, two regiments of the French and Swiſs guards, 14 regiments of foreign infantry, and 60 regiments of light horſe or dragoons, compriſing in all an army of 110,000 fighting men, under the command of marſhal Turenne as captain general. Holland could only be attacked by the Rhine or the Meuſe ; and the generals and miniſters differed by which of theſe inlets they were to make the firſt impreſſions. At laſt, after ſeveral delibera­tions, it was determined to make both attacks at the ſame time, in order the more to diſconcert their councils. It is probable that Turenne always oppoſed the ſiege of Maeſ­tricht ; for we find him immediately after the surrender of Maseik ſtrongly dissuading the king from that enterprize, in opposition to the ſentiments of the prince of Conde. At laſt he prevailed; and it was reſolved in council to advance towards the Rhine, and besiege at the ſame time the towns of Rhinberg, Vessel, Orſoi, and Burick. Theſe places were all well fortified, and deemed the keys of Holland ; how­ever, the Dutch did not appear diſturbed at their being inveſted, as they were only under the protection, and did not immediately belong to, the United Provinces. They were beſides in hopes that any attempts upon the territory of Cleves would haften the preparations of the elector of Brandenburgh, and even rouze the emperor into a ſenſe of the danger he was in from the vaſt deſigns of Louis. Nothing could oppoſe armies ſo well appointed, led by generals ſo ſkilful and ſo experienced. The four towns ſurrendered within a few days of each other ; and Rhinberg, that held out longeſt, opened its gates on the ſeventh of June. A few days after, the town and fort of Rhees, and the town of Emerick, ſurrendered ; upon which the king reſolved to paſs the Rhine by a ford, over which the cavalry were to ſwim. This bold enterpriſe was projected and conducted by Conde ; who, in the face of two regiments of foot; and ſeveral ſquadrons of horſe, under general Wartz, intrenched on the oppoſite side, effected the passage, in the ſame order, and with as much regularity, as if he had marched his troops on dry land. The enemy made a ſtout reſiſtance ; but were driven from their poſt, after having killed the duke de Longueville on the ſpot, and wounded