

LANNES, Jean, *lan'-nes*, duke of Montebello and marshal of France, was one of the most intrepid and skilful of Napoleon's generals, and was greatly esteemed by the emperor. Born of humble parents, he worked as a dyer in early life; but, joining a battalion of volunteers in 1792, he, by his courage, rapidly rose to the grade of major. In 1794 he attracted the notice of Bonaparte, who procured him a command in the army of Italy. At the battles of Montenotte and Millesimo he displayed considerable bravery, and became colonel in 1796. He was made general of brigade in the following year, and sustained a brilliant part at the taking of Mantua and at the battle of Arcola. He went with the French expedition to Egypt, and rose to the rank of general of division. The French victory at Aboukir was in part due to his bravery and coolness. At the siege of Acre he was severely wounded. He left Egypt with Bonaparte, and after returning to Paris, rendered good service to his chief during the revolution of the 18th Brumaire (9th November), 1799, for which Napoleon appointed him commander of the consular guard. After various employments, he commanded the advance guard of the French army crossing the Great St. Bernard into Italy, in 1800. At the great battle of Montebello, where the Austrians were completely beaten, Lannes displayed such great skill and bravery, that Napoleon gave him the title of Montebello when he raised him to a dukedom. He was no less distinguished at the battle of Marengo. On his return from Portugal in 1804, whither he had been sent as minister-plenipotentiary of France, Napoleon created him marshal of France, and afterwards duke of Montebello. In the German campaigns of 1805-6, he commanded the advance guard, and rendered the most signal service to his master at the battles of Austerlitz, Jena, Eylau, and Friedland. His last great exploit was the defence of the village of Essling, where, while resisting the fierce onslaught of the Austrians, a cannon-ball struck off his right leg, and the foot and ankle of the left. Napoleon evinced more emotion at the sight of his brave marshal's mortal wound than he had ever before been known to exhibit. Lannes, throughout his military career, evinced a constantly increasing knowledge of war. Long afterwards, Napoleon, speaking of this intrepid commander, thus expressed himself—"I found him a dwarf, and I lost him a giant. . . . He had great experience in war, having been in fifty-four battles and three hundred combats. He was cool in the midst of fire; possessed of a clear, penetrating eye, ready to take advantage of any opportunity that might present itself. Violent and hasty in his temper, even in my presence, he was ardently attached to me." His young widow, a beautiful and accomplished lady, was afterwards lady in waiting to the empress Maria Louisa. B. at Lectoure, Guienne, 1769; D. 1809.



LANNES.