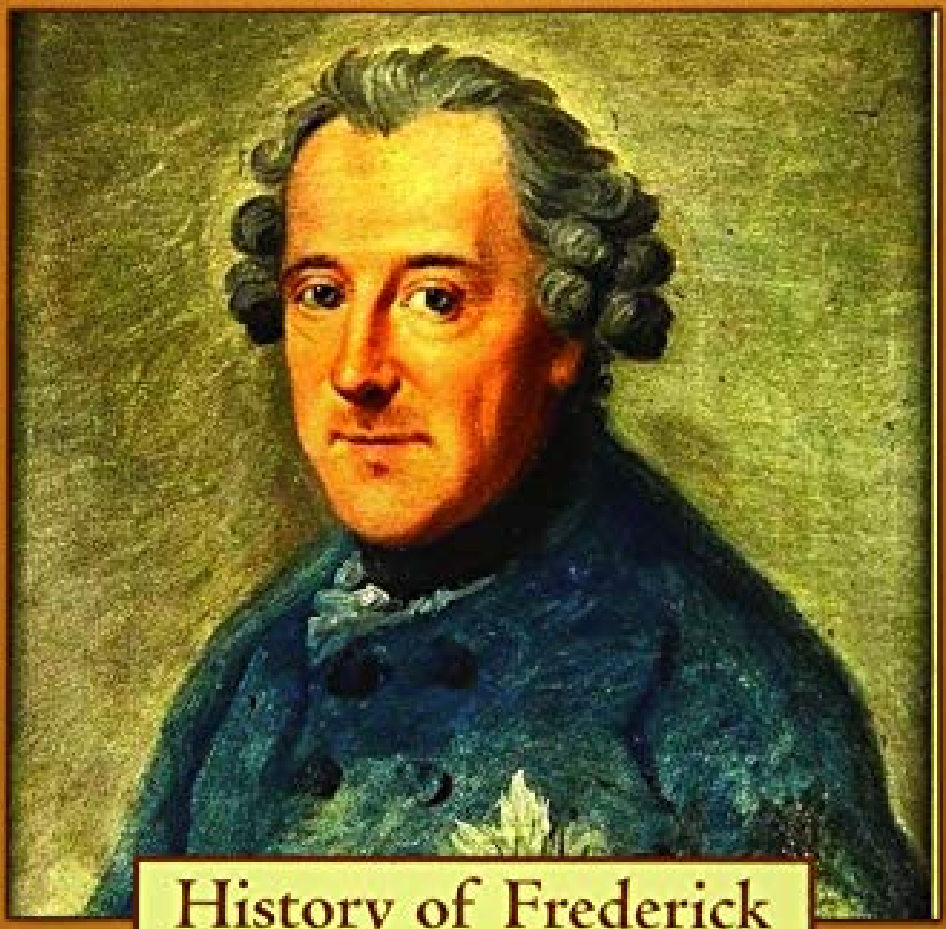


History of Frederick the Second, called Frederick the Great

With Illustration

John S. C. Abbott

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HISTORY

OF

FREDERICK THE GREAT.



FREDERICK THE GREAT. ÆT. 73.

HISTORY

OF

FREDERICK THE SECOND,

CALLED

FREDERICK THE GREAT.

By JOHN S. C. ABBOTT,

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE,"
"THE FRENCH REVOLUTION,"
"NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.



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PREFACE.

IT is not surprising that many persons, not familiar with the wild and wondrous events of the past, should judge that many of the honest narratives of history must be fictions—mere romances. But it is difficult for the imagination to invent scenes more wonderful than can be found in the annals of by-gone days. The novelist who should create such a character as that of Frederick William, or such a career as that of Frederick the Great, would be deemed guilty of great exaggeration, and yet the facts contained in this volume are beyond all contradiction.

Mr. Carlyle has written the Life of Frederick the Great in six closely printed volumes of over five hundred pages each. It is a work of much ability and accuracy. There are, however, but few persons, in this busy age, who can find time to read three thousand pages of fine type, descriptive of events, many of which have lost their interest, and have ceased to possess any practical value. Still, the student who has leisure to peruse these voluminous annals of all the prominent actors in Europe during the reign of Frederick and of his half-insane father, will find a rich treat in the wonderfully graphic and accurate pages of Carlyle.

This volume is intended to give a clear and correct idea of the man—of his public and private

character, and of his career. It would be difficult to find, in the whole range of English literature, a theme more full of the elements of entertainment and instruction.

The reader of these pages will be oppressed with the consciousness of how vast a proportion of the miseries of humanity is caused by the cruelty of man to his brother man. This globe might be a very happy home for those who dwell upon it. But its history, during the last six thousand years, has presented one of the most appalling tragedies of which the imagination can conceive. Among all the renowned warriors of the past, but few can be found who have contributed more to fill the world with desolated homes, with the moans of the dying, with the cry of the widow and the orphan, than Frederick the Great; but he laid the foundations of an empire which is at this moment the most potent upon the globe.

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FREDERICK THE GREAT.

CHAPTER I

PARENTAGE OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

Origin of the Prussian Monarchy.—The Duchies of Brandenburg and Prussia.—The Elector crowned King Frederick I.—Frederick William.—His Childhood, Youth, and Marriage.—Birth of Fritz.—Death of Frederick I.—Eccentric Character of Frederick William.—His defective Education.—His Energy.—Curious Anecdotes.—Hatred of the French.—Education of Fritz.—The Father's Plan of Instruction.

ON the southern coasts of the Baltic Sea, between the latitudes of 52° and 54°, there lies a country which was first revealed to civilized eyes about three hundred years before the birth of Christ. The trading adventurers from Marseilles, who landed at various points upon the coast, found it a cold, savage region of lakes, forests, marshy jungles, and sandy wastes. A

shaggy tribe peopled it, of semi-barbarians, almost as wild as the bears, wolves, and swine which roamed their forests. As the centuries rolled on, centuries of which, in these remote regions, history takes no note, but in which the gloomy generations came and went, shouting, fighting, weeping, dying, gradually the aspect of a rude civilization spread over those dreary solitudes. The savage inhabitants, somewhat tamed, increased in numbers, and there appeared a tall and manly race of fair complexion, light hair, stern aspect, great physical strength, and very formidable in battle.

Still centuries elapsed, leaving little for history to record but war and woe. Fierce tribes swept in all directions. Battle was life's great business. Man, ignorant, degraded, brutal, could have had but few if any joys. Perhaps, through his degradation, his woes were only such as beasts feel. By degrees, from this chaos, a certain kind of governmental order emerged. Small tribes became united under powerful chieftains. Kings arose. There were all varieties of political organizations, dukedoms, principalities, marquisates, and electorates. It is recorded that Adalbert, bishop of Prag, about the year 997, with two companions, as apostles of Christianity, first penetrated these wilds. Like Christian heroes they went, with staff and scrip, regardless of danger. The bishop was fifty years of age, and his gray hairs floated in the breeze. As he landed a stout savage struck him with the flat of his oar, and sent him headlong to the ground.

The zealous bishop, perhaps not unwilling to secure the crown of martyrdom, pressed on, preaching the Gospel, in face of prohibitions and menaces, until he entered one of the sacred

inclosures which was a sanctuary of the idols of these heathen. The priests rushed upon him, endeavored to drive him out, and struck him with a dagger in the back of his neck. He uttered but one cry, “Jesus, receive me!” and, stretching out his arms, fell with his face to the ground, and lay dead there “in the form of a crucifix.” The place is yet pointed out where Adalbert fell. Still the seeds of Christianity were sown. Other missionaries followed. Idolatry disappeared, and the realm became nominally Christian. Revealed religion introduced increased enlightenment and culture, though there still remained much of the savagery of ancient days.

When the Reformation in the sixteenth century was presented to Europe, and was rejected by Italy, France, Austria, and Spain, it was accepted, though not unanimously, yet very generally, by the inhabitants of this wild region. In the year 1700 there was, in the midst of the realm of which we are about to write, and which is now called Prussia, a province then known as the Marquisate of Brandenburg. It embraced a little over fifteen thousand square miles, being about twice as large as the State of Massachusetts. It was one of the electorates of Germany, and the elector or marquis, Frederick, belonged to the renowned family of Hohenzollern. To the east of Brandenburg there was a duchy called Prussia. This duchy, in some of the political agitations of the times, had been transferred to the Marquis of Brandenburg. The Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick, an ambitious man, rejoicing in the extent of his domain, which was large for a marquisate, though small for a monarchy, obtained from the Emperor of Germany its recognition as a kingdom, and assumed the title of Frederick I. of Prussia. Many of the proud monarchies of Europe did

not conceal the contempt with which they regarded this petty kingdom. They received the elector into their society very much as haughty nobles, proud of a long line of illustrious ancestry, would receive a successful merchant who had purchased a title. Frederick himself was greatly elated with the honor he had attained, and his subjects shared with him in his exultation.



FREDERICK THE GREAT.

Berlin was the capital of Brandenburg. Königsberg, an important sea-port on the Baltic, nearly five hundred miles east of Berlin, was the capital of the Prussian duchy. The ceremony of coronation took place at Königsberg. The road, for most of the distance, was through a very wild, uncultivated country. Eighteen hundred carriages, with thirty thousand post-horses, were provided to convey the court to the scene of coronation. Such a cavalcade was never beheld in those parts before. The carriages moved like an army, in three divisions of six hundred each. Volumes have been written descriptive of the pageant. It is said that the diamond buttons on the king's coat cost seven thousand five hundred dollars each. The streets were not only tapestried with the richest cloth of the most gorgeous colors, but many of them were softly carpeted for the feet of the high-born men and proud dames who contributed, by their picturesque costume, to the brilliance of the spectacle. Frederick, with his own hands, placed the crown upon his brow. Thus was the kingdom of Prussia, ushered into being at the close of the year 1700.

Frederick I. had a son, Frederick William, then twelve years of age. He accompanied his father upon this coronation tour. As heir to the throne he was called the Crown Prince. His mother was a Hanoverian princess, a sister of the Elector George of Hanover, who subsequently became George I. of England. George I. did not succeed to the British crown until the death of Anne, in 1714. When Frederick William was but five years of age he had been taken by his mother to Hanover, to visit her brother, then the elector. George had two children—a little girl, named Sophie Dorothee, a few months older than Frederick William, and a son, who

subsequently became George II. of England. The two boys did not love each other. They often quarreled. Though Frederick William was the younger, it is said that on one occasion he severely beat his cousin, the future King of England, causing the blood to flow freely. He developed a very energetic but unamiable character. Among other anecdotes illustrative of his determined spirit, it is recorded that at one time, during this visit, his governess ordered some task which he was unwilling to perform. The headstrong boy sprang out of the third story window of the castle, and, clinging to the sill with his hands, threatened to let himself drop. The terrified Madame Montbail was thus brought to terms.[1]

Sophie Dorothee was a very pretty child. The plan was probably already contemplated by the parents that the two should be married in due time. Soon after this Frederick William lost his mother, and with her all of a mother's care and gentle influences. Her place was taken by a step-mother, whose peevishness and irritability soon developed into maniacal insanity. When Frederick William was eighteen years of age he was allowed to choose between three princesses for his wife. He took his pretty cousin, Sophie Dorothee. They were married with great pomp on the 28th of November, 1706.

A son was born and died. A daughter came, Wilhelmina. But a daughter could not inherit the crown. Another son was born and died. There was great anxiety at court, from fear that the direct line of succession might not be preserved. But on the 24th of January, 1712, when the monarchy was but twelve years old, the little prince was born who subsequently obtained such renown as Frederick the Great. The king, his grandfather, was aged and

infirm. The excessive joy with which he greeted little Fritz, as he fondly called the child, was cordially reciprocated throughout the Prussian nation. The realm blazed with bonfires and illuminations, and resounded with every demonstration of public joy. The young prince was christened with great pomp, Charles Frederick. The emperor, Charles VI., was present on the occasion, and in the solemnities there were blended the most imposing civil, military, and ecclesiastical rites. The baptism took place on the 31st of January, 1712, when the babe was a week old. The young prince subsequently dropped the name of Charles, and Frederick became his sole designation. Wilhelmina, Frederick's sister, was about three years older than himself. We shall have frequent occasion to allude to her in the course of this history, as between her and her brother there sprang up a warm attachment, which was of life-long continuance. Ten children were subsequently born to the royal pair, making fourteen in all, most of whom attained mature years.

Frederick William, the Crown Prince, was at the time of the birth of his son Frederick twenty-four years of age. He was a very peculiar man, sturdy and thick-set in figure, of strong mental powers, but quite uneducated. He was unpolished in manners, rude in his address, honest and sincere, a stern, persevering worker, despising all luxurious indulgence, and excessively devoted to the routine of military duties.



BAPTISM OF FREDERICK.

The king, Frederick I., had for some time been in a feeble state of health. The burden of life had proved heavier than he was able to bear. His wife was crazed, his home desolate, his health broken, and many mortifications and disappointments had so crushed his spirits that he had fallen into the deepest state of melancholy. As he was sitting alone and sad in a chill morning of February, 1713, gazing into the

fire, absorbed in painful musings, suddenly there was a crash of the glass door of the apartment. His frenzied wife, half-clad, with disheveled hair, having escaped from her keepers, came bursting through the shattered panes. Her arms were gashed with glass, and she was in the highest state of maniacal excitement. The shock proved a death-blow to the infirm old king. He was carried to his bed, which he never left, dying in a few days. His grandson Frederick was then fourteen months old.



FREDERICK WILLIAM.

Frederick William was too stern a man to shed many tears over his father's death. The old king was ostentatious in his tastes, fond of parade and splendor. The son had almost an insane contempt for all court etiquette and all the elegancies of life. As he stood by his father's dying bed, his unamiable, rugged nature developed itself in the disgust, almost rage, with which he regarded the courtly pageantry with which the expiring monarch was surrounded. The remains of the king were allowed to be conveyed to the tomb with that pomp which had been dear to him while living.

But, immediately after these ceremonies were over, the new monarch, who assumed the crown with the title of Frederick William, not with that of Frederick II., to the utter consternation of the court, dismissed nearly every honorary official of the palace, from the highest dignitary to the humblest page. His flashing eye and determined manner were so appalling that no one ventured to remonstrate. A clean sweep was made, so that the household was reduced to the lowest footing of economy consistent with the supply of indispensable wants. Eight servants were retained at six shillings a week. His father had thirty pages; all were dismissed but three. There were one thousand saddle-horses in the royal stables; Frederick William kept thirty. Three fourths of the names were struck from the pension-list. Thus rigidly the king went on through every department of administrative and household expenses, until they were reduced to below a fifth of what they had been under his father.

For twenty-seven years this strange man reigned. He was like no other monarch. Great wisdom and shrewdness were blended with unutterable folly and

almost maniacal madness. Though a man of strong powers of mind, he was very illiterate. He certainly had some clear views of political economy. Carlyle says of him, “His semi-articulate papers and rescripts on these subjects are still almost worth reading by a lover of genuine human talent in the dumb form. For spelling, grammar, penmanship, and composition they resemble nothing else extant—are as if done by the paw of a bear; indeed, the utterance generally sounds more like the growling of a bear than any thing that could be handily spelled or parsed. But there is a decisive human sense in the heart of it; and there is such a dire hatred of empty bladders, unrealities, and hypocritical forms and pretenses, which he calls wind and humbug, as is very strange indeed.”

His energy inspired the whole kingdom, and paved the way for the achievements of his son. The father created the machine with which the son attained such wonderful results. He commuted the old feudal service into a fixed money payment. He goaded the whole realm into industry, compelling even the apple-women to knit at the stalls. The crown lands were carefully farmed out. He drained bogs, planted colonies, established manufactures, and in every way encouraged the use of Prussian products. He carried with him invariably a stout rattan cane. Upon the slightest provocation, like a madman, he would thrash those who displeased him. He was thoroughly an arbitrary king, ruling at his sovereign will, and disposing of the liberty, the property, and the lives of his subjects at his pleasure. Every year he was accumulating large masses of coin, which he deposited in barrels in the cellar of his palace. He had no powers of graceful speech, but spent his energetic, joyless life in grumbling and

growling.

The Prussian minister, Baron Pöllnitz, in a letter from Berlin dated June 6, 1729, writes: “The king’s prime minister is the king himself, who is informed of every thing, and is desirous to know every thing. He gives great application to business, but does it with extraordinary ease; and nothing escapes his penetration nor his memory, which is a very happy one. No sovereign in the world is of more easy access, his subjects being actually permitted to write to him without any other formality than superscribing the letter *To the King*. By writing underneath, *To be delivered into his Majesty’s own hands*, one may be sure that the king receives and reads it, and that the next post he will answer it, either with his own hands or by his secretary. These answers are short, but peremptory. There is no town in all the King of Prussia’s dominions, except Neufchatel, where he has not been; no province which he does not know full well; nor a court of justice but he is acquainted with its chief members.”

Fully conscious that the respect which would be paid to him as a European sovereign greatly depended upon the number of men he could bring into the field of battle, Frederick William devoted untiring energies to the creation of an army. By the most severe economy, watching with an eagle eye every expenditure, and bringing his cudgel down mercilessly upon the shoulders of every loiterer, he succeeded in raising and maintaining an army of one hundred thousand men; seventy-two thousand being field troops, and thirty thousand in garrison.[2] He drilled these troops as troops were never drilled before.

Regardless himself of comfort, insensible to

fatigue, dead to affection, he created perhaps the most potent military machine earth has ever known. Prussia was an armed camp. The king prized his soldiers as a miser prizes his gold coin, and was as unwilling to expose them to any danger as the miser is to hazard his treasures. War would thin his regiments, soil his uniforms, destroy his *materiel*. He hated war. But his army caused Prussia to be respected. If needful, he could throw one hundred thousand of the best drilled and best furnished troops in Europe, like a thunderbolt, upon any point. Unprincipled monarchs would think twice before they would encroach upon a man thus armed.

There was but one short war in which Frederick William engaged during his reign of twenty-seven years. That was with Charles XII. of Sweden. It lasted but a few months, and from it the Prussian king returned victorious. The demands of Frederick William were not unreasonable. As he commenced the brief campaign, which began and ended with the siege of Stralsund, he said: “Why will the very king whom I most respect compel me to be his enemy?” In his characteristic farewell order to his ministers, he wrote: “My wife shall be told of all things, and counsel asked of her. And as I am a man, and may be shot dead, I command you and all to take care of Fritz, as God shall reward you. And I give you all, wife to begin with, my curse that God may punish you in time and eternity if you do not, after my death, bury me in the vault of the palace church at Berlin. And you shall make no grand to-do on the occasion. On your body and life no festivals and ceremonials, except that the regiments, one after the other, fire a volley over me. I am assured that you will manage every thing with all the exactness in the world, for which I shall ever, zealously, as long as I

live, be your friend."

The king was scrupulously clean, washing five times a day. He would allow no drapery, no stuffed furniture, no carpets in his apartments. They caught dust. He sat upon a plain wooden chair. He ate roughly, like a farmer, of roast beef, despising all delicacies. His almost invariable dress was a close military blue coat, with red cuffs and collar, buff waistcoat and breeches, and white linen gaiters to the knee. A sword was belted around his loins, and, as we have said, a stout rattan or bamboo cane ever in his hand. A well-worn, battered, triangular hat covered his head. He walked rapidly through the streets which surrounded his palaces at Potsdam and Berlin. If he met any one who attracted his attention, male or female, he would abruptly, menacingly inquire, "Who are you?" A street-lounger he has been known to hit over the head with his cane, exclaiming, "Home, you rascal, and go to work." If any one prevaricated or hesitated, he would sternly demand, "Look me in the face." If there were still hesitancy, or the king were dissatisfied with the answers, the one interrogated was lucky if he escaped without a caning.[3]

The boorish king hated the refinement and polish of the French. If he met a lady in rich attire, she was pretty sure to be rudely assailed; and a young man fashionably dressed could hardly escape the cudgel if he came within reach of the king's arm. The king, stalking through the streets, was as marked an object as an elephant would have been. Every one instantly recognized him, and many fled at his approach. One day he met a pale, threadbare young man, who was quietly passing him, when the king stopped, in his jerking gait, and demanded, in his coarse, rapid

utterance, “Who are you?” “I am a theological student,” the young man quietly replied. “Where from?” added the king. “From Berlin,” was the response. “From Berlin?” the king rejoined; “the Berliners are all a good-for-nothing set.” “Yes, your majesty, that is true of many of them,” the young man added; “but I know of two exceptions.” “Of two?” responded the king; “which are they?” “Your majesty and myself,” the young man replied. The king burst into a good-humored laugh, and, after having the young man carefully examined, assigned him to a chaplaincy.

The French minister at the court of Berlin, Count Rothenburg, was a Prussian by birth. He was a man of much diplomatic ability, and a very accomplished gentleman. Having spent much of his life in Paris, he had acquired the polished manners of the French court, and wore the costume appropriate to the Tuileries and Versailles. He and his associates in the embassy attracted much attention as they appeared in their cocked hats, flowing wigs, laced coats, and other gorgeous trimmings. The king, in his homespun garb, was apprehensive that the example so obnoxious to him might spread.

There was to be a grand review on the parade-ground just out from Berlin, at which the French embassy was to be present. The king caused a party equal in number, composed of the lowest of the people, to be dressed in an enormous exaggeration of the French costume. Their cocked hats were nearly a yard in diameter. Immense wigs reached to their heels; and all other parts of the French court costume were caricatured in the most grotesque manner possible. As soon as the French embassy appeared, there was a great sound of trumpets and martial

bands from another part of the field, and these harlequins were brought forward to the gaze of every eye, and conspicuously to the view of Count Rothenburg and his companions. Military discipline prevented any outburst of derisive laughter. Perfect silence reigned. The king sat upon his horse as stolid and grim as fate. Count Rothenburg yielded to this gross discourtesy of the king, and ever after, while he remained in Berlin, wore a plain German costume.

Frederick William was very anxious that little Fritz should be trained to warlike tastes and habits; that, like himself, he should scorn all effeminacy; that, wearing homespun clothes, eating frugal food, despising all pursuits of pleasure and all literary tastes, he should be every inch a soldier. But, to the bitter disappointment of the father, the child manifested no taste for soldiering. He was gentle, affectionate, fond of books and music,[4] and with an almost feminine love clung to his sister. The stern old king was not only disappointed, but angered. These were qualities which he deemed unmanly, and which he thoroughly despised.



THE LITTLE DRUMMER.

One day the father, returning home, found, to his inexpressible delight, little Fritz strutting about beating a drum, with Wilhelmina marching by his side. The king could scarcely restrain his joy. At last the military element was being developed in his child. He hastened with the tidings to his wife, whom he called by the pet name of “Phiekin”—a word apparently coined from Sophie. The matter was talked about all over the palace. A painter was sent for to transfer the scene to canvas. This picture,

greatly admired, still hangs upon the walls of the Charlottenburg palace. Of this picture Carlyle writes: "Fritz is still, if not in 'long-clothes,' at least in longish and flowing clothes of the petticoat sort, which look as of dark blue velvet, very simple, pretty, and appropriate; in a cap of the same; has a short raven's feather in the cap, and looks up with a face and eyes full of beautiful vivacity and child's enthusiasm, one of the beautifulest little figures, while the little drum responds to his bits of drumsticks. Sister Wilhelmina, taller by some three years, looks on in pretty stooping attitude, and with a graver smile. Blackamoor and room-furniture elegant enough; and finally the figure of a grenadier on guard, seen far off through an open window, make up the background."

The early governess of little Fritz was a French lady of much refinement and culture, Madame Racoule. She was in entire sympathy with her pupil. Their tastes were in harmony. Fritz became as familiar with the French language as if it were his mother tongue. Probably through her influence he acquired that fondness for French literature and that taste for French elegance which continued with him through life.

When the child was but six years of age his father organized a miniature soldiers' company for him, consisting of one hundred lads. Gradually the number was increased to three hundred. The band was called "The Crown Prince Cadets." A very spirited, mature boy of seventeen, named Rentzel, was drill-sergeant, while an experienced colonel was appointed commander-in-chief. Fritz was very thoroughly instructed in his duties, and was furnished with a military dress, almost the fac-simile

of that which his father wore. An arsenal was also provided for the child on the palace grounds at Potsdam, where he mounted batteries and practiced gunnery with small brass ordnance. Nothing was omitted which could inspire the prince with military enthusiasm, and render him skillful in the art of war. A Prussian gentleman of letters testifies as follows respecting Fritz in his seventh year:

"The Crown Prince manifests in this tender age an uncommon capacity, nay, we may say, something quite extraordinary. He is a most alert and vivacious prince. He has fine and sprightly manners, and shows a certain kindly sociality and so affectionate a disposition that all things may be hoped of him. The French lady who has had charge of him hitherto can not speak of him without enthusiasm. 'He is a little angel,' she is wont to say. He takes up and learns whatever is placed before him with the greatest facility."



THE ARSENAL.

When Fritz was seven years of age, he was taken from the care of his female teachers and placed under tutors who had been carefully selected for him. They were all military officers who had won renown on fields of blood. The first of these was M. Duhan, a French gentleman of good birth and acquirements. He was but thirty years of age. By his accomplishments he won the esteem, and by his amiability the love, of his pupil. Count Finkenstein, the second, was a veteran general, sixty years old, who also secured the affections of little Fritz. Colonel Kalkstein was twenty-eight years of age. He was a thorough soldier and a man of honor. For forty years, until his death, he retained the regards of his pupil,

who was ever accustomed to speak of him as “my master Kalkstein.” In the education of the young prince every thing was conducted in accordance with the most inflexible routine. From the minute directions given to the teachers in a document drawn up by the father, bunglingly expressed and wretchedly spelled, we cull out the following:

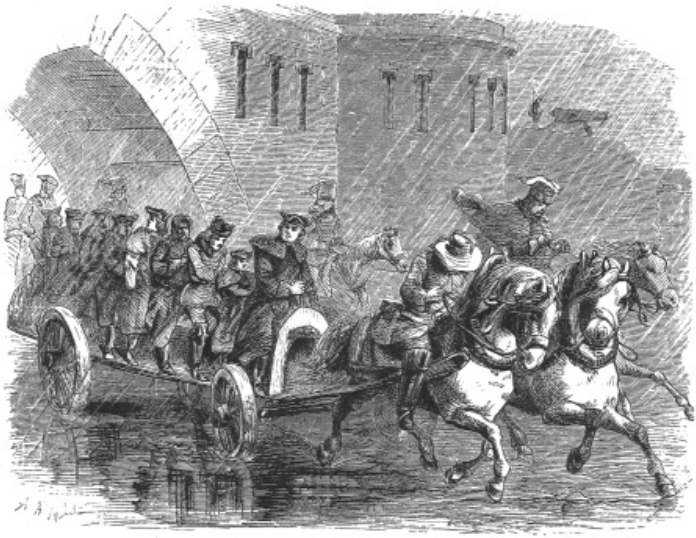
“My son must be impressed with love and fear of God, as the foundation of our temporal and eternal welfare. No false religions or sects of Atheist, Arian, Socinian, or whatever name the poisonous things have, which can so easily corrupt a young mind, are to be even named in his hearing. He is to be taught a proper abhorrence of papistry, and to be shown its baselessness and nonsensicality. Impress on him the true religion, which consists essentially in this, that Christ died for all men. He is to learn no Latin, but French and German, so as to speak and write with brevity and propriety.

“Let him learn arithmetic, mathematics, artillery, economy, to the very bottom; history in particular; ancient history only slightly, but the history of the last hundred and fifty years to the exactest pitch. He must be completely master of geography, as also of whatever is remarkable in each country. With increasing years you will more and more, to an especial degree, go upon fortification, the formation of a camp, and other war sciences, that the prince may, from youth upward, be trained to act as officer and general, and to seek all his glory in the soldier profession. You have, in the highest measure, to make it your care to infuse into my son a true love for the soldier business, and to impress on him that, as there is nothing in the world which can bring a prince renown and honor like the sword, so he would

be a despised creature before all men if he did not love it and seek his glory therein."

In October, 1723, when the prince was eleven years of age, his grandfather, George I., came to Berlin to visit his daughter and his son-in-law, the mother and father of Fritz. From the windows of his apartment he looked out with much interest upon Fritz, drilling his cadet company upon the esplanade in front of the palace. The clock-work precision of the movements of the boy soldiers greatly surprised him.

Every year Frederick William rigorously reviewed all his garrisons. Though accompanied by a numerous staff, he traveled with Spartan simplicity, regardless of exposure and fatigue. From an early age he took Fritz with him on these annual reviews. A common vehicle, called the sausage car, and which was the most primitive of carriages, was often used by the king in his rough travels and hunting excursions. This consisted of a mere stuffed pole, some ten or twelve feet long, upon which one sits astride, as if riding a rail. It rested upon wheels, probably with a sort of stirrup for the feet, and the riders, ten or a dozen, were rattled along over the rough roads, through dust or mud, alike regardless of winter's frost or summer's rain. The cast-iron king, rejoicing in hardship and exposure, robbed his delicate child even of needful sleep, saying, "Too much sleep stupefies a fellow."



THE SAUSAGE CAR.

This rude, coarse discipline was thoroughly uncongenial to the Crown Prince. He was a boy of delicate feelings and sensitive temperament. The poetic nature very decidedly predominated in him. He was fond of music, played the flute, wrote verses, and was literary in his tastes. He simply hated chasing boars, riding on the sausage car, and being drenched with rain and spattered with mud. The old king, a mere animal with an active intellect, could not appreciate, could not understand even, the delicate mental and physical organization of his child. It is interesting to observe how early in life these constitutional characteristics will develop themselves, and how unavailing are all the efforts of education entirely to obliterate them. When Frederick William was a boy, he received, as a present, a truly magnificent dressing-gown, of graceful French fashion, richly embroidered with

gold. Indignantly he thrust the robe into the fire, declaring that he would wear no such finery, and demanded instead a jacket of wholesome homespun. Fritz, on the contrary, could not endure the coarse homespun, but, with almost girlish fondness, craved handsome dress. He had no money allowance until he was seventeen years of age. A minute account was kept of every penny expended for him, and the most rigid economy was practiced in providing him with the mere necessaries of life. When Fritz was in the tenth year of his age, his father gave the following curious directions to the three teachers of his son in reference to his daily mode of life. The document, an abridgment of which we give, was dated Wusterhausen, September 3, 1721:

"On Sunday he is to rise at seven o'clock, and, as soon as he has got his slippers on, shall kneel at his bedside and pray to God, so as all in the room may hear, in these words:

"'Lord God, blessed Father, I thank thee from my heart that thou hast so graciously preserved me through this night. Fit me for what thy holy will is, and grant that I do nothing this day, nor all the days of my life, which can divide me from thee; for the Lord Jesus my Redeemer's sake. Amen.'

"After which the Lord's Prayer; then rapidly and vigorously wash himself clean; dress, and powder, and comb himself. While they are combing and queuing him, he is to breakfast on tea. Prayer, washing, breakfast, and the rest to be done pointedly within fifteen minutes.

"This finished, his domestics and preceptor, Duhan, shall come in and perform family worship. Prayer on their knees. Duhan to read a chapter of the Bible, and sing some proper psalm or hymn. All the

domestics then withdraw, and Duhan reads my son the Gospel of the Sunday, expounds it a little, adducing the main points of Christianity, and questioning him from Noltenius's Catechism. It will then be nine o'clock.

"At nine o'clock he brings my son down to me, who goes to church and dines with me at twelve o'clock. The rest of the day is his own. At half past nine in the evening he shall come and bid me good-night; shall then go directly to his room; very rapidly get off his clothes, wash his hands, and, as soon as that is done, Duhan shall make a prayer on his knees and sing a hymn, all the servants being there again. Instantly after which my son shall get into bed; shall be *in* bed at half past ten.

"On Monday, as on all week-days, he is to be called at six o'clock, and so soon as he is called he is to rise. You are to stand by him that he do not loiter or turn in bed, but briskly and at once get up and say his prayers the same as on Sunday morning. This done, he shall, as rapidly as he can, get on his shoes and spatterdashes, also wash his face and hands, but not with soap; shall put on his dressing-gown, have his hair combed and queued, but not powdered. While being combed and queued, he shall, at the same time, take breakfast of tea, so that both jobs go on at once; and all this shall be ended before half past six. Preceptor and domestics shall then come in with Bible and hymn-books, and have family worship as on Sunday. This shall be done by seven o'clock.

"From seven till nine Duhan takes him on history; at nine o'clock comes Noltenius" (a clergyman from Berlin) "with the Christian religion till a quarter to eleven. Then Fritz rapidly washes his face with water, his hands with soap and water;

clean shirt; powders and puts on his coat. At eleven o'clock he comes to the king, dines with him at twelve, and stays till two.

"Directly at two he goes back to his room. Duhan is then ready; takes him upon maps and geography from two to three o'clock, giving account of all the European kingdoms, their strength and weakness; the size, riches, and poverty of their towns. From three o'clock till four Duhan shall treat of morality; from four till five shall write German letters with him, and see that he gets a good style. About five o'clock Fritz shall wash his hands and go to the king; ride out, and divert himself in the air, and not in his room, and do what he likes if it is not against God."

Thus the employments of every hour were strictly specified for every day in the week. On Wednesday he had a partial holiday. After half past nine, having finished his history and "got something by heart to strengthen the memory, Fritz shall rapidly dress himself and come to the king, and the rest of the day belongs to little Fritz." On Saturday he was to be reviewed in all the studies of the week, "to see whether he has profited. General Finkenstein and Colonel Kalkstein shall be present during this. If Fritz has profited, the afternoon shall be his own. If he has not profited, he shall from two o'clock till six repeat and learn rightly what he has forgotten on the past days. In undressing and dressing, you must accustom him to get out of and into his clothes as fast as is humanly possible. You will also look that he learn to put on and put off his clothes himself, without help from others, and that he be clean, and neat, and not so dirty."

CHAPTER II.

LIFE IN THE PALACE.

The Palace of Wusterhausen.—Wilhelmina and Fritz.—Education of the Crown Prince.—Rising Dislike of the Father for his Son.—The Mother's Sympathy.—The double Marriage.—Character of George I.—The King of England visits Berlin.—Wilhelmina's Account of the Interview.—Sad Fate of the Wife of George I.—The Giant Guard.—Despotism of Frederick William.—The Tobacco Parliament.—A brutal Scene.—Death of George I.—The Royal Family of Prussia.—Augustus, King of Poland.—Corruption of his Court.—Cruel Treatment of Fritz.—Insane Conduct of the King.

WUSTERHAUSEN, where the young Crown Prince spent many of these early years of his life, was a rural retreat of the king about twenty miles southeast from Berlin. The palace consisted of a plain, unornamented, rectangular pile, surrounded by numerous outbuildings, and rising from the midst of low and swampy grounds tangled with thickets and interspersed with fish-pools. Game of all kinds abounded in those lakelets, sluggish streams, and jungles.

In the court-yard there was a fountain with stone steps, where Frederick William loved to sit on summer evenings and smoke his pipe. He frequently

took his frugal dinner here in the open air under a lime-tree, with the additional protection of an awning. After dinner he would throw himself down for a nap on a wooden bench, apparently regardless of the flaming sun.

There seems to have been but little which was attractive about this castle. It was surrounded by a moat, which Wilhelmina describes as a “black, abominable ditch.” Its pets were shrieking eagles, and two black bears ugly and vicious. Its interior accommodations were at the farthest possible remove from luxurious indulgence. “It was a dreadfully crowded place,” says Wilhelmina, “where you are stuffed into garrets and have not room to turn.”

Still Wusterhausen was but a hunting-lodge, which was occupied by the king only during a few weeks in the autumn. Fritz had many playmates—his brothers and sisters, his cousins, and the children of General Finkenstein. To most boys, the streams, and groves, and ponds of Wusterhausen, abounding with fish and all kinds of game, with ponies to drive and boats to row, with picturesque walks and drives, would have been full of charms. But the tastes of Fritz did not lie in that direction. He does not seem to have become strongly attached to any of his young companions, except to his sister Wilhelmina. The affection and confidence which united their hearts were truly beautiful. They encountered together some of the severest of life’s trials, but heartfelt sympathy united them. The nickname which these children gave their unamiable father was *Stumpy*.

There were other abodes of the king, the Berlin and Potsdam palaces, which retained much of the splendor with which they had been embellished by

the splendor-loving monarch, Frederick I. There were but few regal mansions in the world which then surpassed them. And though the king furnished his own apartments with Spartan simplicity and rudeness, there were other portions of these royal residences, as also their surroundings in general, which were magnificent in the highest degree. The health of little Fritz was rather frail, and at times he found it hard to devote himself to his sturdy tasks with the energy which his father required.

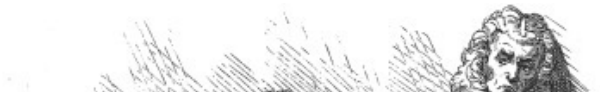
Though Fritz wrote a legible business hand, was well instructed in most points of useful knowledge, and had a very decided taste for elegant literature, he never attained correctness in spelling. The father was bitterly opposed to Latin. Perhaps it was the prohibition which inspired the son with an intense desire to learn that language. He took secret lessons. His vigilant father caught him in the very act, with dictionary and grammar, and a teacher by his side. The infuriated king, volleying forth his rage, would have caned the teacher had he not in terror fled.[5]

The king soon learned, to his inexpressible displeasure and mortification, that his boy was not soldierly in his tastes; that he did not love the rude adventures of the chase, or the exposure and hardships which a martial life demands. He had caught Fritz playing the flute, and even writing verses. He saw that he was fond of graceful attire, and that he was disposed to dress his hair in the French fashion. He was a remarkably handsome boy, of fine figure, with a lady's hand and foot, and soft blonde locks carefully combed. All this the king despised. Scornfully and indignantly he exclaimed, "My son is a flute-player and a poet!" In his vexation he summoned Fritz to his presence, called in the

barber, and ordered his flowing locks to be cut off, cropped, and soaped in the most rigid style of military cut.

The father was now rapidly forming a strong dislike to the character of his son. In nothing were they in harmony. Five princesses had been born, sisters of Fritz. At last another son was born, Augustus William, ten years younger than Frederick. The king turned his eyes to him, hoping that he would be more in sympathy with the paternal heart. His dislike for Fritz grew continually more implacable, until it assumed the aspect of bitter hatred.

Sophie Dorothee tenderly loved her little Fritz, and, with a mother's fondness, endeavored to shield him, in every way in her power, from his father's brutality. Wilhelmina also clung to her brother with devotion which nothing could disturb. Thus both mother and daughter incurred in some degree the hatred with which the father regarded his son. It will be remembered that the mother of Fritz was daughter of George I. of England. Her brother subsequently became George II. He had a son, Fred, about the age of Wilhelmina, and a daughter, Amelia, six months older than Fritz. The mother, Sophie Dorothee, had set her heart upon a double marriage—of Wilhelmina with Fred, and of Fritz with Amelia. But many obstacles arose in the way of these nuptials.





MAKING A SOLDIER OF HIM.

George was a taciturn, jealous, sullen old man, who quarreled with his son, who was then Prince of Wales. The other powers of Europe were decidedly opposed to this double marriage, as it would, in their view, create too intimate a union between Prussia and England, making them virtually one. Frederick William also vexatiously threw hinderances in the way. But the heart of the loving mother, Sophie Dorothee, was fixed upon these nuptials. For years she left no efforts of diplomacy or intrigue untried to

accomplish her end. George I. is represented by Horace Walpole as a stolid, stubborn old German, living in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, and stupefying his faculties with beer. He had in some way formed a very unfavorable opinion of Wilhelmina, considering her, very falsely, ungainly in person and fretful in disposition. But at last the tact of Sophie Dorothee so far prevailed over her father, the British king, that he gave his somewhat reluctant but positive consent to the double matrimonial alliance. This was in 1723. Wilhelmina was then fourteen years of age. Fritz, but eleven years old, was too young to think very deeply upon the subject of his marriage. The young English Fred bore at that time the title of the Duke of Gloucester. He soon sent an envoy to Prussia, probably to convey to his intended bride presents and messages of love. The interview took place in the palace of Charlottenburg, a few miles out from Berlin. The vivacious Wilhelmina, in the following terms, describes the interview in her journal:

“There came, in those weeks, one of the Duke of Gloucester’s gentlemen to Berlin. The queen had a soiree. He was presented to her as well as to me. He made a very obliging compliment on his master’s part. I blushed and answered only by a courtesy. The queen, who had her eye on me, was very angry that I had answered the duke’s compliments in mere silence, and rated me sharply for it, and ordered me, under pain of her indignation, to repair that fault to-morrow. I retired all in tears to my room, exasperated against the queen and against the duke. I vowed I would never marry him.

“Meanwhile the King of England’s time of arrival was drawing nigh. We repaired on the 6th of October to Charlottenburg to receive him. My heart kept

beating. I was in cruel agitations. King George arrived on the 8th about seven in the evening. The King of Prussia, the queen, and all their suite received him in the court of the palace, the apartments being on the ground floor. So soon as he had saluted the king and queen I was presented to him. He embraced me, and, turning to the queen, said, 'Your daughter is very large of her age.' He gave the queen his hand and led her into her apartment, whither every body followed them. As soon as I came in he took a light from the table and surveyed me from head to foot. I stood motionless as a statue, and was much put out of countenance. All this went on without his uttering the least word. Having thus passed me in review, he addressed himself to my brother, whom he caressed much and amused himself with for a good while.

"The queen made me a sign to follow her, and passed into a neighboring apartment, where she had the English and Germans of King George's suite successively presented to her. After some talk with these gentlemen she withdrew, leaving me to entertain them, and saying, 'Speak English to my daughter; you will find she speaks it very well.' I felt much less embarrassed when the queen was gone, and, picking up a little courage, entered into conversation with these English. As I spoke their language like my mother tongue I got pretty well out of the affair, and every body seemed charmed with me. They made my eulogy to the queen; told her I had quite the English air, and was made to be their sovereign one day. It was saying a great deal on their part; for these English think themselves so much above all other people that they imagine that they are paying a high compliment when they tell any one he has got English manners.

"Their king" (Wilhelmina's grandfather) "was of extreme gravity, and hardly spoke a word to any body. He saluted Madam Sonsfeld, my governess, very coldly, and asked if I was always so serious, and if my humor was of a melancholy turn. 'Any thing but that, sire,' answered Madam Sonsfeld; 'but the respect she has for your majesty prevents her from being as sprightly as she commonly is.' He shook his head and said nothing. The reception he had given me, and this question, gave me such a chill that I never had the courage to speak to him."

The wife of George I., the mother of Sophie Dorothee, was the subject of one of the saddest of earthly tragedies. Her case is still involved in some obscurity. She was a beautiful, haughty, passionate princess of Zelle when she married her cousin George, Elector of Hanover. George became jealous of Count Königsmark, a very handsome courtier of commanding address. In an angry altercation with his wife, it is said that the infuriate husband boxed her ears. Suddenly, on the 1st of July, 1694, Count Königsmark disappeared. Mysteriously he vanished from earth, and was heard of no more. The unhappy wife, who had given birth to the daughter Sophie Dorothee, bearing her mother's name, and to a son, afterward George II., almost frenzied with rage, was divorced from her husband, and was locked up in the gloomy castle of Ahlden, situated in the solitary moors of Luneburg heath. Here she was held in captivity for thirty years, until she died. In the mean time, George, ascending the throne of England, solaced himself in the society of female favorites, none of whom he honored with the title of wife. The raging captive of Ahlden, who seems never to have become submissive to her lot, could, of course, exert no influence in the marriage of her grandchildren.

Wilhelmina says that her grandpapa George was intolerably proud after he had attained the dignity of King of England, and that he was much disposed to look down upon her father, the King of Prussia, as occupying a very inferior position. Vexatiously he delayed signing the marriage treaty, to which he had given a verbal assent, evading the subject and presenting frivolous excuses. The reputation of the English Fred was far from good. He had attained eighteen years of age, was very unattractive in personal appearance, and extremely dissolute. George I., morose and moody, was only rendered more obstinate by being pressed. These delays exasperated Frederick William, who was far from being the meekest of men. Poor Sophie Dorothee was annoyed almost beyond endurance. Wilhelmina took the matter very coolly, for she declared that she cared nothing about her cousin Fred, and that she had no wish to marry him.

The months rolled rapidly on, and Fritz, having entered his fourteenth year, was appointed by his father, in May, 1725, captain in the Potsdam Grenadier Guard. This giant regiment has attained world-wide renown, solely from the peculiarity of its organization. Such a body of men never existed before, never will again. It was one of the singular freaks of the Prussian king to form a grenadier guard of men of gigantic stature. In the prosecution of this senseless aim not only his own realms were ransacked, but Europe and even Asia was explored in search of giants. The army was with Frederick William the great object of life, and the giant guard was the soul of the army. This guard consisted of three battalions, 800 in each, 2400 in all. The shortest of the men were nearly seven feet high. The tallest were almost nine feet in height. They had

been gathered, at an enormous expense, out of every country where they could be found. No greater favor could be conferred upon the king than to obtain for him a giant. Many amusing anecdotes are related of the stratagems to which the king resorted to obtain these mammoth soldiers. Portraits were painted of all of them. Frederick William paid very little regard to individual rights or to the law of nations if any chance presented itself by which he could seize upon one of these monster men. Reigning in absolutism, compared with which the despotism of Turkey is mild, if he found in his domains any young woman of remarkable stature, he would compel her to marry one of his giants. It does not, however, appear that he thus succeeded in perpetuating a gigantic race.



CAPTAIN OF THE GIANT GUARDS.

Prussian recruiters were sent in all directions to search with eagle eyes for candidates for the Potsdam Guard. Their pay was higher than that of any other troops, and they enjoyed unusual privileges. Their drill and discipline were as perfect as could by any possibility be achieved. The following stories are apparently well-authenticated, describing the means to which the king often resorted to obtain these men.

In the town of Zulich there was a very tall young carpenter by the name of Zimmerman. A Prussian

recruiting officer, in disguise, Baron von Hompesch, entered the shop and ordered a stout chest to be made, “six feet six inches in length, at least—at all events, longer than yourself, Mr. Zimmerman. Mind you,” he added, “if too short it will be of no service to me.” At the appointed time he called for the chest. Looking at it, he exclaimed, in apparent disappointment, “Too short, as I dreaded!” “I am certain it is over six feet six,” said the carpenter, taking out his rule. “But I said that it was to be longer than yourself,” was the reply. “Well, it is,” rejoined the carpenter. To prove it, he jumped into the chest. Hompesch slammed down the lid, locked it, whistled, and three stout fellows came in, who shouldered the chest and carried it through the streets to a remote place outside of the town. Here the chest was opened, and poor Zimmerman was found dead, stifled to death.

On another occasion, an Austrian gentleman, M. Von Bentenrieder, who was exceedingly tall, was journeying from Vienna to Berlin as the embassador from the Emperor Charles VI. to the Congress of Cambrai. When near Halberstadt some part of his carriage broke. While the smith was repairing it, M. Bentenrieder walked on. He passed a Prussian guard-house, alone, in plain clothes, on foot, an immensely tall, well-formed man. It was too rich a prize to be lost. The officials seized him, and hurried him into the guard-house. But soon his carriage came along with his suite. He was obsequiously hailed as “Your Excellency.” The recruiting officers of Frederick William, mortified and chagrined, with many apologies released the embassador of the emperor.

As we have mentioned, the agents of the King of Prussia were eager to kidnap tall men, in whatever

country they could find them. This greatly exasperated the rulers of the various realms of all sizes and conditions which surrounded the Prussian territory. Frederick William was always ready to apologize, and to aver that each individual act was done without his orders or knowledge. Still, there was no abatement of this nuisance. Several seizures had been made in Hanover, which was the hereditary domain of George I., King of England. George was very angry. He was increasingly obstinate in withholding his assent to the double marriage, and even, by way of reprisal, seized several of the subjects of Frederick William, whom he caught in Hanover.

Sophie Dorothee seemed to have but one thought —the double marriage. This would make Wilhelmina queen of England, and would give her dear son Frederick an English princess for his bride. Her efforts, embarrassments, disappointments, were endless. Frederick William began to be regarded by the other powers as a very formidable man, whose alliance was exceedingly desirable. His army, of sixty thousand men, rapidly increasing, was as perfect in drill and discipline as ever existed. It was thoroughly furnished with all the appliances of war. The king himself, living in Spartan simplicity, and cutting down the expenses of his court to the lowest possible figure, was consecrating the resources of his realm to the promotion of its physical strength, and was accumulating iron-bound casks of gold and silver coin in the cellars of his palace. It became a matter of much moment to every court in Europe whether such a monarch should be its enemy or its ally.

After a long series of intrigues, a narrative of which would not interest the reader, Frederick

William was induced to enter into an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Emperor Charles VI. of Germany. This was renouncing the alliance with England, and threw an additional obstacle in the way of the double marriage. Sophie Dorothee was bitterly disappointed, and yet pertinaciously struggled on to accomplish her end.

There was an institution, if we may so call it, in the palace of the King of Prussia which became greatly renowned, and which was denominated “The Tobacco College,” or “Tobacco Parliament.” It consisted simply of a smoking-room very plainly furnished, where the king and about a dozen of his confidential advisers met to smoke and to talk over, with perfect freedom and informality, affairs of state. Carlyle thus quaintly describes this *Tabagie*:



THE TOBACCO PARLIAMENT.

"Any room that was large enough, and had height of ceiling and air circulation, and no cloth furniture, would do. And in each palace is one, or more than one, that has been fixed upon and fitted out for that object. A high room, as the engravings give it us; contented, saturnine human figures, a dozen or so of them, sitting around a large, long table furnished for the occasion; a long Dutch pipe in the mouth of each man; supplies of knaster easily accessible; small pan of burning peat, in the Dutch fashion (sandy native charcoal, which burns slowly without smoke), is at your left hand; at your right a jug, which I find to consist of excellent, thin, bitter beer; other costlier materials for drinking, if you want such, are not beyond reach. On side-tables stand wholesome cold meats, royal rounds of beef not wanting, with bread thinly sliced and buttered; in a rustic, but neat and abundant way, such innocent accommodations, narcotic or nutritious, gaseous, fluid, and solid, as human nature can require. Perfect equality is the rule; no rising or no notice taken when any body enters or leaves. Let the entering man take his place and pipe without obligatory remarks. If he can not smoke, let him at least affect to do so, and not ruffle the established stream of things. And so puff, slowly puff! and any comfortable speech that is in you, or none, if you authentically have not any."

Distinguished strangers were often admitted to the *Tabagie*. The Crown Prince Fritz was occasionally present, though always reluctantly. The other children of this numerous family not unfrequently came in to bid papa good-night. Here every thing was talked of, with entire freedom, all court gossip, the adventures of the chase, diplomacy, and the administrative measures of the government.

Frederick William had but very little respect for academic culture. He had scarcely the slightest acquaintance with books, and gathered around him mainly men whose knowledge was gained in the practical employments of life. It would seem, from many well-authenticated anecdotes, which have come down to us from the *Tabagie*, that these smoking companions of the king, like Frederick William himself, must have been generally a coarse set of men.

One of this smoking cabinet was a celebrated adventurer named Gundling, endowed with wonderful encyclopedian knowledge, and an incorrigible drunkard. He had been every where, seen every thing, and remembered all which he had either heard or seen. Frederick William had accidentally picked him up, and, taking a fancy to him, had clothed him, pensioned him, and introduced him to his Tabagie, where his peculiar character often made him the butt of ridicule. He was excessively vain, wore a scarlet coat, and all manner of pranks were cut up by these boon companions, in the midst of their cups, at his expense.

Another adventurer, by the name of Fassman, who had written books, and who made much literary pretension, had come to Berlin and also got introduced to the Tabagie. He was in character very like Gundling, and the two could never agree. Fassman could be very sarcastic and bitter in his speech. One evening, as the king and his smoking cabinet were sitting enveloped in the clouds which they were breathing forth, and were all muddled with tobacco and beer—for the king himself was a hard drinker—Fassman so enraged Gundling by some

cutting remarks, that the latter seized his pan of burning peat and red-hot sand and dashed it into the face of his antagonist. Fassman, who was much the more powerful of the two, was seriously burned. He instantly grasped his antagonist, dragged him down, and beat him savagely with his hot pan, amidst roars of laughter from the beer-stupefied bacchanals.

The half-intoxicated king gravely suggests that such conduct is hardly seemly among gentlemen; that the duel is the more chivalric way of settling such difficulties. Fassman challenges Gundling. They meet with pistols. It is understood by the seconds that it is to be rather a Pickwickian encounter. The trembling Gundling, when he sees his antagonist before him, with the deadly weapon in his hand, throws his pistol away, which his considerate friends had harmlessly loaded with powder only, declaring that he would not shoot any man, or have any man shoot him. Fassman sternly advances with his harmless pistol, and shoots the powder into Gundling's wig. It blazes into a flame. With a shriek Gundling falls to the ground as if dead. A bucket of water extinguishes the flames, and roars of laughter echo over the chivalric field of combat.

Such was the Tobacco Parliament in its trivial aspects. But it had also its serious functions. Many questions were discussed there which stirred men's souls, and which roused the ambition or the wrath of the stern old king to the utmost pitch.

We have now reached the year 1726. The Emperor of Germany declares that he can never give his consent to the double marriage with the English princes. Frederick William, who is not at all fond of his wife's relatives, and is annoyed by the hesitancy which his father-in-law has manifested in reference

to it, is also turning his obstinate will against the nuptial alliance. A more imperative and inflexible man never breathed. This year the unhappy wife of George I. died, unreconciled, wretched, exasperated, after thirty years' captivity in the castle of Ahlden. Darker and darker seemed the gloom which enveloped the path of Sophie Dorothee. She still clung to the marriages as the dearest hope of her heart. It was with her an ever-present thought. But Frederick William was the most obdurate and obstinate of mortals.

"The wide, overarching sky," writes Carlyle, "looks down on no more inflexible sovereign man than him, in the red-collared blue coat and white leggins, with the bamboo in his hand; a peaceable, capacious, not ill-given sovereign man, if you will let him have his way; but to bar his way, to tweak the nose of his sovereign royalty, and ignominiously force *him* into another way, that is an enterprise no man or devil, or body of men or devils, need attempt. The first step in such an attempt will require to be the assassination of Frederick Wilhelm, for you may depend upon it, royal Sophie, so long as he is alive the feat can not be done."

While these scenes were transpiring the Crown Prince was habitually residing at Potsdam, a favorite royal residence about seventeen miles west from Berlin. Here he was rigidly attending to his duties in the giant regiment. We have now, in our narrative, reached the year 1727. Fritz is fifteen years of age. He is attracting attention by his vivacity, his ingenuous, agreeable manners, and his fondness for polite literature. He occasionally is summoned by his father to the Smoking Cabinet. But the delicacy of his physical organization is such that he loathes tobacco,

and only pretends to smoke, with mock gravity puffing from his empty, white clay pipe. Neither has he any relish for the society which he meets there. Though faithful to the mechanical duties of the drill, they were very irksome to him. His books and his flute were his chief joy. Voltaire was just then rising to celebrity in France. His writings began to attract the attention of literary men throughout Europe. Fritz, in his youthful enthusiasm, was charmed by them. In the latter part of June, 1729, a courier brought the intelligence to Berlin that George I. had suddenly died of apoplexy. He was on a journey to Hanover when he was struck down on the road. Almost insensible, he was conveyed, on the full gallop, to Osnabrück, where his brother, who was a bishop, resided, and where medical aid could be obtained. But the shaft was fatal. At midnight his carriage reached Osnabrück. The old man, sixty-seven years of age, was heard to murmur, “It is all over with me,” and his spirit passed away to the judgment.

The death of George I. affected the strange Frederick William very deeply. He not only shed tears, but, if we may be pardoned the expression, blubbered like a child. His health seemed to fail, and hypochondria, in its most melancholy form, tormented him. As is not unusual in such cases, he became excessively religious. Every enjoyment was deemed sinful, if we except the indulgence in an ungovernable temper, which the self-righteous king made no attempt to curb. Wilhelmina, describing this state of things with her graphic pen, writes:

“He condemned all pleasures; damnable all of them, he said. You were to speak of nothing but the Word of God only. All other conversation was

forbidden. It was always he who carried on the improving talk at table, where he did the office of reader, as if it had been a refectory of monks. The king treated us to a sermon every afternoon. His valet de chambre gave out a psalm, which we all sang. You had to listen to this sermon with as much devout attention as if it had been an apostle's. My brother and I had all the mind in the world to laugh. We tried hard to keep from laughing, but often we burst out. Thereupon reprimand, with all the anathemas of the Church hurled on us, which we had to take with a contrite, penitent air—a thing not easy to bring your face to at the moment."

In this frame of mind, the king began to talk seriously of abdicating in favor of Frederick, and of retiring from the cares of state to a life of religious seclusion in his country seat at Wusterhausen. He matured his plan quite to the details. Wilhelmina thus describes it:

"He used to say that he would reserve for himself ten thousand crowns a year, and retire with the queen and his daughters to Wusterhausen. 'There,' added he, 'I will pray to God, and manage the farming economy, while my wife and girls take care of the household matters. You, Wilhelmina, are clever; I will give you the inspection of the linen, which you shall mend and keep in order, taking good charge of laundry matters. Frederica, who is miserly, shall have charge of all the stores of the house. Charlotte shall go to market and buy our provisions. My wife shall take charge of the little children and of the kitchen.'"

At that time the family consisted of nine children. Next to Wilhelmina and Fritz came Frederica, thirteen; Charlotte, eleven; Sophie

Dorothee, eight; Ulrique, seven; August Wilhelm, five; Amelia, four; and Henry, a babe in arms.

Some of the courtiers, in order to divert the king from his melancholy, and from these ideas of abdication, succeeded in impressing upon him the political necessity of visiting Augustus, the King of Poland, at Dresden. The king did not intend to take Fritz with him. But Wilhelmina adroitly whispered a word to Baron Suhm, the Polish embassador, and obtained a special invitation for the Crown Prince. It is a hundred miles from Berlin to Dresden—a distance easily traversed by post in a day. It was the middle of January, 1728, when the Prussian king reached Dresden, followed the day after by his son. They were sumptuously entertained for four weeks in a continuous round of magnificent amusements, from which the melancholic King of Prussia recoiled, but could not well escape.

Augustus, King of Poland, called "Augustus the Strong," was a man of extraordinary physical vigor and muscular strength. It was said that he could break horseshoes with his hands, and crush half-crowns between his finger and thumb. He was an exceedingly profligate man, introducing to his palaces scenes of sin and shame which could scarcely have been exceeded in Rome in the most corrupt days of the Cæsars. Though Frederick William, a stanch Protestant, was a crabbed, merciless man, drinking deeply and smoking excessively, he was irreproachable in morals, according to the ordinary standard. Augustus, nominally a Catholic, and zealously advocating political Catholicism, though a good-natured, rather agreeable man, recognized no other law of life than his own pleasure.

Augustus had formed apparently the deliberate

resolve to test his visitor by the most seductive and adroitly-arranged temptations. But, so far as Frederick William was concerned, he utterly failed. Upon one occasion his Prussian majesty, when conducted by Augustus, whirled around and indignantly left the room. That evening, through his minister, Grumkow, he informed the King of Poland that if there were any repetition of such scenes he would immediately leave Dresden.

Fritz, however, had not his father's strength to resist the allurements of this wicked court. He was but sixteen years of age. From childhood he had been kept secluded from the world, and had been reared under the sternest discipline. He was remarkably handsome, full of vivacity, which qualified him to shine in any society, and was heir to the Prussian monarchy. He was, consequently, greatly caressed, and every conceivable inducement was presented to him to lure him into the paths of guilty pleasure. He fell. From such a fall one never on earth recovers. Even though repentance and reformation come, a scar is left upon the soul which time can not efface.

This visit to Dresden, so fatal to Fritz, was closed on the 12th of February. The dissipation of those four weeks introduced the Crown Prince to habits which have left an indelible stain upon his reputation, and which poisoned his days. Upon his return to Potsdam he was seized with a fit of sickness, and for many years his health remained feeble. But he had entered upon the downward course. His chosen companions were those who were in sympathy with his newly-formed tastes. The career of dissipation into which the young prince had plunged could not be concealed from his eagle-eyed father. The king's previous dislike to his son was

converted into contempt and hatred, which feelings were at times developed in almost insane ebullitions of rage.

Still the queen-mother, Sophie Dorothee, clung to the double marriage. Her brother, George II., was now King of England. His son Fred, who had been intended for Wilhelmina, was not a favorite of his father's, and had not yet been permitted to go to England. In May, 1728, he was twenty-one years of age. He was living idly in Hanover, impatient to wed his cousin Wilhelmina, who was then nineteen years of age. He seems to have secretly contemplated, in conference with Wilhelmina's mother, Sophie Dorothee, a trip incognito to Berlin, where he would marry the princess clandestinely, and then leave it with the royal papas to settle the difficulty the best way they could. The plan was not executed. Wilhelmina manifested coquettish indifference to the whole matter. She, however, writes that Queen Sophie was so confidently expecting him that "she took every ass or mule for his royal highness."

In May the King of Poland returned the visit of Frederick William. He came with a numerous retinue and in great splendor. During the past year his unhappy wife had died; and he, then fifty-five years of age, was seeking to bargain for the hand of Wilhelmina, hoping, by an alliance with Prussia, to promote some of his political schemes. The wicked old Polish king was much broken by age and his "terrible debaucheries." He had recently suffered the amputation of two toes from an ulcerated foot, which no medical skill could cure. He was brought into the palace at Berlin in a sedan, covered with red velvet embroidered with gold. Wilhelmina had no suspicion of the object of his visit, and was somewhat surprised

by the intensity of his gaze and his glowing compliments. Diplomatic obstacles arose which silenced the question of the marriage before Wilhelmina knew that it had been contemplated.

Fritz had been for some time confined to his chamber and to his bed. He was now getting out again. By his mother's persuasion he wrote to his aunt, Queen Caroline of England, expressing, in the strongest terms, his love for her daughter the Princess Amelia, and his unalterable determination never to marry unless he could lead her to the altar. Though Frederick William knew nothing of these intrigues, he hated his son with daily increasing venom. Sometimes, in a surly fit, he would not speak to him or recognize him. Again he would treat him with studied contempt, at the table refusing to give him any food, leaving him to fast while the others were eating. Not unfrequently, according to Wilhelmina's account, he even boxed his ears, and smote him with his cane. Wilhelmina gives us one of the letters of her brother to his father about this time, and the characteristic paternal answer. Frederick writes, under date of September 11, 1728, from Wusterhausen:

> "MY DEAR PAPA,—I have not, for a long while, presumed to come near my dear papa, partly because he forbade me, but chiefly because I had reason to expect a still worse reception than usual; and for fear of angering my dear papa by my present request, I have preferred making it in writing to him.
>
> "I therefore beg my dear papa to be gracious to me; and can here say that, after long reflection, my conscience has not accused me of any the least thing with which I could reproach myself. But if I

have, against my will and knowledge, done any thing which has angered my dear papa, I herewith most submissively beg forgiveness, and hope my dear papa will lay aside that cruel hatred which I can not but notice in all his treatment of me. I could not otherwise suit myself to it, as I always thought I had a gracious papa, and now have to see the contrary. I take confidence, then, and hope that my dear papa will consider all this, and again be gracious to me. And in the mean while I assure him that I will never, all my days, fail with my will; and, notwithstanding his disfavor to me, remain my dear papa's most faithful and obedient servant and son,

FREDERICK."

The returning messenger took back the following reply. It was, as usual, ungrammatical, miserably spelled, and confused. Contemptuously the king spoke of his son in the third person, writing *he* and *his* instead of *you* and *yours*. Abruptly he commences:

"His obstinate perverse disposition which does not love his father; for when one does every thing, and really loves one's father, one does what the father requires, not while he is there to see it, but when his back is turned too. For the rest he knows very well that I can endure no effeminate fellow who has no human inclination in him; who puts himself to shame, can not ride or shoot; and, withal, is dirty in his person, frizzles his hair like a fool, and does not cut it off. And all this I have a thousand times reprimanded, but all in vain, and no improvement in nothing. For the rest, haughty; proud as a churl; speaks to nobody but some few, and is not popular and affable; and cuts grimaces with his face as if he were a fool; and does my will in nothing but following his own whims; no

use to him in any thing else. This is the answer.

FREDERICK WILLIAM."

Still the question of the marriages remained the subject of innumerable intrigues. There were several claimants for the hand of Wilhelmina, and many nuptial alliances suggested for Fritz. Frederick William proposed the marriage of Wilhelmina to Fred, the Prince of Wales, and to let the marriage of Fritz and Amelia for the present remain undecided. But England promptly replied "No; both marriages or none." It is intimated by the ministers of the Prussian king that he was influenced in his vacillating course respecting the marriages not only by his doubts whether the English or a German alliance would be most desirable, but also by avarice, as he knew not what dowry he could secure with the English princess, and by jealousy, as he was very unwilling to add to the importance and the power of his hated son Fritz. He also disliked extremely his brother-in-law, George II.[6]

About the middle of January, 1729, the king went upon a hunt with his companions, taking with him Fritz, who he knew detested the rough barbaric sport. This hunting expedition to the wilds of Brandenburg and Pommern was one of great renown. Three thousand six hundred and two wild swine these redoubtable Nimrods boasted as the fruits of their prowess. Frederick William was an economical prince. He did not allow one pound of this vast mass of wild pork to be wasted. Every man, according to his family, was bound to take a certain portion at a fixed price. From this fierce raid through swamps and jungles in pursuit of wild boars the king returned to Potsdam. Soon after he was taken sick. Having ever been a hard drinker, it is not strange that his

disease proved to be the gout. He was any thing but an amiable patient. The pangs of the disease extorted from him savage growls, and he vented his spleen upon all who came within the reach of his crutch or the hearing of his tongue. Still, even when suffering most severely, he never omitted any administrative duties. His secretaries every morning came in with their papers, and he issued his orders with his customary rigorous devotion to business. It was remarked that this strange man would never allow a profane expression or an indelicate allusion in his presence. This sickness lasted five weeks, and Wilhelmina writes, “The pains of Purgatory could not equal those which we endured.”

During this sickness a very curious scene occurred, characteristic of the domestic life of this royal family. The second daughter, Frederica Louisa, “beautiful as an angel, and a spoiled child of fifteen,” was engaged to the Marquis of Anspach. We will allow Wilhelmina to describe the event which took place at the table. It was early in March, 1729, while the king was still suffering from the gout:

“At table his majesty told the queen that he had letters from Anspach; the young marquis to be at Berlin in May for his wedding; that M. Bremer, his tutor, was just coming with the ring of betrothal for Louisa. He asked my sister if that gave her pleasure, and how she would regulate her housekeeping when married. My sister had got into the way of telling him whatever she thought, and home truths sometimes, without his taking it ill. She answered, with her customary frankness, that she would have a good table, which should be delicately served, and, added she, ‘which shall be better than yours. And if I have children I will not maltreat them like you, nor

force them to eat what they have an aversion to.'

"'What do you mean by that?' replied the king; 'what is there wanting at my table?'

"'There is this wanting,' she said, 'that one can not have enough; and the little there is consists of coarse pot-herbs that nobody can eat.'

"The king, as was not unnatural, had begun to get angry at her first answer. This last put him quite in a fury. But all his anger fell on my brother and me. He first threw a plate at my brother's head, who ducked out of the way. He then let fly another at me, which I avoided in like manner. A hail-storm of abuse followed these first hostilities. He rose into a passion against the queen, reproaching her with the bad training which she gave her children, and, addressing my brother, said,

"'You have reason to curse your mother, for it is she who causes your being an ill-governed fellow. I had a preceptor,' continued he, 'who was an honest man. I remember always a story which he told me in his youth. There was a man at Carthage who had been condemned to die for many crimes he had committed. While they were leading him to execution he desired he might speak to his mother. They brought his mother. He came near, as if to whisper something to her, and bit away a piece of her ear. "I treat you thus," said he, "to make you an example to all parents who take no heed to bring up their children in the practice of virtue." Make the application,' continued he, always addressing my brother; and, getting no answer from him, he again set to abusing us till he could speak no longer.



ROYALTY AT DINNER.

“We rose from table. As we had to pass near him in going out, he aimed a great blow at me with his crutch, which, if I had not jerked away from it, would have ended me. He chased me for a while in his wheel-chair, but the people drawing it gave me time to escape to the queen’s chamber.”

That evening Wilhelmina was taken sick with burning fever and severe pain. Still she was compelled to rise from her bed and attend a court party. The next morning she was worse. The king, upon being told of it, exclaimed gruffly, “Ill? I will

cure you!" and compelled her to swallow a large draught of wine. Soon her sickness showed itself to be small-pox. Great was the consternation of her mother, from the fear that, even should she survive, her beauty would be so marred that the English prince would no longer desire her as his bride. Fortunately she escaped without a scar.

CHAPTER III.

THE SUFFERINGS OF FRITZ AND WILHELMINA.

The King an Artist.—Cruel Exactions of the King.—Conflicts of Etiquette.—Quarrel with George II.—Nuptial Intrigues.—Energetic Action of Frederick William.—Marriage of Frederica Louisa.—Fritz and his Flute.—Wrath of the King.—Beats Wilhelmina and Fritz.—Attempts to strangle Fritz.—The Hunt at Wusterhausen.—Intrigues in reference to the Double Marriage.—Anguish of Wilhelmina.—Cruelty of her Mother.—Resolve of Fritz to escape to England.

WHILE Frederick William was confined to his room, tormented by the gout, he endeavored to beguile the hours in painting in oil. Some of these paintings still exist, with the epigraph, "Painted by Frederick William in his torments." Wilhelmina writes:

"For the most part, one of his own grenadiers was the model from which he copied. And when the portrait had more color in it than the original, he was in the habit of coloring the cheeks of the soldier to correspond with the picture. Enchanted with the fruits of his genius, he showed them to his courtiers, and asked their opinion concerning them. As he would have been very angry with any one who had criticised them, he was quite sure of being gratified

with admiration.

"'Well,' said he one day to an attendant, who was extolling the beauties of one of his pictures, 'how much do you think that picture would bring at a sale?'

"'Sire, it would be cheap at a hundred ducats.'

"'You shall have it for fifty,' said the king, 'because you are a good judge, and I am therefore anxious to do you a favor.'

"The poor courtier," Wilhelmina adds, "obliged to become possessor of this miserable performance, and to pay so dear for it, determined for the future to be more circumspect in his admiration."

While the king was thus suffering the pangs of the gout, his irascibility vented itself upon his wife and children. "We were obliged," says Wilhelmina, "to appear at nine o'clock in the morning in his room. We dined there, and did not dare to leave it even for a moment. Every day was passed by the king in invectives against my brother and myself. He no longer called me any thing but 'the English blackguard.' My brother was named the 'rascal Fritz.' He obliged us to eat and drink the things for which we had an aversion. Every day was marked by some sinister event. It was impossible to raise one's eyes without seeing some unhappy people tormented in one way or other. The king's restlessness did not allow him to remain in bed. He had himself placed in a chair on rollers, and was thus dragged all over the palace. His two arms rested upon crutches, which supported them. We always followed this triumphal car, like unhappy captives who are about to undergo their sentence."

We have now reached the summer of 1729.

George II. was a weak-minded, though a proud, conceited man, who, as King of England, assumed airs of superiority which greatly annoyed his irascible and petulant brother-in-law, Frederick William. Flushed with his new dignity, he visited his hereditary domain of Hanover. The journey led him through a portion of the Prussian territory. Courtesy required that George II. should announce that intention to the Prussian king. Courtesy also required that, as the British monarch passed over Prussian soil, Frederick William should furnish him with free post-horses. “I will furnish the post-horses,” said Frederick William, “if the king apprise me of his intention. If he do not, I shall do nothing about it.” George did not write. In affected unconsciousness that there was any such person in the world as the Prussian king, he crossed the Prussian territory, paid for his own post-horses, and did not even condescend to give Frederick William any notice of his arrival in Hanover. The King of Prussia, who could not but be conscious of the vast inferiority of Prussia to England, stung to the quick by this contemptuous treatment, growled ferociously in the Tobacco Parliament.

The English minister at Berlin, Dubourgay, wrote to Hanover, urging that some notification of the king’s arrival should be sent to the Prussian court to appease the angry sovereign. George replied through Lord Townshend that, “under the circumstances, it is not necessary.” Thus the two kings were no longer on speaking terms. It is amusing, while at the same time it is humiliating, to observe these traits of frail childhood thus developed in full-grown men wearing crowns. When private men or kings are in such a state of latent hostility, an open rupture is quite certain soon to follow. George accused Frederick

William of recruiting soldiers in Hanover. In retaliation, he seized some Prussian soldiers caught in Hanoverian territory. There was an acre or so of land, called the "Meadow of Clamei," which both Hanover and Brandenburg claimed. The grass, about eight cart-loads, had been cut by Brandenburg, and was well dried.

On the 28th of June, 1729, the population of Bühlitz, a Hanoverian border village, sallied forth with carts, escorted by a troop of horse, and, with demonstrations both defiant and exultant, raked up and carried off all the hay. The King of Prussia happened to be at that time about one hundred miles distant from Bühlitz, at Magdeburg, reviewing his troops. He was thrown into a towering passion. Sophie Dorothee, Wilhelmina, Fritz, all felt the effects of his rage. Dubourgay writes, under date of July 30, 1729:

"Her majesty, all in tears, complained of her situation. The king is nigh losing his senses on account of the differences with Hanover; goes from bed to bed in the night-time, and from chamber to chamber, like one whose brains are turned. Took a fit at two in the morning lately to be off to Wusterhausen. Since his return he gives himself up entirely to drink. The king will not suffer the prince royal to sit next his majesty at table, but obliges him to go to the lower end, where things are so ordered that the poor prince often rises without getting one bit, insomuch that the queen was obliged two days ago to send, by one of the servants who could be trusted, a box of cold fowls and other eatables for his royal highness's subsistence."

Frederick William, in his extreme exasperation, seriously contemplated challenging George II. to a

duel. In his own mind he arranged all the details—the place of meeting, the weapons, the seconds. With a stern sense of justice, characteristic of the man, he admitted that it would not be right to cause the blood of his subjects to flow in a quarrel which was merely personal. But the "eight cart-loads of hay" had been taken under circumstances so insulting and contemptuous as to expose the Prussian king to ridicule; and he was firm in his determination to settle the difficulty by a duel. The question was much discussed in the Tobacco Parliament. The Prussian ministers opposed in vain. "The true method, I tell you," said the king, "is the duel, let the world cackle as it may."

But at length one of the counselors, Baron Borck, urged the following consideration: "Swords will be the weapons used. Your majesty has been very sick, is now weak, and also crippled with gout. The King of England is in health and vigor. There is great danger that your majesty may be worsted in the combat. That would render matters tenfold worse."

The king was staggered. War seemed the only alternative. But war would empty his money-casks, disfigure his splendid troops, and peril the lives even of his costly giants. One of these men, James Kirkman, picked up in the streets of London, cost the king six thousand dollars "before he could be inveigled, shipped, and brought to hand." Nearly all had cost large sums of money. Such men were too valuable to be exposed to danger. Frederick William was in a state of extreme nervous excitement. There was no rest for him night or day. His deep potations did not calm his turbulent spirit. War seemed imminent. Military preparations were in vigorous progress. Ovens were constructed to bake

ammunition bread. Artillery was dragged out from the arsenals. It was rumored that the Prussian troops were to march immediately upon the duchy of Mecklenburg, which was then held by George II. as an appendage to Hanover.

All thoughts of the double marriage were for the moment relinquished. The Czar of Russia had a son and a daughter. It was proposed to marry Wilhelmina to the son and Fritz to the daughter, and thus to secure a Russian instead of an English alliance. Harassed by these difficulties, Frederick William grew increasingly morose, venting his spite upon his wife and children. Fritz seriously contemplated escaping from his father's abuse by flight, and to take refuge with his uncle George in England, and thus to secure his marriage with Amelia. The portraits of the princess which he had seen proved her to be very beautiful. All reports pronounced her to be as lovely in character as in person. He was becoming passionately attached to her. Wilhelmina was his only confidante. Regard for her alone restrained him from attempting to escape. "He would have done so long ago," writes Dubourgay, under date of August 11, 1729, "were it not for his sister, upon whom the whole weight of his father's resentment would then fall. Happen what will, therefore, he is resolved to share with her all the hardships which the king, his father, may be pleased to put upon her."



WILHELMINA.

One night, about the middle of August, as the king was tossing restlessly upon his pillow, he sprang from his bed, exclaiming “Eureka! I now see what will bring a settlement.” Immediately a special messenger was dispatched, with terms of compromise, to Kannegiesser, the king’s embassador at Hanover. We do not know what the propositions were. But the king was exceedingly anxious to avoid war. He had, in many respects, a very stern sense of justice, and would not do that which he considered

to be wrong. When he abused his family or others he did not admit that he was acting unjustly. He assumed, and with a sort of fanatical conscientiousness, detestable as it was, that he was doing right; that they deserved the treatment. And now he earnestly desired peace, and was disposed to present the most honorable terms to avert a war.

Kannegiesser, at Hanover, received the king's propositions for reconciliation at ten o'clock in the morning of the 15th of August, 1729. George II. was then absent on a hunting excursion. The Prussian embassador called immediately at the council-chamber of the Hanoverian court, and informed M. Hartoff, the privy secretary, that he wished an audience with the ministry, then in session, to make a proposition to them from the Prussian court. Hartoff, who had met Kannegiesser in a room adjoining the council-chamber, reported the request to the council, and returned with the disrespectful answer that "M. Kannegiesser must defer what he has to say to some other time."

The Prussian minister condescended then so importunately to urge an audience, in view of the menacing state of affairs, that M. Hartoff returned to the council-chamber, and in seven minutes came back with an evasive answer, still refusing to grant an audience. The next day M. Kannegiesser called again at the council-chamber. "I let them know in the mildest terms," he writes in his dispatch home, "that I desired to be admitted to speak with them, which was refused me a second time." He then informed M. Hartoff that the Prussian court expected a definite answer to some propositions which had previously been sent to the council at Hanover; that he would remain two days to receive it; that, in case

he did not receive it, he would call again, to remind them that an answer was desired.

The next day M. Hartoff called at the residence of M. Kannegiesser, and informed him “that the ministers, understanding that he designed to ask an audience to-morrow to remind them of the answer which he demanded, wished to say that such applications were not customary among sovereign princes; that they dared not treat farther in that affair with him; that, as soon as they received instructions from his Britannic majesty, they would communicate to him the result.”

The Prussian minister replied that he could not conceive why he should be refused an audience; that he should not fail to be at the council-chamber at eleven o’clock the next day to receive an answer to the proposals already made, and also to the proposals which he was prepared to make. He endeavored to inform Hartoff of the terms of compromise which the Prussian king was ready to present. But Hartoff refused to hear him, declaring that he had positive orders not to listen to any thing he had to say upon the subject. We will give the conclusion in the words of the Prussian minister, as found in his dispatch of the 18th of August, 1729:

“At eleven this day I went to the council-chamber for the third time, and desired Secretary Hartoff to prevail with the ministry to allow me to speak with them, and communicate what the King of Prussia had ordered me to propose. Herr von Hartoff gave them an account of my request, and brought me, for answer, that I must wait a little, because the ministers were not yet all assembled; which I did. But after having made me stay almost an hour, and after the president of the council was come, Herr von

Hartoff came out to me and repeated what he had said yesterday, in very positive and absolute terms, that the ministers were resolved not to see me, and had expressly forbid him taking any paper at my hands.

"To which I replied, that this was very hard usage, and the world would see how the King of Prussia would relish it. But having strict orders from his majesty, my most gracious master, to make a declaration to the ministers of Hanover in his name, and finding that Herr von Hartoff would neither receive it nor take a copy of it, I had only to tell him that I was under the necessity of leaving it in writing, and had brought the paper with me; and that now, as the council were pleased to refuse to take it, I was obliged to leave the said declaration on a table in an adjoining room, in the presence of Herr von Hartoff and other secretaries of the council, whom I desired to lay it before the ministry.

"After this I went home, but had scarcely entered my apartment when a messenger returned me, by order of the ministers, the declaration, still sealed as I left it; and perceiving that I was not inclined to receive it, he laid it on my table, and immediately left the house."

Having met with this repulse, Kannegiesser returned to Berlin with the report. Frederick William was exasperated in the highest degree by such treatment from a brother-in-law whom he both hated and despised. He had at his command an army in as perfect condition, both in equipment and drill, as Europe had ever seen. Within a week's time forty-four thousand troops, horse, foot, and artillery, were rendezvoused at Magdeburg. Fritz was there, looking quite soldierly on his proud charger, at the head of

his regiment of the giant guard. Vigorously they were put upon the march. George II., who had already in his boyhood felt the weight of Frederick William's arm, and who well knew his desperate energy when once roused, was terrified. He had no forces in Hanover which could stand for an hour in opposition to the army which the Prussian king was bringing against him.

War between Prussia and England might draw all the neighboring nations into the conflict. There was excitement in every continental court. The Pope, it is reported, was delighted. "He prays," says Carlyle, "that Heaven would be graciously pleased to foment and blow up to the proper degree this quarrel between the two chief heretical powers, Heaven's chief enemies, whereby holy religion might reap a good benefit."

In the general alarm, France, Holland, and other neighboring courts interposed and called loudly for a settlement. Frederick William had never wished for war. George II. was thoroughly frightened. As it was certain that he would be severely chastised, he was eager to escape from the difficulty through the mediation of others. An arbitration was agreed upon, and the quarrel was settled without bloodshed.

On the 8th of September Fritz returned to Potsdam from this his first military expedition, with his regiment of giants. He was then seventeen years of age. His soldierly bearing had quite rejoiced the king, and he began to think that, after all, possibly something might be made of Fritz.

Just as these troubles were commencing, there was, in May, 1729, a marriage in the Prussian royal family. Some two hundred miles south of Brandenburg there was, at that time, a small

marquisate called Anspach, next in dignity to a dukedom. The marquis was a frail, commonplace boy of seventeen, under the care of a young mother, who was widowed, sick, and dying. Much to the dissatisfaction of Sophie Dorothee, the queen-mother, Frederick William had arranged a marriage between this young man, who was far from rich, and his second daughter, Frederica Louisa, who was then fifteen years of age.[7]

Fritz went in the royal carriage, with suitable escort, to meet the young marquis on the Prussian frontier, as he came to his bridals. They returned together in the carriage to Potsdam with great military display. The wedding took place on the 30th of May, 1729. It was very magnificent. Fritz was conspicuous on the occasion in a grand review of the giant grenadiers. Wilhelmina, in her journal, speaks quite contemptuously of her new brother-in-law, the Marquis of Anspach, describing him as a foolish young fellow. It was, indeed, a marriage of children. The bridegroom was a sickly, peevish, undeveloped boy of seventeen; and the bride was a self-willed and ungoverned little beauty of fifteen. The marriage proved a very unhappy one. There was no harmony between them. Frederick writes: “They hate one another like the fire” (*comme le feu*). They, however, lived together in incessant petty quarrelings for thirty years. Probably during all that time neither one of them saw a happy day.

Fritz had now attained eighteen years of age, and Wilhelmina twenty-one. Fritz was very fond of music, particularly of his flute, upon which he played exquisitely, being, however, careful never to sound its notes within hearing of his father. A celebrated music-master from Dresden, by the name of Quantz,

was his teacher. He came occasionally from Dresden and spent a week or two at Potsdam, secretly teaching the young prince. The mother of Fritz was in warm sympathy with her son, and aided him in all ways in her power in this gratification. Still it was a very hazardous measure. The fierce old king was quite uncertain in his movements. He might at any hour appear at Potsdam, and no one could tell to what lengths, in case of a discovery, he might go in the intensity of his rage. Fritz had an intimate friend in the army, a young man of about his own age, one Lieutenant Katte, who, when Fritz was with his music-teacher, was stationed on the look-out, that he might give instant warning in case there were any indications of the king's approach. His mother also was prepared, when Quantz was at Potsdam, promptly to dispatch a messenger to her son in case she suspected his father of being about to turn his steps in that direction.

Fritz, having thus established his outposts, was accustomed to retire to his room with his teacher, lay aside his tight-fitting Prussian military coat, which he detested, and called his shroud, draw on a very beautiful, flowing French dressing-gown of scarlet, embroidered with gold, and decorated with sash and tags, and, with his hair dressed in the most fashionable style of the French court, surrender himself to the indulgence of his own luxurious tastes for sumptuous attire as well as for melodious sounds. He was thus, one day, in the height of his enjoyment, taking his clandestine music-lesson, when Lieutenant Katte came rushing into the room in the utmost dismay, with the announcement that the king was at the door. The wily and ever-suspicious monarch had stolen the march upon them. He was about to make his son a very unwelcome surprise visit.

A bomb bursting in the room could scarcely have created a greater panic. Katte and Quantz seized the flutes and music-books, and rushed into a wood-closet, where they stood quaking with terror. Fritz threw off his dressing-gown, hurried on his military coat, and sat down at the table, affecting to be deeply engaged with his books. The king, frowning like a thunder-cloud—for he always frowned when he drew near Fritz—burst into the room. The sight of the frizzled hair of his son "kindled the paternal wrath into a tornado pitch." The king had a wonderful command of the vocabulary of abuse, and was heaping epithets of vituperation upon the head of the prince, when he caught sight of the dressing-gown behind a screen. He seized the glittering garment, and, with increasing outbursts of rage, crammed it into the fire. Then searching the room, he collected all the French books, of which Fritz had quite a library, and, sending for a bookseller near by, ordered him to take every volume away, and sell them for what they would bring. For more than an hour the king was thus raging, like a maniac, in the apartment of his son. Fortunately he did not look into the wood-closet. Had he done so, both Quantz and Katte would have been terribly beaten, even had they escaped being sent immediately to the scaffold.



THE DRESSING-GOWN.

"The king," writes Wilhelmina, "almost caused my brother and myself to die of hunger. He always acted as carver, and served every body except us. When, by chance, there remained any thing in the dish, he spit in it, to prevent our eating of it. We lived entirely upon coffee, milk, and dried cherries, which ruined our health. I was nourished with insults and invectives, and was abused all day long,

in every possible manner, and before every body. The king's anger went so far against my brother and myself that he drove us from him, forbidding us to appear in his presence except at meals.

"The queen had contrived in her bedroom a sort of labyrinth of screens, so arranged that I could escape the king without being seen, in case he suddenly entered. One day the king came and surprised us. I wished to escape, but found myself embarrassed among these screens, of which several fell, and prevented my getting out of the room. The king was at my heels, and tried to catch hold of me in order to beat me. Not being able any longer to escape, I placed myself behind my governess. The king advanced so much that she was obliged to fall back, but, finding herself at length near the chimney, she was stopped. I found myself in the alternative of bearing the fire or the blows. The king overwhelmed me with abuse, and tried to seize me by the hair. I fell upon the floor. The scene would have had a tragical end had it continued, as my clothes were actually beginning to take fire. The king, fatigued with crying out and with his passion, at length put an end to it and went away."

These sufferings bound the brother and sister very intimately together. "This dear brother," Wilhelmina writes, "passed all his afternoons with me. We read and wrote together, and occupied ourselves in cultivating our minds. The king now never saw my brother without threatening him with the cane. Fritz repeatedly told me that he would bear any thing from the king except blows; but that, if he ever came to such extremities with him, he would regain his freedom by flight."

On the 10th of December, 1729, Dubourgay

writes in his journal: “His Prussian majesty can not bear the sight of either the prince or the princess royal. The other day he asked the prince, ‘Kalkstein makes you English, does not he?’ To which the prince answered, ‘I respect the English, because I know the people there love me.’ Upon which the king seized him by the collar, struck him fiercely with his cane, and it was only by superior strength that the poor prince escaped worse. There is a general apprehension of something tragical taking place before long.”

Wilhelmina gives the following account of this transaction, as communicated to her by her brother: “As I entered the king’s room this morning, he first seized me by the hair and then threw me on the floor, along which, after having exercised the vigor of his arm upon my unhappy person, he dragged me, in spite of all my resistance, to a neighboring window. His intention apparently was to perform the office of the mutes of the seraglio, for, seizing the cord belonging to the curtain, he placed it around my neck. I seized both of his hands, and began to cry out. A servant came to my assistance, and delivered me from his hands.”

In reference to this event, the prince wrote to his mother from Potsdam, “I am in the utmost despair. What I had always apprehended has at last come on me. The king has entirely forgotten that I am his son. This morning I came into his room as usual. At the first sight of me he sprang forward, seized me by the collar, and struck me a shower of blows with his rattan. I tried in vain to screen myself, he was in so terrible a rage, almost out of himself. It was only weariness that made him give up. I am driven to extremity. I have too much honor to endure such

treatment, and I am resolved to put an end to it in one way or another."

Wilhelmina well understood that her brother contemplated running away, escaping, if possible, to England. We have mentioned that the young prince, after his return from Dresden, had become quite dissipated. The companions he chose were wild young army officers of high birth, polished address, and, in godless lives, fashionable men of the world. Lieutenant Katte was a genteel man of pleasure. Another of his bosom companions, Lieutenant Keith, a young man of illustrious lineage, was also a very undesirable associate for any young man whose principles of virtue were not established.[8] Of Keith and Katte, the two most intimate friends of Fritz, Wilhelmina writes, about this time:



A ROYAL EXECUTIONER.

"Lieutenant Keith had been gone some time, stationed in Wesel with his regiment. Keith's departure had been a great joy to me, in the hope my brother would now lead a more regular life. But it proved quite otherwise. A second favorite, and a much more dangerous, succeeded Keith. This was a young man of the name of Katte, captain lieutenant in the regiment *Gens d'Armes*. He was highly connected in the army. His mother was daughter of Field-marshal Wartensleben. General Katte, his father, had sent him to the universities, and afterward to travel, desiring that he should be a lawyer. But, as there was no favor to be hoped for

out of the army, the young man found himself at last placed there, contrary to his expectation. He continued to apply himself to studies. He had wit, book-culture, and acquaintance with the world. The good company which he continued to frequent had given him polite manners to a degree then rare in Berlin. His physiognomy was rather disagreeable than otherwise. A pair of thick black eyebrows almost covered his eyes. His look had in it something ominous, presage of the fate he met with. A tawny skin, torn by small-pox, increased his ugliness. He affected the freethinker, and carried libertinism to excess. A great deal of ambition and headlong rashness accompanied this vice. Such a favorite was not the man to bring back my brother from his follies."

Early in January, 1730, the king, returning from a hunt at Wusterhausen, during which he had held a drinking carouse and a diplomatic interview with the King of Poland, announced his intention of being no longer annoyed by matrimonial arrangements for Wilhelmina. He resolved to abandon the English alliance altogether, unless an immediate and unequivocal assent were given by George II. for the marriage of Wilhelmina with the Prince of Wales, without any compact for the marriage of Fritz with the Princess Amelia. Count Finckenstein, Baron Grumkow, and General Borck were sent to communicate this, the king's unalterable resolve, to the queen. The first two were friends of the queen. Grumkow was understood to be the instigator of the king. Wilhelmina chanced to be with her mother when the gentlemen announced themselves as the bearers of a very important message from the king to her majesty. Wilhelmina trembled, and said in a low tone to her mother, "This regards me. I have a

dreading." "No matter," the worn and weary mother replied; "one must have firmness, and that is not what I shall want." The queen retired with the ministers to the audience-chamber.

There they informed her that they had each received a letter the night before from the king, the contents of which they were forbidden, under penalty of death, from communicating to any one but to her. The king wished them to say to her majesty that he would no longer endure her disobedience in reference to the marriage of Wilhelmina; that, in case this disobedience continued, there should be an entire separation between him and his wife—a divorce—and that she and her daughter should both be banished to the château of Oranienburg, about twenty miles from Berlin, and there held in close imprisonment. The king was willing that Sophie Dorothee should write once more, and only once more, to her brother, George II., and demand of him a categorical answer, yes or no, whether he would consent to the immediate marriage of the Prince of Wales and Wilhelmina. The king would wait a fortnight for an answer, or, if the winds were contrary, three weeks; but not a day more. Should no answer in that time be returned, or a negative or an evasive answer, then Wilhelmina was to make her immediate choice of a husband between either the Duke of Weissenfels or the Marquis of Schwedt, and to be married without delay.[9]

Weissenfels was a small duchy in Saxony. The duke, so called by courtesy, had visited Berlin before in the train of his sovereign, King Augustus, when his majesty returned the visit of Frederick William. He was then quite captivated by the beauty and vivacity

of Wilhelmina. He was titular duke merely, his brother being the real duke; and he was then living on his pay as officer in the army, and was addicted to deep potations. Carlyle describes him as “a mere betitled, betasseled, elderly military gentleman of no special qualities, evil or good.” Sophie Dorothee, noticing his attentions to Wilhelmina, deemed it the extreme of impudence for so humble a man to aspire to the hand of her illustrious child. She reproved him so severely that he retired from the court in deep chagrin. He never would have presumed to renew the suit but for the encouragement given by Frederick William.

The Marquis of Schwedt was a very indifferent young man, living under the tutelage of his dowager mother. She was a cousin of the King of Prussia, and had named her son Frederick William. Having rendered herself conspicuously ridiculous by the flaunting colors of her dress, which tawdry display was in character with her mind, both she and her son were decidedly disagreeable to Wilhelmina.

There was no alternative left the young princess. Unless there were an immediate consummation of the marriage contract with the English Frederick, she was, without delay, to choose between Weissenfels and Schwedt. The queen, in response to this communication, said, “I will immediately write to England; but, whatever may be the answer, it is impossible that my daughter should marry either of the individuals whom the king has designated.” Baron Grumkow, who was in entire accord with the king, “began,” says Wilhelmina, “quoting Scripture on her majesty, as the devil can on occasion. ‘Wives, be obedient to your husbands,’ said he. The queen very aptly replied, ‘Yes; but did not Bethuel, the son

of Milcah, when Abraham's servant asked his daughter in marriage for young Isaac, answer, "We will call the damsel, and inquire of her mouth?" It is true, wives must obey their husbands, but husbands must command things just and reasonable.'

"The king's procedure," added the unhappy mother, "is not in accordance with that law. He is doing violence to my daughter's inclinations, thus rendering her wretched for the remainder of her days. He wishes to give her for a husband a brutal debauchee, a younger brother, who is nothing but an officer in the army of the King of Poland; a landless man, without the means of living according to his rank. I will write to England. But, whatever the answer, I had rather a thousand times see my child in the grave than hopelessly miserable."

The queen, looking reproachfully at Grumkow, remarked, "I know full well to whom I owe all this." She then excused herself, saying that she was not well, and retired to her apartment. There she communicated to the anxious Wilhelmina the cruel message of the king. Sophie Dorothee then wrote a very earnest letter to Queen Caroline, the wife of George II., imploring that all obstacles in the way of the marriage of Wilhelmina with the Prince of Wales might be withdrawn. The idea of marriage with either Weissenfels or Schwedt was dreadful. But, on the other hand, the wrath of the king, the divorce of the queen, and the imprisonment of both mother and daughter in the château of Oranienburg, were also dreadful. Fritz was taken into the councils of his mother and sister. It was decided that he should also write to his aunt, urging his suit for the Princess Amelia. It is true that George II. was ready to accede to this marriage, but Frederick William threw

obstacles in the way. It was probably the hope of Fritz to secure Amelia, notwithstanding his father's opposition. The ready pen of Wilhelmina was employed to draft the letter, which her brother submissively copied. As it was not probable, in the intricacies in which the question was now involved, that both marriages could take place together, Fritz wrote pleading for the marriage of Wilhelmina at once, pledging his word that he would remain faithful to the Princess Amelia.

"I have already," he wrote, "given your majesty my word of honor never to wed any one but the Princess Amelia, your daughter. I here reiterate that promise, in case your majesty will consent to my sister's marriage."

Sophie Dorothee dispatched a courier with these documents, to go with the utmost speed to England. It was a long journey in those days, and the winds were often contrary. A fortnight passed. Three weeks were gone. Still there was no answer. On the 25th of January, 1730—"a day," writes Wilhelmina, "which I shall never forget"—Finckenstein, Borck, and Grumkow again called upon the queen, with the following message from the king:

"Whatever answer may now be returned from England I will have nothing to do with it. Whether negative, affirmative, or evasive, to me it shall be as nothing. You, madam, must now choose between the Duke of Weissenfels and the Marquis of Schwedt. If you do not choose, you and Wilhelmina may prepare for Oranienburg, where you shall suffer the just penalty of mutiny against the authority set over you by God and men."

The queen summoned firmness to reply: "You can inform the king that he will never make me

consent to render my daughter miserable; and that, so long as a breath of life remains in me, I will not permit her to take either the one or the other of these persons."

Then addressing Grumkow, she said, in tones deliberate and intense, "For you, sir, who are the author of my misfortunes, may my curse fall upon you and your house. You have this day killed me. But I doubt not that Heaven will hear my prayer and avenge my wrongs."

The queen was at this time in a delicate state of health, and anxiety and sorrow threw her upon a sick-bed. The king, who felt as much affection for "Phiekin" as such a coarse, brutal man could feel for any body, was alarmed; but he remained obdurate. He stormed into her room, where, in the fever of her troubles, she tossed upon her pillow, and obstreperously declared that Wilhelmina should be married immediately, and that she must take either Weissenfels or Schwedt. As both mother and daughter remained firm in their refusal to choose, he resolved to decide the question himself.

Accordingly, he made proposals to the Marquise of Schwedt that Wilhelmina should marry her son. The lady replied, in terms very creditable both to her head and her heart, "Such a union, your majesty, would be in accordance with the supreme wish of my life. But how can I accept such happiness against the will of the princess herself? This I can positively never do." Here she remained firm. The raging king returned to the bedside of his wife, as rough and determined as ever. He declared that the question was now settled that Wilhelmina was to marry the old Duke of Weissenfels.

The unhappy princess, distracted by these griefs,

had grown thin and pale. It was soon rumored throughout the court that the king had written to Weissenfels, and that the duke was on his way to seize his reluctant bride. In this emergence, the queen's friend, Baron Borck, suggested to her that, in order to get rid of the obnoxious Weissenfels, she should so far yield to the wishes of the king as to give up the English alliance, and propose a third party, who might be more acceptable to Wilhelmina. But who shall this substitute be?

About two hundred miles south of Berlin there was quite an important marquisate called Baireuth. The marquis had a good-looking young son, the heir-apparent, who had just returned from the grand tour of Europe. Upon the death of his father he would enter upon quite a rich inheritance. This young marquis, Frederick by name, Baron Borck proposed as a substitute for the Duke of Weissenfels. It was understood that Wilhelmina was such a prize that kings, even, would be eager to obtain her hand. There could therefore be no doubt but that the Marquis of Baireuth would feel signally honored by such nuptials. The worn and weary mother eagerly accepted this proposal. She suggested it to the king. Sullenly he gave it his assent, saying, "I will passively submit to it, but will take no active part whatever in the affair. Neither will I give Wilhelmina one single copper for dowry."

The queen, delighted in having obtained even this measure of acquiescence on the part of the king, now conferred with Wilhelmina. But, to her surprise and bitter disappointment, the young princess did not share in her mother's joy. She was not disposed to be thus bartered away, and presented sundry objections. The poor mother, harassed by these

interminable difficulties, now lost all patience. She broke out upon her equally unhappy daughter with cruel reproaches.

"Take, then," she exclaimed, "the Grand Turk or the Great Mogul for your husband. Follow your own caprice. Had I known you better I would not have brought so many sorrows upon myself. You may follow the king's bidding. It is henceforth your own affair. I will no longer trouble myself about your concerns. And spare me, if you please, the sorrows of your odious presence. I can not stand it."

Wilhelmina endeavored to reply. But the angry mother sternly exclaimed, "Silence!" and the tortured girl left the apartment, weeping bitterly. Even Fritz took his mother's part, and reproached Wilhelmina for not acceding to her plan. New troubles were thickening around him. He was in debt. The king had found it out. To his father's stern questioning, Fritz, in his terror, had uttered deliberate falsehood. He confessed a debt of about eight hundred dollars, which his father had detected, and solemnly declared that this was all. In fact, he owed an additional sum of seven thousand dollars. Should the king discover this debt, and thus detect Fritz in a lie, his rage would be tremendous. The king paid the eight hundred dollar debt of his son, and then issued a decree declaring that to lend money to any princes of the blood, even to the prince royal, was a high crime, to be punished, not only by forfeiture of the money, but by imprisonment. The king had begun to suspect that Fritz intended to escape. He could not escape without money. The king therefore took special precautions that his purse should be ever empty, and watched him with renewed vigilance.

While matters were in this extremity, the British

minister, Dubourgay, and Baron Knyphausen, a distinguished Prussian official, dispatched Rev. Dr. Villa, a scholarly man, who had been Wilhelmina's teacher of English, on a secret mission to the court of England, to communicate the true state of affairs, and to endeavor to secure some disentanglement of the perplexities. Dr. Villa was a warm friend of Wilhelmina, and, in sympathy with her sorrows, wept as he bade her adieu. The king was in such ill humor that his daughter dared not appear in his presence. If Fritz came within reach of his father's arm he was pretty sure to receive a blow from his rattan.

On the 18th of February, 1730, some affairs of state led the king to take a trip to Dresden to see the King of Poland. He decided to take Fritz with him, as he was afraid to leave him behind. Fritz resolved to avail himself of the opportunity which the journey might offer to attempt his escape. He was unwilling to do this without bidding adieu to his sister, who had been the partner of so many of his griefs. It was not easy to obtain a private interview. On the evening of the 17th of February, as Wilhelmina, aided by her governess, was undressing for bed, the door of the anteroom of her chamber was cautiously opened, and a young gentleman, very splendidly dressed in French costume, entered. Wilhelmina, terrified, uttered a shriek, and endeavored to hide herself behind a screen. Her governess, Madam Sonsfeld, ran into the anteroom to ascertain what such an intrusion meant. The remainder of the story we will give in the words of Wilhelmina:

"But she returned the next moment accompanying the cavalier, who was laughing heartily, and whom I recognized for my brother. His

dress so altered him he seemed a different person. He was in the best humor possible. ‘I am come to bid you farewell once more, my dear sister,’ said he; ‘and as I know the friendship you have for me, I will not keep you ignorant of my designs. I go, and do not come back. I can not endure the usage I suffer. My patience is driven to an end. It is a favorable opportunity for flinging off that odious yoke. I will glide out of Dresden and get across to England, where, I do not doubt, I shall work out your deliverance too, when I am got thither. So I beg you calm yourself. We shall soon meet again in places where joy shall succeed our tears, and where we shall have the happiness to see ourselves in peace, and free from these persecutions.’”



FREDERICK AND HIS SISTER.

Wilhelmina was appalled in view of the difficulty and danger of the enterprise. It was a long distance from Dresden to the coast. Head winds might detain the vessel. The suspicious king would not long remain ignorant that he was missing. He would be pursued with energy almost demoniac. Being captured, no one could tell how fearful would be his doom. The sagacious sister was right. Fritz could not but perceive the strength of her arguments, and gave her his word of honor that he would not attempt, on the present occasion, to effect his flight. Fritz accordingly went to Dresden with his father, and

returned.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE.

Objections to the British Alliance.—Obstinacy of the King.—Wilhelmina's Journal.—Policy of Frederick William and of George II.—Letter from Fritz.—The Camp of Mühlberg.—The Plan of Escape.—The Flight arrested.—Ungovernable Rage of the King.—Endeavors to kill his Son.—Arrest and Imprisonment of Fritz.—Terror of his Mother and Sister.—Wilhelmina imprisoned.

IN the mean time Dr. Villa reached England. In conference with the British cabinet, the members deemed it very desirable, at all events, to effect the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the Prussian princess. The main consideration was that it would tend to detach Prussia from Germany, and secure its alliance with England. It was also a good Protestant match, and would promote the interests of Protestantism. The king desired this marriage. But he was inflexible in his resolve that both marriages should take place or neither. The Prussian king was equally inflexible in his determination that, while he would consent to one marriage, he would not consent to both. Colonel Hotham, a man of good family and of some personal distinction, was accordingly sent, as envoy extraordinary, to Berlin, to make new efforts in favor of the double marriage.

The Queen of Prussia had recently given birth to another prince. She was on a bed of languor. The king was somewhat mollified, and was anxious to be relieved from these protracted difficulties. Colonel Hotham reached the palace of Charlottenburg on the 2d of April, 1730, and was graciously received by the king. The next day quite a splendid dinner was given in honor of the British envoy. All the notables who surrounded the table, the English and the Prussian, in accordance with the degrading custom of those times, drank deeply. Hotham, in his dispatch, without any apparent sense of shame, writes, “We all got immoderately drunk.”

The object of Colonel Hotham’s mission was well known. The cordial reception he had met from the king indicated that his message was not an unwelcome one to his Prussian majesty. In the indecent hilarity of the hour, it was assumed that the marriage contract between Wilhelmina and the Prince of Wales was settled. Brains addled with wine gave birth to stupid jokes upon the subject. “A German ducat was to be exchanged for an English half guinea.” At last, in the semi-delirium of their intoxication, one proposed as a toast, “To the health of Wilhelmina, Princess of Wales.” The sentiment was received with uproarious jollity. Though all the company were in the same state of silly inebriation, neither the king nor the British ministers, Hotham and Dubourgay, for a moment lost sight of their settled policy. The king remained firm in his silent resolve to consent only to the marriage of Wilhelmina and the Prince of Wales. Hotham and Dubourgay could not swerve from the positive instructions which they had received, to insist upon both marriages or neither. Thus, notwithstanding this bacchanal jollification, neither party was disposed to

swerve a hair's breadth from its fixed resolve, and the question was no nearer a settlement than before.

Still, most of the courtly carousers did not comprehend this. And when the toast to Wilhelmina as Princess of Wales was received with such acclaim, they supposed that all doubt was at an end. The news flew upon the wings of the wind to Berlin. It was late in the afternoon of Monday, April 30. Wilhelmina writes:

"I was sitting quiet in my apartment, busy with work, and some one reading to me, when the queen's ladies rushed in, with a torrent of domestics in their rear, who all bawled out, putting one knee to the ground, that they were come to salute the Princess of Wales. I fairly believed these poor people had lost their wits. They would not cease overwhelming me with noise and tumult; their joy was so great they knew not what they did. When the farce had lasted some time, they told me what had occurred at the dinner.

"I was so little moved by it that I answered, going on with my work, 'Is that all?' which greatly surprised them. A while after, my sisters and several ladies came to congratulate me. I was much loved, and I felt more delighted at the proofs each gave me of that than at what had occasioned their congratulations. In the evening I went to the queen's. You may readily conceive her joy. On my first entrance she called me her dear Princess of Wales, and addressed Madam De Sonsfeld as 'Miladi.' This latter took the liberty of hinting to her that it would be better to keep quiet; that the king, having yet given no notice of this business, might be provoked at such demonstration, and that the least trifle could still ruin all her hopes."

The king, upon his return from Charlottenburg to Berlin, made no allusion whatever in his family to the matter. In the court, however, it was generally considered that the question, so far as Wilhelmina was concerned, was settled. Hotham held daily interviews with the king, and received frequent communications from the Prince of Wales, who appears to have been very eager for the consummation of the marriage. Many of these letters were shown to Wilhelmina. She was much gratified with the fervor they manifested on the part of a lover who had never yet seen her. In one of these letters the prince says: "I conjure you, my dear Hotham, get these negotiations finished. I am madly in love (*amoureux comme un fou*), and my impatience is unequaled."

The question arises, Why was Frederick William so averse to the marriage of Fritz with the Princess Amelia? Probably the real reason was his rooted antipathy to his son, and his consequent unwillingness to do any thing which would promote his interests or increase his influence. His advisers strengthened him in this sentiment. The English were very unpopular at Berlin. Their assumption of superiority over all other peoples was a constant annoyance. The Prussian king said to his confidential friends,

"If the English Princess Amelia come here as the bride of my son, she will bring with her immense wealth. Accustomed to grandeur, she will look contemptuously upon our simplicity. With her money she can dazzle and bribe. I hate my son. He hates me. Aided by the gold of England, my son can get up a party antagonistic to me. No! I will never, never consent to his marrying the Princess Amelia. If he is

never married it is no matter. Fortunately I have other sons, and the succession will not be disturbed."[10]

The king had made many efforts to force his son to surrender his rights of primogeniture, and to sign an act renouncing his claim to the succession of the Prussian throne in favor of his next brother. His only answer was, "Declare my birth illegitimate, and I will give up the throne." But the king could never consent to fix such a stain upon the honor of his wife.

And why was George II. so averse to the single marriage of the Prince of Wales to Wilhelmina? It is supposed that the opposition arose simply from his own mulish obstinacy. He hated his brother-in-law, the Prussian king. He was a weak, ill-tempered man; and having once said "*Both marriages or none*," nothing could induce him to swerve from that position. In such a difficulty, with such men, there could be no possible compromise.

George II. was far from popular in England. There was but little in the man to win either affection or esteem. The Prince of Wales was also daily becoming more disliked. He was assuming haughty airs. He was very profligate, and his associates were mainly actresses and opera girls. The Prussian minister at London, who was opposed to any matrimonial connection whatever between the Prussian and the English court, watched the Prince of Wales very narrowly, and wrote home quite unfavorable reports respecting his character and conduct. He had searched out the fact that Fritz had written to his aunt, Queen Caroline, pledging to her his word "never to marry any body in the world except the Princess Amelia of England, happen what will." This fact was reported to the king, greatly

exciting his wrath.

To obviate the difficulty of the Crown Prince becoming the head of a party in Berlin antagonistic to the king, the plan was suggested of having him appointed, with his English princess, vice-regent of Hanover. But this plan failed. Hotham now became quite discouraged. He wrote home, on the 22d of April, that he had that day dined with the king; that the Crown Prince was present, but dreadfully dejected, and that great sympathy was excited in his behalf, as he was so engaging and so universally popular. He evidently perceived some indications of superiority in the Crown Prince, for he added, “If I am not much mistaken, this young prince will one day make a very considerable figure.”

After much diplomatic toil, the ultimatum obtained from Frederick William was the ever inflexible answer: “1. The marriage of the Prince of Wales to Wilhelmina I consent to. 2. The marriage of the Crown Prince Frederick with the Princess Amelia must be postponed. I hope it may eventually take place.”

Hotham, quite indignant, sent this dispatch, dated May 13, to London, including with it a very earnest letter from the Crown Prince to his uncle, in which Fritz wrote:

“The Crown Prince begs his Britannic majesty not to reject the king’s proposals, whatever they may be, for his sister Wilhelmina’s sake. For, though the Crown Prince is determined to lose his life sooner than marry any body but the Princess Amelia, yet, if this negotiation were broken off, his father would go to extremities to force him and his sister into other engagements.”

The return mail brought back, under date of May 22, the stereotype British answer: “Both marriages or none.” Just before the reception of this reply, as Colonel Hotham was upon the eve of leaving Berlin, the Crown Prince addressed to him, from Potsdam, the following interesting letter:

> “MONSIEUR,—I believe that it is of the last importance that I should write to you, and I am very sad to have things to say which I ought to conceal from all the earth. But one must take that bad leap, and, reckoning you among my friends, I the more easily resolve to open myself to you.
>
> “The case is this: I am treated in an unheard of manner by the king; and I know that there are terrible things in preparation against me touching certain letters which I wrote last winter, of which I believe you are informed. In a word, to speak frankly to you, the real, secret reason why the king will not consent to this marriage is, that he wishes to keep me on a low footing constantly, and to have the power of driving me mad whenever the whim takes him, throughout his life. Thus he will never give his consent.
>
> “For my own part, therefore, I believe it would be better to conclude my sister’s marriage in the first place, and not even to ask from the king any assurance in regard to mine, the rather as his word has nothing to do with it. It is enough that I here reiterate the promises which I have already made to the king, my uncle, never to take another wife than his second daughter, the Princess Amelia. I am a person of my word, and shall be able to bring about what I set forth, provided that there is trust put in me. I promise it to you. And now you may give your court notice of it, and I shall manage to keep my promise. I

remain yours always."

In June, 1730, Augustus, King of Poland, had one of the most magnificent military reviews of which history gives any record. The camp of Mühlberg, as it was called, was established upon an undulating field, twelve miles square, on the right bank of the Elbe, a few leagues below Dresden. It is hardly too much to say that all the beauty and chivalry of Europe were gathered upon that field. Fabulous amounts of money and of labor were expended to invest the scene with the utmost sublimity of splendor. A military review had great charms for Frederick William. He attended as one of the most distinguished of the invited guests. The Crown Prince accompanied the king, as his father dared not leave him behind. But Fritz was exposed to every mortification and every species of ignominy which the ingenuity of this monster parent could heap upon him.

In the presence of monarchs, of lords and ladies, of the highest dignitaries of Europe, the young heir apparent to the throne of Prussia, beautiful in person, high-spirited, and of superior genius, was treated by his father with studied contumely and insult. Every thing was done to expose him to contempt. He even openly flogged the prince with his rattan. It would seem that the father availed himself of this opportunity so to torture the sensibilities of his son as to drive him to suicide. Professor Ranke writes:

"In that pleasure-camp of Mühlberg, where the eyes of many strangers were directed to him, the Crown Prince was treated like a disobedient boy, and at one time even with blows, to make him feel that he was such. The enraged king, who never weighed

the consequences of his words, added mockery to his manual outrage. 'Had I been so treated,' he said, 'by my father, I would have blown my brains out. But this fellow has no honor. He takes all that comes.'"

It would seem that if ever there were an excuse for suicide it was to be found here. But what folly it would have been! Dark as these days were, they led the prince to a crown, and to achievements of whose recital the world will never grow weary. Fritz, goaded to madness, again adopted the desperate resolve to attempt an escape. A young Englishman, Captain Guy Dickens, secretary of the British embassador, Dubourgay, had become quite the intimate friend of the Crown Prince. They conferred together upon plans of escape. But the precautions adopted by the father were such that no plan which they could devise seemed feasible at that time. Fritz confided his thoughts to his friend, Lieutenant Keith, at Berlin.

It is probable that the suspicions of the king were excited, for suddenly he sent Lieutenant Keith to a garrison at Wesel, at a great distance from Berlin, in a small Prussian province far down the Rhine. The three had, however, concocted the following plan, to be subsequently executed. Immediately after the return from Mühlberg the king was to undertake a long journey to the Rhine. The Crown Prince, as usual, was to be dragged along with him. In this journey they would pass through Stuttgart, within a few miles of Strasbourg, which was on the French side of the river. From Stuttgart the prince was to escape in disguise, on fleetest horses, to Strasbourg, and thence proceed to London. Colonel Hotham, who had accompanied the Prussian king to the camp of Mühlberg, was apprised of all this by his secretary.

He immediately dispatched the secretary, on the 16th of June, to convey the confidential intelligence to London.

At the close of these festivities at Mühlberg Frederick William and his suite took boat down the River Elbe to his hunting palace at Lichtenberg. Here they killed, in a grand hunting bout, a thousand animals, boars and deer. The Crown Prince, dishonored by insults which he could not revenge, and stung to the quick by innumerable humiliations, followed, dejected, like a guarded captive, in the train of his father. The unhappy prince had but just returned to his garrison at Potsdam, where spies ever kept their eyes vigilantly upon him, when his friend, Captain Guy Dickens, brought him the answer, returned from London, to the confidential communication of the Crown Prince to his uncle, the British king. The substance of the document was as follows:

“Mr. Guy Dickens may give to the prince the assurance of the deep compassion which the king feels in view of the sad condition in which the prince finds himself, and of the sincere desire of his majesty to aid, by all the means in his power, to extricate him. While waiting the result of some negotiations now on foot, his majesty is of the opinion that it would be best for the prince to defer for a time his present design; that the present critical state of affairs in Europe do not present a favorable opportunity for the execution of the contemplated plan; that the idea of retiring to France demands very careful deliberation; and that there is not time now to ascertain how such a step would be regarded by the French court, which his majesty would think to be essential before he advise a prince so dear to

him to withdraw to that country."

Soon after this, Colonel Hotham, having received a gross insult from the king, demanded his passports. The English embassador had presented the king with a document from his court. Frederick William angrily threw the paper upon the floor, exclaiming, "I have had enough of those things!" and, turning upon his heel, left the room. Colonel Hotham, a high-bred English gentleman, could not brook such an indignity, not only to himself, but to his sovereign. The passionate king had scarcely left the apartment before he perceived the impolicy of his conduct. He tried to make amends. But Colonel Hotham, justly regarding it as an insult to his court, persisted in demanding his passports, and returned to London. The Crown Prince in vain begged Colonel Hotham to remain. Very properly he replied that the incivility was addressed to his king, and that it was for him only to judge what satisfaction was due for the indignity offered.

All negotiation in reference to the marriages was now apparently at an end. Lieutenant Katte remained at Potsdam. In the absence of Lieutenant Keith he became more than ever the friend and confidant of the Crown Prince. Wilhelmina, aware of the dissipated character of Katte, mourned over this intimacy. The king was very much annoyed by the blunder of which he himself had been guilty in insulting the court of England in the person of its embassador. He declared, in his vexation, that he would never again treat in person with a foreign minister; that his hot temper rendered it unsafe for him to do so.

He informed Wilhelmina that the question of her marriage with the Prince of Wales was now settled

forever, and that, as she declined taking the Duke of Weissenfels for a husband, she might prepare to retire to the abbey of Hereford, a kind of Protestant nunnery for ladies of quality, who, for any reason, wished to be buried from the world. He mercilessly resolved to make her the abbess of this institution. This living burial was almost the last situation to suit the taste of Wilhelmina. The king was in the worst possible humor. “He bullies and outrages his poor Crown Prince almost worse than ever. There have been rattan showers hideous to think of, descending this very week (July, 1730) on the fine head and far into the high heart of a royal young man, who can not in the name of manhood endure, and must not in the name of sonhood resist, and vainly calls to all the gods to teach him what he shall do in this intolerable, inextricable state of affairs.”[11]

As soon as Hotham had left Berlin the Crown Prince held a secret midnight interview with Captain Dickens and Lieutenant Katte, to devise some new plan of escape during the journey to the Rhine, which was to commence in a few days. He made arrangements to leave all his private papers with Katte, provided himself with a large gray overcoat as a partial disguise, and, with much difficulty, obtained about a thousand ducats to defray his expenses. Lieutenant Keith was at Wesel. He was written to with the utmost secrecy, as he might be able to render efficient aid, could the Crown Prince reach him.

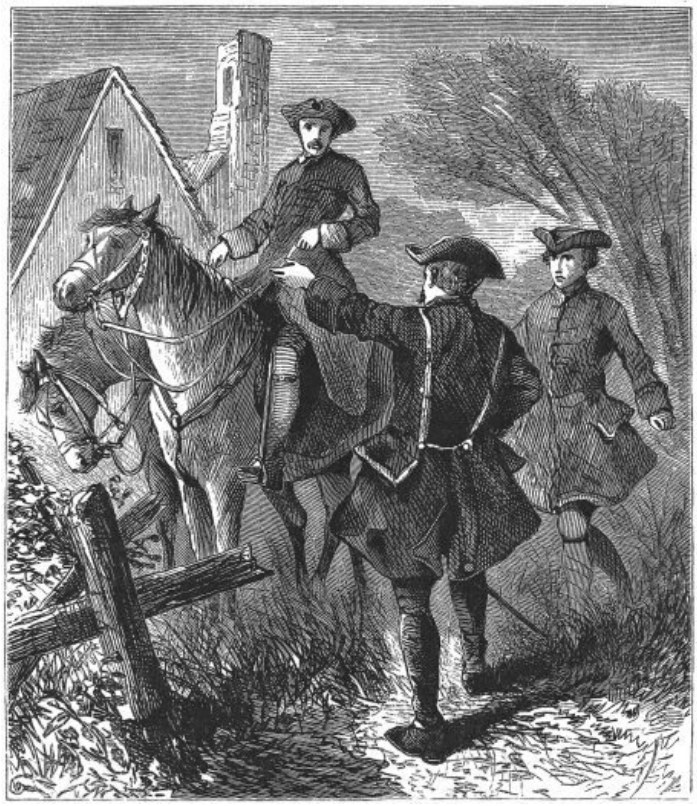
On Saturday, the 15th of July, 1730, the king, with a small train, which really guarded Fritz, set out at an early hour from Potsdam on this memorable journey. Three reliable officers of the king occupied the same carriage with Fritz, with orders to keep a

strict watch over him, and never to leave him alone. Thus, throughout the journey, one of his guards sat by his side, and the other two on the seat facing him. The king was not a luxurious traveler. He seemed to covet hardship and fatigue. Post-horses were provided all along the route. The meteoric train rushed along, scarcely stopping for food or sleep, but occasionally delayed by business of inspection, until it reached Anspach, where the king's beautiful daughter, then but sixteen years of age, resided with her uncongenial husband. Here the Crown Prince had some hope of escape. He endeavored to persuade his brother-in-law, the young Marquis of Anspach, to lend him a pair of saddle-horses, and to say nothing about it. But the characterless young man, suspecting his brother, and dreading the wrath of his terrible father-in-law, refused, with many protestations of good-will.

When near Augsburg, Fritz wrote a letter to Lieutenant Katte, stating that he should embrace the first opportunity to escape to the Hague; that there he should assume the name of the Count of Alberville. He wished Katte to join him there, and to bring with him the overcoat and the one thousand ducats which he had left in his hands. On Thursday, August 3d, the royal party reached the little hamlet of Steinfurth, not far from the Rhine. Here, as was not unfrequently the case, they slept in barns, carefully swept and prepared for them. The usual hour of starting was three o'clock in the morning.

Just after midnight, the prince, seeing his associates soundly asleep, cautiously rose, dressed, and crept out into the open air. He had secretly made arrangements with his valet, a brother of Lieutenant Keith, to meet him with some horses on the village

green. He reached the green. His valet soon appeared with the horses. Just at that moment, one of his guard, Rochow, who had been aroused by a servant whom he had left secretly on the watch, came forward through the gloom of the night, and, sternly addressing Keith, inquired, “Sirrah, what are you doing with those horses?” With much self-possession Keith replied, “I am getting the horses ready for the hour of starting.” “His majesty,” Rochow replied, “does not start till five o’clock. Take the horses directly back to the stable.”



THE FLIGHT ARRESTED.

Keith, trembling in every limb, returned to the stable. Though Rochow pretended not to suspect any attempt at escape, it was manifestly pretense only. The prince had provided himself with a red overcoat as a disguise to his uniform, the gray one having been left with Katte at Potsdam. As Fritz was returning to the barn with Rochow, wearing this suspicious garment, they met the minister Seckendorf, whom Fritz and his mother thoroughly hated as one of the counselors of the king. Very coolly and cuttingly Rochow inquired of Seckendorf, "How do you like his royal highness in the red overcoat?" It was a desperate game these men were playing; for, should the king suddenly die, Fritz would surely inherit the crown, and they would be entirely at his mercy. All hope of escape seemed now to vanish, and the prince was quite in despair.

The king was doubtless informed of all that had occurred. They reached Manheim the next night. Keith was so terrified, fearing that his life would be the penalty, that he there threw himself upon his knees before the king, confessing all, and imploring pardon. The king, in tones of intense agitation, informed the vigilance trio that death would be their inevitable doom if they allowed the prince to escape. Thus far the prince had been nominally free. Those who occupied the carriage with him—Rochow, Waldau, and Buddenbrock—had assumed to be merely his traveling companions. Their office of guardship had been scrupulously concealed. But henceforth he was regarded and treated as a culprit in the custody of his jailers.

The king, smothering his wrath, did not

immediately seek an interview with his son. But the next day, encountering him, he said, sarcastically, “Ah! you are still here, then; I thought that by this time you would have been in Paris.” The prince, somewhat emboldened by despair, ventured to reply, “I certainly could have been there had I wished it.”

At Frankfort-on-the-Main the party were to take boats to descend the river. The prince was informed that the king had given express orders that he should not be permitted to enter the town, but that he should be conducted immediately to one of the royal yachts. Here the king received an intercepted letter from the Crown Prince to Lieutenant Katte. Boiling with indignation, he stalked on board the yacht, and assailed his captive son in the coarsest and most violent language of abuse. In the frenzy of his passion he seized Fritz by the collar, shook him, hustled him about, tore out handfuls of hair, and thrust his cane into his face, causing the blood to gush from his nose. “Never before,” exclaimed the unhappy prince, pathetically, “did a Brandenburg face suffer the like of this.”

The king then, having ordered his guard to watch him with the utmost vigilance, assuring them that their heads should answer for it if they allowed him to escape, sent his son to another boat. He was prevailed upon to do so, as no one could tell to what length the king’s ungovernable passions might lead him.

The royal yachts glided down the Main to the Rhine, and thence down the Rhine to Wesel. Probably a heavier heart than that of the prince never floated upon that world-renowned stream. Lost in painful musings, he had no eye to gaze upon the picturesque scenes of mountain, forest, castle, and

ruins through which they were gliding. At Bonn he had an interview with Seckendorf, whose influence was great with his father, and whom he hoped to interest in his favor. To him he said,

"I intended to have escaped at Steinfurth. I can not endure the treatment which I receive from my father—his abuse and blows. I should have escaped long ago had it not been for the condition in which I should have thus left my mother and sister. I am so miserable that I care but little for my own life. My great anxiety is for those officers who have been my friends, and who are implicated in my attempts. If the king will promise to pardon them, I will make a full confession of every thing. If you can help me in these difficulties, I shall be forever grateful to you."

It is probable that even Seckendorf was somewhat moved by this pathetic appeal. Fritz succeeded in sending a letter to the post-office, addressed to Lieutenant Keith at Wesel, containing simply the words "*Sauvez vous; tout est decouvert*" (Save yourself; all is found out). Keith received the letter but an hour or so before a colonel of gens d'armes arrived to arrest him. Seckendorf had an interview with the king, and seems to have endeavored to mitigate his wrath. He assured the infuriate monarch of his son's repentance, and of his readiness to make a full confession if his father would spare those who had been led by their sympathies to befriend him. The unrelenting father received this message very sullenly, saying that he had no faith that his son would make an honest confession, but that he would see what he had to say for himself.

At Geldern, when within a few miles of Wesel, the king's wrath flamed up anew as he learned that

Lieutenant Keith had escaped. The imperiled young officer, warned of his danger, had saddled his horse as if for an evening ride in the country. He passed out at one of the gates of the city, and, riding gently till darkness came, he put spurs to his horse and escaped to the Hague. Here, through the friendly offices of Lord Chesterfield, the British embassador, he embarked for England. The authorities there received him kindly, and he entered the British army. For ten years he was heard of no more. The king dispatched officers in pursuit of the fugitive, and redoubled the vigilance with which Fritz was guarded.

Upon the king's arrival at Wesel he ordered his culprit son to be brought on shore and to be arraigned before him. It was Saturday evening, August 12, 1730. A terrible scene ensued. The despairing Crown Prince, tortured by injustice, was not disposed to humble himself before his father. Receiving no assurance that his friends would be pardoned, he evaded all attempts to extort from him confessions which would implicate them. General Mosel alone was present at this examination.

"Why," asked the king, furiously, "did you attempt to desert?"

"I wished to escape," the prince boldly replied, "because you did not treat me like a son, but like an abject slave."

"You are a cowardly deserter," the father exclaimed, "devoid of all feelings of honor."

"I have as much honor as you have," the son replied; "and I have only done that which I have heard you say a hundred times you would have done yourself had you been treated as I have been."

The wrath of the king was now ungovernable. He drew his sword, threatening to thrust it through the heart of his son, and seemed upon the point of doing so, when General Mosel threw himself before the king, exclaiming, “Sire, you may kill me, but spare your son.”[12]

The prince was withdrawn, and placed in a room where two sentries watched over him with fixed bayonets. The king malignantly assumed that the prince, being a colonel in the army and attempting to escape, was a *deserter*, whose merited doom was death. General Mosel urged the king not to see his son again, as his presence was sure to inflame his anger to so alarming a pitch. The father did not again see him for a year and three days.

A stern military commission was, however, appointed to interrogate the prince from questions drawn up by the king. The examination took place the next day. The prince confessed that it was his intention to cross the Rhine at the nearest point, and to repair to Strasbourg, in France. There he intended to enlist incognito as a volunteer in the French army. He refused to tell how he obtained his money, or to make any revelations which would implicate his friends Katte and Keith.



FREDERICK WILLIAM ENRAGED.

As this report was made to the king, he exclaimed, angrily, “Let him lie in ward, then, and await the doom which the laws adjudge to him. He is my colonel. He has attempted to desert. He has endeavored to induce others to desert with him. The law speaks plainly enough as to the penalty for such crimes.”

In the mean time, the queen and Wilhelmina, at Berlin, unconscious of the dreadful tidings they were soon to receive, were taking advantage of the

absence of the king in seeking a few hours of social enjoyment. They gave a ball at the pretty little palace of Monbijou, on the banks of the Spree, a short distance out from Berlin. In the midst of the entertainment the queen received, by a courier, the following dispatch from Frederick William:

"I have arrested the rascal Fritz. I shall treat him as his crime and his cowardice merit. He has dishonored me and all my family. So great a wretch is no longer worthy to live."

Wilhelmina, in the following graphic narrative, describes the scene: "Mamma had given a ball in honor of papa's birthday. We recommenced the ball after supper. For six years I had not danced before. It was new fruit, and I took my fill of it, without heeding much what was passing. Madam Bulow, who, with others, had worn long faces all night, pleading illness when one noticed it, said to me several times,

"'It is late. I wish you had done.'

"'Oh dear me!' I exclaimed; 'do let me have enough of dancing this one new time. It may be long before it comes again.'

"She returned to me an hour after, and said, with a vexed air, 'Will you end, then? You are so engaged you have eyes for nothing.'

"I replied, 'You are in such a humor I know not what to make of it.'

"'Look at the queen, then,' she added, 'and you will cease to reproach me.'

"A glance which I gave that way filled me with terror. There sat the queen, in a corner of the room, paler than death, in low conference with Madam

Sonsfeld and Countess Finckenstein. As my brother was most in my anxieties, I asked if it concerned him. Madam Bulow shrugged her shoulders, answering, 'I do not know at all.'"

They repaired to the carriage, which was immediately ordered. Not a word was spoken until they reached the palace. Wilhelmina did not venture to ask any questions. Fearing that her brother was dead, she was in terrible trepidation. Having arrived at the palace, Madam Sonsfeld informed her of the contents of the dispatch.



DESTROYING THE LETTERS.

The next morning they learned that Lieutenant Katte had been arrested. All the private papers of Fritz were left, under Katte's charge, in a small writing-desk. These letters would implicate both the mother and the daughter. They were terror-stricken. Count Finckenstein, who was in high authority, was their friend. Through him, by the aid of Madam Finckenstein, they obtained the desk. It was locked and sealed. Despair stimulated their ingenuity. They succeeded in getting the letters. To destroy them and leave nothing in their place would only rouse to greater fury the suspicion and rage of the king. The letters were taken out and burned. The queen and Wilhelmina immediately set to work writing new ones, of a very different character, with which to replace them. For three days they thus labored almost incessantly, writing between six and seven hundred letters. They were so careful to avoid any thing which might lead to detection that paper was employed for each letter bearing the date of the year in which the letter was supposed to be written. "Fancy the mood," writes Carlyle, "of these two royal women, and the black whirlwind they were in. Wilhelmina's dispatch was incredible. Pen went at the gallop night and day. New letters of old date and of no meaning are got into the desk again, the desk closed without mark of injury, and shoved aside while it is yet time."

Wesel was the fortress of a small province belonging to Prussia, on the Rhine, many leagues from Berlin. The intervening territory belonged to Hanover and Hesse Cassel. The king ordered his captive son to be taken, under a strong guard, by circuitous roads, so as not to attract attention, to the castle of Mittenwalde, near Berlin. The king then started for home, probably as wretched as he was

making every body about him. After a very rapid journey, he reached Berlin late in the afternoon of Sunday, the 27th of August, 1730. It was the evening after the fabrication of the letters had been completed. We give, from the graphic pen of Wilhelmina, the account of the king's first interview with his family:

"The queen was alone, in his majesty's apartment, waiting for him as he approached. As soon as he saw her at the end of the suite of rooms, and long before he arrived in the one where she was, he cried out, 'Your unworthy son has at last ended himself. You have done with him.'

"'What!' cried the queen, 'have you had the barbarity to kill him?'

"'Yes, I tell you,' the king replied; 'but I must have his writing-case.' For he had already informed himself that it was in the queen's possession.

"The queen went to her own apartment to fetch it. I ran in to her there for a moment. She was out of her senses, wringing her hands, crying incessantly, and exclaiming, 'O God, my son, my son!' Breath failed me. I fell fainting into the arms of Madam Sonsfeld. The queen took the writing-desk to the king. He immediately broke it open and tore out the letters, with which he went away. The queen came back to us. We were comforted by the assurance, from some of the attendants, that my brother at least was not dead.

"Pretty soon the king came back, and we, his children, ran to pay our respects to him, by kissing his hands. But he no sooner noticed me than rage and fury took possession of him. He became black in the face, his eyes sparkling fire, his mouth foaming.

‘Infamous wretch!’ said he, ‘dare you show yourself before me? Go and keep your scoundrel brother company.’

“So saying, he seized me with one hand, striking me several blows in the face with the other fist. One of the blows struck me on the temple, so that I fell back, and should have split my head against a corner of the wainscot had not Madam Sonsfeld caught me by the head-dress and broken the fall. I lay on the floor without consciousness. The king, in his frenzy, proceeded to kick me out of a window which opened to the floor. The queen, my sisters, and the rest, ran between, preventing him. They all ranged themselves around me, which gave Mesdames De Kamecke and Sonsfeld time to pick me up. They put me in a chair in an embrasure of a window. Madam Sonsfeld supported my head, which was wounded and swollen with the blows I had received. They threw water upon my face to bring me to life, which care I lamentably reproached them with, death being a thousand times better in the pass things had come to. The queen was shrieking. Her firmness had entirely abandoned her. She ran wildly about the room, wringing her hands in despair. My brothers and sisters, of whom the youngest was not more than four years old, were on their knees begging for me. The king’s face was so disfigured with rage that it was frightful to look upon.

“The king now admitted that my brother was still alive, but vowed horribly that he would put him to death, and lay me fast within four walls for the rest of my life. He accused me of being the prince’s accomplice, whose crime was high treason. ‘I hope now,’ he said, ‘to have evidence enough to convict the rascal Fritz and the wretch Wilhelmina, and to

cut their heads off. As for Fritz, he will always, if he lives, be a worthless fellow. I have three other sons, who will all turn out better than he has done.'

"'Oh, spare my brother,' I cried, 'and I will marry the Duke of Weissenfels.' But in the great noise he did not hear me. And while I strove to repeat it louder, Madam Sonsfeld clapped her handkerchief on my mouth. Pushing aside to get rid of the handkerchief, I saw Katte crossing the square. Four soldiers were conducting him to the king. My brother's trunks and his were following in the rear. Pale and downcast, he took off his hat to salute me. He fell at the king's feet imploring pardon."



WILHELMINA IMPRISONED.

The king kicked him, and struck him several heavy blows with his cane. He was hit repeatedly in the face, and blood gushed from the wounds. With his own hands the king tore from Katte's breast the cross of the Order of Saint John. After this disgraceful scene the interrogatory commenced. Katte confessed all the circumstances of the prince's intended escape, but denied that there had been any

design against the king or the state. His own and the prince's letters were examined, but nothing was found in them to criminate either. Katte was then remanded to prison. Wilhelmina, after receiving the grossest possible insults from her father, who accused her, in coarsest terms, of being the paramour of Lieutenant Katte, was ordered to her room. Two sentries were placed at her door, and directions were given that she should be fed only on prison fare.

"Tell your unworthy daughter," said the king to the queen, "that her room is to be her prison. I shall give orders to have the guard there doubled. I shall have her examined in the most rigorous manner, and will afterward have her removed to some fit place, where she may repent of her crimes."

The whole city of Berlin was agitated by the rumor of these events. The violent scene in the palace had taken place in an apartment on the ground floor. The loud and angry tones of the king, the shrieks of the queen, the cries of the children, the general clamor, had so attracted the attention of the passers-by that a large crowd had assembled before the windows. It was necessary to call out the guard to disperse them. Difficult as it was to exaggerate outrages so infamous, still they were exaggerated. The report went to all foreign courts that the king, in his ungovernable rage, had knocked down the Princess Wilhelmina and trampled her to death beneath his feet.

CHAPTER V.

IMPRISONMENT OF FRITZ AND WILHELMINA.

Spirited Conduct of Fritz.—Fortress of Cüstrin.—Prison Fare.—Wilhelmina's Captivity.—Sad Fate of Doris Ritter.—Motives of the King.—Doom of Lieutenant Katte.—Pathetic Supplications.—The Execution.—Peril of Fritz.—Theology of the King.—Letter from Fritz.—Sufferings of Wilhelmina.—Brutality of the King.—Wilhelmina brought to Terms.

THE captive Crown Prince was conveyed from Wesel to the castle of Mittenwalde, where he was imprisoned in a room without furniture or bed. An old chest which chanced to be there was his only seat. One of the king's favorite ministers, Grumkow, with other officials, was sent to interrogate him. The prince, probably aware that nothing which he could now do could make matters worse than they actually were, displayed much spirit in the interview. Frankly avowing his intention to escape, he refused to make any disclosures which should implicate his friends. Grumkow insolently informed him that the use of the rack was not yet abolished in his majesty's dominions, and that, if he were not more pliant, the energies of that instrument might be called into requisition. Frederick admitted afterward that his

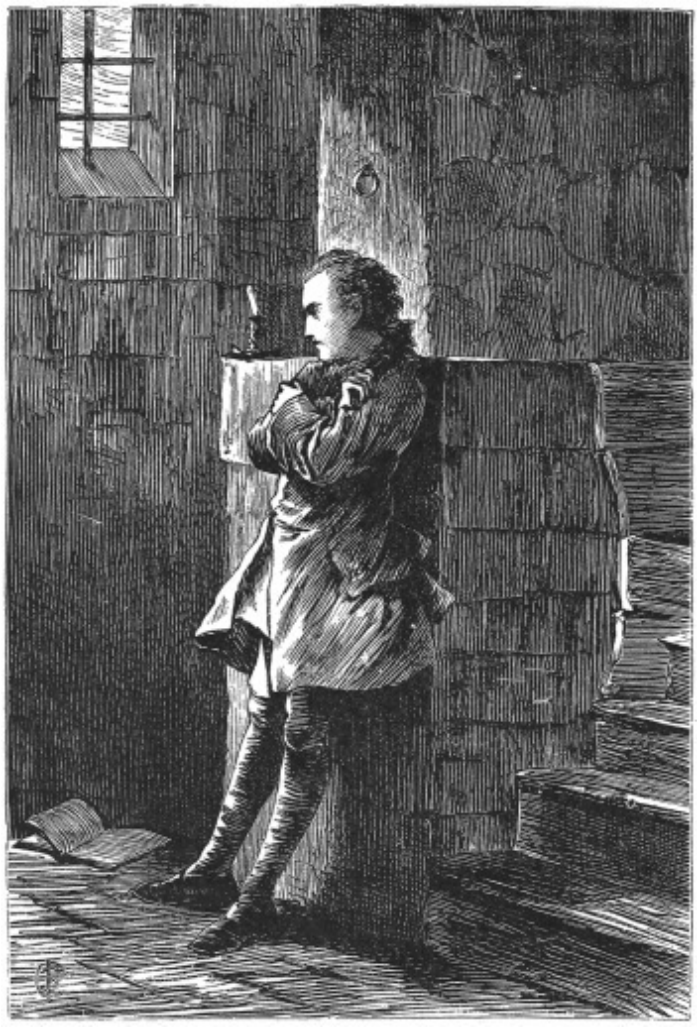
blood ran cold at that suggestion. Still he had the nerve to reply, according to the testimony of Wilhelmina,

"A hangman such as you naturally takes pleasure in talking of his tools and of his trade, but on me they will produce no effect. I have owned every thing, and almost regret to have done so. I ought not to degrade myself by answering the questions of a scoundrel such as you are."

Grumkow gathered up his papers, and, with his associate officials, departed, probably meditating upon his own prospects should the Crown Prince ever become King of Prussia. The next day, September 5, the captive was taken from the castle of Mittenwalde, and sent to the fortress of Cüstrin, a small and quiet town about seventy miles from Berlin. The strong, dungeon-like room in which he was incarcerated consisted of bare walls, without any furniture, the light being admitted by a single aperture so high that the prince could not look out at it. He was divested of his uniform, of his sword, of every mark of dignity.

Coarse brown clothes of plainest cut were furnished him. His flute was taken from him, and he was deprived of all books but the Bible and a few devotional treatises. He was allowed a daily sum, amounting to twelve cents of our money, for his food —eight cents for his dinner and four for his supper. His food was purchased at a cook-shop near by, and cut for him. He was not permitted the use of a knife. The door was opened three times a day for ventilation—morning, noon, and night—but not for more than four minutes each time. A single tallow-candle was allowed him; but that was to be extinguished at seven o'clock in the evening.

Thus deprived of all the ordinary comforts of life, the prince, in the nineteenth year of his age, was consigned to an imprisonment of absolute solitude. For weeks and months he was left to his own agitating thoughts, with the apparent blighting of every earthly hope, awaiting whatever doom his merciless father might award to him. His jailers, not unmindful of the embarrassing fact that their captive might yet become King of Prussia, with their fate in his hands, gradually treated him with all the secret kindness which they dared to exhibit.[13]



FREDERICK IN PRISON.

Though Wilhelmina was also a close prisoner in her apartment in the Berlin palace, and was fed upon the coarsest fare, she still had a comfortable room, her musical instruments, and the companionship of her governess, Madam Sonsfeld. It was rather a relief

to the unhappy princess to be shut out from the presence of her father and from the sound of his voice. She occasionally obtained a smuggled letter from her mother, and even got one, in pencil, from her brother, full of expressions of tenderness.

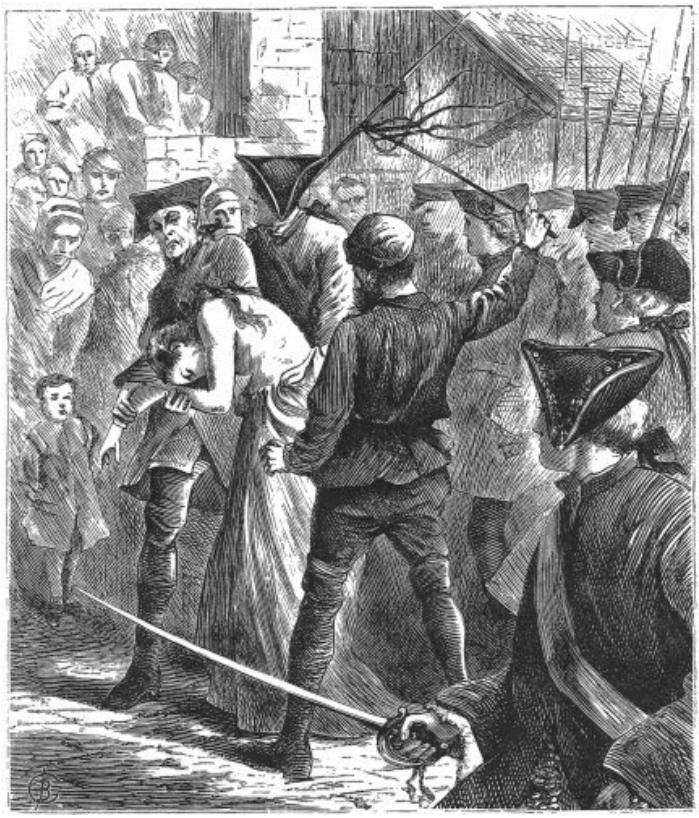
All the friends of Fritz were treated by the infuriate father with the most cruel severity. No mercy was shown to any one who had ever given the slightest indication of sympathy with the Crown Prince. A bookseller, who had furnished Fritz with French books, was cruelly exiled to the remote shores of the Baltic, on the extreme northern frontiers of Prussia. A French gentleman, Count Montholieu, who had loaned the Crown Prince money, would probably have perished upon the scaffold had he not escaped by flight. His effigy was nailed to the gallows.

There was a young lady in Potsdam by the name of Doris Ritter. She was the daughter of highly respectable parents, and was of unblemished character. As Fritz was extremely fond of music, and she played sweetly on the harpsichord, he loaned her pieces of music, and occasionally, under the eye of her parents, accompanied her with the flute. The life of a colonel in garrison at Potsdam was so dull, that this innocent amusement was often quite a help in beguiling the weary hours.

The young lady was not beautiful, and there was no evidence of the slightest improprieties, or of any approach even to flirtation. But the infuriate king, who, without the shadow of reason, could accuse his own daughter of infamy, caused this young lady, under the pretext that she had been the guilty intimate of his son, to be taken from her parents, to be delivered to the executioners, and to be publicly

conveyed in a cart and whipped on the bare back through the principal streets of the town. She was then imprisoned, and doomed to beat hemp as a culprit for three years.

One's faith in a superintending Providence is almost staggered by such outrages. It would seem that there could scarcely be any compensation even in the future world for so foul a wrong inflicted upon this guileless and innocent girl. There can be no possible solution of the mystery but in the decree, "After death cometh the judgment."



DORIS RITTER'S PUNISHMENT.

"It is impossible," writes Lord Dover, "not to perceive that the real reason of his conduct was his enmity to his son, and that the crime of the poor girl was the having assisted in making the son's existence more supportable. The intention of Frederick William apparently being that the infliction of so infamous a punishment in so public a manner should prevent the possibility of Frederick's ever seeing her again."[14]

A court-martial was convened to pronounce sentence upon the Crown Prince and his confederates. The court was appointed by the king, and consisted of three major generals, three colonels, three lieutenant colonels, three majors, three captains, and three belonging to the civil courts, called auditors. The court, thus composed of eighteen members, met on the 20th of October, 1730, in the little town of Copenick, a few miles from Berlin. Grumkow, well aware that these proceedings would attract the attention of every court in Europe, had persuaded the king to submit to the formality of a court-martial.

It was well understood that a verdict was to be returned in accordance with the wishes of the king, and also that the king desired that no mercy should be shown to his son.[15] After a session of six days the verdict of the court was rendered. The crime of the Crown Prince, in endeavoring to escape from the brutality of his father, was declared to be *desertion*, and the penalty was death. Lieutenant Keith was also declared to be a deserter, and doomed to die. But as he had escaped, and could not be recaptured, he was sentenced to be hanged in effigy, which effigy was then to be cut in four quarters and nailed to the

gallows at Wesel. Lieutenant Katte, who certainly had not deserted, and whose only crime was that he had been a confidant of the Crown Prince in his plan to escape, was condemned to imprisonment in a fortress for two years, some say for life.

The king approved of the first two sentences of the court. The mildness of the last roused his indignation. "Katte," he exclaimed, "is guilty of high treason. He shall die by the sword of the headsman. It is better that he should die than that justice depart out of the world." His doom was thus fixed as irreversible as fate.

Fortunately for the young man's mother, she was in her grave. His father was at that time commandant of Königsberg, in high favor with the king. His illustrious grandfather on his mother's side, Field-marshal Wartensleben, was still living. For half a century he had worthily occupied the most eminent posts of honor. The tears, the agonizing entreaties of these friends were not of the slightest avail. The king's heart was as impervious to appeals for mercy as are the cliffs of Sinai.

There are several letters still remaining which Lieutenant Katte wrote to his friends during those hours of anguish in which he was awaiting his death. No one can read them without compassionate emotion, and without execrating the memory of that implacable tyrant who so unjustly demanded his execution. The young man wrote to the king a petition containing the following pathetic plea:

> "SIRE,—It is not to excuse myself that I address this letter to your majesty; but, moved by sincere repentance and heartfelt sorrow, I implore your clemency, and beseech you, sire, to have

some consideration for my youth, which renders me capable of imprudence without any bad design.

"God does not always follow the impulse of his justice toward sinners, but often, by his mercy, reclaims those who have gone astray. And will not your majesty, sire, who are a resemblance of the divinity, pardon a criminal who is guilty of disobedience to his sovereign? The hope of pardon supports me, and I flatter myself that your majesty will not cut me off in the flower of my age, but will give me time to prove the effect your majesty's clemency will have on me.

"Sire, I own that I am guilty. Will not your majesty grant me a pardon, which God never refuses to the greatest sinner who sincerely confesses his sins? I shall be always ready to shed even the last drop of my blood to show your majesty what grateful sentiments your clemency can raise in me."

It was all in vain. On Sunday evening, September 5th, as the condemned young man was sitting alone in his prison cell, sadly awaiting his doom, yet clinging to hopes of mercy, an officer entered with the startling intelligence that the carriage was at the door to convey him to the fortress of Cüstrin, at a few leagues distance, where he was to be executed. For a moment he was greatly agitated. He soon, however, regained his equanimity. It must indeed have been a fearful communication to one in the vigor of health, in the prime of youth, and surrounded by every thing which could render life desirable. Two brother-officers and the chaplain accompanied him upon this dismal midnight ride. Silence, pious conversation, prayers, and occasional devotional hymns occupied the hours. The dawn of a

cold winter's morning was just appearing as they reached the fortress.

His companions had no heart to witness the bloody execution of their friend and brother-officer. The chaplain, Müller, who had accompanied the condemned to Cüstrin, and also Besserer, the chaplain of the garrison there, were either obliged by their official position, or were constrained by Christian sympathy, to ride by his side in the death-cart to the scaffold. Of the rest of his friends he took an affectionate leave, saying, "Adieu, my brothers; may God be with you evermore!" He was conveyed to the rampart of the castle dressed in coarse brown garments precisely like those worn by the prince.

By order of the king, Fritz, who had also been condemned to die and was awaiting his doom, was brought down into a lower room of the fortress, before whose window the scaffold was erected, that he might be compelled "to see Katte die." At his entrance the curtains were closed, shutting out the view of the court-yard. Upon the drawing of the curtains, Fritz, to his horror, beheld the scaffold draped in black on a level with the window, and directly before it.

The unhappy Crown Prince was in an agony of despair. Again and again he frantically exclaimed, "In the name of God, I beg you to stop the execution till I write to the king! I am ready to renounce all my rights to the crown if he will pardon Katte!" As the condemned was led by the window to ascend the scaffold, Fritz cried out to him, in anguish as intense as a generous heart can endure, "Pardon me, my dear Katte, pardon me! Oh that this should be what I have done for you!"

A smile flitted across Katte's pallid features as he

replied, “Death is sweet for a prince I love so well.” With fortitude he ascended the scaffold. The executioner attempted to bandage his eyes, but he resisted, and, looking to heaven, said, “Father, into thy hands I surrender my soul!” Four grenadiers held Fritz with his face toward the window. Fainting, he fell senseless upon the floor. At the same moment, by a single blow, Katte’s head rolled upon the scaffold. As the prince recovered consciousness, he found himself still at the window, in full view of the headless and gory corpse of his friend. Another swoon consigned him to momentary unconsciousness.[16]



FREDERICK AT KATTE'S EXECUTION.

The body of Katte remained upon the scaffold during the short wintry day, and at night was buried in one of the bastions of the fortress. This cruel tragedy was enacted more than a century ago; but there are few who even now can read the record without having their eyes flooded, through the conflicting emotions of sympathy for the sufferers and indignation against the tyrant who could

perpetrate such crimes.

When Frederick returned to consciousness his misery plunged him into a high fever. Delirium ensued, during which Chaplain Müller, who remained with him, says that he frequently attempted to destroy himself. As the fever abated and he became more tranquil, floods of tears gushed from his eyes. He for some time refused to take any nourishment. It seemed to him now that every hope in life was forever blighted. He had no doubt that his own death was fully decided upon, and that he would soon be led to his execution. In his moments of delirious anguish he at times longed for death to come as speedily as possible. And again it seemed awful to have his young life—for he was then but eighteen years of age—cut off by the bloody sword.[17]

Chaplain Müller seems to have enjoyed the confidence of the king to an unusual decree. He was ordered to remain at Cüstrin, and to have daily interviews with the prince, to instruct him in religion. The king professed to be eminently a religious man. While torturing the body and the mind of the prince in every way, he expressed great anxiety for the salvation of his soul. It is not strange that the example of such a father had staggered the faith of the son. Illogically he renounced that religion which condemned, in the severest terms, the conduct of the father, and which caused the king often to tremble upon his throne, appalled by the declaration, “Know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.”

The young prince had also become dissolute in life. The sacred volume denounced such a career as offensive to God, as sure to bring down upon the

guilty prince the divine displeasure in this life, and, if unrepented of, in the life to come. No man who believes the Bible to be true can, with any comfort whatever, indulge in sin. The prince wished to indulge his passions without restraint. He therefore, thus living, found it to be a necessity to renounce that religion which arrayed against his sinful life all the terrors of the final judgment. A wicked life and true Christian faith can not live in peace together. The one or the other must be abandoned. Frederick chose to abandon Christian faith.

It seems that the Crown Prince had an inquiring mind. He was interested in metaphysical speculations. He had adopted, perhaps, as some excuse for his conduct, the doctrine of predestination, that God hath foreordained whatsoever cometh to pass. The idea that there is a power, which Hume calls philosophical necessity, which Napoleon calls destiny, which Calvin calls predestination, by which all events are controlled, and that this necessity is not inconsistent with free agency, is a doctrine which ever has commanded the assent, and probably ever will, of many of the strongest thinkers in the world.

“The heresy about predestination,” writes Carlyle, “or the election by free grace, as his majesty terms it, according to which a man is preappointed, from all eternity, either to salvation or the opposite, which is Fritz’s notion, and indeed Calvin’s, and that of many benighted creatures, this editor among them, appears to his majesty an altogether shocking one. What! may not deserter Fritz say to himself, even now, or in whatever other deeps of sin he may fall into, ‘I was foredoomed to it? How could I or how can I help it?’ The mind of his majesty shudders

as if looking over the edge of an abyss."

Chaplain Müller was especially directed to argue with Frederick upon this point, and, if possible, to convert him to Christianity. The correspondence which ensued between the king and Müller is preserved. The king wrote to the chaplain, under date of November 3d, 1730:

"I have been assured that you are an honest and pious clergyman, and a faithful minister of the Word of God. Since, therefore, you are going to Cüstrin, on account of the execution of Lieutenant Katte, I command you, after the execution, to pay a visit to the Prince Royal; to reason with him and to represent to him that whosoever abandons God is also abandoned by God; and that, when God has abandoned a man, and has taken away his grace from him, that man is incapable of doing what is good, and can only do what is evil. You will exhort him to repent, and to ask pardon for the many sins he has committed, and into which he has seduced others, one of whom has been just punished with death.

"If you then find the prince contrite and humble, you will engage him to fall on his knees with you, to ask pardon of God with tears of penitence. But you must proceed with prudence and circumspection, for the prince is cunning. You will represent to him also, in a proper manner, the error he labors under in believing that some are predestinated to one thing and some to another; and that thus he who is predestinated to evil can do nothing but evil, and he who is predestinated to good can do nothing but good, and that, consequently, we can change nothing of what is to happen—a dreadful error, especially in what regards our salvation.

"Now, as I hope that his present situation, and the execution which has just taken place before his eyes, will touch and soften his heart, and will lead him to better sentiments, I charge you, as you value your conscience, to do all that is humanly possible to represent forcibly to the prince these things; and particularly, in what relates to predestination, to convince him by means of passages from the Scriptures which satisfactorily prove what I wish you to advance."

This letter was addressed to the "reverend, well-beloved, and faithful Müller," and was signed "your affectionate king." Though the king had not yet announced any intention of sparing the life of his son, and probably was fully resolved upon his execution, he was manifestly disturbed by the outcry against his proceedings raised in all the courts of Europe. Three days before the king wrote the above letter, the Emperor of Germany, Charles VI., had written to him, with his own hand, earnestly interceding for the Crown Prince. In addition to the letter, the emperor, through his minister Seckendorf, had presented a very firm remonstrance. He announced to Frederick William that Prince Frederick was a prince of the empire, and that he was entitled to the protection of the laws of the Germanic body; that the heir-apparent of the Prussian monarchy was under the safeguard of the Germanic empire, and that the king was bound to surrender to this tribunal the accused, and the documents relative to this trial.

The emperor was probably induced to this decisive course not merely by motives of humanity, but also by the consideration that by thus saving the life of Frederick he would forever attach him to the

interests of the house of Austria. The kings of Poland and Sweden also wrote to the king, earnestly interceding for the life of the Crown Prince.

The king was at first much incensed by these attempts at interference. It was not safe for him to bid defiance to the opinions of the civilized world. Emotions of anger and mortification struggled in the bosom of the king. Captain Guy Dickens, secretary of Dubourgay, writes:

"The King of Prussia can not sleep. The officers sit up with him every night, and in his slumbers he raves and talks of spirits and apparitions."

He drank deeply, wandering about by night as if possessed by fiends. "He has not," writes Captain Dickens, "gone to bed sober for a month past." Once he rose, about midnight, and, with a candle in his hand, entered the apartment of the queen, apparently in a state of extreme terror, saying that there was something haunting him. His agitation was so great that a bed was made up for him there.

Two days after the death of Katte, the king wrote to Chaplain Müller, under date of November 7th, 1730, a letter closing with the following words:

> "As God often, by wondrous guidance, strange paths, and thorny steps, will bring men into the kingdom of Christ, so may our divine Redeemer help that this prodigal son be brought into his communion; that his godless heart be beaten until it is softened and changed, and so he be snatched from the claws of Satan. This grant us, the Almighty God and Father, for our Lord Jesus Christ and his passion and death's sake. Amen.
>
> "I am, for the rest, your well-affectioned king,

"FREDERICK WILLIAM."

The prince supposed that the object of Muller's visits was to prepare him for his death. But upon receiving the full assurance that his father contemplated pardoning him, should there be evidence of repentance, he promised to take an oath of entire submission to his father's will. Seven commissioners were sent to the prison of Cüstrin, on the 19th of November, to administer this oath with the utmost solemnity. He was conducted to the church. A large crowd was in attendance. A sermon appropriate to the occasion was preached. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to him. And then he audibly repeated the oath and attached to it his signature.

From the church the prince was conducted, not back to his prison in the fortress, but to a town mansion, which was assigned as his residence. His sword was restored to him. But he was still not fully liberated. Officials, appointed by his father, surrounded him, who watched and reported all his movements. The first act of the young prince, upon reaching his apartment after this partial liberation, was to write as follows to his father. We give the letter as translated by Carlyle:

"Cüstrin, November 19, 1730.

"ALL-SERENEST AND ALL-GRACIOUSEST FATHER,—To your royal majesty, my all-graciousest Father, I have, by my disobedience as Their subject and soldier, not less than by my undutifulness as Their son, given occasion to a just wrath and aversion against me. With the all-obedientest respect I submit myself wholly to the grace of my most All-gracious Father, and beg him

> most All-graciously to pardon me, as it is not so much the withdrawal of my liberty, in a sad arrest, as my own thoughts of the fault I have committed that have brought me to reason, who, with all-obedientest respect and submission, continue till my end my All-graciousest king's and Father's faithfully-obedientest servant and son,
>
> FREDERICK."

Here, in the little town of Cüstrin, in a house very meagerly furnished, the Crown Prince established his household upon the humblest scale. The prince was allowed to wear his sword, but not his uniform. He was debarred all amusements, and was forbidden to read, write, or speak French. To give him employment, he was ordered to attend regularly the sittings of the Chamber of Counselors of that district, though he was to take his seat as the youngest member. Three persons were appointed constantly to watch over him. Lord Dover writes:

"His diet was regulated at a sum which made it barely sufficient to prevent actual starvation. His apartment was most miserable, and almost entirely devoid of furniture. He was in great want of linen, and of others of the first necessaries of life. At nine o'clock at night his candle was taken from him, while pen, ink, paper, and books were alike denied him."

"His very flute," Carlyle writes, "most innocent 'Princess,' as he used to call his flute in old days, is denied him ever since he came to Cüstrin. But by degrees he privately gets her back, and consorts much with her; wails forth, in beautiful adagios, emotions for which there is no other utterance at present. He has liberty of Cüstrin and the neighborhood. Out of Cüstrin he is not to lodge any night without leave had of the commandant."

While these sad scenes were transpiring, the Princess Wilhelmina was held in close captivity in her apartment at the palace in Berlin. The king had convened a council of eight clergymen, and had put to them the question whether a father had not a right to give his daughter in wedlock to whom he pleased. Much to the honor of these clergymen, they replied, with but one exception, in the negative.

The queen remained firm in her determination that Wilhelmina should marry the Prince of Wales. The king was equally inflexible in his resolve that she should not marry the Prince of Wales. The queen occasionally had interviews with Wilhelmina, when they wept together over their disappointments and trials. The spirited young princess had no special predilections for the English prince, but she was firm in her resolve not to have a repugnant husband forced upon her. On the night of the 27th of January, 1731, as the queen was about to leave Berlin for Potsdam, she said to her daughter,

"Be firm, my child. Trust in my management. Only swear to me, on your eternal salvation, that never, on any compulsion, will you marry another than the Prince of Wales. Give me that oath."

But Wilhelmina evaded the oath upon the ground of religious scruples. Anxiety, confinement, and bad diet had so preyed upon her health that she was reduced almost to a skeleton. The following extract from her journal gives a graphic account of her painful condition:

"I was shut up in my bedchamber, where I saw nobody, and continued always to fast. I was really dying of hunger. I read as long as there was daylight, and made remarks upon what I read. My health began to give way. I became as thin as a skeleton

from want of food and exercise. One day Madam De Sonsfeld and myself were at table, looking sadly at one another, having nothing to eat but soup made with salt and water, and a ragout of old bones, full of hairs and other dirt, when we heard a knocking at the window. Surprised, we rose hastily to see what it was. We found a raven with a morsel of bread in its beak, which it laid down on the sill of the window so soon as it saw us, and flew away. Tears came into our eyes at this adventure. 'Our lot is very deplorable,' said I to my governess, 'since it even touches the creatures devoid of reason. They have more compassion for us than men, who treat us with so much cruelty.'"

The raven was a tame one, which had got lost and was seeking for its home. The story, however, spread, and created great sympathy for the imprisoned princess. There was a large number of French refugees in Berlin. With characteristic kindness, at the risk of incurring the royal displeasure, they sent daily a basket of food, which was placed in a situation from which Wilhelmina's maids could easily convey the contents to her, while compassionate sentries kindly looked the other way. The princess wrote to her father, imploring permission to receive the sacrament, from which she had been debarred for nearly a year. The reply from her-father was couched in the following terms:

"My blackguard daughter may receive the sacrament."

Her sisters were now permitted occasionally to visit her, and her situation became somewhat ameliorated. On the 10th of May Wilhelmina received a letter from her mother which caused her to wring her hands in anguish. It informed her that

the next day a deputation was to call upon her from the king, to insist upon her giving her consent to marry the Prince of Baireuth.

The letter was as follows:

“All is lost, my dear daughter. The king is determined, at all hazards, upon your marriage. I have sustained several dreadful contests on this subject, but neither my prayers nor my tears have had any effect. Eversman has orders to make the purchases necessary for your marriage. You must prepare yourself to lose Madam Sonsfeld. The king is determined to have her degraded with infamy if you do not obey him. Some one will be sent to persuade you. In God’s name consent to nothing, and God will support you in it. A prison is better than a bad marriage. Adieu, my dear daughter! I expect every thing from your firmness.”



GRUMKOW'S CONFERENCE WITH WILHELMINA.

A deputation of four ministers, headed by Baron Grumkow, the next day presented themselves to the princess. To overawe Wilhelmina, they approached her with all the solemnity of state. Grumkow opened the conference:

"Obey the wishes of the king," said he, "and the royal favor will be restored to you. Refuse to do it,

and no one can tell what will be the doom which will fall upon your mother, your brother, and yourself."

They all united their entreaties, arguments, prayers, and threats. The princess was in a state of terrible agitation. Almost distracted she paced the floor. That she might have a little time to reflect, the four deputies retired into the recess of a window. One of them, M. Tulmier, then approached the princess, and, in a low tone of voice, said to her,

"Do not resist any longer. Submit to whatever is required of you. I will answer with my life that the marriage will never really take place. It is necessary, at whatever cost, to appease the king for the present. I will explain to the queen that this is the only means of obtaining a favorable declaration from the King of England."

Thus influenced, she yielded. Tears flooded her eyes, and her voice was broken with sobs as she said, "I am ready to sacrifice myself for the peace of the family." The deputation withdrew, leaving the princess in despair. Baron Grumkow conveyed to the king the pleasing intelligence of her submission.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MARRIAGE OF WILHELMINA.

Wilhelmina's Letter to her Mother.—Cruel Response.—The Court Festival.—First Interview with the Prince of Baireuth.—His Character and Appearance.—Interview between the King and Fritz.—The Partial Reconciliation.—Divine Decrees.—The King's Sense of Justice.—The King's Discipline of the Judges.—Character of Fritz.—Wilhelmina's Annoyances.—Her Marriage.—Interview between Wilhelmina and Fritz.—The Departure.

WILHELMINA, having thus given her very reluctant assent to her marriage with the Prince of Baireuth, wrote as follows to her mother:

"I have hardly strength enough to trace these lines. My state is altogether worthy of pity. It is not through any menaces, however violent they may have been, that I have yielded my consent to the king's wishes. An interest still more dear to me has determined me to this sacrifice. I have been till now the innocent cause of all the unhappiness which your majesty has endured. My too sensible heart has been penetrated by the touching details you have latterly made of them.

"You have been willing to suffer for me. Is it not much more natural that I should sacrifice myself for

you, and that I should finish, once for all, this fatal division in the family? Could I balance a moment between the choice of unhappiness for myself and the pardon of my brother? What dreadful discourses have there not been held to me on this subject! I tremble when I think of them. All the objections I could allege against the king's proposal were refuted to me beforehand. Your majesty yourself had proposed to him the Prince of Baireuth as a fit alliance for me. I can not therefore imagine that you will disapprove of my resolution. Besides, necessity is not to be resisted. I shall have the honor to offer a more circumstantial detail of the whole transaction to your majesty when I shall be permitted to throw myself at your feet. I can understand easily what must be your grief on the occasion. It is that which touches me the most."

The king, in response to the report of Baron Grumkow, which was so gratifying to him, sent the same evening the following note to Wilhelmina:

"I am delighted, my dear Wilhelmina, that you are so submissive to the wishes of your father. The good God will bless you for it; and I will never abandon you. I will take care of you all my life, and will endeavor to prove to you that I am your very affectionate father."

The next morning the princess received the following cruel epistle from her mother:

"You have cut me to the heart, and have inflicted on me the greatest misery I ever endured. I had placed all my hope in you, in consequence of my ignorance of your character. You have had the address to disguise to me the bad propensities of your heart, and the baseness of your disposition. I repent a thousand times the kindness I have shown

you, the care I have taken of your education, and all that I have suffered on your account. I no longer acknowledge you as my daughter, and shall, in future, never regard you but as my most cruel enemy, since it is you who have sacrificed me to my persecutors, who now triumph over me. Never count upon me again. I vow eternal hatred to you, and will never forgive you."

Soon after, the king returned to Berlin and summoned his daughter to his presence. He received her very graciously. The queen, however, remained quite unreconciled, and was loud in the expression of her anger: "I am disgraced, vanquished, and my enemies are triumphant!" she exclaimed. Her chagrin was so great that she fell quite sick. To a few words of sympathy which her child uttered, she replied, "Why do you pretend to weep? It is you who have killed me."

Frederick William was in high spirits. Many distinguished strangers were invited to his court, and they were received with great magnificence. There were costly and showy entertainments, served by "six-and-twenty blackamoors," bands of music, with much pomp of etiquette, and reviews of the giant guard and of the marvelously drilled army. Preparations were made for a review of great splendor on Monday, the 28th of May. The Prince of Baireuth was invited, though neither the queen nor Wilhelmina were aware of it. At the early hour of seven o'clock of the preceding evening the king went to bed, that he might be fresh for the review on the morrow. His high-born guests were left to be entertained by the queen and the princess. Just as they were passing in to supper, the sound of carriage wheels, approaching the foot of the grand staircase,

was heard in the court-yard. As that was an honor conferred only upon princes, the queen was a little surprised, and sent to inquire who had arrived. To her consternation, she found that it was the Prince of Baireuth.

"The head of Medusa," writes the princess, "never produced such horror as did this piece of news to the queen. For some time she could not utter a word, and changed color so often that we thought she would faint. Her state went to my heart. I remained as immovable as she. Every one present appeared full of consternation."

The prince retired to his chamber, to be presented to the royal family at the review the next day. Wilhelmina passed a miserable night. She could not sleep, and in the morning found herself so ill that she begged to be excused from the review. She also greatly dreaded encountering the coarse jests of her father. But she could not be released from the review. Both she and her mother were compelled to go. In an open carriage, the queen and princess, with attendant ladies of the court, passed before the line. The Marquis of Schwedt, whom the princess had so emphatically discarded, was at the head of his regiment. He seemed "swollen with rage," and saluted the royal party with his eyes turned away. The royal carriages were then withdrawn to a little distance that the ladies might witness the spectacle.

"Such a show for pomp and circumstance, Wilhelmina owns, as could not be equaled in the world; such wheeling, rhythmic coalescing and unfolding, accurate as clock-work, far and wide; swift, big column here hitting big column there at the appointed place and moment; with their volleyings and trumpetings, bright uniforms, and

streamers, and field-music, in equipment and manœuvre perfect all, to the meanest drummer or black kettle-drummer; supreme drill sergeant playing on the thing as on his huge piano, several square miles in area."[18]

As the ladies of the court were gazing upon this spectacle, an officer rode up to the royal carriage, cap in hand, and said that he was directed to present to the queen and princess his Highness the Prince of Baireuth. Immediately a tall young man, in rich dress and of very courtly air, rode up to the carriage and saluted his future mother and his destined bride. His reception was very chilling. The queen, with frigid civility, scarcely recognized his low bow. Wilhelmina, faint from fasting, anxiety, and sleeplessness, was so overcome by her emotions that she fell back upon her seat in a swoon.

Wilhelmina had never seen the Prince of Wales. Her mother had not attempted to conceal from her that he was exceedingly plain in person, slightly deformed, weak in intellect, and debased by his debaucheries. But the ambitious queen urged these considerations, not as objections, but as incentives to the marriage. "You will be able," she said, "to have him entirely under your direction. You will thus be virtually King of England, and can exert a powerful control over all the nations of Europe." These considerations, however, did not influence the princess so much as they did her mother. She had never taken any special interest in her marriage with the Prince of Wales. Indeed, at times, she had said that nothing should ever induce her to marry him.

The first glance at the Prince of Baireuth prepossessed the princess in his favor. She subsequently, when better acquainted with him,

described him in the following terms:

"The prince is tall, well made, and has a noble air. His features are neither handsome nor regular; but his countenance, which is open, engaging, and very agreeable, stands him in the place of beauty. He is of a hasty temper, and replies with quickness and without embarrassment. Though his nature is inclined to anger, he knows so well how to overcome it that it is never perceived, and no one has ever suffered by it. He is very gay. His conversation is very agreeable, though he has some difficulty in making himself intelligible from lisping so much. His conception is quick, and his intellect penetrating. The goodness of his heart gains him the attachment of all who know him. He is generous, charitable, compassionate, polite, engaging, and enjoys very equal spirits. The only fault I know in him is too much levity, which I must mention here, as otherwise I should be accused of partiality. He has, however, much corrected himself of it."

The next Sunday, June 3d, the betrothal took place with great magnificence. The ceremony was attended by a large concourse of distinguished guests. Lord Dover says that the very evening of the day of the betrothing a courier arrived from England with dispatches announcing that the English court had yielded to all the stipulations demanded by the King of Prussia in reference to the marriage of Wilhelmina to the Prince of Wales. It was now too late to retract. Probably both the king and Wilhelmina were gratified in being able to decline the offer. But the chagrin of the queen was terrible. She fell into a violent fever, and came near dying, reproaching her daughter with having killed her.

There seems to be no end to the complications

and troubles of this royal family. It is said that Wilhelmina, to soothe her mother, treated her betrothed with great coldness; that her younger sister Charlotte fell deeply in love with the Prince of Baireuth, and endeavored to win him to herself; and that the prince himself, attracted by warmth on the one hand, and repelled by coldness on the other, was quite disposed to make the exchange.[19] The king, irritated by these interminable annoyances, and the victim of chronic petulance and ill nature, recommenced his brutal treatment of his daughter.

While these scenes were transpiring, the Crown Prince was at Cüstrin, upon probation, being not yet admitted to the presence of his father. He seems to have exerted himself to the utmost to please the king, applying himself diligently to become familiar with all the tedious routine and details of the administration of finance, police, and the public domains. Fritz was naturally very amiable. He was consequently popular in the little town in which he resided, all being ready to do every thing in their power to serve him. The income still allowed him by his father was so small that he would have suffered from poverty had not the gentry in the neighborhood, regardless of the prohibition to lend money to the prince, contributed secretly to replenish his purse.

A year and a day had elapsed since the father had seen the son. On the 15th of August, the king, being on a journey, stopped for a couple of hours at Cüstrin, and held an interview with Fritz. The monarch was attended by a retinue of several hundred persons. The scene which ensued is described by Grumkow in his summary of what took place at Cüstrin on the 15th of August, 1731. The

king sent for the prince to be brought before him at the government house. As Fritz entered he fell upon his knees at his father's feet. The king coldly ordered him to rise, saying,

"You will now recall to mind what passed a year and a day ago—how scandalously you behaved, and what a godless enterprise you undertook. As I have had you about me from the beginning, and must know you well, I did all in the world that was in my power, by kindness and by harshness, to make an honorable man of you. As I rather suspected your evil purposes, I treated you in the harshest and sharpest way in the Saxon camp, in hopes you would consider yourself, and take another line of conduct; would confess your faults to me, and beg forgiveness. But all in vain. You grew ever more stiff-necked. You thought to carry it through with your headstrong humor. But hark ye, my lad! if thou wert sixty or seventy instead of eighteen, thou couldst not cross my resolutions. And as up to this date I have managed to sustain myself against any comer, there will be methods found to bring thee to reason too.

"Have I not, on all occasions, meant honorably by you? Last time I got wind of your debts, did I not, as a father, admonish you to tell me all? I would pay all; you were only to tell me the truth; whereupon you said there were still two thousand thalers beyond the sum named. I paid these also at once, and fancied I had made peace with you. And then it was found, by-and-by, you owed many thousands more. And as you knew you could not pay, it was as good as if the money had been stolen—not to reckon how the French vermin, Montholieu and partner, cheated you with their new loans.

"Nothing touched me so much as that you had

not any trust in me. All this that I was doing for the aggrandizement of the house, the army, and the finances, could only be for you, if you made yourself worthy of it. I here declare that I have done all things to gain your friendship, and all has been in vain."

The Crown Prince, either deeply touched with penitence or affecting to be so, again threw himself upon his knees before his father, as if imploring pardon. The king continued:

"Was it not your intention to go to England?"

"Yes," the prince replied.

"Then hear what the consequences would have been. Your mother would have got into the greatest misery. I could not but have suspected she was the author of the business. Your sister I would have cast for life into a place where she would never have seen sun or moon again. Then on with my army to Hanover, and burn and ravage—yes, if it had cost me life, land, and people. Your thoughtless and godless conduct, see what it was leading to. I intended to employ you in all manner of business, civil and military. But how, after such action, could I show your face to my officers?"

Here the young prince made the most solemn promises to try to regain his father's favor. The king then asked: "Was it thou that temptedst Katte, or did Katte tempt thee?" Fritz promptly replied, "I tempted Katte." "I am glad," rejoined the king, "to hear the truth from you, at any rate."

The king then rattled on without waiting for replies: "How do you like your Cüstrin life? Do you still have as much aversion to Wusterhausen, and to wearing your shroud, as you called your uniform?

Likely enough my company does not suit you. I have no French manners, and can not bring out witty sayings in the coxcomb way; and I truly consider all that as a thing to be thrown to the dogs. I am a German prince, and mean to live and die in that character. But you can now say what you have got by your caprices and obstinate heart, hating every thing that I liked, and if I distinguished any one, despising him. If an officer was put in arrest, you took to lamenting about him. Your real friends, who intended your good, you hated and calumniated. Those who flattered you and encouraged your bad purpose you caressed. You see what that has come to. In Berlin, in all Prussia, for some time back, nobody asks after you, whether you are in the world or not. And were it not that one or the other coming from Cüstrin reports you as playing tennis or wearing French hair-bags, nobody would know whether you were dead, or alive."

Grumkow then goes on to relate, quite in detail, that the king took up the subject of theology. "He set forth the horrible results of that *absolute decree* notion which makes God the author of sin; and that Jesus Christ died only for some." The prince declared that he had thoroughly renounced that heresy. The king then added:

"When godless fellows about you speak against your duties to God, the king, and your country, fall instantly on your knees and pray with your whole soul to Jesus Christ to deliver you from such wickedness, and lead you on better ways. And if it come in earnest from your heart, Jesus, who would have all men saved, will not leave you unheard."

The Crown Prince, with what degree of sincerity we know not, was now in tears. Prostrating himself

before his majesty, he kissed his feet. The king, much moved, was in tears also, and retired to another room.

"It being his majesty's birthday," writes Grumkow, "the prince, in deep emotion, followed his father, and, again falling prostrate, testified such heartfelt joy, gratitude, and affection over this blessed anniversary as quite touched the heart of the king, who at last clasped him in his arms, and hurried out to avoid sobbing aloud. The Crown Prince followed his majesty, and, in the presence of many hundred people, kissed his majesty's feet, and was again embraced by his majesty, who said, 'Behave well, as I see you mean, and I will take care of you.' Which words," writes Grumkow, "threw the Crown Prince into such an ecstasy of joy as no pen can express."

Two events occurred at this time highly characteristic of the king. There was a nobleman by the name of Schlubhut, occupying a high official position, who was found a defaulter to the amount of a sum equal to twenty-five thousand dollars. The supreme court sentenced him to three or four years' imprisonment. The king was indignant at the mildness of the sentence. "What," said he, "when the private thief is sent to the gallows, shall a nobleman and a magistrate escape with fine and imprisonment?" Schlubhut was immediately sent to prison. All night long he was disturbed with the noise of carpentering in the castle square in front of his cell. In the morning he saw directly before his window a huge gallows erected. Upon that gallows he was immediately hung, and his body was left to swing in the wind for several days, some say for weeks.



DISCIPLINING THE JUDGES.

Soon after, a soldier, six feet three inches tall, the ringleader of a gang, broke into a house and robbed it of property to the amount of about five thousand dollars. He was sentenced to be hung. We give the result in the words of Carlyle:

“Friedrich Wilhelm feels this sad contrast very much; the more, as the soldier is his own chattel

withal, and of superlative inches. Friedrich Wilhelm flames up into wrath; sends off swift messengers to bring these judges, one and all, instantly into his presence. The judges are still in their dressing-gowns, shaving, breakfasting. They make what haste they can. So soon as the first three or four are reported to be in the anteroom, Friedrich Wilhelm, in extreme impatience, has them called in; starts discoursing with them upon the two weights and two measures. Apologies, subterfuges, do but provoke him farther. It is not long till he starts up growling terribly, 'Ye scoundrels, how could you?' and smites down upon the crown of them with the royal cudgel itself. Fancy the hurry-scurry, the unforensic attitudes and pleadings! Royal cudgel rains blows right and left. Blood is drawn, crowns cracked, crowns nearly broken; and several judges lost a few teeth and had their noses battered before they could get out. The second relay, meeting them in this dilapidated state on the staircases, dashed home again without the honor of a royal interview. This is an actual scene, of date, Berlin, 1731, of which no constitutional country can hope to see the fellow. Schlubhut he hanged, Schlubhut being only Schlubhut's chattel. This musketeer, his majesty's own chattel, he did not hang, but set him shouldering arms again after some preliminary dusting."

The king, after his apparent reconciliation with Fritz, granted him a little more liberty. He was appointed to travel over and carefully inspect several of the crown domains. He was ordered to study thoroughly the practical husbandry of those domains —how they were to be plowed, enriched, and sown. He was also to devote his attention to the rearing of cattle; to the preparing of malt and the brewing of ale. "Useful discourse," said the king, "is to be kept

up with him on these journeys, pointing out why this is and that, and whether it could not be better." On the 22d of September the Crown Prince wrote to his father as follows:

"I have been to Lebus. There is excellent land there; fine weather for the husbandmen. Major Röder passed this way, and dined with me last Wednesday. He has got a fine fellow for my most all-gracious father's regiment. I depend on my most all-gracious father's grace that he will be good to me. I ask for nothing, and for no happiness in the world but what comes from him; and hope that he will some day remember me in grace, and give me the blue coat to put on again."

It is very evident, from the glimpses we catch of Fritz at this time, that he was a wild fellow, quite frivolous, and with but a feeble sense of moral obligation. General Schulenburg, an old soldier, of stern principles, visited him at Cüstrin, and sent an account of the interview to Baron Grumkow, under date of October 4th, 1731. From this letter we cull the following statement:

"I found him much grown; an air of health and gayety about him. He caressed me greatly. We went to dinner. He asked me to sit beside him. Among other things, he said that he liked the great world, and was charmed to observe the ridiculous, weak side of some people."

The prince inquired, in quite an indifferent tone, respecting the marriages his father had in contemplation for him. He objected to the marriage with the Princess of Mecklenburg, niece of the Czar Peter, that it would require him to change his religion, which he would not do. He expressed himself as inclined to take the second daughter of the

Emperor of Germany, if the emperor would throw in a duchy or two.

"Since you speak so much of marriages," said the general, "I suppose you wish to be married?"

"No," the prince replied; "but if the king absolutely will have it, I will marry to obey him. After that I will shove my wife into a corner, and live after my own fancy."

Against this unprincipled declaration General Schulenburg remonstrated, declaring it to be unchristian and dishonorable. But the prince seemed to regard such suggestions very contemptuously. "I can perceive," the general adds, "that if he marries, it will only be that he may have more liberty than now. It is certain that if he had his elbows free he would strike out. He said to me several times, 'I am young; I want to profit by my youth.'"

A fortnight later General Schulenburg wrote, under date of the 19th of October: "I introduced to the Crown Prince all the officers of my regiment who are here. He received them in the style of a king. It is certain he feels what he is born to; and if he ever get to it, he will stand on the top of it. As to me, I mean to keep myself retired, and shall see as little of him as I can. I perceive well he does not like advice, and does not take pleasure except with men inferior to him in mind. His first aim is to find out the ridiculous side of every one, and he loves to banter and quiz.

"I assure you he is a prince who has talent, but who will be the slave of his passions, and will like nobody but such as encourage him therein. For me, I think all princes are cast in the same mould. There is only a more and a less."



BERLIN PALACE.

On Tuesday, the 20th of November, 1731, Wilhelmina, eight months after her betrothal, was married to the Prince of Baireuth. The marriage ceremony was attended with great magnificence in the royal palace of Berlin. The father of Frederick William, who was fond of pageantry, had reared one of the most sumptuous mansions in Europe, and had furnished it with splendor which no other court could outvie. Entering the interior of the palace through the outer saloon, one passed through nine apartments *en suite*, of grand dimensions, magnificently decorated, the last of which opened into the picture-gallery, a room ninety feet in length, and of corresponding breadth. All these were in a line. Then turning, you entered a series of fourteen rooms, each more splendid than the preceding. The chandeliers were of massive solid silver. The ceilings were exquisitely painted by Correggio. Between each

pair of windows there were mirrors twelve feet high, and of such width that before each mirror tables could be spread for twelve guests. The last of these magnificent apartments, called the Grand Saloon, was illuminated by “a lustre weighing fifty thousand crowns; the globe of it big enough to hold a child of eight years, and the branches of solid silver.”

Though Frederick the First had reared and originally furnished this Berlin palace, yet the masses of solid silver wrought into its ornamentation were mainly the work of Frederick William. Conscious that his influence in Europe depended not only upon the power of his army, but also upon the fullness of his treasury, he had been striving, through all his reign, to accumulate coin. But the money, barreled up and stored away in the vaults of his palace, was of no service while thus lying idle. Banking institutions seem not then to have been in vogue in his realms. But the silver, wrought into chandeliers, mirror-frames, and music balconies, added to the imposing splendor of his court, gave him the reputation of great wealth, and could, at any time when necessary, be melted down and coined. The wealth thus hoarded by the father afterward saved the son from ruin, when involved in wars which exhausted his treasury.

The queen remained bitterly unreconciled to the marriage of Wilhelmina with any one but the Prince of Wales. Stung by the sense of defeat, she did every thing in her power, by all sorts of intrigues, to break off the engagement with the Prince of Baireuth. When she found her efforts entirely unavailing, she even went so far as to take her daughter aside and entreat her, since the ceremony must take place, to refuse, after the marriage, to receive the Prince of

Baireuth as her husband, that the queen might endeavor to obtain a divorce.

The annoyances to which Wilhelmina was exposed, while thus preparing for her wedding, must have been almost unendurable. Not only her mother was thus persistent and implacable in her hostility, but her father reluctantly submitted to the connection. He had fully made up his mind, with all the strength of his inflexible will, that Wilhelmina should marry either the Margrave of Schwedt or the Duke of Weissenfels. It was with extreme reluctance, and greatly to his chagrin, that the stern old man found himself constrained, perhaps for the first time in his life, to yield to others.

Even Wilhelmina had accepted the Prince of Baireuth, whom she had never seen, only to avoid being sacrificed to men whom she utterly loathed. Fortunately for the princess, her affections were not otherwise engaged, and when introduced to her intended she became quite reconciled to the idea of accepting him as her husband.

On the day of the marriage, the princess, having formally renounced all her rights to the personal property of the family, dined with the royal household and her intended, and then retired to her apartment to dress for the wedding. It would seem that the queen must have become quite insane upon this point. Even at this late hour she did every thing she could to delay operations and to gain time, hoping every moment that some courier would arrive from England with proposals which would induce the king to break off the engagement. As fast as the princess’s hair on one side was dressed the queen would contrive to undo it, so that at last the hair would no longer curl, making her look, as

Wilhelmina said, “like a mad woman.” She adds:

“A royal crown was placed upon my head, together with twenty-four curls of false hair, each as big as my arm. I could not hold up my head, as it was too weak for so great a weight. My gown was a very rich silver brocade, trimmed with gold lace, and my train was twelve yards long. I thought I should have died under this dress.”

The marriage took place in the Grand Saloon. The moment the benediction was pronounced, a triple discharge of cannon announced the event to the inhabitants of Berlin. Then the newly-married pair, seated under a gorgeous canopy, received the congratulations of the court. A ball followed, succeeded by a supper. After supper there came, according to the old German custom, what was called the *dance of torches*. This consisted of the whole company marching to music in procession through the rooms, each holding a lighted torch. The marriage festivities were continued for several days, with a succession of balls each night. Wilhelmina had not yet been permitted to see her brother since his arrest. But the king had promised Wilhelmina, as her reward for giving up the wretched Prince of Wales, that he would recall her brother and restore him to favor. On Friday evening, the 23d, three days after the wedding, there was a brilliant ball in the Grand Apartment. Wilhelmina thus describes the event which then took place:

“I liked dancing, and was taking advantage of my chances. Grumkow came up to me, in the middle of a minuet, and said, ‘*Mon dieu, madame*, you seem to have got bit by the tarantula. Don’t you see those strangers who have just come in?’ I stopped short, and, looking all around, I noticed at last a young

man, dressed in gray, whom I did not know. 'Go, then,' said Grumkow, 'and embrace the Crown Prince. There he is before you.' My whole frame was agitated with joy. 'Oh, heavens, my brother!' cried I; 'but I do not see him. Where is he? For God's sake show him to me.'

"Grumkow led me to the young man in gray. Coming near, I recognized him, though with difficulty. He had grown much stouter, and his neck was much shorter. His face also was much changed, and was no longer as handsome as it had been. I fell upon his neck. I was so overcome that I could only speak in an unconnected manner. I wept, I laughed like a person out of her senses. In my life I have never felt so lively a joy. After these first emotions were subsided I went and threw myself at the feet of the king, who said to me aloud, in the presence of my brother,

"'Are you content with me? You see that I have kept my word with you.'

"I took my brother by the hand, and implored the king to restore his affection to him. This scene was so touching that it drew tears from all present. I then approached the queen. She was obliged to embrace me, the king being close opposite. But I remarked that her joy was only affected. I turned to my brother again. I gave him a thousand caresses, to all which he remained cold as ice, and answered only in monosyllables. I presented to him my husband, to whom he did not say one word. I was astonished at this; but I laid the blame of it on the king, who was observing us, and who I judged might be intimidating my brother. But even the countenance of my brother surprised me. He wore a proud air, and seemed to look down upon every body."



THE RECONCILIATION.

Neither the king nor the Crown Prince appeared at the supper. With a select circle, to which neither Wilhelmina nor her mother were admitted, they supped in a private apartment. At the report that the king was treating the Crown Prince with great friendliness, the queen could not conceal her secret pique. “In fact,” says Wilhelmina, “she did not love her children except as they served her ambitious

views." She was jealous of Wilhelmina because she, and not her mother, had been the means of the release of Fritz. After supper the dancing was resumed, and Wilhelmina embraced an opportunity to ask her brother why he was so changed, and why he treated her so coldly. He assured her that he was not changed; that his reserve was external only; that he had reasons for his conduct. Still he did not explain his reasons, and Wilhelmina remained wounded and bewildered.

Before the king released the Crown Prince he extorted from him an oath that he would be, in all respects, obedient to his father; that he would never again attempt to escape, or take any journey without permission; that he would scrupulously discharge all the duties of religion, and that he would marry any princess whom his father might select for him. The next morning, after the interview to which we have above alluded, the prince called upon his sister. They had a short private interview, Madam Sonsfeld alone being present. The prince gave a recital of his adventures and misfortunes during the many months since they last had met. The princess gave an account of her great trials, and how she had consented to a marriage, which was not one of her choice, to obtain her brother's release.

"He appeared," she writes, "quite discountenanced at this last part of my narrative. He returned thanks for the obligations I have laid on him, with some caressings which evidently did not proceed from the heart. To break this conversation he started some indifferent topic, and, under pretense of seeing my apartment, moved into the next room, where the prince, my husband, was. Him he surveyed with his eyes from head to foot for some

time; then, after some constrained civilities to him, he went his way."

Wilhelmina and her husband soon left for Baireuth. Though the princess thus left the splendors of a royal palace for the far more quiet and humble state of a ducal mansion, still she was glad to escape from a home where she had experienced so many sorrows.

"Berlin," she writes, "had become as odious to me as it once was dear. I flattered myself that, renouncing grandeurs, I might lead a soft and tranquil life in my new home, and begin a happier year than the one which had just ended."

As the king was about to take leave of his child, whom he had treated so cruelly, he was very much overcome by emotion. It is a solemn hour, in any family, when a daughter leaves the parental roof, never to return again but as a visitor. Whether the extraordinary development of feeling which the stern old monarch manifested on the occasion was the result of nervous sensibility, excited by strong drink or by parental affection, it is not easy to decide. Wilhelmina, in a few words of intense emotion, bade her father farewell.

"My discourse," she writes, "produced its effect. He melted into tears, and could not answer me for sobs. He explained his thoughts by his embracings of me. Making an effort at length, he said, 'I am in despair that I did not know thee. They had told me such horrible tales—I hated thee as much as I now love thee. If I had addressed myself direct to thee I should have escaped much trouble, and thou too. But they hindered me from speaking. They said that thou wert ill-natured as the devil, and wouldst drive to extremities, which I wanted to avoid. Thy mother, by

her intriguings, is in part the cause of the misfortunes of the family. I have been deceived and duped on every side. But my hands are tied. Though my heart is torn in pieces, I must leave these iniquities unpunished.'"

"The queen's intentions were always good," Wilhelmina kindly urged. The king replied, "Let us not enter into that detail. What is past is past. I will try to forget it. You are the dearest to me of all the family. I am too sad of heart to take leave of you. Embrace your husband on my part. I am so overcome that I must not see him."

Wilhelmina, with flooded eyes, entered her carriage, bidding a final adieu to the home of her childhood, where she had passed through so many scenes, eventful and afflictive. Though she afterward visited Berlin, it was her home no more. The Crown Prince returned to Cüstrin, where he impatiently awaited his future destinies.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE CROWN PRINCE.

Matrimonial Intrigues.—Letters from the King to his Son.—Letter from Fritz to Grumkow.—Letter to Wilhelmina.—The Betrothal.—Character of Elizabeth.—Her cruel Reception by the Prussian Queen.—Letter from Fritz to Wilhelmina.—Disappointment and Anguish of Elizabeth.—Studious Habits of Fritz.—Continued Alienation of his Father.—The Marriage.—Life in the Castle at Reinsberg.

UPON the return of the Crown Prince to Cüstrin after the marriage of Wilhelmina, several of the officers of the army sent in a petition to the king that he would restore to the prince his uniform and his military rank. The king consented, and made out his commission anew as colonel commandant of the Goltz regiment at Ruppin. This was a small town about seventy-five miles northeast of Berlin. His commission was signed on the 29th of February, 1732, he being then twenty years of age. In this little hamlet, mainly engaged in the dull routine of garrison duties, the prince passed most of his time for the next eight years.

The Crown Prince was quite exasperated that the English court would not listen to his earnest plea for

the marriage of Wilhelmina to the Prince of Wales, and accept his vows of fidelity to the Princess Amelia. The stubborn adhesion of the King of England to the declaration of “both marriages or none” so annoyed him that he banished Amelia from his thoughts. In his reckless way he affirmed that the romance of marriage was all over with him; that he cared not much what bride was forced upon him, provided only that she were rich, and that she were not too scrupulous in religious principle. The tongues of all the court gossips were busy upon this theme. Innumerable were the candidates suggested to share the crown of the future Prussian king. The Archduchess Maria Theresa, subsequently the renowned Empress of Germany, was proposed by Prince Eugene. But the imperial court could not wed its Catholic heiress to a Protestant prince. Still the emperor, though unwilling to give his daughter to the Crown Prince, was anxious for as close an alliance as possible with Prussia, and recommended a niece of the empress, the young Princess Elizabeth Christina, only daughter of Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick Bevern. She was seventeen years of age, rather pretty, with a fine complexion, not rich, of religious tastes, and remarkably quiet and domestic in her character.

The Crown Prince did not fancy this connection at all. His first wish was to journey about, through the courts of Europe, to select him a wife. But that measure his father would not think of. Frederick professed a willingness to submit to marry Anna, Princess of Mecklenburg, or the Princess of Eisenach. Seckendorf, the embassador of the emperor, aided by Grumkow, who had been bribed, urged the marriage with Elizabeth. The king adopted their views. His decision was like a decree of fate. The following

letter, written by the king to his son, dated Potsdam, February 4, 1732, very clearly expresses his views:

> "MY DEAR SON FRITZ,—I am glad you need no more medicine. But you must have a care of yourself some days yet, for the severe weather gives me and every body colds. So pray be on your guard.
>
> "You know, my dear son, that when my children are obedient I love them much. So when you were at Berlin, I from my heart forgave you every thing; and from that Berlin time, since I saw you, have thought of nothing but of your well-being, and how to establish you; not in the army only, but also with a right step-daughter, and so see you married in my lifetime. You may be well persuaded I have had the Princesses of Germany taken survey of, so far as possible, and examined by trusty people what their conduct is, their education, and so on. And so a princess has been found, the eldest one of Bevern, who is well brought up, modest and retiring as a woman ought to be.
>
> "You will quickly write me your mind on this. I have purchased the Von Katsch house. The field marshal, as governor of Berlin, will get that to live in. His government house I will have made new for you, and furnish it all, and give you enough to keep house yourself there.
>
> "The princess is not ugly nor beautiful. You must mention it to no mortal. Write indeed to mamma that I have written to you. And when you shall have a son, I will let you go on your travels; wedding, however, can not be before next winter. Meanwhile I will try and contrive opportunity that you see one another a few times, in all honor, yet so that you get acquainted with her. She is a God-

fearing creature, will suit herself to you, as she does to the parents-in-law.

"God give his blessing to it, and bless you and your posterity, and keep you as a good Christian. And have God always before your eyes, and don't believe that damnable *predestination* tenet; and be obedient and faithful. So shall it here in time, and there in eternity, go well with thee. And whosoever wishes that from the heart, let him say Amen.

"Your true father to the death,
"FRIEDRICH WILHELM.

"When the Duke of Lorraine comes I will have thee come. I think the bride will be here then. Adieu; God be with you."

One week after the reception of this letter the Crown Prince wrote to Baron Grumkow in the following flippant and revolting strain. He probably little imagined that the letter was to be read by all Europe and all America. But those whose paths through life lead over the eminences of rank and power can not conceal their words or deeds from the scrutiny of the world. Grumkow, a very shrewd man, had contrived to secure influence over both the father and the son. The prince's letter was dated Cüstrin, February 11, 1732:

"MY DEAR GENERAL AND FRIEND,—I was charmed to learn, by your letter, that my affairs are on so good a footing. You may depend on it I am prepared to follow your advice. I will lend myself to whatever is possible for me. And, provided I can secure the king's favor by my obedience, I will do all that is within my power.

"Nevertheless, in making my bargain with the

Duke of Bevern, manage that my intended be brought up under her grandmother.[20] I should rather have a wife who would dishonor me than to marry a blockhead who would drive me mad by her awkwardness, and whom I should be ashamed to produce.

"I beg you labor at this affair. When one hates romantic heroines as heartily as I do, one dreads those timid virtues; and I had rather marry the greatest profligate[21] in Berlin than a devotee with half a dozen bigots at her beck. If it were still possible to make her a Calvinist! But I doubt that. I will insist, however, that her grandmother have the training of her. What you can do to help me in this, my dear friend, I am persuaded you will do.

"It afflicted me a little that the king still has doubts of me, while I am obeying in such a matter diametrically opposite to my own ideas. In what way shall I offer stronger proofs? I may give myself to the devil, it will be to no purpose. Nothing but the old song over again, doubt on doubt. Don't imagine I am going to disoblige the duke, the duchess, or the daughter, I beseech you. I know too well what is due to them, and too much respect their merits, not to observe the strictest rules of what is proper, even if I hated their progeny and them like the pestilence.

"I hope to speak to you with open heart at Berlin. You may think, too, how I shall be embarrassed in having to act the lover without being it, and to feign a passion for mute ugliness; for I have not much faith in Count Seckendorf's taste in this article. Monsieur, once more get this princess to learn by heart the *Ecole des Maris* and the *Ecole des Femmes*. That will do her much more good than *True Christianity* by the late Arndt. If, beside, she would learn steadiness of humor, learn

> music, become rather too free than too virtuous—ah! then, my dear general, then I should feel some liking for her; and a Colin marrying a Phillis, the couple would be in accordance. But if she is stupid, naturally I renounce the devil and her.
>
> "It is said she has a sister who at least has common sense. Why take the eldest, if so? To the king it must be all one. There is also a princess, Christina Marie, of Eisenach, who would be quite my fit, and whom I should like to try for. In fine, I mean soon to come into your countries, and perhaps will say, like Cæsar, *Veni, vidi, vici*."

In another letter to Grumkow, he writes: "As to what you tell me of the Princess of Mecklenburg, could not I marry her? She would have a dowry of two or three million rubles.[22] Only fancy how I could live with that. I think that project might succeed. I find none of these advantages in the Princess of Bevern, who, as many people even of the duke's court say, is not at all beautiful, speaks almost nothing, and is given to pouting. The good empress has so little money herself that the sums she could afford her niece would be very moderate."

Again, on the 19th of February, 1732, the Crown Prince wrote from Cüstrin to Baron Grumkow. From his letter we make the following extracts:

"Judge, my dear general, if I have been much charmed with the description you give of the abominable object of my desires. For the love of God disabuse the king in regard to her. Let him remember that fools are commonly the most obstinate of creatures. Let the king remember that it is not for himself that he is marrying me, but for *my*self. Nay, he too will have a thousand chagrins to see two persons hating one another, and the most miserable

marriage in the world; to hear their mutual complaints, which will be to him so many reproaches for having fashioned the instrument of our yoke. As a good Christian, let him consider if it is well done to wish to force people, to cause divorces, and to be the occasion of all the sins that an ill-assorted marriage leads us to commit. I am determined to front every thing in the world sooner. Since things are so, you may, in some good way, apprise the Duke of Bevern that, happen what may, I never will have her.

"I have been unhappy all my life, and I think it is my destiny to continue so. One must be patient, and take the time as it comes. Perhaps a sudden tract of good fortune, on the back of all the chagrins I have encountered since I entered this world, would have made me too proud. I have suffered sufficiently, and I will not engage myself to extend my miseries into future times. I have still resources. A pistol-shot can deliver me from my sorrows and my life, and I think a merciful God would not damn me for that, but, taking pity on me, would, in exchange for a life of wretchedness, grant me salvation. This is whitherward despair can lead a young person whose blood is not so quiescent as if he were seventy.

"I have received a letter from the king, all agog about the princess. When his first fire of approbation is spent, you might, praising her all the while, lead him to notice her faults. *Mon Dieu*, has he not already seen what an ill-assorted marriage comes to —my sister of Anspach and her husband, who hate one another like the fire? He has a thousand vexations from it every day.

"And what aim has the king? If it is to assure himself of me, that is not the way. Madam of Eisenach might do it, but a fool not. On the contrary,

it is morally impossible to love the cause of our misery. The king is reasonable, and I am persuaded he will understand this himself."

To his sister, Fritz wrote, about the same time, in a more subdued strain, referring simply to his recent life in Cüstrin: "Thus far my lot has been a tolerably happy one. I have lived quietly in the garrison. My flute, my books, and a few affectionate friends have made my way of life there sufficiently agreeable. They now want to force me to abandon all this in order to marry me to the Princess of Bevern, whom I do not know. Must one always be tyrannized over without any hope of a change? Still, if my dear sister were only here, I should endure all with patience."

Queen Sophie, who still clung pertinaciously to the idea of the English match, was, of course, bitterly hostile to the nuptial alliance with Elizabeth. Indeed, the queen still adhered to the idea of the double English marriage, and exhausted all the arts of diplomacy and intrigue in the endeavor to secure the Princess Amelia for the Crown Prince, and to unite the Prince of Wales to a younger sister of Wilhelmina. Very naturally she cherished feelings of strong antipathy toward Elizabeth, who seemed to be the cause, though the innocent cause, of the frustration of her plans. She consequently spoke of the princess in the most contemptuous manner, and did every thing in her power to induce her son to regard her with repugnance. But nothing could change the inexorable will of the king. Early in March the doomed Princess Elizabeth, a beautiful, artless child of seventeen years, who had seen but little of society, and was frightened in view of the scenes before her, was brought to Berlin to be betrothed to the Crown Prince, whom she had never

seen, of whom she could not have heard any very favorable reports, and from whom she had never received one word of tenderness. The wreck of happiness of this young princess, which was borne so meekly and uncomplainingly, is one of the saddest which history records. Just before her arrival, Fritz wrote to his sister as follows. The letter was dated Berlin, March 6, 1732:

> "MY DEAREST SISTER,—Next Monday comes my betrothal, which will be done just as yours was. The person in question is neither beautiful nor ugly; not wanting in sense, but very ill brought up, timid, and totally behind in fashionable address. That is the candid portrait of the princess. You may judge by that, my dearest sister, if I find her to my taste or not.
>
> "You never can believe, my adorable sister, how concerned I am about your happiness. All my wishes centre there, and every moment of my life I form such wishes. You may see by this that I preserve still that sincere friendship which has united our hearts from our tenderest years. Recognize at least, my dear sister, that you did me a sensible wrong when you suspected me of fickleness toward you, and believed false reports of my listening to tale-bearers—me, who love only you, and whom neither absence nor lying rumors could change in respect of you. At least, don't again believe such things on my score, and never mistrust me till you have had clear proof, or till God has forsaken me, or I have lost my wits.
>
> "Your most humble brother and servant,
> "FREDERICK."

The betrothal took place in the Berlin palace on Monday evening, March 10, 1732. Many

distinguished guests from foreign courts were present. The palace was brilliantly illuminated. The Duke and Duchess of Bevern, with their son, had accompanied their daughter Elizabeth to Berlin. The youthful pair, who were now to be betrothed only, not married, stood in the centre of the grand saloon, surrounded by the brilliant assemblage. With punctilious observance of court etiquette, they exchanged rings, and plighted their mutual faith. The old king embraced the bride tenderly. The queen-mother, hoping that the marriage would never take place, saluted her with repulsive coldness. And, worst of all, the prince himself scarcely treated her with civility. The sufferings of this lovely princess must have been terrible. The testimony to her beauty, her virtues, her amiable character, is uncontradicted. The following well-merited tribute to her worth is from the pen of Lord Dover:



THE BETROTHAL.

“Elizabeth Christina, who became the wife of Frederick the Great, was a princess adorned with all the virtues which most dignify human nature; religious, benevolent, charitable, affectionate, of the strictest and most irreproachable conduct herself, yet indulgent and forgiving for the faults of others. Her whole life was passed in fulfilling the circle of her duties, and, above all, in striving without ceasing to

act in the way she thought would be most pleasing to her husband, whom she respected, admired, and even loved, in spite of his constant neglect of her."

Baron Bielfeld, a member of the court, thus describes her personal appearance: "Her royal highness is tall of stature, and her figure is perfect. Never have I seen a more regular shape in all its proportions. Her neck, her hands, and her feet might serve as models to the painter. Her hair, which I have particularly admired, is of a most beautiful flaxen, but somewhat inclining to white, and shines, when not powdered, like rows of pearls. Her complexion is remarkably fine; and in her large blue eyes vivacity and sweetness are so happily blended as to make them perfectly animated.

"The princess has an open countenance; her eyebrows are neat and regular; her nose is small and angular, but very elegantly defined; and her coral lips and well-turned neck are equally admirable. Goodness is strongly marked in her countenance; and we may say, from her whole figure, that the Graces have exerted themselves in forming a great princess. Her highness talks but little, especially at table, but all she says is sterling sense. She appears to have an uncommon genius, which she ornaments by the continual study of the best French authors."

The reception of the princess was so cruel, by Queen Sophie and her younger daughter Charlotte, that the inexperienced maiden of but seventeen summers must have been perfectly wretched. But she could only bear her anguish in silence. There was nothing for her to say, and nothing for her to do. She was led, by resistless powers, a victim to the sacrifice.

About three weeks after this sad betrothal, Fritz

wrote to his sister Wilhelmina, under date of Berlin, March 24, 1732, as follows:

"God be praised, my dearest sister, that you are better. Nobody can love you more tenderly than I do. As to the Princess of Bevern, the queen bids me answer that you need not style her 'Highness,' but that you may write to her quite as to an indifferent princess. As to 'kissing the hands,' I assure you I have not kissed them nor will kiss them. They are not pretty enough to tempt me that way.

"Believe, my charming sister, that never brother in the world loved with such tenderness a sister so charming as mine."

The betrothed princess, bewildered, wounded, heart-broken, returned with her parents to her home, there to await the consummation of her sacrifice by being married to a man who had never addressed to her a loving word, and who, in his heart, had resolved never to receive her as his wife. The Crown Prince, unfeeling and reckless, returned to his dissolute life in garrison at Ruppin. The queen continued an active correspondence with England, still hoping to break the engagement of her son with Elizabeth, and to secure for him the Princess Amelia.

Ruppin, where the Crown Prince continued to reside for several years, was a small, dull town of about two thousand inhabitants. The only life it exhibited was found in the music and drillings of the garrison. The only important event in its history was the removal of the Crown Prince there. Of what is called society there was none. The hamlet was situated in the midst of a flat, marshy country, most of it quite uncultivated. The region abounded in peat bogs, and dark, still lakes, well stocked with fish.

A comfortable house, with garden and summer-house, was provided for the Crown Prince. He occasionally gave a dinner-party to his brother officers; and from the summer-house rockets were thrown into the sky, to the great gratification of the rustic peasantry.

Both father and son had become by this time fully satisfied that their tastes and characters were so different that it was not best for them to live near each other. The prince spent much of his time with his flute. He also engaged in quite a wide range of reading to occupy the listless hours. Works of the most elevated and instructive character especially interested him, such as history, biography, moral and intellectual philosophy, and polite literature in its higher branches of poetry and the drama. “What mankind have done and been in this world,” writes Carlyle, “and what the wisest men, poetical or other, have thought about mankind and their world, this is what he evidently had the appetite for—appetite insatiable, which lasted him to the very end of his days.”

It is unquestionable that the mental discipline acquired by this elevated course, to which he consecrated so diligently his hours, prepared him for the wonderful career upon which he soon entered, and enabled him to act with efficiency which filled Europe with his renown.

It appears, moreover, that Fritz devoted himself very assiduously to his military duties, earnestly studying the art of war, and making himself familiar with the achievements of the most renowned commanders. His frugal father allowed him but a very meagre income for a prince—not above four thousand five hundred dollars a year. With this sum

it was scarcely possible to keep up even the appearance of such an establishment as belonged to his rank. Such glimpses as we get of his moral and social developments during this period are not favorable. He paid no respect to the claims of religion, and was prone to revile Christianity and its advocates. He was particularly annoyed if the chaplain uttered, in his sermons, any sentiments which the prince thought had a bearing against the sensual indulgences and the wild amusements of himself and his companions. On one occasion the chaplain said in his sermon, “There was Herod, who had Herodias to dance before him, and he gave her John the Baptist’s head for her pains.”

The prince assumed to make a personal application of this. Herod meant the Crown Prince; Herodias, his boon companions; and John the Baptist was the chaplain. To punish the offender, the prince, with several brother officers, went at night, smashed the windows of the chaplain, and threw in a shower of fire-crackers upon him and his wife, who was in delicate health, driving them in dismay out into the stable-yard. The stern old king was very indignant at this conduct. Grumkow affirms, we hope falsely, that the prince threw the whole charge upon his associate officers, and that they were punished for the deed, while he escaped.

Thus the summer of 1732 passed away. In November Wilhelmina returned from Baireuth to Berlin on a visit. She remained at home for ten months, leaving her babe, Frederica, at Baireuth. There must have been some urgent reason to have induced her to make this long visit, for her reception, by both father and mother, was far from cordial. Neither of them had been really in favor of the

match with the young prospective Margraf of Baireuth, but had yielded to it from the force of circumstances. The journey to Berlin was long and cold. Her mother greeted her child with the words, “What do you want here? What is a mendicant like you come hither for?” The next day her father, who had been upon a journey, came home. His daughter had been absent for two years. And yet this strange father addressed her in the following cruel and sarcastic words:

“Ah! here you are. I am glad to see you.” Then, taking a light, he carefully examined her from head to foot. After a moment’s silence, he added, “How changed you are! I am sorry for you, on my word. You have not bread to eat, and but for me you might go a-begging. I am a poor man myself; not able to give you much; will do what I can. I will give you now and then twenty or thirty shillings, as my affairs permit. It will always be something to assuage your want. And you, madam,” turning to the queen, “will sometimes give her an old dress, for the poor child hasn’t a shift to her back.”

This merciless banter from her parents cut the unhappy princess to the heart. With the utmost difficulty she refrained from bursting into convulsive crying. Her husband seems to have been a kind man, inspired with true and tender affection for his wife. But much of the time he was necessarily absent on regimental duty. The old Marquis of Baireuth, her husband’s father, was penurious, irascible, and an inebriate. Wilhelmina often suffered for the necessaries of life. There seemed to be no refuge for her. The home of her step-parents was unendurable, and the home of her childhood was still more so. Few and far between must have been the joys which

visited her crushed heart.

A few days after her arrival at Berlin, Fritz, on short leave of absence, ran over from Ruppin, and had a brief interview with his sister, whom he had not seen since her marriage. The royal family supped together, with the exception of the king, who was absent. At the table the conversation turned upon the future princess royal, Elizabeth. The queen said, addressing Wilhelmina, and fixing her eyes on Fritz,

"Your brother is in despair at the idea of marrying her. And he is not wrong. She is an actual fool. She can only answer whatever is said to her by *yes* or *no*, accompanied by a silly laugh, which is painful to hear."

Charlotte added, in terms still more bitter and unpardonable, "Your majesty is not yet aware of all her merit. I was one morning at her toilet. I remarked that she is deformed. Her gown is stuffed on one side, and she has one hip higher than the other." The cruel girl even went so far as to accuse the princess of suffering from loathsome ulcers. This discourse was uttered in a loud voice, in presence of the domestics. Fritz was evidently greatly annoyed, and blushed deeply, but said nothing. Immediately after supper he retired. Wilhelmina soon followed him, and they met again privately in Wilhelmina's room. The princess asked her brother how he was now getting along with his father. He replied,

"My situation changes every moment. Sometimes I am in favor, sometimes in disgrace. My chief happiness consists in my being absent from him. I lead a quiet and tranquil life with my regiment at Ruppin. Study and music are my principal occupations. I have built me a house there, and laid out a garden where I can read and walk about."

"Then," writes Wilhelmina, "as to his bride, I begged him to tell me candidly if the portrait the queen and my sister had been making of her were the true one."

"We are alone," Fritz replied, "and I will conceal nothing from you. The queen, by her miserable intrigues, has been the source of our misfortunes. Scarcely were you gone when she began again with England. She wished to substitute our sister Charlotte for you, and to contrive her marriage with the Prince of Wales.

"You may easily imagine that she used every endeavor for the success of her plan, and also to marry me to the English Princess Amelia. The king was informed of this design from its commencement. He was much nettled at these fresh intrigues, which have caused many quarrels between the queen and him. Seckendorf finally took part in the affair, and counseled the king to make an end of all these plans by concluding my marriage with the Princess of Bevern.

"The queen can not console herself for this reverse. She vents her despair in the abuse of that poor princess. She wanted me to refuse the marriage decidedly, and told me that she should not mind my quarreling again with the king provided I would only show firmness, in which case she would be well able to support me. I would not follow her advice, and declared to her plainly that I did not choose to incur the displeasure of my father, which had already caused me so much suffering.

"With regard to the princess herself, I do not dislike her as much as I pretend. I affect not to be able to bear her, in order to make the more merit of my obedience to the king. She is pretty—a

complexion of lily and rose. Her features are delicate, and her whole face is that of a beautiful person. She has no breeding, and dresses ill. But I flatter myself that when she comes here you will have the goodness to assist in forming her. I recommend her to you, my dear sister; and I hope you will take her under your protection."

On Monday, the 8th of June, 1733, the Crown Prince left Ruppin, and, joining his father and mother, set out, with a suitable retinue, for the ducal palace of Salzdahlum, in Brunswick, where the marriage ceremony was to be solemnized. Fritz was twenty-one years of age. Elizabeth was not quite eighteen. The wedding took place at noon of Friday, the 12th, in the beautiful chapel of the palace, with the usual display of splendor and rejoicing. The mansion, situated a few miles from Wolfenbüttel, was renowned for its gardens and picture-galleries, and was considered one of the finest in Europe.

The ceremony was performed by the Reverend Johann Lorenz Mosheim, favorably known throughout Christendom for his treatise upon Ecclesiastical History. Immediately after the nuptial benediction had been pronounced, Fritz wrote as follows to Wilhelmina:

"Salzdahlum, Noon, June 12, 1733.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—A minute since the whole ceremony was finished. God be praised, it is over. I hope you will take it as a mark of my friendship that I give you the first news of it. I hope that I shall have the honor to see you again soon, and to assure you, my dear sister, that I am wholly yours. I write in great haste, and add nothing that is merely formal. Adieu.

"FREDERICK."

The queen behaved very unamiably, "plunged in black melancholy," and treating her new daughter-in-law with great contempt. There have been many sad weddings, but this was surely one of the saddest. Frederick had often declared that he never would receive the princess as his wife. In the evening, just after the newly-married couple had retired to their room, through the arrangement of the prince, a false alarm of fire was raised by some of his friends. This furnished him with the opportunity to rush from the apartment. He did not return. Ever after he saw the princess but unfrequently, treating her with cold politeness when they met, though on public occasions giving her, with all external forms of civility, the position of honor to which, as his wedded wife, she was entitled.

It was apparently easy for the Crown Prince to relinquish Amelia. But the English princess, being very unhappy at home, had fixed her affections upon Frederick with the most romantic tenderness. In beauty of person, in chivalric reputation, in exalted rank, he was every thing an imaginative maiden could have desired. She regarded him probably as, in heart, true to her. He had often sent his protestations to the English court that he would never marry any one but Amelia. Though the marriage ceremony had been performed with Elizabeth, he recognized only its legal tie. Poor Amelia was heart-crushed. Earth had no longer any joys for her. She never married, but wore the miniature of the prince upon her breast for the rest of her days. We have no record of the weary years during which grief was consuming her life. Her eyelids became permanently swollen with weeping. And when, at the age of sixty, she died, the

miniature of the Crown Prince was still found resting upon her true and faithful heart. Amelia and Elizabeth—how sad their fate! Through no fault of their own, earth was to them both truly a vale of tears. The only relief from the contemplation of the terrible tragedies of earth is found in the hope that the sufferers may find compensation in a heavenly home.

On Tuesday, the 16th, the King and Queen of Prussia left Salzdahlum to return to Potsdam. At the close of the week the Crown Prince and his bride, escorted by a brilliant retinue of Brunswick notabilities, set out on their return. In most of the intervening towns they were received with great pomp. On the 27th, the last day of the next week, the bridal pair had a grand entrance into Berlin. The troops were all out upon parade. The clang of bells, the roar of cannon, and peals of martial music filled the air. All the inhabitants of Berlin and the surrounding region were in the streets, which were spanned by triumphal arches, and garlanded with flowers. Gladly would the princess have exchanged all this for one loving word from her husband. But that word was not uttered. Two days before the grand reception at Berlin the princess arrived at Potsdam. Here Wilhelmina, for the first time, met her cruelly-wronged and heart-crushed sister-in-law. In the following terms she describes the interview:

“The king led the princess into the queen’s apartment. Then seeing, after she had saluted us all, that she was much heated and her hair deranged, he bade my brother take her to her own room. I followed them thither. My brother said to her, introducing me,

“‘This is a sister I adore, and to whom I am

obliged beyond measure. She has the goodness to promise me that she will take care of you and help you with her good counsel. I wish you to respect her beyond even the king and queen, and not to take the least step without her advice. Do you understand?'

"I embraced the Princess Royal," Wilhelmina continues, "and gave her every assurance of my attachment. But she remained like a statue, not answering a word. Her people not being come, I arranged her hair and readjusted her dress a little, without the least sign of thanks or any answer to all my caressings. My brother got impatient at last, and said aloud,

"'Devil's in the blockhead! Thank my sister, then?'

"She made me a courtesy on the model of that of Agnes in the *Ecole des Femmes*. I took her back to the queen's apartment, little edified by such a display of talent."

It is probable that the princess, in the strangeness of her position, very young and inexperienced, and insulted by cruel neglect, in the freshness of her great grief dared not attempt to utter a syllable, lest her voice should break in uncontrollable sobbings. The Crown Prince returned to Ruppin, leaving the princess at Berlin. Charles, the heir-apparent to the ducal crown of Brunswick, and brother of the Princess Elizabeth, about a week after the arrival of the princess in Berlin, was married to Fritz's sister Charlotte—that same wicked Charlotte who had flirted with Wilhelmina's intended, and who had so shamelessly slandered the betrothed of her brother. Several fêtes followed these marriages, with the usual concomitants of enjoyment and disappointment. Wilhelmina thus describes one of

them:

"The next day there was a great promenade. We were all in phaetons, dressed out in our best. All the nobility followed in carriages, of which there were eighty-five. The king, in a Berline, led the procession. He had beforehand ordered the round we were to take, and very soon fell asleep. There came on a tremendous storm of wind and rain, in spite of which we continued our procession at a foot's pace. It may easily be imagined what state we were in. We were as wet as if we had been in the river. Our hair hung about our ears, and our gowns and head-dresses were destroyed. We got out at last, after three hours' rain, at Monbijou, where there was to be a great illumination and ball. I never saw any thing so comical as all these ladies, looking like so many Xantippes, with their dresses sticking to their persons. We could not even dry ourselves, and were obliged to remain all the evening in our wet clothes."

CHAPTER VIII.

DEVELOPMENTS OF CHARACTER.

The Castle at Reinsberg.—Slender Purses of Fritz and Wilhelmina.—Liberality of Fritz.—The Ball at Monbijou.—Adventures of Fritz and Wilhelmina.—Letters.—The Interview.—Anecdote of the King.—Wilhelmina's Account of her Brother.—Mental and Physical Maladies of the King.—Frederick's cruel Neglect of his Wife.—Daily Habits of the young Prince.—The shameful Carousal.

ABOUT six miles from Ruppin there was the village of Reinsberg, containing about one thousand inhabitants, clustered around an ancient dilapidated castle. Frederick was with his regiment in Ruppin. The Princess Royal, his wife, resided in Berlin. There was an ostensible reason for this separation in the fact that there was no suitable mansion for the royal couple at Ruppin. The castle, with its extensive grounds, belonged to a French refugee. The king purchased it, and assigned it to his son. As the whole estate was in a condition of extreme dilapidation, Frederick immediately commenced improvements and repairs. The building, the gardens, the forests, and the surrounding lands rapidly assumed a new aspect, until Reinsberg became one of the most attractive spots in Europe.

The situation of the castle was admirable. A beautiful sheet of water bathed its walls on one side, while a dense forest of oaks and beeches rose like an amphitheatre upon the other. The whole edifice assumed the form of a square, with two towers connected by a double colonnade, richly ornamented with vases and statuary. Over the majestic portal was inscribed the motto, *Frederico, tranquillitatem colenti*.[23] The interior of the palace, in the magnitude and arrangement of the apartments, their decoration and furniture, was still more imposing than the exterior. The grand saloon was a superb hall, the walls lined with mirrors and costly marbles, and the ceiling painted by the most accomplished artists of the day. The garden, with its avenues, and bowers, and labyrinth of bloom, extended the whole length of the lake, upon whose waters two beautiful barges floated, ever ready, under the impulse of sails or oars, to convey parties on excursions of pleasure.

This immense building presented a front of nearly a thousand feet; for, being in a quadrangular form, it fronted four ways. It was all faced with hammered stone. In one of the towers this bachelor husband constructed his library. It was a magnificent apartment, provided with every convenience, and decorated with the most tasteful adornments which the arts could furnish. Its windows commanded an enchanting prospect of the lake, with its tufted islands and the densely wooded heights beyond.

The apartments prepared for the Princess Royal were also very magnificent. Her parlor was twenty feet high. It had six windows, three opening in the main front toward the town, and the other three opening toward the interior court. The spaces between the windows were covered with immense

mirrors, so arranged as to display the ceiling, beautifully painted by one of the finest artists of the day. The artist had spread his colors with such delicacy and skill, so exquisitely blending light and shade, that the illusion was almost perfect. The spectator felt that the real sky, with its fleecy clouds and infinite depth of blue, overarched him.

Three years were occupied in enlarging and decorating this palace. In the mean time the Princess Elizabeth resided in Berlin, or in a small country house provided for her at Schönhausen. The Crown Prince occasionally visited her, always treating her with the marked respect due a lady occupying her high position.

The king was by no means pleased with the costly luxuries with which his son was surrounding himself. But he had, in a very considerable degree, lost his control over the Crown Prince. Frederick was now twenty-one years of age. He had married the niece of the Emperor of Germany. The emperor had probably once saved his life, and was disposed particularly to befriend him, that he might secure his alliance when he should become King of Prussia. Frederick was now the rising sun, and his father the setting luminary. All the courts in Europe were interested in winning the regards of the Crown Prince.

The king, as we have mentioned, allotted to his son a very moderate income, barely enough for the necessary expenses of his establishment. But the prince borrowed money in large sums from the Empress of Germany, from Russia, from England. It was well known that, should his life be preserved, he would soon have ample means to repay the loan. Frederick William probably found it expedient to

close his eyes against these transactions. But he did not attempt to conceal the chagrin with which he regarded the literary and voluptuous tastes of his son.

"When I am dead," he said, petulantly, "you will see Berlin full of madmen and freethinkers, and the sort of people who walk about the streets."

Wilhelmina's purse was generally empty, and she was often in great want of money. Her penurious father had married her below her rank that he might escape settling upon her a dowry. Though her husband was heir to the marquisate of Baireuth, his father was still living. That father was a drunkard and a miser. It seems that the son received but little more than his wages as colonel in the army. Wilhelmina records that one day her brother Fritz came to her and said,

"Seckendorf" (the embassador of the emperor) "sometimes sends me money, of which I have great need. I have already taken measures that he should procure some for you. My *galleons* arrived yesterday, and I will divide their contents with you."

He then gave her a thousand crowns. Wilhelmina manifested a little natural reluctance in receiving the money. But he shrugged his shoulders and said,

"Take them freely. The empress sends me as much money as I wish. I assure you that by this means I get rid of the demon of poverty as soon as I find him approaching me."

"The empress, then," added Wilhelmina, "is a better exorcist than other priests."

"Yes," the Crown Prince replied; "and I promise you that she will drive away your demon as well as

mine."

Poland, ever in turmoil, was at this time choosing a king. The emperor advocated the claims of August of Saxony. France urged Stanislaus, a Polish noble, whose daughter had married the French dauphin. War ensued between France and Germany. Frederick William became the ally of the emperor. An army of ten thousand men, admirably equipped and organized, was upon the march for the Rhine, to act with the emperor against France. The Crown Prince was very eager to join the expedition, and obtained permission to do so.

On the evening of the 29th of June, 1734, there was a grand ball at the little palace of Monbijou. At three o'clock in the morning the Crown Prince changed his ball-dress for a military suit, and with his staff set out at full speed for the seat of war. They traveled in carriages, by post, night and day, hastening to take part in the siege of Philipsburg. A little after midnight on the morning of the 2d of July, they reached Hof, having traveled two hundred miles, and having two hundred miles still farther to go. At Hof the prince was within thirty-five miles of Baireuth, to which place Wilhelmina had some time before returned. He was very anxious to see her. But his father had strictly prohibited his going through Baireuth, under the assumption that it would occasion loss of time. Frederick made arrangements with Wilhelmina, who was in a very delicate state of health, to meet him at Berneck, about twelve miles from Baireuth. But, unfortunately, one of the carriages which conveyed the Crown Prince and his companions lost a wheel, which detained them several hours. The commands of the king were explicit that the Crown Prince should not be

separated from the rest of the company.

Thus Wilhelmina, upon reaching Berneck, according to appointment, did not find her brother there, and could hear nothing from him. The prince, upon his arrival at Hof, wrote as follows to his sister

"Hof, July 2, 1734, not long after 4 A.M.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Here I am, within six leagues of a sister I love, and I have to decide that it will be impossible to see her after all. I have never so lamented the misfortune of not depending on myself as at this moment. The king being very sour sweet on my score, I dare not risk the least thing. A week from next Monday, when he arrives himself, I should be queerly treated in the camp if I were found to have disobeyed orders.

"The queen commands me to give you a thousand regards from her. She appeared much affected at your illness. But I can not warrant you how sincere it was, for she is totally changed, and I no longer comprehend her. She has done me all the hurt with the king she could. As to Sophie, she is no longer the same. She approves all the king says or does, and is charmed with her big clown of a bridegroom.

"The king is more difficult than ever. He is content with nothing. He has no gratitude for whatever favors one can do him. As to his health, it is one day better, another worse; but the legs they are always swelled. Judge what my joy must be to get out of that turpitude; for the king will only stay a fortnight at most in camp.

"Adieu! my adorable sister. I am so tired I can not stir, having left on Tuesday night, or rather Wednesday morning, at three o'clock, from a ball

at Monbijou, and arrived here this Friday morning at four. I recommend myself to your gracious remembrance, and am, for my own part, till death, dearest sister, your

FREDERICK."

In the mean time, Wilhelmina, disappointed in not finding her brother, wrote to him the following account of her adventures:

"I got to Berneck at ten. The heat was excessive. I found myself quite worn out with the little journey I had taken. I alighted at the house which had been got ready for my brother. We waited for him, and in vain waited till three in the afternoon. At three we lost patience; had dinner served without him. While we were at table there came on a frightful thunder-storm. I have witnessed nothing so terrible. The thunder roared and reverberated among the rocky cliffs which begirdle Berneck, and it seemed as if the world were going to perish. A deluge of rain succeeded the thunder.

"It was four o'clock, and I could not understand what had become of my brother. I had sent out several persons on horseback to get tidings of him, and none of them came back. At length, in spite of all my prayers, the hereditary prince[24] himself would go in search. I was in cruel agitations. These cataracts of rain are very dangerous in the mountain countries. The roads get suddenly overflowed, and accidents often happen. I thought for certain one had happened to my brother, or to the hereditary prince.

"At last, about nine, somebody brought word that my brother had changed his route and gone to Culmbach, there to stay overnight. I was for setting out thither. Culmbach is twenty miles from Berneck.

But the roads are frightful, and full of precipices. Every body rose in opposition. And whether I would or not they put me into the carriage for Himmelkron, which is only about ten miles off. We had like to have got drowned on the road, the waters were so swollen. The horses could not cross but by swimming.

"I arrived at last about one in the morning. I instantly threw myself on a bed. I was like to die of weariness, and in mortal terror that something had happened to my brother or the hereditary prince. The latter relieved me on his own score. He arrived at last about four o'clock; had still no news of my brother. I was beginning to doze a little, when they came to inform me that M. von Knobelsdorf wished to speak to me from the Prince Royal. I darted out of bed and ran to him."

Knobelsdorf was the bearer of a second letter from the Crown Prince. The first had not reached her. Frederick, having taken an hour or two of sleep at Hof, rose much refreshed, and, continuing his journey about fifteen miles farther, wrote this second letter as follows to his sister:

"Munchberg, July 2, 1734.

MY DEAREST SISTER,—I am in despair that I can not satisfy my impatience and my duty, to throw myself at your feet this day. But, alas! dear sister, it does not depend upon me. We poor princes are obliged to wait here till our generals come up. We dare not go along without them. They broke a wheel in Gera. Hearing nothing of them since, we are absolutely forced to wait here. Judge in what a mood I am, and what sorrow must be mine. Express order not to go by Baireuth or Anspach. Forbear, dear sister, to torment me on

things not depending on myself at all.

"I waver between hope and fear of paying my court to you. I hope it might still be at Berneck, if you could contrive a road into the Nürnberg highway again, avoiding Baireuth; otherwise I dare not go. The bearer, Captain Knobelsdorf, will apprise you of every particular. Let him settle something that may be possible. This is how I stand at present: instead of having to expect some favor from the king, I get nothing but chagrin. But what is more cruel upon me than all is that you are ill. God, in his grace, be pleased to help you, and restore that health which I so much wish for you.

FREDERICK."

Arrangements were made for them to meet at eight o'clock Saturday morning, at the Lake House, situated on a small island in a beautiful artificial sheet of water a couple of miles north of Baireuth. The prince thus obeyed the letter of the order not to go to Baireuth. The following account of the interview which ensued is from the pen of Wilhelmina:

"My brother overwhelmed me with caresses, but found me in so pitiable a state that he could not restrain his tears. I was not able to stand on my limbs, and felt like to faint every moment, so weak was I. He told me that the king was very angry at the margraf for not letting his son make the campaign. I told him all the margraf's reasons, and added surely they were good, in respect of my dear husband.

"'Well,' said he, 'let him quit soldiering then, and give back his regiment to the king. But quiet yourself as to the fears you may have about him if he do; for I know, by certain information, that there will be no

blood spilt.'

"The hereditary prince came in while we were talking, and earnestly entreated my brother to get him away from Baireuth. They went to a window and talked a long time together. My brother told me he would write a letter to the margraf, and give him such reasons in favor of the campaign that he doubted not it would turn the scale. He promised to obtain the king's express leave to stop at Baireuth on his return, after which he went away. It was the last time I saw him on the old footing with me. He has much changed since then. We returned to Baireuth, where I was so ill that for three days they did not think I should get over it."



FREDERICK AND WILHELMINA.

After this interview the Crown Prince hurried away on his route to Philipsburg. He reached Nürnberg that night, where he wrote the following brief but affectionate letter to his sister:

"Nürnberg, July 3, 1734.

"MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—It would be impossible to leave this place without signifying,

> dearest sister, my lively gratitude for all the marks of favor you showed me in the House on the Lake. The highest of all that it was possible to do was that of procuring me the satisfaction of paying my court to you. I beg millions of pardons for so incommoding you, dearest sister, but I could not help it, for you know my sad circumstances well enough. I entreat you write me often about your health. Adieu, my incomparable and dear sister. I am always the same to you, and will remain so till my death.
>
> FREDERICK."

Early on the morning of the 4th the prince left Nürnberg, and reached the camp at Weisenthal on the 7th. Here the imperial and Prussian troops were collected, who had been sent to attempt to raise the siege of Philipsburg. But the French lines investing the city were so strong that Prince Eugene, in command of the imperial army, did not venture to make an attack. The Crown Prince almost immediately rode out to reconnoitre the lines of the foe. As he was returning through a strip of forest a cannonade was opened, and the balls went crashing around him through the trees. Pride of character probably came to the aid of constitutional courage. The prince did not in the slightest degree quicken his pace. Not the least tremor could be perceived in his hand as he held the reins. He continued conversing with the surrounding generals in perfect tranquillity, as if unconscious of any danger.

A week after the arrival of the prince the Prussian king entered the camp. As it was expected that some remarkable feats of war would be exhibited in the presence of the king, under the leadership of the renowned Prince Eugene, a very

large assemblage of princes and other distinguished personages was collected on the field. The king remained for a month, dwelling in a tent among his own troops, and sharing all their hardships. He, with his son, attended all the councils of war. Still no attempt was made to relieve Philipsburg. The third day after the king's arrival the city surrendered to the French. The campaign continued for some time, with unavailing manœuvring on both sides of the Rhine; but the Crown Prince saw but little active service. About the middle of August the king left the camp to return home. His health was seriously impaired, and alarming symptoms indicated that he had not long to live. His journey was slow and painful. Gout tortured him. Dropsy threatened to strangle him. He did not reach home until the middle of September. The alarming state of the king's health added very much to the importance of the Crown Prince. It was evident that ere long he must come into power. The following characteristic anecdote is related of the king during this illness:

One evening, being too unwell to read his usual devotions, he called upon his *valet de chambre* to read prayers. In the prayer occurred the words, "May God bless thee." The servant, not deeming it respectful to use *thee* in reference to the king, took the liberty to change the phrase, and read it, "May God bless *you*." The king, exasperated, hurled something at the head of the speaker, exclaiming, "It is not so; read it again." The terrified servant, not conceiving in what he had done wrong, read again, "May God bless you." The irascible monarch, having nothing else he could grasp, took off his night-cap and threw it into the man's face, exclaiming, "It is not so; read it over again." The servant, frightened almost out of his senses, read for the third time, "May God bless you."

"*Thee*, rogue," shouted the king. "'May God bless *thee*.' Dost thou not know, rascal, that, in the eyes of God, I am only a miserable rascal like thyself?"

Early in October, the Crown Prince, not socially or morally improved by his campaigning, set out on his return to Berlin. He was by no means insensible to the fact that the crown of Prussia would soon rest upon his brow. On the 5th he called again upon his sister at Baireuth. She was sick and very sad. The following is Wilhelmina's account of the interview:

"My brother arrived on the 5th of October. He seemed to me in ill humor. To break off conversation with me, he said that he had to write to the king and queen. I ordered him pen and paper. He wrote in my room, and spent more than a good hour in writing a couple of letters of a line or two each. He then had all the court, one after another, introduced to him; said nothing to any of them; looked merely with a mocking air at them; after which we went to dinner.



THE KING AND HIS SERVANT.

“Here his whole conversation consisted in quizzing whatever he saw, and repeating to me, above a hundred times over, the words ‘little prince,’ ‘little court.’ I was shocked, and could not understand how he had changed so suddenly toward me. The etiquette of all courts in the empire is, that nobody who has not at least the rank of captain can sit at a prince’s table. My brother put a lieutenant there who was in his suite, saying, ‘A king’s lieutenant is as good as a margraf’s minister.’ I swallowed this incivility, and showed no sign.

“After dinner, being alone with me, he said, ‘Our sire is approaching his end. He will not live out this

month. I know that I have made you great promises, but I am not in the condition to keep them. I will leave you the half of the sum which my predecessor lent you. I think that you will have every reason to be satisfied with that.'

"I answered that my regard for him had never been of an interested nature; that I would never ask any thing of him but the continuance of his friendship; and that I did not wish for one penny if it would in the least inconvenience him.

"'No, no,' said he; 'you shall have those one hundred thousand thalers. I have destined them for you. People will be much surprised to see me act quite differently from what they had expected. They imagine I am going to lavish all my treasures, and that money will become as common as pebbles in Berlin. But they will find that I know better. I mean to increase my army, and to leave all other things on the old footing. I will have every consideration for the queen, my mother, and will satiate her with honors. But I do not mean that she shall meddle with my affairs. If she try it she will find so.'

"I fell from the clouds on hearing all that, and knew not if I were sleeping or waking. He then questioned me on the affairs of this country. I gave him the detail of them. He said to me, 'When your goose of a father-in-law dies, I advise you to break up the whole court, and reduce yourselves to the footing of a private gentleman's establishment in order to pay your debts. In real truth, you have no need of so many people. And you must try to reduce the wages of those whom you can not help keeping. You have been accustomed to live, at Berlin, with a table of four dishes. That is all you want here. I will invite you now and then to Berlin, which will spare

table and house expenses.'

"For a long time my heart had been swelling. I could not restrain my tears at hearing all these indignities. 'Why do you cry?' said he. 'Ah! ah! I see that you are in low spirits. We must dissipate that dark humor. The music waits us. I will drive that fit out of you by an air or two on the flute.' He gave me his hand and led me into the other room. I sat down to the harpsichord, which I inundated with my tears."

On the fourth day after the arrival of the Crown Prince at Baireuth, a courier came with a letter from the queen conjuring him to return immediately, as the king was growing worse and worse. Frederick immediately hastened to Potsdam, and on the 12th of October entered the sick-chamber of his father in the palace there. He seems to have thought nothing of his wife, who was at Berlin. We have no evidence that he wrote to her during his absence, or that he visited her upon his return. For four months the king remained a great sufferer in Potsdam, trembling between life and death. It was often with great difficulty that he could breathe. He was impatient and irritable in the extreme. As he was rolled about in his Bath chair, he would petulantly cry out, "Air! air!" as if his attendants were to blame for his shortness of breath. The distress from the dropsy was very great. "If you roll the king a little fast," writes an attendant, "you hear the water jumble in his body." The Crown Prince was deeply affected in view of the deplorable condition of his father, and wept convulsively. The stern old king was stern to the end. He said one day to Frederick, "If you begin at the wrong end with things, and all go topsy-turvy after I am gone, I will laugh at you out of my grave."

Quite unexpectedly, the latter part of January the virulence of the king's complicated diseases of gout, dropsy, and ulcers seemed to abate. Though but forty-seven years of age, he was, from his intemperate habits, an infirm old man. Though he lingered along for many months, he was a great sufferer. His unamiability filled the palace with discomfort.

Frederick returned to Ruppin. Though he treated his wife with ordinary courtesy, as an honored member of the court, his attentions were simply such as were due to every lady of the royal household. It does not appear that she accompanied him to Ruppin or to Reinsberg at that time, though the apartments to which we have already alluded were subsequently provided for her at Reinsberg, where she was ever treated with the most punctilious politeness. Lord Dover says that after the accession of the prince to the throne he went to see his wife but once a year, on her birthday. She resided most of the time at Berlin, surrounded by a quiet little court there. However keen may have been her sufferings in view of this cruel neglect, we have no record that any word of complaint was ever heard to escape her lips. "This poor Crown Princess, afterward queen," says Carlyle, "has been heard, in her old age, reverting in a touching, transient way to the glad days she had at Reinsberg. Complaint openly was never heard of her in any kind of days; but these, doubtless, were the best of her life."



FRITZ IN HIS LIBRARY.

Frederick had become very ambitious of high intellectual culture and of literary renown. He gathered around him a numerous class of scholarly men, and opened an extensive correspondence with the most distinguished philosophers, poets, and historians all over Europe. He commenced and persevered in a course of very rigorous study, rising at an early hour, and devoting the unbroken morning to intellectual pursuits. The renowned men of earth have not attained their renown but by untiring exertions. For six or seven consecutive hours every day the prince was busy in his library, when no one was allowed to interrupt him. He wrote to a friend about this time:

"Having been not quite well lately, my physician has advised me to take more exercise than I have hitherto done. This has obliged me to mount my horse and take a gallop every morning. But, in order not to be obliged on that account to change my ordinary way of life, I get up earlier, in order to regain on the one hand what I lose on the other."

He rose about five o'clock. After a horseback ride of an hour he devoted the mornings to his books. The remainder of the day was given to society, music, and recreation. The following extract from his correspondence throws additional light upon the employment of his time. The letter was addressed to an intimate friend, Baron Von Suhm, of Saxony:

"I think you will not be sorry if I say a few words to you respecting our rural amusements, for with persons who are dear to us we love to enter even into the smallest details. We have divided our occupations into two classes, of which the first consists of what is useful, and the second of what is agreeable. I reckon in the list of the usefuls the study of philosophy, history, and languages. The agreeables are music, the tragedies and comedies which we represent, the masquerades and presents which we give. The serious occupations, however, have always the prerogative of going before the others. And I think I can say that we make a reasonable use of our pleasures, only indulging in them to relieve the mind, and to prevent moroseness and too much philosophic gravity, which is apt not to yield a smile even to the graces."

Again he wrote a few months after, while absent from home: "I set off on the 25th to return to my dear garden at Ruppin. I burn with impatience to see again my vineyards, my cherries, and my melons.

There, tranquil and free from all useless cares, I shall live really for myself. I become every day more avaricious of my time, of which I render an account to myself, and never lose any of it without much regret. My mind is now wholly turned toward philosophy. That study renders me wonderful services, which are repaid by me with affection. I find myself happy because I am more tranquil than formerly. My soul is much less agitated with violent and tumultuous emotions. I suppress the first impulses of my passions, and do not proceed to act upon them till after having well considered the question before me."

Immediately after his return he wrote again: "I am now a peaceable inhabitant of Reinsberg, applying myself to study and reading almost from morning till night. With regard to the news of this world, you will learn them better through the gazetteers than through me. They contain the history of the madness and folly of the great, the wars of some, the quarrels of others, and the childish amusements of all. These news are as little worthy the attention of a man of sense as the quarrels of rats and mice would be."[25]

The king was not at all pleased either with his son's studies or his recreations. Philosophy and literature were as obnoxious to the sturdy old monarch as were music and all amusements save the rough pastime of hunting stags and boars. He was a thorough materialist, having no other thought than to drill his troops and develop the resources of his realm. Beer and tobacco, both of which he used inordinately, were almost his only luxuries. He often growled loudly at what he deemed the coxcombry of his son and companions at Reinsberg, and frequently

threatened to disperse his associates.

But Frederick was now a full-grown man. His heirship to the throne rendered him a power among the courts of Europe. It was doubtful whether he would again submit to a caning. The infirm old king, gouty, dropsical, weakened, and lamed by ulcers, could not conceal from himself that his power, with his energies, was rapidly waning. Indeed, at times, he even talked of abdicating in favor of his son. Whenever there was a transient abatement in his maladies, he roused himself to the utmost, took short journeys, and tried to deceive himself into the belief that he was well again.

The principal companions of Frederick at Reinsberg were gay, pleasure-loving men. Among them were Major Keyserling, a thoughtless young man, full of vivacity, and of very agreeable manners; and M. Jordan, a French young gentleman, formerly a preacher, very amiable, and an author of considerable note. M. Jordan was devotedly attached to the prince, and continued so through life. He gives the following testimony to the good qualities of Frederick:

"It is not the king that I love in him; it is the man. If I considered the dignity and the power of the king, I should only seek to keep myself at a distance from him. But the qualities which are personal to him, both of the heart and of the head, they attach me to him for life, without reserve and without fear."[26]

Lieutenant Chasot, another of his friends, was a French officer who had killed a brother officer in a duel at Philipsburg, and, in consequence, had fled to the Prussian lines. He had brightness of intellect and winning manners, which rendered him a universal

favorite. Captain Knobelsdorf was a distinguished musician and architect. He rendered signal service in enlarging and decorating the chateau at Reinsberg. Baron De Suhm, with whom Frederick kept up a constant correspondence, was then in Saxony, translating for the Crown Prince the philosophy of Wolff. He sent the prince chapter by chapter, with copious notes.

In this assembly of gay young men religion was generally a topic of ridicule. Even Jordan, the ex-preacher, was either willingly or unwillingly borne along by the current. Subsequently, when youth and health had fled, and he was on a sick-bed suffering from lingering disease, he felt the need of those consolations which Christianity alone can give. He wrote, under date of April, 1745, to Frederick, who was then king, and whose friendship continued unabated:

"My complaint increases so much that I no longer even hope to recover from it. I feel strongly, in the situation in which I at present find myself, the necessity of an enlightened religion arising from conviction. Without that, we are the beings on earth most to be pitied. Your majesty will, after my death, do me the justice to testify that if I have combated superstition with vehemence, I have always supported the interests of the Christian religion, though differing from the ideas of some theologians. As it is only possible when in danger to discover the necessity of bravery, so no one can really have the consoling advantage of religion except through sufferings."

It speaks well for Frederick that during this illness, which was long and painful, he almost daily visited at the bedside of his friend, ministering to his

wants with his own hand. After his death the king continued his kindness to the bereaved family. Baron Bielfeld gives the following account of one of the scenes of carousal in which these men engaged, when in the enjoyment of youth and health:

"About a fortnight ago the prince was in a humor of extraordinary gayety at the table. His gayety animated all the rest; and some glasses of Champagne still more enlivened our mirth. The prince, perceiving our disposition, was willing to promote it, and on rising from table, told us that he was determined that we should recommence our jollity at supper.

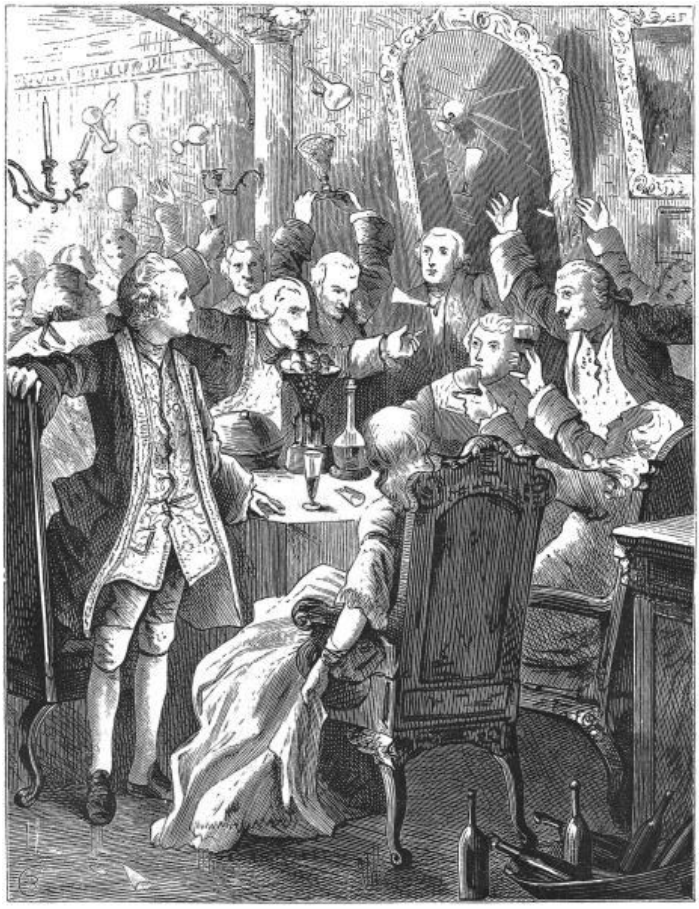
"We were scarcely seated at supper before he began by drinking a number of interesting healths, which there was a necessity of pledging. This first skirmish being over, it was followed by an incessant flow of sallies and repartees. The most contracted countenances became expanded. The gayety was general, even the ladies assisting in promoting our jollity.

"After about two hours I stepped out for a moment into the vestibule. I had placed before me a large glass of water, which the princess, opposite to whom I had the honor to sit, in a vein of mischievous pleasantry, had ordered to be emptied, and had filled it with Sellery wine, which was as clear as rock water. Having already lost my taste, I mixed my wine with wine. Thinking to refresh myself, I became joyous, but it was a kind of joy that leaned toward intoxication.

"To finish my picture—the prince ordered me to come and sit by him. He said many gracious things to me, and let me see into futurity as far as my feeble sight was then capable of discovering. At the same

time, he made me drink bumper after bumper of his Lunelle wine. The rest of the company, however, were not less sensible than I of the effects of the nectar which there flowed in such mighty streams.

“At last, whether by accident or design, the princess broke a glass. This was the signal for our impetuous jollity, and an example that appeared highly worthy of our imitation. In an instant all the glasses flew to the several corners of the room. All the crystals, porcelain, mirrors, branches, bowls, and vases were broken into a thousand pieces. In the midst of this universal destruction, the prince stood, like the man in Horace who contemplates the crush of worlds, with a look of perfect tranquillity.



THE BANQUET.

"To this tumult succeeded a fresh burst of mirth, during which the prince slipped away, and, aided by his pages, retired to his apartment; and the princess immediately followed. The day after this adventure the court was at its last gasp. Neither the prince nor any of the courtiers could stir from their beds."

Baron Bielfeld himself was so intoxicated that, in

attempting to retire, he fell down the grand staircase from top to bottom. He was severely bruised, and was taken up senseless. “After lying about a fortnight in bed,” he writes, “where the prince had the goodness to come every day to see me, and to contribute every thing possible to my cure, I got abroad again.”

Frederick William, through spies, kept himself informed of every thing which was said or done at Reinsberg. Such orgies as the above excited his contempt and abhorrence. But, notwithstanding the above narrative, there is abundant testimony that the prince was not ordinarily addicted to such shameful excesses. The Italian Count Algarotti, distinguished alike for his familiarity with the sciences and his cultivated taste for the fine arts, was an honored guest at Reinsberg. In a letter addressed to Lord Hervey, under date of September 30th, 1739, the count writes:

“What shall I say to you, my lord, of the Prince Royal, the lover and the favorite of the Muses? Several days, which we passed with him in his castle of Reinsberg, seemed to be but a few hours. He is the most intelligent and the most amiable of men. Though I could notice only his private virtues, I can boldly assure you, my lord, that the world will one day admire his royal qualifications, and that when he shall be upon the throne he will show himself to be the greatest of sovereigns. There is all the reason in the world to believe that he will seek out for great men with as much eagerness as his father does for giants.”

Baron Bielfeld gives the following account of the ordinary employments, and the tone of conversation of the prince: “All the employments and all the

pleasures of the prince are those of a man of understanding. He is, at this time, actually engaged in refuting the dangerous political reveries of Machiavel. His conversation at table is charming. He talks much and excellently well. His mind seems to be equal to all sorts of subjects, and his imagination produces on each of them a number of new and just ideas. His genius resembles the fire of the vestals that was never extinct. A decent and polite contradiction is not disagreeable to him. He possesses the rare talent of displaying the wit of others, and of giving them opportunity to shine on those subjects in which they excel. He jests frequently, and sometimes rallies, but never with asperity; and an ingenious retort does not displease him.

"Nothing can be more elegant than this prince's library. It has a view of the lake and gardens. A collection, not very numerous, but well chosen, of the best books in the French language are ranged in glass cases, which are ornamented with carvings and gildings in excellent taste. The portrait of M. De Voltaire occupies an honorable place in this library. He is the favorite author of the prince, who has, in general, a high esteem for good French writers both in prose and verse.

"The evenings are devoted to music. The prince has a concert in his saloon, where no one enters who is not invited, and such invitation is regarded as an extraordinary favor. The prince has commonly performed a sonata and a concert for the flute, on which he plays in the greatest perfection. He fills the flute admirably well, has great agility with the fingers, and a vast fund of music. He composes himself sonatas. I have had the honor of standing behind him more than once while he was playing,

and was charmed with his taste, especially in the *adagio*. He has a continual creation of new ideas."

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEATH OF FREDERICK WILLIAM.

Voltaire and Madame Du Châtelet.—Letter from Frederick to Voltaire.—The Reply.—Visit to the Prince of Orange.—Correspondence.—The Crown Prince becomes a Mason.—Interesting Letter from the Crown Prince.—Petulance and declining Health of the King.—Scenes in the Death-chamber.—Characteristic Anecdotes.—The Dying Scene.

THE Crown Prince had for some time been inspired with an ever-increasing ambition for high intellectual culture. Gradually he was gathering around him, in his retreat at Reinsberg, men of high literary reputation, and was opening correspondence with the most distinguished men of letters in all the adjacent countries.

Voltaire was, at this time, about forty years of age. His renown as a man of genius already filled Europe. He was residing, on terms of the closest intimacy, with Madame Du Châtelet, who had separated from her husband. With congenial tastes and ample wealth they occupied the chateau of Cirey, delightfully situated in a quiet valley in Champagne, and which they had rendered, as Madame testifies, a perfect Eden on earth. It is not always, in the divine government, that sentence

against an evil work is “executed speedily.” Madame Du Châtelet, renowned in the writings of Voltaire as the “divine Emilie,” was graceful, beautiful, fascinating. Her conversational powers were remarkable, and she had written several treatises upon subjects connected with the pure sciences, which had given her much deserved celebrity.

Still it is evident that the serpent was in this Eden. Carlyle writes: “An ardent, aerial, gracefully predominant, and, in the end, somewhat termagant female, this divine Emilie. Her temper, radiant rather than bland, was none of the patientest on occasion. Nor was M. De Voltaire the least of a Job if you came athwart him in a wrong way. I have heard that their domestic symphony was liable to furious flaws; that plates, in presence of the lackeys, actual crockery or metal, have been known to fly from end to end of the dinner-table; nay, they mention ‘knives,’ though only in the way of oratorical action; and Voltaire has been heard to exclaim, ‘Don’t fix those haggard, sidelong eyes on me in that way!’—mere shrillness of pale rage presiding over the scene.”

Voltaire had already written the epic poem the *Henriade*, the history of *Charles XII.*, and several tragedies.

The first letter from Frederick to Voltaire was dated August 8th, 1736. The following extracts will show the spirit of this flattering epistle:

> “MONSIEUR,—Although I have not the satisfaction of knowing you personally, you are not the less known to me through your works. They are treasures of the mind, if I may so express myself; and they reveal to the reader new beauties at every perusal. I think I have recognized in them the character of their ingenious author, who does

honor to our age and to human nature. If ever the dispute on the comparative merits of the moderns and the ancients should be revived, the modern great men will owe it to you, and to you only, that the scale is turned in their favor. With the excellent quality of poet you join innumerable others more or less related to it.

"Monsieur, there is nothing I wish so much as to possess all your writings. Pray do communicate them to me without reserve. If there be among your manuscripts any that you wish to conceal from the eyes of the public, I engage to keep them in profoundest secrecy.

"I should think myself richer in the possession of your works than in that of all the transient goods of fortune.

"You inspire the ambition to follow in your footsteps. But I, how often have I said to myself, unhappy man! throw down a burden which is above thy strength! One can not imitate Voltaire without being Voltaire.

"It is in such moments that I have felt how small are those advantages of birth, those vapors of grandeur, with which vanity would solace us. They amount to little, properly to nothing. Ah! would glory but make use of me to crown your successes!

"If my destiny refuse me the happiness of being able to possess you, may I at least hope one day to see the man whom I have admired so long now from afar, and to assure you, by word of mouth, that I am, with all the esteem and consideration due those who, following the torch of truth for guide, consecrate their labors to the public, Monsieur, your affectionate friend,

"FREDERICK, *Prince Royal of Prussia*."

Voltaire promptly replied to this letter in corresponding terms of flattery. His letter was dated Cirey, August 26th, 1736:

> "MONSEIGNEUR,—A man must be void of all feeling who were not infinitely moved by the letter which your royal highness has deigned to honor me with. My self-love is only too much flattered by it. But my love of mankind, which I have always nourished in my heart, and which, I venture to say, forms the basis of my character, has given me a very much purer pleasure to see that there is now in the world a prince who thinks as a man—a *Philosopher* prince, who will make men happy.
>
> "Permit me to say there is not a man on the earth but owes thanks for the care you take to cultivate, by sound philosophy, a soul that is born for command. Good kings there never were except those who had begun by seeking to instruct themselves; by knowing good men from bad; by loving what was true; by detesting persecution and superstition. No prince, persisting in such thoughts, but might bring back the golden age into his countries.
>
> "Unless one day the tumult of business and the wickedness of men alter so divine a character, you will be worshiped by your people and loved by the whole world. Philosophers, worthy of the name, will flock to your states. The illustrious Queen Christina quitted her kingdom to go in search of the arts. Reign you, Monseigneur, and the arts will come to seek you.
>
> "I will obey your commands as to sending those unpublished pieces. Your criticism will be my reward. It is a price few sovereigns can pay. I am sure of your secrecy. Your virtue and your

intellect must be in proportion. I should indeed consider it a precious happiness to come and pay my court to your royal highness. One travels to Rome to see paintings and ruins. A prince such as you is a much more singular object, worthier of a long journey.

"In whatever corner of the world I may end my life, be assured, Monseigneur, my wishes will be continually for you. My heart will rank itself among your subjects. Your glory will be ever dear to me. I shall wish, May you always be like yourself, and may other kings be like you. I am, with profound respect, your royal highness's most humble

VOLTAIRE."

The correspondence thus commenced was prosecuted with great vigor. It seemed difficult to find language sufficiently expressive of their mutual admiration. Frederick received many of Voltaire's unpublished manuscripts, and sent him many tokens of regard. Some of Frederick's manuscripts Voltaire also examined, and returned with slight corrections and profuse expressions of delight.

In the summer of 1738 the infirm old king undertook a journey to Holland, on a visit of diplomacy to the Prince of Orange. The Crown Prince accompanied him. It does not, however, appear that they had much intercourse with each other on the journey. They spent several days at the beautiful palace of Loo, in Geldern, occupied by the Prince of Orange and his English bride, a niece to his Prussian majesty. The palace was imposing in its architectural structure, containing many gorgeous saloons, and surrounded with beautiful gardens. In a letter which Frederick wrote from Loo to Voltaire,

dated August 6th, we find the following sentiments:

"I write from a place where there lived once a great man,[27] which is now the Prince of Orange's house. The demon of ambition sheds its unhappy poisons over his days. He might be the most fortunate of men, and he is devoured by chagrins in his beautiful palace here, in the middle of his gardens and of a brilliant court."

In one of the letters of the Crown Prince, speaking of the mode of traveling with his father, he says: "We have now been traveling near three weeks. The heat is as great as if we were riding astride upon a ray of the sun. The dust is like a dense cloud, which renders us invisible to the eyes of the by-standers. In addition to this, we travel like the angels, without sleep, and almost without food. Judge, then, what my condition must be."

While on this journey to Holland the Crown Prince was one day dining with a prince of Lippe-Bückeburg. Freemasonry became one of the topics of conversation at the table. King Frederick William denounced the institution in his usual style of coarse vituperation, as tomfoolery, atheism, and every thing else that was bad. But the Prince of Bückeburg, himself a mason and a very gentlemanly man, defended the craft with such persuasive eloquence as quite captivated the Crown Prince. After dinner the prince took him secretly aside, conversed with him more fully upon the subject, expressed his admiration of the system, and his wish to be admitted into the fraternity: But it was necessary carefully to conceal the step from the irate king. Arrangements were immediately made to assemble at Brunswick a sufficient number of masons from Hamburg, where the Crown Prince, on his return,

could be received in a secret meeting into the mystic brotherhood.

The Crown Prince met the masons by agreement at “Korn’s Hotel.” On the night of Tuesday, August 14th, 1738, the king having that evening continued his journey, Frederick, after adopting extreme precautions to prevent any publicity of the act, fearing probably only lest it should reach his father’s ears, passed through the mysterious rites of initiation. It does not, however, appear that subsequently he took any special interest in the society.[28]

The year 1739 was spent by the prince mostly at Reinsberg. Many distinguished visitors were received at the chateau. Frederick continued busily engaged in his studies, writing both prose and verse, and keeping up a lively correspondence with Voltaire and other literary friends. He engaged very earnestly in writing a book entitled *Anti-Machiavel*, which consisted of a refutation of Machiavel’s *Prince*. This book was published, praised, and read, but has long since been forgotten. The only memorable thing about the book now is that in those dark days of absolutism, when it was the almost universally recognized opinion that power did not ascend from the people to their sovereign, but descended from the monarch to his subjects, Frederick should have spoken of the king as the “born servant of his people.”

In July of this year the Crown Prince took another journey with his father through extensive portions of the Prussian territory. The following extract from one of his letters to Voltaire reflects pleasing light upon the heart of Frederick, and upon the administrative ability of his father:

“Prussian Lithuania is a hundred and twenty miles long, by from forty to sixty broad. It was ravaged by pestilence at the beginning of this century, and they say three hundred thousand people died of disease and famine. The disorder carried off the people, and the lands remained uncultivated and full of weeds. The most flourishing of our provinces was changed into the most miserable of solitudes.

“Meanwhile Frederick the First died, and with him was buried all his false grandeur, which consisted only in a vain magnificence, and in the pompous display of frivolous ceremonies. My father, who succeeded him, compassionated the general misery. He visited the spot, and saw, with his own eyes, this vast country laid waste, and all the dreadful traces which a contagious malady, a famine, and the sordid avarice of a venal administration leave behind them. Twelve or fifteen towns depopulated, and four or five hundred villages uninhabited, presented themselves to his view. Far from being discouraged by such a sad spectacle, his compassion only became the more lively from it; and he resolved to restore population, plenty, and commerce to this land, which had even lost the appearance of an inhabited country.

“Since this time he has spared no expense for the furtherance of his salutary intentions. He first established wise regulations and laws. He rebuilt whatever had been allowed to go to ruin in consequence of the plague. He brought and established there thousands of families from the different countries of Europe. The lands became again productive, and the country populous. Commerce reflourished; and at the present time abundance reigns in this country more than ever

before. There are now half a million of inhabitants in Lithuania. There are more towns than formerly; more flocks, and more riches and fertility than in any other part of Germany.

"And all that I have been relating to you is due to the king alone, who not only gave the orders, but himself saw that they were faithfully obeyed. He both conceived the designs and executed them. He spared neither care, nor trouble, nor vast treasures, nor promises, nor recompenses, in order to assure the existence and the comfort of half a million of rational beings, who owe to him alone their happiness. There is something in my mind so heroic in the generous and laborious manner in which the king has devoted himself to the restoring to this deserted country its population, fertility, and happiness, that I think you will see his conduct in the same light as I do when you are made acquainted with the circumstances."

It would be unjust alike to the father and the son to withhold a letter which reflects so much credit upon them both—upon the father for his humane measures, and upon the son for his appreciation of their moral beauty.

The king was so pleased with the conduct of his son during this journey that, in a moment of unusual good-nature, he made him a present of a very extensive horse-breeding establishment near Tilsit, consisting of seven farms, all in the most perfect order, as every thing was sure to be which was under the control of Frederick William. The profits of this establishment added about ten thousand dollars to the annual income of the Crown Prince. He was quite overjoyed at the unexpected gift, and wrote to his sister Wilhelmina a letter glowing with satisfaction.

During the first part of his journey the king had

been remarkably cheerful and genial, but toward its close he was attacked by a new fit of very serious illness. To the discomfort of all, his chronic moodiness returned. A few extracts from Pöllnitz's account of this journey throws interesting light upon those scenes:

"Till now his majesty has been in especial good-humor. But in Dantzig his cheerfulness forsook him, and it never came back. He arrived about ten o'clock at night in that city, slept there, and was off again next morning at five. He drove only fifty miles this day; stopped in Luppow. From Luppow he went to a poor village near Belgard, and staid there overnight.

"At Belgard next morning he reviewed the dragoon regiment, and was very ill content with it. And nobody, with the least understanding of that business, but must own that never did Prussian regiment manœuvre worse. Conscious themselves how bad it was, they lost head and got into confusion. The king did every thing that was possible to help them into order again, but it was all in vain. The king, contrary to wont, restrained himself amazingly, and would not show his displeasure in public. He got into his carriage and drove away, not staying to dine with General Von Platen, as was always his custom with commandants whom he had reviewed.

"As the prince was anxious to come up with his majesty again, and knew not where he would meet him, we had to be very swift in the business. We found the king, with Anhalt and Winterfeld, by-and-by, sitting in a village in front of a barn, eating a cold pie there which the Marquis of Anhalt chanced to have with him. His majesty, owing to what he had seen on the parade-ground, was in the utmost ill-

humor. Next day, Saturday, he went a hundred and fifty or two hundred miles, and arrived in Berlin at ten o'clock at night, not expected there till the morrow, so that his rooms were locked, her majesty being over in Monbijou giving her children a ball."

Late in the fall of 1739 the health of Frederick William was so rapidly failing that it became manifest to all that his days on earth would soon be ended. He sat joylessly in his palace, listening to the moaning of the wind, the rustle of the falling leaves, and the pattering of the rain. His gloomy spirit was in accord with the melancholy days. More dreary storms darkened his turbid soul than those which wrecked the autumnal sky.

Early in November he came to Berlin, languid, crippled, and wretched. The death-chamber in the palace is attended with all the humiliations and sufferings which are encountered in the poor man's hut. The king, through all his life, had indulged his irritable disposition, and now, imprisoned by infirmities and tortured with pain, his petulance and abuse became almost unendurable. Miserable himself, he made every one wretched around him. He was ever restless—now in his bed, now out of it, now in his wheel-chair, continually finding fault, and often dealing cruel blows to those who came within his reach. He was unwilling to be left for a moment alone. The old generals were gathered in his room, and sat around his bed talking and smoking. He could not sleep at night, and allowed his attendants no repose. Restlessly he tried to divert his mind by whittling, painting, and small carpentry. The Crown Prince dared not visit him too often, lest his solicitude should be interpreted into impatience for the king to die, that he might grasp the crown. In the

grossest terms the king insulted his physicians, attributing all his sufferings to their wickedness or their ignorance. Fortunately the miserable old man was too weak to attempt to cane them. A celebrated physician, by the name of Hoffman, was sent for to prescribe for the king. He was a man of much intellectual distinction, and occupied an important position in the university. As his prescriptions failed to give relief to his majesty, he was assailed, like the rest, in the vilest language of vituperation. With great dignity Professor Hoffman replied:

"Sire, I can not bear these reproaches, which I do not deserve. I have tried, for the relief of your majesty, all the remedies which art can supply, or which nature can admit. If my ability or my integrity is doubted, I am willing to leave not only the university, but the kingdom. But I can not be driven into any place where the name of Hoffman will not be respected."

The king was so impressed by this firm attitude of his physician that he even made an apology for his rudeness. As Frederick William was now convinced that ere long he must appear before the tribunal of God, he gradually became a little more calm and resigned.[29] It is, however, evident that the Crown Prince still had his share of earthly annoyances, and certainly his full share of earthly frailties. In a letter to his friend Suhm, written this summer, he says:

"Tantalus never suffered so much while standing in the river, the waters of which he could not drink, as I when, having received your package of the translation of Wolff, I was unable to read it. All the accidents and all the bores in the world were, I think, agreed to prevent me. A journey to Potsdam, daily reviews, and the arrival of my brother in company

with Messrs. De Hacke and De Rittberg, have been my impediments. Imagine my horror, my dear Diaphanes,[30] at seeing the arrival of this caravan without my having in the least expected them. They weigh upon my shoulders like a tremendous burden, and never quit my side, in order, I believe, to make me wish myself at the devil."

As the king's infirmities and sufferings increased, the sympathies of his son were more and more excited. He seemed to forget all his father's cruel treatment, and to remember only his kingly energies. The thought of his death became very painful to him, and at times he recoiled from the oppressive cares he must of necessity assume with the crown.



THE CROWN PRINCE ENTERING THE TOBACCO PARLIAMENT.

One evening in April, the king, feeling a little better, decided to dress and hold a tobacco parliament, as formerly. Quite a numerous party of his customary cabinet was assembled, and the circle was full. The pipes were lighted; the king was in good-humor; the beer-pots circulated merrily; and as

every one made an effort to be agreeable, the scene was unusually animated. Quite unexpectedly, in the midst of the lively talk, the door opened, and the Crown Prince entered. Simultaneously, as by a common instinct, the whole company arose and bowed profoundly to the young prince. The king was exceedingly annoyed. Trembling with rage, he exclaimed,

"This is the homage you render the rising sun, though you know that the rule in the tobacco parliament is to rise to no one. You think I am dead. But I will teach you that I am yet living."

Ringing violently for his servants, and deaf to all protestations and excuses, he had himself immediately rolled from the room. As the courtiers stood bewildered and gazing at each other in consternation, an officer came in with an order from the king that they should all leave the palace immediately, and come not back again. The next morning Pöllnitz, who occupied a position somewhat similar to that of prime minister, applied for admission to his majesty's apartment. But a gendarme seized him by the shoulder and turned him around, saying, "There is no admittance." It was several days, and not till after repeated acts of humiliation, that the king would permit any member of the parliament again to enter his presence.

In the latter part of April, the weather being very fine, the king decided to leave Berlin and retire to his rural palace at Potsdam. It seems, however, that he was fully aware that his days were nearly ended, for upon leaving the city he said, "Fare thee well, then, Berlin; I am going to die in Potsdam." The winter had been one of almost unprecedented severity, and the month of May was cold and wet. As the days

wore on the king's health fluctuated, and he was continually struggling between life and death. The king, with all his great imperfections, was a thoughtful man. As he daily drew near the grave, the dread realities of the eternal world oppressed his mind. He sent for three clergymen of distinction, to converse with them respecting his preparation for the final judgment. It seems that they were very faithful with him, reminding him of his many acts of violence and tyranny, alluding particularly to his hanging Baron Schlubhut, at Königsberg, without even a trial. The king endeavored to defend himself, saying,

"It is true that Schlubhut had no trial, but he certainly deserved his doom. He was a public thief, stealing the taxes he was sent to gather; insolently offering to repay, as if that were all the amends required; and saying that it was not good manners to hang a nobleman."

Still the clergymen pressed upon him his sins, his many acts of oppression, his unrelenting and unforgiving spirit. Singularly enough, most of the members of the tobacco parliament were present at this strange interview; and some of them, courtier like, endeavored to defend the king against several of the charges brought against him. The king might emphatically be called a good hater; and he hated his brother-in-law, the King of England, perhaps with passion as implacable as ever took possession of a human heart. In allusion to this, one of the clergymen, M. Roloff, said,

"There is the forgiveness of enemies. Your majesty is bound to forgive all men. If you do not do this, how can you ask to be forgiven?"

The king had a logical mind. He could keenly

feel where the argument pinched. He seemed quite troubled. After a moment's pause, he said, "Well, I will do it." Then, turning to the queen, he said, "You, Phiekin, may write to your brother, *after I am dead*, and tell him that I forgave him, and died at peace with him."

"It would be better," M. Roloff mildly suggested, "that your majesty should write at once."

"No," said the king, sternly and peremptorily. "Write after I am dead. That will be safer."

At parting, the king bore magnanimous testimony to the fidelity of his spiritual advisers. He said to M. Roloff, who had been the principal speaker, "You do not spare me. It is right. You do your duty like an honest Christian man."

For such a mind and such a body there could be no possible peace or repose in the dying-chamber. Feverish, restless, sleepless, impatient, he knew not what to do with himself. He was incessantly passing from his bed to his wheel-chair and back again, irascibly demanding this and that, complaining of every body and every thing. Sometimes he would declare that he would no longer be sick, but would dress and be well; and scarcely would he get his clothes on ere he would sink in fainting weakness, as though he had not another hour to live. Thus the sad days of sickness wore away as death drew near.

On the 26th of May the Crown Prince received an express informing him that his father was dying, and that he must hasten to Potsdam with the utmost speed if he would ever again see him alive. Reinsberg was about thirty miles north from Potsdam. It took the courier some hours to reach the place. Frederick, with emotions not easily imagined,

started before the dawn of the morning, followed by a train of attendants, to hasten to the death-bed of his father, and to receive the kingly crown of Prussia.

As he reached Potsdam and turned the corner of the palace, he saw, at a little distance, a small crowd gathered around some object; and soon, to his inexpressible surprise, beheld his father, dressed, in his wheel-chair, out of doors, giving directions about laying the foundations of a house he had undertaken to build. The old king, at the sight of his son, threw open his arms, and Frederick, kneeling before him, buried his face in his fathers lap, and they wept together. The affecting scene forced tears into the eyes of all the by-standers. Frederick William, upon recovering from a fainting-fit, had insisted that he would not die, and had compelled his attendants to dress him and conduct him to the open air.

But the exertion, and the emotion occasioned by the interview with his son, prostrated him again. He was taken back into his palace and to his bed more dead than alive. Reviving a little in the afternoon, he dictated to Frederick all the arrangements he wished to have adopted in reference to his funeral. This curious document is characteristic, in every line, of the strange man. His coffin, which was of massive oak carpentry, had been made for some time, and was in the king's chamber awaiting its occupant. He not unfrequently, with affected or real complacency, fixed his eyes upon it, saying, "I shall sleep right well there." In the minute directions to his son as to his burial, he said,

"As soon as I am dead, my body must be washed, a white shirt must be placed upon it, and it must be stretched out upon a table. They must then shave and wash me, and cover me with a sheet. After four

hours my body must be opened. The surgeons of the regiments in town will examine into the malady which has caused my death. They will then dress me in my best clothes, with all my decorations. Then I am to be placed in my coffin, and thus left all night.

"The next day the battalions will be formed in complete order, each grenadier with three cartridges. Crape will be placed about the colors, the drums, the fifes, and hautboys. Every officer will have crape on his hat, around his arm, and on the hilt of his sword. The funeral car will be placed near the green staircase, with the heads of the horses toward the river. Eight captains of my regiment will carry me toward the funeral car. These eight captains will also take me out of the car, and carry me into the church.

"As soon as the car shall begin to move, the drums shall beat the dead march, and the hautboys shall play the well-known anthem, 'O blessed head, covered with blood and wounds!' The car will stop at the iron gate. The regiment will defile before it. My two sons, Augustus William and Henry, will remain with the regiment. You, as my eldest son, with little Ferdinand, my youngest son, will walk in uniform behind the car.

"When the body has been carried into the church, there shall be placed upon the coffin my handsomest sword, my best scarf, a pair of gilt spurs, and a gilt helmet. There shall be brought from Berlin twenty-four six-pounders, which shall make twelve discharges singly. Then the battalions will fire.

"I forbid any funeral sermon to be preached over me. In the evening a festival will be given in the great room in the garden. The cask of hock which I have in my cellar must be opened. At this repast good wine alone shall be drank.

"A fortnight after a funeral sermon shall be preached for me in all the churches. The text shall be, 'I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith.' They shall not speak any thing of my life, of my actions, nor any thing personal of me. But they shall tell the people that I confessed my sins, and that I died in full confidence of the goodness of God and of my Savior."

During the next three days the king suffered much from weakness and a violent cough. He was often heard murmuring prayers, and would say to those around him, "Pray for me; pray for me." Several times he pathetically exclaimed, "Lord, enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." A favorite hymn was often sung to him containing the words, "Naked came I into the world, and naked shall I go out of it." At this passage he repeatedly exclaimed, with much vivacity, as though it were an admirable joke, "No, not quite naked; I shall have my uniform on."

At one o'clock in the morning of May 31 he sent for a clergyman, M. Cochius, and seemed to be in great distress both of body and of mind. "I fear," said he, "that I have a great deal of pain yet to suffer. I can remember nothing. I can not pray. I have forgotten all my prayers." M. Cochius endeavored to console him. At the close of the interview the king said, sadly, "Fare thee well. We shall most probably never meet again in this world." He was then rolled, in his wheel-chair, into the chamber of the queen.

"Oh, Phiekin, my Phiekin!" said he, "thou must rise and help me what thou canst. This day I am going to die. Thou must be with me this day."

The dying king strangely decided, at that late hour, to abdicate. All the officials were hurriedly

summoned to his chamber. The poor old man, bandaged, with his night-cap on, and a mantle thrown over him, was wheeled into the anteroom where the company was assembled. As he saw Pöllnitz he exclaimed, sadly, “It is all over.” Noticing one in tears, he said to him, kindly, “Nay, my friend, this is a debt we all have to pay.” The king then solemnly abdicated in favor of his “good son Frederick.” The deed was made out, signed, and sealed. But scarcely was it executed ere the king fainted, and was carried to his bed. Still the expiring lamp of life flickered in its socket. About eleven o’clock the clergyman, M. Cochius, was sent for. The king was in his bed, apparently speechless. He, however, revived a little, and was in great pain, often exclaiming, “Pray for me; pray for me; my trust is in the Savior.” He called for a mirror, and carefully examined his face for some moments, saying at intervals, “Not so worn out as I thought.” “An ugly face.” “As good as dead already.”[31]

He then summoned his physician, M. Pitsch, and said, “Feel my pulse. Tell me how long this will last.”

The physician replied, “Alas! not long.”

“Say not alas,” added the king. “But how do you know?”

“The pulse is gone,” the physician said, sadly.

The king seemed surprised, raised his hand, opening and shutting the fingers, and then said, “It is impossible. How could I move my fingers so if the pulse were gone?”

M. Pitsch made no reply. The king, probably feeling at the moment some physical monition of approaching death, cried out, “Lord Jesus, to thee I live. Lord Jesus, to thee I die. In life and in death

thou art my gain."

These were his last words. He fainted, and, after a few gasps, died. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, the 31st of May, 1740. Thus the soul of Frederick William passed to the spirit land, in the fifty-first year of its sojourn here on earth.

The king having breathed his last, Frederick, in tears, retired to a private room, there to reflect upon the sad receding past, and upon the opening future, with the vast responsibilities thus suddenly thrown upon him. He was now King of Prussia; and not only absolute master of himself, but absolute monarch over a realm containing two millions two hundred and forty thousand souls. He was restrained by no Parliament, no Constitution, no customs or laws superior to his own resolves. He could take advice of others, and call energetic men to his aid, but his will alone was sovereign.

The Prussian kingdom, which thus fell to Frederick by "divine right," consisted of an assemblage of duchies, marquisates, principalities, and lordships, comprising an area of nearly fifty-seven thousand square miles, being about the size of the State of Michigan, and very similarly situated as to climate and soil. It was unfortunately not a compact country, as several of the states could only be reached by passing through the territories of other powers. The annual revenue amounted to a little over six million dollars. There was also in the treasury a sum, which Frederick William had saved, of about seven million dollars. The army consisted of seventy-six thousand men, in the highest state of discipline, and abundantly furnished with all the *materiel* of war.

Quite an entire change seemed immediately to take place in the character of the young king. M. Bielfeld was the first who was introduced to his apartment after the death of Frederick William. Frederick was in tears, and seemed much affected.

"You do not know," said he to M. Bielfeld, "what I have lost in losing my father."

"It is true, sire," Bielfeld replied, "but I know very well what you have gained in getting a kingdom. Your loss is great, but your motives for consolation are very powerful."

The king smiled, and immediately entered very vigorously upon business. It was not possible, under these circumstances, for him deeply to mourn over the death of so tyrannical a father. Frederick was twenty-eight years of age. He is described as a handsome young man, five feet seven inches in stature, and of graceful presence. The funeral ceremonies of the deceased monarch were conducted essentially according to the programme already given. The body of the king mouldered to dust in the sepulchre of his fathers. His spirit returned to the God who gave it.

"The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

If these words are true, which Milton places in the lips of the apostate fiend, it is appalling to think of the ungoverned and ungovernable spirit with which the king entered the unseen world. We know not that there is any power in the alembic of death to transform the character; and certain it is that if Frederick William carried with him to the abode of spirits the same character which he cherished in this world, there are but few who could be rendered

happy by his society. But we must leave him with his God, and return to the stormy scenes upon which his son now entered.

The young sovereign commenced his reign with the utterance of very noble sentiments. The day after his accession he assembled the chief officers of his father to administer to them the oath of allegiance. He urged them to be humane in the exercise of all authority which might be delegated to them.

“Our grand care,” said he, “will be to further the country’s well-being, and to make every one of our subjects contented and happy. If it ever chance that my particular interest and the general good of my country should seem to conflict, it is my wish that the latter should always be preferred.”



FREDERICK MEETING HIS MINISTERS.

CHAPTER X.

THE ACCESSION OF FREDERICK THE SECOND.

Establishment of the Berlin Academy of Sciences.—Religious Toleration.—A Free Press.—Sternness of the young King.—Domestic Habits of the King.—Provision for the Queen-mother.—Absolutism of the King.—Journey to Strasbourg.—First Interview with Voltaire.

THE conduct of Frederick the Second, upon his accession to the throne, was in accordance with his professions. The winter had been intensely cold. The spring was late and wet. There was almost a famine in the land. The public granaries, which the foresight of his father had established, contained large stores of grain, which were distributed to the poor at very low prices. A thousand aged and destitute women in Berlin were provided with rooms, well warmed, where they spun in the service of the king, with good wages, and in their grateful hearts ever thanking their benefactor. He abolished the use of *torture* in criminal trials, not forgetting that he himself had come very near having his limbs stretched upon the rack. This important decree, which was hailed with joy all over Prussia, was issued the third day after his accession.

Very vigorous measures were immediately adopted to establish an Academy of Sciences. The celebrated French philosopher Maupertuis, who had just obtained great renown from measuring a degree of the meridian at the polar circle, was invited to organize this very important institute. The letter to the philosopher, written by the king but a few days after his accession, was as follows:

> "My heart and my inclination excited in me, from the moment I mounted the throne, the desire of having you here, that you might put our Berlin Academy in the shape you alone are capable of giving it. Come then, come, and insert into this wild crab-tree the sciences, that it may bear fruit. You have shown the figure of the earth to mankind; show also to a king how sweet it is to possess such a man as you.
>
> "Monsieur De Maupertuis, your very affectionate
> "FREDERICK."

On the 22d of June a complaint was made to the king that the Roman Catholic schools were perverted to seducing Protestants to become Catholics. Frederick returned the complaint with the following words written upon the margin:

"All religions must be tolerated, and the king's solicitor must have an eye that none of them make unjust encroachments on the other; for in this country every man must get to heaven his own way."

It is a fact worthy of mention, as illustrative of the neglect with which the king had regarded his own German language in his devotion to the French tongue, that in these three lines there were eleven words wrongly spelled.

But the good sense of the utterance, so rare in those dark days, electrified thousands of minds. It drew the attention of Europe to Frederick, and gave him wide-spread renown.

Under Frederick William the newspaper press in Berlin amounted to nothing. The capital had not a single daily paper. Speedy destruction would crush any writer who, in journal, pamphlet, or book, should publish any thing displeasing to the king. Frederick proclaimed freedom of the press. Two newspapers were established in Berlin, one in French and one in German. Distinguished men were selected to edit them. One was a noted writer from Hamburg. Frederick, in his absolutism, had adopted the resolve not to interfere with the freedom of the press unless there were some gross violation of what he deemed proper. He allowed very bitter satires to be circulated in Berlin against himself, simply replying to the remonstrances of his ministers, "*The press is free*."

Such were the measures adopted during the first week of Frederick's reign. He soon abolished the enormously expensive regiment of giants, and organized, instead of them, four regiments composed of men of the usual stature.[32] Within a few months he added sixteen thousand men to his already large army, thus raising the number of the standing army of his little realm to over ninety thousand men. He compelled his old associates to feel, and some of them very keenly, that he was no longer their comrade, but their king. One of the veteran and most honored officers of Frederick William, in his expressions of condolence and congratulation, ventured to suggest the hope that he and his sons might continue to "occupy the same posts and retain

the same authority as in the last reign."

"You will retain your *posts*," said the king, severely. "I have no thought of making any change. But as to *authority*, I know of none there can be but what resides in the king that is sovereign."

The Marquis of Schwedt advanced to meet the new-made sovereign, his face beaming jovially, and with outstretched hands, as in the days of their old companionship. Frederick, fixing his cold eye steadfastly upon him, almost floored him with the rebuff, "My cousin, I am now king."

General Schulenburg, trembling in memory of the fact that he had once, in court-martial, given his vote in favor of beheading the Crown Prince, hastened from his post at Landsberg to congratulate the prince upon his accession to the throne. To his extreme chagrin and indignation, he was repelled by the words, "An officer should not quit his post without order. Return immediately to Landsberg."

As an administrative officer the young sovereign was inexorable and heartless in the extreme. Those who had befriended him in the days of his adversity were not remembered with any profusion of thanks or favors. Those who had been in sympathy with his father in his persecution of the Crown Prince encountered no spirit of revenge. Apparently dead to affection, and oblivious of the past, the young sovereign only sought for those agents who could best assist him in the work to which he now consecrated all his energies—the endeavor to aggrandize the kingdom of Prussia. Poor Doris Ritter received but a trivial pension for her terrible wrongs. Lieutenant Keith, his friend and confederate in his contemplated flight, who had barely escaped with his life from Wesel, after ten years of exile hastened

home, hoping that his faithful services and sufferings would meet with a reward. The king appointed him merely lieutenant colonel, with scarcely sufficient income to keep him from absolute want. Perhaps the king judged that the young man was not capable of filling, to the advantage of the state, a higher station, and he had no idea of sacrificing his interests to gratitude.

Ten years later the king made poor Keith a present of a purse of gold, containing about seven thousand dollars, under circumstances which reflected much credit upon the donor. In the following quaint style Carlyle records the incident:

"The king did a beautiful thing to Lieutenant Keith the other day—that poor Keith who was nailed to the gallows, in effigy, for him at Wesel, long ago, and got far less than he expected. The other day there had been a grand review, part of it extending into Madame Knyphausen's grounds, who is Keith's mother-in-law.

"'Monsieur Keith,' said the king to him, 'I am sorry we had to spoil Madame's fine shrubbery by our manœuvres; have the goodness to give her that, with my apologies,' and handed him a pretty casket with key to it, and in the interior 10,000 crowns.

"Not a shrub of Madame's had been cut or injured. But the king, you see, would count it £1500 of damage done, and here is acknowledgment for it, which please accept. Is not that a gracious little touch?"

One wretched man, who had been the guilty accomplice of the Crown Prince in former scenes of guilt and shame, was so troubled by the neglect with which he was treated that he hanged himself.

Frederick, as Crown Prince, had been quite methodical in the distribution of his time, and had cultivated rigid habits of industry. Now, fully conscious of the immense duties and cares which would devolve upon him as king, he entered into a very systematic arrangement of the employments of each hour, to which he rigidly adhered during nearly the whole of his reign of forty-six years. He ordered his servants to wake him at four o'clock every morning. Being naturally inclined to sleep, he found it hard to shake off his lethargy. The attendants were therefore directed, every morning, to place upon his forehead a towel dipped in cold water. He thus continued to rise at four o'clock, summer and winter, until an advanced age.

A single servant lighted his fire, shaved him, and dressed his hair. He always wore the uniform of his guards, and allowed only fifteen minutes for his morning toilet. He did not indulge in the luxury of slippers or dressing-gown, though occasionally, when ill, he put on a sort of linen wrapper, but even then he wore his military boots. Only on one day in the year did he appear in silk stockings, and that was on the birthday of his neglected wife, when he formally called upon her with his congratulations.

The ordinary routine of the day, when not absent on travels or campaigns, was as follows: As soon as dressed, one of his pages brought the packet of letters. The number was usually very large. He employed himself in reading these letters till eight o'clock. By a particular style of folding, he designated those to which no reply was to be returned, those to which there was to be an immediate reply, and those which required further consideration. At eight o'clock one of the four

secretaries of the cabinet entered, took the three parcels, and, while the king was breakfasting, received from him very briefly the character of the response to be made.

At nine o'clock Frederick received one of the general officers, and arranged with him all the military affairs of the day, usually dismissing him loaded with business. At ten o'clock he reviewed some one of the regiments; and then, after attending parade, devoted himself to literary pursuits or private correspondence until dinner-time. This was the portion of the day he usually appropriated to authorship. He was accustomed to compose, both in prose and verse, while slowly traversing the graveled walks of his garden.

He was particularly fond of dogs of the graceful greyhound breed, and might often be seen with book and pencil in his hand, in the shady walks, with three or four Italian greyhounds gamboling around him, apparently entirely absorbed in deep meditation. A page usually followed at a short distance behind, to attend his call. At twelve o'clock he dined with invited guests. As quite a number of distinguished men always met at his table, and the king was very fond of good living, as well as of the "feast of reason and the flow of soul," the repast was frequently prolonged until nearly three o'clock. At dinner he was very social, priding himself not a little upon his conversational powers.



FREDERICK IN THE GARDEN.

In pleasant weather he took a long walk after dinner, and generally at so rapid a pace that it was difficult for most persons to keep up with him. At four o'clock the secretaries brought to him the answers to the letters which they had received from him in the morning. He glanced them over, examining some with care. Then, until six o'clock, he devoted himself to reading, to literary compositions,

and to the affairs of the Academy, in which he took a very deep interest. At six o'clock he had a private musical concert, at which he performed himself upon the flute. He was passionately fond of this instrument, and continued to play upon it until, in old age, his teeth decaying, he was unable to produce the sounds he wished.

After the concert, which usually continued an hour, he engaged in conversation until ten o'clock. He then took supper with a few friends, and at eleven retired to his bed.

To his mother he was very considerate in all his manifestations of filial affection, while, at the same time, he caused her very distinctly to understand that she was to take no share whatever in the affairs of government. When she addressed him, upon his accession to the throne, as "Your Majesty," he replied, "Call me son. That is the title of all others most agreeable to me." He decreed to her the title of "Her Majesty the Queen-mother." The palace of Monbijou was assigned her, where she was surrounded with every luxury, treated with the most distinguished attention, and her court was the acknowledged centre of fashionable society.

He seems ever to have treated his nominal wife, Queen Elizabeth, *politely*. For some months after the accession he was quite prominent in his public attentions to her. But these intervals of association grew gradually more rare, until after three or four years they ceased almost entirely.

Frederick, under the tutelage of his stern father, had not enjoyed the privileges of foreign travel. While other princes of far humbler expectations were taking the grand tour of Europe, the Crown Prince was virtually imprisoned in the barracks, day after

day, engaged in the dull routine of drilling the giant guard. After the death of his father he did not condescend to be crowned, proudly assuming, in contradiction to some of his earlier teachings, that the crown was already placed upon his brow by divine power. He, however, exacted from the people throughout his realms oaths of allegiance, and in person visited several of the principal cities to administer those oaths with much pomp of ceremony. The Danish envoy, writing home to his government respecting the administration of Frederick, says,

"I must observe that hitherto the King of Prussia does, as it were, every thing himself; and that, excepting the finance minister, who preaches frugality, and finds for that doctrine uncommon acceptance, his majesty allows no counseling from any minister; so that the minister for foreign affairs has nothing to do but to expedite the orders he receives, his advice not being asked upon any matter. And so it is with the other ministers."

On the 12th of June, but a fortnight after his accession, Frederick wrote from Charlottenburg to Voltaire, who was then at Brussels, as follows:

> "MY DEAR VOLTAIRE,—Resist no longer the eagerness I have to see you. Do, in my favor, whatever your humanity allows. In the end of August I go to Wesel, and perhaps farther. Promise that you will come and join me, for I could not live happy nor die tranquil without having embraced you. Thousand compliments to the Marquise" (Madame Du Châtelet, the *divine Emilie*). "I am busy with both hands—working at the army with one hand, at the people and the fine arts with the other."

It would seem that Frederick was not very willing to receive, as his guest, the divine Emilie, who occupied so questionable a position in the household of Voltaire; for he wrote again, on the 5th of August, in reply to a letter from Voltaire, saying,

"I will write to Madame Du Châtelet in compliance with your wish. To speak to you frankly concerning her journey, it is Voltaire, it is you, it is my friend that I desire to see. I can not say whether I shall travel or not travel. Adieu, dear friend, sublime spirit, first-born of thinking beings. Love me always sincerely, and be persuaded that none can love and esteem you more than I."

Again the next day he wrote:

"You will have received a letter from me dated yesterday. This is the second I write to you from Berlin. I refer you to what was in the other. If it must be that Emilie accompany Apollo, I consent. But if I could see you alone, that is what I should prefer. I should be too much dazzled. I could not stand so much splendor all at once. It would overpower me. I should need the veil of Moses to temper the united radiance of your two divinities."

In return, Voltaire compliments the king very profusely. Speaking of the book of the royal author, the *Anti-Machiavel*, he writes:

"It is a monument for the latest posterity; the only book worthy of a king for these fifteen hundred years."[33]

Frederick was very desirous of visiting France, whose literature, science, and distinguished men he so greatly admired. Early Monday morning, the 15th of August, the king left Potsdam to visit his sister Wilhelmina, intending then to continue his journey

incognito into France, and, if circumstances favored, as far as Paris. The king assumed the name of the Count Dufour. His next younger brother, William, eighteen years of age, accompanied him, also under an assumed name. William was now Crown Prince, to inherit the throne should Frederick leave no children. Six other gentlemen composed the party. They traveled in two coaches, with but few attendants, and avoided all unnecessary display.

Frederick spent three days with his sister at Baireuth. Wilhelmina was disappointed in his appearance. The brotherly affection she looked for was not found. He was cold, stately, disposed to banter her, and his conversation seemed "set on stilts." Leaving Baireuth, the king continued his journey very rapidly toward Strasbourg. When they reached Kehl, on the eastern banks of the Rhine, they were informed that they could not cross the river without passports. One of the gentlemen drew up the necessary document, which the king signed and sealed with his signet-ring. The curiosity of the landlord had been excited, and he watched his guests from a closet. Seeing what was done, he said to Frederstorf, the king's valet, "Count Dufour is the King of Prussia, sir; I saw him sign his name." He was bribed to keep the secret.

When they reached Strasbourg they provided themselves with French dresses. The king and his brother put up at different inns, that they might be less liable to suspicion. Frederick, with several of his party, took lodgings at the Raven Hotel. He sent the landlord out to invite several army officers to sup with a foreign gentleman, Count Dufour, from Bohemia, who was an entire stranger in the place. Some of the officers very peremptorily declined the

invitation, considering it an imposition. Three, however, allured by the singularity of the summons, repaired to the inn. The assumed count received them with great courtesy, apologized for the liberty he had taken, thanked them for their kindness, and assured them that, being a stranger, he was very happy to make the acquaintance of so many brave officers, whose society he valued above that of all others.

The companions of the king were well-bred men, of engaging manners, commanding intelligence, and accustomed to authority. The entertainment was superb, with an abundance of the richest wines. The conversation took a wide range, and was interesting and exciting to a high degree. The French officers were quite bewildered by the scene. The count was perfect master of the French language, was very brilliant in his sallies, and seemed perfectly familiar with all military affairs. He was treated with remarkable deference by his companions, some of whom were far his superiors in years.

The entertainment was prolonged until a late hour of the night. The delighted guests, as they retired, urged their host to attend parade with them in the morning, offering to come in person to conduct him to the ground. The count, with pleasure, accepted the invitation. In the morning he was escorted to the parade-ground. His fame spread rapidly. Friends multiplied. He was invited to sup with the officers in the evening, and accepted the invitation. Marshal Broglio, a very stately gentleman of seventy years, was military governor at Strasbourg. The count and one of his companions, the distinguished philosopher Count Algarotti, were invited to dine with the marshal. The supper given in

the evening by the officers was brilliant. They then repaired to the opera. A poor little girl came to the box with a couple of lottery tickets for sale. Frederick gave her four ducats ($25), and tore up the tickets.

Strasbourg began to echo with the fame of this foreign count. But the next morning, Thursday, August 25, as Marshal Broglio was walking on the Esplanade, a soldier, who had formerly been in the regiment of the Crown Prince at Potsdam, and who knew the Crown Prince perfectly, having seen him hundreds of times, but who had deserted and entered the French service, came to the marshal, with much bowing and embarrassment, and assured him that Count Dufour was no less than the King of Prussia.

The secret was now out. The tidings flew in all directions that the King of Prussia was in Strasbourg *incognito*. The king, not yet aware of the detection, called upon the marshal. A crowd of officers gathered eagerly around. The marshal was much embarrassed in his desire to respect the *incognito*, and also to manifest the consideration due to a sovereign. No one yet ventured to address him as king, though there were many indications that his rank was beginning to be known. Frederick therefore decided to get out of the city as soon as possible. To conceal his design, he made arrangements to attend the theatre with the marshal in the evening. The marshal went to the theatre with all his officers. The building was crowded with the multitude hoping to see the king. Bonfires began to blaze in the streets, and shouts were heard of “Long live the King of Prussia.” Frederick hastily collected his companions, paid his enormous bill at the Raven, “shot off like lightning,” and was seen in Strasbourg no more.

Voltaire was at this time in Brussels. Frederick

wrote him from Wesel, under date of 2d September, 1740, giving a narrative of his adventures, partly in prose, partly in verse. It was a long communication, the rhyme very much like that which a bright school-girl would write upon the gallop. The following specimen of this singular production will give the reader a sufficient idea of the whole:

"MY DEAR VOLTAIRE,—You wish to know what I have been about since leaving Berlin. Annexed you will find a description of it.

"I have just finished a journey intermingled with singular adventures, sometimes pleasant, sometimes the reverse. You know I had set out for Baireuth to see a sister whom I love no less than esteem. On the road Algarotti and I consulted the map to settle our route for returning by Wesel. Frankfort-on-the-Main comes always as a principal stage. Strasbourg was no great roundabout. We chose that route in preference. The *incognito* was decided, names pitched upon, story we were to tell. In fine, all was arranged as well as possible. We fancied we should get to Strasbourg in three days.

"Mais le ciel, qui de tout dispose,
Régla différemment la chose.
Avec de coursiers efflanqués,
Et des paysans en postillons masqués,
Butors de race impertinente,
Notre carrosse en cent lieux accroché,
Nous allions gravement d'une allure indolente,
Gravitant contre les rochers,
L'airs émus par le bruyant tonnere.
Les torrents d'eau répandus sur la terre
Du dernier jour menaçaient les humains.
Et malgré notre impatience,
Quatre bons jours en pénitence

Sont pour jamais perdus dans les charrains."

(But Heaven, which of all disposes,
Regulated differently the thing.
With coursers lank-sided,
And peasants as postillions disguised,
Blockheads of race impertinent,
Our carriages in a hundred places sticking,
We went gravely at a slow pace,
Knocking against the rocks,
The air agitated by loud thunder.
Torrents of water spread over the earth
With the last day threatened mankind.
And notwithstanding our impatience,
Four good days in penance
Are forever lost in these jumbles.)

"Had all our fatalities been limited to stoppages of speed on the journey, we should have taken patience. But after frightful roads we found lodgings still more frightful."

Then came another strain of verse. Thus the prose and the doggerel were interspersed through the long narrative. Though very truthful in character, it was a school-boy performance—a very singular document indeed to be sent to the most brilliant genius of that age, by one who soon proved himself to be the ablest sovereign in Europe.

At Wesel the king met Maupertuis, to whom we have already alluded, who was then one of the greatest of European celebrities. His discovery of the flattening of the earth at the poles had given him such renown that the kings of Russia, France, and Prussia were all lavishing honors upon him. It was a great gratification to Frederick that he had secured his services in organizing the Berlin Academy. While at Wesel the king was seized by a fever, which shut

him up for a time in the small chateau of Moyland. He had never yet met Voltaire, and being very anxious to see him, wrote to him as follows, under date of September 6th, 1740:

> "MY DEAR VOLTAIRE,—In spite of myself, I have to yield to the quartan fever, which is more tenacious than a Jansenist. And whatever desire I had of going to Antwerp and Brussels, I find myself not in a condition to undertake such a journey without risk. I would ask of you, then, if the road from Brussels to Cleves would not to *you* seem too long for a meeting? It is the one means of seeing you which remains to me. Confess that I am unlucky; for now, when I could dispose of my person, and nothing hinders me from seeing you, the fever gets its hand into the business, and seems to intend disputing me that satisfaction.
>
> "Let us deceive the fever, my dear Voltaire, and let me have at least the pleasure of embracing you. Make my best excuses to Madame the Marquise that I can not have the satisfaction of seeing her at Brussels. All that are about me know the intention I was in, which certainly nothing but the fever could make me change.
>
> "Sunday next I shall be at a little place near Cleves, where I shall be able to possess you at my ease. If the sight of you don't cure me, I will send for a confessor at once. Adieu. You know my sentiments and my heart.
>
> FREDERICK."

In accordance with this request, Voltaire repaired to Cleves to visit the king. Many years afterward, having quarreled with Frederick, and being disposed to represent him in the most unfavorable light, he

gave the following account of this interview in his *Vie Privée*:

"The king said that he would come and see me *incognito* at Brussels. But having fallen ill a couple of leagues from Cleves, he wrote me that he expected I would make the advances. I went accordingly to present my profound homages. I found at the gate of the court-yard a single soldier on guard. The privy councilor Rambonet, Minister of State, was walking about the court, blowing on his fingers to warm them. He had on great ruffles of dirty linen, a hat with holes in it, and an old periwig, one end of which hung down into one of his pockets, while the other hardly covered his shoulder.

"I was conducted into his majesty's apartment, where there was nothing but the bare walls. I perceived in a closet, lit by a single wax candle, a small bed, two feet and a half wide, on which lay a little man wrapped up in a cloak of coarse blue cloth. It was the king, who perspired and shivered, under a miserable coverlet, in a violent access of fever. I made my bow, and began the acquaintance by feeling his pulse, as if I had been his first physician. When the fit was passed he dressed himself and came to supper. Algarotti, Keyserling, Maupertuis, and the king's embassador to the States General made up the party. We talked learnedly respecting the immortality of the soul, liberty, and the Androgynes of Plato, and other small topics of that nature."



FREDERICK'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH VOLTAIRE.

Frederick, who was then in the zenith of his admiration for Voltaire, describes as follows, in a letter to his friend M. Jordan, his impressions of the interview:

"I have at length seen Voltaire, whom I was so anxious to know. But, alas! I saw him when under the influence of my fever, and when my mind and my body were equally languid. With persons like him one ought not to be sick. On the contrary, one ought to be specially well. He has the eloquence of Cicero, the mildness of Pliny, and the wisdom of Agrippa. He unites, in a word, all the collected virtues and talents of the three greatest men of antiquity. His intellect is

always at work. Every drop of ink that falls from his pen is transformed at once into wit. He declaimed his *Mahomet* to us, an admirable tragedy which he has composed. I could only admire in silence."

Indeed, it would seem that, at the time, Voltaire must have been very favorably impressed by the appearance of his royal host. The account he then gave of the interview was very different from that which, in his exasperation, he wrote twenty years afterward. In a letter to a friend, M. De Cideville, dated October 18th, 1740, Voltaire wrote:

"When you sent me, inclosed in your letter, those verses for our Marcus Aurelius of the North, I fully intended to pay my court to him with them. He was at that time to have come to Brussels *incognito*. But the quartan fever, which unhappily he still has, deranged all his projects. He has sent me a courier to Brussels, and so I set out to find him in the neighborhood of Cleves.

"It was there that I saw one of the most amiable men in the world, who forms the charm of society, who would be every where sought after if he were not a king; a philosopher without austerity, full of sweetness, complaisance, and obliging ways—not remembering that he is king when he meets his friends; indeed, so completely forgetting it that he made me too almost forget it, and I needed an effort of memory to recollect that I here saw, sitting at the foot of my bed, a sovereign who had an army of a hundred thousand men."

CHAPTER XI.

DIPLOMATIC INTRIGUES.

The Herstal Affair.—The Summons.—Voltaire's Manifesto.—George II. visits Hanover.—The Visit of Wilhelmina to Berlin.—Unpopularity of the King.—Death of the Emperor Charles VI.

ON the River Maas, a few miles north of the present city of Liege, there was a celebrated castle called Herstal. For many generations feudal lords had there displayed their pomp and power; and it had been the theatre not only of princely revelry, but of many scenes of violence and blood. A surrounding territory of a few thousand acres, cultivated by serfs, who were virtually slaves, was the hereditary domain of the petty lords of the castle. A few miles south of the castle there was a monastery called Liege, which was a dependency of the lords of Herstal.

Amid the vicissitudes of the revolving centuries the rollicking lords grew poor, and the frugal monks grew rich. A thrifty city rose around the monastery, and its bishop wielded a power, temporal and spiritual, more potent than had ever issued from the walls of the now crumbling and dilapidated castle. In some of the perplexing diplomatic arrangements of those days, the castle of Herstal, with its surrounding district, was transferred to Frederick William of

Prussia. The peasants, who had heard of the military rigor of Prussia, where almost every able-bodied man was crowded into the army, were exceedingly troubled by this transfer, and refused to take the oath of allegiance to their new sovereign, who had thus succeeded to the ownership of themselves, their flocks, and their herds. The gleaming sabres of Frederick William's dragoons soon, however, brought them to terms. Thus compelled to submission, they remained unreconciled and irritated. Upon the withdrawal of the Prussian troops, the authority of Frederick William over the Herstal people also disappeared, for they greatly preferred the milder rule of the Bishop of Liege.

The bishop denied that Frederick William had any claim to Herstal. He brought forward a prior claim of his own in behalf of the Church. The Duke of Lorraine, when proprietor of the castle and its dependencies, had pawned it to the bishop for a considerable sum of money. This money, the bishop averred, had never been repaid. Consequently he claimed the property as still in his possession.

George Ludwig, Count of Berg, who at this time was Bishop of Liege, was a feeble old man, tottering beneath the infirmities of eighty-two years. He did not venture upon physical resistance to the power of Prussia, but confined himself to protests, remonstrances, and to the continued exercise of his own governmental authority. As Herstal was many leagues distant from Berlin, was of comparatively little value, and could only be reached by traversing foreign states, Frederick William offered to sell all his claims to it for about eighty thousand dollars. The proposal not being either accepted or rejected by the bishop, the king, anxious to settle the question before

his death, sent an embassador to Liege, with full powers to arrange the difficulty by treaty. For three days the embassador endeavored in vain to obtain an audience. He then returned indignantly to Berlin. The king, of course, regarded this treatment as an insult. The bishop subsequently averred that the audience was prevented by his own sickness. Such was the posture of affairs when Frederick William died.

Upon the accession of Frederick the Second, as officers were dispatched through the realm to exact oaths of allegiance, the Herstal people, encouraged by the bishop, refused to acknowledge fealty to the new king. Frederick was now in the district of Cleve, in the near vicinity of Herstal. He sent the following very decisive summons to the "Prince Bishop of Liege," dated Wesel, September 4, 1740:

> "My Cousin,—Knowing all the assaults made by you upon my indisputable rights over my free barony of Herstal, and how the seditious ringleaders there, for several years past, have been countenanced by you in their detestable acts of disobedience against me, I have commanded my privy counselor, Rambonet, to repair to your presence, and in my name to require from you, within two days, a distinct and categorical answer to this question:
>
> "Whether you are still minded to assert your pretended sovereignty over Herstal, and whether you will protect the rebels at Herstal in their disorders and abominable disobedience?
>
> "In case you refuse, or delay beyond the term, the answer which I hereby of right demand, you will render yourself alone responsible, before the world, for the consequences which infallibly will

follow. I am, with much consideration, my cousin, your very affectionate cousin,

FREDERICK."

Rambonet presented the peremptory missive, and waited forty-eight hours for the answer. He then returned to Wesel without any satisfactory reply. Frederick immediately issued a manifesto, declaring the reasons for his action, and ordered two thousand men, horse and foot, who were all ready for the emergence, to advance immediately to Maaseyk, one of the principal towns of the bishop, take possession of it and of the surrounding region, quarter themselves upon the people, enforce liberal contributions, and remain there until the bishop should come to terms.[34]

The solid, compact army, with infantry, artillery, and cavalry in the best possible condition, advanced at the double-quick. Arriving at the gates of Maaseyk, not a moment was spent in parleying. "Open the gates instantly," was the summons, "or we shall open them with the petard."

With great courtesy of words, but pitiless energy of action, General Borck, who was in command, fulfilled his commission. A contribution was exacted of fifteen thousand dollars, to be paid within three days; sufficient rations were to be furnished daily for the troops, or the general, it was stated, would be under the painful necessity of collecting them for himself. Two hundred and fifty dollars a day were to be provided for the general's private expenses. Remonstrances were of no avail. Resistance was not to be thought of.

The poor old bishop called loudly upon the Emperor of Germany for help. The territory of the

Bishop of Liege was under the protection of the empire. The Emperor Charles VI. immediately issued a decree ordering Frederick to withdraw his troops, to restore the money which he had extorted, and to settle the question by arbitration, or by an appeal to the laws of the empire. This was the last decree issued by Charles VI. Two weeks after he died.

Frederick paid no regard to the remonstrance of the emperor. The bishop, in his distress, applied to the French for aid, and then to the Dutch, but all in vain. He then sent an embassy to Berlin, proposing to purchase Herstal. The king consented to sell upon the same terms his father had offered, adding to the sum the expenses of his military expedition and other little items, bringing the amount up to one hundred and eighty thousand dollars. The money was paid, and the Herstal difficulty was settled. This was Frederick's first act of foreign diplomacy. Many severely censured him for the violent course he pursued with a power incapable of resistance. All admitted the energy and sagacity which he had developed in the affair.

Voltaire, in his *Memoirs*, says that he drew up the manifesto for Frederick upon this occasion. "The pretext," he writes, "for this fine expedition was certain rights which his majesty pretended to have over a part of the suburbs. It was to me he committed the task of drawing up the manifesto, which I performed as well as the nature of the case would let me, never suspecting that a king, with whom I supped, and who called me his friend, could possibly be in the wrong. The affair was soon brought to a conclusion by the payment of a million of livres, which he exacted in good hard ducats, and which served to defray the expenses of his tour to

Strasbourg, concerning which he complained so loudly in his poetic prose epistle.

"I represented to him that perhaps it was not altogether prudent to print his *Anti-Machiavel* just at the time that the world might reproach him with having violated the principles he taught. He permitted me to stop the impression. I accordingly took a journey into Holland purposely to do him this trifling service. But the bookseller demanded so much money that his majesty, who was not in the bottom of his heart vexed to see himself in print, was better pleased to be so for nothing, than to pay for not being so. I could not avoid feeling some remorse at being concerned in printing this *Anti-Machiavelian* book at the very moment that the King of Prussia, who had a hundred millions in his coffers, was robbing the poor people of Liege of another, by the hand of the privy counselor Rambonet."[35]

It must be borne in mind that these words were written after Voltaire had quarreled with Frederick, and when it seems to have been his desire to represent all the acts of the king in as unfavorable a light as possible. Frederick himself, about eight years after the settlement of the Herstal difficulty, gave the following as his version of the affair:

"A miserable Bishop of Liege thought it a proud thing to insult the late king. Some subjects of Herstal, which belongs to Prussia, had revolted. The bishop gave them his protection. Colonel Kreutzen was sent to Liege to compose the thing by treaty, with credentials and full power. Imagine it; the bishop would not receive him! Three days, day after day, he saw this envoy apply at his palace, and always denied him entrance. These things had grown past endurance."

Frederick returned to Berlin by a circuitous route, which occupied ten days. His uncle, King George II. of England, whom he exceedingly disliked, was then on a visit to his Hanoverian possessions. Frederick passed within a few miles of his Britannic majesty without deigning to call upon him. The slight caused much comment in the English papers. It was regarded as of national moment, for it implied that in the complicated policy which then agitated the courts of Europe the sympathies of Prussia would not be with England.

Soon after this, Frederick's next younger brother, Augustus William, who was heir-presumptive to the throne in default of a son by Frederick, was betrothed to Louisa Amelia of Brunswick, younger sister of Frederick's bride.

About the middle of October Wilhelmina came to Berlin to see her brothers again. Nine years had passed since her marriage, and seven since her last sad visit to the home of her childhood, in which inauspicious visit the wretchedness of her early years had been renewed by the cruelty of her reception. In Wilhelmina's journal we find the following allusion to this her second return to Berlin:

"We arrived at Berlin the end of October. My younger brothers, followed by the princes of the blood and by all the court, received us at the bottom of the stairs. I was led to my apartment, where I found the reigning queen, my sisters, and the princesses. I learned, with much chagrin, that the king was ill of tertian ague. He sent me word that, being in his fit, he could not see me, but that he depended on having that pleasure to-morrow. The queen-mother, to whom I went without delay, was in a dark condition. Her rooms were all hung in their

lugubrious drapery. Every thing was as yet in the depth of mourning for my father. What a scene for me! Nature has her rights. I can say with truth I have almost never in my life been so moved as on this occasion. My interview with my mother was very touching."

The next morning Frederick hastened to greet his sister. Wilhelmina was not pleased with his appearance. The cares of his new reign entirely engrossed his mind. The dignity of an absolute king did not sit gracefully upon him. Though ostentatiously demonstrative in his greeting, the delicate instincts of Wilhelmina taught her that her brother's caresses were heartless. He was just recovering from a fit of the ague, and looked emaciate and sallow. The court was in mourning. During those funereal days no festivities could be indulged in. The queen-mother was decorously melancholy; she seems to have been not only disappointed, but excessively chagrined, to find that she was excluded by her son from the slightest influence in public affairs. The distant, arrogant, and assuming airs of the young king soon rendered him unpopular.

"A general discontent," writes Wilhelmina, "reigned in the country. The love of his subjects was pretty much gone. People spoke of him in no measured terms. Some accused him of caring nothing about those who helped him as Prince Royal. Others complained of his avarice as surpassing that of the late king. He was accused of violence of temper, of a suspicious disposition, of distrust, haughtiness, dissimulation. I would have spoken to him about these had not my brother Augustus William and the queen regnant dissuaded me."

Frederick invited his sister to visit him at Reinsberg, to which place either business or pleasure immediately called him. After the lapse of two days, Wilhelmina, with the neglected Queen Elizabeth, repaired to the enchanting chateau, hoping to find, amid its rural scenes, that enjoyment which she never yet had been able to find in the sombre halls of the Berlin palace. Here quite a gay company was assembled. Frederick was very laboriously occupied during the day in affairs of state. But in the evening he appeared in the social circles, attracting the attention of all by his conversational brilliance, and by the apparent heartiness with which he entered into the amusements of the court. He took an active part in some private theatricals, and none were aware of the profound schemes of ambition which, cloaked by this external gayety, were engrossing his thoughts.

On the 25th of October a courier arrived, direct from Vienna, with the startling intelligence that the Emperor Charles VI. had died five days before. The king was at the time suffering from a severe attack of chills and fever. There was quite a long deliberation in the court whether it were safe to communicate the agitating intelligence to his majesty while he was so sick. They delayed for an hour, and then cautiously informed the king of the great event. Frederick listened in silence; uttered not a word; made no sign.[36] Subsequent events proved that his soul must have been agitated by the tidings to its profoundest depths. The death of the emperor, at that time, was unexpected. But it is pretty evident that Frederick had, in the sombre recesses of his mind, resolved upon a course of action when the emperor should die which he knew would be fraught with the most momentous results. In fact, this action proved the

occasion of wars and woes from which, could the king have foreseen them, he would doubtless have shrunk back appalled.

The Emperor Charles VI. left no son. He therefore promulgated a new law of succession in a decree known throughout Europe as the "Pragmatic Sanction." By the custom of the realm the sceptre could descend only to male heirs. But by this decree the king declared that the crown of the house of Hapsburg should be transmitted to his daughter, Maria Theresa. This law had been ratified by the estates of all the kingdoms and principalities which composed the Austrian monarchy. All the leading powers of Europe—England, France, Spain, *Prussia*, Russia, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and the Germanic body—had bound themselves by treaty to maintain the "Pragmatic Sanction." It was a peaceable and wise arrangement, acceptable to the people of Austria and to the dynasties of Europe as a means of averting a war of succession, which might involve all the nations of the Continent in the conflict.

The death-scene of the emperor was an event which must interest every reader. Upon his return from a hunting excursion into Hungary, he was attacked, on Thursday evening, October 16th, by slight indisposition, which was supposed to have been caused by eating imprudently of mushrooms. His sickness, baffling the skill of the doctors, increased, and by Saturday night became alarming. On Tuesday it was thought that he was dying. The pope's nuncio administered to him the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. His majesty manifested great composure in view of the sublime change before him, and said to one who was weeping at his bedside,

"I am not afraid in contemplating the dread tribunal before which I must now so soon appear. I am certain of my cause. Look at me! A man that is certain of his cause can enter on such a journey with good courage and a composed mind."

To his physicians, who were doubtful respecting the nature of his disease, he said, "If Doctor Gazelli were here you would soon know what is my complaint. As it is, you will only learn after you have dissected me."

He then requested to be shown the cup in which his heart would be placed after that operation. His daughter, Maria Theresa, who had married the Grand-duke Francis, was in a delicate state of health. The death of her father would place the weighty crown upon her youthful brow. Grief and agitation threw her helpless upon her bed. So important was her life to the world that the emperor was unwilling that, in her then condition, she should enter the death-chamber. "Tell my Theresa," said he, in faint and dying accents, "that I bless her, notwithstanding her absence."

The empress had fainted away at the bedside, and had been borne, in the arms of the attendants, into her daughter Maria Theresa's chamber. She was now summoned, with the younger children, for the final adieu. As the empress, almost delirious with grief, re-entered the apartment, she threw herself upon the bed of her dying husband, and exclaimed, in frenzied tones, "Do not leave me! Do not leave me!"

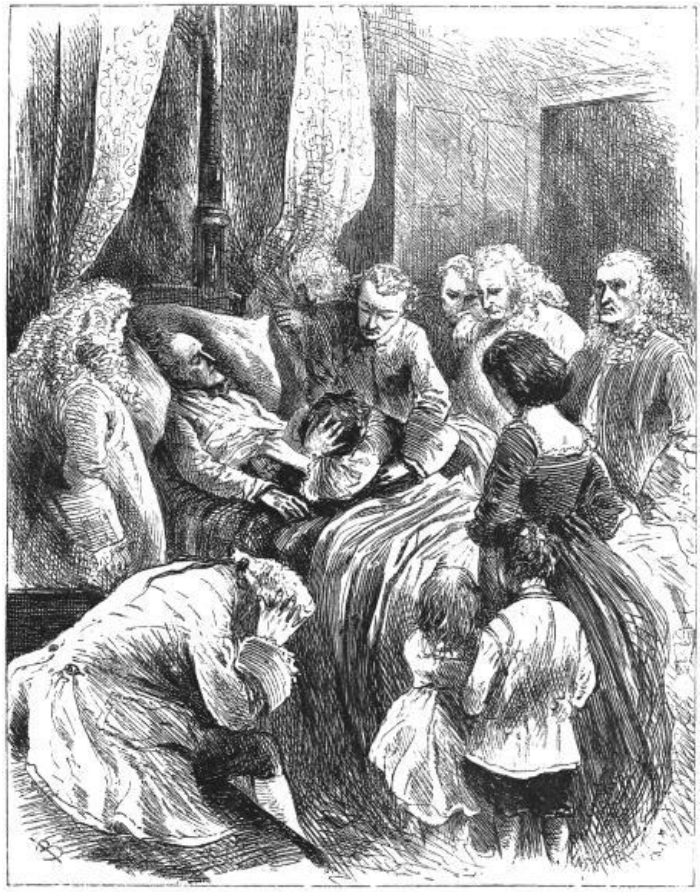
During all the day of Wednesday weeping friends stood around the bed, as the lamp of life flickered in its socket. Every moment it was expected that the emperor would breathe his last. At two o'clock the

next morning the spirit took its flight, and the lifeless clay alone remained. The grief-stricken empress closed the eyes of her departed husband, kissed his hands, and "was carried out more dead than alive." Thus ended the male line of the house of Hapsburg, after five centuries of royal sway. The emperor died on the 20th of October 1740, in the fifty-sixth year of his age.

As Frederick received the tidings of this death, he rose, dressed himself, and his ague disappeared, to return no more. A courier was immediately dispatched, at the top of his speed, to summon to his presence General Schwerin and M. Podewils, his chief minister. Two days must elapse before they could reach him. In the mean time, the king, taking counsel of no one, was maturing his plans, and making quiet but vigorous preparations for their execution. He wrote the next day to Voltaire, in allusion to the emperor's death,

"I believe that there will, by June next, be more talk of cannon, soldiers, trenches, than of actresses and dancers for the ballet. This small event changes the entire system of Europe. It is the little stone which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, loosening itself and rolling down on the image made of four metals, which it shivers to ruin."

On the southeast frontier of Prussia, between that kingdom, and Poland, and Hungary, there was an Austrian realm called Silesia. The country embraced a territory of twenty thousand square miles, being about twice as large as the State of Vermont. The population was about two millions. For more than a century Silesia had been a portion of the Austrian kingdom. Time, and the assent of Europe, had sanctioned the title.



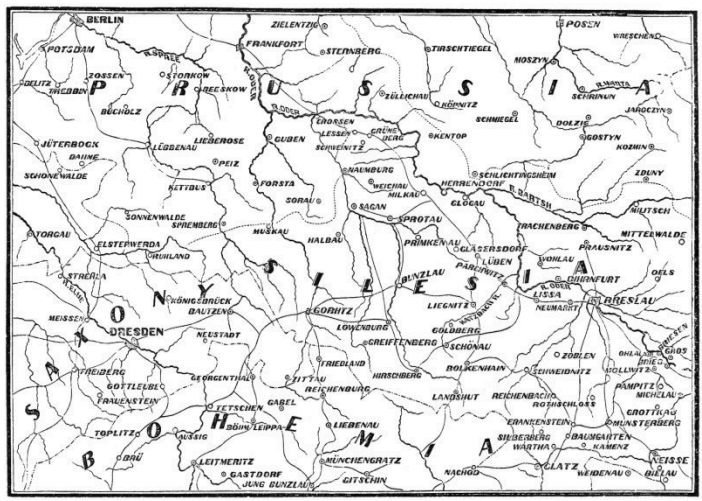
THE DEATH-SCENE OF THE EMPEROR.

But the young King Frederick was very ambitious of enlarging the borders of his Liliputian realm, and of thus attaining a higher position among the proud and powerful monarchs who surrounded him. Maria Theresa, who had inherited the crown of Austria, was a remarkably beautiful, graceful, and accomplished young lady, in the twenty-fourth year of her age. She was a young wife, having married

Francis, Duke of Lorraine. Her health, as we have mentioned, was at that time delicate. Frederick thought the opportunity a favorable one for wresting Silesia from Austria, and annexing it to his own kingdom. The queen was entirely inexperienced, and could not prove a very formidable military antagonist. Her army was in no respect, either in number, discipline, or *materiel*, prepared for war. Her treasury was deplorably empty. There was also reason for Frederick to hope that several claimants would rise in opposition to her, disputing the succession.

On the other hand, Frederick himself was in the very prime of manhood. He was ambitious of military renown. He had a compact army of one hundred thousand men, in better drill and more amply provided with all the apparatus of war than any other troops in Europe. The frugality of his father had left him with a treasury full to overflowing. To take military possession of Silesia would be a very easy thing. There was nothing to obstruct the rush of his troops across the frontiers. There were no strongly garrisoned fortresses, and not above three thousand soldiers in the whole realm. No one even suspected that Frederick would lay any claim to the territory, or that there was the slightest danger of invasion. The complicated claim which he finally presented, in official manifestoes, was founded upon transactions which had taken place a hundred years before. In conversation with his friends he did not lay much stress upon any legitimate title he had to the territory. He frankly admitted, to quote his own words, that “ambition, interest, the desire of making people talk about me, carried the day, and I decided for war.”[37]

The general voice of history has severely condemned the Prussian king for this invasion of Silesia. Frederick probably owed his life to the interposition of the father of Maria Theresa, when the young prince was threatened with the scaffold by his own father. Prussia was bound by the most solemn guarantees to respect the integrity of the Austrian states. There was seemingly a great want of magnanimity in taking advantage of the extreme youth, inexperience, and delicate health of the young queen, who was also embarrassed by an empty treasury and a weakened and undisciplined army. Frederick had also made, in his *Anti-Machiavel*, loud protestations of his love of justice and magnanimity. Mr. Carlyle, while honestly stating these facts, still does not blame Frederick for seizing the opportunity which the death of the emperor presented for him to enlarge his dominions by plundering the domain of Maria Theresa.



MAP OF SILESIA.

"It is almost touching," Mr. Carlyle writes, "to reflect how unexpectedly, like a bolt out of the blue, all this had come upon Frederick, and how it overset his fine programme for the winter at Reinsberg, and for his life generally. Not the Peaceable magnanimities, but the Warlike, are the thing appointed Frederick this winter, and mainly henceforth. Those 'golden or soft radiances' which we saw in him, admirable to Voltaire and to Frederick, and to an esurient philanthropic world, it is not those, it is the 'steel bright or stellar kind' that are to become predominant in Frederick's existence; grim hail-storms, thunders, and tornado for an existence to him instead of the opulent genialities and halcyon weather anticipated by himself and others.

"Indisputably enough to us, if not yet to Frederick, 'Reinsberg and Life to the Muses' are done. On a sudden, from the opposite side of the horizon, see miraculous Opportunity rushing hitherward; swift, terrible, clothed with lightning like a courser of the gods; dare you clutch *him* by the thunder-mane, and fling yourself upon him, and make for the Empyrean by that course rather? Be immediate about it, then; the time is now or never! No fair judge can blame the young man that he laid hold of the flaming Opportunity in this manner, and obeyed the new omen. To seize such an Opportunity and perilously mount upon it was the part of a young, magnanimous king, less sensible to the perils and more to the other considerations than one older would have been."[38]

CHAPTER XII.

THE INVASION OF SILESIA.

Deceptive Measures of Frederick.—Plans for the Invasion of Silesia.—Avowed Reasons for the Invasion.—The Ball in Berlin.—The March of the Army.—Hardships and Successes.—Letter to Voltaire.—Capture of Glogau.—Capture of Brieg.—Bombardment of Neisse.

WITH the utmost secrecy Frederick matured his plans. It could not be concealed that he was about to embark in some important military enterprise. The embassadors from other courts exerted all their ingenuity, but in vain, to ascertain in what direction the army was to march. Though the French had an embassador at Berlin, still it would seem that Voltaire was sent as a spy, under the guise of friendship, to attempt to ferret out the designs of the king. These men, who did not profess any regard to the principles of religion, seem also to have trampled under feet all the instincts of honor. Voltaire endeavored to conceal his treachery beneath smiles and flattery, writing even love verses to the king. The king kept his own secret. Voltaire was not a little chagrined by his want of success. In his billet of leave he wrote:

“Non, malgré vos vertus, non malgré vos appas,

Mon âme n'est point satisfaite:
Non, vous n'êtes qu'une coquette,
Qui subjuguez les cœurs, et ne vous donnez pas."[39]

Frederick, while equally complimentary, while lavishing gifts and smiles upon his guest, to whom he had written that as there "could be but one God, so there could be but one Voltaire," wrote from Ruppin to M. Jordan, on the 28th of November, just before Voltaire took his leave.

"Thy miser" (Voltaire) "shall drink to the lees of his insatiable desire to enrich himself. He shall have the three thousand thalers [$2250]. He was with me six days. That will be at the rate of five hundred thalers [$375] a day. That is paying dearly for a fool. Never had court fool such wages before."

The Austrian envoy expressed to his court a suspicion that Silesia might be threatened. The reply which came back was that the Austrian court would not, and could not, believe that a prince who was under such obligations to the father of Maria Theresa, and who had made such loud professions of integrity and philanthropy, could be guilty of such an outrage.

Frederick did what he could to divert the attention of the court at Reinsberg by multiplying gayeties of every kind. There was feasting, and music, and dancing, and theatric exhibitions, often continuing until four o'clock in the morning. In the mean time couriers were coming and going. Troops were moving. Provisions and the *materiel* of war were accumulating. Anxious embassadors watched every movement of the king's hand, weighed every word which escaped his lips, and tried every adroit measure to elicit from him his secret. The Danish

minister, Prätorius, wrote to his court from Berlin:

"From all persons who return from Reinsberg the unanimous report is that the king works the whole day through with an assiduity which is unique, and then, in the evening, gives himself to the pleasures of society with a vivacity of mirth and sprightly humor, which makes those evening parties charming."

The Marquis of Botta, the Austrian envoy, endeavoring to penetrate the plans of Frederick, descanted upon the horrible condition of the roads in Silesia, which province he had traversed in coming to Berlin. The king listened with a quiet smile, and then, with much apparent indifference, replied,

"The worst which can happen to those who wish to travel in Silesia is to get spattered with the mud."

The English envoy, Sir Guy Dickens, being utterly baffled in all his endeavors to discover the enterprise upon which the king was about to embark, wrote to his court:

"Nobody here, great or small, dares make any representation to this young prince against the measures he is pursuing, though all are sensible of the confusion which must follow. A prince who had the least regard to honor, truth, and justice, could not act the part he is going to do. But it is plain his only view is to deceive us all, and conceal for a while his ambitious and mischievous designs."

Dickens at length ventured to ask the king directly, "What shall I write to England?"

Frederick angrily replied, "You can have no instructions to ask that question. And if you had, I have an answer ready for you. England has no right to inquire into my designs. Your great sea

armaments, did I ask you any question about them? No! I was, and am, silent on that head."[40]

By the 10th of December, within a fortnight of the time that the king received the tidings of the death of the emperor, he had collected such a force on the frontiers of Silesia that there could be no question that the invasion of that province was intended. As not the slightest preparation had been made on the part of Austria to meet such an event, the king could with perfect ease overrun the province and seize all its fortresses. But Austria was, in territory, resources, and military power, vastly stronger than Prussia. It was therefore scarcely possible that Frederick could hold the province, after he had seized it, unless he could encourage others to dispute the succession of Maria Theresa, and thus involve Europe in a general war. Frederick, having made all his arrangements for prompt and vigorous action, sent to Maria Theresa a message which could be regarded only as an insult:

"Surrender to me peaceably," was the substance of this demand, "the province of Silesia, and I will be the ally of your majesty in maintaining your right to the throne, and in defending the integrity of all the rest of your realms. I will exert my influence to have the Grand-duke Francis[41] chosen Emperor of Germany, and will also immediately pay one million of dollars into the Austrian treasury."

An embassador, Count De Gotter, was sent to Vienna to present this demand to Maria Theresa. He was authorized, in case these terms were not accepted, to declare war. But in the mean time, *before the count could possibly reach Vienna*, consequently before there was any declaration of war, or even any demand presented, Frederick, at the

head of his troops, had entered Silesia, and was seizing its defenseless fortresses.[42]

As the king was about to embark upon this enterprise, it was proposed to place upon the banners the words “For God and our Country.” But Frederick struck out the words “For God,” saying that it was improper to introduce the name of the Deity into the quarrels of men, and that he was embarking in war to gain a province, not for religion.[43] In a brief speech to his soldiers he said,

“Gentlemen, I do not look upon you as my subjects, but as my friends. The troops of Brandenburg have always signalized themselves by their courage, and given, on different occasions, the fullest evidences of their bravery. I shall be an eye-witness to all your exploits. You will always fight in my presence. I will recompense those who shall distinguish themselves for their zeal in my service rather as a father than as a sovereign.”

In reference to this campaign the king subsequently wrote: “At the death of the emperor there were but two Austrian regiments in Silesia. Being determined to assert my right to that duchy, I was obliged to make war during the winter, that I might make the banks of the Neisse the scene of action. Had I waited till the spring, what we gained by one single march would certainly have cost us three or four difficult campaigns.”[44]

To the summons which Frederick sent to Maria Theresa, demanding the surrender of Silesia, no response could be returned, consistent with the dignity of the crown, but a peremptory refusal. The reply was unanswerable in its logic. Though it was, in general, couched in courteous terms, one sentence crept into it of rather scornful defiance.

"It seems strange," said the Austrian minister of war, "that his Prussian majesty, whose official post in Germany, as chamberlain of the emperor, is to present the basin and towel to the house of Austria, should now presume to prescribe rules to it."

On Tuesday night, the 12th of December, 1740, there was a very splendid masked ball in Berlin. The king and queen were both present. The mind of the king was evidently preoccupied, though he endeavored to assume an air of gayety. Privately quitting the ball at a late hour, he set out, early in the morning, to place himself at the head of forty thousand troops whom he had assembled near the Silesian frontier. A small escort only accompanied him. It was a cold winter's day. Driving rapidly, they reached Frankfort that night, sixty miles distant. In the dawn of the next day the king was again upon the road, and, after a drive of forty miles, reached Crossen, a border town, where he established his head-quarters.

Two Silesian barons called upon him, and presented a protest from the authorities they represented against his meditated invasion, the design of which was now manifest to all. The king received them very courteously, tossed the protest to a secretary to file away or to cast into the waste-paper basket, and invited the two gentlemen to dine with him.

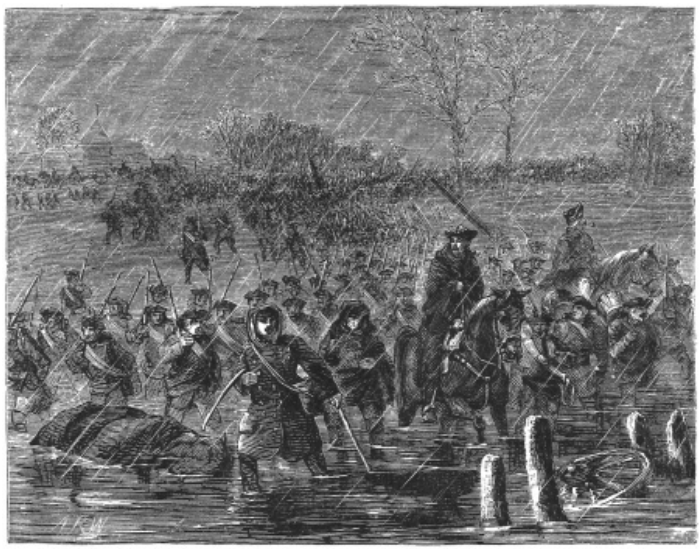
The next day the Prussian army, in two divisions, occupying a space about ten miles long and ten broad in the lines of march, crossed the frontiers, and entered the Silesian territory.[45] Frederick issued a proclamation declaring that he had come as a friend; that no one would be molested in person, property, or religious privileges; and that every thing

used by the army would be amply paid for.

In very rapid march, the troops advanced through Grünberg toward Glogau, about forty miles in the interior. Here there was a fortified town, which was considered the key of Northern Silesia. It was but feebly garrisoned, and was entirely unprepared for resistance. By great exertions, the Austrian governor of the province, Count Wallis, and his second in command, General Browne, succeeded in placing behind the works a little garrison of one thousand men. The whole population was summoned to work upon the ramparts. Count Wallis remained in Glogau. General Browne took command of the troops and garrisons abroad. But there was a division of sentiment within the walls. Quite a large portion of the population was Protestant, and would be glad to come under the protection of Protestant Prussia. The Catholics were zealous for the continued reign of Austria.

The Prussian troops, meeting with no opposition, spread over the country, and a strong division reached Weichau on Saturday, the 17th. There they spent Sunday in rest. Frederick was anxious to win to his cause the Protestant population. He consequently favored their religious institutions, and ordered that Protestant worship should be held in the villages which he occupied, and where there was no Protestant church edifice, one part of the day in the Catholic churches. This plan he continued through the campaign, much to the gratification of the chaplains of his regiments and the Protestant community in Silesia. Though the Austrian government had not been particularly oppressive to the Protestants, still it leaned decidedly against what it deemed heresy. The Jesuits, favored by the

governmental officials, were unwearied in their endeavors to promote the interests of their Church. Frederick, by allowing the impression to be spread abroad that he was the champion of Protestantism, was enabled to secure the sympathies of quite a strong party in Silesia in his favor. It is said that two thirds of the inhabitants of Silesia were Protestants, and therefore favorable to Frederick.



THE MARCH INTO SILESIA.

In the suburbs of Glogau there was a Protestant church which Count Wallis deemed it a military necessity to order to be burned down, lest it should protect the Prussians in their attack. “The Prussians,” said Wallis, “will make a block-house of it.” The Protestants pleaded earnestly for a brief respite, and sent a delegation to Frederick to intercede for the safety of their church. The king very courteously, and with shrewd policy, replied,

"You are the first who have asked any favor of me on Silesian ground. Your request shall be granted."

Immediately he sent a polite note to Count Wallis, assuring him that the attack, if attack were necessary, should be made on the other side of the city, so that no military advantage could be taken of the church. This popular act resounded widely not only through the Protestant community of Silesia, but throughout Europe.

Monday morning, December 19th, the army was again on the move, now spread out into a length of nearly fifteen miles, and even more than that in breadth. Concentration was unnecessary, as there was no foe to be encountered. The occupation of this wide area enabled Frederick to take advantage of good roads, and also to obtain abundance of supplies. Their advance led them in a southerly direction, up the western banks of the Oder, which stream here runs nearly north.

It seems to be ever the doom of an army to encounter mud and rain. It was cold, gloomy, December weather. The troops were drenched and chilled by the floods continually falling from the clouds. The advance of the army was over a flat country where the water stood in pools. All day long, Monday and Tuesday, the rain continued to fall without intermission. But the Prussian army, under its impetuous leader, paid no regard to the antagonistic elements.

"Waters all out, bridges down," writes Carlyle; "the country one wide lake of eddying mud; up to the knee for many miles together; up to the middle for long spaces; sometimes even to the chin or deeper, where your bridge was washed away. The

Prussians marched through it as if they had been slate or iron. Rank and file—nobody quitted his rank, nobody looked sour in the face—they took the pouring of the skies and the red seas of terrestrial liquid as matters that must be; cheered one another with jocosities, with choral snatches, and swashed unweariedly forward. Ten hours some of them were out, their march being twenty or twenty-five miles."

They reached Milkau Tuesday night, the 20th. Here they were allowed one day of rest, and Frederick gave each soldier a gratuity of about fifteen cents. On Thursday the march was resumed, and the advance-guard of the army was rapidly gathered around Glogau, behind whose walls Count Wallis had posted his intrepid little garrison of a thousand men. Here Frederick encountered his first opposition. The works were found too strong to be carried by immediate assault, and Frederick had not yet brought forward his siege cannon. The following extracts from the correspondence which Frederick carried on at this time develop the state of public sentiment, and the views and character of the king. His friend Jordan, who had been left in Berlin, wrote to him as follows, under date of December 14, 1740, the day after the king left to place himself at the head of his army:

"Every body here is on tiptoe for the event, of which both origin and end are a riddle to most. Those who, in the style of theologians, consider themselves entitled to be certain, maintain that your majesty is expected with religious impatience by the Protestants; and that the Catholics hope to see themselves delivered from a multitude of imposts, which cruelly tear up the beautiful bosom of their Church. You can not but succeed in your valiant and

stoical enterprise, since both religion and worldly interest rank themselves under your flag. Wallis, they say, has punished a Silesian heretic, of enthusiastic turn, as blasphemer, for announcing that a new Messiah is just coming. I have a taste for that kind of martyrdom. Critical persons consider the present step as directly opposed to certain maxims in the *Anti-Machiavel*."

Again M. Jordan wrote, a week later, on the 20th of December:

"The day before yesterday, in all churches, was prayer to Heaven for success to your majesty's arms, interest of the Protestant religion being one cause of the war, or the only one assigned by the reverend gentleman. At the sound of these words the zeal of the people kindles. 'Bless God for raising such a defender! Who dared suspect our king's indifference to Protestantism?'"

On the 19th of December the king wrote, from the vicinity of Glogau, to M. Jordan. Perhaps he would not so frankly have revealed his ambition and his want of principle had he supposed that the private letter would be exposed to the perusal of the whole civilized world.

"Seigneur Jordan," the king writes, "thy letter has given me a great deal of pleasure in regard to all these talkings thou reportest. To-morrow I arrive at our last station this side of Glogau, which place I hope to get in a few days. All things favor my designs; and I hope to return to Berlin, after executing them, gloriously, and in a way to be content with. Let the ignorant and the envious talk. It is not they who shall ever serve as load-star to my designs; not they, but glory. With the love of that I am penetrated more than ever. My troops have their

hearts big with it, and I answer to thee for success. Adieu! dear Jordan. Write me all the ill the public says of thy friend, and be persuaded that I love and will esteem thee always."

To Voltaire the king wrote, in a very similar strain, four days later, on the 23d of December:

> "MY DEAR VOLTAIRE,—I have received two of your letters, but could not answer sooner. I am like Charles Twelfth's chess king, who was always on the move. For a fortnight past we have been kept continually afoot and under way in such weather as you never saw.
>
> "I am too tired to reply to your delightful verses, and shivering too much with cold to taste all the charm of them. But that will come round again. Do not ask poetry from a man who is actually doing the work of a wagoner, and sometimes even of a wagoner stuck in the mud. Would you like to know my way of life? We march from seven in the morning till four in the afternoon. I dine then; afterward I work—I receive tiresome visits; with these comes a detail of insipid matters of business. 'Tis wrong-headed men, punctiliously difficult, who are to be set right; heads too hot which must be restrained, idle fellows that must be urged, impatient men that must be rendered docile, plunderers to be restrained within the bounds of equity, babblers to hear babbling, dumb people to keep in talk; in fine, one has to drink with those that like it, to eat with those who are hungry; one has to become a Jew with Jews, a pagan with pagans. Such are my occupations, which I would willingly make over to another if the phantom they call glory did not rise on me too often. In truth, it is a great folly, but a folly difficult to cast away when once you are

smitten by it.

> "Adieu, my dear Voltaire! May Heaven preserve from misfortune the man I should so like to sup with at night after fighting in the morning. Do not forget the absent who love you.
>
> "FREDERICK."

As we have mentioned, the army advanced mainly in two columns. While the left was briefly delayed at Glogau, the right, under the command of General Schwerin, was pushed rapidly forward a few leagues, to Liegnitz. They reached the city, unexpectedly to its inhabitants, just at the dawn of a drear, chill winter's morning, the rain having changed to freezing cold. It was Wednesday, December 28. The Prussian grenadiers stole softly upon the slumbering sentinels, seized them, and locked them in the guard-house. Then the whole column marched into the heart of the city silently, without music, but with a tramp which aroused all the sleepers in the streets through which they passed —many of whom, in their night-caps, peered curiously out of their chamber windows. Having reached the central square, or market-place, the forces were concentrated, and the drums and bugles pealed forth notes of triumph. The Prussian flag rose promptly from rampart and tower. Liegnitz was essentially a Protestant town. The inhabitants, who had received but few favors from the Catholic Austrian government, welcomed their invaders with cautious demonstrations of joy.

Frederick, having completed the investment of Glogau, cutting off all its supplies, left a sufficient detachment there to starve the city into submission. There were about seven thousand inhabitants within the walls—"a much-enduring, frugal, pious, and very

desirable people." As it was probable that the feeble garrison, after a brief show of resistance, would surrender, Frederick hastened in person, with all his remaining available troops, toward Breslau, the capital of Silesia. On the 27th he wrote to M. Jordan:

"I march to-morrow for Breslau, and shall be there in four days. You Berliners have a spirit of prophecy which goes beyond me. In fine, I go my road; and you will shortly see Silesia ranked in the list of our provinces. Adieu! this is all I have time to tell you. Religion and our brave soldiers will do the rest."

With almost unprecedented rapidity Frederick pressed his troops along, accomplishing "in three marches near upon seventy miles." The course of the Oder here is, in its general direction, northwest. The army marched along its southwestern banks. On Saturday evening, the last day of the year, the advance-guard took possession of the southern and western suburbs of Breslau. The city, of one hundred thousand inhabitants, was spread out over both banks of the stream. Frederick established his headquarters at the palace of Pilsnitz, about five miles from the city. There were many Protestants in Breslau, who rejoiced in the idea of exchanging a Catholic for a Protestant government. It is said that some of the sentinels on the walls would watch their opportunity and present arms to the Prussian soldiers, and even at times exclaim, "Welcome, dear sirs!"

Before sunrise Sunday morning the Prussians had seized upon many important posts. About seven o'clock a flag of truce, or rather a trumpeter, approached one of the gates, demanding admittance to communicate to the chief magistrate of the city

the intentions and requisitions of the Prussian king. After some delay, two colonels were admitted. They demanded the entire surrender of the city, and that the authority of Frederick, the King of Prussia, should be recognized instead of that of Maria Theresa, Queen of Austria. All their local laws and customs were to be respected, and they were to be protected in all their rights and privileges. Their own garrison should guard the city. No Prussian soldier should enter the gates with other than side-arms. The king himself, in taking possession of the city, should be accompanied by a body-guard of but thirty men. The city council was assembled to consider this summons, and thirty hours were spent in anxious deliberation.

In the mean time Frederick took positions which commanded the three gates on his, the southern, side of the river; constructed a bridge of boats; and sent four hundred men across the stream, and made preparations to force an entrance. At four o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, not a gun having yet been fired, a messenger brought the intelligence that the town would be surrendered. At eight o'clock the next morning, Tuesday, 3d of January, 1741, the city authorities came in their coaches, with much parade, to welcome their new sovereign. It was a bitter cold morning. The king had ridden away to reconnoitre the walls in their whole circuit. It was not until near noon that he was prepared to accompany the officials to the palace which was made ready for him. He then, on horseback, attended by his principal officers, and followed by an imposing retinue, in a grand entrance, proudly took possession of his easy conquest. He rode a very magnificent gray charger, and wore his usual cocked hat and a blue cloak, both of which were somewhat the worse

for wear. Four footmen, gorgeously dressed in scarlet, trimmed with silver lace, walked by the side of his horse. The streets through which he passed were thronged, and the windows and balconies were crowded with spectators of both sexes. Though Frederick did not meet with an enthusiastic reception, he was very gracious, bowing to the people on each side of the street, and saluting with much courtesy those who seemed to be people of note.

On the evening of the 5th his Prussian majesty gave a grand ball. All the nobility, high and low, were invited. The provident king arranged that the expenses, which he was to defray, should not exceed half a guinea for each guest. Early hours were fashionable in those days. Frederick entered the assembly-rooms at six o'clock, and opened the ball with a Silesian lady. He was very complaisant, and walked through the rooms with a smile upon his countenance, conversing freely with the most distinguished of his guests. About ten o'clock he silently withdrew, but the dancing and feasting continued until a late hour.

The king exerted all his powers of fascination to gain the affections of the people. Though he dismissed all the Austrian public functionaries, and supplied their places by his own friends, he continued to the Catholics their ancient privileges, and paid marked attention to the bishop and his clergy. At the same time, he encouraged the Protestants with the expectation that he would prove their especial friend. At the assemblies which he gave each evening that he was in the city, he lavished his smiles upon the ladies who were distinguished either for exalted rank or for beauty.

But there is no evidence that, during this campaign, he wrote one line to his absent, neglected wife, or that he expended one thought upon her.

About thirty miles southeast of Breslau is the pleasant little town of Ohlau, situated in the delta formed by the junction of the Ohlau River with the Oder. It was a place of some strength, and the Austrian authorities had thrown into it a garrison of three hundred men. Frederick appeared before its gates on the morning of January the 9th. He immediately sent in the following summons to the garrison:

"If you make any resistance, you shall be treated as prisoners of war. If you make no resistance, and promise not to serve against us, you may march out of the city unmolested, with your arms."

The surrender was made. Fifteen miles nearly east from Ohlau, on the southern banks of the Oder, is the little town of Brieg. Frederick approached it with divisions of his army on both sides of the river. The country was flat and densely wooded. On the southern side, where Frederick marched with the major part of his troops, it was traversed by an admirably paved road. This was constructed one hundred and fifty-six years before by one of the dukes of that realm. It was a broad highway, paved with massive flat stones, climbing the mountains, threading the valleys, traversing the plains—a road such as those which the Romans constructed, and over which the legions of the Cæsars tramped in their tireless conquests. This duke, in consequence of his religious character, was called "George the Pious." His devotional spirit may be inferred from the following inscription, in Latin, which he had engraved on a very massive monument, constructed

in commemoration of the achievement:

"Others have made roads for us. We make them for
posterity.
But Christ has opened for us all a road to heaven."[46]

On the 11th, Brieg was summoned to surrender. The prompt and resolute response was "*No*." The place was found unexpectedly strong, and a gallant little garrison of sixteen hundred men had been assembled behind its walls. Frederick was much annoyed by the delay thus occasioned. He promptly invested the city so as to cut off all supplies, and dispatched an order to Glogau to have the field artillery sent, as speedily as possible, up the Oder to Brieg.

Two days before Frederick reached Brieg, a column of his army, under General Schwerin, which had advanced by a line parallel to the Oder, but several miles to the west, encountering no opposition, reached Ottmachau, a considerable town with a strong castle on the River Neisse. This was near the extreme southern border of Silesia. The Austrian commander, General Browne, had placed here also a garrison of sixteen hundred men, with orders not to yield upon any terms, for that re-enforcements should be speedily sent to them. A slight conflict ensued. Twelve of the Prussians were killed. This was the first blood which was shed. A delay of three days took place, when four cannon were brought up, and the gates, both of the town and of the castle, were blown open. The garrison offered to withdraw upon the terms proposed in the summons to surrender. The king was sent for to obtain his decision. He rebuked the garrison sternly, and held all as prisoners of war. The officers were

sent to Cüstrin, the common soldiers to Berlin.

Preparations were now made for the capture of Neisse. This was an opulent, attractive, well-fortified town of about seven thousand inhabitants. It then occupied only the left or north bank of the stream, which runs from the west to the east. The region around, being highly cultivated, presented a beautiful aspect of rich meadows, orchards, and vineyards. It was the chief fortress of Southern Silesia, and, being very near the frontier of Austria proper, was a position of great importance. Frederick, having encountered so little opposition thus far, was highly elated, expecting that Neisse would also immediately fall into his hands. From Ottmachau he wrote, on the 14th of January, to M. Jordan as follows:

"My dear Monsieur Jordan, my sweet Monsieur Jordan, my quiet Monsieur Jordan, my good, my benign, my pacific, my most humane Monsieur Jordan,—I announce to thy serenity the conquest of Silesia. I warn thee of the bombardment of Neisse, and I prepare thee for still more projects, and instruct thee of the happiest successes that the womb of fortune ever bore."[47]

Three days after, on the 17th, the king wrote again to M. Jordan:

"I have the honor to inform your humanity that we are Christianly preparing to bombard Neisse; and that, if the place will not surrender of good-will, needs must that it be beaten to powder. For the rest, our affairs go the best in the world; and soon thou wilt hear nothing more of us, for in ten days it will all be over, and I shall have the pleasure of seeing you and hearing you in about a fortnight.

"I have seen neither my brother[48] nor Keyserling.[49] I left them at Breslau, not to expose them to the dangers of war. They perhaps will be a little angry, but what can I do? the rather as, on this occasion, one can not share in the glory unless one is a mortar!

"Adieu; go and amuse yourself with Horace, study Pausanias, and be gay over Anacreon. As to me, who for amusement have nothing but merlons, fascines, and gabions, I pray God to grant me soon a pleasanter and peacefuler occupation, and you health, satisfaction, and whatever your heart desires."

A letter of the same date as the above, addressed to Count Algarotti,[50] contains the following expressions:

"I have begun to settle the figure of Prussia. The outline will be altogether regular; for the whole of Silesia is taken in except one miserable hamlet, which perhaps I shall have to keep blockaded until next spring. Up to this time the whole conquest has cost me only twenty men and two officers.

"You are greatly wanting to me here. In all these three hundred miles I have found no human creature comparable to the Swan of Padua. I would willingly give ten cubic leagues of ground for a genius similar to yours. But I perceive I was about entreating you to return fast, and join me again, while you are not yet arrived where your errand was. Make haste to arrive then, to execute your commission, and fly back to me. I wish you had a Fortunatus hat; it is the only thing defective in your outfit.

"Adieu, dear Swan of Padua. Think, I pray, sometimes of those who are getting themselves cut in

slices for the sake of glory here; and, above all, do not forget your friends who think a thousand times of you."

The River Neisse is quite narrow. In preparation for the bombardment, Frederick planted his batteries on the south side of the stream, and also approached the city from the north. It will be remembered that Frederick had an army in Silesia at his command of about forty thousand men, abundantly provided with all the munitions of war. The little Austrian garrison hurriedly thrown into Neisse consisted of but sixteen hundred men, but poorly prepared either for battle or for siege. The Austrian commandant, General Roth, determined upon a heroic resistance. To deprive the assailants of shelter, the torch was applied to all the beautiful suburbs. In a few hours the cruel flames destroyed the labor of ages. Many once happy families were impoverished and rendered homeless. Ashes, blackened walls, and smouldering ruins took the place of gardens, villas, and comfortable homes.

On Sunday morning, January 15th, the deadly, concentric fire of shot and shell was opened upon the crowded city, where women and children, torn by war's merciless missiles, ran to and fro frantic with terror. The dreadful storm continued to rage, with but few intermissions, until Wednesday. Still there were no signs of surrender. The king, though his head-quarters were a few miles distant, at Ottmachau, was almost constantly on the ground superintending every thing. As he felt sure of the entire conquest of Silesia, the whole province being now in his possession except three small towns, he looked anxiously upon the destruction which his own balls and bombs were effecting. He was destroying

his own property.

On Wednesday morning General Borck was sent toward the gates of the city, accompanied by a trumpeter, who, with bugle blasts, was to summon General Roth to a parley. General Borck was instructed to inform the Austrian commander that if he surrendered immediately he should be treated with great leniency, but that if he persisted in his defense the most terrible severity should be his doom. To the people of Neisse it was a matter of but very little moment whether they were under Austrian or Prussian domination. They would gladly accede to any terms which would deliver them from the dreadful bombardment. General Roth, therefore, would not allow what we should call the flag of truce to approach the gates. He opened fire upon General Borck so as not to wound him, but as a warning that he must approach no nearer. The king was greatly angered by this result.



ATTACK UPON NEISSE.

In burning the suburbs, one of the mansions of the bishop, a few miles from Neisse, had escaped the general conflagration. The Prussians had taken possession of this large and commodious structure, with its ample supply of winter fuel. General Roth employed a resolute butcher, who, under the pretense of supplying the Prussians with beef, visited the bishop's mansion, and secretly applied the torch. It was a cold winter's night. The high wind fanned the flames. Scarcely an hour passed ere the whole structure, with all its supplies, was in ashes. The Prussian officers who had found a warm home were driven into the icy fields.

These two events so exasperated his Prussian majesty that the next morning, at an early hour, he reopened upon the doomed city with renewed vigor his fire of bombshells and red-hot shot. Fire companies were organized throughout the city, to rush with their engines wherever the glowing balls descended, and thus the flames which frequently burst out were soon extinguished. All day Thursday, Thursday night, Friday, and until nine in the morning of Saturday, the tempest of battle, with occasional lulls, hurled its bolts and uttered its thunders. There was then a short rest until four o'clock on Sunday afternoon, when the batteries again opened their action more vigorously than ever, nine bombs being often in the air at the same time.

Frederick, not willing utterly to destroy the city, which he wished to preserve for himself, and perhaps, though no word of his indicates it, influenced by some sympathy for the seven thousand unoffending inhabitants of the place, men, women,

and children, very many of whom were Protestants, who were suffering far more from the missiles of war than the Austrian garrison, arrested the fire of his batteries, and decided to convert the siege into a blockade. His own troops were suffering much in the bleak fields swept by the gales of winter. The whole of Silesia was in his hands excepting the small towns of Brieg, Glogau, and Neisse. These were so closely invested that neither food nor re-enforcements could be introduced to them. Should they hold out until spring, Frederick could easily then, aided by the warm weather, break open their gates.

He therefore spread his troops abroad in winter quarters, levying contributions upon the unhappy inhabitants of Silesia for their support. The king, ever prompt in his movements, having on Monday, the 23d of January, converted the siege into a blockade, on Wednesday, the 25th, set out for home. Visiting one or two important posts by the way, he reached Berlin the latter part of the week. Here he was received with great acclamations as a conquering hero. In six weeks he had overrun Silesia, and had virtually annexed it to his own realms. Whether Austria would quietly submit to this robbery, and whether Frederick would be able to retain his conquest, were questions yet to be decided.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CAMPAIGN OF MOLLWITZ.

Embarrassments of Frederick.—Attempts a Compromise.—New Invasion of Silesia.—Intrigues for the Imperial Crown.—Rivalry between England and France.—Death of Anne of Russia.—Energy of Austria.—Narrow Escape of Frederick.—Frederick's Antipathy to Christianity.—Capture of Glogau.—Peril of Frederick.—The Siege of Neisse.

FREDERICK, returning to Berlin from his six weeks' campaign in Silesia, remained at home but three weeks. He had recklessly let loose the dogs of war, and must already have begun to be appalled in view of the possible results. His embassadors at the various courts had utterly failed to secure for him any alliance. England and some of the other powers were manifestly unfriendly to him. Like Frederick himself, they were all disposed to consult merely their own individual interests. Thus influenced, they looked calmly on to see how Frederick, who had thrown into the face of the young Queen of Austria the gage of battle, would meet the forces which she, with great energy, was marshaling in defense of her realms. Frederick was manifestly and outrageously in the wrong.

The chivalry of Europe was in sympathy with the

young and beautiful queen, who, inexperienced, afflicted by the death of her father, and about to pass through the perils of maternity, had been thus suddenly and rudely assailed by one who should have protected her with almost a brother's love and care. Every court in Europe was familiar with the fact that the father of Maria Theresa had not only humanely interceded, in the most earnest terms, for the life of Frederick, but had interposed his imperial authority' to rescue him from the scaffold, with which he was threatened by his unnatural parent. Frederick found that he stood quite alone, and that he had nothing to depend upon but his own energies and those of his compact, well-disciplined army.

It would seem that Frederick was now disposed to compromise. He authorized the suggestion to be made to the court at Vienna by his minister, Count Gotter, that he was ready to withdraw from his enterprise, and to enter into alliance with Austria, if the queen would surrender to him the duchy of Glogau only, which was but a small part of Silesia. But to these terms the heroic young queen would not listen. She justly regarded them but as the proposition of the highway robber, who offers to leave one his watch if he will peaceably surrender his purse. Whatever regrets Frederick might have felt in view of the difficulties in which he found himself involved, not the slightest indication of them is to be seen in his correspondence. He had passed the Rubicon. And now he summoned all his energies—such energies as the world has seldom, if ever, witnessed before, to carry out the enterprise upon which he had so recklessly entered, and from which he could not without humiliation withdraw.

On the 19th of February, 1741, Frederick, having

been at home but three weeks, again left Berlin with re-enforcements, increasing his army of invasion to sixty thousand men, to complete the conquest of Silesia by the capture of the three fortresses which still held out against him. On the 21st he reached Glogau. After carefully reconnoitring the works, he left directions with Prince Leopold of Dessau, who commanded the Prussian troops there, to press the siege with all possible vigor. He was fearful that Austrian troops might soon arrive to the relief of the place.

The king then hastened on to Schweidnitz, a few miles west from Breslau. This was a small town, strongly fortified, about equally distant from the three beleaguered fortresses—Neisse, Brieg, and Glogau. The young monarch was daily becoming more aware that he had embarked in an enterprise which threatened him with fearful peril. He had not only failed to secure a single ally, but there were indications that England and other powers were in secret deliberation to join against him. He soon learned that England had sent a gift or loan of a million of dollars—a large sum in those days—to replenish the exhausted treasury of Maria Theresa. His minister in Russia also transmitted to him an appalling rumor that a project was in contemplation by the King of England, the King of Poland, Anne, regent of Russia, and Maria Theresa, to unite, and so partition the Prussian kingdom as to render the ambitious Frederick powerless to disturb the peace of Europe. The general motives which influenced the great monarchies in the stupendous war which was soon evolved are sufficiently manifest. But these motives led to a complication of intrigues which it would be alike tedious and unprofitable to attempt to unravel.

Frederick wished to enlarge his Liliputian realms, and become one of the powers of Europe. This he could only do by taking advantage of the apparent momentary weakness of Austria, and seizing a portion of the territory of the young queen. In order to accomplish this, it was for his interest to oppose the election of Maria Theresa's husband, the Grand-duke Francis, as emperor. The imperial crown placed upon the brow of Francis would invest Austria with almost resistless power. Still, Frederick was ready to promise his earnest concurrence in this arrangement if Maria Theresa would surrender to him Silesia. He had even moderated his terms, as we have mentioned, to a portion of the province.

France had no fear of Prussia. Even with the addition of Silesia, it would be comparatively a feeble realm. But France did fear the supremacy of Austria over Europe. It was for the apparent interest of the court of Versailles that Austria should be weakened, and, consequently, that the husband of the queen should not be chosen Emperor of Germany. Therefore France was coming into sympathy with Frederick, and was disposed to aid him in his warfare against Austria.

England was the hereditary foe of France. It was one of the leading objects in her diplomacy to circumvent that power. "Our great-grandfathers," writes Carlyle, "lived in perpetual terror that they would be devoured by France; that French ambition would overset the Celestial Balance, and proceed next to eat the British nation." Strengthening Austria was weakening France. Therefore the sympathies of England were strongly with Austria. In addition to this, personal feelings came in. The puerile little king, George II., hated implacably his nephew,

Frederick of Prussia, which hatred Frederick returned with interest.

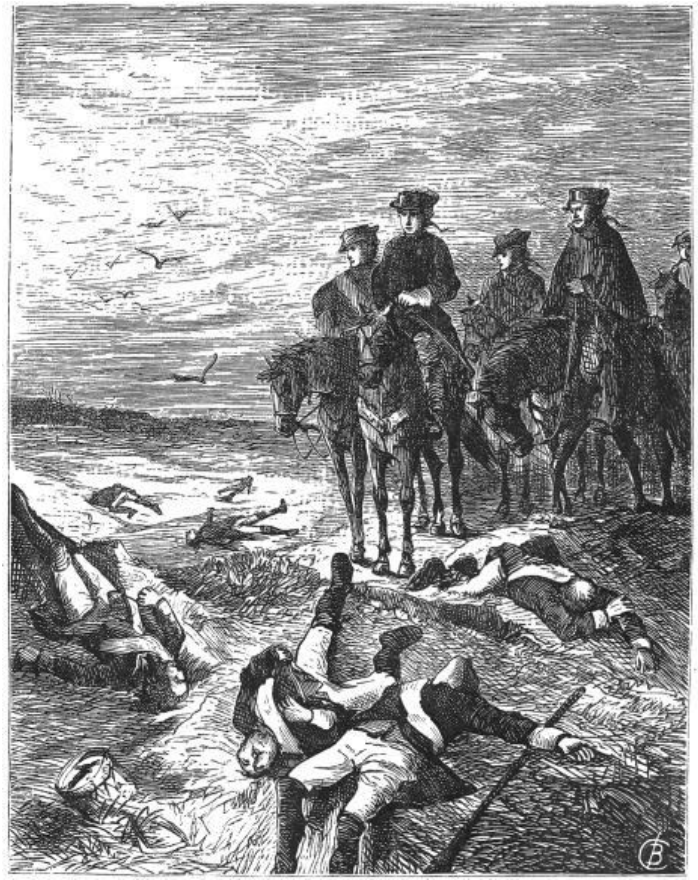
Spain was at war with England, and was ready to enter into an alliance with any power which would aid her in her struggle with that formidable despot of the seas.

The Czarina, Anne of Russia, died the 28th of October, 1740, just eight days after the death of the emperor. She left, in the cradle, the infant Czar Iwan, her nephew, two months old. The father of this child was a brother of Frederick's neglected wife Elizabeth. The mother was the Russian Princess Catharine of Mecklenburg, now called Princess Anne, whom Frederick had at one time thought of applying for as his wife. Russia was a semi-barbaric realm just emerging into consideration, and no one could tell by what influences it would be swayed. The minor powers could be controlled by the greater—constrained by terror or led by bribes. Such, in general, was the state of Europe at this time.

Austria was rapidly marshaling her hosts, and pouring them through the defiles of the mountains to regain Silesia. Her troops still held three important fortresses—Neisse, Brieg, and Glogau. These places were, however, closely blockaded by the Prussians. Though it was midwinter, bands of Austrian horsemen were soon sweeping in all directions, like local war tempests borne on the wings of the wind. Wherever there was an unprotected baggage-train, or a weakly-defended post, they came swooping down to seize their prey, and vanished as suddenly as they had appeared. Their numbers seemed to be continually increasing. All the roads were swept by these swarms of irregulars, who carefully avoided any serious engagement, while they awaited the

approach of the Austrian army, which was gathering its strength to throw down to Frederick the gauntlet on an open field of battle.

Much to Frederick's chagrin, he soon learned that a body of three hundred foot and three hundred horse, cautiously approaching through by-paths in the mountains, had thrown itself into Neisse, to strengthen the garrison there. This was on the 5th of March. But six days before a still more alarming event had occurred. On the 27th of February, Frederick, with a small escort, not dreaming of danger, set out to visit two small posts in the vicinity of Neisse. He stopped to dine with a few of his officers in the little village of Wartha, while the principal part of the detachment which accompanied him continued its movement to Baumgarten.



FREDERICK ON THE FIELD OF BAUMGARTEN.

The leader of an Austrian band of five hundred dragoons was on the watch. As the detachment of one hundred and fifty horse approached Baumgarten, the Austrians, from their ambuscade, plunged upon them. There was a short, sharp conflict, when the Prussians fled, leaving ten dead, sixteen prisoners, one standard, and two kettle-drums in the hands of the victors. The king had just sat down at the dinner-table, when he heard, at the distance of a few miles,

the tumult of the musketry. He sprang from the table, hurriedly mustered a small force of forty hussars and fifty foot, and hastened toward the scene. Arriving at the field, he found it silent and deserted, and the ten men lying dead upon it. The victorious Austrians, disappointed in not finding the king, bore their spoils in triumph to Vienna. It was a very narrow escape for Frederick. Had he then been captured it might have changed the history of Europe, and no one can tell the amount of blood and woe which would have been averted.

It is perhaps not strange that Frederick should have imbibed a strong feeling of antipathy to Christianity. In his father's life he had witnessed only its most repulsive caricature. While making the loudest protestations of piety, Frederick William, in his daily conduct, had manifested mainly only every thing that is hateful and of bad report. Still, it is quite evident that Frederick was not blind to the distinction between the principles of Christianity as taught by Jesus and developed in his life, and the conduct of those who, professing his name, trampled those principles beneath their feet. In one of his letters to Voltaire, dated Cirey, August 26, 1736, Frederick wrote:

"May you never be disgusted with the sciences by the quarrels of their cultivators; a race of men no better than courtiers; often enough as greedy, intriguing, false, and cruel as these.

"And how sad for mankind that the very interpreters of Heaven's commandments—the theologians, I mean—are sometimes the most dangerous of all! professed messengers of the Divinity, yet men sometimes of obscure ideas and pernicious behavior, their soul blown out with mere

darkness, full of gall and pride in proportion as it is empty of truths. Every thinking being who is not of their opinion is an atheist; and every king who does not favor them will be damned. Dangerous to the very throne, and yet intrinsically insignificant.

"I respect metaphysical ideas. Rays of lightning they are in the midst of deep night. More, I think, is not to be hoped from metaphysics. It does not seem likely that the first principles of things will ever be known. The mice that nestle in some little holes of an immense building know not whether it is eternal, or who the architect, or why he built it. Such mice are we. And the divine architect has never, that I know of, told his secret to one of us."

Notwithstanding these sentiments, the king sent throughout Silesia a supply of sixty Protestant preachers, ordained especially for the work. Though Frederick himself did not wish to live in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ, it is very evident that he did not fear the influence of that Gospel upon his Silesian subjects. Very wisely the Protestant preachers were directed carefully to avoid giving any offense to the Catholics. They were to preach in barns and town-halls in places where there was no Protestant church. The salary of each was one hundred and fifty dollars a year, probably with rations. They were all placed under the general superintendence of one of the army chaplains.

Every day it became more clear that Maria Theresa was resolved not to part with one inch of her territory, and that the Austrian court was thoroughly roused in its determination to drive the intrusive Prussians out of Silesia. Though Frederick had no scruples of conscience to prevent him from seizing a portion of the domains of Maria Theresa, his

astonishment and indignation were alike aroused by the rumor that England, Poland, and Russia were contemplating the dismemberment of his realms. An army of thirty-six thousand men, under the old Duke Leopold of Dessau,[51] was immediately dispatched by Frederick to Götten, on the frontiers of Hanover, to seize upon that Continental possession of the King of England upon the slightest indication of a hostile movement. George II. was greatly alarmed by this menace.

Frederick found himself plunged into the midst of difficulties and perils which exacted to the utmost his energies both of body and of mind. Every moment was occupied in strengthening his posts, collecting magazines, recruiting his forces, and planning to circumvent the foe. From the calm of Reinsberg he found himself suddenly tossed by the surges of one of the most terrible tempests of conflict which a mortal ever encountered. Through night and storm, almost without sleep and without food, drenched and chilled, he was galloping over the hills and through the valleys, climbing the steeples, fording the streams, wading the morasses, involved in a struggle which now threatened even the crown which he had so recently placed upon his brow. Had Frederick alone suffered, but few tears of sympathy would have been shed in his behalf; but his ambition had stirred up a conflict which was soon to fill all Europe with the groans of the dying, the tears of the widow, the wailings of the orphan.

Frederick deemed it of great importance to gain immediate possession of Glogau. It was bravely defended by the Austrian commander, Count Wallis, and there was hourly danger that an Austrian army might appear for its relief. Frederick, in the intensity

of his anxiety, as he hurried from post to post, wrote from every stopping-place to young Leopold, whom he had left in command of the siege, urging him immediately to open the trenches, concentrate the fire of his batteries, and to carry the place by storm. “I have clear intelligence,” he wrote, “that troops are actually on the way for the rescue of Glogau.” Each note was more imperative than the succeeding one. On the 6th of March he wrote from Ohlau:

“I am certainly informed that the enemy will make some attempt. I hereby, with all distinctness, command that, so soon as the petards are come, you attack Glogau. And you must make your dispositions for more than one attack, so that if one fail the other shall certainly succeed. I hope you will put off no longer. Otherwise the blame of all the mischief that might arise out of longer delay must lie on you alone.”

On the 8th of March Leopold summoned all his generals at noon, and informed them that Glogau, at all hazards, must be taken that very night. The most minute directions were given to each one. There were to be three attacks—one up the river on its left bank, one down the river on its right bank, and one on the land side perpendicular to the other two. The moment the clock on the big steeple in Glogau should give the first stroke of midnight, the three columns were to start. Before the last stroke should be given they were all to be upon the silent, rapid advance.

Count Wallis, who was intrusted with the defense of the place, had a garrison of about a thousand men, with fifty-eight heavy guns and several mortars, and a large amount of ammunition. Glogau was in the latitude of fifty-two, nearly six degrees north of

Quebec. It was a cold wintry night. The ground was covered with snow. Water had been thrown upon the glacis, so that it was slippery with ice. Prince Leopold in person led one of the columns. The sentinels upon the walls were not alarmed until three impetuous columns, like concentrating tornadoes, were sweeping down upon them. They shouted "To arms!" The soldiers, roused from sleep, rushed to their guns. Their lightning flashes were instantly followed by war's deepest thunders, as discharge followed discharge in rapid succession.

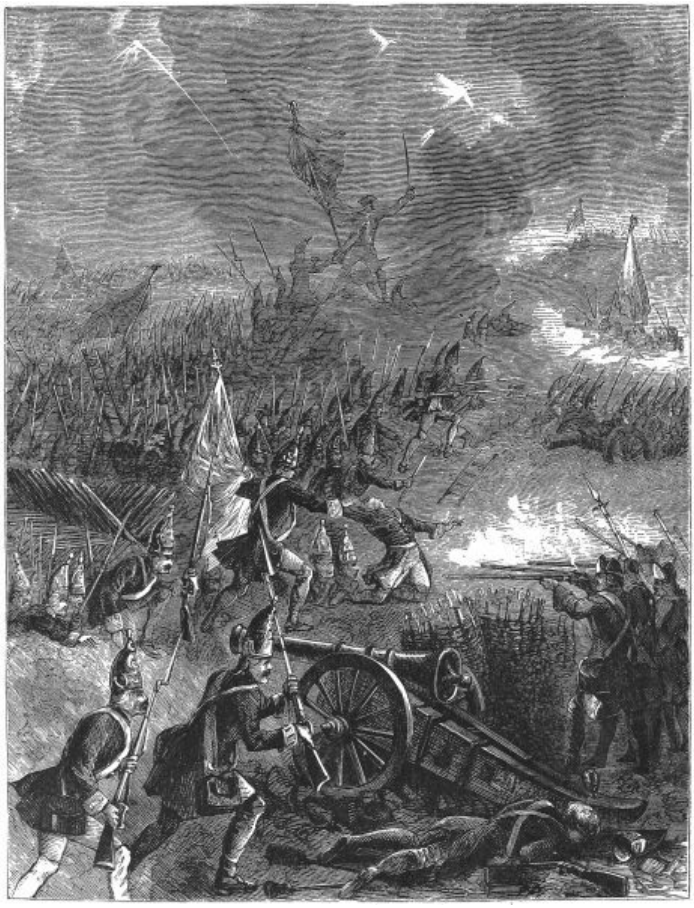
But the assailants were already so near the walls that the shot passed harmlessly over their heads. Without firing a gun or uttering a sound, these well-drilled soldiers of Frederick William hewed down the palisades, tore out the chevaux-de-frise, and clambered over the glacis. With axe and petard they burst open the gates and surged into the city.

In one short hour the gallant deed was done. But ten of the assailants were killed and forty-eight wounded. The loss of the Austrians was more severe. The whole garrison, one thousand sixty-five in number, and their *materiel* of war, consisting of fifty brass cannons, a large amount of ammunition, and the military chest, containing thirty-two thousand florins, fell into the hands of the victors. To the inhabitants of Glogau it was a matter of very little moment whether the Austrian or the Prussian banner floated over their citadel. Neither party paid much more regard to the rights of the people than they did to those of the mules and the horses.

But to Frederick the importance of the achievement was very great. The exploit was justly ascribed to his general direction. Thus he obtained a taste of that military renown which he had so greatly

coveted. The king was, at this time, at his head-quarters at Schweidnitz, about one hundred and twenty miles from Glogau. A courier, dispatched immediately from the captured town, communicated to him, at five o'clock in the afternoon, the glad tidings of the brilliant victory.

Frederick was overjoyed. In the exuberance of his satisfaction, he sent Prince Leopold a present of ten thousand dollars. To each private soldier he gave half a guinea, and to the officers sums in proportion. To the old Duke of Dessauer, father of the young Prince Leopold, he wrote:

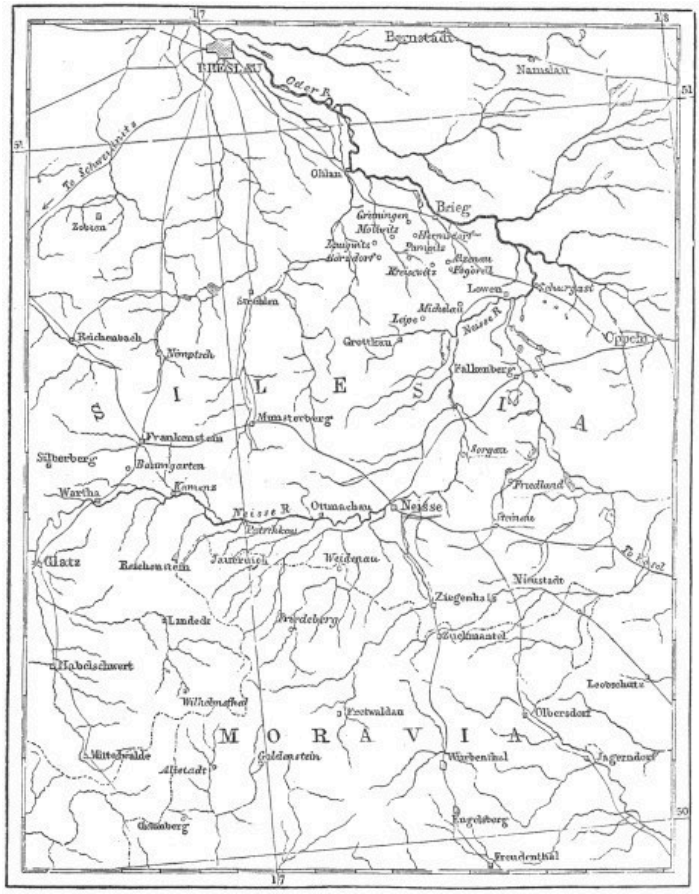


THE ASSAULT ON GLOGAU.

"The more I think of the Glogau business the more important I find it. Prince Leopold has achieved the prettiest military stroke that has been done in this century. From my heart I congratulate you on having such a son. In boldness of resolution, in plan, in execution, it is alike admirable, and quite gives a turn to my affairs."

Leaving a sufficient force to garrison Glogau, the

king ordered all the remaining regiments to be distributed among the other important posts; while Prince Leopold, in high favor, joined the king at Schweidnitz, to assist in the siege of Neisse. Frederick rapidly concentrated his forces for the capture of Neisse before the Austrian army should march for its relief. He thought that the Austrians would not be able to take the field before the snow should disappear and the new spring grass should come, affording forage for their horses.



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE MOLLWITZ CAMPAIGN.

But General Neipperg, the Austrian commander-in-chief, proved as watchful, enterprising, and energetic as Frederick. His scouting bands swarmed in all directions. The Prussian foraging parties were cut off, their reconnoitrers were driven back, and all the movements of the main body of the Austrian army were veiled from their view. General Neipperg, hearing of the fall of Glogau, decided,

notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather and the snow, to march immediately, with thirty thousand men, to the relief of Neisse. His path led through mountain defiles, over whose steep and icy roads his heavy guns and lumbering ammunition-wagons were with difficulty drawn.

At the same time, Frederick, unaware of the movement of the Austrians, prepared to push the siege of Neisse with the utmost vigor. Leaving some of his ablest generals to conduct the operations there, Frederick himself marched, with strong re-enforcements, to strengthen General Schwerin, who was stationed among the Jagerndorf hills, on the southern frontier of Silesia, to prevent the Austrians from getting across the mountains. Marching from Ottmachau, the king met General Schwerin at Neustadt, half way to Jagerndorf, and they returned together to that place. But the swarming horsemen of General Neipperg were so bold and watchful that no information could be obtained of the situation or movements of the Austrian army. Frederick, seeing no indications that General Neipperg was attempting to force his way through the snow-encumbered defiles of the mountains, prepared to return, and, with his concentrated force, press with all vigor the siege of Neisse.

As he was upon the point of setting off, seven Austrian deserters came in and reported that General Neipperg's full army was advancing at but a few miles' distance. Even as they were giving their report, sounds of musketry and cannon announced that the Prussian outposts were assailed by the advance-guard of the foe. The peril of Frederick was great. Had Neipperg known the prize within his reach, the escape of the Prussian king would have

been almost impossible. Frederick had but three or four thousand men with him at Jagerndorf, and only three pieces of artillery, with forty rounds of ammunition. Bands of Austrian cavalry on fleet horses were swarming all around him. Seldom, in the whole course of his life, had Frederick been placed in a more critical position.

It was soon ascertained that the main body of the Austrian army was fifteen miles to the southwest, at Freudenthal, pressing on toward Neisse. General Neipperg, without the slightest suspicion that Frederick was any where in his vicinity, had sent aside a reconnoitring party of skirmishers to ascertain if there were any Prussians at Jagerndorf. General Neipperg, at Freudenthal, was as near Neisse as Frederick was at Jagerndorf.

There was not a moment to be lost. General Neipperg was moving resolutely forward with a cloud of skirmishers in the advance and on his wings. With the utmost exertions Frederick immediately rendezvoused all his remote posts, destroying such stores as could not hastily be removed, and by a forced march of twenty-five miles in one day reached Neustadt. General Neipperg was marching by a parallel road about twenty miles west of that which the Prussians traversed. At Neustadt the king was still twenty miles from Neisse. With the delay of but a few hours, that he might assemble all the Prussian bands from the posts in that neighborhood, the king again resumed his march. He had no longer any hope of continuing the siege of Neisse. His only aim was to concentrate all his scattered forces, which had been spread over an area of nearly two thousand square miles, and, upon some well-selected field, to trust to the uncertain issues of a general battle. There was no

choice left for him between this course and an ignominious retreat.

Therefore, instead of marching upon Neisse, the king directed his course to Steinau, twenty miles east of Neisse. The siege was abandoned, and the whole Prussian army, so far as was possible, was gathered around the king. On the 5th of April Frederick established his head-quarters at Steinau. On that same day, General Neipperg, with the advanced corps of his army, triumphantly entered Neisse. Apprehensive of an immediate attack, Frederick made all his arrangements for a battle. In the confusion of those hours, during which the whole Prussian army, with all its vast accumulation of artillery and baggage-wagons, was surging like an inundation through the streets of Steinau, the village took fire and was burned to ashes. With great difficulty the artillery and powder were saved, being entangled in the narrow streets while the adjoining houses were enveloped in flames. The night was intensely cold. The Prussian army bivouacked in the open frozen fields.

General Neipperg, as his men were weary with their long march, did not make an attack, but allowed his troops a short season of repose in the enjoyment of the comforts of Neisse. The next morning, the 6th, Frederick continued his retreat to Friedland, ten miles farther north. He was anxious to get between the Austrians and Ohlau. He had many pieces of artillery there, and large stores of ammunition, which would prove a rich prize to the Austrians. It was Frederick’s intention to cross the River Neisse at a bridge at Sorgau, eight miles from Friedland; but the officer in charge there had been compelled to destroy the bridge, to protect himself

from the Austrian horsemen, who in large numbers had appeared upon the opposite banks. Prince Leopold was sent with the artillery and a strong force to reconstruct the bridge and force the passage, but the Austrian dragoons were encountered in such numbers that the enterprise was found impossible.

Frederick therefore decided to march down the river twenty miles farther, to Lowen, where there was a good bridge. To favor the operation, Prince Leopold, with large divisions of the army and much of the baggage, was to cross the Neisse on pontoons at Michelau, a few miles above Lowen. Both passages were successfully accomplished, and the two columns effected a junction on the west side of the river on the 8th of April. The blockade of Brieg was abandoned, and its blockading force united with the general army.

General Neipperg had now left Neisse; but he kept himself so surrounded by clouds of skirmishers as to render his march entirely invisible. Frederick, anxious to unite with him his troops under the Prince of Holstein Beck, advanced toward Grottkau to meet that division, which had been ordered to join him. The prince had been stationed at Frankenstein, with a force of about eight thousand, horse and foot; but the Austrian scouts so occupied all the roads that the king had not been able to obtain any tidings from him whatever.

It was Saturday, the 8th of April. A blinding, smothering storm of snow swept over the bleak plains. Breasting the gale, and wading through the drifts, the Prussian troops tramped along, unable to see scarcely a rod before them. At a little hamlet called Leipe the vanguard encountered a band of Austrian hussars. They took several captives. From

them they learned, much to their chagrin and not a little to their alarm, that the Austrian army was already in possession of Grottkau.



THE NIGHT BEFORE MOLLWITZ.

Instantly the Prussian troops were ordered to the right about. Rapidly retracing their steps through the streets of Leipe, much to the surprise of its inhabitants, they pressed on seven miles farther toward Ohlau, and encamped for the night. The anxiety of Frederick in these hours when he was retiring before the foe, and when there was every probability of his incurring disgrace instead of gaining honor, must have been dreadful. There was

no sleep for him that night. The Prussians were almost surrounded by the Austrians, and it was quite certain that the morrow would usher in a battle. Oppressed by the peril of his position, the king, during the night, wrote to his brother Augustus William, who was at Breslau, as follows. The letter was dated at the little village of Pogerell, where the king had taken shelter.

"MY DEAREST BROTHER,—The enemy has just got into Silesia. We are not more than a mile from them. To-morrow must decide our fortune. If I die, do not forget a brother who has always loved you most tenderly. I recommend to you my most dear mother, my domestics, and my first battalion. Eichel and Schuhmacher are informed of all my testamentary wishes.

"Remember me always, but console yourself for my death. The glory of the Prussian arms and the honor of the house have set me in action, and will guide me to my last moment. You are my sole heir. I recommend to you, in dying, those whom I have the most loved during my life—Keyserling, Jordan, Wartensleben, Hacke, who is a very honest man, Fredersdorf, and Eichel, in whom you may place entire confidence.

"I bequeath eight thousand crowns ($6000) to my domestics. All that I have elsewhere depends on you. To each of my brothers and sisters make a present in my name; a thousand affectionate regards to my sister at Baireuth. You know what I think on their score; and you know, better than I can tell you, the tenderness and all the sentiments of most inviolable friendship with which I am, dearest brother, your faithful brother and servant till death,

FREDERICK."

To his friend Jordan, who was also in Breslau, he wrote:

> "MY DEAR JORDAN,—We are going to fight to-morrow. Thou knowest the chances of war. The life of kings is not more regarded than that of private people. I know not what will happen to me.
>
> "If my destiny is finished, remember a friend who loves thee always tenderly. If Heaven prolong my days, I will write to thee after to-morrow, and thou shalt hear of our victory. Adieu, dear friend; I shall love thee till death.
>
> FREDERICK."

It is worthy of notice that there is no indication that the king sent any word of affectionate remembrance to his neglected wife. It is a remarkable feature in the character of the Emperor Napoleon I. that in his busiest campaigns rarely did a day pass in which he did not write to Josephine. He often wrote to her twice a day.

Sunday morning, the 9th, dawned luridly. The storm raged unabated. The air was so filled with the falling snow that one could not see the distance of twenty paces, and the gale was piling up large drifts on the frozen plains. Neither army could move. Neipperg was in advance of Frederick, and had established his head-quarters at the village of Mollwitz, a few miles northwest of Pogerell. He had therefore got fairly between the Prussians and Ohlau. But Frederick knew not where the Austrian army was. For six-and-thirty hours the wild storm drove both Prussians and Austrians to such shelter as could be obtained in the several hamlets which were scattered over the extended plain.

Frederick dispatched messengers to Ohlau to summon the force there to his aid; the messengers were all captured. The Prussians were now in a deplorable condition. The roads were encumbered and rendered almost impassable by the drifted snow. The army was cut off from its supplies, and had provisions on hand but for a single day. Both parties alike plundered the poor inhabitants of their cattle, sheep, and grain. Every thing that could burn was seized for their camp-fires. We speak of the carnage of the battle-field, and often forget the misery which is almost invariably brought upon the helpless inhabitants of the region through which the armies move. The schoolmaster of Mollwitz, a kind, simple-hearted, accurate old gentleman, wrote an account of the scenes he witnessed. Under date of Mollwitz, Sunday, April 9, he writes:

"Country, for two days back, was in new alarm by the Austrian garrison of Brieg, now left at liberty, who sallied out upon the villages about, and plundered black cattle, sheep, grain, and whatever they could come at. But this day in Mollwitz the whole Austrian army was upon us. First there went three hundred hussars through the village to Grüningen, who quartered themselves there, and rushed hither and thither into houses, robbing and plundering. From one they took his best horses; from another they took linen, clothes, and other furnitures and victual.

"General Neipperg halted here at Mollwitz with the whole army before the village, in mind to quarter. And quarter was settled, so that a plow-farmer got four to five companies to lodge, and a spade-farmer two or three hundred cavalry. The houses were full of officers, and the fields full of

horsemen and baggage; and all around you saw nothing but fires burning. The wooden railings were instantly torn down for firewood. The hay, straw, barley were eaten away, and brought to nothing. Every thing from the barns was carried out. As the whole army could not lodge itself with us, eleven hundred infantry quartered at Laugwitz. Bärzdorf got four hundred cavalry; and this day nobody knew what would come of it."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEFEAT AND FLIGHT OF FREDERICK.

Preparing for the Battle.—The Surprise.—The Snow-encumbered Plain.—Horror of the Scene.—Flight of Frederick.—His Shame and Despair.—Unexpected Victory of the Prussians.—Letters of Frederick.—Adventures of Maupertuis.

MONDAY morning the storm ceased. There was a perfect calm. For leagues the spotless snow, nearly two feet deep, covered all the extended plains. The anxiety of Frederick had been so great that for two nights he had not been able to get any sleep. He had plunged into this war with the full assurance that he was to gain victory and glory. It now seemed inevitable that he was to encounter but defeat and shame.

At the earliest dawn the whole army was in motion. Ranked in four columns, they cautiously advanced toward Ohlau, ready to deploy instantly into line of battle should the enemy appear. Scouts were sent out in all directions. But, toiling painfully through the drifts, they could obtain no reliable information. The spy-glass revealed nothing but the winding-sheet of crisp and sparkling snow, with scarcely a shrub or a tree to break the dreary view.

There were no fences to be seen—nothing but a smooth, white plain, spreading for miles around. The hamlet of Mollwitz, where General Neipperg had established his head-quarters, was about seven miles north from Pogerell, from which point Frederick was marching. At the distance of a few miles from each other there were several wretched little hamlets, consisting of a few low, thatched, clay farm-houses clustered together.

General Neipperg was not attempting to move in the deep snow. He, however, sent out a reconnoitring party of mounted hussars under General Rothenburg. About two miles from Mollwitz this party encountered the advance-guard of the Prussians. The hussars, after a momentary conflict, in which several fell, retreated and gave the alarm. General Neipperg was just sitting down to dinner. The Prussian advance waited for the rear columns to come up, and then deployed into line. As the Austrian hussars dashed into the village of Mollwitz with the announcement that the Prussians were on the march, had attacked them, and killed forty of their number, General Neipperg dropped knife and fork, sprang from the table, and dispatched couriers in all directions, galloping for life, to concentrate his troops. His force was mainly distributed about in three villages, two or three miles apart. The clangor of trumpets and drums resounded; and by the greatest exertions the Austrian troops were collected from their scattered encampments, and formed in two parallel lines, about two miles in length, facing the Prussians, who were slowly advancing in the same order, wading through the snow. Each army was formed with the infantry in the centre and the cavalry on the wings. Frederick was then but an inexperienced soldier. He subsequently condemned

the want of military ability which he displayed upon this occasion.

"We approached," he writes, "Marshal Neipperg's army without being discovered by any one man living. His troops were then cantoned in three villages. But at that time I had not sufficient experience to know how to avail myself of such an opportunity. I ought immediately to have ordered two of my columns to surround the village of Mollwitz, and then to have attacked it. I ought at the same instant to have detached my dragoons with orders to have attacked the other two villages, which contained the Austrian cavalry. The infantry, which should have followed, would have prevented them from mounting. If I had proceeded in this way I am convinced that I should have totally destroyed the Austrian army."[52]

It was now about noon. The sun shone brightly on the glistening snow. There was no wind. Twenty thousand peasants, armed and drilled as soldiers, were facing each other upon either side, to engage in mutual slaughter, with no animosity between them—no cause of quarrel. It is one of the unrevealed mysteries of Providence that any one man should thus have it in his power to create such wide-spread death and misery. The Austrians had a splendid body of cavalry, eight thousand six hundred in number. Frederick had but about half as many horsemen. The Prussians had sixty pieces of artillery, the Austrians but eighteen.

The battle soon began, with its tumult, its thunder-roar of artillery and musketry, its gushing blood, its cries of agony, its death convulsions. Both parties fought with the reckless courage, the desperation with which trained soldiers, of whatever

nationality, almost always fight.

The Prussians advanced in their long double line, trampling the deep snow beneath their feet. All their banners were waving. All their bands of music were pealing forth their most martial airs. Their sixty pieces of artillery, well in front, opened a rapid and deadly fire. The thoroughly-drilled Prussian artillerymen discharged their guns with unerring aim, breaking gaps in the Austrian ranks, and with such wonderful rapidity that the unintermitted roar of the cannons drowned the sound of drums and trumpets.

The Austrian cavalry made an impetuous charge upon the weaker Prussian cavalry on the right of the Prussian line. Frederick commanded here in person. The Prussian right wing was speedily routed, and driven in wild retreat over the plain. The king lost his presence of mind and fled ingloriously with the fugitives. General Schulenberg endeavored, in vain, to rally the disordered masses. He received a sabre slash across his face. Drenched in blood, he still struggled, unavailingly, to arrest the torrent, when a bullet struck him dead. The battle was now raging fiercely all along the lines.

General Römer, in command of the Austrian cavalry, had crushed the right wing of the Prussians. Resolutely he followed up his victory, hotly chasing the fugitives in the wildest disorder far away to the rear, capturing nine of their guns. Who can imagine the scene? There were three or four thousand horsemen put to utter rout, clattering over the plain, impetuously pursued by six or seven thousand of the finest cavalry in the world, discharging pistol-shots into their flying ranks, and raining down upon them sabre-blows.

The young king, all unaccustomed to those horrors of war which he had evoked, was swept along with the inundation. The danger of his falling in the midst of the general carnage, or of his capture, which was, perhaps, still more to be dreaded, was imminent. His friends entreated him to escape for his life. Even Marshal Schwerin, the veteran soldier, assured him that the battle was lost, and that he probably could escape capture only by a precipitate flight.



FLIGHT OF FREDERICK.

Frederick, thus urged, leaving the main body of his army, as he supposed, in utter rout, with a small

escort, put spurs to his steed in the attempt to escape. The king was well mounted on a very splendid bay horse. A rapid ride of fifteen miles in a southerly direction brought him to the River Neisse, which he crossed by a bridge at the little town of Lowen. Immediately after his departure Prince Leopold dispatched a squadron of dragoons to accompany the king as his body-guard. But Frederick fled so rapidly that they could not overtake him, and in the darkness, for night soon approached, they lost his track. Even several of the few who accompanied him, not so well mounted as the king, dropped off by the way, their horses not being able to keep up with his swift pace.

It was Frederick's aim to reach Oppeln, a small town upon the River Oder, about thirty miles from the field of battle. He supposed that one of his regiments still held that place. But this regiment had hurriedly vacated the post, and had repaired, with all its baggage, to Pampitz, in the vicinity of Mollwitz. Upon the retirement of this garrison a wandering party of sixty Austrian hussars had taken possession of the town.

Frederick, unaware that Oppeln was in the hands of the enemy, arrived, with the few of his suite who had been able to keep up with him, about midnight before the closed gates of the town. "Who are you?" the Austrian sentinels inquired. "We are Prussians," was the reply, "accompanying a courier from the king." The Austrians, unconscious of the prize within their grasp, and not knowing how numerous the Prussian party might be, instantly opened a musketry fire upon them through the iron gratings of the gate. Had they but thrown open the gate and thus let the king enter the trap, the whole history of Europe

might have been changed. Upon apparently such trivial chances the destinies of empires and of the world depend. Fortunately, in the darkness and the confusion, none were struck by the bullets.

At Oppeln there was a bridge across the Oder by which the king hoped to escape with his regiment to the free country beyond. There he intended to summon to his aid the army of thirty-six thousand men which he had sent to Götten under the "Old Dessauer." The discharge of the musketry of the Austrians blasted even this dismal hope. It seemed as though Frederick were doomed to drain the cup of misery to its dregs; and his anguish must have been intensified by the consciousness that he deserved it all. But a few leagues behind him, the bleak, snow-clad plains, swept by the night-winds, were strewed with the bodies of eight or nine thousand men, the dying and the dead, innocent peasant-boys torn from their homes, whose butchery had been caused by his own selfish ambition.

The king, in utter exhaustion from hunger, sleeplessness, anxiety, and misery, for a moment lost all self-control. As with his little band of fugitives he vanished into the gloom of the night, not knowing where to go, he exclaimed, in the bitterness of his despair, "O my God, my God, this is too much!"

Retracing his steps in the darkness some fifteen miles, he returned to Lowen, where, by a bridge, a few hours before, he had crossed the Neisse. Taught caution by the misadventure at Oppeln, he reined up his horse, before the morning dawned, at the mill of Hilbersdorf, about a mile and a half from the town. The king, upon his high-blooded charger, had outridden nearly all his escort; but one or two were now with him. One of these attendants he sent into

the town to ascertain if it were still held by the Prussians. Almost alone, he waited under the shelter of the mill the return of his courier. It was still night, dark and cold. The wind, sweeping over the snow-clad plains, caused the exhausted, half-famished monarch to shiver in his saddle.

There is a gloom of the soul far deeper than any gloom with which nature can ever be shrouded. It is not easy to conceive of a mortal placed in circumstances of greater mental suffering than was the proud, ambitious young monarch during the hour in which he waited, in terror and disgrace, by the side of the mill, for the return of his courier. At length the clatter of hoofs was heard, and the messenger came back, accompanied by an adjutant, to announce to the king that the Prussians still held Lowen, and that *the Prussian army had gained a signal victory at Mollwitz*.

Who can imagine the conflicting emotions of joy and wretchedness, of triumph and shame, of relief and chagrin, with which the heart of Frederick must have been rent! The army of Prussia had triumphed, under the leadership of his generals, while he, its young and ambitious sovereign, who had unjustly provoked war that he might obtain military glory, a fugitive from the field, was scampering like a coward over the plains at midnight, seeking his own safety. Never, perhaps, was there a more signal instance of a retributive providence. Frederick knew full well that the derision of Europe would be excited by caricatures and lampoons of the chivalric fugitive. Nor was he deceived in his anticipations. There was no end to the ridicule which was heaped upon Frederick, galloping, for dear life, from the battle-field in one direction, while his solid columns were

advancing to victory in the other. His sarcastic foes were ungenerous and unjust. But when do foes, wielding the weapons of ridicule, ever pretend even to be just and generous?



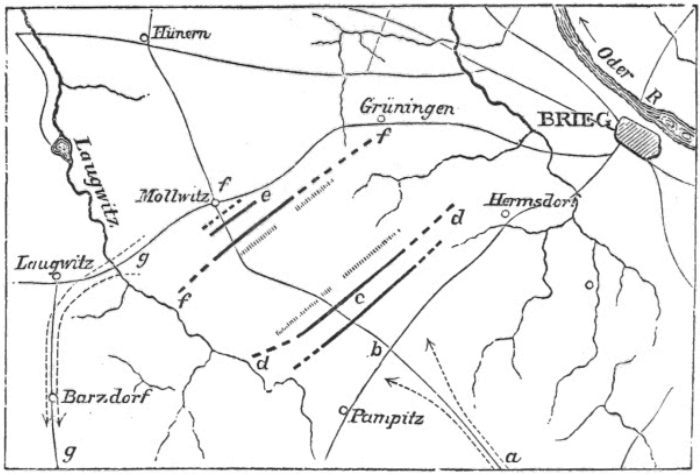
FREDERICK AT THE MILL.

The king, upon receiving these strange and unexpected tidings, immediately rode into Lowen. It

was an early hour in the morning. He entered the place, not as a king and a conqueror, but as a starving fugitive, exhausted with fatigue, anxiety, and sleeplessness. It is said that his hunger was so great that he stopped at a little shop on the corner of the market-place, where “widow Panzern” served him with a cup of coffee and a cold roast fowl. Thus slightly refreshed, the intensely humiliated young king galloped back to his victorious army at Mollwitz, having been absent from it, in his terror-stricken flight, for sixteen hours.

The chagrin of Frederick in view of this adventure may be inferred from the fact that, during the whole remainder of his life, he was never known to make any allusion to it whatever.

After the king, swept away in the wreck of his right wing of cavalry, had left the field, and was spurring his horse in his impetuous flight, his generals in the centre and on the left, in command of infantry so highly disciplined that every man would stand at his post until he died, resolutely maintained the battle. Frederick William had drilled these men for twenty years as men were never drilled before or since, converting them into mere machines. They were wielded by their officers as they themselves handled their muskets. Five successive cavalry charges these cast-iron men resisted. They stood like rocks dashing aside the torrent. The assailing columns melted before their terrible fire—they discharging five shots to the Austrians’ two.



BATTLE OF
MOLLWITZ,
April 10, 1741.

a. Advance of Prussians.
b. Where Rothenburg met the Hussars.
c. Prussian Infantry.
dd. Prussian Cavalry.
e. Austrian Infantry.
fff. Austrian Cavalry.
gg. Retreat of Austrians.

After the fifth charge, the Austrians, dispirited, and leaving the snow plain crimsoned with the blood and covered with the bodies of their slain, withdrew out of ball range. Torn and exhausted, they could not be driven by their officers forward to another assault. The battle had now lasted for five hours. Night was at hand, for the sun had already set. The repulsed Austrians were collected in scattered and confused bands. The experienced eye of General Schwerin saw that the hour for decisive action had come. He closed

up his ranks, ordered every band to play its most spirited air, and gave the order “Forward.” An Austrian officer, writing the next week, describes the scene.

“I can well say,” he writes, “that I never in my life saw any thing more beautiful. They marched with the greatest steadiness, arrow straight and their front like a line, as if they had been upon parade. The glitter of their clear arms shone strangely in the setting sun, and the fire from them went on no otherwise than a continued peal of thunder. The spirits of our army sank altogether, the foot plainly giving way, the horse refusing to come forward—all things wavering toward dissolution.”

The Austrians had already lost, in killed, wounded, and missing, four thousand four hundred and ten men. And though the Prussians had lost four thousand six hundred and thirteen, still their infantry lines had never for a moment wavered; and now, with floating banners and peals of music, they were advancing with the strides of conquerors.

Thus circumstanced, General Neipperg gave the order to retreat. At the double quick, the Austrians retired back through the street of Mollwitz, hurried across the River Laugwitz by a bridge, and, turning short to the south, continued their retreat toward Grottkau. They left behind them nine of their own guns, and eight of those which they had captured from the Prussians. The Prussians, exhausted by the long battle, their cavalry mostly dispersed and darkness already enveloping them, did not attempt any vigorous pursuit. They bivouacked on the grounds, or quartered themselves in the villages from which the Austrians had fled.

On Wednesday, April 12, two days after the

battle, Frederick wrote to his sister Wilhelmina from Ohlau as follows:

> "My dearest Sister,—I have the satisfaction to inform you that we have yesterday[53] totally beaten the Austrians. They have lost more than five thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. We have lost Prince Frederick, brother of Margraf Karl; General Schulenberg, Wartensleben of the Carabineers, and many other officers. Our troops did miracles, and the result shows as much. It was one of the rudest battles fought within the memory of man.
>
> "I am sure you will take part in this happiness, and that you will not doubt the tenderness with which I am, dearest sister, yours wholly,
>
> Frederick."

The king's intimate friend, Jordan, had accompanied him as far as Breslau. There he remained, anxiously awaiting the issue of the conflict. On the 11th, the day succeeding the battle, he wrote from Breslau to the king as follows:

"Sire,—Yesterday I was in terrible alarms. The sound of the cannon heard, the smoke of powder visible from the steeple-tops here, all led us to suspect that there was a battle going on. Glorious confirmation of it this morning. Nothing but rejoicing among all the Protestant inhabitants, who had begun to be in apprehension from the rumors which the other party took pleasure in spreading. Persons who were in the battle can not enough celebrate the coolness and bravery of your majesty. For myself, I am at the overflowing point. I have run about all day announcing this glorious news to the Berliners who are here. In my life I have never felt a

more perfect satisfaction. One finds at the corner of every street an orator of the people celebrating the warlike feats of your majesty's troops. I have often, in my idleness, assisted at these discourses; not artistic eloquence, it must be owned, but gushing full from the heart."

Frederick immediately sent an announcement of the victory to his friend Voltaire. It does not appear that he alluded to his own adventures. Voltaire received the note when in the theatre at Lisle, while listening to the first performance of his tragedy of *Mahomet*. He read the account to the audience between the acts. It was received with great applause. "You will see," said Voltaire, "that this piece of Mollwitz will secure the success of mine." *Vous verrez que cette piece de Mollwitz fera réussir la miene.*

The distinguished philosopher Maupertuis accompanied Frederick on this campaign. Following the king to the vicinity of the field of battle, he took a post of observation at a safe distance, that he might witness the spectacle. Carlyle, in his peculiar style of word-painting, describes the issue as follows:

"The sage Maupertuis, for example, had climbed some tree, or place of impregnability, hoping to see the battle there. And he did see it much too clearly at last! In such a tide of charging and chasing on that Right Wing, and round all the field in the Prussian rear; in such wide bickering and boiling of Horse-currents, which fling out round all the Prussian rear-quarters such a spray of Austrian Hussars for one element, Maupertuis, I have no doubt, wishes much he were at home doing his sines and tangents. An Austrian Hussar party gets sight of him on his tree or other stand-point (Voltaire says elsewhere he was

mounted on an ass, the malicious spirit!)—too certain the Austrian Hussars got sight of him; his purse, gold watch, all he has of movable, is given frankly; all will not do. There are frills about the man, fine laces, cloth; a goodish yellow wig on him for one thing. Their Slavonic dialect, too fatally intelligible by the pantomime accompanying it, forces sage Maupertuis from his tree or stand-point; the big red face flurried into scarlet, I can fancy, or scarlet and ashy-white mixed; and—Let us draw a veil over it. He is next seen shirtless, the once very haughty, blustery, and now much humiliated man; still conscious of supreme acumen, insight, and pure science; and, though an Austrian prisoner and a monster of rags, struggling to believe that he is a genius, and the Trismegistus of mankind. What a pickle!"

While in this deplorable condition, Maupertuis was found by the Prince of Lichtenstein, an Austrian officer who had met him in Paris. The prince rescued him from his brutal captors and supplied him with clothing. He was, however, taken to Vienna as a prisoner of war, where he was placed on parole. Voltaire, whose unamiable nature was pervaded by a very marked vein of malignity, made himself very merry over the misfortunes of the philosopher. As Maupertuis glided about the streets of Vienna for a time in obscurity, the newspapers began to speak of his scientific celebrity. He was thus brought into notice. The queen treated him with distinction. The Grand-duke Francis drew his own watch from his pocket, and presented it to Maupertuis in recompense for the one he had lost. Eventually he was released, and, loaded with many presents, was sent to Brittany.

In the account which Frederick gave, some years after, of this campaign, in his *Histoire de Mons Temps*, he wrote:

"The contest between General Neipperg and myself seemed to be which should commit the most faults. Mollwitz was the school of the king and his troops. That prince reflected profoundly upon all the faults and errors he had fallen into, and tried to correct them for the future."

CHAPTER XV.

THE WAR IN SILESIA.

The Encampment at Brieg.—Bombardment.—Diplomatic Intrigues.—Luxury of the Spanish Minister.—Rising Greatness of Frederick.—Frederick's Interview with Lord Hyndford.—Plans of France.—Desperate Prospects of Maria Theresa.—Anecdote of Frederick.—Joint Action of England and Holland.—Heroic Character of Maria Theresa.—Coronation of the Queen of Hungary.

AFTER the battle of Mollwitz, General Neipperg withdrew the defeated Austrian army to the vicinity of Neisse, where he strongly intrenched himself. Frederick encamped his troops around Brieg, and made vigorous preparations to carry the place by storm. With great energy he pushed forward his works, and in less than three weeks was ready for the assault. On the night of April 26 there was a tempest of extraordinary violence, which was followed, the next night, by a dead calm, a cloudless sky, and a brilliant moon. On both sides of the River Oder, upon which Brieg was situated, there was an open champaign country. Several bridges crossed the river. At a fixed moment two thousand diggers were collected, at appointed stations, divided into twelve equal parties. With the utmost exactness they were equipped with all the necessary implements. These

diggers, with spade and pickaxe, and yet thoroughly armed, were preceded a few yards by covering battalions, who, having stealthily and silently obtained the position assigned to them, were to lie flat upon the ground. Not a gun was to be fired; not a word was to be spoken save in a whisper; not even a pipe was to be lighted. Some engineers were to mark out with a straw rope, just in the rear of the covering party, the line of the first parallel. Every imaginable contingency was provided for, and each man was to attend to his individual duty with the precision of clock-work.

Precisely at midnight all were in silent, rapid motion. The march of half an hour brought them to their appointed stations. The soft and sandy soil was easily shoveled. Every man plied pick and spade with intensest energy. As the town clock of Brieg struck one, they had so far dug themselves in as to be quite sheltered from the fire of the hostile batteries, should the guns open upon them. Before the dawn of day they had two batteries, of twenty-five guns each, in position, and several mortars ready for action.

Thus far the enemy had no suspicion of the movement. But now the sun was rising, and, almost simultaneously on both sides, the roar of battle commenced. The positions had been so adroitly taken as to bring three Prussian guns to bear upon each gun of the Austrians. The Prussian gunners, drilled to the utmost possible accuracy and precision of fire, poured into the city a terrific tempest of shot and shells. Every thing had been so carefully arranged that, for six days and nights, with scarcely a moment’s intermission, the doomed city was assailed with such a tornado of cannonading and bombardment as earth had seldom, if ever, witnessed

before.

The city took fire in many places; magazines were consumed; the ducal palace was wrapped in flames. Nearly fifteen thousand cannon-balls, and over two thousand bombs, were hurled crashing through the thronged dwellings. Many of the Austrian guns were silenced. General Piccolomini, who was intrusted with the defense of the place, could stand it no longer. On the 4th of May he raised above the walls the white flag of surrender. The gallant general was treated magnanimously. He was invited to dine with Frederick, and, with the garrison, was permitted to retire to Neisse, pledged not to serve against the Prussians for two years. The town had been nearly demolished by the war-tempest which had beat so fiercely upon it. Frederick immediately commenced repairing the ruins and strengthening the fortifications.

All Europe was thrown into commotion by this bold and successful invasion of Silesia. France was delighted, for Prussia was weakening Austria. England was alarmed. The weakening of Austria was strengthening France, England's dreaded rival. And Hanover was menaced by the Prussian army at Götten, under the Old Dessauer. The British Parliament voted an additional subsidy of £300,000 to Maria Theresa. Two hundred thousand had already been granted her. This, in all, amounted to the sum of two million five hundred thousand dollars. Envoys from all the nations of Europe were sent to Frederick's encampment at Strehlen, in the vicinity of Brieg. Some were sent seeking his alliance, some with terms of compromise, and all to watch his proceedings. The young king was not only acquiring the territory which he sought, but seemed

to be gaining that renown which he had so eagerly coveted. He did not feel strong enough to make an immediate attack upon the Austrian army, which General Neipperg held, in an almost impregnable position, behind the ramparts of Neisse. For two months he remained at Strehlen, making vigorous preparations for future movements, and his mind much engrossed with diplomatic intrigues. Strehlen is a pretty little town, nestled among the hills, about twenty-five miles west of Brieg, and thirty northwest of Neisse. The troops were mainly encamped in tents on the fields around. The embassadors from the great monarchies of Europe were generally sumptuously lodged in Strehlen, or in Breslau, which was a beautiful city about thirty miles north of Strehlen. Baron Bielfeld in the following terms describes the luxury in which the Spanish minister indulged:

"Each of these ministers makes a most brilliant figure, and never have I seen one travel with more ease and convenience, more elegance and grandeur, than does the Marquis of Montijo. Wherever he stops to dine or sup, he finds a room hung with the richest tapestry, and the floor covered with Turkey carpets, with velvet chairs, and every other kind of convenience; a table sumptuously served, the choicest wines, and a dessert of fruit and confectionery that Paris itself could not excel. This kind of enchantment, this real miracle in Germany, is performed by means of three baggage-wagons, of which two always go before the embassador, and carry with them every thing necessary for his reception. When they arrive in some poor village, the domestics that accompany each wagon immediately clear and clean some chamber, fix the tapestry by rings to the walls, cover the floor with carpets, and furnish the kitchen and cellar with every kind of

necessary."[54]

Speaking of Frederick at this time, Bielfeld says: "Notwithstanding all the fatigues of war, the king is in perfect health, and more gay and pleasant than ever. All who approach his majesty meet with a most gracious reception. In the midst of his camp, and at the head of sixty thousand Prussians, our monarch appears to me with a new and superior air of greatness."

Circumstances had already rendered Frederick one of the most important personages in Europe. He could ally himself with France, and humble Austria; or he could ally himself with England and Austria, and crush France. All the lesser lights in the Continental firmament circulated around these central luminaries. Consequently Frederick was enabled to take a conspicuous part in all the diplomatic intrigues which were then agitating the courts of Europe.

On the 7th of May, three days after the capture of Brieg, Lord Hyndford, the English embassador, arrived at the camp of Frederick, and obtained an audience with his majesty. It was eleven o'clock in the forenoon. He gave his government a very minute narrative of the interview. The following particulars, gleaned from that narrative, will interest the reader. It will be remembered that Frederick cherished a strong antipathy against his uncle, George II. of England.

Lord Hyndford commenced his communication by assuring his majesty of the friendly feelings and good wishes of the English government. Frederick listened with much impatience, and soon interrupted him, exclaiming passionately,

"How is it possible, my lord, to believe things so contradictory? It is mighty fine, all this that you now tell me, on the part of the King of England. But how does it correspond with his last speech in Parliament, and with the doings of his ministers at Petersburg and at the Hague, to stir up allies against me? I have reason to doubt the sincerity of the King of England. Perhaps he means to amuse me. But" (with an oath[55]) "he is mistaken. I will risk every thing rather than abate the least of my pretensions."

Lord Hyndford, evidently embarrassed, for the facts were strongly against him, endeavored, in some additional remarks, to assume ignorance of any unfriendly action on the part of the British government. The king again, in a loud and angry tone, replied,

"My lord, there seems to be a contradiction in all this. The King of England, in his letter, tells me you are instructed as to every thing, and yet you pretend ignorance. But I am perfectly informed of all. And I should not be surprised if, after all these fine words, you should receive some strong letter or resolution for me." Then, turning to his secretary, he added, sarcastically, "Write down that my lord would be surprised to receive such instruction."

Lord Hyndford, who says that by this rude assailment he was put extremely upon his guard, rejoined:

"Europe is under the necessity of taking some speedy resolution, things are in such a state of crisis. Like a fever in a human body, got to such a height that quinquina becomes necessary. Shall we apply to Vienna, your majesty?"

A transient smile flitted across the king's

countenance. Then, looking cold again, he added, “Follow your own will in that.”

“Would your majesty,” Lord Hyndford replied, “engage to stand by his excellency Gotter’s original offer at Vienna on your part? That is, would you agree, in consideration of the surrender to you of Lower Silesia and Breslau, to assist the Queen of Austria, with all your troops, for the maintenance of the Pragmatic Sanction, and to vote for the Grand-duke Francis as emperor?”

“Yes,” was the monosyllabic reply.

“What was the sum of money your majesty then offered the Queen of Austria?” Lord Hyndford inquired.

The king hesitated, as though he had forgotten. But his secretary answered, “Three million florins ($1,500,000).”

“I should not value the money,” the king added. “If money would content her I would give more.”

After a long pause Lord Hyndford inquired, “Would your majesty consent to an armistice?”

“Yes,” Frederick replied; “but for not less than six months” (counting on his fingers from May to December)—“till December 1. The season then would be so far gone that they could do nothing.”

As the secretary, Podewils, had been taking notes, Lord Hyndford requested permission to look at them, that he might see that no mistake had been made. The king assented, and then Lord Hyndford bowed himself out. Thus ended the audience.

A few days after this interview, the Dutch embassador, General Ginckel, arrived with the

Resolution from the English and Dutch courts, demanding that the king should evacuate Silesia. Lord Hyndford was much embarrassed, apprehending that the presentation of the summons at that time would work only mischief. He persuaded General Ginckel to delay the presentation until he could send a courier to England for instructions. In a fortnight the courier returned with the order that the Resolution was immediately to be presented to his Prussian majesty.

In the mean time, Frederick, who kept himself thoroughly informed of all these events, signed secretly, on the 5th of June, a treaty of intimate alliance with France. Though he had not yet received the Joint Resolution of the English and Dutch courts, he was well aware of its existence, and the next day sent to his envoy, M. Räsfeld, at the Hague, the following dispatch:

"You will beforehand inform the high mightinesses in regard to that Advice of April 24th, which they determined on giving me, through his excellency General Ginckel, along with his excellency Lord Hyndford, that such advice can be considered by me only as a blind complaisance to the court of Vienna's improper urgencies. That for certain I will not quit Silesia till my claims be satisfied. And the longer I am forced to continue warring for them here, the higher they will rise."

The plan of France, as conceived and pushed resolutely forward by the Count of Belleisle, the renowned minister of Louis XV., was to divide Germany into four small kingdoms of about equal power, Bavaria, Saxony, Prussia, and Austria. The King of Bavaria, as one of the protégés of France, was to be chosen Emperor of Germany. To

accomplish this, Austria was to be reduced to a second-rate power by despoiling the young queen, Maria Theresa, of large portions of her territory, and annexing the provinces wrested from her to the petty states of Prussia, Bavaria, and Saxony, thus sinking Austria to an equality with them. France, the grand nation, would then be indisputably the leading power in Europe. By bribery, intimidation, and inciting one kingdom against another, the court of Versailles could control the policy of the whole Continent. Magnificent as was this plan, many circumstances seemed then combining to render it feasible. The King of Prussia, inspired simply by the desire of enlarging his kingdom by making war against Austria, and striving to wrest Silesia from the realms of Maria Theresa, was co-operating, in the most effectual way possible, to further the designs of France. And it had now also become a matter of great moment to Frederick that he should secure the alliance of the court of Versailles.

All the courts of Europe were involved in these intrigues, which led to minor complications which it would be in vain to attempt to unravel. In the secret treaty into which Frederick entered with France on the 5th of June, 1741, the Count of Belleisle engaged, in behalf of his master, Louis XV., to incite Sweden to declare war against Russia, that the semi-barbaric power of the North, just beginning to emerge into greatness, might be so occupied as not to be able to render any assistance to Austria. France also agreed to guarantee Lower Silesia, with Breslau, to Frederick, and to send two armies, of forty thousand men each, one across the Upper and the other across the Lower Rhine, to co-operate with his Prussian majesty. The forty thousand men on the Upper Rhine were to take position in the vicinity of

the Electorate of Hanover, which belonged to George II. of England, prepared to act immediately in concert with the Prussian army at Götten under the "Old Dessauer," in seizing Hanover resistlessly, should England make the slightest move toward sending troops to the aid of Maria Theresa.

The prospects of Maria Theresa seemed now quite desperate. We know not that history records a more inglorious act than that Europe should have thus combined to take advantage of the youth and inexperience of this young queen, weeping over the grave of her father, and trembling in view of her own approaching hour of anguish, by wresting from her the inheritance which had descended to her from her ancestors. France and Germany, inspired by the most intense motives of selfish ambition, were to fall upon her, while the most effectual precautions were adopted to prevent Russia and England from coming to her aid.



FREDERICK'S INTERVIEW WITH VALORI.

In carrying forward these intrigues at the camp of Frederick, the Count of Belleisle had an associate minister in the embassy, M. De Valori. A slight incident occurred in connection with this minister which would indicate, in the view of most persons, that Frederick did not cherish a very high sense of honor. M. Valori was admitted to an audience with his Prussian majesty. During the interview, as the French minister drew his hand from his pocket, he accidentally dropped a note upon the floor. Frederick, perceiving it, slyly placed his foot upon it. As soon as the minister had bowed himself out, Frederick eagerly seized the note and read it. It contained some secret instructions to M. Valori from

the French court, directing him not to give Glatz to his Prussian majesty if it could possibly be avoided. Frederick did not perceive any thing ignoble in this act of his, for he records it himself;[56] neither does Mr. Carlyle condemn him.[57] Most readers will probably regard it as highly dishonorable.

On the 8th of June the English and Dutch ministers, not yet aware of the alliance into which Frederick had entered with France, presented the joint resolution of their two courts, exhorting Frederick to withdraw his army from Silesia. Lord Hyndford, who was somewhat annoyed by the apparent impolicy of the measure just at that time, solicited and obtained a private audience with the king, hoping by apologies and explanations to make the summons a little less unpalatable to his majesty. In the brief interview which ensued Lord Hyndford appealed to the magnanimity of the king, declaring that it would be generous and noble for him to accept moderate terms from Austria. The king angrily interrupted him, saying,

"My lord, do not talk to me of magnanimity. A prince ought, in the first place, to consult his interest. I am not opposed to peace. But I expect to have four duchies given me."

Maria Theresa was much encouraged by the subsidy she had received from England. She was not yet informed of the formidable alliance into which France, with a portion of Germany, had entered for her destruction. About the 20th of June she left Vienna for Presburg, in Hungary, a drive of about fifty miles. Here, on the 25th of June, 1741, she was crowned Queen of Hungary. She was a very beautiful woman in person, devout in spirit, and those who admire manly developments in the female character

must regard her as presenting the highest type of womanhood. She merits the following beautiful tribute to her worth from the pen of Carlyle:

"As to the brave young Queen of Hungary, my admiration goes with that of all the world. Not in the language of flattery, but of evident fact, the royal qualities abound in that high young lady. Had they left the world, and grown to mere costume elsewhere, you might find certain of them again here. Most brave, high and pious minded; beautiful too, and radiant with good-nature, though of temper that will easily catch fire; there is, perhaps, no nobler woman then living. And she fronts the roaring elements in a truly grand, feminine manner, as if Heaven itself and the voice of Duty called her. 'The inheritances which my fathers left me, we will not part with these. Death if it so must be, but not dishonor.'

"This, for the present, is her method of looking at the matter; this magnanimous, heroic, and occasionally somewhat female one. Her husband, the grand-duke, an inert but good-tempered, well-conditioned duke, after his sort, goes with her. Now, as always, he follows loyally his wife's lead, never she his. Wife being intrinsically as well as extrinsically the better man, what other can he do?"

The ceremony of coronation was attended, near Presburg, on the 25th of June, with much semi-barbaric splendor, as the Iron Crown[58] of St. Stephen was placed upon the pale, beautiful brow of the young wife and mother. All the renowned chivalry of Hungary were assembled upon that field. They came in gorgeous costume, with embroidered banners, and accompanied by imposing retinues. At the close of the ceremonies, the queen, who was distinguished as

a bold rider, mounted a swift charger, and, followed by a long retinue of Magyar warriors, galloped to the top of a small eminence artificially constructed for the occasion, called the Königsburg, or King's Hill, where she drew her sword, and, flourishing it toward the four quarters of the heavens, bade defiance to any adversary who should venture to question her claims. The knightly warriors who crowded the plain flashed their swords in the sunlight, as with one accord, with chivalric devotion, they vowed fidelity to their queen.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CONQUEST OF SILESIA.

An extraordinary Interview.—Carlyle's Sympathy.—Trifling Demeanor of Frederick.—Conspiracy in Breslau.—Guile of Frederick.—The successful Stratagem.—Crossing the Neisse.—The Co-operation of France.—Anguish of Maria Theresa.—Inflexible Will of Frederick.—Duplicity of the King.—The Surrender of Neisse.

GRADUALLY the secret treaty which allied France, Bavaria, and Prussia, and it was not known how many other minor powers, against Austria, came to light. Two French armies of fifty thousand men each were on the march to act in co-operation with Frederick. England, trembling from fear of the loss of Hanover, dared not move. The Aulic Council at Vienna, in a panic, "fell back into their chairs like dead men." The ruin of Maria Theresa and the fatal dismemberment of Austria seemed inevitable.

Under these circumstances, the young queen, urged by her council and by the English court, very reluctantly consented to propose terms of compromise to Frederick. Sir Thomas Robinson, subsequently Earl of Grantham, was sent from Vienna to Breslau to confer with the British minister there, Lord Hyndford, and with him to visit

Frederick, at his camp at Strehlen, in the attempt to adjust the difficulties. The curious interview which ensued has been minutely described by Sir Thomas Robinson. It took place under the royal canvas tent of his Prussian majesty at 11 o'clock A.M. of the 7th of August, 1741.

The two English gentlemen, stout, burly, florid men, were dressed in the gorgeous court costume of those days. Each wore a large, frizzled, powdered wig. Their shirts were heavily ruffled in the bosoms and at the wrists. Their coats, of antique cut, were covered with embroidery of gold lace. Their waistcoats hung down in deep flaps, and large buckles adorned their shoes.

Frederick was a trig, slender young man of twenty-nine years. He was dressed in a closely-fitting blue coat, with buff breeches and high cavalry boots. He wore a plumed hat, which he courteously raised as the embassadors entered his tent. The scene which ensued was substantially as follows, omitting those passages which were of no permanent interest. After sundry preliminary remarks, Sir Thomas Robinson said,

"I am authorized to offer your majesty two million guilders [$1,000,000] if your majesty will consent to relinquish this enterprise and retire from Silesia."



FREDERICK AND THE BRITISH MINISTERS.

"Retire from Silesia!" exclaimed the king, vehemently. "And for money? Do you take me for a beggar? Retire from Silesia, in the conquest of which I have expended so much blood and treasure! No, sir, no. That is not to be thought of. If you have no better proposals to suggest, it is not worth while talking."

Sir Thomas, somewhat discomposed,

apologetically intimated that that was not all he had to offer.

“Very well,” said the king, impatiently; “let us see, then, what there is more.”

“I am permitted,” the embassador said, “to offer your majesty the whole of Austrian Guelderland. It lies contiguous to your majesty’s possessions in the Rhine country. It will be a very important addition to those possessions. I am permitted to say the whole of Austrian Guelderland.”

“What do you mean?” exclaimed the king, with an air of real or affected surprise. Then, turning to his secretary, M. Podewils, he inquired, “How much of Guelderland is theirs, and not ours already?”

“Almost none,” M. Podewils replied.

Here the king quite lost his temper. In a loud tone and with angry gesticulation he exclaimed, “Do you offer me such rags and rubbish, such paltry scrapings, for all my just claims in Silesia?” And so he ran on for quite a length of time, with ever-increasing violence, fanning himself into a flame of indignation.

“His contempt,” writes Sir Thomas in his narrative, “was so great, and was expressed in such violent terms, that now, if ever, was the time to make the last effort. A moment longer was not to be lost, to hinder the king from dismissing us.”

“I am also permitted, sire,” said Sir Thomas, “to add the Duchy of Limburg. It is a duchy of great wealth and resources, so valuable that the Elector Palatine was willing to give in exchange for it the whole Duchy of Berg.”

“It is inconceivable to me,” Frederick replied,

"how Austria should dare to think of such a proposal. Limburg! Are there not solemn engagements upon Austria which render every inch of ground in the Netherlands inalienable?"

"These engagements," said Sir Thomas, "are good as against the French, your majesty. But the Barrier treaty, confirmed at Utrecht, was for our benefit and that of Holland."

"That is your interpretation," said Frederick. "But the French assert that it was an arrangement made in their favor."

"Your majesty," Sir Thomas rejoined, "by a little engineering art, could render Limburg impregnable to the French or any others."

"I have not the least desire," the king replied, "to aggrandize myself in those parts, or to spend money in fortifying there. It would be useless to me. Am I not fortifying Brieg and Glogau? These are enough for one who wishes to live well with his neighbors. Neither the Dutch nor the French have offended me, nor will I offend them by acquisitions in the Netherlands. Besides, who would guarantee them?"

"The proposal," Sir Thomas replied, "is to give guarantees at once."

"Guarantees!" exclaimed the king, scornfully. "Who minds or keeps guarantees in this age? Has not France guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction? Has not England? Why do you not all fly to the queen's succor?"

Sir Thomas, who was not aware of the engagement into which the allies had entered to keep Russia busy by a war with Sweden, intimated that there were powers which might yet come to the

rescue of the queen, and mentioned Russia as one.

The king, with a very complaisant smile, said, “Russia, my good sir—It is not proper for me to explain myself, but I have means to keep the Russians employed.”

“Russia,” added Sir Thomas, with some stateliness of utterance, “is not the only power which has engagements with Austria, and which must keep them too; so that, however averse to a breach—”

Here the king interrupted him, and with scornful gesture, “laying his finger on his nose,” and in loud tones, exclaimed,

“No threats, sir, if you please, no threats.”

Lord Hyndford here came to the rescue of his colleague, and said, meekly,

“I am sure his excellency had no such meaning, sire. His excellency will advance nothing so very contrary to his instructions.”

Sir Thomas Robinson added, “Sire, I am not talking of what this power or that means to do, but of what will come of itself. To prophesy is not to threaten, sire. It is my zeal for the public good which brought me here, and—”

Again the king interrupted him, saying, “The public will be much obliged to you, sir! But hear me. With respect to Russia, you know how matters stand. From the King of Poland I have nothing to fear. As for the King of England, he is my relation. If he do not attack me, I shall not him. If he do attack me, the Prince of Anhalt, with my army at Götten, will take care of him.”

“It is the common rumor now,” Sir Thomas

replied, “that your majesty, after the 12th of August, will join the French. Sire, I venture to hope not. Austria prefers your friendship; but if your majesty disdain Austria’s advances, what is it to do? Austria must throw itself entirely into the hands of France, and endeavor to outbid your majesty.”

This was a very serious suggestion. None of these sovereigns professed to be influenced by any other considerations than their own interests. And it was manifest that Austria could easily outbid Prussia, if determined to purchase the French alliance. For a moment the king was silent, apparently somewhat perplexed. He then said,

“I am at the head of an army which has already vanquished the enemy, and which is ready to meet the enemy again. The country which alone I desire is already conquered and securely held. This is all I want. I now have it. I will and must keep it. Shall I be bought out of this country? Never! I will sooner perish in it with all my troops. With what face shall I meet my ancestors if I abandon my right which they have transmitted to me? My first enterprise, and to be given up lightly?

“Have I need of peace? Let those who need it give me what I want, or let them fight me again and be beaten again. Have they not given whole kingdoms to Spain? And to me they can not spare a few trifling principalities. If the queen do not now grant me all I require, I shall, in four weeks, demand four principalities more. I now demand the whole of Lower Silesia, Breslau included. With that answer you can return to Vienna.”

“With that answer!” Sir Thomas replied, in tones of surprise. “Is your majesty serious? Is that your majesty’s deliberate answer?”

"Yes, I say," the king rejoined. "That is my answer, and I will never give any other."

Both of the English ministers, in much agitation, spoke together. The king, impatiently interrupting them, said,

"Gentlemen, gentlemen, it is of no use to think about it."

Taking off his hat, he slightly saluted them, and retired behind the curtain into the interior tent.

A brief account of this interview has been given by Frederick,[59] and also a very minute narrative by Sir Thomas Robinson, in his official report to his government. There is no essential discrepancy between the two statements. Frederick alludes rather contemptuously to the pompous airs of Sir Thomas, saying that "he negotiated in a wordy, high, droning way, as if he were speaking in Parliament." Mr. Carlyle seems to be entirely in sympathy with Frederick in his invasion of Silesia. The reader will peruse with interest his graphic, characteristic comments upon this interview:

"The unsuccessfulest negotiation well imaginable by a public man. Strehlen, Monday, 7th August, 1741—Frederick has vanished into the interior of his tent, and the two diplomatic gentlemen, the wind struck out of them in this manner, remain gazing at one another. Here, truly, is a young, royal gentleman that knows his own mind, while so many do not. Unspeakable imbroglio of negotiations, mostly insane, welters over all the earth; the Belleisles, the Aulic Councils, the British Georges, heaping coil upon coil; and here, notably in that now so extremely sordid murk of wiggeries, inane diplomacies, and solemn deliriums, dark now and

obsolete to all creatures, steps forth one little human figure, with something of sanity in it, like a star, like a gleam of steel, sheering asunder your big balloons, and letting out their diplomatic hydrogen. Salutes with his hat, 'Gentlemen, gentlemen, it is of no use!' and vanishes into the interior of his tent."

The next day the two British ministers dined with Frederick. The king was in reality, or assumed to be, in exultant spirits. He joked and bantered his guests even upon those great issues which were threatening to deluge Europe in blood. As they took leave, intending to return to Vienna through Neisse, which was held by the Austrian army, the king said to Sir Thomas Robinson, derisively,

"As you pass through Neisse, please present my compliments to Marshal Neipperg; and you can say, your excellency, that I hope to have the pleasure of calling upon him one of these days."

It seemed to be the policy of Frederick to assume a very trifling, care-for-nothing air, as though he were engaged in very harmless child's play. He threw out jokes, and wrote ludicrous letters to M. Jordan and M. Algarotti. But behind this exterior disguise it is manifest that all the energies of his soul were aroused, and that, with sleepless vigilance, he was watching every event, and providing for every possible emergence.

It will be remembered that Breslau, whose inhabitants were mainly Protestant, and which was one of the so-called free cities of Germany, was surrendered to Frederick under peculiar conditions. It was to remain, in its internal government, in all respects exactly as it had been, with the simple exception that it was to recognize the sovereignty of Prussia instead of that of Austria. Its strict neutrality

was to be respected. It was to be protected by its own garrison. No Prussian soldier could enter with any weapons but side-arms. The king himself, in entering the city, could be accompanied only by thirty guards.

When under the sovereignty of Austria, though the Protestants were not persecuted, very decided favor was shown to the Catholics. But the influence of Protestant Prussia was to place both parties on a perfect equality. This greatly annoyed the Catholics. Certain Catholic ladies of rank, with a few leading citizens, entered into a secret society, and kept the court of Vienna informed of every thing which transpired in Breslau. They also entered into intimate communication with General Neipperg, entreating him to come to their rescue. They assured him that if he would suddenly appear before their gates with his army, or with a strong detachment, the conspiring Catholics would open the gates, and he could rush in and take possession of the city.

But the ever-vigilant Frederick had smuggled a “false sister” into the society of the Catholic ladies, who kept him informed of every measure that was proposed. At the very hour when Frederick was dining with the two English ministers, and making himself so merry with jests and banter, he was aware that General Neipperg, with the whole Austrian army, was crossing the River Neisse, on the march, by a route thirty miles west of his encampment, to take Breslau by surprise. But he had already adopted effectual measures to thwart their plans.

On the 10th of August there was a magnificent review of the Prussian army on the plain of Strehlin, to which all the foreign embassadors were invited. During the night of the 9th, General Schwerin and

Prince Leopold, with eight thousand Prussian troops, horse and foot, arrived in the southwestern suburbs of Breslau, and, at six o'clock in the morning, demanded simply a passage through the city for their regiments and baggage, on the march to attack a marauding band of the Austrians on the other side of the Oder.

The rule, in such cases, was that a certain number of companies were to be admitted at a time. The gate was then to be closed until they had marched through the city and out at the opposite gate. After this another detachment was to be admitted, and so on, until all had passed through. But General Schwerin so contrived it, by stratagem, as to crowd in a whole regiment at once. Instead of marching through Breslau, to the surprise of the inhabitants, he directed his steps to the market-place, where he encamped and took possession of the city, admitting the remainder of his regiments. In an hour and a half the whole thing was done, and the streets were strongly garrisoned by Prussian troops. The majority of the inhabitants, being Protestant, were well pleased, and received the achievement with laughter. Many cheers resounded through the streets, with shouts of "Frederick and Silesia forever." All the foreign ministers in Breslau, and the magistrates of the city, had been lured to Strehlin to witness the grand review.

Frederick had caused signal cannon to be placed at suitable points between Breslau and Strehlin, which, by transmitting reports, should give him as early intelligence as possible of the success of the enterprise. About noon, in the midst of the grand manœuvrings on the parade-ground, one distant cannon-shot was heard, to the great satisfaction of

Frederick, who alone understood its significance.

General Neipperg had advanced as far as Baumgarten when he heard of this entire circumvention of his plans. Exasperated by the discomfiture, he pushed boldly forward to seize Schweidnitz, where Frederick had a large magazine, which was supposed not to be very strongly protected. But the vigilant Frederick here again thwarted the Austrian general. Either anticipating the movement, or receiving immediate information of it, he had thrown out some strong columns to Reichenbach, where they so effectually intrenched themselves as to bar, beyond all hope of passage, the road to Schweidnitz. General Neipperg had advanced but half a day's march from Baumgarten when he heard of this. He ordered a halt, and retraced his steps as far as Frankenstein, where he had a very strongly intrenched camp.

Frederick soon followed the Austrians with his whole army, hoping to bring them to a decisive battle. But General Neipperg was conscious that he was unable to cope with the Prussian army in the open field. For a week there was manœuvring and counter-manœuvring with great skill on both sides, General Neipperg baffling all the endeavors of Frederick to bring him to a general action.

At length Frederick, weary of these unavailing efforts, dashed off in rapid march toward the River Neisse, and with his vanguard, on the 11th of September, crossed the river at the little town of Woitz, a few miles above the city. The river was speedily spanned with his pontoon bridges. As the whole army hurried forward to effect the passage, Frederick, to his surprise, found the Austrian army directly before him, occupying a position from which

it could not be forced, and where it could not be turned. For two days Frederick very earnestly surveyed the region, and then, recrossing the river and gathering in his pontoons, passed rapidly down the stream on the left or northern bank, and, after a brief encampment of a few days, crossed the river fifteen miles below the city. He then threw his army into the rear of Neipperg's, so as to cut off his communications and his daily convoys of food. He thus got possession again of Oppeln, of the strong castle of Friedland, and of the country generally between the Oder and the Neisse rivers.

General Neipperg cautiously advanced toward him, and encamped in the vicinity of Steinau—the same Steinau which but a few weeks before had been laid in ashes as the Prussian troops passed through it. The two armies were now separated from each other but by an interval of about five miles. The country was flat, and it was not probable that the contest which Frederick so eagerly sought could long be avoided.

Affairs were now assuming throughout Europe a very threatening aspect. The two French armies, of forty thousand each, had already crossed the Rhine to join their German allies in the war against Austria. One of these armies, to be commanded by Belleisle, had crossed the river about thirty miles below Strasbourg to unite with the Elector of Bavaria's troops and march upon Vienna. The other army, under Maillebois, had crossed the Lower Rhine a few miles below Düsseldorf. Its mission was, as we have mentioned, to encamp upon the frontiers of Hanover, prepared to invade that province, in co-operation with the Prussian troops in the camp at Göttin, should the King of England venture to raise a hand in

behalf of Austria. It was also in position to attack and overwhelm Holland, England's only ally, should that power manifest the slightest opposition to the designs of Prussia and France. At the same time, Sweden, on the 4th of August, had declared war against Russia, so that no help could come to Austria from that quarter. Great diplomatic ability had been displayed in guarding every point in these complicated measures. The French minister, Belleisle, was probably the prominent agent in these wide-spread combinations.[60]

The queen, Maria Theresa, still remained at Presburg, in her Hungarian kingdom. The Aulic Council was with her. On the 15th of August Sir Thomas Robinson had returned to Presburg with the intelligence of his unsuccessful mission, and of the unrelenting determination of Frederick to prosecute the war with the utmost vigor unless Silesia were surrendered to him.

These tidings struck the Austrian council with consternation. The French armies were declared to be the finest that had ever taken the field. The Prussian army, in stolid bravery and perfection of discipline, had never been surpassed. Germany was to be cut into four equal parts, and France was to be the sovereign power on the Continent.

In this terrible emergence, the queen, resolute as she was, was almost compelled, by the importunity of her counselors, to permit Sir Thomas Robinson, who was acting for England far more than for Austria, to go back to Frederick with the offer so humiliating to her, that she would surrender to him one half of Silesia if he would withdraw his armies and enter into an alliance with her against the French. The high-spirited queen wrung her hands in

anguish as she assented to this decision, exclaiming passionately,

"If these terms are not accepted within a fortnight, I will not be bound by them."

Sir Thomas hastened back to Breslau, and anxiously entered into communication with Lord Hyndford. The British minister entreated the king to admit Sir Thomas to another interview, assuring him that he came with new and more liberal propositions for a compromise. The king replied, in substance, with his customary brusqueness,

"I will not see him. I wish to listen to no more of his offers. The sooner he takes himself away the better."

Sir Thomas, deeply chagrined, hastened back to Presburg. Acting in behalf of the English cabinet, he trembled in view of the preponderance of the French court and of the loss of Hanover. With the most impassioned earnestness he entreated the queen to yield to the demands of Frederick, and thus secure his alliance.

"High madam," he said, fervently, "at this crisis, alliance with Frederick is salvation to Austria. His continued hostility is utter ruin. England can not help your majesty. The slightest endeavor would cause the loss of Hanover."

Thus pressed by England, and with equal earnestness by her own Aulic Council, the queen again yielded, though almost frantic with grief, and consented to surrender the whole of Lower Silesia to Frederick if he would become her ally. As Frederick had offered these terms, it was supposed, of course, that he would accept them. Sir Thomas was again dispatched, at the top of his speed, to convey them to

the camp of Frederick. But the repulse of the king was peremptory and decisive. To Lord Hyndford, soliciting an audience for the envoy, he replied,

"I will not see him. There was a time when I would have listened to a compromise. That time has passed. I have now entered into arrangements with France. Talk to me no more."

Sir Thomas hastened back to Presburg in despair. Feeling the "game was up," and that there was no more hope, he asked permission to return home. The British cabinet was in a state of consternation. France, the dreaded rival of England, was attaining almost sovereign power over the Continent of Europe. Frederick himself was uneasy. He had sufficient penetration to be fully aware that he was aiding to create a resistless power, which might, by-and-by, crush him. Sir Thomas, in a state of great agitation, which was manifest in his disordered style, wrote from Presburg to Lord Hyndford at Breslau as follows. The letter was dated September 8, 1741.

"My lord, I could desire your lordship to summon up, if it were necessary, the spirit of all your lordship's instructions, and the sense of the king, of the Parliament, and of the whole British nation. It is upon this great moment that depends the fate, not of the house of Austria, not of the empire, but of the house of Brunswick, of Great Britain, of all Europe. I verily believe the King of Prussia himself does not know the extent of the present danger. With whatever motive he may act, there is not one, not that of the wildest resentment, that can blind him to this degree—of himself perishing in the ruin he is bringing upon others. With his concurrence, the French will, in less than six weeks, be masters of the German empire. The weak Elector of Bavaria is but

their instrument. Prague and Vienna may, and probably will, be taken in that short time. Will even the King of Prussia himself be reserved to the last?"

These considerations probably weighed heavily upon the mind of Frederick; for, after having so peremptorily repulsed the queen's messenger, he sent, on the 9th of September, Colonel Goltz with a proposition to Lord Hyndford, which was substantially the same which the queen in her anguish had consented to make. The strictest secrecy was enjoined upon Colonel Goltz. The proposition was read from a paper without signature, and was probably in the king's handwriting, for Lord Hyndford was not permitted to see the paper. He took a copy from dictation, which was as follows:

"The whole of Lower Silesia; the River Neisse for the boundary; the city of Neisse for us, as also Glutz; on the other side of the Oder, the ancient boundary between the Duchies of Brieg and Oppeln. Namslau for us. The affairs of religion in *statu quo*. No dependence upon Bohemia. Cession eternal. In exchange we will go no farther. We will besiege Neisse for form. The commandant shall surrender and depart. We will quietly go into winter quarters; and they (the Austrians) can take their army where they will. Let all be finished in twelve days."

But Frederick did not seem to think himself at all bound by his treaty obligations with France to refrain from entering into secret arrangements with the foe which would promote his interests, however antagonistic those arrangements might be to his assumed obligations. He was the ally of France in the attempt to wrest territory from the young Queen of Austria, and to weaken her power. His armies and those of France were acting in co-operation.

Frederick now proposed to the common enemy that, if Silesia were surrendered to him, he would no longer act in co-operation with his ally; but, that France might not discover his perfidy, he would still pretend to make war. The Austrians were to amuse themselves in defending Neisse from a sham siege until the pleasant weeks of autumn were gone, and then they were to march, with all their guns and ammunition, south to Vienna, there to fight the French. Frederick, still assuming that he was the ally of France, was to avail himself of the excuse that the season of ice and snow was at hand, and withdraw into winter quarters. Such, in general, were the terms which Frederick authorized his minister, Goltz, to propose to Lord Hyndford, as the agent of England and Austria.

Most of our readers will pronounce this to be as unwarrantable an act of perfidy as history has recorded. But, in justice to Frederick, we ought to state that there are those who, while admitting all these facts, do not condemn him for his course. It is surprising to see how different are the opinions which intelligent men can form upon the same actions. Mr. Carlyle writes, in reference to these events:

“Magnanimous I can by no means call Frederick to his allies and neighbors, nor even superstitiously veracious in this business; but he thoroughly understands, he alone, what just thing he wants out of it, and what an enormous wigged mendacity it is he has got to deal with. For the rest, he is at the gaming-table with these sharpers, their dice all cogged, and he knows it, and ought to profit by his knowledge of it, and, in short, to win his stake out of that foul, weltering melley, and go home safe with it

if he can."

While these scenes of war and intrigue were transpiring, no one knowing what alarming developments any day might present, Vienna was thrown into a state of terror in apprehension of the immediate approach of a French army to open upon it all the horrors of a bombardment. The citizens were called out *en masse* to work upon the fortifications. The court fled to Presburg, in Hungary. The national archives were hurried off to Grätz. The royal family was dispersed. There were but six thousand troops in the city. General Neipperg, with nearly the whole Austrian army, was a hundred and fifty miles distant to the north, on the banks of the Neisse. The queen, on the 10th of September, assembled at Presburg the Hungarian Parliament, consisting almost exclusively of chivalric nobles renowned in war. The queen appeared before them with her husband, the Grand-duke Francis, by her side, and with a nurse attending, holding her infant son and heir. Addressing them in Latin, in a brief, pathetic speech, she said:

"I am abandoned by all. Hostile invasion threatens the kingdom of Hungary, our person, our children, our crown. I have no resource but in your fidelity and valor. I invoke the ancient Hungarian virtue to rise swiftly and save me."

The queen was radiantly beautiful in form and features. Her eyes were filled with tears. The scene and the words roused the zeal of these wild Magyar warriors to the highest pitch. They drew their sabres, flourished them over their heads, and with united voice shouted *Moriamur pro nostro rege, Maria Theresa* —"Let us die for our king, Maria Theresa." "They always," writes Voltaire, "give the title of king to

their queen. In fact, no princess ever better deserved that title."



THE QUEEN'S APPEAL TO THE HUNGARIAN NOBLES.

Between the two camps of the Austrians and Prussians, south of the River Neisse, there was a castle called Little Schnellendorf, belonging to Count Von Steinberg. It was a very retired retreat, far from

observation. Arrangements were made for a secret meeting there between Frederick and General Neipperg, to adjust the details of their plot. It was of the utmost importance that the perfidious measure should be concealed from France. The French minister, Valori, was in the Prussian camp, watching every movement with an eagle eye. “Frederick,” writes Carlyle, “knows that the French are false to him. He by no means intends to be romantically true to them, and that they also know.”

On Monday morning, the 9th of October, 1741, the British minister, Lord Hyndford, accompanied by General Neipperg and General Lentulus from the Austrian camp, repaired to this castle, ostensibly to fix some cartel for the exchange of prisoners. Frederick rode out that morning with General Goltz, assuming that he was going to visit some of his outposts. In leaving, he said to the French minister Valori, “I am afraid that I shall not be home to dinner.” At the same time, to occupy the attention of M. Valori, he was invited to dine with Prince Leopold. By circuitous and unfrequented paths, the king and his companion hied to the castle.



THE KING APPROACHING SCHNELLENDORF.

Frederick cautiously refused to sign his name to any paper. Verbally, he agreed that in one week from that time, on the 16th, General Neipperg should have liberty to retire to the south through the mountains, unmolested save by sham attacks in his rear. A small garrison was to be left in Neisse. After maintaining a sham siege for a fortnight, they were to surrender the city. Sham hostilities, to deceive the French, were to be continued until the year was out, and then a treaty was to be signed and ratified.

His majesty pledged his *word of honor* that he would fulfill these obligations, but declared that, should the slightest intimation of the agreement leak out, so that the French should discover it, he would deny the whole thing, and refuse in any way to be bound by it. This was assented to.

At the close of the business, the king, who had been exceedingly courteous during the whole

interview, took General Neipperg aside, and, beckoning Lord Hyndford to join them, said, addressing Lord Hyndford,

"I wish you too, my lord, to hear every word I speak to General Neipperg. His Britannic majesty knows, or should know, my intentions never were to do him hurt, but only to take care of myself. And pray inform him that I have ordered my army in Brandenburg to go into winter quarters, and break up that camp at Göttin."

The reader will bear in mind that the camp at Göttin, menacing Hanover, was acting in co-operation with Frederick's ally, France, and that forty thousand men had been sent from France to the aid of those Prussian troops. Frederick now, entering into secret treaty with the enemy, while still feigning to be true to his ally, was perfidiously withdrawing his troops so as to leave the French unsupported. His treachery went even farther than this. In the presence of Lord Hyndford, the representative of England, he informed the Austrian general minutely how he could, to the greatest advantage, attack the French.

"Join," said he, "the Austrian force under Prince Lobkowitz in Bohemia. Fall immediately and impetuously upon the French, before they can combine their forces to resist you. If you succeed in this, perhaps I will by-and-by join you; if you fail—well, you know every one must look out for himself."

The audacious duplicity of this ambitious young king was still more conspicuously developed by his entering into a secret correspondence with the court of Austria, through certain generals in the Austrian army. And that he might the more effectually disguise his treachery from his allies, the French, he

requested Lord Hyndford to write dispatches to various courts—to Presburg, to England, to Dresden—complaining that Frederick was *deaf to all proposals; that nothing could influence him to enter into terms of reconciliation with Austria*. It was to be so arranged that the couriers carrying these dispatches of falsehood should be captured by the French, so that these documents should be carried to the French court.

And, in addition to all this, the more effectually to hoodwink the eagle eyes of the French minister in the Prussian camp, M. Valori, the following stratagem was arranged. The king was to invite M. Valori to dine with him. While at the table, merry over their wine, a courier was to arrive, and with trumpet blast announce dispatches for the king. They were to be delivered to the king at the table. He was to open them before Valori, to find that they consisted of a bitter complaint and remonstrance, on the part of the British minister, that the king was inflexible in repelling all advances toward an amicable adjustment of their difficulties, that unrelentingly he persisted in co-operating with France in her warfare against Austria. All this farce took place according to the programme. M. Valori was effectually deceived.

Some of our readers may think that the above narrative is quite incredible; that a young sovereign, who had just written the *Anti-Machiavel*, and who knew that the eyes of the world were upon him, could not be guilty of such perfidy. But, unhappily, there is no possible room for doubt. The documentary evidence is ample. There is no contradictory testimony.

General Neipperg, in his account of the

interview, writes, in reference to Frederick: “He is a very spirited young king. He will not stand contradiction; but a great deal may be made of him if you seem to adopt his ideas, and honor him in a delicate, dexterous way. He did not in the least hide his engagements with France, Bavaria, Saxony. But he would really, so far as I could judge, prefer friendship with Austria on the given terms. He seems to have a kind of pique at Saxony, and manifests no favor for the French and their plans.”

Mr. Carlyle, who, with wonderful accuracy, and with impartiality which no one will call in question, has recorded the facts in Frederick’s career, gives the story as it is here told. In the following terms Mr. Carlyle comments upon these events:

“Of the political morality of this game of fast-and-loose what have we to say, except that the dice on both sides seem to be loaded; that logic might be chopped upon it forever; that a candid mind will settle what degree of wisdom (which is always essential veracity) and what of folly (which is always falsity) there was in Frederick and the others; whether, or to what degree, there was a better course open to Frederick in the circumstances; and, in fine, it will have to be granted that you can not work in pitch and keep hands evidently clean. Frederick has got into the enchanted wilderness populous with devils and their work, alas! It will be long before he get out of it again; *his* life waning toward night before he get victoriously out, and bequeath his conquest to luckier successors!”

On the 16th of November General Neipperg broke up his camp at Neisse, according to the arrangement and, leaving a small garrison in the city to encounter the sham siege, defiled through the

mountains on the south into Moravia. The Prussians, pretending to pursue, hung upon his rear for a short distance, making as much noise and inflicting as little harm as possible. General Neipperg pressed rapidly on to Vienna, where he was exultingly welcomed to aid in defending the city menaced by the French.

Frederick on the 17th, the day after the departure of the Austrian army, invested Neisse. He had an embarrassing part to play. He was to conduct a sham siege in the presence of M. Valori, who was not only a man of ability, but who possessed much military intelligence. Feigning the utmost zeal, Frederick opened his trenches, and ostentatiously manœuvred his troops. He sent the young Prince Leopold, with fifteen thousand horse and foot, into the Glatz country, many leagues to the east, to guard against surprise from an enemy, where no enemy was to be found. He marked out his parallels, sent imperious summonses for surrender, and dispatched reconnoitring parties abroad. M. Valori began to be surprised—amazed. “What does all this mean?” he said to himself. “They have great need of some good engineers here.”

With that vigilant eye upon him, Frederick was compelled to some vigor of action. On the night of October 17th he commenced the bombardment. The noise was terrific. It could not be prevented but that the shot and shell should do some harm. Some buildings were burned; several lives were lost. M. Valori, who knew that the result could not be doubtful, was induced to go to Breslau and await the surrender. After the garrison had made apparently a gallant resistance, and Frederick had achieved apparent prodigies of valor, the city was surrendered

on the 31st of October. Most of the garrison immediately enlisted in the Prussian service.

Thus the last fortress in Silesia fell into the hands of Frederick. There was no longer any foe left in the province to dispute his acquisition. He took possession of Neisse on the 1st of November, celebrating his victory with illuminations and all the approved demonstrations of public rejoicing.



MAP OF THE SECOND SILESIAN CAMPAIGN.

On the 4th of November he returned to Breslau, entering the city with great military display. Seated in a splendid carriage, he was drawn through the streets by eight cream-colored horses. Taking his seat upon the ancient ducal throne, he was crowned, with great ceremonial pomp, Sovereign Duke of Lower Silesia. Four hundred of the notables of the

dukedom, in gala dresses, and taking oaths of homage, contributed to the imposing effect of the spectacle. Illuminations, balls, and popular festivities, in great variety, closed the triumph.

On the morning of the 9th of November Frederick set out for Berlin, visiting Glogau by the way. On the 11th he entered Berlin, where he was received by the whole population with enthusiastic demonstrations of joy. For a short time he probably thought that through guile he had triumphed, and that his troubles were now at an end. But such victories, under the providence of God, are always of short duration. Frederick soon found that his troubles had but just begun. He had entered upon a career of toil, care, and peril, from which he was to have no escape until he was ready to sink into his grave.

But a few days after his return, Lord Hyndford, who had followed the king to Berlin, met his majesty in one of the apartments of the palace. Frederick, struggling to conceal the emotions with which he was agitated, said to him,

"My lord, the court of Vienna has entirely divulged our secret. The Dowager Empress has acquainted the court of Bavaria with it. Wasner, the Austrian minister at Paris, has communicated it to the French minister, Fleury. The Austrian minister at St. Petersburg, M. Linzendorf, has told the court of Russia of it. Sir Thomas Robinson has divulged it to the court of Dresden. Several members of the British government have talked about it publicly."

Frederick immediately and publicly denied that he had ever entered into any such arrangement with Austria, and declared the whole story to be a mere fabrication. Having by the stratagem obtained Neisse, and delivered Silesia from the presence of the

Austrian army, he assured the French of his unchanging fidelity to their interests, and with renewed vigor commenced co-operating with them in the furtherance of some new ambitious plans.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CAMPAIGN OF MORAVIA.

Frederick's Motives for the War.—Marriage of William Augustus.—Testimony of Lord Macaulay.—Frederick and his Allies.—Visit to Dresden.—Military Energy.—Charles Albert chosen Emperor.—The Coronation.—Effeminacy of the Saxon Princes.—Disappointment and Vexation of Frederick.—He withdraws in Chagrin.—The Cantonment on the Elbe.—Winter Campaigning.—The Concentration at Chrudim.

IT was on the 11th of November, 1741, that Frederick, elated with his conquest of Silesia, had returned to Berlin. In commencing the enterprise he had said, "Ambition, interest, and the desire to make the world speak of me, vanquished all, and war was determined on." He had, indeed, succeeded in making the "world speak" of him. He had suddenly become the most prominent man in Europe. Some extolled his exploits. Some expressed amazement at his perfidy. Many, recognizing his sagacity and his tremendous energy, sought his alliance. Embassadors from the various courts of Europe crowded his capital. Fourteen sovereign princes, with many foreigners of the highest rank, were counted among the number. The king was in high spirits. While studiously maturing his plans for the future, he

assumed the air of a thoughtless man of fashion, and dazzled the eyes and bewildered the minds of his guests with feasts and pageants.



FREDERICK THE GREAT. ÆT. 30

On the 7th of January, 1742, Frederick's eldest brother, William Augustus, was married to Louisa Amelia, a younger sister of the king's neglected wife, Elizabeth. The king himself graced the festival, in gorgeous attire, and very successfully plied all his

wonderful arts of fascination. “He appeared,” says Bielfeld, “so young, so gay, so graceful, that I could not have refrained from loving him, even if he had been a stranger.”

But, in the midst of these scenes of gayety, the king was contemplating the most complicated combinations of diplomacy. Europe was apparently thrown into a state of chaos. It was Frederick’s one predominant thought to see what advantages he could secure to Prussia from the general wreck and ruin. Lord Macaulay, speaking of these scenes, says:

“The selfish rapacity of the King of Prussia gave the signal to his neighbors. His example quieted their sense of shame. The whole world sprang to arms. On the head of Frederick is all the blood which was shed in a war which raged during many years, and in every quarter of the globe—the blood of the column of Fontenoy, the blood of the brave mountaineers who were slaughtered at Culloden. The evils produced by this wickedness were felt in lands where the name of Prussia was unknown. In order that he might rob a neighbor whom he had promised to defend, black men fought on the coast of Coromandel, and red men scalped each other by the great lakes of North America.”

As we have stated, Frederick had declared that if any rumor should be spread abroad of the fact that he had entered into a secret treaty with Austria, he would deny it, and would no longer pay any regard to its stipulations. He had adopted the precaution not to affix his signature to any paper. By this ignoble stratagem he had obtained Neisse and Silesia. The rumor of the secret treaty had gone abroad. He had denied it. And now, in accordance with the principles of his peculiar code of honor, he felt

himself at liberty to pursue any course which policy might dictate.

Frederick, in his *Histoire de mon Temps*, states that, in the negotiations which at this time took place in Berlin, France pressed the king to bring forward his armies into vigorous co-operation; that England exhorted him to make peace with Austria; that Spain solicited his alliance in her warfare against England; that Denmark implored his counsel as to the course it was wise for that kingdom to pursue; that Sweden entreated his aid against Russia; that Russia besought his good offices to make peace with the court at Stockholm; and that the German empire, anxious for peace, entreated him to put an end to those troubles which were convulsing all Europe.

The probable object of the Austrian court in revealing the secret treaty of Schnellendorf was to set Frederick and France at variance. Frederick, much exasperated, not only denied the treaty, but professed increased devotion to the interests of Louis XV. The allies, consisting of France, Prussia, Bavaria, and Saxony, now combined to wrest Moravia from Maria Theresa, and annex it to Saxony. This province, governed by a marquis, was a third larger than the State of Massachusetts, and contained a population of about a million and a half. Moravia bounded Silesia on the south. Frederick made a special treaty with the King of Saxony, that the southern boundary of Silesia should be a full German mile, which was between four and five English miles, beyond the line of the River Neisse. With Frederick's usual promptitude, he insisted that commissioners should be immediately sent to put down the boundary stones. France was surprised that the King

of Saxony should have consented to the surrender of so important a strip of his territory.

Frederick paid but little regard to his allies save as he could make them subservient to the accomplishment of his purposes. He pushed his troops forward many leagues south into Moravia, and occupied the important posts of Troppau, Friedenthal, and Olmütz. These places were seized the latter part of December. The king hoped thus to be able, early in the spring, to carry the war to the gates of Vienna.

On the 18th of January, 1742, Frederick visited Dresden, to confer with Augustus III., King of Poland, who was also Elector of Saxony, and whose realms were to be increased by the annexation of Moravia. His Polish majesty was a weak man, entirely devoted to pleasure. His irresolute mind, subjected to the dominant energies of the Prussian king, was as clay in the hands of the potter.

"You are now," said Frederick, "by consent of the allies, King of Moravia. Now is the time, now or never, to become so in fact. Push forward your Saxon troops. The Austrian forces are weak in that country. At Iglau, just over the border from Austria, there is a large magazine of military stores, which can easily be seized. Urge forward your troops. The French will contribute strong divisions. I will join you with twenty thousand men. We can at once take possession of Moravia, and perhaps march directly on to Vienna."

Frederick, in describing this interview, writes: "Augustus answered *yes* to every thing, with an air of being convinced, joined to a look of great *ennui*. Count Brühl,[61] whom this interview displeased, interrupted it by announcing to his majesty that the

Opera was about to commence. Ten kingdoms to conquer would not have kept the King of Poland a minute longer. He went, therefore, to the Opera; and the King of Prussia obtained at once, in spite of those who opposed it, a final decision."[62]

The next morning, in the intense cold of midwinter, Frederick set out several hours before daylight for the city of Prague, which the French and Bavarians had captured on the 25th of November. Declining all polite attentions, for business was urgent, he eagerly sought M. De Séchelles, the renowned head of the commissariat department, and made arrangements with him to perform the extremely difficult task of supplying the army with food in a winter's campaign.

The next morning, at an early hour, he again dashed off to the east, toward Glatz, a hundred miles distant, where a portion of the Prussian troops were in cantonments, under the young Prince Leopold. Within a week he had ridden over seven hundred miles, commencing his journey every morning as early as four o'clock, and doing a vast amount of business by the way.

It will be remembered that, in the note which M. Valori accidentally dropped, and which Frederick furtively obtained, the minister was instructed by the French court not to give up Glatz to the Prussian king if he could possibly avoid it. But Frederick had now seized the city, and the region around, by force of arms, and held them with a gripe not to be relaxed. Glatz was a Catholic town. In the convent there was an image of the Virgin, whose tawdry robes had become threadbare and faded. The wife of the Austrian commandant had promised the Virgin a new dress if she would keep the Prussians out of the

city. Frederick heard of this. As he took possession of the city, with grim humor he assured the Virgin that she should not lose in consequence of the favor she had shown the Prussians. New and costly garments were immediately provided for her at the expense of the Prussian king.

On the 26th of January Frederick set out from Glatz, with a strong cortége, for Olmütz, far away to the southeast. This place his troops had occupied for a month past. His route led through a chain of mountains, whose bleak and dreary defiles were clogged with drifted snow, and swept by freezing gales. It was a dreadful march, accompanied by many disasters and much suffering.

General Stille, one of the aids of Frederick on this expedition, says that the king, with his retinue, mounted and in carriages, pushed forward the first day to Landskron. “It was,” he writes, “such a march as I never witnessed before. Through the ice and through the snow, which covered that dreadful chain of mountains between Böhmen and Mähren, we did not arrive till very late. Many of our carriages were broken down, and others were overturned more than once.”[63]

Frederick, ever regardless of fatigue and exposure for himself, never spared his followers. It was after midnight of the 28th when the weary column, frostbitten, hungry, and exhausted, reached Olmütz. The king was hospitably entertained in the fine palace of the Catholic bishop, “a little, gouty man,” writes Stille, “about fifty-two years of age, with a countenance open and full of candor.”

Orders had been issued for all the Prussian troops to be rendezvoused by the 5th of February at Wischau. They were then to march immediately

about seventy-five miles west, to Trebitsch, which was but a few miles south of Iglau, the point of attack. Here they were to join the French and Saxon troops. The force thus concentrated would amount to twenty-four thousand Prussian troops, twenty thousand Saxons, and five thousand French horsemen. With this army—forty-nine thousand strong—Frederick was to advance, by one short day's march, upon Iglau, where the Austrian garrison amounted to but ten thousand men.

In the mean time, on the 24th of January, Charles Albert, King of Bavaria, through the intrigues of the French minister and the diplomacy of Frederick, was chosen Emperor of Germany. This election Frederick regarded as a great triumph on his part. It was the signal defeat of Austria. Very few of the sons of Adam have passed a more joyless and dreary earthly pilgrimage than was the fortune of Charles Albert. At the time of his election he was forty-five years of age, of moderate stature, polished manners, and merely ordinary abilities. He was suffering from a complication of the most painful disorders. His previous life had been but a series of misfortunes, and during all the rest of his days he was assailed by the storms of adversity. In death alone he found refuge from a life almost without a joy.

Charles Albert, who took the title of "the Emperor Charles VII.," was the son of Maximilian, King of Bavaria, who was ruined at Blenheim, and who, being placed under the ban of the empire, lived for many years a pensioner upon the charity of Louis XIV. Charles was then but seven years of age, a prince by birth, yet homeless, friendless, and in poverty. With varying fortunes, he subsequently

married a daughter of the Emperor Joseph. She was a cousin of Maria Theresa. Upon the death of his father in 1726, Charles Albert became King of Bavaria; but he was involved in debt beyond all hope of extrication. The intrigues of Frederick placed upon his wan and wasted brow the imperial crown of Germany. The coronation festivities took place at Frankfort, with great splendor, on the 12th of February, 1742.

Wilhelmina, who was present, gives a graphic account, with her vivacious pen, of many of the scenes, both tragic and comic, which ensued.

"Of the coronation itself," she writes, "though it was truly grand, I will say nothing. The poor emperor could not enjoy it much. He was dying of gout and other painful diseases, and could scarcely stand upon his feet. He spends most of his time in bed, courting all manner of German princes. He has managed to lead my margraf into a foolish bargain about raising men for him, which bargain I, on fairly getting sight of it, persuade my margraf to back out of; and, in the end, he does so. The emperor had fallen so ill he was considered even in danger of his life. Poor prince! What a lot he had achieved for himself!"

While these coronation splendors were transpiring, Frederick was striving, with all his characteristic enthusiasm, to push forward his Moravian campaign to a successful issue. Inspired by as tireless energies as ever roused a human heart, he was annoyed beyond measure by the want of efficient co-operation on the part of his less zealous allies. Neither the Saxons nor the French could keep pace with his impetuosity. The princes who led the Saxon troops, the petted sons of kings and nobles,

were loth to abandon the luxurious indulgences to which they had been accustomed. When they arrived at a capacious castle where they found warm fires, an abundant larder, and sparkling wines, they would linger there many days, decidedly preferring those comforts to campaigning through the blinding, smothering snowstorm, and bivouacking on the bleak and icy plains, swept by the gales of a northern winter. The French were equally averse to these terrible marches, far more to be dreaded than the battle-field.

Frederick remonstrated, argued, implored, but all in vain. He was not disposed to allow considerations of humanity, regard for suffering or life, to stand in the way of his ambitious plans. For two months, from February 5th, when Frederick rendezvoused the Prussians at Wischau, until April 5th, he found himself, to his excessive chagrin, unable to accomplish any thing of moment, in consequence of the lukewarmness of his allies. He was annoyed almost beyond endurance. It was indeed important, in a military point of view, that there should be an immediate march upon Iglau. It was certain that the Austrians, forewarned, would soon remove their magazines or destroy them. The utmost expedition was essential to the success of the enterprise.

The young officers in the Saxon army, having disposed their troops in comfortable barracks, had established their own head-quarters in the magnificent castle of Budischau, in the vicinity of Trebitsch. “Nothing like this superb mansion,” writes Stille, “is to be seen except in theatres, on the drop-scene of the enchanted castle.” Here these young lords made themselves very comfortable. They had food in abundance, luxuriously served, with the

choicest wines. Roaring fires in huge stoves converted, within the walls, winter into genial summer. Here these pleasure-loving nobles, with song, and wine, and such favorites, male and female, as they carried with them, loved to linger.



THE YOUNG LORDS OF SAXONY ON A WINTER CAMPAIGN.

At length, however, Frederick succeeded in pushing forward a detachment of his army to seize the magazines and the post he so greatly coveted. The troops marched all night. Toward morning, almost perishing with cold, they built enormous

fires. Having warmed their numbed and freezing limbs, they pressed on to Iglau, to find it abandoned by the garrison. The Austrian general Lobkowitz had carried away every thing which could be removed, and then had reduced to ashes seventeen magazines, filled with military and commissary stores. The king was exceedingly chagrined by this barren conquest. He was anxious to advance in all directions, to take full possession of Moravia, before the Austrians could send re-enforcements to garrison its fortresses; but the Saxon lords refused to march any farther in this severe winter campaign. Frederick complained to the Saxon king. His Polish majesty sent an angry order to his troops to go forward. Sullenly they obeyed, interposing every obstacle in their power. Some of the leaders threw up their commissions and went home. Frederick, with his impetuous Prussians and his unwilling Saxons, spread over Moravia, levying contributions and seizing the strong places.

The Saxons, much irritated, were rather more disposed to thwart his plans than to co-operate in them. The Austrian horsemen were vigilant, pouncing upon every unprotected detachment. Frederick marched for the capture of Brünn, the strongest fortress in Moravia. It had a garrison of seven thousand men, under the valiant leader Roth. To arrest the march of Frederick, and leave him shelterless on the plains, the Austrian general laid sixteen villages in ashes. The poor peasants—men, women, and children—foodless and shelterless, were thus cast loose upon the drifted fields. Who can gauge such woes?

Frederick, finding that he could not rely upon the Saxons, sent to Silesia for re-enforcements of his own troops. Brünn could not be taken without siege

artillery. He was capturing Moravia for the King of Poland. Frederick dispatched a courier to his Polish majesty at Dresden, requesting him immediately to forward the siege guns. The reply of the king, who was voluptuously lounging in his palaces, was, “I can not meet the expense of the carriage.” Frederick contemptuously remarked, “He has just purchased a green diamond which would have carried them thither and back again.” The Prussian king sent for siege artillery of his own, drew his lines close around Brünn, and urged Chevalier De Saxe, general of the Saxon horse, to co-operate with him energetically in battering the city into a surrender. The chevalier interposed one obstacle, and another, and another. At last he replied, showing his dispatches, “I have orders to retire from this business altogether, and join the French at Prague.”

Frederick declares, in his history, that never were tidings more welcome to him than these. He had embarked in the enterprise for the conquest of Moravia with the allies. He could not, without humiliation, withdraw. But, now that the ally, in whose behalf he assumed to be fighting, had abandoned him, he could, without dishonor, relinquish the field. Leaving the Saxons to themselves, with many bitter words of reproach, he countermanded his order for Silesian re-enforcements, assembled his troops at Wischau, and then, by a rapid march through Olmütz, returned to his strong fortresses in the north.

The Saxons were compelled to a precipitate retreat. Their march was long, harassing, and full of suffering, from the severe cold of those latitudes, and from the assaults of the fierce Pandours, every where swarming around. Villages were burned, and

maddened men wreaked direful vengeance on each other. Scarcely eight thousand of their number, a frostbitten, starving, emaciate band, reached the borders of Saxony. Curses loud and deep were heaped upon the name of Frederick. His Polish majesty, though naturally good-natured, was greatly exasperated in view of the conduct of the Prussian king in forcing the troops into the severities of such a campaign. Frederick himself was also equally indignant with Augustus for his want of co-operation. The French minister, Valori, met him on his return from these disasters. He says that his look was ferocious and dark; that his laugh was bitter and sardonic; that a vein of suppressed rage, mockery, and contempt pervaded every word he uttered.

Frederick withdrew his troops into strong cantonments in the valley of the upper Elbe. This beautiful river takes its rise in romantic chasms, among the ridges and spurs of the Giant Mountains, on the southeastern borders of Silesia. Here the Prussian army was distributed in small towns along a line following the windings of the stream, about forty miles in length. All the troops could be concentrated in forty-eight hours. The encampments faced the south, with the Elbe behind them. At some little distance north of the river, safe from surprise, the magazines were stationed. The mountains of Bohemia rose sublimely in the distant background. In a letter to M. Jordan, under date of Chrudim, May 5th, 1742, Frederick expresses his views of this profitless campaign in the following terms:



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE CAMPAIGN IN MORAVIA.

“Moravia, which is a very bad country, could not be held, owing to want of provisions. The town of Brünn could not be taken because the Saxons had no cannon. When you wish to enter a town, you must first make a hole to get in by. Besides, the country has been reduced to such a state that the enemy can not subsist in it, and you will soon see him leave it. There is your little military lesson. I would not have you at a loss what to think of our operations, or what to say, should other people talk of them in your presence.”

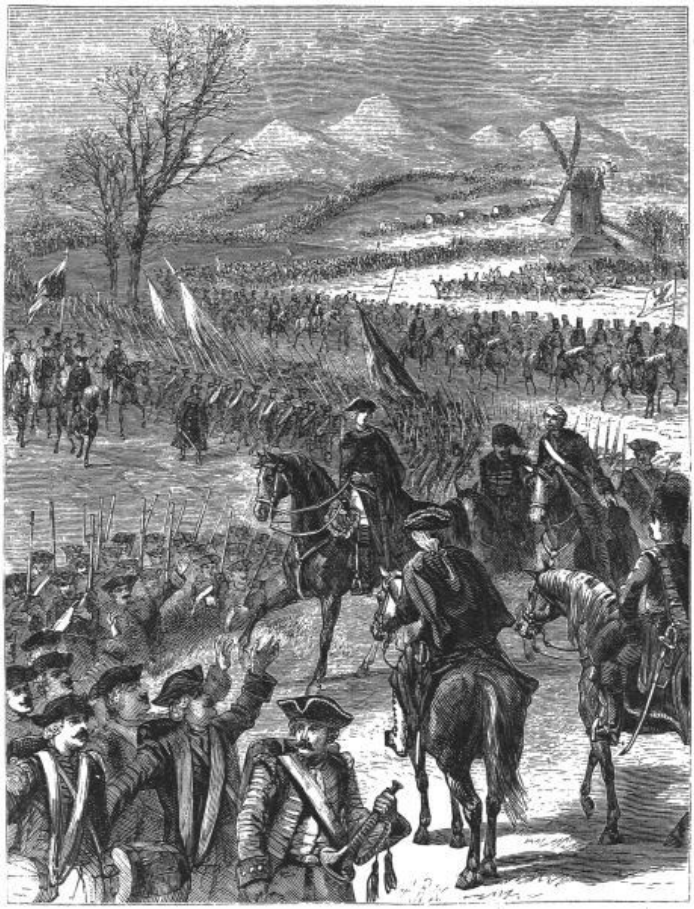
Elsewhere, Frederick, speaking of these two

winter campaigns, says: “Winter campaigns are bad, and should always be avoided, except in cases of necessity. The best army in the world is liable to be ruined by them. I myself have made more winter campaigns than any general of this age. But there were reasons. In 1740 there were hardly above two Austrian regiments in Silesia, at the death of the Emperor Charles VI. Being determined to assert my right to that duchy, I had to try it at once, in winter, and carry the war, if possible, to the banks of the Neisse. Had I waited till spring, we must have begun the war between Crossen and Glogau. What was now to be gained by one march would then have cost us three or four campaigns. A sufficient reason, this, for campaigning in winter. If I did not succeed in the winter campaigns of 1742, a campaign which I made to deliver Moravia, then overrun by Austrians, it was because the French acted like fools, and the Saxons like traitors.”[64]

Frederick, establishing his head-quarters at Chrudim, did not suppose the Austrians would think of moving upon him until the middle of June. Not till then would the grass in that cold region afford forage. But Maria Theresa was inspired by energies fully equal to those of her renowned assailant. Undismayed by the powerful coalition against her, she sent Prince Charles, her brother-in-law, early in May, at the head of an army thirty thousand strong, to advance by a secret, rapid flank march, and seize the Prussian magazines beyond the Elbe.

The ever-wakeful eye of Frederick detected the movement. His beautiful encampment at Chrudim had lasted but two days. Instantly couriers were dispatched in all directions to rendezvous the Prussian troops on a vast plain in the vicinity of

Chrudim. But a few hours elapsed ere every available man in the Prussian ranks was on the march. This movement rendered it necessary for Prince Charles to concentrate the Austrian army also. The field upon which these hosts were gathering for battle was an undulating prairie, almost treeless, with here and there a few hamlets of clustered peasant cottages scattered around.



FREDERICK CONCENTRATING HIS ARMY AT CHRUDIM.

It was a serene, cloudless May morning when Frederick rode upon a small eminence to view the approach of his troops, and to form them in battle array. General Stille, who was an eye-witness of the scene, describes the spectacle as one of the most beautiful and magnificent which was ever beheld. The transparent atmosphere, the balmy air, transmitting with wonderful accuracy the most distant sounds, the smooth, wide-spreading prairie, the hamlets, to which distance lent enchantment, surmounted by the towers or spires of the churches, the winding columns of infantry and cavalry, their polished weapons flashing in the sunlight, the waving of silken and gilded banners, while bugle peals and bursts of military airs floated now faintly, and now loudly, upon the ear, the whole scene being bathed in the rays of the most brilliant of spring mornings—all together presented war in its brightest hues, divested of every thing revolting.[65]

There were nearly thirty thousand men, infantry and cavalry, thus assembling under the banners of Frederick for battle. They were in as perfect state of drill as troops have ever attained, and were armed with the most potent implements of war which that age could furnish. The king was visibly affected by the spectacle. Whether humane considerations touched his heart, or merely poetic emotion moved him, we can not tell. But he was well aware that within a few hours not merely hundreds, but thousands of those men, torn by shot and shell, would be prostrate in their blood upon the plain; and he could not but know that for all the carnage and the suffering, he, above all others, would be

responsible at the bar of God.

"The king," writes Stille, "though fatigued, would not rest satisfied with reports or distant view. Personally he made the tour of the whole camp, to see that every thing was right, and posted the pickets himself before retiring."

CHAPTER XVIII.

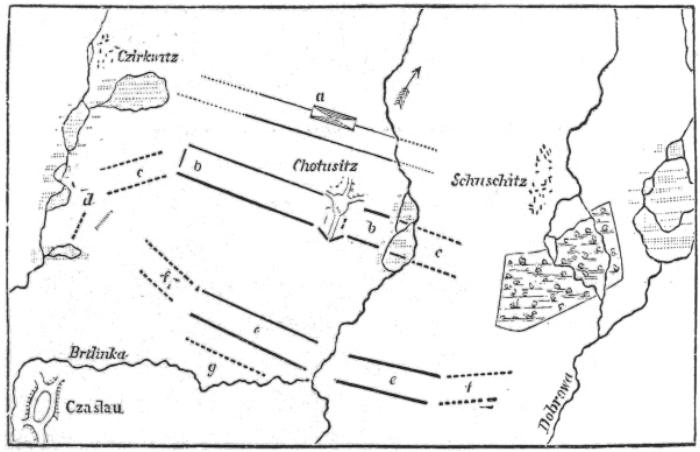
FREDERICK TRIUMPHANT.

The Battle of Chotusitz.—Letter to Jordan.—Results of the Battle.—Secret Negotiations.—The Treaty of Breslau.—Entrance into Frankfort.—Treachery of Louis XV.—Results of the Silesian Campaigns.—Panegyrics of Voltaire.—Imperial Character of Maria Theresa.—Her Grief over the Loss of Silesia.—Anecdote of Senora Barbarina.—Duplicity of both Frederick and Voltaire.—Gayety in Berlin.—Straitened Circumstances.—Unamiability of Frederick.

IT was the aim of Prince Charles to get between Frederick's encampment at Chrudim and his French allies, under Marshal Broglio, at Prague. When discovered by Frederick, the Austrian army was on the rapid march along a line about fifteen miles nearly southwest of Chrudim. It thus threatened to cut Frederick's communication with Prague, which was on the Moldau, about sixty miles west of the Prussian encampment. The forces now gathering for a decisive battle were nearly equal. The reader would not be interested in the description of the strategic and tactical movements of the next two days. The leaders of both parties, with great military sagacity, were accumulating and concentrating their forces for a conflict, which, under the circumstances,

would doubtless prove ruinous to the one or the other. A battle upon that open plain, with equal forces, was of the nature of a duel, in which one or the other of the combatants must fall.

On the morning of the 17th of May Frederick's army was drawn out in battle array, facing south, near the village of Chotusitz, about fifteen miles west of Chrudim. Almost within cannon-shot of him, upon the same plain, near the village of Czaslau, facing north, was the army of Prince Charles. The field was like a rolling western prairie, with one or two sluggish streams running through it; and here and there marshes, which neither infantry nor cavalry could traverse. The accompanying map will give the reader an idea of the nature of the ground and the position of the hostile forces.



BATTLE OF CHOTUSITZ.

a. Prussian Camp. b b. Prussian Infantry. c c. Prussian Cavalry. d. Position of Buddenbrock. e e. Austrian Infantry. f f. Austrian Cavalry. g. Austrian Hussars.

The sun rose clear and cloudless over the plain, soon to be crimsoned with blood and darkened by the smoke of battle. The Prussians took position in accordance with very minute directions given to the young Prince Leopold by Frederick. It was manifest to the most unskilled observer that the storm of battle would rage over many miles, as the infantry charged to and fro; as squadrons of strongly-mounted cavalry swept the field; as bullets, balls, and shells were hurled in all directions from the potent enginery of war.

About seven o'clock in the morning the king ascended an eminence, and carefully scanned the field, where sixty thousand men were facing each other, soon to engage in mutual slaughter. There were two spectacles which arrested his attention. The one was the pomp, and pageantry, and panoply of war, with its serried ranks, its prancing steeds, its flashing armor, its waving banners, its inspiriting bugle-peals—a scene in itself beautiful and sublime in the highest conceivable degree.

But there was another picture which met the eye of the king very different in its aspect. We know not whether it at all touched his heart. It was that of the poor peasants, with their mothers, their wives, their children, hurrying from their hamlets in all directions, in the utmost dismay. Grandmothers tottered beneath the burden of infant children. Fathers and mothers struggled on with the household goods they were striving to rescue from impending ruin. The cry of maidens and children reached the ear as they fled from the tramp of the war-horse and the approaching carnage of the death-dealing artillery.

Frederick, having carefully scanned the Austrian

lines for an instant or two, gave the signal, and all his batteries opened their thunders. Under cover of that storm of iron, several thousand of the cavalry, led by the veteran General Bredow, deployed from behind some eminences, and first at a gentle trot, and then upon the most impetuous run, with flashing sabres, hurled themselves upon the left wing of the Austrian lines. The ground was dry and sandy, and a prodigious cloud of dust enveloped them. For a moment the tornado, vital with human energies, swept on, apparently unobstructed. The first line of the Austrian horse was met, crushed, annihilated. But the second stood as the rock breasts the waves, horse against horse, rider against rider, sabre against sabre. Nothing met the eye but one vast eddying whirlpool of dust, as if writhing in volcanic energies, while here and there the flash of fire and the gleam of steel flickered madly through it.

The battle, thus commenced, continued to rage for four long hours, with all its demon energies, its blood, its wounds, its oaths, its shrieks, its death; on the right wing, on the left wing, in the centre; till some ten or twelve thousand, some accounts say more, of these poor peasant soldiers lay prostrate upon the plain, crushed by the hoof, torn by the bullet, gashed by the sabre. Many were dead. Many were dying. Many had received wounds which would cripple them until they should totter into their graves. At the close of these four hours of almost superhuman effort, the villages all around in flames, the Austrians slowly, sullenly retired from the contest. Prince Charles, having lost nearly seven thousand men, with his remaining forces breathless, exhausted, bleeding, retired through Czaslau, and vanished over the horizon to the southwest. Frederick, with his forces almost equally breathless,

exhausted, and bleeding, and counting five thousand of his soldiers strewn over the plain, in death or wounds, remained master of the field. Such was the famous battle of Chotusitz.

In the following terms, Frederick, the moment the battle was over, announced his victory, not to his wife, but to his friend Jordan:

> "From the Field of Battle of Chotusitz,
> May 17, 1742.
>
> "DEAR JORDAN,—I must tell you, as gayly as I can, that we have beaten the enemy soundly, and that we are all pretty well after it. Poor Rothenburg is wounded in the breast and in the arm, but, as it is hoped, without danger. Adieu. You will be happy, I think, at the good news I send you. My compliments to Cæsarion."[66]

Frederick did not pursue the Austrians after this victory. Nine acres of ground were required to bury the dead. He rented this land from the proprietor for twenty-five years. His alienation from his allies was such that, without regard to them, he was disposed to make peace with Austria upon the best terms he could for himself. England also, alarmed in view of the increasing supremacy of France, was so anxious to detach Frederick, with his invincible troops, from the French alliance, that the British cabinet urged Maria Theresa to make any sacrifice whatever that might be necessary to secure peace with Prussia. Frederick, influenced by such considerations, buried the illustrious Austrian dead with the highest marks of military honor, and treated with marked consideration his distinguished prisoners of war.

Secret negotiations were immediately opened at Breslau, in Silesia, between England, Austria, and

Prussia. Maria Theresa, harassed by the entreaties of her cabinet and by the importunities of the British court, consented to all that Frederick demanded.

The French, who, through their shrewd embassador, kept themselves informed of all that was transpiring, were quite alarmed in view of the approaching accommodation between Prussia and Austria. It is said that Frederick, on the 6th of June, in reply to the earnest remonstrances of the French minister, Marshal Belleisle, against his withdrawal from the alliance, frankly said to him,

"All that I ever wanted, more than I ever demanded, Austria now offers me. Can any one blame me that I close such an alliance as ours all along has been, when such terms are presented to me as Austria now proposes?"

On the 15th of June Frederick gave a grand dinner to his generals at his head-quarters. In an after-dinner speech he said to them,

"Gentlemen, I announce to you that, as I never wished to oppress the Queen of Hungary, I have formed the resolution of agreeing with that princess, and accepting the proposals she has made me, in satisfaction of my rights."

Toasts were then drank with great enthusiasm to the health of "Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary," to "the queen's consort, Francis, Grand-duke of Lorraine;" and universal and cordial was the response of applause when the toast was proposed "to the brave Prince Charles."

The treaty of Breslau was signed on the 11th of June, and ratified at Berlin on the 28th of July. By this treaty, Silesia, Lower and Upper, was ceded to "Frederick and his heirs for evermore," while

Frederick withdrew from the French alliance, and entered into friendly relations with her Hungarian majesty. Immediately after the settlement of this question, Frederick, cantoning his troops in Silesia, returned to Berlin. Elate with victory and accompanied by a magnificent suite, the young conqueror hastened home, over green fields and beneath a summer's sun. Keenly he enjoyed his triumph, greeted with the enthusiastic acclaim of the people in all the towns and villages through which he passed.[67] At Frankfort-on-the-Oder, where a fair was in operation, the king stopped for a few hours. Vast crowds, which had been drawn to the place by the fair, lined the highway for a long distance on both sides, eager to see the victor who had aggrandized Prussia by adding a large province to its realms.

"His majesty's entrance into Frankfort," writes M. Bielfeld, who accompanied him, "although very triumphant, was far from ostentatious. We passed like lightning before the eyes of the spectators, and were so covered with dust that it was difficult to distinguish the color of our coats and the features of our faces. We made some purchases at Frankfort, and the next day arrived safely in Berlin, where the king was received with the acclamations of his people."[68]

If we can rely upon the testimony of Frederick, an incident occurred at this time which showed that the French court was as intriguing and unprincipled as was his Prussian majesty. It is quite evident that the Austrian court also was not animated by a very high sense of honor.

After the battle of Chotusitz, Frederick called upon General Pallant, an Austrian officer, who was wounded and a prisoner. In the course of the

conversation, General Pallant stated that France was ready at any moment to betray his Prussian majesty, and that, if he would give him six days' time, he would furnish him with documentary proof. A courier was instantly dispatched to Vienna. He soon returned with a letter from Cardinal Fleury, the prime minister of Louis XV., addressed to Maria Theresa, informing her that, if she would give up Bohemia to the emperor, France would *guarantee to her Silesia*. Frederick, though guilty of precisely the same treachery himself, read the document with indignation, and assumed to be as much amazed at the perfidy as he could have been had he been an honest man.

"The cardinal," he said, "takes me for a fool. He wishes to betray me. I will try and prevent him."

The French marshal, Belleisle, alarmed by the report that Frederick was entering into a treaty of peace with Austria, hastened to the Prussian camp to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the rumor. Frederick, emboldened by the document he had in his pocket, was very frank.

"I have prescribed," he said, "the conditions of peace to the Queen of Hungary. She accepts them. Having, therefore, all that I want, I make peace. All the world in my situation would do the same."

"Is it possible, sire," Marshal Belleisle replied, "that you can dare to abandon the best of your allies, and to deceive so illustrious a monarch as the King of France?"

"And you, sir," responded the king, with an air of great disdain, at the same time placing in his hand the cardinal's letter, "do you dare to talk to me in this manner?"

The marshal glanced his eye over the document, and retired, overwhelmed with confusion. Thus ended the alliance between Prussia and France. “Each party,” writes Frederick, “wished to be more cunning than the other.”[69]

In the following terms, Frederick correctly sums up the incidents of the two Silesian campaigns:

“Thus was Silesia reunited to the dominions of Prussia. Two years of war sufficed for the conquest of this important province. The treasure which the late king had left was nearly exhausted. But it is a cheap purchase, where whole provinces are bought for seven or eight millions of crowns. The union of circumstances at the moment peculiarly favored this enterprise. It was necessary for it that France should allow itself to be drawn into the war; that Russia should be attacked by Sweden; that, from timidity, the Hanoverians and Saxons should remain inactive; that the successes of the Prussians should be uninterrupted; and that the King of England, the enemy of Prussia, should become, in spite of himself, the instrument of its aggrandizement. What, however, contributed the most to this conquest was an army which had been formed for twenty-two years, by means of a discipline admirable in itself, and superior to the troops of the rest of Europe. Generals, also, who were true patriots, wise and incorruptible ministers, and, finally, a certain good fortune which often accompanies youth, and often deserts a more advanced age.”[70]

There was no end to the panegyrics which Voltaire, in his correspondence with Frederick, now lavished upon him. He greeted him with the title of Frederick the Great.

“How glorious,” he exclaimed, “is my king, the

youngest of kings, and the grandest! A king who carries in the one hand an all-conquering sword, but in the other a blessed olive-branch, and is the arbiter of Europe for peace or war."

Frederick, having obtained all that, for the present, he could hope to obtain, deemed it for his interest to attempt to promote the peace of Europe. His realms needed consolidating, his army recruiting, his treasury replenishing. But he found it much easier to stir up the elements of strife than to allay them.

His withdrawal from the French alliance removed the menace from the English Hanoverian possession. George II. eagerly sent an army of sixty thousand men to the aid of Maria Theresa against France, and freely opened to her his purse. The French were defeated every where. They were driven from Prague in one of the most disastrous wintry retreats of blood and misery over which the demon of war ever gloated. The powerless, penniless emperor, the creature of France, who had neither purse nor army, was driven, a fugitive and a vagabond, from his petty realm of Bavaria, and was exposed to humiliation, want, and insult.

Maria Theresa was developing character which attracted the admiration of Europe. She seriously contemplated taking command of her armies herself. She loved Duke Francis, her husband, treated him very tenderly, and was anxious to confer upon him honor; but by nature vastly his superior, instinctively she assumed the command. She led; he followed. She was a magnificent rider. Her form was the perfection of grace. Her beautiful, pensive, thoughtful face was tanned by the weather. All hearts throbbed as, on a spirited charger, she sometimes swept before the

ranks of the army, with her gorgeous retinue, appearing and disappearing like a meteor. She was as devout as she was brave, winning the homage of all Catholic hearts. We know not where, in the long list of sovereigns, to point to man or woman of more imperial energies, of more exalted worth.



MARIA THERESA AT THE HEAD OF HER ARMY.

The loss of Silesia she regarded as an act of pure highway robbery. It rankled in her noble heart as the great humiliation and disgrace of her reign. Frederick was to her but as a hated and successful bandit, who had wrenched from her crown one of its brightest jewels. To the last day of her life she never ceased to deplore the loss. It is said that if any stranger, obtaining an audience, was announced as from Silesia, the eyes of the queen would instantly flood with tears. But the fortunes of war had now triumphantly turned in her favor. Aided by the armies and the gold of England, she was on the high career of conquest. Her troops had overrun Bohemia and Bavaria. She was disposed to hold those territories in compensation for Silesia, which she had lost.

In the mean time, during the two years in which Maria Theresa was making these conquests, Frederick, alarmed by the aggrandizement of Austria and the weakening of France, while unavailingly striving to promote peace, was busily employed in the administration of his internal affairs. He encouraged letters; devoted much attention to the Academy of Arts and Sciences; reared the most beautiful opera-house in Europe; devoted large sums to secure the finest musicians and the most exquisite ballet-dancers which Europe could afford. He sought to make his capital attractive to all those throughout Europe who were inspired by a thirst for knowledge, or who were in the pursuit of pleasure.

One incident in this connection, illustrative of the man and of the times, merits brief notice. His agent at Venice reported a female dancer there of rare attainments, Señora Barberina. She was marvelously beautiful, and a perfect fairy in figure

and grace, and as fascinating in her vivacity and sparkling intelligence as she was lovely in person. Frederick immediately ordered her to be engaged for his opera-house at Berlin, at a salary of nearly four thousand dollars, and sundry perquisites.

But it so happened that the beautiful dancer had in the train of her impassioned admirers a young English gentleman, a younger brother of the Earl of Bute. He was opposed to Barberina's going to Prussia, and induced her to throw up the engagement. Frederick was angry, and demanded the execution of the contract. The pretty Barberina, safe in Venice, made herself merry with the complaints of the Prussian monarch. Frederick, not accustomed to be thwarted, applied to the doge and the Senate of Venice to compel Barberina to fulfill her contract. They replied with great politeness, but did nothing. Barberina remained with her lover under the sunny skies of Italy, charming with her graceful pirouettes admiring audiences in the Venetian theatres.

In the mean time a Venetian embassador, on his way to one of the northern courts, passed a night at a hotel in Berlin. He was immediately arrested, with his luggage, by a royal order. A dispatch was transmitted to Venice, stating that the embassador would be held as a hostage till Barberina was sent to Prussia. "A bargain," says Frederick, in his emphatic utterance, "is a bargain. A state should have law courts to enforce contracts entered into in their territories."

The doge and senate were brought to terms. They seized the beautiful Barberina, placed her carefully in a post-chaise, and, under an escort of armed men, sent her, from stage to stage, over mountain and valley, till she arrived at Berlin. The

Venetian embassador was then discharged. The young English gentleman, James Mackenzie, a grandson of the celebrated advocate, Sir George Mackenzie, eagerly followed his captured inamorata, and reached Berlin two hours after Barberina. The rumor was circulated that he was about to marry her.

It is said that Frederick, determined not to lose his dancer in that manner, immediately informed the young gentleman's friends that he was about to form a *mesalliance* with an opera girl. The impassioned lover was peremptorily summoned home. Hatred for Frederick consequently rankled in young Mackenzie's heart. This hatred he communicated to his brother, Lord Bute, which subsequently had no little influence in affairs of national diplomacy.

The king himself became much fascinated with the personal loveliness and the sparkling intelligence of the young dancer. He even condescended to take tea with her, in company with others. Not long after her arrival in Berlin she made a conquest of a young gentleman of one of the first Prussian families, M. Cocceji, son of the celebrated chancellor, and was privately married to him. For a time Barberina continued upon the stage. At length, in the enjoyment of ample wealth, she purchased a splendid mansion, and, publicly announcing her marriage, retired with her husband to private life. But the mother of Cocceji, and other proud family friends, scorned the lowly alliance. A divorce was the result. Soon after, Barberina was married to a nobleman of high rank, and we hear of her no more.

Though Frederick, in his private correspondence, often spoke very contemptuously of Voltaire, it would seem, if any reliance can be placed on the

testimony of Voltaire himself, that Frederick sedulously courted the author, whose pen was then so potential in Europe. By express invitation, Voltaire spent a week with Frederick at Aix la Chapelle early in September, 1742. He writes to a friend from Brussels under date of December 10:

"I have been to see the King of Prussia. I have courageously resisted his fine proposals. He offers me a beautiful house in Berlin, a pretty estate, but I prefer my second floor in Madame Du Châtelet's here. He assures me of his favor, of the perfect freedom I should have; and I am running to Paris, to my slavery and persecution. I could fancy myself a small Athenian refusing the bounties of the King of Persia; with this difference, however, one had liberty at Athens."

Again he writes, under the same date, to the Marquis D'Argenson:

"I have just been to see the King of Prussia. I have seen him as one seldom sees kings, much at my ease, in my own room, in the chimney-corner, whither the same man who has gained two battles would come and talk familiarly, as Scipio did with Terence. You will tell me I am not Terence. True; but neither is he altogether Scipio."

Again he writes, under the same date, to Cardinal De Fleury, then the most prominent member of the cabinet of Louis XV.:

"MONSEIGNEUR,—I am bound to give your excellency some account of my journey to Aix la Chapelle. I could not leave Brussels until the second of this month. On the road I met a courier from the King of Prussia, coming to reiterate his master's orders on me. The king had me lodged in quarters

near his own apartment. He passed, for two consecutive days, four hours at a time in my room, with all that goodness and familiarity which form, as you know, part of his character, and which does not lower the king's dignity, because one is duly careful not to abuse it. I had abundant time to speak with a great deal of freedom on what your excellency had prescribed to me, and the king spoke to me with an equal frankness.

"First he asked me 'if it were true that the French nation were so angered against him, if the king was, and if you were.' I answered 'that there was nothing permanent.' He then condescended to speak fully upon the reasons which induced him to make peace. These reasons were so remarkable that I dare not trust them to this paper. All that I dare say is, that it seems to me easy to lead back the mind of this sovereign, whom the situation of his territories, his interest, and his taste would appear to mark as the natural ally of France. He said, moreover, 'that he earnestly desired to see Bohemia in the emperor's hands, that he renounced all claim on Berg and Jülick, and that he thought only of keeping Silesia.' He said 'that he knew well enough that the house of Austria would one day wish to recover that fine province, but that he trusted he could keep his conquest. That he had at that time a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers perfectly prepared for war; that he would make of Neisse, Glogau, and Brieg fortresses as strong as Wesel; that he was well informed that the Queen of Hungary owed eighty million German crowns ($60,000,000); that her provinces, exhausted and wide apart, would not be able to make long efforts; and that the Austrians for a long time to come could not of themselves be formidable.'"[71]

Frederick was accustomed to cover his deep designs of diplomacy by the promotion of the utmost gayety in his capital. Never did Berlin exhibit such spectacles of festivity and pleasure as during the winter of 1742 and 1743. There was a continued succession of operas, balls, fêtes, and sleigh-parties. Frederick's two younger sisters were at that time brilliant ornaments of his court. They were both remarkably beautiful and vivacious. The Princess Louise Ulrique was in her twenty-third year. The following letter to Frederick from these two princesses will be keenly appreciated by many of our young lady readers whose expenses have exceeded their allowance. It shows very conclusively that there may be the same pecuniary annoyances in the palaces of kings as in more humble homes.

"Berlin, 1st of March, 1743.

"MY DEAREST BROTHER,—I know not if it is not too bold to trouble your majesty on private affairs. But the great confidence my sister and I have in your kindness encourages us to lay before you a sincere avowal of our little finances, which are a good deal deranged just now. The revenues, having for two years and a half past been rather small, amounting to only four hundred crowns ($300) a year, could not be made to cover all the little expenses required in the adjustment of ladies. This circumstance, added to our card-playing, though small, which we could not dispense with, has led us into debt. Mine amounts to fifteen hundred crowns ($1125); my sister's, to eighteen hundred crowns ($1350). We have not spoken of it to the queen-mother, though we are sure she would have tried to assist us. But as that could not have been done without some inconvenience to her, and as she would have

retrenched in some of her own little entertainments, I thought we should do better to apply directly to your majesty. We were persuaded you would have taken it amiss had we deprived the queen of her smallest pleasure, and especially as we consider you, my dear brother, the father of the family, and hope you will be so gracious as to help us. We shall never forget the kind acts of your majesty. We beg you to be persuaded of the perfect and tender attachment with which we are proud to be, all our lives, your majesty's most humble sisters and servants,

LOUISE ULRIQUE,
"ANNE AMELIA.

"P.S.—I most humbly beg your majesty not to speak of this to the queen-mother, as perhaps she would not approve of the step we are now taking.

ANN AMELIA."[72]

About this time Frederick was somewhat alarmed by a statement issued by the court of Austria, that the emperor, Charles Albert, was no legitimate emperor at all; that the election was not valid; and that Austria, which had the emperor's kingdom of Bavaria by the throat, insisted upon compensation for the Silesia she had lost. It was evident that Maria Theresa, whose armies were every where successful, was determined that her husband, Duke Francis, should be decorated with the imperial crown. It now seemed probable that she would be able to accomplish her design. Frederick was alarmed, and deemed it necessary to strengthen himself by matrimonial alliances.

The heir to the Russian throne was an orphan boy, Peter Federowitz. The Russian court was looking around to obtain for him a suitable wife.

Frederick's commandant at Stettin, a man of renowned lineage, had a beautiful daughter of fourteen. She was a buxom girl, full of life as she frolicked upon the ramparts of the fortress with her young companions. Frederick succeeded in obtaining her betrothal to the young Prince of Russia. She was solemnly transferred from the Protestant to the Greek religion; her name was changed to Catharine; and she was eventually married, greatly to the satisfaction of Frederick, to the young Russian czar.

Adolph Frederick was the heir to the throne of Sweden. Successful diplomacy brought a magnificent embassy from Stockholm to Berlin, to demand Princess Ulrique as the bride of Sweden's future king. The course of love, whether true or false, certainly did in this case run smooth. The marriage ceremony was attended in Berlin with such splendor as the Prussian capital had never witnessed before. The beautiful Ulrique was very much beloved. She was married by proxy, her brother Augustus William standing in the place of the bridegroom.

All eyes were dimmed with tears as, after a week of brilliant festivities, she prepared for her departure. The carriages were at the door to convey her, with her accompanying suite of lords and ladies, to Stralsund, where the Swedish senate and nobles were to receive her. The princess entered the royal apartment to take leave of her friends, dressed in a rose-colored riding-habit trimmed with silver. The vest which encircled her slender waist was of sea-green, with lappets and collar of the same. She wore a small English bonnet of black velvet with a white plume. Her flowing hair hung in ringlets over her shoulders, bound with rose-colored ribbon.

The king, who was devotedly attached to his

sister, and who was very fond, on all occasions, of composing rhymes which he called poetry, wrote a very tender ode, bidding her adieu. It commenced with the words

"Partez, ma sœur, partez;
La Suède vous attend, la Suède
vous désire."

Go, my sister, go;
Sweden waits you, Sweden
wishes you.

"His majesty gave it to her at the moment when she was about to take leave of the two queens. The princess threw her eyes on it and fell into a faint. The king had almost done the like. His tears flowed abundantly. The princes and princesses were overcome with sorrow. At last Gotter judged it time to put an end to this tragic scene. He entered the hall almost like Boreas in the ballet of "The Rose"—that is to say, with a crash. He made one or two whirlwinds, clove the press, and snatched away the princess from the arms of the queen-mother, took her in his own, and whisked her out of the hall. All the world followed. The carriages were waiting in the court, and the princess in a moment found herself in hers.

"I was in such a state I know not how we got down stairs. I remember only that it was in a concert of lamentable sobbings. Madame, the Marchioness of Schwedt, who had been named to attend the princess to Stralsund, on the Swedish frontier, this high lady, and the two dames D'Atours, who were for Sweden itself, having sprung into the same carriage, the door of it was shut with a slam, the postillions cracked, the carriage shot away, and disappeared from our

eyes. In a moment the king and court lost sight of the beloved Ulrique forever."[73]

Frederick was far from being an amiable man. He would often cruelly banter his companions, knowing that it was impossible for them to indulge in any retort. Baron Pöllnitz was a very weak old man, who had several times changed his religion to subserve his private interests. He had been rather a petted courtier during three reigns. Now, in extreme old age, and weary of the world, he wished to renounce Protestantism, and to enter the cloisters of the convent in preparation for death. He applied to the king for permission to do so. Frederick furnished him with the following sarcastic parting testimony. It was widely circulated through many of the journals of that day, exciting peals of laughter as a capital royal joke:

> "Whereas the Baron De Pöllnitz, born of honest parents, so far as we know, having served our grandfather as gentleman of the chamber, Madame D'Orleans in the same rank, the King of Spain as colonel, the deceased Emperor Charles VI. as captain of horse, the pope as chamberlain, the Duke of Brunswick as chamberlain, the Duke of Weimar as ensign, our father as chamberlain, and, in fine, *us* as grand master of ceremonies, has, notwithstanding such accumulation of honors, become disgusted with the world, and requests of us a parting testimony;
>
> "We, remembering his important services to our house in diverting for nine years long the late king our father, and doing the honors of our court through the now reign, can not refuse such request. We do hereby certify that the said Baron Pöllnitz has never assassinated, robbed on the highway, poisoned, forcibly cut purses, or done

other atrocity or legal crime at our court; but that he has always maintained gentlemanly behavior, making not more than honest use of the industry and talents he has been endowed with at birth; imitating the object of the drama—that is, correcting mankind by gentle quizzing—following in the matter of sobriety Boerhaave's counsels, pushing Christian charity so far as often to make the rich understand that it is more blessed to give than to receive; possessing perfectly the anecdotes of our various mansions, especially of our worn-out furnitures, rendering himself by his merits necessary to those who know him, and, with a very bad head, having a very good heart.

"Our anger the said Baron Pöllnitz never kindled but once.[74] But as the loveliest countries have their barren spots, the most beautiful forms their imperfections, pictures by the greatest masters their faults, we are willing to cover with the veil of oblivion those of the said baron. We do hereby grant him, with regret, the leave of absence he requires, and abolish his office altogether, that it may be blotted from the memory of man, not judging that any one, after the said baron, can be worthy to fill it.

"FREDERICK.

"Potsdam, April 1, 1744."

No man of kindly sympathies could have thus wantonly wounded the feelings of a poor old man who had, according to his capacity, served himself, his father, and his grandfather, and who was just dropping into the grave. A generous heart would have forgotten the foibles, and, remembering only the virtues, would have spoken words of cheer to the world-weary heart, seeking a sad refuge in the glooms of the cloister. It must be confessed that

Frederick often manifested one of the worst traits in human nature. He took pleasure in inflicting pain upon others.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE INVASION OF BOHEMIA.

Correspondence between Frederick and Voltaire.—Voltaire's Visit to Frederick.—Domestic Habits of the King.—Unavailing Diplomacy of Voltaire.—The New Alliance.—The Renewal of War.—The Siege of Prague.—The Advance upon Vienna.—Darkening Prospects.—The Pandours.—Divisions in Council.—Sickness of Louis XV.—Energy of Frederick.—Distress of the Army.

THE correspondence carried on between Frederick and Voltaire, and their mutual comments, very clearly reveal the relations existing between these remarkable men. Frederick was well aware that the eloquent pen of the great dramatist and historian could give him celebrity throughout Europe. Voltaire was keenly alive to the consideration that the friendship of a monarch could secure to him position and opulence. And yet each privately spoke of the other very contemptuously, while in the correspondence which passed between them they professed for each other the highest esteem and affection. Frederick wrote from Berlin as follows to Voltaire:

"October 7, 1743.

> "MY DEAR VOLTAIRE,—France has been considered thus far as the asylum of unfortunate monarchs. I wish that my capital should become the temple of great men. Come to it, then, my dear Voltaire, and give whatever orders can tend to render a residence in it agreeable to you. My wish is to please you, and wishing this, my intention is to enter entirely into your views.
>
> "Choose whatever apartment in our house you like. Regulate yourself all that you want, either for comfort or luxury. Make your arrangements in such a way as that you may be happy and comfortable, and leave it to me to provide for the rest. You will be always entirely free, and master to choose your own way of life. My only pretension is to enchain you by friendship and kindness.
>
> "You will have passports for the post-horses, and whatever else you may ask. I hope to see you on Wednesday. I shall then profit by the few moments of leisure which remain to me, to enlighten myself by the blaze of your powerful genius. I entreat you to believe I shall always be the same toward you. Adieu."

Voltaire has given a detailed account of the incidents connected with this visit to his Prussian majesty. It is a humiliating exhibition of the intrigues and insincerity which animated the prominent actors in those scenes.

"The public affairs in France," writes Voltaire, "continued in as bad a state after the death of Cardinal De Fleury as during the last two years of his administration. The house of Austria rose again from its ashes. France was cruelly pressed upon by that power and by England. No other resource remained

to us but the chance of regaining the King of Prussia, who, having drawn us into the war, had abandoned us as soon as it was convenient to himself so to do. It was thought advisable, under these circumstances, that I should be sent to that monarch to sound his intentions, and, if possible, persuade him to avert the storm which, after it had first fallen on us, would be sure, sooner or later, to fall from Vienna upon him. We also wished to secure from him the loan of a hundred thousand men, with the assurance that he could thus better secure to himself Silesia.

"The minister for foreign affairs was charged to hasten my departure. A pretext, however, was necessary. I took that of my quarrel with the Bishop Mirepoix. I wrote accordingly to the King of Prussia that I could no longer endure the persecutions of this monk, and that I should take refuge under the protection of a philosophical sovereign, far from the disputes of this bigot. When I arrived at Berlin the king lodged me in his palace, as he had done in my former journeys. He then led the same sort of life which he had always done since he came to the throne. He rose at five in summer and six in winter.[75] A single servant came to light his fire, to dress and shave him. Indeed, he dressed himself almost without any assistance. His bedroom was a handsome one. A rich and highly ornamented balustrade of silver inclosed apparently a bed hung with curtains, but behind the curtains, instead of a bed, there was a library. As for the royal couch, it was a wretched truckle-bed, with a thin mattress, behind a screen, in one corner of the room. Marcus Aurelius and Julian, his favorite heroes, and the greatest men among the Stoics, were not worse lodged."

The king devoted himself very energetically to business during the morning, and reviewed his troops at eleven o'clock. He dined at twelve.

"After dinner," writes Voltaire, "the king retired alone into his cabinet, and made verses till five or six o'clock. A concert commenced at seven, in which the king performed on the flute as well as the best musician. The pieces of music executed were also often of the king's composition. On the days of public ceremonies he exhibited great magnificence. It was a fine spectacle to see him at table, surrounded by twenty princes of the empire, served on the most beautiful gold plate in Europe, and attended by thirty handsome pages, and as many young heyducs, superbly dressed, and carrying great dishes of massive gold. After these banquets the court attended the opera in the great theatre, three hundred feet long. The most admirable singers and the best dancers were at this time in the pay of the King of Prussia."

Voltaire seems to have formed a very different estimate of his own diplomatic abilities from those expressed by the King of Prussia. Voltaire writes:

"In the midst of fêtes, operas, and suppers, my secret negotiation advanced. The king allowed me to speak to him on all subjects. I often intermingled questions respecting France and Austria in conversations relating to the Æneid and Livy. The discussion was sometimes very animated. At length the king said to me, 'Let France declare war against England, and I will march.' This was all I desired. I returned as quickly as possible to the court of France. I gave them the same hopes which I had myself been led to entertain at Berlin, and which did not prove delusive."

The fact was, that the diplomacy of Voltaire had probably not the slightest influence in guiding the action of the king. Frederick had become alarmed in view of the signal successes of the armies of Maria Theresa, under her brother-in-law, Prince Charles of Lorraine. Several Austrian generals, conspicuous among whom was Marshal Traun, were developing great military ability. The armies of Austria had conquered Bohemia and Bavaria. The French troops, discomfited in many battles, had been compelled to retreat to the western banks of the Rhine, vigorously pursued by Prince Charles. The impotent emperor Charles Albert, upon whom France had placed the imperial crown of Germany, was driven from his hereditary realm, and the heart-broken man, in poverty and powerlessness, was an emperor but in name. It was evident that Maria Theresa was gathering her strength to reconquer Silesia. She had issued a decree that the Elector of Bavaria was not legitimately chosen emperor. It was very manifest that her rapidly increasing influence would soon enable her to dethrone the unfortunate Charles Albert, and to place the imperial crown upon the brow of her husband.

Under these circumstances, it was evidently impossible for Frederick to retain Silesia unless he could again rally France and other powers to his aid. It was always easy to rouse France against England, its hereditary foe. Thus influenced, Frederick, early in the spring of 1744, entered into a new alliance with France and the Emperor Charles Albert against Maria Theresa. The two marriages which he had so adroitly consummated constrained Russia and Sweden to neutrality. While France, by the new treaty, was engaged to assail with the utmost energy, under the leadership of Louis XV. himself, the

triumphant Austrian columns upon the Rhine, Frederick, at the head of one hundred thousand troops, was to drive the Austrians out of Bohemia, and reseat Charles Albert upon his hereditary throne. For this service Frederick was to receive from the Bohemian king three important principalities, with their central fortresses near upon the borders of Silesia.

The shrewd foresight of Frederick, and his rapidly developing military ability, had kept his army in the highest state of discipline, while his magazines were abundantly stored with all needful supplies. It was written at the time:

"Some countries take six months, some twelve, to get in motion for war. But in three weeks Prussia can be across the frontiers and upon the throats of its enemy. Some countries have a longer sword than Prussia, but none can unsheath it so soon."

Public opinion was then much less potent than now; still it was a power. Frederick had two objects in view in again drawing the sword. One was to maintain possession of Silesia, which was seriously menaced; the other was to enlarge his territory, and thus to strengthen his hold upon his new conquest, by adding to Prussia the three important Bohemian principalities of Königgratz, Bunzlau, and Leitmeritz. By a secret treaty, he had secured the surrender of these provinces in payment for the assistance his armies might furnish the allies; but policy required that he should not avow his real motives. He therefore issued a manifesto, in which he falsely stated,

"His Prussian majesty requires nothing for himself. He has taken up arms simply and solely with the view of restoring to the empire its freedom, to

the emperor his imperial crown, and to all Europe the peace which is so desirable."

Frederick published his manifesto on the 10th of August, 1744. Early in the morning of the 15th he set out from Potsdam upon this new military expedition. His two eldest brothers, Augustus William, Prince of Prussia, and Prince Henry, accompanied him. The army entered Bohemia in three columns, whose concentrated force amounted to nearly one hundred thousand men. Frederick in person led the first column, the old Prince Leopold the second, and Marshal Schwerin the third. Marching by different routes, they swept all opposition before them. On the 4th of September the combined army appeared before the walls of Prague. Here, as in every act of Frederick's life, his marvelous energy was conspicuous.

The works were pushed with the utmost vigor. On the 8th the siege cannon arrived; late in the night of Wednesday, the 9th, they were in position. Immediately they opened their rapid, well-aimed, deadly fire of solid shot and shell from three quarters —the north, the west, and the east. Frederick, watching the bombardment from an eminence, was much exposed to the return fire of the Austrians. He called upon others to take care of themselves, but seemed regardless of his own personal safety. His cousin, Prince William, and a page, were both struck down at his side by a cannon-ball.

On the 16th the battered, smouldering, blood-stained city was surrendered, with its garrison of sixteen thousand men. The prisoners of war were marched off to Frederick's strong places in the north. Prague was compelled to take the oath of allegiance to the emperor, and to pay a ransom of a million of

dollars. Abundant stores of provision and ammunition were found in the city. It was a brilliant opening of the campaign.

The impetuous Frederick made no delay at Prague. The day after the capture, leaving five thousand men, under General Einsiedel, to garrison the city, he put his troops in motion, ascending the right bank of the Moldau. It would seem that he was about to march boldly upon Vienna. Wagons of meal, drawn by oxen, followed the army. The heavy artillery was left behind. The troops were forced along as rapidly as possible. They advanced in two columns. One was led by Frederick, and the other by young Leopold. The country through which they passed was dreary, desolate, barren in the extreme—a wild waste of precipitous rocks, and bogs, and tangled forest. The roads were wretched. No forage could be obtained. The starved oxen were continually dropping, exhausted, by the way; the path of the army was marked by their carcasses.

It was but sixty miles from Prague to Tabor. The march of Frederick's division led through Kunraditz, across the Sazawa River, through Bistritz and Miltchin. It was not until the ninth day of their toilsome march that the steeples of Tabor were descried, in the distant horizon, on its high, scarped rock. Here both columns united. Half of the draught cattle had perished by the way, and half of the wagons had been abandoned.





THE PANDOURS.

The prospects of Frederick were now gloomy. The bright morning of the campaign had darkened into a stormy day. The barren region around afforded no supplies. The inhabitants were all Catholics; they hated the heretics. Inspired by their priests, they fled from their dwellings, taking with them or destroying every thing which could aid the Prussian army. But most annoying of all, the bold, sagacious chieftain, General Bathyani, with hordes of Pandours which could not be counted—horsemen who seemed to have the vitality and endurance of centaurs—was making deadly assaults upon every exposed point.

“Such a swarm of hornets as darkens the very

daylight!" writes Carlyle. "Vain to scourge them down, to burn them off by blaze of gunpowder; they fly fast, but are straightway back again. They lurk in these bushy wildernesses, scraggy woods; no foraging possible unless whole regiments are sent out to do it; you can not get a letter safely carried for them."

Thus Frederick found himself in a barren, hostile country, with a starving army, incessantly assailed by a determined foe, groping his way in absolute darkness, and with the greatest difficulty communicating even with his own divisions, at the distance of but a few leagues. He knew not from what direction to anticipate attack, or how formidable might be his assailants. He knew not whether the French, on the other side of the Rhine, had abandoned him to his own resources, or were marching to his rescue. He knew that they were as supremely devoted to their own interests as he was to his, and that they would do nothing to aid him, unless by so doing they could efficiently benefit themselves.

As is usual under such circumstances, a quarrel arose among his officers. Young Leopold proposed one plan, Marshal Schwerin another. They were both bold, determined men. Frederick found it difficult to keep the peace between them. It was now October. Winter, with its piercing gales, and ice, and snow, was fast approaching. It was necessary to seek winter quarters. Frederick, with the main body of his army, took possession of Budweis, on the Upper Moldau. A detachment was stationed at Neuhaus, about thirty miles northeast of Budweis.

It will be remembered that Prince Charles was at the head of a strong Austrian army, on the western

banks of the Rhine. It numbered over fifty thousand combatants. The King of France had pledged himself to press them closely, so that they could not recross the Rhine and rush into Bohemia to thwart the operations of Frederick; but, unfortunately, Louis XV. was seized with a malignant fever, which brought him near to the grave. Taking advantage of this, Prince Charles, on the night of the 23d of August, crossed the Rhine with his whole army. It was bright moonlight, so that every movement was as visible as if it had been made by day. But the French officers, glad thus to be rid of the Austrian army, preferring much that Frederick should encounter it in Bohemia than that they should struggle against it on the Rhine, went quietly to their beds, even forbidding the more zealous subalterns from harassing Prince Charles in his passage of the river. It was then the great object of the French to take Freyburg. The withdrawal of Prince Charles, with his fifty thousand men, was a great relief to them.

While Frederick was involved in all these difficulties, he was cheered by the hope that the French would soon come to his rescue. Unutterable was his chagrin when he learned, early in October, that the French had done exactly as he would have done in their circumstances. Appalling, indeed, were the tidings soon brought to him, that Prince Charles, with his army, had marched unmolested into Bohemia; that he had already effected a junction with General Bathyani and his countless swarm of Pandours; and, moreover, that a Saxon army, twenty thousand strong, in alliance with the Queen of Hungary, was on the way to join his already overwhelming foes. It was reported, at the same time, that Prince Charles was advancing upon Budweis, and that his advance-guard had been seen,

but a few miles off, on the western side of the Moldau.

The exigency demanded the most decisive action. Frederick promptly gathered his army, and dashed across the Moldau, resolved, with the energies of despair, to smite down the troops of Prince Charles; but no foe could be found. For four days he sought for them in vain. He then learned that the Austrian army had crossed the Moldau several miles north of him, thus cutting off his communications with Prague.

Though Prince Charles was nominally commander-in-chief of the Austrian forces, Marshal Traun, as we have mentioned, was its military head. He was, at that time, far Frederick's superior in the art of war. Frederick had sufficient intelligence and candor to recognize that superiority. When he heard of this adroit movement of his foes, he exclaimed, "Old Traun understands his trade."

Prince Charles was now forming magazines at Beneschau, just south of the Sazawa River, about seventy miles north of Frederick's encampment at Budweis. Frederick hastily recrossed the Moldau, and, marching through Bechin, concentrated nearly all his forces at Tabor. He hoped by forced marches to take the Austrians by surprise, and capture their magazines at Beneschau. Thousands, rumor said fourteen thousand, of the wild Pandours, riding furiously, hovered around his line of march. They were in his front, on his rear, and upon his flanks. Ever refusing battle, they attacked every exposed point with the utmost ferocity. The Prussian king thus found himself cut off from Prague, with exhausted magazines, and forage impossible. He had three hundred sick in his hospitals. He could not

think of abandoning them, and yet he had no means for their transportation.

The salvation of the army seemed to depend upon capturing the Austrian magazines at Beneschau. Marshal Schwerin was sent forward with all speed, at the head of a strong detachment, and was so lucky as to take Beneschau. Here he intrenched himself. Frederick, upon hearing the glad tidings, immediately started from Tabor to join him. His sick were at Fraunberg, Budweis, and Neuhaus, some dozen miles south of Tabor. Garrisons, amounting to three thousand men, had been left to protect them from the Pandours. As Frederick was about to abandon that whole region, it was manifest that these garrisons could not maintain themselves. He dispatched eight messengers in succession to summon the troops immediately to join him. The sick were to be left to their fate. It was one of the cruel necessities of war. But not one of these messengers escaped capture by the Pandours. Frederick commenced his march without these garrisons. The three thousand fighting men, with the three hundred sick, all fell into the hands of the Pandours.

CHAPTER XX.

THE RETREAT.

The Retreat ordered.—Awful Suffering.—Narrow Escape of the King.—The Flight from Prague.—Military Mistakes of the King.—Frederick returns to Berlin.—His wonderful administrative Ability.—Poland joins Austria.—The Austrians enter Silesia.—Unreasonable Demands of Frederick.—Humiliation of the King.—Prince Charles and his Bride.—Character of Leopold.—Death of the Emperor.—Bavaria turns against Frederick.—Anecdotes of Prince Leopold.—Peril of Frederick.—Battle of Hohenfriedberg.—Signal Victory of Frederick.

FREDERICK concentrated his army at Konopischt, very near Beneschau. He could bring into the field sixty thousand men. Prince Charles was at the head of seventy thousand. In vain the Prussian king strove to bring his foes to a pitched battle. Adroitly Prince Charles avoided any decisive engagement. Frederick was fifty miles from Prague. The roads were quagmires. November gales swept his camp. A foe, superior in numbers, equal in bravery, surrounded him on all sides. The hostile army was led by a general whose greater military ability Frederick acknowledged.

A council of war was held. It was decided to commence an immediate and rapid retreat to Silesia.

Prague, with its garrison of five thousand men, and its siege artillery, was to be abandoned to its fate. Word was sent to General Einsiedel to spike his guns, blow up his bastions, throw his ammunition into the river, and to escape, if possible, down the valley of the Moldau, to Leitmeritz.

Frederick divided his retreating army into two columns. One, led by the young Leopold, was to retire through Glatz. The other, led by Frederick, traversed a road a few leagues to the west, passing through Königgratz. It was an awful retreat for both these divisions—through snow, and sleet, and mud, hungry, weary, freezing, with swarms of Pandours hanging upon their rear. Thousands perished by the way. The horrors of such a retreat no pen can describe. Their very guides deserted them, and became spies, to report their movements to the foe.

On one occasion the king himself narrowly escaped being taken prisoner. One of his officers, General Trenck, gives the following graphic narrative of the incident:

“One day the king entered the town of Collin, with his horse and foot guard and the whole of the baggage. We had but four small field-pieces with us. The squadron to which I belonged was placed in the suburb. In the evening our advanced posts were driven back into the town, and the huzzas of the enemy followed them pell-mell. All the country around was covered with the light troops of the Austrians. My commandant sent me to the king to take his orders.

“After a long search, I at length found him in a tower of a church, with a telescope in his hand. Never had I seen him in so much perplexity and anxiety as at this moment. The order he gave me

was, ‘You must get out of this scrape as well as you can.’ I had hardly got back to my post when his adjutant followed me with a new order to cross the town, and to remain on horseback with my squadron in the opposite suburb.



THE KING IN THE TOWER AT COLLIN.

“We had just arrived there when it began to rain heavily, and the night became exceedingly dark. About nine o’clock one of the Austrian generals approached us with his light troops, and set fire to the houses close to which we were posted. By the blaze of the conflagration he soon discovered us, and began firing at us from the windows. The town was

so full that it was impossible for us to find a place in it. Besides, the gate was barricaded, and from the top they were firing at us with our small field-pieces, which they had captured.

"In the mean time the Austrians had turned in upon us a rivulet, and by midnight we found our horses in the water up to their bellies. We were really incapable of defending ourselves."

Just at that time, when all hope seemed lost, it so happened that a cannon-ball crushed the foot of the Austrian commander. This disaster, together with the darkness and the torrents of rain, caused the fire of the enemy to cease. The next morning some Prussian re-enforcements came to the rescue of the king, and he escaped.

It was on the night of the 25th of November, cold and dreary, that General Einsiedel commenced his retreat from Prague. He pushed his wagon trains out before him, and followed with his horse and foot. The Austrians were on the alert. Their light horsemen came clattering into the city ere the rear-guard had left. The Catholic populace of the city, being in sympathy with the Austrians, immediately joined the Pandours in a fierce attack upon the Prussians. The retreating columns were torn by a terrific fire from the windows of the houses, from bridges, from boats, from every point whence a bullet could reach them. But the well-drilled Prussians met the shock with the stern composure of machines, leaving their path strewn with the dying and the dead.

The heroic General Einsiedel struggled along through the snow and over the pathless hills, pursued and pelted every hour by the indomitable foe. He was often compelled to abandon baggage-

wagons and ambulances containing the sick, while the wounded and the exhausted sank freezing by the way. At one time he was so crowded by the enemy that he was compelled to continue his march through the long hours of a wintry night, by the light of pitch-pine torches. After this awful retreat of twenty days, an emaciate, ragged, frostbitten band crossed the frontier into Silesia, near Friedland. They were soon united with the other columns of the discomfited and almost ruined army.

It will generally be admitted by military men that Frederick did not display much ability of generalship in this campaign. He was fearless, indomitable in energy, and tireless in the endurance of fatigue, but in generalship he was entirely eclipsed by his formidable rival. Indeed, Frederick could not be blind to this, and he had sufficient candor to confess it. Subsequently, giving an account of these transactions in his "Works," he writes:

"No general has committed more faults than did the king in this campaign. The conduct of Marshal Traun is a model of perfection, which every soldier who loves his business ought to study, and try to imitate if he have the talent. The king has admitted that he himself regarded this campaign as his school in the art of war, and Marshal Traun as his teacher."

He then adds the philosophical reflection: "Bad is often better for princes than good. Instead of intoxicating them with presumption, it renders them circumspect and modest."[76]

Frederick, leaving his army safe for a short time, quartered, as he supposed, for the winter, in his strong fortresses of Silesia, returned hastily to Berlin. It was necessary for him to make immediate preparation for another campaign. "From December

13, 1744," writes Carlyle, "when he hastened home to Berlin, under such aspects, to June 4, 1745, when aspects suddenly changed, are probably the worst six months Frederick had yet had in the world."[77]

His wintry ride, a defeated monarch leaving a shattered army behind him, must have been dark and dreary. He had already exhausted nearly all the resources which his father, Frederick William, had accumulated. His army was demoralized, weakened, and his *materiel* of war greatly impaired. His subjects were already heavily taxed. Though practicing the most rigid economy, with his eye upon every expenditure, his disastrous Bohemian campaign had cost him three hundred and fifty thousand dollars a month. The least sum with which he could commence a new campaign for the protection of Silesia was four million five hundred thousand dollars. He had already melted up the sumptuous plate, and the massive silver balustrades and balconies where his father had deposited so much solid treasure.

"It was in these hours of apparently insurmountable difficulty that the marvelous administrative genius of Frederick was displayed. No modern reader can imagine the difficulties of Frederick at this time as they already lay disclosed, and kept gradually disclosing themselves, for months coming; nor will ever know what perspicacity, what patience of scanning, sharpness of discernment, dexterity of management, were required at Frederick's hands; and under what imminency of peril too—victorious deliverance or ruin and annihilation, wavering fearfully in the balance, for him more than once, or rather all along."[78]

To add to the embarrassments of Frederick, the

King of Poland, entirely under the control of his minister Brühl, who hated Frederick, entered into an alliance with Maria Theresa, and engaged to furnish her with thirty thousand troops, who were to be supported by the sea powers England and Holland, who were also in close alliance with Austria.

Maria Theresa, greatly elated by her success in driving the Prussians out of Bohemia, resolved immediately, notwithstanding the severity of the season, to push her armies through the "Giant Mountains" for the reconquering of Silesia. She ordered her generals to press on with the utmost energy and overrun the whole country. At the same time she issued a manifesto, declaring that the treaty of Breslau was a treaty no longer; that the Silesians were absolved from all oaths of allegiance to the King of Prussia, and that they were to hold themselves in readiness to take the oath anew to the Queen of Hungary.

On the 18th of December a strong Austrian army entered Silesia and took possession of the country of Glatz. The Prussian troops were withdrawn in good order to their strong fortresses on the Oder. The old Prince Leopold, the cast-iron man, called the Old Dessauer, the most inflexible of mortals, was left in command of the Prussian troops. He was, however, quite seriously alienated from Frederick. A veteran soldier, having spent his lifetime on fields of blood, and having served the monarchs of Prussia when Frederick was but a child, and who had been the military instructor of the young prince, he deemed himself entitled to consideration which an inexperienced officer might not command. In one of the marches to which we have referred, Leopold ventured to take a route different from that which

Frederick had prescribed to him. In the following terms the Prussian king reprimanded him for his disobedience:

"I am greatly surprised that your excellency does not more accurately follow my orders. If you were more skillful than Cæsar, and did not with strict fidelity obey my directions, all else were of no help to me. I hope this notice, once for all, will be enough, and that in future you will give no cause for complaint."

Prince Leopold was keenly wounded by this reproof. Though he uttered not a word in self-defense, he was ever after, in the presence of his majesty, very silent, distant, and reserved. Though scrupulously faithful in every duty, he compelled the king to feel that an impassable wall of separation had risen up between them. He was seeking for an honorable pretext to withdraw from his majesty's service.

Frederick had hardly reached Berlin ere he was astonished to learn, from dispatches from the Old Dessauer, that the Austrians, not content with driving him out of Bohemia, had actually invaded Silesia. Amazed, or affecting amazement, at such audacity, he sent reiterated and impatient orders to his veteran general to fall immediately upon the insolent foe and crush him.

"Hurl them out," he wrote. "Gather twenty, thirty thousand men, if need be. Let there be no delay. I will as soon be pitched out of Brandenburg as out of Silesia."

But it was much easier for Frederick to issue these orders than for Leopold to execute them. As Leopold could not, in a day, gather sufficient force to

warrant an attack upon the Austrians, the king was greatly irritated, and allowed himself to write to Leopold in a strain of which he must afterward have been much ashamed. On the 19th he addressed a note to the veteran officer couched in the following terms:

"On the 21st I leave Berlin, and mean to be at Neisse on the 24th at least. Your excellency will, in the mean time, make out the order of battle for the regiments which have come in. For I will, on the 25th, without delay, cross the Neisse, and attack those people, cost what it may, and chase them out of Silesia, and follow them as far as possible. You will, therefore, take measure and provide every thing, that the project may be executed the moment I arrive."

In this fiery humor, the king leaped upon his horse and galloped to Schweidnitz. Here he met the Old Dessauer. He must have been not a little mortified to learn that his veteran general was right, and he utterly in the wrong. Prince Charles had returned home. Marshal Traun was in command of the Austrians. He had a compact army of 20,000 men, flushed with victory and surrounded by countless thousands of Pandours, who veiled every movement from view. He had established himself in an impregnable position on the south side of the Neisse, where he could not be assailed, with any prospect of success, by the force which Leopold could then summon to his aid.

Frederick was silenced, humiliated. He returned to Berlin, having accomplished nothing, and having lost four days in his fruitless adventure. Leopold was left to accumulate his resources as rapidly as he could, and to attack the Austrians at his discretion.

Prince Charles had married the only sister of Maria Theresa. She was young, beautiful, and amiable. While the prince was conducting his arduous campaign on the Moldau, his wife, grief-stricken, consigned her new-born babe to the tomb. The little stranger, born in the absence of his father, had but opened his eyes upon this sad world when he closed them forever. The princess sank rapidly into a decline.

Charles, feeling keenly the bereavement, and alarmed for the health of his wife, whom he loved most tenderly, hastened to his home in Brussels. The prince and princess were vice-regents, or "joint governors" of the Netherlands. The decline of the princess was very rapid. On the 16th of December, the young prince, with flooded eyes, a broken-hearted man, followed the remains of his beloved companion to their burial. Charles never recovered from the blow. He had been the happiest of husbands. He sank into a state of deep despondency, and could never be induced to wed again. Though in April he resumed, for a time, the command of the army, his energies were wilted, his spirit saddened, and he soon passed into oblivion. This is but one among the countless millions of the unwritten tragedies of human life.

On the 9th of January, Leopold, having gathered a well-furnished army of 25,000 men, crossed the Neisse to attack Marshal Traun. The marshal did not deem it prudent to hazard a battle. Large bodies of troops were soon to be sent to re-enforce him. He therefore retired by night toward the south, breaking the bridges behind him. Though Silesia was thus delivered from the main body of the Austrian army, the fleet-footed Pandours remained, scouring the

country on their shaggy horses, plundering and destroying. The energetic, tireless Old Dessauer could seldom get a shot at them. But they harassed his army, keeping the troops constantly on the march amidst the storms and the freezing cold.

"The old serene highness himself, face the color of gunpowder, and bluer in the winter frost, went rushing far and wide in an open vehicle which he called his 'cart,' pushing out his detachments; supervising every thing; wheeling hither and thither as needful; sweeping out the Pandour world, and keeping it out; not much fighting needed, but 'a great deal of marching,' murmurs Frederick, 'which in winter is as bad, and wears down the force of battalions.'"[79]



PRINCE LEOPOLD INSPECTING THE ARMY IN HIS "CART."

We seldom hear from Frederick any recognition

of God. But on this occasion, perhaps out of regard to the feelings of his subjects, he ordered the *Te Deum* to be sung in the churches of Berlin "for the deliverance of Silesia from invasion."

On the 20th of January, 1745, Charles Albert, the unhappy and ever-unfortunate Emperor of Germany, died at Munich, in the forty-eighth year of his age. Tortured by a complication of the most painful disorders, he had seldom, for weary years, enjoyed an hour of freedom from acute pain. An incessant series of disasters crushed all his hopes. He was inextricably involved in debt. Triumphant foes drove him from his realms. He wandered a fugitive in foreign courts, exposed to humiliation and the most cutting indignities. Thus the victim of bodily and mental anguish, it is said that one day some new tidings of disaster prostrated him upon the bed of death. He was patient and mild, but the saddest of mortals. Gladly he sought refuge in the tomb from the storms of his drear and joyless life. An eye-witness writes, "Charles Albert's pious and affectionate demeanor drew tears from all eyes. The manner in which he took leave of his empress would have melted a heart of stone."

"The death of the emperor," says Frederick, "was the only event wanting to complete the confusion and embroilment which already existed in the political relations of the European powers."

Maximilian Joseph, son of the emperor, was at the time of his father's death but seventeen years of age. He was titular Elector of Bavaria; but Austrian armies had overrun the electorate, and he was a fugitive from his dominions. At the entreaty of his mother, he entered into a treaty of alliance with the Queen of Hungary. She agreed to restore to him his

realms, and to recognize his mother as empress dowager. He, on the other hand, agreed to support the Pragmatic Sanction, and to give his vote for the Grand-duke Francis as Emperor of Germany.

Thus Bavaria turned against Frederick. It was manifest to all that Maria Theresa, aided by the alliances into which she had entered, and sustained by the gold which the English cabinet so generously lavished upon her, would be able to place the imperial crown upon her husband's brow. It was equally evident that the sceptre of power, of which that crown was the emblem, would be entirely in her own hands.

Frederick had now France only for an ally. But France was seeking her own private interests on the Rhine, as Frederick was aiming at the aggrandizement of Prussia on his Austrian frontiers. Neither party was disposed to make any sacrifice for the benefit of the other. Frederick, thus thrown mainly upon his own resources, with an impoverished treasury, and a weakened and baffled army, made indirect application to both England and Austria for peace. But both of these courts, flushed with success, were indisposed to listen to any terms which Frederick would propose.

There was nothing left for his Prussian majesty but to abandon Silesia, and retire within his own original borders, defeated and humiliated, the object of the contempt and ridicule of Europe, or to press forward in the conflict, summoning to his aid all the energies of despair.

Old Prince Leopold of Dessau, whom he had left in command of the army in Silesia, was one of the most extraordinary men of any age. He invented the iron ramrod, and also all modern military tactics.

"The soldiery of every civilized country still receives from this man, on the parade-fields and battle-fields, its word of command. Out of his rough head proceeded the essential of all that the innumerable drill-sergeants in various languages repeat and enforce."[80]

Dessau was a little independent principality embracing a few square miles, about eighty miles southwest of Prussia. The prince had a Liliputian army, and a revenue of about fifty thousand dollars. Leopold's mother was the sister of the great Elector of Brandenburg's first wife. The little principality was thus, by matrimonial alliance as well as location, in affinity with Prussia.

Leopold, in early youth, fell deeply in love with a beautiful young lady, Mademoiselle Fos. She was the daughter of an apothecary. His aristocratic friends were shocked at the idea of so unequal a marriage. The sturdy will of Leopold was unyielding. They sent him away, under a French tutor, to take the grand tour of Europe. After an absence of fourteen months he returned. The first thing he did was to call upon Mademoiselle Fos. After that, he called upon his widowed mother. It was in vain to resist the will of such a man. In 1698 he married her, and soon, by his splendid military services, so ennobled his bride that all were ready to do her homage. For half a century she was his loved and honored spouse, attending him in all his campaigns.

With a tender heart, Leopold was one of the most stern and rugged of men. Spending his whole life amidst the storms of battle, he seemed ever insensible to fatigue, and regardless of all physical comforts. And yet there was a vein of truly feminine gentleness and tenderness in his heart, which made

him one of the most loving of husbands and fathers.

His young daughter Louisa, bride of Victor Leopold, reigning Prince of Anhalt-Bernburg, lay dying of a decline. A few days before her death she said, “I wish I could see my father at the head of his regiment once again before I die.” The remark was reported to Leopold. He was then with his regiment at Halle, thirty miles distant. Immediately the troops were called out, and marched at rapid pace to Bernburg. With banners flying, music playing, and all customary display of military pomp, they entered the court-yard of the palace. The dying daughter, pale and emaciate, sat at the window. The war-worn father rose in his stirrups to salute his child, and then put his regiment through all its most interesting manœuvrings. The soldiers were then marched to the orphan-house, where the common men were treated with bread and beer, all the officers dining at the prince’s table. “All the officers except Leopold alone, who stole away out of the crowd, sat himself upon the Saale bridge, and wept into the river.”

Leopold was now seventy years of age. On the 5th of February his much-loved wife died at Dessau. Leopold, infirm in health, and broken with grief, entreated the king to allow him to go home. He could not, of course, be immediately spared.

On the 15th of March Frederick left Berlin for Silesia. Stopping to examine some of his works at Glogau and Breslau, he reached Neisse on the 23d. On the 29th he dismissed the Old Dessauer, with many expressions of kindness and sympathy, to go home to recover his health.

“Old Leopold is hardly at home at Dessau,” writes Carlyle, “when the new Pandour tempests, tides of ravaging war, again come beating against the

Giant Mountains, pouring through all passes, huge influx of wild riding hordes, each with some support of Austrian grenadiers, cannoniers, threatening to submerge Silesia. Precursors, Frederick need not doubt, of a strenuous, regular attempt that way. Hungarian majesty's fixed intention, hope, and determination is to expel him straightway from Silesia."[81]

The latter part of April Prince Charles had gathered a large force of Austrian regulars at Olmütz, with the manifest intention of again invading Silesia. The King of Poland had entered into cordial alliance with Austria, and was sending a large army of Saxon troops to co-operate in the enterprise. Frederick's indignation was great, and his peril still greater. Encamped in the valley of the Neisse, assailed on every side, and menaced with still more formidable foes, he dispatched orders to the Old Dessauer immediately to establish an army of observation (thirty thousand strong) upon the frontiers of Saxony. He was to be prepared instantly, upon the Saxon troops leaving Saxony, to ravage the country with the most merciless plunderings of war.

The Queen of Hungary had purchased the co-operation of the Polish king by offering to surrender to him a generous portion of Silesia after the province should have been reconquered. Indeed, there was a great cause of apprehension that the allied army would make a rush upon Berlin itself. The aspect of his Prussian majesty's affairs was now gloomy in the extreme.

Frederick wrote to his minister Podewils in Berlin, under date of Neisse, March 29, 1745, as follows: "We find ourselves in a great crisis. If we don't by mediation of England get peace, our

enemies from different sides will come plunging in against me. Peace I can not force them to. But if we must have war, we will either beat them, or none of us will ever see Berlin again."

On the 17th of April again he wrote, still from Neisse: "I toil day and night to improve our situation. The soldiers will do their duty. There is none among us who will not rather have his back-bone broken than give up one foot-breadth of ground. They must either grant us a good peace, or we will surpass ourselves by miracles of daring, and force the enemy to accept it from us."

On the 20th of April he wrote: "Our situation is disagreeable, but my determination is taken. If we needs must fight, we will do it like men driven desperate. Never was there a greater peril than that I am now in. Time, at its own pleasure, will untie this knot, or destiny, if there is one, determine the event. The game I play is so high, one can not contemplate the issue with cold blood. Pray for the return of my good luck."

The alarm in Berlin was very great. The citizens were awake to the consciousness that there was danger; that the city itself would be assaulted. Great was the consternation in the capital when minute directions came from Frederick respecting the course to be pursued in the event of such a calamity, and the places of refuge to which the royal family should retreat.

On the 26th of April Frederick again wrote to M. Podewils: "I can understand how you are getting uneasy at Berlin. I have the most to lose of you all, but I am quiet and prepared for events. If the Saxons take part in the invasion of Silesia, and we beat them, I am determined to plunge into Saxony. For

great maladies there need great remedies. Either I will maintain my all or else lose my all. To me remains only to possess myself in patience. If all alliances, resources, and negotiations fail, and all conjunctures go against me, I prefer to perish with honor rather than lead an inglorious life, deprived of all dignity. My ambition whispers me that I have done more than another to the building up of my house, and have played a distinguished part among the crowned heads of Europe. To maintain myself there has become, as it were, a personal duty, which I will fulfill at the expense of my happiness and my life. I have no choice left. I will maintain my power, or it may go to ruin, and the Prussian name be buried under it. If the enemy attempt any thing upon us, we will either beat them, or will all be hewed to pieces for the sake of our country and the renown of Brandenburg. No other counsel can I listen to. Perform faithfully the given work on your side, as I on mine. For the rest, let what you call Providence decide as it likes. I prepare myself for every event. Fortune may be kind or be unkind, it shall neither dishearten me nor uplift me. If I am to perish, let it be with honor, and sword in hand."

Frederick was, with great energy, gathering all his resources for a decisive conflict in his fortresses along the banks of the Neisse. By almost superhuman exertions he had collected an army there of about seventy thousand men. The united army of Austria and Saxony marching upon him amounted to one hundred thousand regulars, together with uncounted swarms of Pandours sweeping around him in all directions, interrupting his communications and cutting off his supplies.

The mountain range upon the south, which

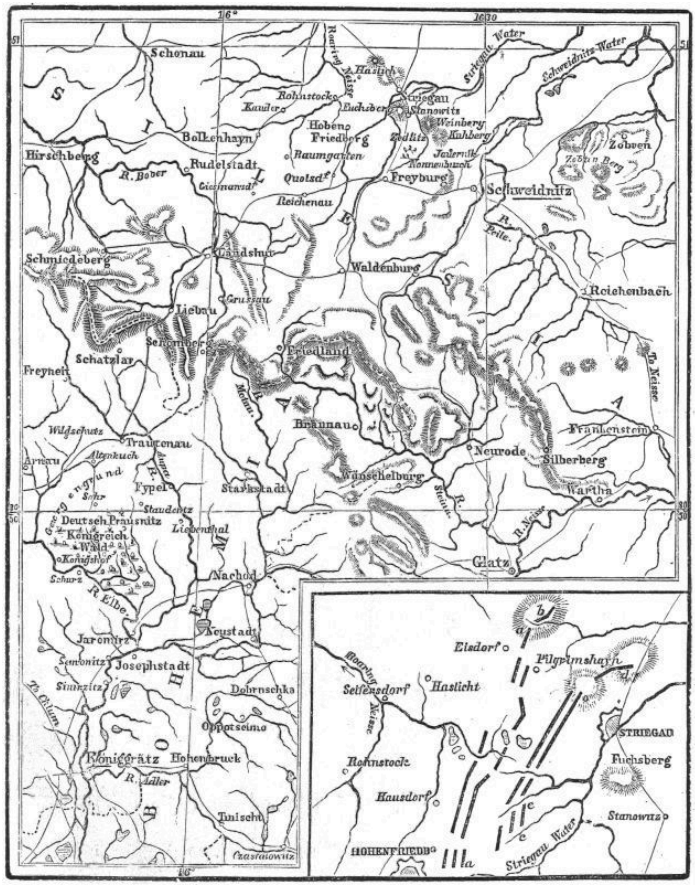
separated Silesia from the realms of the Queen of Hungary, was three or four hundred miles long, with some twenty defiles practicable for the passage of troops. The French minister Valori urged Frederick to guard these passes. This was impossible; and the self-confidence of the Prussian king is revealed in his reply: “My friend, if you wish to catch the mouse, you must not shut the trap, but leave it open.”

The latter part of May, Frederick, in his head-quarters at Frankenstein, learned that an Austrian army under Prince Charles, and a Saxon army under the Duke of Weissenfels, in columns, by strict count seventy-five thousand strong, had defiled through the passes of the Giant Mountains, and entered Silesia near Landshut. Day after day he ascended an eminence, and, with his glass, anxiously scanned the horizon, to detect signs of the approach of the foe. On Thursday morning, June 3, an immense cloud of dust in the distance indicated that the decisive hour was at hand.

As this magnificent army entered upon the smooth and beautiful fields of Southern Silesia they shook out their banners, and with peals of music gave expression to their confidence of victory. The Austrian officers pitched their tents on a hill near Hohenfriedberg, where they feasted and drank their wine, while, during the long and beautiful June afternoon, they watched the onward sweep of their glittering host. “The Austrian and Saxon army,” writes an eye-witness, “streamed out all the afternoon, each regiment or division taking the place appointed it; all the afternoon, till late in the night, submerging the country as in a deluge.”

Far away in the east the Austrian officers discerned a Prussian column of observation,

consisting of about twelve thousand horse and foot, wending along from hollow to height, their polished weapons flashing back the rays of the afternoon sun. Frederick, carefully examining the ground, immediately made arrangements to bring forward his troops under curtain of the night for a decisive battle. His orderlies were silently dispatched in all directions. At eight o'clock the whole army was in motion. His troops were so concentrated that the farthest divisions had a march of only nine miles. Silently, not a word being spoken, not a pipe being lighted, and all the baggage being left behind, they crossed the bridge of the Striegau River, and, deploying to the right and the left, took position in front of the slumbering allied troops.



BATTLE OF HOHENFRIEDBERG, JUNE 4, 1745.

a a. Austrian Army. b. Prince Weissenfels. c c. Prussian Army. d. Dumoulin. e. Gesler's Dragoons.

With the first dawn of the morning, the two armies, in close contact, rushed furiously upon each other. There were seventy thousand on the one side, seventy-five thousand on the other. They faced each other in lines over an undulating plain nearly ten miles in extent. It is in vain to attempt to give the

reader an adequate idea of the terrible battle which ensued. With musketry, artillery, gleaming sabres, and rushing horsemen, the infuriate hosts dashed upon each other. For fifteen hours the blood-red surges of battle swept to and fro over the plain. At length Prince Charles, having lost nine thousand in dead and wounded, seven thousand prisoners, sixteen thousand in all, sixty-six cannon, seventy-three flags and standards, beat a retreat. Rapidly his bleeding and exhausted troops marched back through Hohenfriedberg, entered the mountain defiles, and sought refuge, a thoroughly beaten army, among the fortresses of Bohemia. Frederick remained the undisputed victor of the field. Five thousand of his brave soldiers lay dead or wounded upon the plain. Even his stoical heart was moved by the greatness of the victory. As he first caught sight of M. Valori after the battle, he threw his arms around him, exclaiming, “My friend, God has helped me wonderfully this day.”

“There was, after all,” says Valori, “at times a kind of devout feeling in this prince, who possessed such a combination of qualities, good and bad, that I know not which preponderates.”

The Prussian army was so exhausted by its midnight march and its long day of battle that his majesty did not deem it wise to attempt to pursue the retreating foe. For this he has been severely, we think unjustly, censured by some military men. He immediately, that evening, wrote to his mother, saying, “So decisive a defeat has not been since Blenheim,” and assuring her that the two princes, her sons, who had accompanied him to the battle, were safe. Such was the battle of Hohenfriedberg, once of world-wide renown, now almost forgotten.

CHAPTER XXI.

BATTLES AND VICTORIES.

Battle of Hohenfriedberg.—Religious Antagonism.—Anecdote of the King.—Retreat of the Austrians.—Horrors of War.—"A slight Pleasantry."—Sufferings of the Prussian Army.—The Victory of Fontenoy.—Frederick's Pecuniary Embarrassments.—Executive Abilities of Maria Theresa.—Inflexibility of the Austrian Queen.—The Retreat to Silesia.—The Surprise at Sohr.—Military Genius of Frederick.—Great Victory of Sohr.

THE decisive battle of Hohenfriedberg, by which victory Frederick probably escaped utter destruction, was fought on the 4th of June, 1745. From early dawn to the evening twilight of the long summer's day the dreadful work of slaughter had continued without a moment's intermission. As the Austrians, having lost nearly one fourth of their number, retreated, the Prussians, in utter exhaustion, threw themselves upon the ground for sleep. The field around them was covered with fourteen thousand of the wounded, the dying, and the dead.

Early the next morning Frederick commenced the vigorous pursuit of the retiring foe. A storm arose. For twelve hours the rain fell in torrents. But the Prussian army was impelled onward, through the mud, and through the swollen streams, inspired by

the almost supernatural energy which glowed in the bosom of its king. It seemed as if no hardships, sufferings, or perils could induce those iron men, who by discipline had been converted into mere machines, to wander from the ranks or to falter on the way. As we have mentioned, there were throughout all this region two religious parties, the Catholics and the Protestants. They were strongly antagonistic to each other. Under the Austrian sway, the Catholics, having the support of the government, had enjoyed unquestioned supremacy. They had often very cruelly persecuted the Protestants, robbing them of their churches, and, in their zeal to defend what they deemed the orthodox faith, depriving them of their children, and placing them under the care of the Catholic priests to be educated.

"While the battle of Hohenfriedberg was raging," writes an eye-witness, "as far as the cannon was heard all around, the Protestants fell on their knees praying for victory for the Prussians." Indescribable was the exultation when the bugle peals of the Prussian trumpeters announced to them a Protestant victory. When Frederick approached, in his pursuit, the important town of Landshut, the following incident occurred, as described by the pen of his Prussian majesty:

"Upon reaching the neighborhood of Landshut, the king was surrounded by a troop of two thousand Protestant peasants. They begged permission of him to massacre the Catholics of those parts, and clear the country of them altogether. This animosity arose from the persecutions which the Protestants had suffered during the Austrian domination.

"The king was very far from granting so barbarous a permission. He told them they ought

rather to conform to the precepts of Scripture, and to ‘bless those that curse them, and pray for those that despitefully use them.’ Such, the king assured them, was the way to gain the kingdom of heaven. The peasants, after a little reflection, declared that his majesty was right, and desisted from their cruel intention.”[82]

For several weeks the Austrians slowly and sullenly retired. Their retreat was conducted in two immense columns, by parallel roads at some distance from each other. Their wings of foragers and skirmishers were widely extended, so that the hungry army swept with desolation a breadth of country reaching out many leagues. Though the Austrian army was traversing the friendly territory of Bohemia, still Prince Charles was anxious to leave behind him no resources for Frederick to glean. Frederick, with his army, pressed along, following the wide-spread trail of his foes. The Austrians, with great skill, selected every commanding position on which to erect their batteries, and hurl back a storm of shot and shell into the bosoms of their pursuers. But Frederick allowed them no rest by day or by night. His solid columns so unremittingly and so impetuously pressed with shot, bullets, bayonet, and sabre-blows upon the rear ranks of the foe that there was almost an incessant battle, continuing for several weeks, crimsoning a path thirty miles wide and more than a hundred miles in length with the blood of the wounded and the slain.



THE RETREAT OF THE AUSTRIANS.

The region through which this retreat and pursuit were conducted was much of the way along the southern slope of the Giant Mountains. It was a wild country of precipitous rocks, quagmires, and gloomy forests. At length Prince Charles, with his defeated and dispirited army, took refuge at Königsgraft, a compact town between the Elbe and the Adler, protected by one stream on the west, and by the other on the south. Here, in an impregnable position, he intrenched his troops. Frederick, finding them unassailable, encamped his forces in a position almost equally impregnable, a few miles west of the Elbe, in the vicinity of a little village called Chlum. Thus the two hostile armies, almost within sound of

each other's bugles, defiantly stood in battle array, each watching an opportunity to strike a blow.

"War is cruelty," said General Sherman; "and you can not refine it." "No man of refined Christian sensibilities," said the Duke of Wellington, "should undertake the profession of a soldier." The exigencies of war often require things to be done from which humanity revolts. "War," said Napoleon I., "is the science of barbarians." One of the principal objects of Frederick in this pursuit of the Austrians through Bohemia was to lay waste the country so utterly, destroying its roads and consuming its provisions, that no Austrian army could again pass through it for the invasion of Silesia. Who can imagine the amount of woe thus inflicted upon the innocent peasants of Bohemia? Both armies were reduced to the necessity of living mainly upon the resources of the country in which they were encamped. Their foraging parties were scattered in all directions. There were frequent attacks of outposts and bloody skirmishes, in which many were slain and many were crippled for life. Each death, each wound, sent tears, and often life-long woe, to some humble cottage.

There are sometimes great and glorious objects to be attained—objects which elevate and ennoble a nation or a race—which warrant the expenditure of almost any amount of temporary suffering. It is not the duty of the millions to suffer the proud and haughty hundreds to consign them to ignorance and trample them in the dust. In this wicked world, where kings and nobles have ever been so ready to doom the masses of the people to ignorance, servitude, and want, human rights have almost never made any advances but through the energies of the sword. Many illustrious generals, who, with

saddened hearts, have led their armies over fields of blood, have been among the most devoted friends and ornaments of humanity. Their names have been enshrined in the affections of grateful millions.

But this war, into which the Prussian king had so recklessly plunged all Europe, was purely a war of personal ambition. Even Frederick did not pretend that it involved any question of human rights. Unblushingly he avowed that he drew his sword and led his hundred thousand peasant-boys upon their dreadful career of carnage and misery simply that he might enlarge his territories, gain renown as a conqueror, and make the world talk about him. It must be a fearful thing to go to the judgment seat of Christ with such a crime weighing upon the soul.

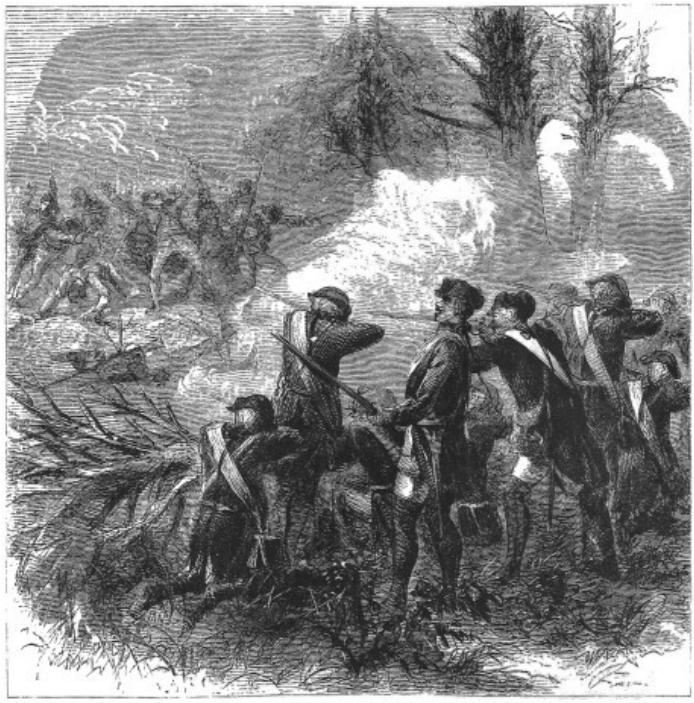
War has its jokes and merriment, but the comedies of war are often more dreadful than the tragedies of peace. Frederick, in his works, records the following incident, which he narrates as "slight pleasantry, to relieve the reader's mind:"[83]

The Prussians had a detached post at Smirzitz. The little garrison there was much harassed by lurking bands of Austrians, who shot their sentries, cut off their supplies, and rendered it almost certain death to any one who ventured to emerge from the ramparts. Some inventive genius among the Prussians constructed a straw man, very like life, representing a sentinel with his shouldered musket. By a series of ropes this effigy was made to move from right to left, as if walking his beat. A well-armed band of Prussians then hid in a thicket near by.

Ere long a company of Austrian scouts approached. From a distance they eyed the sentinel, moving to and fro as he guarded his post. A sharp-

shooter crept near, and, taking deliberate aim at his supposed victim, fired. A twitch upon the rope caused the image to fall flat. The whole band of Austrians, with a shout, rushed to the spot. The Prussians, from their ambuscade, opened upon them a deadly fire of bullets. Then, as the ground was covered with the mutilated and the dead, the Prussians, causing the welkin to ring with their peals of laughter, rushed with fixed bayonets upon their entrapped foes. Not a single Austrian had escaped being struck by a bullet. Those who were not killed outright were wounded, and were taken captive. This is one of the “slight pleasantries” of war.

Frederick’s army was now in a state of great destitution. The region around was so stripped of its resources that it could afford his foragers no more supplies. It was difficult for him to fill his baggage-trains even in Silesia, so much had that country been devastated by war; and wherever any of his supply wagons appeared, swarms of Austrian dragoons hovered around, attacking and destroying them. To add to the embarrassments of the Prussian king, his purse was empty. His subjects could endure no heavier taxation. All the plate which Frederick William had accumulated had been converted into coin and expended. Even the massive silver balustrades, which were reserved until a time of need, were melted and gone. He knew not where to look for a loan. All the nations were involved in ruinous war. All wished to borrow. None but England had money to lend; and England was fighting Frederick, and furnishing supplies for his foes.



A SLIGHT PLEASANTRY.

The expenses of the war were enormous. Frederick made a careful estimate, and found that he required at least three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars a month. He could not carry on another campaign with less than four million five hundred thousand dollars. He had been expecting that Louis XV., who in person was in command of the French army on the Rhine, would send him a re-enforcement of sixty thousand troops to enable him to crush the forces of Prince Charles. But week after week passed, and no re-enforcements came. The French, intent upon their conquest, were as selfishly pursuing their own interests on the Rhine as Frederick was pursuing his in Silesia.

The great victory of Fontenoy, gained by the French on the Rhine, caused boundless exultation throughout France. “The French,” writes Carlyle, “made immense explosions of rejoicing over this victory; Voltaire celebrating it in prose and verse to an amazing degree; the whole nation blazing out over it into illuminations, arcs of triumph, and universal three times three; in short, I think nearly the heartiest national huzza, loud, deep, long-drawn, that the nation ever gave in like case.”

But this victory on the Rhine was of no avail to Frederick in Bohemia. It did not diminish the hosts which Prince Charles was gathering against him. It did not add a soldier to his diminished columns, or supply his exhausted magazines, or replenish his empty treasury. Louis XV. was so delighted with the victory that he supposed Frederick would be in sympathy with him. He immediately dispatched a courier to the Prussian king with the glad tidings. But Frederick, disappointed, embarrassed, chagrined, instead of being gratified, was irritated by the news. He sent back the scornful reply “that a victory upon the Scamander,[84] or in the heart of China, would have been just as important to him.”

Louis XV. felt insulted by this message, and responded in a similar strain of irritation. Thus the two monarchs were alienated from each other. Indeed, Frederick had almost as much cause to be dissatisfied with the French as they had to be dissatisfied with him. Each of the monarchs was ready to sacrifice the other if any thing was to be gained thereby.

Frederick was now in such deep pecuniary embarrassment that he was compelled to humble himself so far as to apply to the King of France for

money. “If your majesty,” he wrote, “can not furnish me with any re-enforcements, you must, at least, send me funds to raise additional troops. The smallest possible sum which will enable me to maintain my position here is three million dollars.”

Louis XV. wrote a very unsatisfactory letter in reply. He stated, with many apologies, that his funds were terribly low, that he was exceedingly embarrassed, that it was impossible to send the sum required, but that he would *try* to furnish him with a hundred thousand dollars a month.

Frederick was indignant. Scornfully he rejected the proposal, saying, “Such a paltry sum might with propriety, perhaps, be offered to a petty duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, but it is not suitable to make such a proposition to the King of Prussia.”

Poor Valori, the French embassador, was placed in a very embarrassing situation. The anger of the Prussian king vented itself upon him. He was in complete disgrace. It was his duty daily to wait upon Frederick. But the king would seldom speak to him, or even look upon him; and if he did favor him with a glance, it was with an expression of scorn.

Frederick was rapidly awaking to the consciousness that Maria Theresa, whom he had despised as a woman, and a young wife and mother, and whose territory he thought he could dismember with impunity, was fully his equal, not only in ability to raise and direct armies, but also in diplomatic intrigue. About the middle of August he perceived from his camp in Chlum that Prince Charles was receiving large re-enforcements from the south. At the same time, he saw that corps after corps, principally of Saxon troops, were defiling away by circuitous roads to the north. It was soon evident

that the heroic Maria Theresa was preparing to send an army into the very heart of Prussia to attack its capital. This was, indeed, changing the aspect of the war.

Berlin was almost defenseless. All Saxony was rising in arms behind Frederick. The invader of Silesia was in danger of having his own realms invaded and his own capital sacked. Frederick was thoroughly roused. But he never allowed himself to appear agitated or anxious. He ordered Leopold, the Old Dessauer, to march immediately, with all the troops he could rally, to the frontiers of Saxony. He even found it necessary to detach to the aid of Leopold some corps from his own enfeebled forces, now menaced by an Austrian army twice as large as he could oppose to them.

While affairs were in this posture, the English, eager to crush their hereditary rivals, the French, were very anxious to detach the Prussians from the French alliance. The only way to do this was to induce Maria Theresa to offer terms of peace such as Frederick would accept. They sent Sir Thomas Robinson to Schönbrunn to endeavor to accomplish this purpose. He had an interview with her Hungarian majesty on the 2d of August, 1745. The queen was very dignified and reticent. Silently she listened to the proposals of Sir Thomas. She then said, with firmness which left no room for further argument,

“It would be easier for me to make peace with France than with Prussia. What good could possibly result now from peace with Prussia? I must have Silesia again. Without Silesia the imperial sceptre would be but a bauble. Would you have us sway that sceptre under the guardianship of Prussia? Prince

Charles is now in a condition to fight the Prussians again. Until after another battle, do not speak to me of peace. You say that if we make peace with Prussia, Frederick will give his vote for the grand-duke as emperor. The grand-duke is not so ambitious of an empty honor as to engage in it under the tutelage of Prussia. Consider, moreover, is the imperial dignity consistent with the loss of Silesia? One more battle I demand. Were I compelled to agree with Frederick to-morrow, I would try him in a battle to-night."[85]

On the 13th of September the German Diet met at Frankfort for the election of emperor. Frederick had determined that the Grand-duke Francis, husband of the Hungarian queen, should not be elected. Maria Theresa had outgeneraled him. Francis was elected. He had seven out of nine of the electoral votes. Frederick, thus baffled, could only protest. Maria Theresa was conscious of her triumph. Though the imperial crown was placed upon the brow of Francis, all Europe knew that the sceptre was in the hands of his far more able and efficient wife. Maria Theresa was at Frankfort at the time of the election. She could not conceal her exultation. She seemed very willing to have it understood that her amiable husband was but the instrument of her will. She took the title of empress queen, and assumed a very lofty carriage toward the princes of the empire. Alluding to Frederick, she said, in a very imperial tone, for she deemed him now virtually vanquished,

"His Prussian majesty has unquestionably talent, but what a character! He is frivolous in the extreme, and sadly a heretic in his religious views. He is a dishonorable man, and what a neighbor he has been! As to Silesia, I would as soon part with my last

garment as part with it."

Her majesty now wrote to Prince Charles, urging him to engage immediately in a fight with Frederick. She sent two of the highest dignitaries of the court to Königgrätz to press forward immediate action. There was an eminence near by, which the Austrian officers daily ascended, and from which they could look directly into the Prussian camp and observe all that was transpiring there.

The position of Frederick became daily more embarrassing. His forces were continually decreasing. Re-enforcements were swelling the ranks of the Austrians. Elated in becoming the *Imperial Army*, they grew more bold and annoying, assailing the Prussian outposts and cutting off their supplies.

On the 18th of September, when the rejoicing Austrians at Königgrätz were firing salutes, drinking wine, and feasting in honor of the election of the grand-duke to the imperial dignity, Frederick, availing himself of the carousal in the camp of his foes, crossed the Elbe with his whole army, a few miles above Königgrätz, and commenced his retreat to Silesia. His path led through a wild, sparsely inhabited country, of precipitous rocks, hills, mountain torrents, and quagmires. One vast forest spread along the banks of the Elbe, covering with its gloom an extent of sixty square miles. A few miserable hamlets were scattered over this desolate region. The poor inhabitants lived mainly upon the rye which they raised and the swine which ranged the forest.

Along the eastern edge of this vast wilderness the army of Frederick marched for two days. But Hungarian Pandours in swarms, savage men on their fleet and shaggy horses, were continually emerging

from the paths of the forest, with gleaming sabres and shrill war-cries, assailing the flank of the Prussian line wherever there was the slightest exposure. In the vicinity of the little village of Sohr the king encamped for two days. The halt seemed necessary to refresh his horses, and to send out foraging parties to replenish his stores. But the light horsemen of the foe were so thick around him, so vigilant, and so bold, that no baggage train could enter his camp unless protected by eight thousand foot and three thousand horse.

Just at the break of day of Thursday morning, September 30, as the king was in his tent, busy with his generals, examining maps in preparation for the immediate resumption of the march, an orderly came, in breathless haste, to inform the king that the Austrians were advancing rapidly upon him, and in great force. While he was yet speaking another messenger arrived, confirming the tidings, and stating that, apparently, the whole Austrian army, in battle array, was coming down upon him.

It was a cold, dreary autumnal morning. The Austrian army, according to Frederick's statement, amounted to sixty thousand men.[86] But it was widely dispersed. Many of the cavalry were scouring the country in all directions, in foraging parties and as skirmishers. Large bodies had been sent by circuitous roads to occupy every avenue of retreat. The consolidated army, under Prince Charles, now advancing to the attack, amounted to thirty-six thousand men. Frederick had but twenty-six thousand.[87]

In this hour of peril the genius of the Prussian monarch was remarkably developed. He manifested not the slightest agitation or alarm. His plan was

immediately formed. Indeed, there was no time for a moment's delay. The Austrians had moved rapidly and silently, concealing their approach by a thick veil of hussars. They were already in solid columns, confident of victory, advancing upon the Prussian camp. Frederick was compelled to form his line of battle under fire of the Austrian batteries. The discipline of the Prussians was such that this was done with a recklessness of danger, rapidity, and mechanical precision which seemed almost miraculous, and which elicited the admiration of every one who beheld it.

The reader would not be interested in the details of the battle which ensued. It lasted for five hours. It was, as is every battle, an indescribable scene of tumult, uproar, and confusion. The result was long doubtful. Defeat to Frederick would have been utter ruin. It is wonderful how one determined man can infuse his spirit into a whole host. Every Prussian seemed to have the same desperate valor, and determination to conquer or to die, which animated his king.

The sun had just risen above the horizon when the conflict commenced. It reached its meridian. Still the storm of battle swept the plains and reverberated over the hills. Heights had been taken and retaken; charges had been made and repelled; the surges of victory had rolled to and fro; over many leagues the thunderbolts of battle were thickly flying; bugle peals, cries of onset, shrieks of the wounded crushed beneath artillery wheels, blended with the rattle of musketry and the roar of artillery; riderless horses were flying in all directions; the extended plain was covered with the wreck and ruin of battle, and every moment was multiplying the victims of war's horrid

butchery.

At length the Austrians were routed—utterly routed—broken, dispersed, and driven in wild confusion into the glooms of the forest. The victory of Frederick was complete. As a warrior, he was winning the title he so greatly coveted, of Frederick the Great.

It was a glorious victory. What was the price? Five thousand six hundred Prussian young men lay in their blood upon the field, dead or wounded. Six thousand seven hundred young men from Austrian homes lay by their side, silent in death, or groaning in anguish, lacerated by the missiles of war.[88]

Frederick was elated with his victory. He had taken three thousand three hundred prisoners, twenty-one cannon, and twenty-two standards. He had added to the renown of his name, and strengthened his hold upon Silesia.

Prince Charles, as he was leading the main body of his army to the assault, sent a squadron of his fleet-footed cavalry to burn the Prussian camp, and to assail the foe in their rear. But the troops found the camp so rich in treasure that they could not resist the temptation of stopping to plunder. Thus they did not make the attack which had been ordered, and which would probably have resulted in the destruction of the Prussian army. It is said that when Frederick, in the heat of the battle, was informed that the Pandours were sacking his camp, he coolly replied, “So much the better; they will not then interrupt us.”[89]

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PEACE OF DRESDEN.

Sufferings of the Peasantry.—Renown and Peril of Frederick.—New Plan of Maria Theresa.—Despondency of Frederick.—Surprise and Rout of the Austrians.—The "Old Dessauer" enters Saxony.—Battle of Kesseldorf.—Singular Prayer of the Old Dessauer.—Signal Victory of the Prussians.—Elation of Frederick.—The Peace of Dresden.—Death of M. Duhan.

AFTER the retreat of the Austrians, Frederick returned to his camp to find it plundered and burned. The semi-barbarian assailants had also consigned to the flames eight or ten sick Prussians whom they found there, and several women whom they caught. "We found the limbs of these poor men and women lying about," writes General Lehwald.

The camp was so utterly destroyed that Frederick could not even obtain pen and ink. He was obliged to write with a pencil. Not a loaf of bread nor a cup of wine was left for the exhausted king. The hungry soldiers, after a conflict of five hours, having had neither breakfast nor dinner, found no refreshments awaiting them; yet, without a murmur, they smoked their pipes, drank some spring water, and rejoiced in their great victory.

"Never mind," said the king; "it is a cheap price to pay for escaping an attack from Pandours in the rear, while such a battle was raging in front."

Frederick remained at Sohr five days. The country was scoured in all directions to obtain food for his army. It was necessary that the troops should be fed, even if the poor inhabitants starved miserably. No tongue can tell the sufferings which consequently fell upon the peasantry for leagues around. Prince Charles, with his shattered army, fell back to Königgrätz, remorselessly plundering the people by the way. Frederick, ordering his army to retire to Silesia, returned to Berlin.

The victory of Sohr filled Europe with the renown of Frederick. Still his peril was great, and the difficulties before him apparently insurmountable. His treasury was exhausted. His only ally, France, would furnish him with no money, had no confidence in him, and was in heart exasperated against him. Not a single court in Europe expressed any friendship for Frederick. On the contrary, nearly all would have rejoiced at his downfall. There seemed to be no end to the campaigns which were opening before him. Yet Frederick knew not where to obtain the money to meet the expense even of a single campaign.

Under these circumstances, Frederick made indirect but vigorous exertions to bring the war to a close. "I am ready and desirous now," he said, "as at all times, for peace. I will immediately sheathe the sword if I can be guaranteed the possession of Silesia."

"I, too, am anxious for peace," Maria Theresa replied, "and will joyfully withdraw my armies if Silesia, of which I have been robbed, is restored to

me."

Thus his Prussian majesty and the Queen of Hungary met each other like two icebergs in a stormy sea. The allies were exasperated, not conquered, by the defeat of Sohr. Maria Theresa, notwithstanding the severity of winter's cold, resolved immediately to send three armies to invade Prussia, and storm Berlin itself. She hoped to keep the design profoundly secret, so that Frederick might be taken at unawares. The Swedish envoy at Dresden spied out the plan, and gave the king warning. Marshal Grüne was to advance from the Rhine, and enter Brandenburg from the west. Prince Charles, skirting Western Silesia, was to march upon Brandenburg from the south. General Rutowski was to spring upon the Old Dessauer, who was encamped upon the frontiers of Saxony, overwhelm and crush his army with superior numbers, and then, forming a junction with Marshal Brüne, with their united force rush upon Berlin.

Frederick was astounded, alarmed, for a moment overwhelmed, as these tidings were clearly made known to him. He had brought all this upon himself. "And yet," the wretched man exclaimed, "what a life I lead! This is not living; this is being killed a thousand times a day!"

This despondency lasted, however, but a moment. Concealing his emotions, he smoothed his furrowed brow, dressed his face in smiles, and wrote doggerel verses and jocose letters as if he were merely a fashionable man of pleasure. At the same time he rallied all his marvelous energies, and prepared to meet the exigency with sagacity and intrepidity rarely surpassed. Orders were immediately dispatched to the Old Dessauer to

marshal an army to oppose Grüne and Rutowski, while the king hastened to Silesia to attack Prince Charles. Leopold, though he had nearly numbered his threescore years and ten, according to Frederick, was very glad to fight once again before he died. The veteran general ventured to make some suggestions in reference to the orders he had received. The king sternly replied,

"When your highness gets armies of your own, you will order them according to your mind. At present, it must be according to mine."

Frederick had an army of thirty-five thousand men at Liegnitz, in Silesia, under the command of young Leopold. Every man was a thoroughly trained soldier. The army was in the best possible condition. At seven o'clock in the morning of November 15, 1745, the king left Berlin at full speed for Liegnitz. He arrived there the next day, and at once took the command. "There is great velocity in this young king," writes Carlyle; "a panther-like suddenness of spring in him; cunning too, as any *felis* of them; and with claws as the *felis leo* on occasion."

Prince Charles was *en route* for Berlin—a winter's march of a hundred and fifty miles. He was not aware that the King of Prussia was near him, or that the king was conscious of his bold design. On Saturday night, November 20, the army of Prince Charles, forty thousand strong, on its line of march, suspecting no foe near, was encamped in villages, extending for twenty miles along the banks of the Queiss, one of the tributaries of the Oder. Four marches would bring them into Brandenburg. It was the design of Frederick to fall with his whole force upon the centre of this line, cut it in two, and then to annihilate the extremities. Early in the morning of

Sunday, the 21st, Frederick put his troops in motion. He marched rapidly all that day, and Monday, and Tuesday. In the twilight of Tuesday evening, a dense fog enveloping the landscape, Frederick, with his concentrated force, fell impetuously upon a division of the Austrian army encamped in the village of Hennersdorf.

The assault was as sudden and resistless as the sweep of the avalanche. The Austrian division was annihilated. Scarcely a man escaped. This achievement was deemed a very brilliant passage of war. It cut the Austrian army in twain and secured its ruin.

The next morning the Prussian troops, led by their indomitable king, were early on the march, groping through the thick mist to find more of the foe. But the blow already given was decisive. The Austrian army was shattered, demoralized, ruined. The king could find nothing but broken tumbrils, abandoned wagons, and the débris of an utterly routed army. Prince Charles, bewildered by the disaster, had wheeled his columns around, and fled through the passes of the mountains back to Bohemia. Five thousand of his troops he left behind in killed or prisoners.

Frederick was not unduly elated with his victory. He was still terribly harassed for money. There were campaigns opening before him, in an unending series, requiring enormous expenditure. Even many such victories as he had just gained would only conduct him to irretrievable ruin, unless he could succeed in conquering a peace. In these dark hours the will of this extraordinary man remained inflexible. He would not listen to any propositions for peace which did not guarantee to him Silesia.

Maria Theresa would listen to no terms which did not restore to her the lost province.

Frederick, in this great emergence, condescended again to write imploringly to France for pecuniary aid. He received a sarcastic reply, which exasperated him, and which was couched in such polite terms that he could not openly resent it. Marshal Grüne, who was advancing rapidly from the Rhine to Berlin, hearing of the defeat of his confederates at Hennersdorf, and of the retreat of Prince Charles, wheeled his columns south for Saxony. Here he effected a junction with General Rutowski, near Dresden. Their combined troops intrenched themselves, and stood on the defensive.

On the 29th of December, the Old Dessauer, with thirty-five thousand men, crossed the frontiers and entered Saxony. He marched rapidly upon Leipsic, and seized the town, from which a division of Rutowski's army precipitately fled. Leopold found here quite a supply of commissary and ordnance stores. He also replenished his empty army-chest by levying a contribution of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars upon the inhabitants. Then, by a rapid march northeast to Torgo, on the Elbe, he captured another imperial magazine. Turning south, he pressed his troops along up the river to Myssen, which was within two days' easy march of Dresden. Here there was a bridge across the Oder. Frederick was pushing his troops, by forced marches, from Hennersdorf, to effect a junction with Leopold at Myssen. Unitedly they were to fall upon Grüne and Rutowski at Dresden. In the mean time, also, Prince Charles, a despondent man, crushed by domestic woe and humiliating defeats, was moving, by not very energetic steps, to re-enforce the allied troops at

Dresden.

It was two o'clock in the afternoon of Sunday, December 12, when the banners of the Old Dessauer appeared before Myssen. The Saxon commander there broke down the bridge, and in the darkness of the night stole away with his garrison to Dresden. Leopold vigorously but cautiously pursued. As the allied army was near, and in greater force than Leopold's command, it was necessary for him to move with much discretion. His march was along the west bank of the river. The ground was frozen and white with snow.

On Wednesday morning, December 15, the advance-guard of the Prussians saw before them the allied army, thirty-five thousand strong, occupying a very formidable position. Marshal Grüne and General Rutowski had advanced a few miles north from Dresden to meet the Prussians. Their troops were drawn up in battle array, extending from the River Elbe on the east, to the village of Kesselsdorf on the west. A small stream, with a craggy or broken gully or dell, extended along their whole front. The southern ridge, facing the advancing Prussians, bristled with artillery. Some of the pieces were of heavy calibre. Leopold had only light field-pieces.

In the cold of the winter morning the Old Dessauer carefully reconnoitred the position of his foes. Their batteries seemed innumerable, protected by earth-works, and frowning along a cliff which could only be reached by plunging into a gully and wading through a half-frozen bog. There was, however, no alternative but to advance or retreat. He decided to advance.

Forming his army in two parallel lines, nearly five miles long, facing the foe, he prepared to open

the battle along the whole extent of the field. While thus engrossing the attention of the enemy, his main attempt was to be directed against the village of Kesselsdorf, which his practiced eye saw to be the key of the position. It was two o'clock in the afternoon ere all his arrangements were completed. The Old Dessauer was a devout man—in his peculiar style a religious man, a man of prayer. He never went into battle without imploring God's aid. On this occasion, all things being arranged, he reverently uncovered his head, and in presence of the troops offered, it is said, the following prayer:

"O my God, help me yet this once. Let me not be disgraced in my old days. But if Thou wilt not help me, don't help those scoundrels, but leave us to try it out ourselves."

Having uttered this prayer, he waved his hat to his troops, and shouted, "On, in God's name!"

"The Prussians," writes Carlyle, "tramp on with the usual grim-browed resolution, foot in front, horse in rear. But they have a terrible problem at that Kesselsdorf, with its retrenched batteries and numerous grenadiers fighting under cover. The very ground is sore against them; up-hill, and the trampled snow wearing into a slide, so that you sprawl and stagger sadly. Thirty-one big guns, and near nine thousand small, pouring out mere death on you from that knoll-head. The Prussians stagger; can not stand; bend to rightward to get out of shot range; can not manage it this bout. Rally, re-enforced; try it again. Again with a will; but again there is not a way. The Prussians are again repulsed; fall back down this slippery course in more disorder than the first time. Had the Saxons stood still, steadily handling arms, how, on such terms, could the

Prussians have ever managed it?"[90]

At the second repulse, the Saxon grenadiers, greatly elated, gave a shout of "victory," and rushed from their works to pursue the retreating Prussians. This was their ruin.

"Old Leopold, quick as thought, noticing the thing, hurls cavalry on these victorious, down-plunging grenadiers; slashes them asunder into mere recoiling whirlpools of ruin, so that few of them got back unwounded; and the Prussians, storming in along with them, aided by ever new Prussians, the place was at length carried."[91]

And now the Prussians from the centre press the foe with new vigor. Leopold, at the head of his victorious division, charged the allied troops in flank, pouring in upon them his resistless horsemen. Whole regiments were made prisoners. Ere nightfall of the short December day, the whole allied army, broken and disordered, was on the retreat back to Dresden. The night alone protected them from utter ruin. They had lost six thousand prisoners, and three thousand in killed and wounded.[92]

Prince Charles had arrived in Dresden the night before. He heard the roar of the cannonade all the day, but, for some unexplained reason, did not advance to the support of his friends. The very unsatisfactory excuse offered was, that his troops were exhausted by their long march; and that, having been recently twice beaten by the Prussians, his army would be utterly demoralized if led to another defeat.

On the evening of Tuesday, the 14th, Frederick, with his advanced guard, reached Myssen. All the next day, Wednesday, he was hurrying up his troops

from the rear. In the afternoon he heard the deep booming of the cannon far up the Elbe. In the evening the sky was ablaze with the glare of the watch-fires of Leopold's victorious troops. The next morning Frederick pressed forward with all haste to join Leopold. Couriers on the way informed him of the great victory. At Wilsdruf, a few miles from the field of battle, he met Leopold, who had advanced in person to meet his king. Frederick dismounted, uncovered his head, and threw his arms around the Old Dessauer in a grateful embrace.

Together the king and his sturdy general returned to Kesselsdorf, and rode over the field of battle, which was still strewn with the ghastly wrecks of war. Large numbers of the citizens of Dresden were on the field searching for their lost ones among the wounded or the dead. The Queen of Poland and her children remained in the city. Frederick treated them with marked politeness, and appointed them guards of honor. The King of Poland, who, it will be remembered, was also Elector of Saxony, applied for peace. Frederick replied:

"Guarantee me the possession of Silesia, and pay me seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the expenses of this campaign, and I will withdraw my army."



FREDERICK AND THE OLD DESSAUER.

M. D'Arget, private secretary of the French minister Valori, gives an interesting account of an interview he held with Frederick at this time. M. D'Arget was quite a favorite of the king, who conversed with him with unusual frankness.

"These kind condescensions of his majesty," writes M. D'Arget, "emboldened me to represent to him the brilliant position he now held, and how noble it would be, after being the hero of Germany, to become the pacificator of Europe."

"I grant it, my dear D'Arget," said the king, "but it is too dangerous a part to play. A reverse brings me to the edge of ruin. I know too well the mood of

mind I was in the last time I left Berlin ever to expose myself to it again. If luck had been against me there, I saw myself a monarch without a throne. A bad game that. In fine, I wish to be at peace."

"I represented to him," continues M. D'Arget, "that the house of Austria would never, with a tranquil eye, see his house in possession of Silesia."

"Those that come after me," said the king, "will do as they like. The future is beyond man's reach. I have acquired; it is theirs to preserve. I am not in alarm about the Austrians. They dread my armies—the luck that I have. I am sure of their sitting quiet for the dozen years or so which may remain to me of life. There is more for me in the true greatness of laboring for the happiness of my subjects than in the repose of Europe. I have put Saxony out of a condition to hurt me. She now owes me twelve million five hundred thousand dollars. By the defensive alliance which I form with her, I provide myself a help against Austria. I would not, henceforth, attack a cat, except to defend myself. Glory and my interests were the occasion of my first campaigns. The late emperor's situation, and my zeal for France, gave rise to the second. Always since, I have been fighting for my own hearths—for my very existence. I know the state I have got into. If I now saw Prince Charles at the gates of Paris, I would not stir."

"And would you regard with the same indifference," M. D'Arget rejoined, "seeing us at the gates of Vienna?"

"Yes," the king replied. "I swear it to you, D'Arget. In a word, I want to have some good of my life. What are we, poor human atoms, to get up projects that cost so much blood!"

On the 25th of December, 1745, the peace of Dresden was signed. The demands of Frederick were acceded to. Augustus III. of Saxony, Maria Theresa of Austria, and George II. of England became parties to the treaty. The next day Frederick attended sermon in the Protestant church. Monday morning his army, by slow marches, commenced its return to Brandenburg. Frederick, highly elated by the wonderful and almost miraculous change in his affairs, entered his carriage in company with his two brothers, and drove rapidly toward Berlin. The next day, at two o'clock in the afternoon, they reached the heath of Britz, five miles out from the city. Here the king found an immense concourse of the citizens, who had come on horseback and in carriages to escort him to his palace. Frederick sat in an open phaeton, accompanied by the Prince of Prussia and Prince Henry. The throng was so great that the horses could only proceed at the slowest pace. The air resounded with shouts of "Long live Frederick the Great." The king was especially gracious, saying to those who eagerly crowded around his carriage wheels,

"Do not press each other, my children. Take care of yourselves that the horses may not trample upon you, and that no accident may happen."

It was remarked that the whole behavior of the king upon this occasion exhibited the utmost mildness, gentleness, and affability. He seemed to be influenced by the most tender regard for the welfare of the people.

Upon reaching the palace, he stood for a moment upon the grand stairway, and, surveying the thronging thousands, took off his hat and saluted them. This gave rise to a burst of applause louder

and heartier than Berlin had ever heard before. The king disappeared within the palace. Where the poor neglected queen was at this time we are not informed. There are no indications that he gave her even a thought.

At six o'clock in the evening the whole city was illuminated. Frederick entered his carriage, and, attended by his two brothers, the Prince of Prussia and Prince Henry, rode out to take the circuit of the streets. But the king had received information that one of his former preceptors, M. Duhan, lay at the point of death. He ordered his carriage to be at once driven to the residence of the dying man. The house of M. Duhan was situated in a court, blazing with the glow of thousands of lamps.

"It was an affecting sight," says M. Bielfeld, "to see a dying man in the midst of a brilliant illumination, surrounded by princes, and visited by a triumphant monarch, who, in the midst of the incessant clamor of exultation, sought only to alleviate the sick man's pangs, participating in his distress, and reflecting upon the vanity of all human grandeur."

The king having taken a tender adieu of M. Duhan, who died the next morning, traversed the brilliant streets of the rejoicing city, and returned to the palace about ten that evening.

Frederick now entered upon a period of ten years of peace.



FREDERICK AT THE DEATH-BED OF M. DUHAN.



SANS SOUCI.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FREDERICK THE GREAT AT SANS SOUCI.

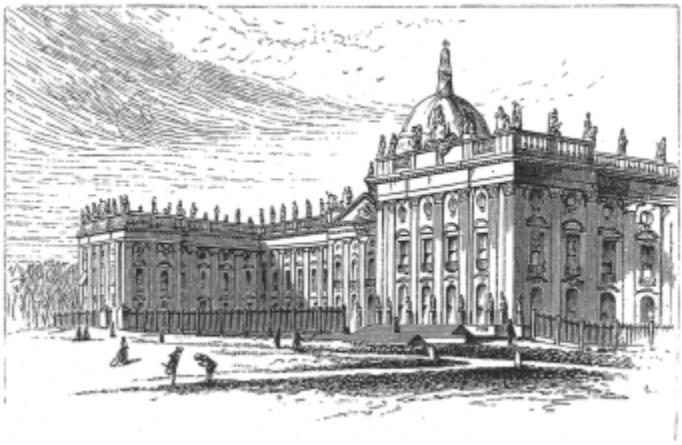
Days of Peace and Prosperity.—The Palace of Sans Souci.—Letter from Marshal Keith.—Domestic Habits of the King.—Frederick's Snuff-boxes.—Anecdotes.—Severe Discipline of the Army.—Testimony of Baron Trenck.—The Review.—Death of the "Divine Emilie."—The King's Revenge.—Anecdote of the Poor Schoolmaster.—The Berlin Carousal.—Appearance of his Majesty.—Honors conferred upon Voltaire.

"HAPPY the people," says Montesquieu, "whose annals are blank in history books." The annals of the nations are mainly composed of wars, tumult, and woe. For ten years Prussia enjoyed peace. During this happy period, when the days and the years glided by in tranquillity, there is little left for the historian to record. Frederick engaged vigorously in repairing the ruins left by the war. The burned Silesian villages were rebuilt; debts were paid; agriculture and commerce encouraged; the laws revised and reformed. A decree was issued that all lawsuits should be brought to a decision within a year after their beginning.

The king, weary of the life of turmoil,

constructed for himself a beautiful villa, which he named *Sans Souci* (“Free from Care”), which Carlyle characteristically translates “No bother.” It was situated on a pleasant hill-top near Potsdam, in great retirement, yet commanding an enchanting view of land and water.

On the first of May, 1747, Frederick took formal possession of this beautiful chateau. The occasion was celebrated by quite a magnificent dinner of two hundred covers. Here, for the next forty years, he spent most of his leisure time. He had three other palaces, far surpassing Sans Souci in splendor, which he occasionally visited on days of royal festivities. Berlin and Charlottenburg were about twenty miles distant. The New Palace, so called, at Potsdam, was but about a mile from Sans Souci. He had also his palace at Rheinsberg, some thirty miles north of Berlin, where he had spent many of his early days.



THE NEW PALACE AT POTSDAM.

It is said that one day, as Frederick was

contemplating the royal burying-ground, not far from the spot which he had selected for his rural villa, he said to a companion by his side, in reference to his own burial, “Oui, alors je serais sans souci.” *Yes, then I shall be free from care.* From that remark the villa took its name. Frederick adopted it, and inscribed it in golden letters on the lintel. He appropriated to his private use three apartments—an audience-room, a library, and a small alcove for a bedroom. In this alcove, scarcely larger than a closet, he slept, in soldier style, upon an iron bed, without curtains. An old slouched hat, softened by wear, served him for a night-cap. His library was a beautiful room, very richly furnished. There were terrible war-clouds still sweeping over various parts of Europe, but their lightning flashes and their thunder roar disturbed not the repose of Frederick in his elevated retreat.

In the month of October, 1747, Field-marshal Keith visited his Prussian majesty at Sans Souci. In a letter to his brother he thus describes the results of his observations:

“I have now the honor, and, what is still more, the pleasure of being with the king at Potsdam. I have the honor to dine and sup with him almost every day. He has more wit than I have wit to tell you; speaks solidly and knowingly on all kinds of subjects; and I am much mistaken if, with the experience of four campaigns, he is not the best officer of his army. He has several persons with whom he lives with almost the familiarity of a friend, but he has no favorite. He shows a natural politeness for every body who is about him. For one who has been four days about his person, you will say, I pretend to know a great deal about his character. But what I tell you you may depend upon. With more

time I shall know as much of him as he will let me know, and no one of his ministry knows any more."

The king was a very busy man. In addition to carrying on quite an extensive literary correspondence, he was vigorously engaged in writing his memoirs. He was also with great energy developing the wealth of his realms. In the exercise of absolute power, his government was entirely personal. He had no constitution to restrain him. Under his single control were concentrated all legislative, judicial, and executive powers. There was no senate or legislative corps to co-operate in framing laws. His ministers were merely servants to do his bidding. The courts had no powers whatever but such as he intrusted to them. He could at any time reverse their decrees, and flog the judges with his cane, or hang them.

Frederick was a great snuff-taker. He always carried two large snuff-boxes in his pocket. Several others stood upon tables around in his rooms, always ready for use. The cheapest of these boxes cost fifteen hundred dollars. He had some richly studded with gems, which cost seven thousand five hundred dollars. At his death one hundred and thirty snuff-boxes appeared in the inventory of his jewels.

Many anecdotes are related illustrative of the kind feelings of the king toward the peasants. He was much interested in ameliorating their condition, and said to the Bishop of Varmia, "Believe me, if I knew every thing—if I could read every thing myself—all my subjects should be happy. But alas! I am but a man."

In the ranks all of the army were equally entitled to distinction. Promotion was conferred upon merit, not upon the accident of birth. This principle, which

was entirely ignored in the other European despotisms, probably contributed to the success of Frederick's armies. A Hanoverian count wrote to him, soliciting a high position in the army for his son, in favor of his exalted birth. Frederick dictated the following reply:

"I am obliged to tell you that I have long forbid *counts* to be received, as such, into my army; for when they have served one or two years they retire, and merely make their short military career a subject of vain boasting. If your son wishes to serve, the title of count can be of no use to him. But he will be promoted if he learn his profession well."

The king then took the pen himself, and added with his own hand:

> "Young counts who have learned nothing are the most ignorant people in all countries. In England the king's son begins by being a sailor on board a ship, in order to learn the manœuvres belonging to that service. If it should miraculously happen that a count could be good for any thing, it must be by banishing all thoughts about his titles and his birth, for these are only follies. Every thing depends upon personal merit.
>
> "FREDERICK."

The severity of discipline in the Prussian army was dreadful. The slightest misdemeanor was punished mercilessly. The drill, exposure, and hardships in the camp made life to the soldier a scene of constant martyrdom. Desertion was almost impossible. The only avenue of escape was suicide. In the little garrison at Potsdam, in ten years, over three hundred, by self-inflicted death, escaped their miseries. Dr. Zimmerman states that it not

unfrequently happened that a soldier murdered a child, and then came and gave himself up to justice. They thought that if they committed suicide they would be subject to eternal punishment. But the murdered infant was sure to go to heaven, and the murderer would have time to repent and make his peace with God.

Baron Trenck, in his memoir, gives an appalling account of these hardships in the body-guards to which he belonged. In time of peace there was scarcely an hour which he could command. The morning drill commenced at four o'clock. The most complicated and perilous manœuvres were performed. Frederick considered this the best school for cavalry in the world. They were compelled to leap trenches, which were continually widened till many fell in and broke their legs or arms. They were also compelled to leap hedges, and continue to charge at the highest possible speed for miles together. Almost daily some were either killed or wounded. At midday they took fresh horses, and repeated these toilsome and dangerous labors. Frequently they would be called from their beds two or three times in one night, to keep them on the alert. But eight minutes were allowed the guardsman to present himself on horseback, in his place, fully equipped. "In one year of peace," he says, "the body-guards lost more men and horses than they had in two battles during the war."

In 1747 Marshal Saxe visited Potsdam. He witnessed a review of the guards. In the account of this review given by Algarotti, he says, "The squadron of guards, which at one time, drawn up close, exhibited the appearance of a rock, at another resembled a cloud scattered along the plain. In the

charge on full gallop one horse's head was not a foot beyond another. The line was so exactly straight that Euclid himself could not have found fault with it."

In September, 1749, Madame Du Châtelet, the "divine Emilie" of Voltaire, suddenly died. The infidel philosopher seemed much grieved for a time. Frederick, who never fancied Madame Du Châtelet, was the more eager, now that she was out of the way, that Voltaire should come to Sans Souci, and aid him in his literary labors. A trivial incident occurred at this time worthy of record, as illustrative of the character of the king. At the close of the year 1749 there had been a review of Austrian troops at Mähren. It was not a very important affair, neither the empress queen nor her husband being present. Three Prussian officers made their appearance. It was said that they had come to inveigle soldiers to desert, and enlist under the banners of Prussia. They were peremptorily ordered by the Austrian authorities to leave the ground. Frederick, when he heard of it, said nothing, but treasured it up.

A few months after, in May, 1750, there was a grand review at Berlin. An Austrian officer who chanced to be there was invited by his friend, a Prussian officer, Lieutenant Colonel Chasot, to attend. The Austrian was not willing to ride upon the parade-ground without the permission of the king. Colonel Chasot called upon Frederick and informed him that an Austrian officer would be happy, with his majesty's permission, to be present at the review.

"Certainly, certainly," exclaimed the king.

This was on the evening before the review. On the morrow the Austrian accordingly rode upon the field. He had hardly arrived there when, just as the manœuvres were commencing, one of the aids-de-

camp of Frederick galloped up to him and said, “By the king’s command, sir, you are ordered instantly to retire from this field.”

Colonel Chasot, exceedingly chagrined, rode directly to the king, and inquired, “Did not your majesty grant me permission to invite my friend to the review?”

“Certainly,” replied the king, in his most courteous tones; “and if he had not come, how could I have paid back the Mähren business of last year?”

It is pleasant to record another incident more creditable to Frederick. In the year 1750 there was a poor and aged schoolmaster, by the name of Linsenbarth, a very worthy man, a veritable Dominie Sampson, residing in the obscure village of Hemmleben. He had been educated as a clergyman, had considerable book learning, was then out of employment, and was in extreme destitution. The pastor of the village church died, leaving a vacant pulpit, and a salary amounting to about one hundred dollars a year. The great man of the place, a feudal lord named Von Werthern, offered the situation to Linsenbarth upon condition that he would marry his lady’s termagant waiting-maid. Linsenbarth, who had no fancy for the haughty shrew, declined the offer. The lord and lady were much offended, and in various ways rendered the situation of the poor schoolmaster so uncomfortable that he gathered up his slender means, amounting to about three hundred dollars, all in the deteriorated coin of the province, and went to Berlin. His money was in a bag containing nearly nine thousand very small pieces of coin, called *batzen*.

At the custom-house the poor man’s coin was seized as contraband. He was informed that the king,

had forbidden the circulation of that kind of money in Berlin. The heartless officials laughed at the poor man's distress, paid no regard to his remonstrances and pleadings, and locked up his confiscated coin.

Poor Linsenbarth had a feather bed, a small chest of clothes, and a bag of books. He went to a humble inn, called the "White Swan," utterly penniless. The landlord, seeing that he could levy upon his luggage in case of need, gave him food and a small room in the garret to sleep in. Here he remained in a state verging upon despair for eight weeks. Some of the simple neighbors advised him to go directly to the king, as every poor man could do at certain hours in the day. He wrote a brief statement of the facts, and started on foot for Potsdam. We give the result in the words of Linsenbarth:

"At Potsdam I was lucky enough to see the king. He was on the esplanade drilling his troops. When the drill was over he went into the garden, and the soldiers dispersed. Four officers remained lounging on the esplanade. For fright, I knew not what to do; I drew the papers from my pocket. These were my memorial, two certificates of character, and a Thuringian pass. The officers, noticing this, came directly to me and said, 'What letters have you there?' I thankfully imparted the whole. When the officers had read them, they said, 'We will give you good advice. The king is extra gracious to-day, and is gone alone into the garden. Follow him straight. You will have luck.'

"This I would not do; my awe was too great. They thereupon laid hands upon me. One took me by the right arm, another by the left, and led me to the garden. Having got me there, they looked out for the king. He was among the gardeners examining some

rare plant, and had his back to us. Here I had to halt. The officers began in an under tone to put me through my drill. ‘Take your hat under your left arm; put your right foot foremost; breast well forward; hold your head up; hold your papers aloft in your right hand; there, so—steady—steady!’



FREDERICK AND LINSENBARTH.

"They then went away, often looking around to see if I kept my posture. I perceived well enough that they were making game of me; but I stood all the same like a wall, being full of fear. When the king turned round he gave a look at me like a flash of sunbeams glancing through you. He sent one of the gardeners to bring my papers. Taking them, he disappeared in one of the garden walks. In a few minutes he came back with my papers open in his hand, and waved with them for me to come nearer. I plucked up heart and went directly to him. Oh, how graciously this great monarch deigned to speak to me!

"'My good Thuringian,' said the king, 'you came to Berlin seeking to earn your bread by the industrious teaching of children, and here at the custom-house they have taken your money from you. True, the *batzen* are not legal here. They should have said to you, "You are a stranger and did not know of the prohibition. We will seal up the bag of *batzen*. You can send it back to Thuringia and get it changed for other coin." Be of good heart, however. You shall have your money again, and interest too. But, my poor man, in Berlin they do not give any thing gratis. You are a stranger. Before you are known and get to teaching, your bit of money will be all gone. What then?'

"I understood the speech perfectly well, but my awe was too great to allow me to say, 'Your majesty will have the grace to allow me something.' But as I was so simple, and asked for nothing, he did not offer any thing. And so he turned away. But he had gone scarcely six or eight steps when he looked around and gave me a sign to walk by his side."

The king then questioned him very closely

respecting the place where he had studied, during what years, under what teachers, and to what branches he had devoted special attention. While thus conversing the clock struck twelve. This was the dinner-hour of his majesty. “Now I must go,” said the king. “They wait for their soup.”

Linsenbarth, thus left alone, sauntered from the garden back to the esplanade. There he stood quite bewildered. He had walked that day twenty miles beneath a July sun and over the burning sands. He had eaten nothing. He had not a farthing in his pocket.

“In this tremor of my heart,” writes Linsenbarth, “there came a valet out of the palace and asked, ‘Where is the man that was with my king in the garden?’ I answered, ‘Here.’ He led me into the palace to a large room, where pages, lackeys, and soldier valets were about. My valet took me to a little table excellently furnished with soup, beef; likewise carp, dressed with garden salad; likewise game, with cucumber salad; bread, knife, fork, plate, spoon were all there. My valet set me a chair, and said,

“‘This that is on the table the king has ordered to be served for you. You are to eat your fill and mind nobody. I am to serve.’

“I was greatly astonished, and knew not what to do; least of all could it come into my head that the king’s valet who waited on his majesty should wait on me. I pressed him to sit by me; but, as he refused, I did as bidden.

“The valet took the beef from the table and set it on the charcoal dish until wanted. He did the like with the fish and roast game, and poured me out wine and beer. I ate and drank till I had abundantly

enough. Dessert, confectionery, what I could. A plate of big black cherries and a plateful of pears my waiting-man wrapped in paper, and stuffed them into my pockets to be a refreshment on the way home. And so I rose from the royal table, and thanked God and the king in my heart that I had so gloriously dined. At that moment a secretary came, brought me a sealed order for the custom-house at Berlin, with my certificates and the pass; told down on the table five tail-ducats and a gold Friedrich under them, saying, 'The king sent me this to take me home to Berlin.'[93]

"And if the hussar took me into the palace, it was now the secretary took me out again. And there, yoked with six horses, stood a royal wagon, which, having led me to, the secretary said, 'You people, the king has given order that you are to take this stranger to Berlin, and you are to accept no drink-money from him.' I again testified my thankfulness for the royal kindness, took my place, and rolled away.

"On reaching Berlin I went at once to the custom-house, and handed them my royal order. The head man opened the seal. In reading, he changed color—went from pale to red; said nothing, and gave it to the second man to read. The second put on his spectacles, read, and gave it to the third. However, the head man rallied himself at last. I was to come forward and be so good as to write a receipt that I had received for my four hundred thalers, all in *batzen*, the same sum in Brandenburg coin, ready down, without the least deduction. My cash was at once accurately paid, and thereupon the steward was ordered to go with me to the 'White Swan,' and pay what I owed there, whatever my score was. That was

what the king had meant when he said ‘you shall have your money back, and interest too.’”

This good old man died in Berlin on the 24th of August, 1777, eighty-eight years of age.

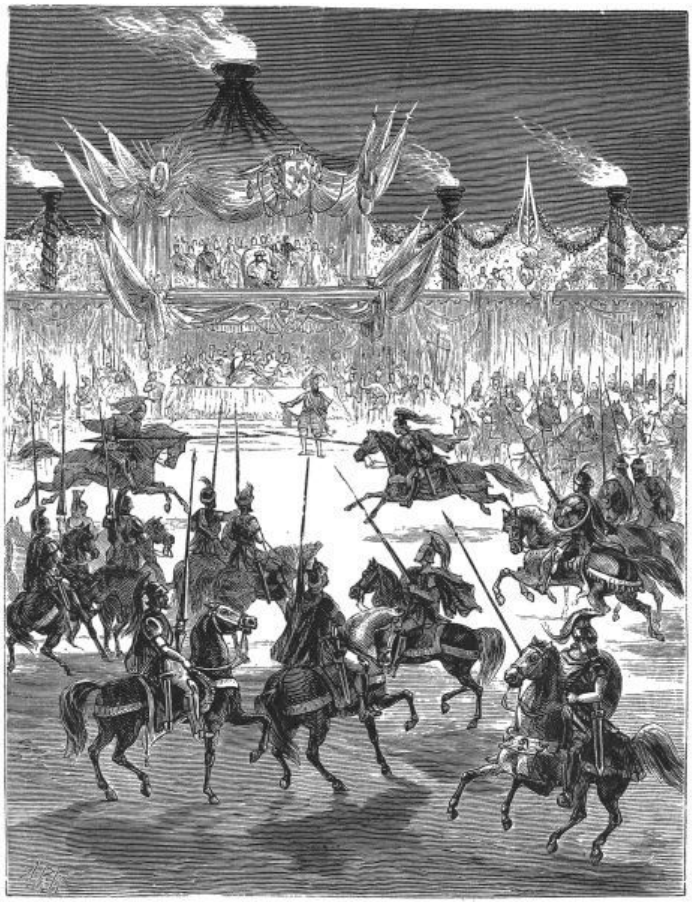
In the autumn of 1750 Frederick held a famous Berlin carousal, the celebrity of which filled all Europe. Distinguished guests flocked to the city from all the adjoining realms. Wilhelmina came to share in the festivities. Voltaire was also present, “the observed of all observers.” An English gentleman, Sir Jonas Hanway, in the following terms describes the appearance of Frederick at this time:

“His Prussian majesty rides much about, often at a rapid rate, with a pleasant business aspect—humane, though imperative; handsome to look upon, though with a face perceptibly reddish. His age, now thirty-eight gone; a set appearance, as if already got into his forties; complexion florid; figure muscular, almost tending to be plump.”

The carousal presented a very splendid spectacle. It took place by night, and the spacious arena was lighted by thirty thousand torches. The esplanade of the palace, which presented an ample parallelogram, was surrounded by an amphitheatre of rising seats, crowded with the beauties and dignitaries of Europe. At one end of the parallelogram was a royal box, tapestried with the richest hangings. The king sat there; his sister, the Princess Amelia, was by his side, as queen of the festival. Where the neglected wife of Frederick was is not recorded. The entrance for the cavaliers was opposite the throne. The jousting parties consisted of four bands, representing Romans, Persians, Carthaginians, and Greeks. They were decorated with splendid equipments of jewelry, silver helmets, sashes, and housings, and were

mounted on the most spirited battle-steeds which Europe could furnish. The scene was enlivened by exhilarating music, and by the most gorgeous decorations and picturesque costumes which the taste and art of the times could create. The festivities were closed by a ball in the vast saloons of the palace, and by a supper, where the tables were loaded with every delicacy.

Voltaire was received on this occasion with very distinguished honor. The king, in inviting him to the court, had sent him a sum amounting to three thousand dollars to pay the expenses of his journey. He had also conferred upon him the cross of the order of Merit, and a pension of about four thousand dollars a year.



TOURNAMENT AT BERLIN IN HONOR OF FREDERICK.

For a time Frederick and Voltaire seem to have lived very pleasantly together. Voltaire writes: “I was lodged under the king’s apartment, and never left my room except for supper. The king composed, above stairs, works of philosophy, history, poetry; and his favorite, below stairs, cultivated the same arts and the same talents. They communicated to one another their respective works. The Prussian monarch

composed, at this time, his ‘History of Brandenburg;’ and the French author wrote his ‘Age of Louis XIV.,’ having brought with him all his materials.[94] His days thus passed happily in a repose which was only animated by agreeable occupations. Nothing, indeed, could be more delightful than this way of life, or more honorable to philosophy and literature.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE QUARREL.

Voltaire and the Jew.—Letter from Frederick to D'Arget.—Letter to Wilhelmina.—Caustic Letters to Voltaire.—Partial Reconciliation.—Frederick's brilliant Conversational Powers.—His Neglect of his Wife.—All Females excluded from his Court.—Maupertuis and the Academy.—Voltaire's Malignity.—Frederick's Anger.—Correspondence between Voltaire and Maupertuis.—Menaces of War.—Catt and the King.

THE king and Voltaire soon became involved in a very serious quarrel. Voltaire had employed a Jew, by the name of Hirsch, to engage fraudulently in speculating in the funds. The transaction was so complicated that few of our readers would have the patience to follow an attempt at its disentanglement. Voltaire and his agent quarreled. The contention rang through all the court circles, as other conspicuous names were involved in the meshes of the intrigue. A lawsuit ensued, which created excitement almost inconceivable. The recent law reform caused the process to be pushed very rapidly to its conclusion. Voltaire emerged from the suit with his character sadly maimed. He was clearly convicted of both falsehood and forgery. The king, annoyed by the clamor, retired from Berlin to Sans Souci.

Voltaire was not invited to accompany him, but was left in the Berlin palace. In a letter which Frederick wrote to D'Arget, dated April, 1752, he says:

"Voltaire has conducted himself like a blackguard and a consummate rascal. I have talked to him as he deserved. He is a sad fellow. I am quite ashamed for human abilities that a man who has so much of them should be so full of wickedness. I am not surprised that people talk at Paris of the quarrel of our *beaux esprits*. Voltaire is the most mischievous madman I ever knew. He is only good to read. It is impossible for you to imagine the duplicities, the impositions, the infamies he practiced here. I am quite indignant that so much talent and acquirement do not make men better. I took the part of Maupertuis because he is a good sort of man, and the other had determined upon ruining him. A little too much vanity had rendered him too sensitive to the manœuvres of this monkey, whom he ought to have despised after having castigated him."[95]

Frederick wrote to Wilhelmina: "Voltaire picks Jews' pockets, but he will get out of it by some somersault."

Voltaire fell sick. He had already quarreled with many persons, and had constrained the king in many cases, very reluctantly, to take his part. He now wrote to Frederick, begging permission to join him in the quietude of Sans Souci. The following extracts from the reply of his majesty will be read with interest:

"Potsdam, February 24, 1751.

"I was glad to receive you in my house. I esteemed your genius, your talents, and your acquirements. I had reason to think that a man of

> your age, weary of fencing against authors, and exposing himself to the storm, came hither to take refuge, as in a safe harbor."

After briefly alluding to the many quarrels in which Voltaire had been involved, the king adds:

"You have had the most villainous affair with a Jew. It has made a frightful scandal all over town. For my own part, I have preserved peace in my house until your arrival; and I warn you that, if you have the passion of intriguing and cabaling, you have applied to the wrong person. I like peaceable, quiet people, who do not put into their conduct the violent passions of tragedy. In case you can resolve to live like a philosopher, I shall be glad to see you. But if you abandon yourself to all the violence of your passions, and get into quarrels with all the world, you will do me no good by coming hither, and you may as well stay in Berlin."

Four days after this Frederick wrote again, in answer to additional applications from Voltaire.

"If you wish to come hither you can. I hear nothing of lawsuits, not even of yours. Since you have gained it I congratulate you, and I am glad that this scurvy affair is done.[96] I hope you will have no more quarrels, either with the Old or the New Testament. Such contentions leave their mark upon a man. Even with the talents of the finest genius in France, you will not cover the stains which this conduct will fasten on your reputation in the long run. I write this letter with the rough common sense of a German, without employing equivocal terms which disfigure the truth. It is for you to profit by it."

Voltaire's visit lasted about thirty-two months. He was, however, during all this time, fast losing

favor with the king. Instead of being received as an inmate at Sans Souci, he was assigned to a small country house in the vicinity, called the Marquisat. His wants were, however, all abundantly provided for at the expense of the king. It is evident from his letters that he was a very unhappy man. He was infirm in health, irascible, discontented, crabbed; suspecting every one of being his enemy, jealous of his companions, and with a diseased mind, crowded with superstitious fears.

On one occasion, when the king had sent him a manuscript to revise, he sarcastically exclaimed to the royal messenger, “When will his majesty be done with sending me his dirty linen to wash?” This speech was repeated to the king. He did not lose his revenge.

Frederick was endowed with brilliant powers of conversation. He was fond of society, where he could exercise and display these gifts and accomplishments. Frequent suppers were given at Sans Souci, which lasted from half past eight till midnight. Gentlemen only—learned men—were invited to these entertainments. Frederick was not an amiable man. He took pleasure in inflicting the keenest pain possible with his satirical tongue. No friend was spared. The more deeply he could strike the lash into the quivering nerves of sensibility, the better he seemed pleased with himself.

He could not but respect his wife. Her character was beyond all possible reproach. She never uttered a complaint, was cheerful and faithful in every duty. She had rooms assigned her on the second floor of the Berlin palace, where she was comfortably lodged and fed, and had modest receptions every Thursday, which were always closed at nine o’clock. A

gentleman writes from Berlin at this time:

"The king esteems his wife, and can not endure her. It was but a few days ago she handed him a letter petitioning for some things of which she had the most pressing want. Frederick took the letter with that most smiling, gracious air, which he assumes at pleasure, and, without breaking the seal, tore it up before her face, made her a profound bow, and turned his back on her."

"The king respects his mother," the same writer adds. "She is the only female to whom he pays any sort of attention. She is a good, fat woman, who moves about in her own way."

It was a peculiarity quite inexplicable which led Frederick to exclude females from his court. His favorites were all men—men of some peculiar intellectual ability. He sought their society only. With the exception of his sister, and occasionally some foreign princess, ladies were seldom admitted to companionship with him. He was a cold, solitary man, so self-reliant that he seldom asked or took advice.

Voltaire hated M. Maupertuis. He was the president of the Berlin Academy, and was regarded by Voltaire as a formidable rival. This hatred gave rise to a quarrel between Frederick and Voltaire, which was so virulent that Europe was filled with the noise of their bickerings. M. Maupertuis had published a pamphlet, in which he assumed to have made some important discovery upon the law of action. M. König, a member of the Academy, reviewed the pamphlet, asserting not only that the proclaimed law was false, but that it had been promulgated half a century before. In support of his position he quoted from a letter of Leibnitz. The

original of the letter could not be produced. M. König was accused of having forged the extract. M. Maupertuis, a very jealous, irritable man, by his powerful influence as president, caused M. König to be expelled from the Academy.

Frederick regarded the Academy as his pet institution, and was very jealous of the illustrious philosopher, whom he had invited to Berlin to preside over its deliberations. Voltaire, knowing this very well, and fully aware that to strike the Academy in the person of its president was to strike Frederick, wrote an anonymous communication to a review published in Paris, in which he accused M. Maupertuis—first, of plagiarism, in appropriating to himself a discovery made by another; secondly, of a ridiculous blunder in assuming that said discovery was a philosophical principle, and not an absurdity; and thirdly, that he had abused his position as president of the Academy in suppressing free discussion, by expelling from the institution a member merely for not agreeing with him in opinion. These statements were probably true, and on that account the more damaging.

The authorship of the article could not be concealed. Frederick was indignant. He angrily seized his pen, and wrote a reply, which, though anonymous, was known by all to have been written by the king. In this reply he accused the writer of the article, whom he well knew to be Voltaire, of being a "manifest retailer of lies," "a concocter of stupid libels," and as "guilty of conduct more malicious, more dastardly, more infamous" than he had ever known before.

This roused Voltaire. He did not venture to attack the king, but he assailed M. Maupertuis again,

anonymously, but with greatly increased venom. A brief pamphlet appeared, entitled, “The Diatribe of Doctor Akakia, Physician to the Pope.” It was a merciless satire against M. Maupertuis. Voltaire was entirely unscrupulous, and was perfect master of the language of sarcasm. No moral principle restrained him from exaggerating, misrepresenting, or fabricating any falsehoods which would subserve his purpose. M. Maupertuis was utterly overwhelmed with ridicule. The satire was so keen that few could read it without roars of laughter. Voltaire, the king’s guest, was thus exposing to the contempt of all Europe the president of the Berlin Academy, the reputation of which Academy was dear to the king above almost every thing else. An edition of the pamphlet was printed in Holland, and copies were scattered all over Berlin. Another edition was published in Paris, where thirty thousand copies were eagerly purchased.

Frederick was in a towering passion. Voltaire was alarmed at the commotion he had created. He wrote a letter to the king, in which he declared most solemnly that he had not intended to have the pamphlet published; that a copy had been obtained by treachery, and had been printed without his consent or knowledge. But the king wrote back:

“Your effrontery astonishes me. What you have done is clear as the day; and yet, instead of confessing your culpability, you persist in denying it. Do you think you can make people believe that black is white? All shall be made public. Then it will be seen whether, if your words deserve statues, your conduct does not deserve chains.”

The king, in his anger, ordered all the pamphlets in Berlin to be collected and burned by the common

hangman, in front of Voltaire's windows. Three months passed away, during which the parties remained in this deplorable state of antagonism. Voltaire was wretched, often confined to his bed, and looked like a skeleton. He was anxious to leave Berlin, but feared that the king would not grant him leave. He wrote to Frederick, stating that he was very sick, and wished to retire to the springs of Plombières for his health. The king curtly replied,

"There was no need of that pretext about the waters of Plombières in demanding your leave. You can quit my service when you like. But, before going, be so good as to return me the key, the cross, and the volume of verses which I confided to you.

"I wish that my works, and only they, had been what König attacked. I could sacrifice them with a great deal of willingness to persons who think of increasing their own reputation by lessening that of others. I have not the folly nor vanity of certain authors. The cabals of literary people seem to me the disgrace of literature. I do not the less esteem the honorable cultivators of literature. It is the cabalers and their leaders that are degraded in my eyes."

For some unexplained reason, soon after this, the king partially relented, and invited Voltaire to Potsdam. He allowed him to retain his cross and key, and said nothing about the return of the volume of poetry. This was a volume of which twelve copies only had been printed. On the 25th of March, 1753, Voltaire left Potsdam for Dresden.

In the following terms Thiebault describes their parting: The final interview between Frederick and Voltaire took place on the parade at Potsdam, where the king was then occupied with his soldiers. One of the attendants announced Voltaire to his majesty

with these words:

"Sire, here is Monsieur De Voltaire, who is come to receive the orders of your majesty."

Frederick turned to Voltaire and said, "Monsieur De Voltaire, are you still determined upon going?"

"Sire, affairs which I can not neglect, and, above all, the state of my health, oblige me to it."

"In that case, sir," replied the king, "I wish you a good journey."

Thus parted these remarkable men, who were never destined to meet again.

Voltaire, being safe out of Prussia, in the territory of the King of Poland, instead of hastening to Plombières, tarried in Dresden, and then in Leipsic. From those places he began shooting, through magazines, newspapers, and various other instrumentalities, his poisoned darts at M. Maupertuis. Though these malignant assaults, rapidly following each other, were anonymous, no one could doubt their authorship. M. Maupertuis, exasperated, wrote to him from Berlin on the 7th of April:

> "If it be true that you design to attack me again, I declare to you that I have still health enough to find you, wherever you are, and to take the most signal vengeance upon you. Thank the respect and obedience which have hitherto restrained my arm, and saved you from the worst adventure you have ever had.
>
> MAUPERTUIS."

Voltaire replied from Leipsic:

> "M. LE PRESIDENT,—I have had the honor to

> receive your letter. You inform me that you are well, and that, if I publish La Beaumelle's letter,[97] you will come and assassinate me. What ingratitude to your poor Doctor Akakia! If you exalt your soul so as to discern futurity, you will see that, if you come on that errand to Leipsic, where you are no better liked than in other places, you will run some risk of being hanged. Poor me, indeed, you will find in bed. But, as soon as I have gained a little strength, I will have my pistols charged, and, multiplying the mass by the square of velocity, so as to reduce the action and you to zero, I will put some lead into your head. It appears that you have need of it. Adieu, my president.
>
> AKAKIA."

There were some gross vulgarities in Voltaire's letter which we refrain from quoting. Both of these communications were printed and widely circulated, exciting throughout Europe contempt and derision. Voltaire had still the copy of the king's private poems. Frederick, quite irritated, and not knowing what infamous use Voltaire might make of the volume, which contained some very severe satires against prominent persons, and particularly against his uncle, the King of England, determined, at all hazards, to recover the book. He knew it would be of no avail to write to Voltaire to return it.

Voltaire, on his journey to Paris, would pass through Frankfort. Frederick secretly employed a Prussian officer to obtain from the authorities there the necessary powers, and to arrest him, and take from him the cross of Merit, the gold key of the chamberlain, and especially the volume of poems. The officer, M. Freytag, kept himself minutely

informed of Voltaire's movements. At eight o'clock in the evening of the 31st of May the illustrious philosopher arrived, with a small suite, traveling in considerable state, and stopped at the "Golden Lion." M. Freytag was on the spot. He was a man of distinction. He called upon Voltaire, and, after the interchange of the customary civilities, informed the poet that he was under the necessity of arresting him in the name of the King of Prussia, and detaining him until he should surrender the cross, the key, and the volume of poems. Voltaire was greatly annoyed. He professed warm friendship for the King of Prussia. Very reluctantly, and not until after several hours of altercation, he surrendered the key and the cross. The volume of poems he was very anxious indeed to retain, and affirmed that they were, he knew not where, with luggage he had left behind him in Leipsic or Dresden. He was informed that he would be detained as a prisoner until the volume was produced.

In a state of great exasperation, Voltaire wrote for a large trunk to be sent to him which contained the book. To save himself from the humiliation of being guarded as a prisoner, he gave his *parole d'honneur* that he would not go beyond the garden of the inn. After a delay of three weeks, Voltaire decided, notwithstanding his parole, to attempt his escape. His reputation was such that M. Freytag had no confidence in his word, and employed spies to watch his every movement.

On the 20th of June, Voltaire dressed himself in disguise, and, with a companion, M. Coligny, entered a hackney-coach, and ordered the driver to leave the city by the main gate. M. Freytag was immediately informed of this by his spies. With mounted men he

commenced the pursuit, overtook the carriage as it was delayed a moment at the gate, and arrested the fugitive in the king's name. Voltaire's eyes sparkled with fury, and he raved insanely. The scene gathered a crowd, and Voltaire was taken by a guard of soldiers to another inn, "The Billy-Goat," as the landlord of the "Golden Lion" refused any longer to entertain so troublesome a guest.

All Frankfort was excited by these events. The renown of Voltaire as a philosopher, a poet, and as the friend of Frederick, filled Europe. His eccentricities were the subject of general remark. The most distinguished men, by birth and culture, had paid him marked attention during his brief compulsory sojourn in Frankfort. Having arrived at "The Billy-Goat," his conduct, according to the report of M. Freytag, was that of a madman, in which attempted flight, feigned vomitings, and a cocked pistol took part. The account which Voltaire gave of these events is now universally pronounced to be grossly inaccurate.

On the 6th of July, the trunk having arrived, the volume of poems was recovered and Voltaire was allowed to go on his way. His pen, dipped in gall, was an instrument which even a monarch might fear. It inflicted wounds upon the reputation of Frederick which will probably never be healed. Four years passed away, during which Voltaire and Frederick were almost entirely strangers to each other.

The merciless satires of Voltaire, exposing Maupertuis to the ridicule of all Europe, proved death-blows to the sensitive philosopher. He was thrown into a state of great dejection, which induced disease, of which he died in 1759. Maupertuis needed this discipline. In the proud days of

prosperity he had rejected Christianity. In these hours of adversity, oppressed by humiliation and pain, and with the grave opening before him, he felt the need of the consolations of religion. Christian faith cheered the sadness of his dying hours.[98]

The Marquis D'Argens, another of Frederick's infidel companions, one whom Voltaire described as "the most frank atheist in Europe," after a very ignoble life of sin and shame, having quarreled with the king, found himself aged, poor, friendless, and infirm. He then, experiencing need of different support from any which infidelity could give, became penitent and prayerful. Renouncing his unbelief, he became an openly avowed disciple of Jesus.[99]

What effect was produced upon the mind of Frederick as he saw one after another of his boon companions in infidelity, in their hours of sickness and approaching death, seeking the consolations of religion, we do not know. The proud king kept his lips hermetically sealed upon that subject. Voltaire, describing the suppers of the gay revelers at Sans Souci, writes:

"Never was there a place in the world where liberty of speech was so fully indulged, or where the various superstitions of men were treated with so much ridicule and contempt. God was respected. But those who, in His name, had imposed on mankind, were not spared. Neither women nor priests ever entered the palace. In a word, Frederick lived without a court, without a council, and without a religion."

Prussia had enjoyed eight years of peace. But Frederick was not a popular man excepting with his own subjects. They idolized him. Innumerable are the anecdotes related illustrative of his kindness to

them. He seemed to be earnestly seeking their welfare. But foreign courts feared him. Many hated him. He was unscrupulous and grasping, and had but very little sense of moral integrity. He was ambitious of literary renown; of reputation as a keen satirist. With both pen and tongue he was prone to lash without mercy his brother sovereigns, and even the courtiers who surrounded him. There were no ties of friendship which could exempt any one from his sarcasm. Other sovereigns felt that he was continually on the watch to enlarge his realms, by invading their territories, as he had robbed Maria Theresa of the province of Silesia.

Some years before this time Frederick had taken possession of East Friesland, and had made Emden a port of entry. It was a very important acquisition, as it opened to Prussia a convenient avenue for maritime commerce. With great vigor and sagacity Frederick was encouraging this commerce, thus strengthening his kingdom and enriching his subjects. England, mistress of the seas, and then, as usual, at war with France, was covering all the adjacent waters with her war-ships and privateers. Frederick had inquired of the English court, through his embassador at London, whether hemp, flax, or timber were deemed contraband. "*No*," was the official response. Freighted with such merchandise, the Prussian ships freely sailed in all directions. But soon an English privateer seized several of them, upon the assumption that the *planks* with which they were loaded were contraband.

It was an outrage to which Frederick was not disposed to submit. He entered his remonstrances. The question was referred to the British Court of Admiralty. Month after month the decision was

delayed. Frederick lost all patience. English capitalists held Silesian bonds to the amount of about one million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

"I must have my ships back again," said Frederick to the British court. "The law's delay in England is, I perceive, very considerable. My people, who have had their property thus wrested from them, can not conveniently wait. I shall indemnify them from the money due on the Silesian bonds, and shall give England credit for the same. Until restitution is made, I shall not pay either principle or interest on those bonds."

The British court was frantic with rage. Frederick had a strong army on the frontiers of Hanover. The first hostile gun fired would be the signal for the invasion of that province, and it would inevitably be wrested from the British crown. The lion roared, but did not venture to use either teeth or claws. England was promptly brought to terms. It was grandly done of Frederick. There was something truly sublime in the quiet, noiseless, apparently almost indifferent air with which Frederick accomplished his purpose.

Maria Theresa was more and more unreconciled to the loss of Silesia. Never for an hour did she relinquish the idea of eventually regaining the province. The various treaties into which she had been compelled to enter she regarded as merely temporary arrangements. Between the years 1752 and 1755 the energetic and persistent queen was making secret arrangements for the renewal of the Silesian war.

The King of Poland, who was also Elector of Saxony, had strong feelings of personal hostility to Frederick. His prime minister, Count Von Brühl, even surpassed his royal master in the bitter antagonism

with which he regarded the Prussian monarch. Frederick, whose eagle eye was ever open, and whose restless mind was always on the alert, suspected that a coalition was about to be formed against him. He had false keys made to the royal archives at Dresden; bribed one of the officials there, M. Menzel, stealthily to enter the chamber of the archives, and copy for him such extracts as would throw any light upon the designs of the court. Among other items of intelligence, he found that Austria, Russia, and Poland were deliberating upon the terms of a coalition against him.

On the 15th of May, 1753, the Russian Senate had passed the resolution that it should henceforth be the policy of Russia not only to resist all further encroachments on the part of Prussia, but to seize the first opportunity to force the Prussian monarch back to the possession of simply his original boundary of Brandenburg. It was also agreed that, should Prussia attack any of the allies of Russia, or be attacked by any of them, the armies of the czar should immediately array themselves against the armies of Frederick. There were many other papers, more or less obscure, which rendered it very certain that Maria Theresa would ere long make a new attempt to regain Silesia, and that in that attempt she would be aided both by Russia and Poland. Frederick also knew full well that nothing would better please his uncle George II. of England than to see Prussia crowded back to her smallest limits. To add to Frederick's embarrassment, France was hopelessly alienated from him.

Many bitter words had already passed between Louis XV. and Frederick. But recently a new element of discord had appeared. The Duchess of Pompadour,

the guilty favorite of Louis XV., beautiful, fascinating, and wicked, had become a power in Europe, notwithstanding the ignoble position she occupied. This artful and enchanting woman, having the weak king completely under her control, was in reality the ruler of France. The proudest nobles and the highest ecclesiastics bowed submissively at her shrine. Even the immaculate Maria Theresa, constrained by state policy, wrote flattering notes to her, addressing her as “my cousin,” “princess and cousin,” “madame, my dearest sister.”

The pampered duchess sent by the French minister to Berlin a complimentary message to Frederick. He disdainfully replied: “The Duchess of Pompadour! who is she? I do not know her.” This was an offense never to be forgiven.

Frederick was now in imminent danger of being assailed by a coalition of Austria, Russia, Poland, and England. Indeed, it was by no means certain that France might not also join the alliance. All this was the result of Frederick’s great crime in wresting Silesia from Austria. Such was the posture of affairs when, in the summer of 1755, Frederick decided to take a trip into Holland incognito. He disguised himself with a black wig, and assumed the character of a musician of the King of Poland. At Amsterdam he embarked for Utrecht in the common passage-boat. The king mingled with the other passengers without any one suspecting his rank. There chanced to be in the boat a young Swiss gentleman, Henry de Catt, twenty-seven years of age. He was a teacher, taking a short tour for recreation. He gives the following account of his interview with the king, whom, at the time, he had no reason to suppose was other than an ordinary passenger. We give the

narrative in his own words:

"As I could not get into the cabin, because it was all engaged, I staid with the other passengers in the steerage, and the weather being fine, came upon deck. After some time there stepped out of the cabin a man in cinnamon-colored coat with gold buttons; in black wig; face and coat considerably dusted with Spanish snuff. He looked at me fixedly for a while, and then said, without farther preface, 'Who are you, sir?' This cavalier tone from an unknown person, whose exterior indicated nothing very important, did not please me, and I declined satisfying his curiosity. He was silent. But some time after he assumed a more courteous tone, and said, 'Come in here to me, sir. You will be better here than in the steerage amidst the tobacco-smoke.'

"This polite address put an end to all anger; and, as the singular manner of the man excited my curiosity, I took advantage of the invitation. We sat down and began to speak confidentially with one another.

"'Do you see the man in the garden yonder, sitting, smoking his pipe?' said he to me. 'That man, you may depend upon it, is not happy.'

"'I know not,' I answered; 'but it seems to me, until one knows a man, and is completely acquainted with his situation and his way of thought, one can not possibly determine whether he is happy or unhappy.'

"My gentleman admitted this, and led the conversation on to the Dutch government. He criticised it—probably to bring me to speak. I did speak, and gave him frankly to know that he was not perfectly instructed in the thing he was criticising.

"'You are right,' answered he; 'one can only criticise what one is thoroughly acquainted with.'

"He now began to speak of religion; and, with eloquent tongue, to recount what mischiefs scholastic philosophy had brought upon the world; then tried to prove that creation was impossible.

"At this last point I stood out in opposition. 'But how can one create something out of nothing?' said he.

"'That is not the question,' I answered. 'The question is, whether such a being as God can, or can not, give existence to what, as yet, has none.'

"He seemed embarrassed, and added, 'But the universe is eternal.'

"'You are in a circle,' said I. 'How will you get out of it?'

"'I skip over it,' he replied, laughing; and then began to talk of other things. He inquired,

"'What form of government do you reckon the best?'

"'The monarchic, if the king is just and enlightened.'

"'Very well,' said he; 'but where will you find kings of that sort?' And thereupon went into such a sally as could not in the least lead me to suppose that he was one. In the end, he expressed pity for them, that they could not know the sweets of friendship, and cited on the occasion these verses—his own, I suppose:

"'Amitié, plaisir des grandes âmes;
Amitié, que les rois, ces illustres ingrats

Sont assez malheureux de ne connaître pas!'

"'I have not the honor to be acquainted with kings,' said I; 'but, to judge from what one has read in history of several of them, I should believe, sir, on the whole, that you are right.'

"'Ah! yes, yes,' he added, 'I'm right. I know the gentlemen.'

"A droll incident happened during our dialogue. My gentleman wanted to let down a little sash window, and could not manage it. 'You do not understand that,' said I; 'let me do it.' I tried to get it down, but succeeded no better than he.

"'Sir,' said he, 'allow me to remark, on my side, that you understand as little of it as I.'

"'That is true,' I replied, 'and I beg your pardon. I was too rash in accusing you of a want of expertness.'

"'Were you ever in Germany?' he now asked me.

"'No,' I answered; 'but I should like to make that journey. I am very curious to see the Prussian states and their king, of whom one hears so much.' And now I began to launch out on Frederick's actions.

"But he interrupted me hastily with the word, 'Nothing more of kings, sir—nothing more. What have we to do with them? We will spend the rest of our voyage on more agreeable and cheering objects.' And now he spoke of the best of all possible worlds, and maintained that in our planet, earth, there was more evil than good. I maintained the contrary, and this discussion brought us to the end of the voyage.

"On quitting me he said, 'I hope, sir, you will leave me your name. I am very glad to have made

your acquaintance. Perhaps we shall see one another again.' I replied as was fitting to the compliment, and begged him to excuse me for having contradicted him a little. I then told him my name, and we parted."

How soon Henry learned that he had been conversing with the King of Prussia we do not know. It is evident that Frederick was pleased with the interview. He soon after invited Henry de Catt to his court, and appointed him reader to the king. In this capacity he served his Prussian majesty for about twenty years. He left a note-book in the royal archives of Berlin from which the above extracts are taken.

CHAPTER XXV.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.

Secret Preparations for a Coalition.—Frederick's Embarrassments.—The uncertain Support of England.—Causes of the War.—Commencement of Hostilities.—Letter from Frederick to his Sister Amelia.—Letter to his Brother.—The Invasion of Saxony.—Misfortunes of the Royal Family of Poland.—Battle of Lobositz.—Energetic Military Movements.—Prisoners of War compelled to enlist in the Prussian Service.—Dispatches from Frederick.—Battle of Prague.—Battle of Kolin.—Retreat of Frederick.—Death of Sophia Dorothea.

WE now enter upon the third Silesian war, usually termed in history The Seven Years' War. For four years Frederick had been aware that a coalition was secretly forming against him. Maria Theresa wished, with ardor which had never for one moment abated, to regain Silesia. All the other European powers, without exception, desired to curb Frederick, whose ambition they feared. They were well aware that he was taking advantage of a few years of peace to replenish his treasury, and to enlarge his army for new conquests. As we have before stated, Frederick, by bribery, had fully informed himself of the secret arrangements into which Austria, Russia, Poland,

and other powers were entering for the dismemberment of his realms. It is in vain to attempt to unravel the intricacies of the diplomacy which ensued.

England, while endeavoring to subsidize Russia against Frederick, entered secretly into a sort of alliance with Frederick, hoping thus to save Hanover. The Empress Elizabeth, of Russia, heartily united with Maria Theresa against Frederick, whom she personally disliked, and whose encroachments she dreaded. His Prussian majesty, proud of his powers of sarcasm, in his poems spared neither friend nor foe. He had written some very severe things against the Russian empress, which had reached her ears.[100]

Frederick was in great perplexity. To wait for his enemies to complete their arrangements, and to commence the attack at their leisure, placed him at great disadvantage. To begin the attack himself, and thus to open anew the floodgates of war, would increase the hostility with which the nations were regarding him. As the diplomacy of the foreign cabinets had been secret, he would universally be regarded as the aggressor. England was Frederick's only ally—a treacherous ally, influenced not by sympathy for Frederick, but by hatred of France, and by fear of the loss of Hanover. The British cabinet would abandon Prussia the first moment it should see it to be for its interest to do so.

The King of Prussia had an army of two hundred thousand men under perfect discipline. The Old Dessauer was dead, but many veteran generals were in command. It was manifest that war would soon burst forth. In addition to the personal pique of the Duchess of Pompadour, who really ruled France, Louis XV. was greatly exasperated by the secret

alliance into which Frederick had entered with England. The brother of the Prussian king, Augustus William, the heir-apparent to the throne, disapproved of this alliance. He said to the French minister, Valori, “I would give a finger from my hand had it never been concluded.”

In July, 1756, Frederick, for form’s sake, inquired, through his embassador at Vienna, why Maria Theresa was making such formidable military preparations. At the same time he conferred with two of his leading generals, Schwerin and Retzow, if it would not be better, since it was certain that Austria and Russia would soon declare war, to anticipate them by an attack upon Austria. The opinion of both, which was in perfect accord with that of the king, was that it was best immediately to seize upon Saxony, and in that rich and fertile country to gather magazines, and make it the base for operations in Bohemia.

A spy was sent to Saxony, who reported that there were but twenty thousand troops there. All necessary information was promptly and secretly obtained in reference to roads and fortresses. It required three weeks to receive an answer from Vienna. The reply was evasive, as Frederick knew that it would be. In the mean time, his Prussian majesty, with characteristic energy, had mustered on the frontier an army numbering in the aggregate nearly one hundred and fifty thousand men. These troops, in three divisions, with two thousand pieces of artillery, were to make a rush upon Saxony. Among the directions given by Frederick to the leaders of these divisions were the following:

“Each regiment shall take but one baggage-cart for a company. No officer, whoever he may be or

whatever his title, shall take with him the least of silver plate, not even a silver spoon. Whoever wants to keep table, great or small, must manage the same with tin utensils, without exception, be he who he will."

On the 25th of August, 1756, the king wrote from Potsdam to his brother, the Prince of Prussia, and his sister Amelia, who were at Berlin, as follows:

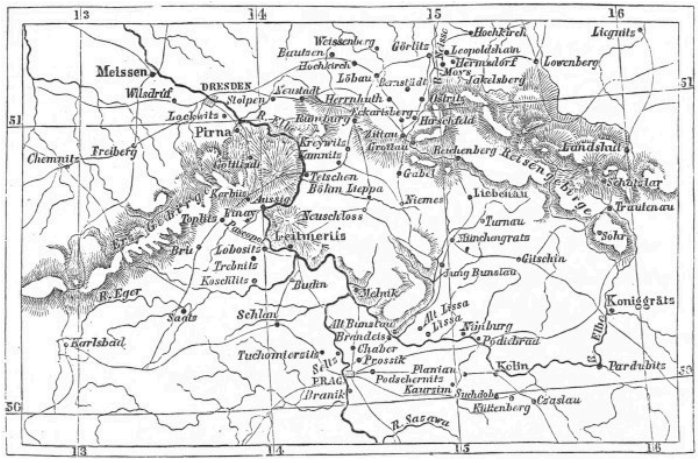
"MY DEAR BROTHER, MY DEAR SISTER,—I write you both at once for want of time. I have as yet received no answer from Vienna. I shall not get it till to-morrow. But I count myself surer of war than ever, as the Austrians have named their generals, and their army is ordered to march to Königgrätz. So that, expecting nothing else but a haughty answer, or a very uncertain one, on which there will be no reliance possible, I have arranged every thing for setting out on Saturday next."

Upon the ensuing day, having received the answer from Vienna, he wrote to his brother:

"You have seen the paper I have sent to Vienna. Their answer is, that they have not made an offensive alliance with Russia against me. Of the assurance that I required there is not one word, so that the sword alone can cut this Gordian knot. I am innocent of this war. I have done what I could to avoid it; but, whatever be one's love of peace, one can not, and one must not, sacrifice to that safety and honor. At present our one thought must be to wage war in such a way as may cure our enemies of their wish to break peace again too soon."

On Saturday morning, August 28, 1756, the Prussian army, over one hundred thousand strong, entered Saxony at three different points on the

northern frontier. Frederick, with about sixty thousand troops, crossed the Elbe at Torgau, and seized upon Leipsic. Duke Ferdinand, of Hanover, led his columns across the frontier about eighty miles to the right. The Duke of Brunswick-Bevern crossed about the same distance to the left. Each column was stronger than the whole Saxon army. The appointed place of rendezvous for the three divisions was the city of Dresden, the capital of Saxony. By the route marked out, each column had a distance of about one hundred and fifty miles to traverse.



THE INVASION OF SAXONY.

"Thus," writes Voltaire, "Frederick invaded Saxony under the pretense of friendship, and that he might make war upon Maria Theresa with the money of which he should rob the Saxons."

Not a soldier appeared to oppose the invaders. The Prussians seized, in an unobstructed march, all the most important Saxon towns and fortresses. The King of Poland and his court, with less than twenty

thousand troops, had fled from the capital up the river, which here runs from the south to Pirna, where they concentrated their feeble army, which numbered but eighteen thousand men. Frederick, with his resistless column, entered Dresden on the 9th of September. The queen had remained in the palace. The keys of the archives were demanded of her. She refused to surrender them. The officers proceeded to break open the door. The queen placed herself before the door. The officers, shrinking from using personal violence, sent to Frederick for instructions. He ordered them to force the archives, whatever opposition the queen, in person, might present. The queen, to avoid a rude assault, withdrew. The door was forced, and the archives seized.

"The king found," writes Voltaire, "*testimonies of the dread which he had occasioned*. The queen died soon after of grief. All Europe pitied that unfortunate family. But in the course of those public calamities millions of families experienced hardships not less great, though more obscure."[101]

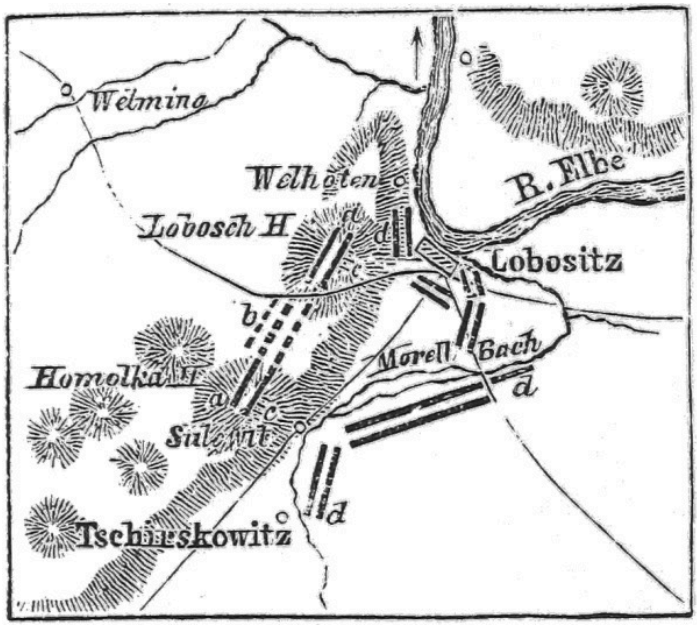
Thus was commenced the Seven Years' War. It proved one of the most bloody and cruel strifes which man has ever waged against his brother man. Through its terrible scenes of conflagration, blood, and despair, Frederick obtained the renown of being one of the ablest generals who ever marshaled armies upon fields of blood.

His Polish majesty had placed his feeble band of troops in the vicinity of Pirna, on the Elbe, amidst the defiles of a mountainous country, where they could easily defend themselves against superior numbers. Winter was rapidly approaching. In those high latitudes and among those bleak hills the storms

of winter ever raged with terrible severity. The Austrians were energetically accumulating their forces in Bohemia to act against the Prussians. The invasion of Saxony by Frederick, without any apparent provocation, roused all Europe to intensity of hatred and of action.

His Prussian majesty carefully examined the position of the Saxons. They were in a region of precipices and chasms, broken into a labyrinth of sky-piercing and craggy rocks. The eminences, in some cases, rose two thousand feet, and were covered with pine forests. “There is no stronger position in the world,” Frederick writes. All these passes were fortified, mile after mile, by batteries, ramparts, palisades, and abattis. But the Saxon troops, taken unawares, had but a small supply of provisions. Frederick decided to block every entrance to their encampment, and thus to starve them out. His Polish majesty sent frantic cries to France and Austria for help. Frederick was assailed with the title of the “Prussian robber.”

The Dauphiness of France was daughter of the King of Poland. With tears she craved protection for her parents. The Duchess of Pompadour was anxious to show her gratitude to Maria Theresa, who had condescended to address her as a “cousin and a dear sister.” A French army of one hundred thousand men was soon on the march to aid Austria in the liberation of Saxony. At the same time, an Austrian army of sixty thousand men, under Marshal Browne, was advancing rapidly from Bohemia to penetrate the fastnesses of the mountains for the release of the Polish king.



BATTLE OF LOBOSITZ, OCT. 1, 1756.

a a. Prussian Infantry, b. Cavalry, c c. Artillery. d d. Austrian Army.

On Friday, the 1st of October, 1756, the Prussian army under Frederick, leaving the Saxons besieged in their encampment, marched up the river to meet the foe advancing to the aid of the Saxons. They encountered the Austrians, under Marshal Browne, at Lobositz, about thirty miles south of Pirna. A terrible battle of seven hours' duration ensued. The opposing generals were of nearly equal ability. The soldiers were equal in courage. The carnage of the bloody conflict was almost equal on either side. The desperation of the Prussian assault was resistless. Bayonet often crossed bayonet. The Austrians were driven from their strong position into the city. The Prussians laid the city in ashes. As the Austrians fled

from the blazing streets, many, endeavoring to swim across the Elbe, were drowned. At the close of this bloody strife General Browne withdrew his army to the rear, where he still presented a defiant front to the Prussians. He had lost from his ranks, in killed and wounded, two thousand nine hundred and eighty-four. The loss of Frederick was still greater; it numbered three thousand three hundred and eight. Neither party would confess to a defeat.

"Never have my troops," writes Frederick, "done such miracles of valor, cavalry as well as infantry, since I had the honor to command them. By this dead-lift achievement I have seen what they can do."

The Prussians remained at Lobositz nearly a fortnight, to see if Marshal Browne would again attempt to force the defiles. The Saxon troops, for whose relief the Austrians were advancing, were about thirty miles farther north, on the south, or left bank of the Elbe. The news of the repulse of Marshal Browne at Lobositz fell disastrously upon their starving ranks. Maria Theresa was much distressed. She sent a messenger to her Austrian general to relieve the Saxons at whatever cost. A confidential messenger was dispatched through the mountains to the Saxon camp, which he reached in safety. He informed his Polish majesty that Marshal Browne, with a picked force of eight thousand, horse and foot, would march by a circuitous route of sixty miles, so as to approach Pirna from the northeast, where but a small Prussian force was stationed. He would be there without fail on the 11th of August.

The Saxons were directed to cross the Elbe, by a sudden and unexpected march at Königstein, a few miles from Pirna. Immediately upon effecting the passage of the river they were to fire two cannon as a

signal that the feat was accomplished. The Saxon and Austrian troops were then to form a junction, and co-operate in crushing the few Prussian bands which were left there as a guard. The Saxon troops would thus be rescued from the trap in which they were inclosed, and from the famine which was devouring them.

Marshal Browne skillfully and successfully performed his part of the adventure. But there was no efficient co-operation by the Saxons. The men were weak, emaciate, and perishing from hunger. Their sinews of exertion were paralyzed. The skeleton horses could not draw the wagons or the guns. To add to their embarrassment, a raging storm of wind and rain burst upon the camp. The roads were converted into quagmires. The night was pitch-dark as the Saxons, about fourteen thousand in number, drenched with rain and groping through the mud, abandoned their camp and endeavored to steal their way across the river. The watchful Prussians detected the movement. A scene of confusion, terror, slaughter ensued, which it is in vain to endeavor to describe. The weeping skies and moaning winds indicated nature's sympathy with these scenes of woe. Still the unhappy Saxons struggled on heroically. After seventy hours of toilsome marching and despairing conflict, these unhappy peasant-lads, the victims of kingly pride, were compelled to surrender at discretion. Marshal Browne, finding the enterprise an utter failure, rapidly returned to the main body of his army.

Frederick was much embarrassed in deciding what to do with his captives. They numbered about fourteen thousand. To guard and feed them was too troublesome and expensive. They could not be

exchanged, as the King of Poland had no Prussian prisoners. To set them at liberty would speedily place them in the Austrian ranks to fight against him. Under these circumstances, Frederick compelled them all to enlist as Prussian soldiers. He *compelled* them to do this *voluntarily*, for they had their choice either to enlist under his banners or to starve. The King of Poland was permitted to return to Warsaw. The electorate of Saxony, nearly as large as the State of Massachusetts, and containing a population of one and a half millions, was annexed to Prussia. The captured soldiers, prisoners of war, were dressed in Prussian uniform, commanded by Prussian officers, and either placed in garrison or in the ranks of the army in the field. The public voice of Europe condemned Frederick very severely for so unprecedented an act.

"Think of the sounds," writes Carlyle, "uttered from human windpipes, shrill with rage, some of them, hoarse others with ditto; of the vituperations, execrations, printed and vocal—grating harsh thunder upon Frederick and this new course of his. Huge melody of discords, shrieking, groaning, grinding on that topic through the afflicted universe in general."

Voltaire embraced the opportunity of giving vent to his malice in epigrams and lampoons. Frederick was by no means insensible to public opinion, but he was ever willing to brave that opinion if by so doing he could accomplish his ambitious ends.

After this signal achievement his Prussian majesty established his army in winter quarters along the banks of the Elbe. He took up his abode in the palace of Dresden, awaiting the opening of the spring campaign. Saxony was held with a tight grasp, and

taxes and recruits were gathered from the country as if it had always belonged to Prussia. Frederick had hoped that his sudden campaign would have led him into the heart of the Austrian states. Instead of this, though he had wrested Saxony from Poland, he had given Austria ample time to prepare her armies for a long war, and had roused all Europe to intense hostility against him.

It became more and more manifest to Frederick that he must encounter a terrible conflict upon the opening of the spring. Early in January he took a short trip to Berlin, but soon returned to Dresden. Though he avoided all appearance of anxiety, and kept up a cheerful air, he was fully conscious of his peril. This is evident from the secret instructions he left with his minister, Count Finck, upon his departure from Berlin. The dispatch was dated January 10th, 1757:

“Should it chance that my army in Saxony were beaten, or that the French should get possession of Hanover, and threaten us with invasion from that quarter, or that the Russians should get through by Neumark, you are to save the royal family and the archives. Should we be beaten in Saxony, remove the royal family to Cüstrin. Should the Russians enter by Neumark, or a misfortune befall us in the Lausitz, all must go to Magdeburg, but not till the last extremity. The garrison, the royal family, and the treasure must be kept together. In such a case, the silver plate and the gold plate must at once be coined into money.

“If I am killed, affairs must go on without alteration. If I should be taken prisoner, I forbid you from paying the least regard to my person, or paying the least heed to what I may write from my place of detention. Should such misfortune happen to me, I

wish to sacrifice myself for the state. You must obey my brother. He, as well as all my ministers and generals, shall answer to me with their heads not to offer any province or ransom for me, but to continue the war, pushing their advances as if I had never existed in the world."

Two days after committing this important document to Count Finck, Frederick took leave of his mother and his brother. His mother he never saw again. We have no evidence that on this visit he even called upon his irreproachable, amiable, neglected wife. In preparation for the worst, Frederick had provided poison for himself, and wore it constantly about his person. It consisted of several small pills in a glass tube. This fact is fully established.

All Europe, England alone excepted, was aroused against him. Armies were every where being marshaled. The press of all continental Europe was filled with denunciations of his crimes and encroachments. Not all his efforts to assume a careless air could efface from his countenance the impression left there by the struggles of his soul. His features, as seen in a portrait painted about this time, are expressive of the character of an anxious and unhappy man.

Early in the spring of 1757, France, Russia, Austria, Poland, and Sweden were combined against Frederick. These countries represented a population of one hundred millions. Frederick's domains contained but five millions. His annual revenue was but about ten million dollars. He had an army in the field of one hundred and fifty thousand of the best troops in the world. His fortresses were garrisoned by about fifty thousand of inferior quality. The armies of the allies numbered four hundred and

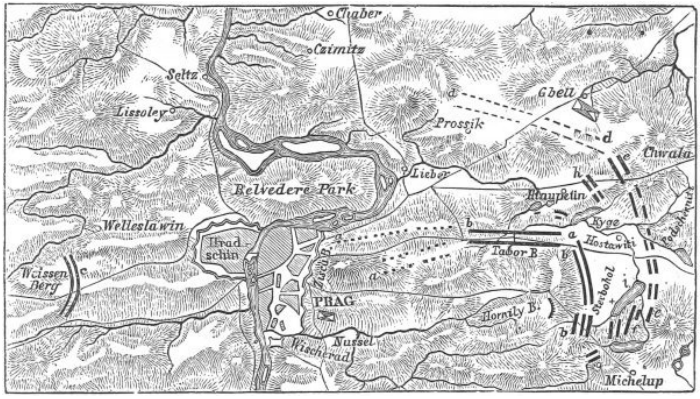
thirty thousand. Frederick was regarded as an outlaw. The design of the allies was to crush him, and to divide his territory between them. Austria was to retake Silesia. France was to have the Wesel-Cleve country. Russia was to annex to her domains Prussen, Königsberg, etc. Poland, having regained Saxony, was to add to her territory Magdeburg and Halle. Sweden was to have Pomerania. Never before had there appeared such a combination against any man. The situation of Frederick seemed desperate.

France was first in the field with a superb host of one hundred and ten thousand men. The other powers speedily followed. In four great armies of invasion these hosts pressed upon Prussia from the southeast and southwest, the northeast and northwest. The Russian battalions were one hundred thousand strong. The Austrian army was still more formidable.

It was supposed, that Frederick would remain in Saxony on the defensive against the Austrians, who were rapidly gathering their army at Prague, in Bohemia. The city was situated upon the River Moldau, one of the tributaries of the Elbe, and was about sixty miles south of Dresden.

On the 20th of April, Frederick, having secretly placed his army in the best possible condition, commenced a rapid march upon Prague, thus plunging into the very heart of Bohemia. He advanced in three great columns up the valley of the Elbe and the Moldau. His movements were so rapid and unexpected that he seized several Austrian magazines which they had not even time to burn. Three months' provisions were thus obtained for his whole army. The first column, under the king, was sixty thousand strong. The second column, led by

General Bevern, numbered twenty-three thousand, horse and foot. The third, under Marshal Schwerin, counted thirty-two thousand foot and twelve thousand horse. On the 2d of May the banners of Frederick were seen from the steeples of Prague. They appeared floating from the heights of the Weissenberg, a few miles west of the city. At the same time, the other two columns, which had united under Marshal Schwerin, appeared on the east side of the Moldau, upon both banks of which the city is built.



THE BATTLE OF PRAGUE, MAY 6, 1757.

a a a. First position of Austrian Army. b b b. Second position to meet the Prussian Attack. c. Prussians under Keith. d d. First position of Prussian Army. e e. Second position of Prussian Army. f. Schwerin's Prussians. g. Prussian Horse. h. Mannstein's Attack. i. Place of Schwerin's Monument.

On the 5th of May, after careful reconnoissance, Frederick crossed the Moldau several miles north of Prague. He went over upon pontoons unopposed, and thus effected a junction with his troops on the east side of the river. The Austrian army was drawn up on

some formidable heights but a short distance east of the city. Their position was very strong, and they were thoroughly intrenched. On the 6th of May the dreadful battle of Prague was fought. For many years, as not a few of our readers will remember, it was fought over and over again upon all the pianos in Christendom. They will remember the awe with which, as children, they listened to the tumult of the battle, swelling forth from the ivory keys, with the rattle of musketry, the booming of the cannon, and the groans of the dying—such groans as even the field of battle itself could scarcely have rivaled.

The final and decisive struggle took place on and around two important eminences, called the Sterbohol Hill and the Homoly Hill. Both of these heights the Prussians stormed. In the following glowing words Carlyle pictures the scene:

"Fearful tugging, swagging, and swaying is conceivable in this Sterbohol problem! And, after long scanning, I rather judge that it was in the wake of that first repulse that the veteran Schwerin himself got his death. No one times it for us; but the fact is unforgetable; and in the dim whirl of sequences dimly places itself there. Very certain it is 'at sight of his own regiment in retreat,' Field-marshal Schwerin seized the colors, as did other generals, who are not named, that day. Seizes the colors, fiery old man: 'This way, my sons!' and rides ahead along the straight dam again; his 'sons' all turning, and with hot repentance following. 'On, my children, this way!' Five bits of grape-shot, deadly each of them, at once hit the old man; dead he sinks there on his flag; and will never fight more.

"'This way!' storm the others with hot tears; Adjutant Von Platen takes the flag: Platen too is

instantly shot; but another takes it. ‘This way, on!’ in wild storm of rage and grief; in a word, they managed to do the work at Sterbohol, they and the rest. First line, second line, infantry, cavalry (and even the very horses, I suppose), fighting inexpressibly; conquering one of the worst problems ever seen in war. For the Austrians too, especially their grenadiers there, stood to it toughly, and fought like men; and ‘every grenadier that survived of them,’ as I read afterward, ‘got double pay for life.’

“Done, that Sterbohol work; those foot-chargings, horse-chargings; that battery of Homoly Hill; and, hanging upon that, all manner of redoubts and batteries to the rightward and rearward; but how it was done no pen can describe, nor any intellect in clear sequence understand. An enormous *mêlée* there: new Prussian battalions charging, and ever new, irrepressible by case-shot, as they successively get up; Marshal Browne, too, sending for new battalions at double-quick from his left, disputing stiffly every inch of his ground, till at length (hour not given), a cannon shot tore away his foot, and he had to be carried into Prague, mortally wounded. Which probably was a most important circumstance, or the most important of all.”

“This battle,” writes Frederick, “which began toward nine in the morning, was one of the bloodiest of the age. The enemy lost twenty-four thousand men, of whom four thousand were prisoners. The Prussian loss amounted to eighteen thousand fighting men, without counting Marshal Schwerin, who was alone worth above ten thousand. This day saw the pillars of the Prussian infantry cut down.”

Immediately after the battle, Frederick wrote rather a stately letter to his mother, informing her of

his victory, and that he was about to pursue the foe with a hundred and fifty thousand men. Fifty thousand of the defeated Austrians entered Prague, and stood at bay behind its ramparts. Frederick seized all the avenues, that no provisions could enter the city, convinced that starvation, combined with a vigorous assault, would soon compel the garrison to surrender themselves, the city, and all its magazines. On the 9th of May the bombardment with red-hot balls commenced. The siege lasted six weeks, creating an amount of misery over which angels might weep. The balls of fire were constantly kindling wide and wasting conflagrations. Soon a large portion of the city presented only a heap of smouldering ruins.

Besides the garrison of fifty thousand there were eighty thousand inhabitants in the city, men, women, and children. Large numbers perished. Some died of starvation; some were burned to death in their blazing dwellings; some were torn to pieces by shot and shell; some were buried beneath the ruins of their houses. In the stillness of the night the wails and groans of the sufferers were borne on the breeze to the ears of the Prussians in their intrenched camp. Starvation brought pestilence, which caused the death of thousands. The inhabitants, reduced to this state of awful misery, entreated the Austrian general to surrender. He refused, but forced out of the gates twelve thousand skeleton, starving people, who consumed the provisions, but could not contribute to the defense. Frederick drove the poor creatures back again at the point of the bayonet, threatening to shoot them all. The cruel act was deemed a necessity of war.

Maria Theresa, anxious to save Prague, sent an

army of sixty thousand men under General Daun to its relief. This army, on the rapid march, had reached Kolin, about fifty miles east of Prague. Should General Daun, as was his plan, attack Frederick in the rear, while the fifty thousand in Prague should sally out and attack him in front, ruin would be almost inevitable. Frederick, gathering thirty-four thousand men, marched rapidly to Kolin and attacked the foe with the utmost possible fierceness. The Austrians not only nearly twice outnumbered him, but were also in a very commanding position, protected by earthworks. Never did men fight more reckless of life than did the Prussians upon this occasion.

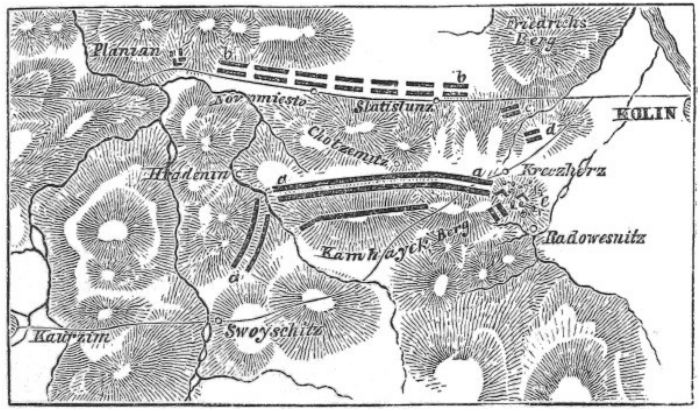
"And so from right wing to left," writes Carlyle, "miles long there is now universal storm of volleying, bayonet charging, thunder of artillery, case-shot, cartridge-shot, and sulphurous devouring whirlwind; the wrestle very tough and furious, especially on the assaulting side. Here, as at Prague, the Prussian troops were one and all in the fire, each doing strenuously his utmost. There is no reserve left. All is gone up into one combustion. To fan the fire, to be here, there, fanning the fire where need shows, this is now Frederick's function. This death-wrestle lasted, perhaps, four hours; till seven, or perhaps eight o'clock, of a June evening."

Frederick exposed himself like a common soldier. Indeed, it sometimes seems that, in the desperate state of his affairs, he sought the fatal bullet. All his efforts against the Austrians were in vain. The Prussians were repulsed with dreadful slaughter. After losing fourteen thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, forty-five cannon, and twenty-two flags, Frederick was compelled to order a

retreat. His magnificent regiment of guards, one thousand in number, picked men, undoubtedly the best body of troops in the world, was almost annihilated. The loss of the Austrians was about nine thousand men. They were so accustomed to be defeated by Frederick that they were equally surprised and delighted by this dearly-earned victory. The following plan will give the military reader an idea of the position of the hostile forces.

Still the conquerors had such dread of their foe that they dared not emerge from their ramparts to pursue him. Had they done so, they might easily have captured or slain his whole army. Frederick bore adversity with great apparent equanimity. He did not for a moment lose self-control, or manifest any agitation. With great skill he conducted his retreat. Immediately after the battle he wrote to his friend Lord Marischall:

> "Prosperity, my dear lord, often inspires a dangerous confidence. Twenty-three battalions were not sufficient to drive sixty thousand men from their intrenchments. Another time we will take our precautions better. Fortune has this day turned her back upon me. I ought to have expected it. She is a female, and I am not gallant. What say you to this league against the Margrave of Brandenburg? How great would be the astonishment of the great elector if he could see his great-grandson at war at the same time with the Russians, the Austrians, almost all Germany, and one hundred thousand French auxiliaries! I do not know whether it will be disgraceful in me to be overcome, but I am sure there will be no great glory in vanquishing me."[102]



BATTLE OF KOLIN, JUNE 18, 1757.

a a. Austrian Army, b b. Prussian Army. c. Ziethen's Hussars. d. Nadasti's Hussars. e. The Oak Wood.

Frederick retreated down the banks of the Elbe, and sent couriers to the camp at Prague, ordering the siege immediately to be raised, and the troops to retire down the Moldau to join him at Leitmeritz. The news was received at the camp at two o'clock on Sunday morning, June 19, creating amazement and consternation. As Frederick was on his retreat with his broken battalions from the field of battle, parched with thirst, burning with heat, and smothered with dust, it is recorded that an old dragoon brought to the king, in his steel cap, some water which he had drawn from a well, saying to his sovereign, consolingly,

"Never mind, sire, God Almighty and we will mend this yet. The enemy may get a victory for once, but that does not send us to the devil."

At Nimburg, about twenty miles from Kolin, where the retiring Prussians were crossing the Elbe, Frederick sat upon a green mound, lost in thought, as

his troops defiled before him. He was scratching figures upon the sand with his stick.



AFTER THE DEFEAT.

"Raising his eyes," says Archenholtz, "he surveyed, with speechless emotion, the small remnant of his life-guard of foot, his favorite battalion. It was one thousand strong yesterday morning, hardly four hundred now. All the soldiers of this chosen battalion were personally known to him—their names, their age, their native place, their history. In one day death had mowed them down. They had fought like heroes, and it was for him they had died. His eyes were visibly wet. Down his face

rolled silent tears."

Suddenly dashing the tears away, he issued his swift orders, and, mounting his horse, galloped to Prague, where he arrived Sunday evening. The next day the siege was raised, and the besieging troops were on the retreat north into Saxony. The whole army was soon rendezvoused at Leitmeritz, on the Elbe, about thirty miles south of Dresden. Here Frederick awaited the development of the next movement of his foes.

He had hardly arrived at Leitmeritz ere he received the tidings of the death of Sophia Dorothea, his mother. She died at Berlin on the 28th of June, 1757, in the seventy-first year of her age. This grief, coming in the train of disasters which seemed to be overwhelming his Prussian majesty, affected him very deeply. Frederick was subdued and softened by sorrow. He remembered the time when a mother's love rocked his cradle, and wrapped him around with tender care. The reader will be surprised to learn that his grief—perhaps with some comminglings of remorse—was so great that he shut himself in his closet, and wept with sobbings like a child.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DEFEATS AND PERILS.

Grief of the King over his Mother's Death.—Interesting Letters.—Forces in the Field.—The March upon Dresden.—Devotion of Wilhelmina.—Atheism of the King.—Wilhelmina to Voltaire.—Despair of Frederick.—Great Victory of Rossbach.—Description of the Battle.—Utter Rout of the Allies.—Elation of Frederick.—His Poem on the Occasion.—Ravages of War.

THE tidings of the death of the king's mother reached him on the 2d of July, 1757. Sir Andrew Mitchell, the English embassador in Berlin, gives the following account of an interview he had with Frederick on that occasion:

"Yesterday, July 3d, the king sent for me, in the afternoon, the first time he has seen any body since the news came. I had the honor to remain with him in his closet. I must own I was most sensibly affected to see him indulging his grief, and giving way to the warmest filial affections; recalling to mind the many obligations he had to her late majesty; all she had suffered, and how nobly she had borne it; the good she did to every body; the one comfort he now had, that he tried to make her last years more agreeable."



SOPHIA DOROTHEA.

On the 1st of July, the day before the king heard of his mother's death, he wrote to Wilhelmina, in reply to a letter from her which expressed great anxiety on his account:

"Dear sister, fear nothing on my score. Men are always in the hand of what we call destiny. Accidents will befall people walking on the streets, sitting in their room, lying on their bed; and there are many who escape the perils of war."

Again, on the 5th of July, he wrote: "I write to apprise you, my dear sister, of the new grief that overwhelms us. We have no longer a mother. This

loss puts the crown on my sorrows. I am obliged to act, and have not time to give free course to my tears. Judge, I pray you, of the situation of a feeling heart put to so severe a trial. All losses in the world are capable of being remedied, but those which death causes are beyond the reach of hope."

On the 7th of July he wrote again to Wilhelmina. The letter reveals the anxiety of his heart, and his earnest desire to escape, if possible, from his embarrassments. Wilhelmina had written, offering her services to endeavor to secure peace. The king replied:

"You are too good. I am ashamed to abuse your indulgence. But do, since you are willing, try and sound the French, and learn what conditions of peace they would demand. Send that Mirabeau[103] to France. Willingly will I pay the expense. He may offer as much as five million thalers [$3,750,000] to the Favorite[104] for peace alone."

Soon after this, Frederick again wrote to his sister a letter which throws so much light upon his character that we give it almost entire:

"Leitmeritz, July 13, 1757.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Your letter has arrived. I see in it your regrets for the irreparable loss we have had of the best and worthiest mother in this world. I am so overwhelmed by these blows from within and without that I feel myself in a sort of stupefaction.

"The French have seized upon Friesland, and are about to pass the Weser. They have instigated the Swedes to declare war against me. The Swedes are sending seventeen thousand men into Pomerania. The Russians are besieging Memel.

General Schwald has them on his front and in his rear. The troops of the empire are also about to march. All this will force me to evacuate Bohemia so soon as that crowd of enemies gets into motion.

"I am firmly resolved on the utmost efforts to save my country. Happy the moment when I took to training myself in philosophy. There is nothing else that can sustain a soul in a situation like mine. I spread out to you, my dear sister, the detail of my sorrows. If these things regarded myself only, I could stand it with composure. But I am the bound guardian of the happiness of a people which has been put under my charge. There lies the sting of it. And I shall have to reproach myself with every fault if, by delay or by overhaste, I occasion the smallest accident.

"I am in the condition of a traveler who sees himself surrounded and ready to be assassinated by a troop of cut-throats, who intend to share his spoils. Since the league of Cambrai[105] there is no example of such a conspiracy as that infamous triumvirate, Austria, France, Russia, now forms against me. Was it ever before seen that three great princes laid plot in concert to destroy a fourth who had done nothing against them? I have not had the least quarrel either with France or with Russia, still less with Sweden.

"Happy, my dear sister, is the obscure man whose good sense, from youth upward, has renounced all sorts of glory; who, in his safe and humble place, has none to envy him, and whose fortune does not excite the cupidity of scoundrels. But these reflections are vain. We have to be what our birth, which decides, has made us in entering upon this world.

"I beg a thousand pardons, my dear sister. In

> these three long pages I talk to you of nothing but my troubles and affairs. A strange abuse it would be of any other person's friendship. But yours, my dear sister, is known to me; and I am persuaded that you are not impatient when I open to you my heart—a heart which is yours altogether, being filled with sentiments of the tenderest esteem, with which I am, my dearest sister, your
>
> "FREDERICK."

At this time the whole disposable force of his Prussian majesty did not exceed eighty thousand men. There were marching against him combined armies of not less, in the aggregate, than four hundred thousand. A part of the Prussian army, about thirty thousand strong, under the king's eldest brother, Augustus William, Prince of Prussia, was sent north, especially to protect Zittau, a very fine town of about ten thousand inhabitants, where Frederick had gathered his chief magazines. Prince Charles, with seventy thousand Austrians, pursued this division. He outgeneraled the Prince of Prussia, drove him into wild country roads, took many prisoners, captured important fortresses, and, opening a fire of red-hot shot upon Zittau, laid the whole place, with its magazines, in ashes. The Prince of Prussia, who witnessed the conflagration which he could not prevent, retreated precipitately toward Lobau, and thence to Bautzen, with his army in a deplorable condition of exhaustion and destitution.

Here Frederick, with the remainder of the army from Leitmeritz, joined his brother, against whom he was greatly incensed, attributing the disasters he had encountered to his incapacity. At four o'clock of the 30th of July the king met the Prince of Prussia and the other generals of the discomfited army. Both

parties approached the designated spot on horseback. The king, who was accompanied by his suite, upon his arrival within about two hundred feet of the place where his brother, with his officers, was awaiting him, without saluting the prince or recognizing him in the slightest degree, dismounted, and threw himself in a reclining posture upon the greensward. General Goltz was then sent with the following message to the prince:

"His majesty commands me to inform your royal highness that he has cause to be greatly discontented with you; that you deserve to have a court-martial held over you, which would sentence you and all your generals to death; but that his majesty will not carry the matter so far, being unable to forget that in the chief general he has a brother."

Augustus William, overwhelmed by his disgrace, and yet angered by the rebuke, coldly replied that he desired only that a court-martial should investigate the case and pronounce judgment. The king forbade that any intercourse whatever should take place between his own troops, soldiers, or officers, and those of his brother, who, he declared, had utterly degraded themselves by the loss of all courage and ambition. The prince sent to the king General Schultz to obtain the countersign for the army. Frederick refused to receive him, saying "that he had no countersign to send to cowards." Augustus William then went himself to present his official report and a list of his troops. Frederick took the papers without saying a word, and then turned his back upon his brother. This cruel treatment fell with crushing force upon the unhappy prince. Conscious of military failure, disgraced in the eyes of his generals and soldiers, and abandoned by the king, his health and

spirits alike failed him. The next morning he wrote a sad, respectfully reproachful letter to Frederick, stating that his health rendered it necessary for him to retire for a season from the army to recruit. The reply of the king, which was dated Bautzen, July 30, 1757, shows how desperate he, at that time, considered the state of his affairs. Hopeless of victory, he seems to have sought only death.

> "MY DEAR BROTHER,—Your bad conduct has greatly injured my affairs. It is not the enemy, but your ill-concerted measures, which have done me this harm. My generals also are inexcusable, whether they gave you bad advice or only suffered you to come to such injudicious resolutions. In this sad situation it only remains for me to make a last attempt. I must hazard a battle. If we can not conquer, we must all of us have ourselves killed.
>
> "I do not complain of your heart, but of your incapacity, and of the little judgment you have shown in making your decisions. A man who has but a few days to live need not dissemble. I wish you better fortune than mine has been, and that all the miseries and bad adventures you have had may teach you to treat important matters with greater care, sense, and resolution than you have hitherto done. The greatest part of the calamities which I now apprehend comes only from you. You and your children will suffer more from them than I shall. Be persuaded, nevertheless, that I have always loved you, and that with these sentiments I shall die.
>
> FREDERICK."

Upon the reception of this letter, the prince, without replying to it, verbally asked leave, through

one of his officers, to throw up his commission and retire to his family in Berlin. The king scornfully replied, “Let him go; he is fit for nothing else.” In the deepest dejection the prince returned to his home. Rapidly his health failed, and before the year had passed away, as we shall have occasion hereafter to mention, he sank into the grave, deploring his unhappy lot.

Frederick speedily concentrated all his strength at Bautzen, and strove to draw the Austrians into a battle; but in vain. The heights upon which they were intrenched, bristling with cannon, he could not venture to assail. After three weeks of impatient manœuvring, Frederick gathered his force of fifty thousand men close in hand, and made a sudden rush upon Bernstadt, about fifty miles to the east of Bautzen. Here he surprised an Austrian division, scattered it to the winds, seized all its baggage, and took a number of prisoners. He also captured the field equipage, coach, horses, etc., of General Nadasti, who narrowly escaped.

The French, advancing from the Rhine on the west, were sweeping all opposition before them. They had overrun Hanover, and compelled the Duke of Brunswick, brother of George II., to withdraw, with his Hanoverian troops, from the alliance with the King of Prussia. This was a terrible blow to Frederick. It left him entirely alone to encounter his swarming enemies.

The Prince of Soubise had rendezvoused fifty thousand French and Saxon troops at Erfurt, about a hundred and seventy miles west of Dresden. He had also, scattered around at different posts, easily accessible, a hundred thousand more well-armed and well-disciplined troops. Frederick took twenty-three

thousand men and marched to assail these foes in almost despairing battle. To plunge with so feeble a band into such a mass of enemies seemed to be the extreme of recklessness.

On the 30th of August Frederick commenced his march from Dresden. Great caution was requisite, and great military skill, in so bold an adventure. On the 13th of September he reached Erfurt. The Prince of Soubise, aware of the prowess of his antagonist, retired to the hills and intrenched himself, waiting until he could accumulate forces which would render victory certain. Frederick had now with him his second brother, Henry, who seems to have very fully secured his confidence. On the 16th of September the king wrote:

"My brother Henry has gone to see the Duchess of Gotha to-day. I am so oppressed with grief that I would rather keep my sadness to myself. I have reason to congratulate myself much on account of my brother Henry. He has behaved like an angel, as a soldier, and well toward me as a brother. I can not, unfortunately, say the same of the elder. He sulks at me, and has sulkily retired to Torgau, from which place he has gone to Wittenberg. I shall leave him to his caprices and to his bad conduct; and I prophesy nothing for the future unless the younger guide him."

In these hours of trouble the noble Wilhelmina was as true to her brother as the magnet to the pole. She was appalled by no dangers, and roused all her energies to aid that brother, struggling, with the world arrayed against him. The king appreciated his sister's love. In a poetic epistle addressed to her, composed in these hours of adversity, he wrote:

"Oh sweet and dear hope of my remaining days! oh sister whose friendship, so fertile in resources,

shares all my sorrows, and with a helpful arm assists me in the gulf! it is in vain that the destinies have overwhelmed me with disasters. If the crowd of kings have sworn my ruin, if the earth have opened to swallow me, you still love me, noble and affectionate sister. Loved by you, what is there of misfortune?"

In conclusion, he gives utterance to that gloomy creed of infidelity and atheism which he had adopted instead of the Christian faith. "Thus destiny with a deluge of torments fills the poisoned remnants of my days. The present is hideous to me, the future unknown. Do you say that I am the creature of a beneficent being? I see that all men are the sport of destiny. And if there do exist some gloomy and inexorable being who allows a despised herd of creatures to go on multiplying here, he values them as nothing. He looks down on our virtues, our misdeeds, on the horrors of war, and on all the cruel plagues which ravage earth, as a thing indifferent to him. Wherefore my sole refuge and only haven, loved sister, is in the arms of death."[106]

Twenty years before this, Frederick, in a letter to his friend Baron Suhm, dated June 6, 1736, had expressed the belief that, while the majority of the world perished at death, a few very distinguished men might be immortal.

"The thought alone," he wrote, "of your death, my dear Suhm, affords me an argument in proof of the immortality of the soul. For is it possible that the spirit which acts in you with so much clearness, brightness, and intelligence, which is so different from matter and from body—that fine soul endowed with so many solid virtues and agreeable qualities—is it possible that this should not be immortal? No! I would maintain in solid argument that, if the

greatest part of the world were to be annihilated, you, Voltaire, Boileau, Newton, Wolfius, and some other geniuses of this order must be immortal."[107]

Now, however, Frederick, in that downward path through which the rejecters of Christianity invariably descend, had reached the point at which he renounced all belief in the immortality of the soul and in the existence of God. In a poetic epistle addressed to Marshal Keith, he declares himself a materialist, and affirms his unwavering conviction that the soul, which he says is but the result of the bodily organization, perishes with that body. He declares suicide to be the only remedy for man in his hour of extremity.

Wilhelmina, in her distress in view of the peril of her brother, wrote to Voltaire, hoping that he might be persuaded to exert an influence in his favor.

"The king, my brother," she wrote, "supports his misfortunes with a courage and a firmness worthy of him. I am in a frightful state, and will not survive the destruction of my house and family. That is the one consolation that remains to me. I can not write farther of it. My soul is so troubled that I know not what I am doing. To me there remains nothing but to follow his destiny if it is unfortunate. I have never piqued myself on being a philosopher, though I have made many efforts to become so. The small progress I made did teach me to despise grandeur and riches. *But I could never find in philosophy any cure for the wounds of the heart, except that of getting done with our miseries by ceasing to live.* The state I am in is worse than death. I see the greatest man of his age, my brother, my friend, reduced to the most frightful extremity. I see my whole family exposed to dangers and, perhaps, destruction. Would to Heaven I were

alone loaded with all the miseries I have described to you."

Five days after this letter was written to Voltaire by Wilhelmina from Baireuth, Frederick, on the 17th of September, 1757, wrote his sister from near Erfurt. This letter, somewhat abbreviated, was as follows:

> "MY DEAREST SISTER,—I find no other consolation but in your precious letters. May Heaven[108] reward so much virtue and such heroic sentiments! Since I wrote you last my misfortunes have but gone on accumulating. It seems as though destiny would discharge all its wrath and fury upon the poor country which I had to rule over. I have advanced this way to fall upon a corps of the allied army, which has run off and intrenched itself among hills, whither to follow, still more to attack them, all rules of war forbid. The moment I retire toward Saxony this whole swarm will be upon my heels. Happen what may, I am determined, at all risks, to fall upon whatever corps of the enemy approaches me nearest. I shall even bless Heaven for its mercy if it grant me the favor to die sword in hand.
>
> "Should this hope fail me, you will allow that it would be too hard to crawl at the feet of a company of traitors to whom successful crimes have given the advantage to prescribe the law to me. If I had followed my own inclinations I should have put an end to myself at once after that unfortunate battle which I lost. But I felt that this would be weakness, and that it behooved me to repair the evil which had happened. But no sooner had I hastened this way to face new enemies than Winterfield was beaten and killed near Gorlitz; than the French entered the heart of my states;

> than the Swedes blockaded Stettin. Now there is nothing effective left for me to do. There are too many enemies. Were I even to succeed in beating two armies, the third would crush me. As for you, my incomparable sister, I have not the heart to turn you from your resolves. We think alike, and I can not condemn in you the sentiments which I daily entertain. Life has been given us as a benefit. When it ceases to be such— I have nobody left in this world to attach me to it but you. My friends, the relations I loved most, are in the grave. In short, I have lost every thing. If you take the resolution which I have taken, we end together our misfortunes and our unhappiness.
>
> "But it is time to end this long, dreary letter. I have had some leisure, and have used it to open to you a heart filled with admiration and gratitude toward you. Yes, my adorable sister, if Providence troubled itself about human affairs, you ought to be the happiest person in the universe. Your not being such confirms me in the sentiments expressed in my epistle."

In his "epistle" Frederick had expressed the opinion that there was no God who took any interest in human affairs. He had also repeatedly expressed the resolve to Wilhelmina, and to Voltaire, to whom he had become partially reconciled, that he was prepared to commit suicide should events prove as disastrous as he had every reason to expect they would prove. He had also urged his sister to follow his example, and not to survive the ruin of the family. Such was the support which the king, in hours of adversity, found in that philosophy for which he had discarded the religion of Jesus Christ.

On the 15th of September, two days before Frederick had written the despairing letter we have

just given, Wilhelmina wrote again to him, in response to previous letters, and to his poetic epistle.

> "MY DEAREST BROTHER,—Your letter and the one you wrote to Voltaire have nearly killed me. What fatal resolutions, great God! Ah! my dear brother, you say you love me, and you drive a dagger into my heart. Your epistle, which I did receive, made me shed rivers of tears. I am now ashamed of such weakness. My misfortune would be so great that I should find worthier resources than tears. Your lot shall be mine. I shall not survive your misfortunes, or those of the house I belong to. You may calculate that such is my firm resolution.
>
> "But, after this avowal, allow me to entreat you to look back at what was the pitiable state of your enemy when you lay before Prague. It is the sudden whirl of fortune for both parties. The like can occur again when one is the least expecting it. Cæsar was the slave of pirates, and yet he became master of the world. A great genius like yours finds resources even when all is lost.
>
> "I suffer a thousand times more than I can tell you. Nevertheless, hope does not abandon me. I am obliged to finish. But I shall never cease to be, with the most profound respect, your
>
> WILHELMINA."

On the 11th of October an express courier reached Frederick's camp with the alarming intelligence that an Austrian division of fifteen thousand men was on the march for Berlin. The city was but poorly fortified, and held a garrison of but four thousand troops. Frederick had no doubt that the Austrian army was acting in co-operation with other forces of the allies, advancing upon his

metropolis from the east, north, and west. Immediately he collected all his available troops and commenced a rapid march for the protection of his capital. In the mean time Wilhelmina had heard of this new peril. A rumor also had reached her that there had been a battle, and that her brother was wounded. The following letter reveals the anguish of her heart:

"Baireuth, October 15, 1757.

"MY DEAREST BROTHER,—Death and a thousand torments could not equal the frightful state I am in. There run reports that make me shudder. Some say that you are wounded, others that you are dangerously ill. In vain have I tormented myself to have news of you. I can get none. Oh, my dear brother, come what may, I will not survive you. If I am to continue in this frightful uncertainty, I can not stand it. In the name of God, bid some one write to me.

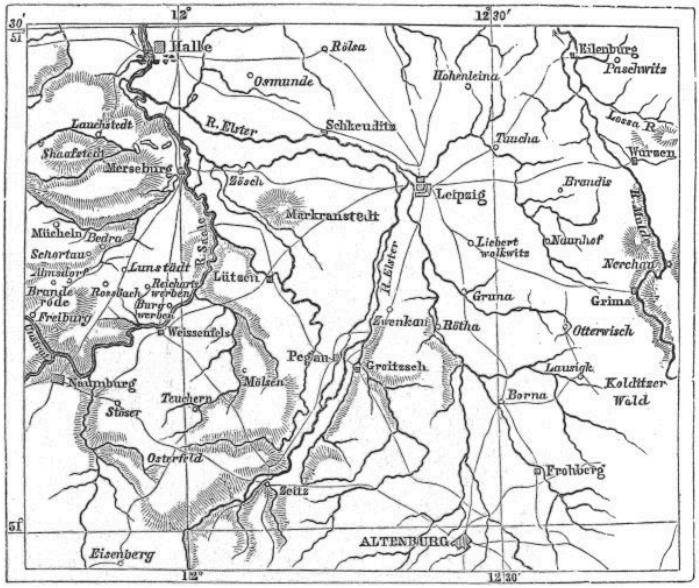
"I know not what I have written. My heart is torn in pieces. I feel that by dint of disquietude and alarms I am losing my senses. Oh, my dear, adorable brother, have pity on me. The least thing that concerns you pierces me to the heart. Might I die a thousand deaths provided you lived and were happy! I can say no more. Grief chokes me. I can only repeat that your fate shall be mine; being, my dear brother, your

"WILHELMINA."

It turned out that the rumor of the march upon Berlin was greatly exaggerated. General Haddick, with an Austrian force of but four thousand men, by a sudden rush through the woods, seized the suburbs of Berlin. The terrified garrison, supposing that an

overwhelming force of the allied army was upon them, retreated, with the royal family and effects, to Spandau. General Haddick, having extorted a ransom of about one hundred and forty thousand dollars from the city, and "*two dozen pair of gloves* for the empress queen," and learning that a division of Frederick's army was fast approaching, fled precipitately. Hearing of this result, the king arrested his steps at Torgau, and returned to Leipsic. The Berliners asserted that "the two dozen pair of gloves were all gloves for the left hand."

Frederick reached Leipsic on the 26th of October. The allied forces were rapidly concentrating in overwhelming numbers around him. On the 30th the king marched to the vicinity of Lutzen, where he encamped for the night. General Soubise, though in command of a force outnumbering that of the Prussians nearly three to one, retreated rapidly to the west before Frederick, and crossed the River Saale. Frederick followed, and effected the passage of the stream with but little opposition.

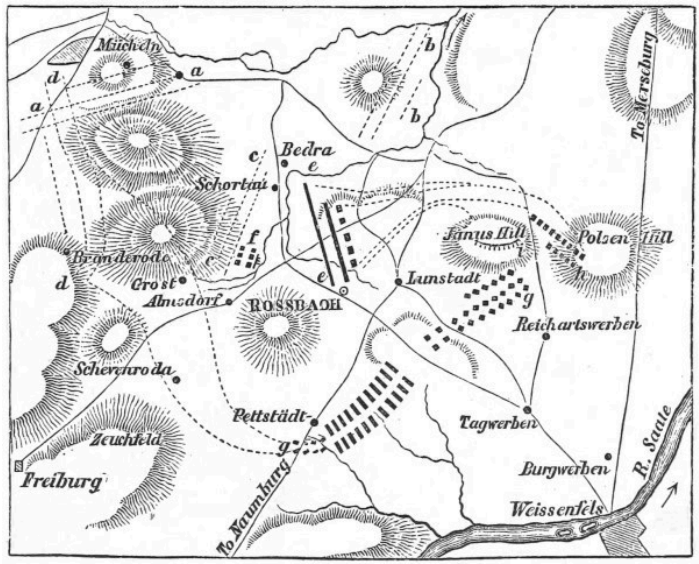


MAP OF THE CAMPAIGN OF ROSSBACH.

After some manœuvring, the hostile forces met upon a wide, dreary, undulating plain, with here and there a hillock, in the vicinity of Rossbach. Frederick had twenty thousand men. The French general, Prince Soubise, had sixty thousand. The allies now felt sure of their prey. Their plan was to surround Frederick, destroy his army, and take him a prisoner. On the morning of the 5th of November the two hostile armies were nearly facing each other, a few miles west of the River Saale. A party of Austrians was sent by the general of the allies to destroy the bridges upon the river in the rear of the Prussians, that their retreat might be cut off. Frederick, from a house-top, eagerly watched the movement of his foes. To his surprise and great satisfaction, he soon saw the whole allied army commencing a circuitous march around his left to fall upon him in his rear.

Instantly, and “like a change of scene in the opera,” the Prussians were on the rapid march to the east in as perfect order as if on parade. Taking advantage of an eminence called James Hill, which concealed their movements from the allies, Frederick hurled his whole concentrated force upon the flank of the van of the army on the advance. He thus greatly outnumbered his foes at the point of attack. The enemy, taken by surprise in their long line of march, had no time to form.

“Compact as a wall, and with an incredible velocity, Seidlitz, in the blaze of rapid steel, is in upon them.” From the first it was manifest that the destruction of the advance-guard was certain. The Prussian cavalry slashed through it again and again, throwing it into inextricable disorder. In less than half an hour this important portion of the allied troops was put to utter rout, “tumbling off the ground, plunging down hill in full flight, across its own infantry, or whatever obstacle, Seidlitz on the hips of it, and galloping madly over the horizon.”



BATTLE OF ROSSBACH, NOVEMBER 5, 1757.

a a. First Position of Combined Army. b b. First Position of Prussian Camp. c c. Advance of Prussian Army. d d. Second Position of Combined Army. e e. Prussians retire to Rossbach. f. French Cavalry, under St. Germain. g g. March of Combined Army to attack Prussian Rear. h. Prussian Attack led by Seidlitz. i. Position of Prussian Guns.

And now the Prussian artillery, eighteen heavy guns, opened a rapid and murderous fire upon the disordered mass, struggling in vain to deploy in line of battle. Infantry, artillery, cavalry, all were at work, straining every nerve, one mighty mind controlling and guiding the terrible mechanism in its death-dealing blows. The French regiments were jammed together. The Prussians, at forty paces, opened a platoon fire of musketry, five shots a minute. At the same moment the impetuous Seidlitz, with his triumphant and resistless dragoons, plunged upon the rear. The centre of the allied army was thus

annihilated. It was no longer a battle, but a rout and a massacre. In twenty minutes this second astonishing feat was accomplished.

The whole allied army was now put wildly to flight, in one of the most humiliating and disastrous retreats which has ever occurred. There is generally some slight diversity of statement in reference to the numbers engaged on such occasions. Frederick gives sixty-three thousand as the allied force. The allies lost, in killed, wounded, and missing, about ten thousand men. The loss of the Prussians was but five hundred. The French, in a tumultuous mass, fled to the west. Crossing the Unstrut River at Freiburg, they burned the bridge behind them. The Prussians rebuilt the bridge, and vigorously pursued. The evening after the battle the king wrote as follows to Wilhelmina. His letter was dated "Near Weissenfels."

> "At last, my dear sister, I can announce to you a bit of good news. You were doubtless aware that the Coopers with their circles had a mind to take Leipsic. I ran up and drove them beyond Saale. They called themselves 63,000 strong. Yesterday I went to reconnoitre them; could not attack them in the post they held. This rendered them rash. To-day they came out to attack me. It was a battle after one's own heart. Thanks to God,[109] I have not one hundred men killed. My brother Henry and General Seidlitz have slight hurts. We have all the enemy's cannon. I am in full march to drive them over the Unstrut. You, my dear sister, my good, my divine, my affectionate sister, who deign to interest yourself in the fate of a brother who adores you, deign also to share my joy. The instant I have time I will tell you more. I embrace you with my whole heart. Adieu.
>
> F."

Voltaire, speaking of this conflict, says, “It was the most inconceivable and complete rout and discomfiture of which history makes any mention. Thirty thousand French and twenty thousand imperial troops were there seen making a disgraceful and precipitate flight before five battalions and a few squadrons. The defeats of Agincourt, Cressy, and Poitiers were not so humiliating.”[110]

As usual, Frederick wrote a poem upon the occasion. It was vulgar and profane. Carlyle says of it, “The author, with a wild burst of spiritual enthusiasm, sings the charms of the rearward part of certain men. He rises to the height of anti-biblical profanity, quoting Moses on the Hill of Vision; sinks to the bottomless of human or ultra-human depravity, quoting King Nicomedes’s experience on Cæsar, happily known only to the learned. A most cynical, profane affair; yet we must say, by way of parenthesis, one which gives no countenance to Voltaire’s atrocities of rumor about Frederick himself in the matter.”[111]

The routed allies, exasperated and starving, and hating the Protestant inhabitants of the region through which they retreated, robbed and maltreated them without mercy. The woes which the defenseless inhabitants endured from the routed army in its flight no pen can adequately describe.

An eye-witness writes from near Weissenfels, in a report to the King of Poland, whose allies the French were, and whose territories they were ravaging:

“The French army so handled this place as not only to take from its inhabitants, by open force, all bread and articles of food, but likewise all clothes, bed-linens, and other portable goods. They also broke open, split to pieces, and emptied out all

chests, boxes, presses, drawers; shot dead in the back-yards and on the roofs all manner of feathered stock, as hens, geese, pigeons. They carried off all swine, cows, sheep, and horses. They laid violent hands on the inhabitants, clapped swords, guns, and pistols to their breasts, threatening to kill them unless they brought out whatever goods they had; or hunted them out of their houses, shooting at them, cutting, sticking, and at last driving them away, thereby to have freer room to rob and plunder. They flung out hay and other harvest stock into the mud, and had it trampled to ruin under the horses' feet."

"For a hundred miles around," writes St. Germain, "the country is plundered and harried as if fire from heaven had fallen on it. Scarcely have our plunderers and marauders left the houses standing."

This signal achievement raised the military fame of Frederick higher than ever before. Still it did not perceptibly diminish the enormous difficulties with which he was environed. Army after army was marching upon him. Even by a series of successful battles his forces might be annihilated. But the renown of the great victory of Rossbach will ever reverberate through the halls of history.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LEUTHEN CAMPAIGN.

Results of the Battle of Rossbach.—The Attack upon Breslau.—Extraordinary Address of the King to his Troops.—Confidence of the Prussians in their Commander.—Magnificent Array of the Austrians at Leuthen.—Tactics of Frederick.—The Battle Hymn. —The Battle and the Victory.—Scenes after the Battle.—Recapture of Breslau by Frederick.

THE battle of Rossbach was fought on the 5th of November, 1757. Frederick had but little time to rejoice over his victory. The Austrians were overrunning Silesia. On the 14th of the month, the important fortress of Schweidnitz, with all its magazines, fell into their hands. Then Prince Charles, with sixty thousand Austrian troops, marched upon Breslau, the principal city of Silesia, situated on the Oder. The Prince of Bevern held the place with a little over twenty thousand Prussian troops. His army was strongly intrenched outside of the walls, under the guns of the city.

On the 22d of November the Austrians commenced their attack from five different points. It was a terrific conflict. Sixty thousand men stormed ramparts defended by twenty thousand as highly disciplined troops, and as desperate in valor, as ever

stood upon a battle-field. The struggle commenced at three o'clock in the morning, and raged, over eight miles of country, until nine o'clock at night. Darkness and utter exhaustion terminated the conflict. The Austrians had lost, in killed and wounded, six thousand men, the Prussians eight thousand.

Prince Bevern, aware that the battle would be renewed upon the morrow, and conscious that he could not sustain another such struggle, withdrew with his Prussian troops in the night, through the silent streets of Breslau, to the other side of the Oder, leaving eighty cannon behind him. The next morning, in visiting one of the outposts, he was surprised by a party of the Austrians and taken prisoner. It was reported that, fearing the wrath of the king, he had voluntarily allowed himself to be captured. General Kyau, the next in rank, took the command. He rapidly retreated. Breslau, thus left to its fate, surrendered, with its garrison of four thousand men, ninety-eight pieces of cannon, and vast magazines filled with stores of war. The next day was Sunday. Te Deums were chanted by the triumphant Austrians in the Catholic churches in Breslau, and thanks were offered to God that Maria Theresa had reconquered Silesia, and that "our ancient sovereigns are restored to us."

These were terrible tidings for Frederick. The news reached him at Gorlitz when on the rapid march toward Silesia. Prince Charles had between eighty and ninety thousand Austrian troops in the reconquered province. Frederick seemed to be marching to certain and utter destruction, as, with a feeble band of but about twenty thousand men, he pressed forward, declaring, "I will attack them if they stand on the steeples of Breslau."

On the evening of the 3d of December, 1757, the king arrived at Parchwitz, in the heart of Silesia, about thirty miles from Breslau. Here the wreck of Prince Bevern's army joined him. Thus re-enforced, he could bring about thirty thousand men into the field. He immediately, in the night, assembled his principal officers, and thus addressed them; the words were taken down at the time. We give this characteristic address slightly abbreviated:

"My friends, the disasters which have befallen us here are not unknown to you. Schweidnitz is lost. The Prince of Bevern is beaten. Breslau is gone, and all our war-stores there. A large part of Silesia is lost. Indeed, my embarrassments would be insuperable were it not that I have boundless trust in you. There is hardly one among you who has not distinguished himself by some memorable action. All these services I well know, and shall never forget.

"I flatter myself that now nothing will be wanting of that valor which the state has a right to expect of you. The hour is at hand. I should feel that I had accomplished nothing were I to leave Silesia in the hands of Austria. Let me then apprise you that I intend to attack Prince Charles's army, which is nearly thrice the strength of our own, wherever I can find it. It matters not what are his numbers, or what the strength of his position. All this by courage and by skill we will try to overcome. This step I must risk, or all is lost. We must beat the enemy, or perish before his batteries. If there be any one who shrinks from sharing these dangers with me, he can have his discharge this evening."

The king paused. A general murmur of applause indicated the united resolve to conquer or to die. Frederick immediately added:

"Yes, I knew it. Not one of you will forsake me. I rely upon your help and upon victory as sure. The cavalry regiment that does not, on the instant, on order given, dash full plunge into the enemy, I will directly after the battle unhorse, and make it a garrison regiment. The infantry battalion which, meet with what it may, shows the least sign of hesitating, loses its colors and its sabres, and I cut the trimmings from its uniform.

"I shall be in the front and in the rear of the army. I shall fly from one wing to the other. No squadron and no company will escape my observation. Those who act well I will reward, and will never forget them. We shall soon either have beaten the enemy or we shall see each other no more."

After this address to the assembled generals Frederick rode out to the camp, and addressed each regiment in the most familiar and fatherly, yet by no means exultant terms. It was night. The glare of torches shed a lurid light upon the scene. The first regiment the king approached was composed of the cuirassiers of the Life Guard.

"Well, my children," said Frederick, "how do you think that it will be with us now? The Austrians are twice as strong as we."

"Never you mind that," they replied. "The Austrians are not Prussians. You know what we can do."

"Indeed I do," the king responded. "Otherwise I durst not risk a battle. And now, my children, a good night's sleep to you. We shall soon attack the enemy; and we shall beat him, or we shall all die."

"Yes, death or victory," they shouted. Then from

loving lips the cheer ran along the line, “Good-night, Fritz.”

And thus the king passed from regiment to regiment. Perhaps no commander, excepting Napoleon, has ever secured to an equal degree the love of his soldiers. It is said that a deserter was brought before him.

“What induced you to desert me?” inquired the king.

“Alas! your majesty,” the man replied, “we are so few, and the Austrians are so many, that defeat is certain.”

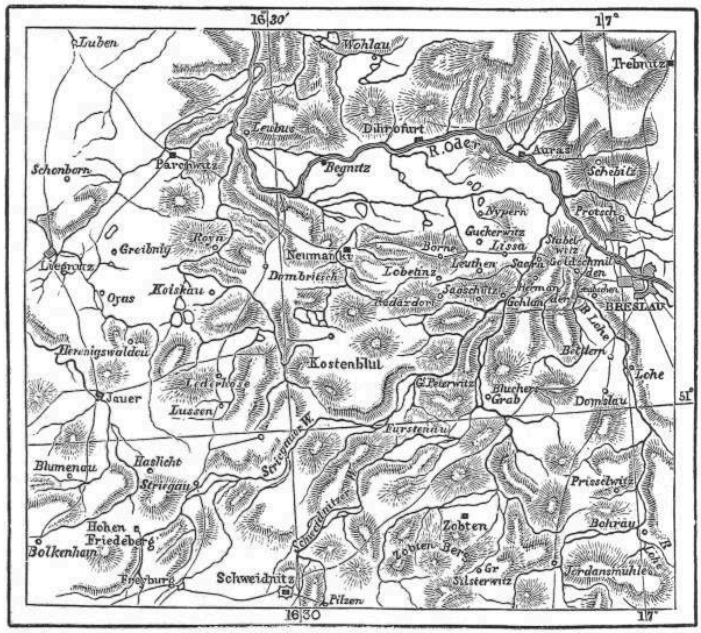
“Well,” the king replied, kindly, “try it one day more. If we do not mend matters, you and I will both desert together.”

The Austrian army, which outnumbered the Prussian over three to one, was in a camp, very strongly fortified, near Breslau. A council of war was held. Some of the Austrian officers, dreading the prowess of their redoubtable opponent, advised that they should remain behind their intrenchments, and await an attack. It would, of course, be impossible for less than thirty thousand men to storm ramparts bristling with artillery, and defended by nearly ninety thousand highly disciplined and veteran troops.

Others, however, urged that this was ignoble and cowardly; that it would expose them to the derision of the world if they, with their overwhelming numbers, were to take shelter behind their ramparts, fearing to attack so feeble a band. Prince Charles, anxious to regain lost reputation, and elated by the reconquest of Silesia, adopted the more heroic resolve, and marched out to meet the foe.

With great joy Frederick learned that the Austrians had left their camp, and were on the advance to attack him. He immediately put his little army in motion for the perilous and decisive conflict. It was four o'clock Sunday morning, December 4, 1757, when Frederick left Parchwitz on his march toward Breslau. He was familiar with every square mile of the region. The Austrians were so vastly superior in numbers that many of them quite despised the weakness of the Prussian army. Many jokes were tossed about in the Austrian camp respecting the feeble band of Frederick, which they contemptuously called the "Potsdam Guard."

The Austrians, on the careless and self-confident march toward Parchwitz, had crossed the Schweidnitz River, or Water, as it was called, when they learned that Frederick, with a tiger-like spring, had leaped upon Neumarkt, an important town fourteen miles from Parchwitz. Here the Austrians had a bakery, protected by a guard of a thousand men. Seven hundred of the guard were instantly sabred or taken prisoners. The rest fled wildly. Frederick gathered up eighty thousand hot bread rations, with which he feasted his hungry troops.



MAP OF THE LEUTHEN CAMPAIGN.

Early on Monday morning the Prussians advanced from Neumarkt, eight miles, to Borne. Here they met the advance-guard of the Austrian cavalry. It was a dark, foggy morning. Frederick, as usual, was with his vanguard. Almost before the Austrians were conscious of the presence of the foe, they were assailed, with the utmost impetuosity, in front and on both their flanks. Instantly they were thrown into utter confusion. The ground was covered with their dead. Their general, Nostitz, was fatally wounded, and died the next day. Five hundred and forty were taken prisoners. The bleeding, breathless remnant fled pell-mell back to the main body, a few miles in the rear.

Frederick, pressing forward directly east, toward

Leuthen, ascended an eminence, the height of Scheuberg, whence he beheld, directly before him, the whole majestic Austrian army. It extended for a distance of about five miles, drawn up in battle-array across his path, from the village of Nypern on the north, through Leuthen, to the village of Sagschütz on the south. So distinctly were their military lines spread out before the eye that Frederick, with his glass, could count them, man by man. Carefully the king studied the position of the enemy, and formed his plan of attack. He designed, while bewildering the Austrians by his manœuvres, to direct the whole concentrated strength of his army upon their extreme left wing. He hoped thus, by the desperate impetuosity of his attack, to roll that whole left wing together in utter ruin before the centre or the right could come to its aid. He would then press on, with numbers ever overpowering the Austrians at the point of attack, until the whole line, five miles in length, was annihilated.

An eye-witness thus describes the tactics by which Frederick executed his design: “It is a particular manœuvre which, up to the present time, none but Prussian troops can execute with the precision and velocity indispensable to it. You divide your line into many pieces. You can push these forward stair-wise, so that they shall halt close to one another. Forming itself in this way, a mass of troops takes up in proportion very little ground. And it shows in the distance, by reason of the mixed uniforms and standards, a totally chaotic mass of men, heaped one on another. But it needs only that the commander lift his finger, and instantly this living coil of knotted intricacies develops itself in perfect order, and with a speed like that of mountain rivers.”[112]

"It was a beautiful sight," writes Tempelhof. "The heads of the columns were constantly on the same level, and at the distance necessary for forming. All flowed on exact as if in a review. And you could read in the eyes of our brave troops the temper they were in."

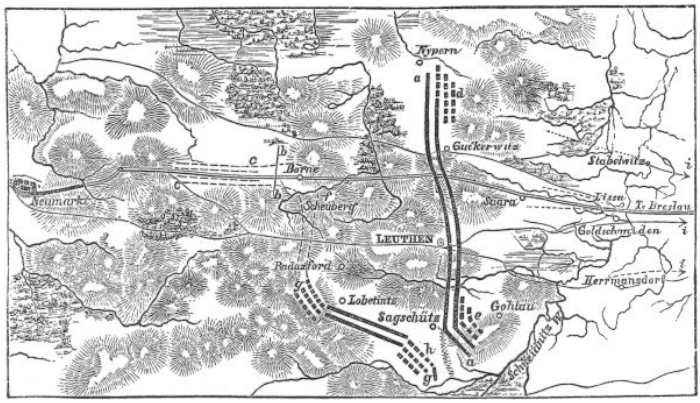
As they marched their voices burst forth simultaneously in a German hymn. The gush of their rude and many-voiced melody was borne distinctly on the wind to the eminence where Frederick stood, anxiously watching those movements which were to decide his own fate, that of his family, and of his kingdom. The following is a translation of one of the verses of this hymn:

"Grant that with zeal and skill, this day, I do
What me to do behooves, what Thou command'st me to;
Grant that I do it sharp, at point of moment fit,
And when I do it, grant me good success in it."[113]

These solemn tones of sacred psalmody fell impressively upon the ear of the king when his earthly all was trembling in the balance. Religionless and atheistic as he was, he could not repress some visible emotion. One of his officers, aware of the king's avowed contempt for every thing of a religious nature, inquired,

"Shall we order that to cease, your majesty?"

"By no means," the king replied. "With men like these I shall be sure of victory to-day!"[114]



BATTLE OF LEUTHEN, DECEMBER 5, 1757.

a a. Austrian Army. b b. Position of Saxon Forepost, under Nostitz. c c. Advance of Prussian Army. d. Lucchesi's Cavalry, re-enforced by Daun. e. Left Wing, under Nadasti. f. Frederick's Hill of Observation. g g. Prussian Army about to attack. h. Ziethen's Cavalry. i i i. Retreat of Austrians.

The field of Leuthen—for so this battle-field was called—was a vast undulating plain or rolling prairie, extending for miles in all directions. One or two brooks flowed sluggishly through it. Here and there were expanses of marsh which neither horse nor foot could traverse. A few scraggy firs dotted the dreary landscape, and there were also a few hamlets of peasants' huts scattered around. Frederick concealed his movements as much as possible behind the undulations, and succeeded in deceiving the Austrians into the belief that he was to make an attack upon their *right* wing. The Austrian officers, on windmills and in church belfries, were eagerly scrutinizing his manœuvres. Deceived into the conviction that their right wing was menaced, they impetuously pushed forward large re-enforcements of horse to the support of the presumed point of attack.

Thus the left wing was weakened.

Frederick, who had taken his position upon a windmill, saw, with much satisfaction, the successful operation of his plan. Suddenly, with almost miraculous swiftness of movement, his perfectly drilled troops, horse, foot, and artillery, every man reckless of life, poured forth with a rush and a roar as of a lava-flood upon the extreme left of the Austrians. It was one o'clock of the day. There was neither brook, bush, fence, nor marsh to impede the headlong impetuosity of the assault. At the point of attack the Prussians were, of course, most numerous. There were a few moments of terrible slaughter, and the left wing of the Austrian army was annihilated. The ground was covered with the wounded and the dead, and the fugitives, in dismay, were fleeing across the fields.

The Austrian centre was pushed rapidly forward to the aid of the discomfited left. It was too late. The soldiers arrived upon the ground breathless and in disorder. Before they had time to form, Frederick plowed their ranks with balls, swept them with bullets, and fell upon them mercilessly with sabre and bayonet. The carnage was awful. Division after division melted away in the fire deluge which consumed them. Prince Charles made the most desperate efforts to rally his dismayed troops in and around the church-yard at Leuthen. Here for an hour they fought desperately. But it was all in vain. The left wing was destroyed. The centre was destroyed. The right wing was pushed forward only to be cut to pieces by the sabres, and to be mown down by the terrific fire of the triumphant Prussians.

Scarcely had the conflict upon the extreme left commenced ere it was evident that by the military

sagacity of Frederick the doom of the Austrian army was sealed. With thirty thousand men he had attacked ninety thousand on the open field, and was utterly overwhelming them. An Austrian officer, Prince De Ligne, describing the battle, writes:

"Cry had risen for the reserve, and that it must come on as fast as possible. We ran at our utmost speed. Our lieutenant colonel fell, killed, at the first. Then we lost our major, and, indeed, all the officers but three. We had crossed two successive ditches which lay in an orchard to the left of the first houses in Leuthen, and were beginning to form in front of the village. But there was no standing it. Besides a general cannonade, such as can scarcely be imagined, there was a rain of case-shot upon this battalion, of which I had to take command. A Prussian battalion at the distance of eighty paces gave the liveliest fire upon us. It stood as if on the parade-ground, and waited for us without stirring. My soldiers, who were tired with running, and had no cannon, soon became scattered. At last, when I had but two hundred left, I drew back to the height where the windmill is."

Before the sun went down the Austrian army was every where flying from the field in hopeless confusion. Their rush was in four torrents toward the east, to reach the bridges which crossed the Schweidnitz Water. There were four of them. One was on the main road at Lissa; one a mile north at Stabelwitz; and two on the south, one at Goldschmieden, and the other at Hermannsdorf. The victory of Frederick was one of the most memorable in the annals of war. The Austrians lost in killed and wounded ten thousand men. Twenty-one thousand were taken prisoners. This was a heavier loss in

numbers than the whole army of Frederick. The victors also took fifty-one flags, and a hundred and sixteen cannon.

As the king cast his eye over the blood-stained field, covered with the wounded and the dead, for a moment he seemed overcome with the aspect of misery, and exclaimed, “When, oh when will my woes cease?”

“My children,” said Frederick that night at parole, “after such a day’s work you deserve rest. This day will send the renown of your name and that of the nation down to the latest posterity.”

He did not order the exhausted troops to pursue the foe. Still, as he rode along the line after dark, he inquired,

“Is there any battalion which has a mind to follow me to Lissa?”

Three volunteered. It was so dark that the landlord of a little country inn walked with a lantern by the side of Frederick’s horse. Lissa was on the main road to Breslau. The landlord supposed that he was guiding one of Frederick’s generals, and was very communicative.

“Yesterday noon,” said he, “I had Prince Charles in my parlor. His adjutants and people were all crowding about. Such a questioning and bothering. Hundreds came dashing in, and other hundreds were sent out. In and out they went all night. No sooner was one gone than ten came. I had to keep a roaring fire in the kitchen all night, so many officers were crowding to it to warm themselves. They talked and babbled. One would say that our king was marching upon them with his Potsdam parade guard. Another would say, ‘No, he dare not come. He will turn and

run.' But my delight is that our king has paid them for their fooleries so prettily this afternoon."

"When did you get rid of your guests?" inquired the king.

"About nine this morning," was the reply, "the prince got to horse. Not long after three he came back again with a swarm of officers, all going full speed for Lissa. They were full of bragging when they came; now they were off wrong side foremost! I saw how it was. Close following after him the flood of them ran. The high road was not broad enough. It was an hour and more before it ended. Such a pell-mell, such a welter! cavalry and infantry all jumbled together. Our king must have given them a terrible flogging."

When the king reached Lissa he found the village full of Austrian officers and soldiers in a state of utter disorganization and confusion. Had the Austrians known their strength or the weakness of the king, they might easily have taken him captive. Frederick was somewhat alarmed. He, however, assumed a bold front, and rode to the principal house in the town, which was a little one side of the main street. The house was crowded with Austrian officers, bustling about, seeking lodgings for the night. The king stepped in with a slight escort, and said gayly,

"Good evening, gentlemen, good evening. Can you make room for me here, do you think?"



THE KING IN SEARCH OF LODGINGS.

The astounded Austrians bowed to the dust before him, escorted him to the best room, and, stealing out into the darkness, made their way as rapidly as possible to the bridge, which at the east end of the street crossed the Schweidnitz Water. At the farther end of the bridge Austrian cannon were planted to arrest the pursuit. The officers hurried across, and vanished in the gloom of night, followed by the river-guard. The Prussian cannoneers steadily pursued, and kept up through the night an incessant fire upon the rear of the foe.

The night was very dark and cold. A wintry wind swept the bleak, frozen fields. Still the routed

Austrians pressed on. Still the tireless Prussians pursued. The Prussian soldiers were Protestants. Many of them were well instructed in religion. As they pressed on through the gloom, sweeping the road before them with artillery discharges, their voices simultaneously burst forth into a well-known Church hymn, a sort of Protestant *Te Deum*—

"Now thank God, one and all,
With heart, with voice, with hands,
Who wonders great hath done
To us and to all lands."[115]

Early in the morning Frederick's whole army was on the rapid march for Breslau, which was scarcely twenty miles distant from the battle-field. The Austrians had collected immense military stores in the city. Prince Charles, as he fled through the place with the wreck of his army, left a garrison of seventeen thousand men for its defense. In a siege of twelve days, during which there was an incessant bombardment and continual assaults, the city was carried. A few days after this, Liegnitz, which the Austrians had strongly fortified, was also surrendered to the victor. Frederick had thus reconquered the whole of Silesia excepting the single fortress of Schweidnitz.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DOMESTIC GRIEFS AND MILITARY REVERSES.

Destruction of the Army of Prince Charles.—Dismay in Vienna.—Testimony of Napoleon I.—Of Voltaire.—Wretchedness of the King.—Compromise rejected.—New Preparations for War.—Treaty between England and Prussia.—Plan of the Campaign.—Siege of Olmütz.—Death of Prince Augustus William.—The Baggage Train.—The irreparable Disaster.—Anxiety of Frederick for Wilhelmina.—The March against the Russians.—The Battle of Zorndorf.—Anecdotes of Frederick.

THE army of Prince Charles was so utterly destroyed or dispersed by the battle of Leuthen that the morning after his terrible defeat he could rally around his banners, by count, but fifty thousand men. These were utterly disheartened. Stragglers were wandering all over the country. A few thousand of these again joined the ranks. Seventeen thousand men left in Breslau were soon captured. Prince Charles, abandoning guns and wagons, fled through rain, and mud, and sleet directly south toward Königgrätz, in Bohemia. The sufferings of the troops were awful. Several hundred sentinels, in one night, were frozen stiff at their posts. The dreadful retreat continued for ten days.

"The army," writes Prince Charles, mournfully, "was greatly dilapidated. The soldiers were without clothes, and in a condition truly pitiable. So closely were we pursued by the enemy that at night we were compelled to encamp without tents."

Having reached the shelter of Königgrätz, he counted his troops, and found that he had in rank and file but thirty-seven thousand men. Of these, twenty-two thousand, from sickness, exhaustion, and wounds, were in hospital. Thus, out of the army of ninety thousand men with which he had commenced the campaign early in December, at the close of the month he could array but fifteen thousand on any field of battle.

The astonishment and indignation in Vienna, in view of this terrible defeat, were intense. Prince Charles was immediately relieved of his command, and General Daun appointed in his stead. It is the testimony of all military men that the battle of Leuthen was one of the most extraordinary feats of war. Napoleon, speaking of it at St. Helena, said,

"This battle is a masterpiece of movements, of manœuvres, and of resolution. It is enough to immortalize Frederick, and to rank him among the greatest generals. It develops, in the highest degree, both his moral and his military qualities."

Voltaire, in summing up a sketch of this campaign of 1757, writes in characteristic phrase:

"Even Gustavus Adolphus never did such great things. One must, indeed, pardon Frederick his verses, his sarcasms, and his little malices. All the faults of the man disappear before the glory of the hero."

On the 19th of December, the day of the

capitulation of Breslau, Frederick wrote from that place to his friend D'Argens as follows:

"Your friendship seduces you, *mon cher*. I am but a paltry knave in comparison with Alexander, and not worthy to tie the shoe-latchets of Cæsar. Necessity, who is the mother of industry, has made me act, and have recourse to desperate remedies in evils of a like nature.

"We have taken here from fourteen to fifteen thousand prisoners. In all, I have above twenty-three thousand of the queen's troops in my hands, fifteen generals, and above seven hundred officers. It is a plaster on my wounds, but it is far enough from healing them."

It was now midwinter. Frederick, having established his troops in winter quarters, took up his residence in Breslau. His troubles were by no means ended. Vastly outnumbering foes still surrounded him. Very vigorous preparations were to be made for the sanguinary conflicts which the spring would surely introduce. Frederick did what he could to infuse gayety into the society at Breslau, though he had but little heart to enter into those gayeties himself. For a week he suffered severely from colic pains, and could neither eat nor sleep. "Eight months," he writes, "of anguish and agitation do wear one down."

His sister Amelia and several other friends visited him at Breslau. Among others was his reader, Henry de Catt.

"Should you have known me?" the king inquired of De Catt.

"Hardly," he replied, "in that dress. Besides, your majesty has grown thinner."

"That may well be," rejoined the king, "with the cursed life I have been leading."

Frederick still sought recreation in writing verses which he called poetry. To D'Argens he wrote, "I have made a prodigious quantity of verses. If I live I will show them to you. If I perish they are bequeathed to you, and I have ordered that they be put into your hand."

Again he wrote D'Argens on the 26th of December, "What a pleasure to hear that you are coming. I have sent a party of light horse to conduct you. You can make short journeys. I have directed that horses be ordered for you, that your rooms be warmed every where, and good fowls ready on all roads. Your apartment in this house is carpeted, hermetically shut. You shall suffer nothing from draughts or from noise."

Frederick, having regained Silesia, was anxious for peace. He wrote a polite letter to Maria Theresa, adroitly worded, so as to signify that desire without directly expressing it. The empress queen, disheartened by the disasters of Rossbach and Leuthen, was rather inclined to listen to such suggestions; but the Duchess of Pompadour verified the adage that "hell has no fury like a woman scorned." She governed the wretched Louis XV., and through him governed France. In her intense personal exasperation against Frederick she would heed no terms of compromise, and infused new energy into all warlike operations. Large subsidies were paid by France to Austria, Sweden, and Russia, to prepare for the campaign of 1758.

Frederick was soon aware that peace was out of the question without farther fighting. Before the 1st of April he had one hundred and forty-five thousand

men ready for the field. Of these, fifty-three thousand were in Silesia. Many of the Austrian deserters were induced to join his standards. But the most important event secured was forming a subsidy treaty with England. The British cabinet, alarmed in view of the power which the successful prosecution of the war on the part of the allies would give to France, after much hesitation, came to the aid of Frederick, whom they hated as much as they feared France. On the 11th of April, 1758, a treaty was signed between the English court and Frederick, containing the following important item:

"That Frederick shall have six hundred and seventy thousand pounds ($3,350,000), payable in London to his order, in October, this year, which sum Frederick engages to spend wholly in the maintenance and increase of his army for behoof of the common object; neither party to dream of making the least shadow of peace or truce without the other."

Schweidnitz was strictly blockaded during the winter. On the 15th of March, the weather being still cold, wet, and stormy, Frederick marched from Breslau to attack the place. His siege artillery was soon in position. With his accustomed impetuosity he commenced the assault, and, after a terrific bombardment of many days, on the night of the 15th of April took the works by storm. The garrison, which had dwindled from eight thousand to four thousand five hundred, was all captured, with fifty-one guns, thirty-five thousand dollars of money, and a large quantity of stores. Thus the whole of Silesia was again in the hands of Frederick.

It was supposed that his Prussian majesty would now march southwest for the invasion of Bohemia.

Austria made vigorous preparations to meet him there. Much to the surprise and bewilderment of the Austrians, the latter part of April Frederick directed his columns toward the southeast. His army, about forty thousand strong, was in two divisions. By a rapid march through Neisse and Jagerndorf he reached Troppau, on the extreme southern frontier of Silesia. He then turned to the southwest. It was again supposed that he intended to invade Bohemia, but from the east instead of from the north.

General Daun, in command of the Austrian forces, rapidly concentrated his troops around Leutomischel, where he had extensive magazines. But Frederick, leaving Leutomischel far away on his right, pressed forward in a southerly direction, and on the 12th of May appeared before Olmütz. His march had been rapidly and admirably conducted, dividing his troops into columns for the convenience of road and subsistence.

Olmütz was an ancient, strongly fortified city of Moravia, pleasantly situated on the western banks of the Morawa River. It had been the capital of Moravia, and contained about ten thousand inhabitants. The place subsequently became renowned from the imprisonment of Lafayette in its citadel for many years. The city had become an arsenal, and one of the most important military store-houses of Austria.

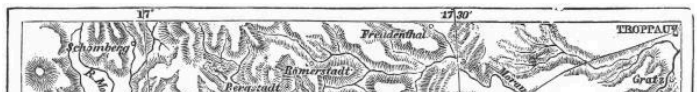
Olmütz was ninety miles from Troppau, in Silesia, where Frederick had established his base of supplies. This was a long line of communication to protect. General Daun, with a numerous Austrian army, all whose movements were veiled by clouds of those fleet and shaggy horsemen called Pandours, was forty miles to the west, at Leutomischel.

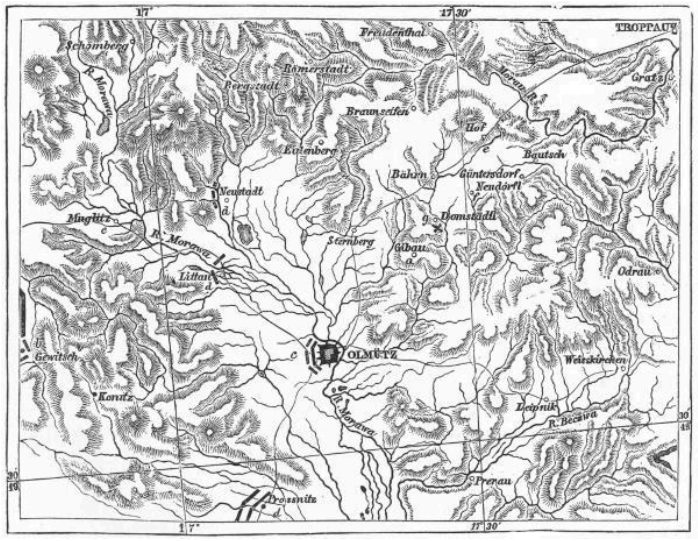
Cautious in the extreme, nothing could draw him into a general battle. But he watched his foe with an eagle eye, continually assailing his line of communication, and ever ready to strike his heaviest blows upon any exposed point.

The king's brother Henry was in command in Saxony, at the head of thirty thousand troops. Frederick wrote to him the characteristic and very judicious advice, "Do as energetically as possible whatever seems wisest to *you*. But hold no councils of war."

The plan of his Prussian majesty was bold and sagacious. He supposed that he could easily take Olmütz. Availing himself of the vast magazines to be found there, he would summon his brother Henry to join him by a rapid march through Bohemia, and with their combined force of sixty thousand troops they would make a rush upon Vienna. The Austrian capital was distant but about one hundred miles, directly south. As the Austrian army was widely dispersed, there were but few impediments to be encountered. The success of this plan would compel the allies to withdraw their forces from the territories of the King of Prussia, if it did not enable Frederick to dictate peace in the palaces of Maria Theresa.

Olmütz was found very strongly fortified. It was so situated that, with the force Frederick had, it could not be entirely invested. Baron Marshal, a very brave and energetic old man, sixty-seven years of age, conducted the defense.





SIEGE OF OLMÜTZ, MAY 12—JULY 2, 1758.

a a. Stages of the Prussian March. b. Daun's Encampment. c. Prussian Batteries and Intrenchments. d d d. Prussian Camps. e e. Loudon's March against Mosel's Convoy. f f. Mosel's resting Quarters. g. Convoy attacked and ruined.

His garrison consisted of about fourteen thousand infantry and six hundred dragoons. General Daun was at the distance of but two marches, with a larger Austrian force than Frederick commanded. Nothing can more clearly show the dread with which the Austrians regarded their antagonist than the fact that General Daun did not march immediately upon Olmütz, and, with the aid of a sally from the garrison, overwhelm and crush Frederick beneath their united assaults.

For seven weeks the siege of Olmütz was prosecuted with great vigor. With much skill Frederick protected his baggage trains in their long and exposed route of ninety miles through forests

and mountain defiles. General Keith was intrusted with the details of the siege facing the town toward the east; Frederick, with a vigilant corps of horse and foot, was about twenty miles to the west, watching every movement of General Daun, so far as he was able through the thick cloud of Pandours, behind which the Austrian commander endeavored to conceal all his manœuvres.

While engaged in these labors the tidings reached him of the death of his brother Augustus William. He was Prince of Prussia, being, next to the childless Frederick, heir to the crown. Frederick seems to have received the news very heartlessly.

"Of what did he die?" he coldly inquired of the messenger.

"Of chagrin, your majesty," was the reply.

Frederick turned upon his heel, and made no answer.

The unhappy Prince of Prussia, on his dying bed, wrote a very touching letter to his brother Frederick, remonstrating against his conduct, which was not only filling Europe with blood and misery, but which was also imperiling the existence of the Prussian kingdom.

"The slow fever," he wrote, "which consumes me, has not thrown any disorder into my understanding. Condescend to listen to me, sire, now that I can not be suspected of any illusion or deceit. There is an end to the house of Prussia if you continue to brave all Europe confederated against you. You force all Europe to arm to repel your encroachments. The princes of Europe are leagued against your majesty by justice and by interest. Their subjects regard your ruin as essential to the re-

establishment of peace and the safety of monarchical government. They read in your success the slavery of the human race, the annihilation of laws, the degradation of society."

In reference to the course which the king had allowed himself to pursue in obtaining access to the archives of Saxony by bribing an officer to betray his trust, Augustus William wrote:

"The more you have proved that you were acquainted with the intentions of Saxony, the more odious have you rendered its invasion. In order to procure this knowledge, your minister has degraded his character. By means proscribed in society, you have discovered only that the King Elector of Saxony did not love the power of Prussia, that he feared it, and that he even dared to form projects to defend himself against it. Documents which are stolen make against the accuser who produces them, if they do not prove the crime which they impute."[116]

In conclusion, in most pathetic terms he entreated the king to listen to terms of peace, and thus to prevent the ruin of himself, of his people, and of his royal house.

At the same time that the tidings of the death of Augustus William were communicated to the king, he received also the tidings, which to him were truly heart-rending, that Wilhelmina, worn down with care and sorrow, was fast sinking into the grave.

Early in June, the cautious but ever-vigilant General Daun succeeded in throwing into Olmütz a re-enforcement of eleven hundred Austrian troops. They were guided by peasants through by-paths in the forests. Crossing the river some miles below Olmütz, they entered the city from the east.

Still, on the whole, the siege progressed favorably. Large supplies of food and ammunition were indispensable to Frederick. Thirty thousand hungry men were to be fed. A constant bombardment rapidly exhausts even abundant stores of powder, shot, and shell.

In the latter part of June a large train of over three thousand four-horse wagons, laden with all necessary supplies, left Troppau for Olmütz. It is difficult for a reader unfamiliar with such scenes to form any conception of the magnitude of such an enterprise. There are twelve thousand horses to be shod, harnessed, and fed, and watered three or four times a day. There are three thousand wagons to be kept in repair, rattling over the stones and plowing through the mire. Six thousand teamsters are required. There is invariably connected with such a movement one or two thousand camp-followers, sutlers, women, vagabonds. A large armed force is also needed to act as convoy.

This train filled the road for a distance of twenty miles. To traverse the route of ninety miles required six days. The road led through forests and mountain defiles. A bold and vigorous foe, well equipped and well mounted, watched the movement. To protect such a train from assault is one of the most difficult achievements of war. The enemy, suddenly emerging from mountain fastnesses or gloomy forests, can select his point of attack, and then sweep in either direction along the line, burning and destroying.

On the 26th of June this vast train commenced its movement from Troppau. A convoy of about seven thousand infantry and eleven hundred cavalry guarded the wagons. They were in three bodies, on the front, in the centre, and on the rear. The king

also sent forward about six thousand horse and foot from Olmütz to meet the train.

The wagons had accomplished about half the distance, when, on Friday, the 30th of June, as they were emerging from wild ravines among the mountains, they were simultaneously attacked in front, centre, and rear by three divisions of the Austrians, each about five thousand strong. Then ensued as terrible a scene of panic and confusion as war has ever witnessed. The attack of horsemen with their gleaming sabres, the storm of bullets, thick as hailstones, the thunders of the cannon, as the ponderous balls tore their way through wagons, and horses, and men, soon presented such a spectacle of devastation, ruin, and woe as mortal eyes have seldom gazed upon.

"Among the tragic wrecks of this convoy there is one that still goes to our heart. A longish, almost straight row of Prussian recruits stretched among the slain, what are these? These were seven hundred recruits coming up from their cantons to the wars. See how they have fought to the death, poor lads! and have honorably, on the sudden, got manumitted from the toils of life. Seven hundred of them stood to arms this morning; some sixty-five will get back to Troppau; that is the invoice account. There they lie with their blonde young cheeks, beautiful in death."[117]

A large portion of the train was utterly destroyed. The remainder was driven back to Troppau. The disaster was irreparable. The tidings were conveyed to Frederick the next day, July 1. They must have fallen upon him with crushing weight. It was the annihilation of all his hopes for the campaign, and rendered it necessary immediately

to raise the siege and retreat. This extraordinary man did not allow himself to manifest the slightest despondency. He assembled his officers, and, with a smiling face, and hopeful, cheering words, announced his decision.

All Saturday night the bombardment was continued with increasing fury. In the mean time four thousand wagons were packed, and, long before the dawn of Sunday morning, were on the road. The retreat was so admirably conducted that General Daun did not venture even to attempt to harass the retiring columns. Instead of moving in a northerly direction to Silesia, Frederick directed his march to the northwest, into Bohemia. On the 8th of July his long column safely reached Leutomischel. He there seized quite an amount of military stores, which General Daun, in his haste and bewilderment, had not been able to remove or to destroy. Five more marches conducted him to Königgrätz.

General Daun, with the utmost caution, followed the retreating army. Though his numbers were estimated at seventy-five thousand, he did not dare to encounter Frederick with his thirty thousand Prussians on the field of battle. With skill which has elicited the applause of all military critics, Frederick, early in August, continued his retreat till he reached, on the 8th of the month, Grüssau, on his own side of the mountains in Silesia. On this march he wrote to his brother Henry from Skalitz:

“What you write to me of my sister of Baireuth makes me tremble. Next to my mother, she is the one I have most tenderly loved in this world. She is a sister who has my heart and all my confidence, and whose character is of a price beyond all the crowns in the universe. From my tenderest years I was

brought up with her. You can conceive how there reigns between us that indissoluble bond of mutual affection and attachment for life which in many cases were impossible. Would to Heaven that I might die before her!"

On the 9th of August he wrote from Grüssau to Wilhelmina herself: "Oh, you, the dearest of my family, you whom I have most at heart of all in this world, for the sake of whatever is most precious to you, preserve yourself, and let me have at least the consolation of shedding my tears in your bosom!"

Frederick had left Grüssau on the 18th of April for his Moravian campaign. He returned on the 8th of August, after an absence of sixteen weeks. The campaign had proved an entire failure. A Russian army, fifty thousand strong, under General Fermor, had invaded Brandenburg, just beyond the extreme northern frontier of Silesia. These semi-barbarian soldiers had burned the town of Cüstrin, on the Oder, were besieging the small garrison in its citadel, and were committing the most horrid outrages upon the community around, not only plundering and burning, but even consigning captives to the flames.

On Friday, the 11th of August, Frederick, leaving forty thousand men to guard Silesia, took fifteen thousand troops, and commenced a very rapid march to attack the fifty thousand Russians. Upon the eve of his departure he wrote to his brother Henry:

"I march to-morrow against the Russians. As the events of war may lead to all sorts of accidents, and it may easily happen to me to be killed, I have thought it my duty to let you know what my plans were; the rather, as you are the guardian of my nephew,[118] with unlimited authority."

He then gave minute directions as to what he wished to have done in case of his death. Marching rapidly through Liegnitz and Hohenfriedberg, he reached Frankfort-on-the-Oder on Sunday, the 20th of August. He was now within twenty miles of Cüstrin, and the bombardment by the heavy siege guns of the Russians could be distinctly heard. Frederick took lodgings at the house of a clergyman's widow. Frequently he arose and went out of doors, listening impatiently to the cannonade. An eye-witness writes:

"I observed that the king took a pinch of snuff as the sound of each discharge reached him. And even through that air of intrepidity, which never abandoned this prince, I could perceive the sensations of pity toward that unfortunate town, and an eager impatience to fly to its relief."

The next morning, taking with him a small escort, and leaving his army to follow with as much speed as possible, he rode rapidly down the western bank of the Oder to Görgast, where he had an encampment of about fifteen thousand Prussian troops. At five o'clock in the morning of Tuesday the two bands were united. He now had at his command thirty thousand men. Cüstrin was on the eastern bank of the Oder, near the confluence of the Warta. A few miles below Cüstrin, at Schaumburg, there were portions of a bridge across the Oder. Here the Russians had erected a redoubt. Frederick ordered a violent attack upon that redoubt. During the night, while the attention of the Russians was occupied by the assault, Frederick marched his army twelve miles farther down the river, and crossed, without any loss, at Güstebiese. His baggage train he left, carefully guarded, on the western bank of the river.

Pressing straight forward, Wednesday morning, to the east, he encamped that night about ten miles from Güstebiese. He had so successfully veiled his movements that the Russians knew not where he was. On Thursday morning, August 24, at an early hour, he resumed his march, and crossed the Mützel River at various points. His confidence of victory was so great that he destroyed all the bridges behind him to prevent the retreat of the Russians.

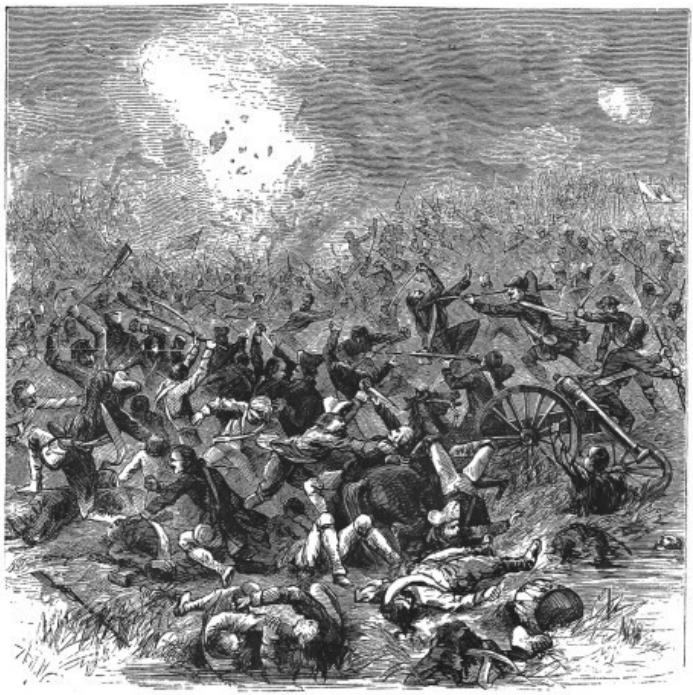
General Fermor was now informed, through his roving Cossacks, of the position of Frederick. Immediately he raised the siege of Cüstrin, hurried off his baggage train to Klein Kamin, on the road to Landsberg, and retired with his army to a very strong position near the village of Zorndorf. Here there was a wild, bleak, undulating plain, interspersed with sluggish streams, and forests, and impassable bogs. General Fermor massed the Russian troops in a very irregular hollow square, with his staff baggage in the centre, and awaited an attack. This huge quadrilateral of living lines, four men deep, with bristling bayonets, prancing horses, and iron-lipped cannon, was about two miles long by one mile broad.

At half past three o'clock on Friday morning, Frederick, with his whole army, was again upon the march. He swept quite around the eastern end of the Russian square, and approached it from the south. By this sagacious movement he could, in case of disaster, retreat to Cüstrin.

The morning of a hot August day dawned sultry, the wind breathing gently from the south. Bands of Cossacks hovered around upon the wings of the Prussian army, occasionally riding up to the infantry ranks and discharging their pistols at them. The Prussians were forbidden to make any reply. "The

infantry pours along like a plowman drawing his furrow, heedless of the circling crows." The Cossacks set fire to Zorndorf. In a few hours it was in ashes, while clouds of suffocating smoke were swept through the Russian lines.

The attack was made about eight o'clock, with the whole concentrated force of the Prussians, upon the southwest wing of the quadrilateral. The carnage produced by the Prussian batteries, as their balls swept crosswise through the massed Russians, was terrible. One cannon-shot struck down forty-two men. For a moment the Prussians were thrown into confusion by the destructive fire returned by the foe, and seemed discomfited. The Russians plunged wildly forward, with loud huzzas. In the eagerness of their onset their lines were broken.



CHARGE OF GENERAL SEIDLITZ AT ZORNDORF.

General Seidlitz, with five thousand horsemen, immediately dashed in among them. Almost in an instant the shouts of victory sank away in groans of death. It was an awful scene—a maelstrom of chaotic tumult, shrieks, blood, and death. The stolid Russians refused to fly. The Prussians sabred them and trampled them beneath their horses' feet until their arms were weary. This terrible massacre lasted until one o'clock. The whole of the western portion of the quadrilateral was destroyed. The Russian soldiers at a little distance from the scene of carnage, reckless and under poor discipline, broke open the sutlers' brandy-casks, and were soon beastly drunk. The officers, endeavoring to restrain them, dashed in

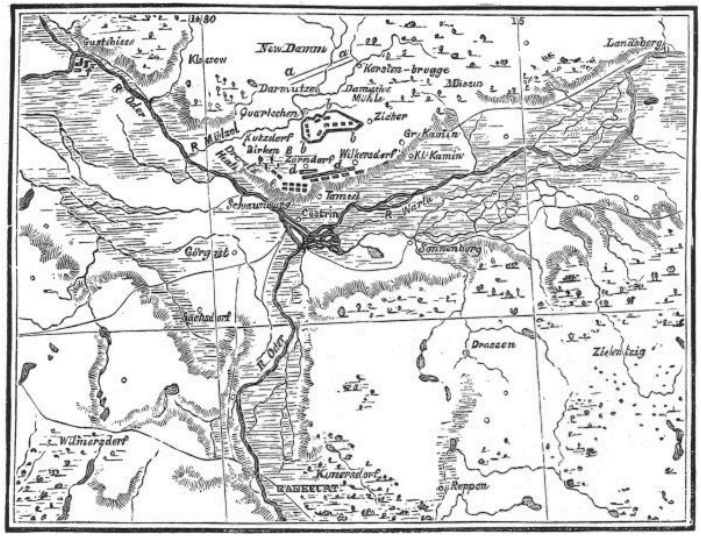
many of the casks. The soldiers, throwing themselves upon the ground, lapped the fiery liquid from the puddles. They killed many of their own officers, and became almost unresisting victims of the sabres and bayonets of their assailants. The Prussians, exasperated by the awful acts of cruelty which had been perpetrated by the Russians, showed no mercy. In the midst of the butchery, the word ran along their lines, “No quarter.”

The eastern half of the immense quadrangle endeavored to reform itself, so as to present a new front to the foe. But, before this could be done, Frederick hurled his right wing, his centre, and all that remained disposable of his left wing upon it. His cavalry plunged into the disordered mass. His batteries, with almost unprecedented rapidity of fire, tore the tumultuous and panic-stricken ranks to shreds; and his line of infantry, like a supernatural wall of bristling steel, unwaveringly advanced, pouring in upon the foe the most deadly volleys.

At one moment the Russian horse dashed against this line and staggered it. Frederick immediately rushed into the vortex to rally the broken battalions. At the same instant the magnificent squadrons of Seidlitz, five thousand strong, flushed with victory, swept like the storm-wind upon the Russian dragoons. They were whirled back like autumn leaves before the gale. About four o’clock the firing ceased. The ammunition on both sides was nearly expended. For some time the Prussians had been using the cartridge-boxes of the dead Russians.

And now ensued a conflict such as has seldom been witnessed in modern times. The Russian soldiers would not run. Indeed, the bridges over the Mützel being broken down, they could only plunge

into the river and be drowned. Frenzied with brandy, they fought like tigers. “Then began a tug of deadly massacring and wrestling, man to man, with bayonets, with butts of muskets, with hands, even with teeth, such as was never seen before. The shore of Mützel is thick with men and horses, who have tried to cross, and lie swallowed in the ooze.”[119]



BATTLE OF ZORNDORF, AUGUST 25, 1758.

a a. Prussian Army about to cross the Mützel. b b b. Russian Army ranked for Battle. c. Russian Baggage. d d. Prussian Infantry. e e. Prussian Cavalry. f. Prussian Baggage.

This lasted till nightfall. As darkness veiled the awful scene the exhausted soldiers dropped upon the ground, and, regardless of the dead and of the groans of the wounded, borne heavily upon the night air, slept almost side by side. It is appalling to reflect upon what a fiend to humanity man has been, as revealed in the history of the nations. All the woes of

earth combined are as nothing compared with the misery which man has inflicted upon his brother.

During the night bands of barbarian, half-drunken Cossacks ranged the field, plundering the wounded and the dead, friends and foes alike, and thrusting their bayonets through those who presented any remonstrance, or who might, by any possibility, call them to account. Four hundred of these wretches the equally merciless Prussians drove into a barn, fastened them in, set fire to the building, and burned them all to ashes. During the carnage of this bloody day the Russians lost, in killed, wounded, and missing, 21,539. The Prussians lost 11,390, more than one third of their number.

General Fermor availed himself of the darkness in withdrawing his troops, now numbering but 28,000, a mile west from the battle-field to a dense forest of firs, called Drewitz Heath. Frederick arranged his little remaining band of but eighteen thousand men in two lines, facing the foe. The next morning, Saturday, the 26th, General Fermor sent a request for a truce of three days to bury the dead. The reply was, “Your proposal is entirely inadmissible. The victor will bury the slain.” There was no serious resumption of the conflict on that day. Both parties were alike exhausted, and had alike expended nearly all their ammunition. Frederick’s hussars had, however, found out the position of the Russian baggage train, and had effectually plundered a large portion of it.

Saturday night was very dark. A thick mist mantled the landscape. About midnight, the Russians, feigning an artillery attack upon a portion of the Prussian lines, commenced a retreat. Groping their way through the woods south of Zorndorf, they

reached the great road to Landsberg, and retreated so rapidly that Frederick could annoy them but little.

Several well-authenticated anecdotes are given respecting the conduct of Frederick on this occasion, which illustrate the various phases in the character of this extraordinary man. The evening before the battle of Zorndorf, the king, having completed his arrangements for a conflict against vastly unequal numbers, upon whose issue were dependent probably both his throne and his life, sent for a member of his staff of some literary pretensions, and spent some time in criticising and amending one of the poems of Rousseau. Was this an affected display of calmness, the result of vanity? Was it an adroit measure to impress the officers with a conviction of his own sense of security? Was it an effort to throw off the terrible pressure which was upon his mind, as the noble Abraham Lincoln often found it to be a moral necessity to indulge in a jest even amidst scenes of the greatest anguish? Whatever may have been the motive, the fact is worthy of record.

Immediately after the battle Sir Andrew Mitchell called upon the king to congratulate him upon his great victory. General Seidlitz, who had led the two decisive cavalry charges, was in the royal tent. The king, in reply to the congratulations of the English minister, pointed to General Seidlitz and said,

“Had it not been for him, things would have had a bad look by this time.”

The town of Cüstrin, it will be remembered, was utterly consumed, being set on fire by the shells of the Russians. The commandant of the citadel was censured for not having prevented the calamity. He immediately sought an interview with the king, endeavoring to apologize for his conduct. The king,

perhaps justly, perhaps very unjustly, interrupted him, saying,

"I find no fault with you; the blame is entirely my own in having appointed you to such a post."

The utter ruin of the town of Cüstrin, and the misery of its houseless and starving population, seemed to affect the king deeply. To the inhabitants, who clustered around him, he said, kindly,

"My children, I could not come to you sooner, or this calamity should not have happened. Have a little patience, and I will cause every thing to be rebuilt."

As has often been mentioned, the carnage of the battle-field constitutes by no means the greater part of the miseries of war. One of the sufferers from the conflagration of the city of Cüstrin gives the following graphic account of the scene. It was the 15th of August, 1758:

"The enemy threw such a multitude of bombs and red-hot balls into the city that by nine o'clock in the morning it burned, with great fury, in three different places. The fire could not be extinguished, as the houses were closely built, and the streets narrow. The air appeared like a shower of fiery rain and hail. The surprised inhabitants had not time to think of any thing but of saving their lives by getting into the open fields.

"I, as well as many others, had hardly time to put on my clothes. As I was leading my wife, with a young child in her arms, and my other children and servants before me—who were almost naked, having, ever since the first fright, run about as they got out of bed—the bombs and red-hot balls fell round about us. The bombs, in their bursting, dashed the houses to pieces, and every thing that was in their way.

Every body that could got out of the town as fast as possible. The crowd of naked and in the highest degree wretched people was vastly great.

"Among the women were many of distinction, who had neither shoes nor stockings, nor hardly any thing else on, thinking only of saving their lives. When I had seen my family in the open field, I endeavored to return and save something, if possible, but in vain. I could not force my way through the multitude of people thronging out at the gate, some few with horses and carriages, and others with the sick and bedridden on their backs. The bombs and red-hot balls fell so thick that all thought themselves happy if they could but escape with their lives.

"Many thousands are made miserable, inhabitants as well as strangers. Many from the open country and defenseless towns in Prussia, Pomerania, and the New Marche had fled hither, with their most valuable effects, in hopes of security when the Russians entered the Prussian territories; so that a great many who, a little while ago, were possessed of considerable fortunes, are now reduced to beggary. On the roads nothing was to be seen but misery, and nothing to be heard but such cries and lamentations as were enough to move even the stones. No one knew where to get a morsel of bread, nor what to do for farther subsistence. The fire was so furious that the cannon in the store and artillery houses were all melted. The loaded bombs and cartridges for cannon and muskets, with a large quantity of gunpowder, went off at once with a most horrible explosion. The fury of the enemy fell almost entirely upon the inhabitants. They did not begin to batter the fortifications, except with a few shot, till the 17th, after the rest was all destroyed."[120]

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE THIRD CAMPAIGN OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.

Frederick's Attempt to Rescue his Brother.—Captured Dispatches.—Battle of Hochkirch.—Defeat and Retreat of Frederick.—Death of Wilhelmina.—Letter to Voltaire.—Rejoicings at Vienna.—The Siege of Neisse.—The Siege of Dresden.—Conflagrations and Terror.—The Siege raised by Frederick.—Results of the Third Campaign.—Unavailing Efforts for Peace. —Despair of Frederick.

THE battle of Zorndorf was the most bloody of the Seven Years' War. It is often considered the most furious battle which was ever fought. While Frederick was engaged in this arduous campaign in the extreme north, driving the Russians from the Prussian territory, an Austrian army, ninety thousand strong, under General Daun, was endeavoring to reconquer Saxony. The Prussian king had left his brother Henry in defense of the province, with a small force garrisoned in the city of Dresden.

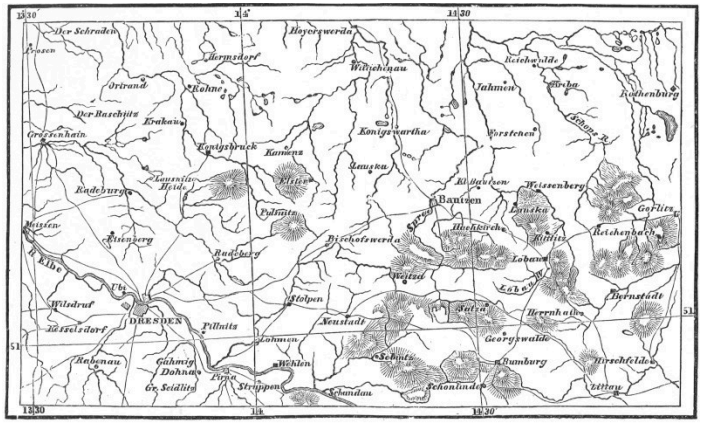
On the 2d of September, 1758, Frederick, advancing from the smouldering ruins of Cüstrin, pushed forward his columns by forced marches for the rescue of his brother, who was nearly surrounded by vastly outnumbering foes. While upon this rapid

march an Austrian courier was captured, with the following dispatch, which he was bearing from General Daun to General Fermor, whose army of Russians had just been so terribly beaten by Frederick upon the field of Zorndorf, but of which fact the Austrian general had not yet been apprised:

> "Your excellency does not know that wily enemy, the King of Prussia, as well as I do. By no means get into a battle with him. Cautiously manœuvre about. Detain him there till I have got my stroke in Saxony done. Don't try fighting him.
>
> "DAUN."

Frederick, with grim humor characteristic of him, sent back the courier with the following response, as if from the Russian general, signed Fermor, but in the king's handwriting:

> "Your excellency was right to warn me against a cunning enemy whom you know better than I. Here have I tried fighting him, and have got beaten. Your unfortunate
>
> FERMOR."



CAMPAIGN OF HOCHKIRCH.

On the 12th of September Frederick dined with his brother Henry in Dresden. General Daun, as soon as he heard of the approach of the foe whom he so much dreaded, rapidly retreated eastward to Stolpen, on the road to Bautzen. Here he intrenched himself in one of the strongest posts in Germany. As Frederick, at Dresden, received his supplies from Bautzen, he was much embarrassed in having his line of communication thus cut. Finding all his efforts vain to provoke Daun to a battle, after four weeks of such endeavors, he loaded his baggage trains with supplies for nine days, and by a rapid march, brushing away in the movement Daun's right flank, and advancing through Bautzen, established himself among the hills of Hochkirch. He had thus taken position thirty miles east of General Daun's encampment at Stolpen, cutting off his line of supply.

This movement of Frederick took place on the 1st of October, 1758. On the 5th, General Daun, who stood in great dread of the military ability of his foe, after holding a council of war, made a stealthy

march, in a dark and rainy night, a little to the south of Frederick's encampment, and took a strong position about a mile east of him, at Kittlitz, near Löbau. With the utmost diligence he reared intrenchments and palisades to guard himself from attack by a foe whom he outnumbered more than two to one. He thus again blocked Frederick's direct communication with Silesia.

General Daun's army, numbering ninety thousand men, occupied very strong positions in a line extending north and south about five miles. On the 10th, Frederick, having obtained the needful supplies, resolutely, rashly—but, situated as he was, what the world deemed rashness was prudence—advanced with but twenty-eight thousand men to assail this foe of ninety thousand behind his intrenchments. About five miles to the north, in the rear of the heights of Weissenberg, Frederick had a reserve of ten or twelve thousand men under General Retzow.

As the Prussian king brought up his little army to within a mile of the lines of General Daun, and ordered the troops to take position there, his boldest generals were appalled. It seemed to be courting sure and utter destruction. The king's favorite adjutant general, Marwitz, ventured to remonstrate against so fearful a risk. He was immediately ordered under arrest. The line was formed while the Austrian cannon were playing incessantly upon it. General Retzow, who for some cause had failed to seize the heights of Stromberg, was also placed under arrest. Thus the king taught all that he would be obeyed implicitly and without questioning.

General Keith, as he looked upon the long and compact lines of General Daun, and saw how

apparently easy it would be for him, from his commanding position, to annihilate the Prussian army, said to the king, sadly,

"If the Austrians do not attack us here they deserve to be hanged."

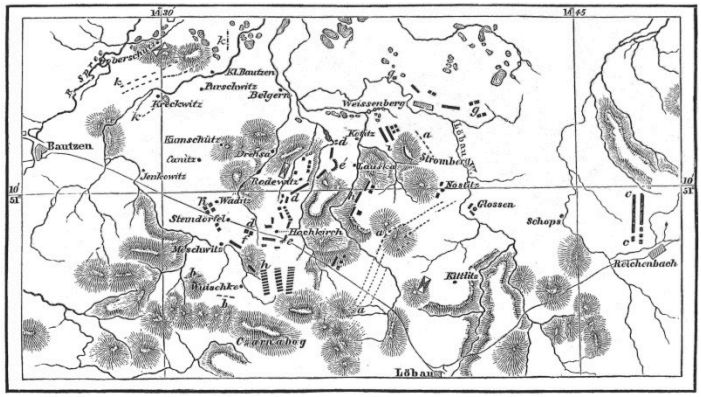
The king coolly replied, "We must hope that they are more afraid of us than even of the gallows."

On Friday, the 13th of October, the two hostile armies, separated merely by a brook and a ravine, were within half a mile of each other. Daun had manifested great timidity in not venturing from behind his intrenchments to attack the little band of Prussians. Frederick, emboldened by this cowardice on the part of his opponent, made his arrangements to assail the Austrians in a secret attack before the dawn of the morning of Saturday, the 14th. In the mean time, Daun, probably a little ashamed of being held at bay by so small a force, formed his plan to surround and destroy the whole Prussian army. It is generally conceded by military critics that the plan was admirably conceived, and would have been triumphantly executed but for the singular ability displayed by Frederick.

General Daun directed the energies of his ninety thousand troops upon the right wing of the Prussians, which could not number more than twenty thousand men. As soon as it was dark on Friday night, the 13th, he sent thirty thousand men, under guides familiar with every rod of the country, by a circuitous route, south of the Prussian lines, through forest roads, to take position on the west of the Prussian right wing, just in its rear. General Daun himself accompanied this band of picked men.

At three o'clock of a dark and misty morning, the

Austrians from the west, the south, and the east rushed upon the sleeping Prussians. At the same time, an attack was made upon the left wing of the Prussians, which was a feint to bewilder them, and to prevent re-enforcements from being sent to the right wing. For five hours there was a scene of tumult, confusion, and horror which can neither be described nor imagined. The morning was dark, the fog dense, and the Prussians, though ever on the alert, were taken by surprise. No one in the army of Frederick thought either of running or of surrendering. It was a hand-to-hand fight, with bayonets, and sabres, and butts of muskets. Marshal Keith, after receiving two bullet-wounds which he did not regard, was shot through the heart.



BATTLE OF HOCHKIRCH, OCTOBER 14, 1758.

a a a. First Position of the Austrian Army. b b. Extreme Left, under Loudon. c c. Austrian Reserve, under Baden-Durlach. d d d. Prussian Army. e e. The two main Prussian Batteries. f. Ziethen's Cavalry. g g. Prussian Vanguard, under Retzow. h h h. Advance of Austrian Army. i. Right Wing, under D'Ahremberg. k k k. Position taken by the Prussians after the battle.

As the morning dawned it was manifest to Frederick that the battle was lost, and that there was no salvation for the remnant of his troops but in a precipitate retreat. He had lost a hundred pieces of cannon, nearly all of his tents and camp furniture, and over eight thousand of his brave troops were either dead or captive. Though the Austrians had lost about the same number of men, they had still over eighty thousand left.

With wonderful skill, Frederick conducted his retreat about four miles to the northwest. Here he took a strong position at Doberschütz, and again bade defiance to the Austrians. Slowly, proudly, and in perfect order he retired, as if merely shifting his ground. His cavalry was drawn up as on parade, protecting his baggage-wagons as they defiled through the pass of Drehsa. The Austrians gazed quietly upon the movement, not venturing to renew the attack by daylight upon such desperate men.

Though, as we may see from Frederick's private correspondence, he suffered terribly in these hours of adversity and peril, he assumed in public a tranquil and even a jocose air. Meeting De Catt upon the evening of that dreadful day, he approached him, smiling, and with theatric voice and gesture declaimed a passage from Racine, the purport of which was, "Well, here you see me not a conqueror, but vanquished."

While on the retreat, one of his aids approached him, and the king, with a smile, said, "Daun has played me a slippery trick to-day."

"I have seen it," was the reply; "but it is only a scratch, which your majesty will soon heal again."

"Do you think so?" inquired the king.

"Not only I," the aid replied, "but the whole army, firmly believe it of your majesty."

"You are quite right," responded the king. "We will manage Daun. What I lament is the number of brave men who have died this morning."

The next day he remarked, "Daun has let us out of checkmate. The game is not lost yet. We will rest ourselves here for a few days, then we will go to Silesia and deliver Neisse. But where are all your guns?" he said, playfully, to an artilleryman, who stood, vacant, on parade.

"Your majesty," replied the gunner, "the devil stole them all last night."

"Ah!" said the king, gayly, "we must have them back from him again."

The fourth day after this dreadful defeat the king received the tidings of the death of Wilhelmina. It was apparently the heaviest blow he had ever encountered. The anguish which her death caused him he did not attempt to conceal. In a business letter to Prince Henry we find this burst of feeling:

"Great God! my sister of Baireuth, my noble Wilhelmina, dead; died in the very hours while we were fighting here."

The king, in a letter to Voltaire upon this occasion, writes:

> "It will have been easy for you to conceive my grief when you reflect upon the loss I have had. There are some misfortunes which are reparable by constancy and courage, but there are others against which all the firmness with which one can arm one's self, and all the reasonings of philosophers, are only vain and useless attempts

at consolation.[121] Of the latter kind is the one with which my unhappy fate overwhelms me, at a moment the most embarrassing and the most anxious of my whole life. I have not been so sick as you have heard. My only complaints are colics, sometimes hemorrhoidal, and sometimes nephritic.

"If it had depended upon me, I would willingly have devoted myself to that death which those maladies sooner or later bring upon one, in order to save and prolong the life of her whose eyes are now closed. I beseech you never to forget her. Collect all your powers to raise a monument to her honor. You need only do her justice. Without any way abandoning the truth, she will afford you an ample and beautiful subject. I wish you more repose and happiness than falls to my lot.

FREDERICK."[122]

The court at Vienna received with transports of joy the tidings of the victory of Hochkirch. The pope was greatly elated. He regarded the battle as one between the Catholic and Protestant powers. The holy father, Clement XIII., sent a letter of congratulation to Marshal Daun, together with a sword and hat, both blessed by his holiness. The occurrence excited the derision of Frederick, who was afterward accustomed to designate his opponent as "the blessed general with the papal hat." Frederick remained at Doberschütz ten days. During this time his brother Henry joined him from Dresden with six thousand foot and horse. This raised his force to a little above thirty thousand men. General Finck was left in command of the few Prussian troops who remained for the defense of the capital of Saxony.

The Austrian general, flushed with victory, at the head of eighty thousand troops, encamped in strong positions a few miles east of Frederick, on the road to Neisse, in Silesia. Narrowly he watched the movements of his Prussian majesty, but he did not venture to molest him. Neisse was at that time closely besieged by the Austrians. It would inevitably soon fall into their hands unless Frederick could march to its succor. The great strategic object of the Austrian commander was so to block up the road as to prevent the advance of the Prussian troops. Frederick, despising the inactivity of his cautious foe, said to his brother,

"Daun has thrown up his cards, so the game is not yet lost. Let us repose ourselves for some days, and then go to the assistance of Neisse."[123]

In the mean while, Marshal Daun was so confident that Frederick, with but thirty thousand men, could not drive him from his intrenchments, guarded by eighty thousand veteran troops, that he wrote to General Harsch, who was conducting the siege of Neisse,

"Go on quietly with your siege. I have the king within my grasp. He is cut off from Silesia except by attacking me. If he does that, I hope to give you a good account of what happens."[124]

On Tuesday evening, October 24, 1758, Frederick, in a rapid and secret march, protected by darkness, pushed his whole army around the right wing of the Austrian encampment, and took a very strong position at Reichenbach, in the rear of Marshal Daun, and on the road to Neisse. The Austrian general, astonished at this bold and successful manœuvre, now found that the march of Frederick to Neisse could by no possibility be

prevented except by attacking him on his own chosen ground. This he did not dare to do. He therefore resolved to make a rush with his whole army to the west for the capture of Dresden. Frederick, in the mean time, by forced marches, was pressing forward to the east for the relief of Neisse. Thus the two armies were flying from each other in opposite directions.

When the Austrian general conducting the siege at Neisse heard of the rapid approach of Frederick, he, in consternation, blew up many of his works, abandoned several guns, and, on the 6th of November, fled with his army over the hills to the south, to take shelter in Austria. Frederick triumphantly entered Neisse, and, having driven the Austrians from every outpost, commenced, with a recruited army, his return march to Dresden. The more slow-footed Daun did not reach Dresden till the 8th of the month. The city, outside of the walls, was crowded with the dwellings of the more respectable citizens, and the beautiful mansions of the wealthy. The King of Poland was Elector of Saxony, and was in alliance with Austria. For the Austrian commander to pursue any measure which should lead to the destruction, in whole or in part, of this beautiful capital, would inflict a terrible blow upon the subjects of the ally of Austria.

As General Daun approached the city, the Prussian general who had been left in command of the small garrison there sent word to him that, should he menace Dresden with his forces, the Prussian commander would be under the necessity of setting fire to the suburbs, as a measure of self-defense. Daun, expostulating vehemently against so cruel an act, regardless of the menace, approached

the city on the 9th of November, and at midnight commenced rearing his batteries for the bombardment. In the mean time the Prussian general had filled many of the largest houses with combustibles. As the clock struck three in the morning the torch was applied. The unhappy inhabitants had but three hours' notice that their houses were to be surrendered to destruction. Instantly the flames burst forth with terrific fury in all directions. Sir Andrew Mitchel, who witnessed the conflagration, writes:

"The whole suburb seemed on a blaze. Nay, you would have said the whole town was environed in flames. I will not describe to your lordship the horror, the terror, the confusion of this night; the wretched inhabitants running with their furniture toward the great garden. All Dresden, in appearance, girt with flames, ruin, and smoke."

The army of General Daun, with its re-enforcements, amounted to one hundred thousand men. The Prussian garrison in the city numbered but ten thousand. The Prussian officer then in command, General Schmettau, emboldened by the approach of Frederick, repelled all proposals for capitulation.

"I will defend myself," he said, "by the known rules of war and honor to the last possible moment."

On the 15th of November Frederick arrived at Lauban, within a hundred miles of Dresden. General Daun immediately raised the siege and retired into Bohemia. Frederick marched triumphantly into the city. Thus, as the extraordinary result of the defeat at Hochkirch, Frederick, by the exhibition of military ability which astonished Europe, regained Neisse, retained Dresden, and swept both Silesia and Saxony entirely free of his foes. Frederick remained in

Dresden about a month. He then retired to Breslau, in Silesia, for winter quarters. The winter was a very sad one to him. Private griefs and public calamities weighed heavily upon his heart.[125] Though during the year he had destroyed a hundred thousand of his enemies, he had lost thirty thousand of his own brave little band. It was almost impossible, by any energies of conscription, to replace this waste of war. His treasury was exhausted. Though he wrenched from the wretched Saxons every dollar which military rapacity and violence could extort from them, still they were so impoverished by the long and desolating struggle that but little money could be found in the almost empty purses of a beggared people. Another campaign was soon to open, in which the allies, with almost unlimited resources of men and treasure, would again come crowding upon him in all directions in overpowering numbers.

In a letter to his friend Lord Marischal, dated Dresden, November 23, 1758, just after the retreat of Daun into Bohemia from Saxony, Frederick writes sadly,

“There is nothing left for us, my dear lord, but to mingle and blend our weeping for the losses we have had. If my head were a fountain of tears, it would not suffice for the grief I feel.

“Our campaign is over. And there is nothing come of it on the one side or the other but the loss of a great many worthy people, the misery of a great many poor soldiers crippled forever, the ruin of some provinces, and the ravage, pillage, and conflagration of some flourishing towns. These are exploits which make humanity suffer; sad fruits of the wickedness and ambition of certain people in power, who sacrifice every thing to their unbridled passions. I

wish you, *mon cher milord*, nothing that has the least resemblance to my destiny, and every thing that is wanting to it."

Thus ended in clouds, darkness, and woe the third campaign of the Seven Years' War. The winter was employed by both parties in preparing for a renewal of the struggle. As the spring opened the allies had in the field such a military array as Europe had never seen before. Three hundred thousand men extended in a cordon of posts from the Giant Mountains, near the borders of Silesia, to the ocean. In the north, also, Russia had accumulated her vast armies for vigorous co-operation with the southern troops. All the leading Continental powers—France, Austria, Russia, Sweden, and the states of the German Empire—were combined against Prussia. England alone was the inefficient ally of Frederick. Small sums of money were loaned him from the British cabinet; and the court of St. James, hostile in heart to the Prussian king, co-operated with him only so far as was deemed essential for the promotion of British interests.

Perhaps never before was a monarch surrounded by difficulties so great. The energy and sagacity Frederick displayed have never been surpassed, if ever equaled.

It was a dreary winter to Frederick in Breslau. Sad, silent, and often despairing, he was ever inflexibly resolved to struggle till the last possible moment, and, if need be, to bury himself beneath the ruins of his kingdom. All his tireless energies he devoted to the Herculean work before him. No longer did he affect gayety or seek recreations. Secluded, solitary, sombre, he took counsel of no one. In the possession of absolute power, he issued

his commands as with the authority of a god.

Frederick made several unavailing efforts during the winter to secure peace. He was weary of a war which threatened his utter destruction. The French were also weary of a struggle in which they encountered but losses and disgraces. England had but little to hope for from the conflict, and would gladly see the exhaustive struggle brought to a close.

"Many men in all nations long for peace. But there are three women at the top of the world who do not. Their wrath, various in quality, is great in quantity, and disasters do the reverse of appeasing it."[126]

Of these three women who then held the destinies of Europe in their hands, one only, Maria Theresa, in the estimation of the public, had good cause for war. Frederick was undeniably a highway robber, seeking to plunder her. She was heroically, nobly struggling in self-defense. The guilty Duchess of Pompadour, who, having the entire control of the infamous king, Louis XV., was virtually the Empress of France, stung by an insult from Frederick, did not hesitate to deluge Europe in blood, that she might take the vengeance of a "woman scorned" upon her foe. Catharine II., Empress of Russia, who in moral pollution rivaled the most profligate of kings—whom Carlyle satirizes as "a kind of she Louis XIV."—also stung by one of Frederick's witty and bitter epigrams, was mainly impelled by personal pique to push forth her armies into the bloody field.

The impartial student of history must admit that, were the government of the world taken from the hands of men, and placed in the hands of women, still the anticipated millennium of righteousness and peace might be far distant.

In the following letter, which Frederick wrote at this time to his friend D'Argens, he unbosoms his sorrows with unusual frankness. The letter was dated Breslau, March 1, 1759:

"I have passed my winter like a Carthusian monk. I dine alone. I spend my life in reading and writing, and I do not sup. When one is sad, it becomes, at last, too burdensome to hide one's grief continually. It is better to give way to it than to carry one's gloom into society. Nothing solaces me but the vigorous application required in steady and continuous labor. This distraction does force one to put away painful ideas while it lasts. But alas! no sooner is the work done than these fatal companions present themselves again, as if livelier than ever. Maupertuis was right; the sum of evil does certainly surpass that of good. But to me it is all one. I have almost nothing more to lose; and my few remaining days—what matters it much of what complexion they be?"

During this dismal winter of incessant and almost despairing labor the indefatigable king wrote several striking treatises on military affairs. It is manifest that serious thoughts at times occupied his mind. He doubtless reflected that if there were a God who took any cognizance of human affairs, there must be somewhere responsibility to Him for the woes with which these wars were desolating humanity. To the surprise of De Catt, the king presented him one evening with a sermon upon "The Last Judgment," from his own pen. He also put upon paper his thoughts "On the new kind of tactics necessary with the Austrians and their allies." He seems himself to have been surprised that he had been able so long to resist such overpowering numbers. In allusion to the

allies he writes:

"To whose continual sluggishness and strange want of concert—to whose incoherency of movements, languor of execution, and other enormous faults, we have owed, with some excuse for our own faults, our escape from destruction hitherto."[127]

CHAPTER XXX.

FOURTH CAMPAIGN OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.

Desperate Exertions of Frederick.—Aid from England.—Limited Resources.—Opening of the Campaign.—Disgraceful Conduct of Voltaire.—Letter to Voltaire.—An Act of Desperation.—Letter to Count Finckenstein.—Frankfort taken by the Prussians.—Terrible Battle of Kunersdorf.—Anguish of Frederick.—The Disastrous Retreat.—Melancholy Dispatch.—Contemplating Suicide.—Collecting the Wrecks of the Army.—Consternation in Berlin.—Letters to D'Argens.—Wonderful Strategical Skill.—Literary Efforts of the King.

BY the most extraordinary exertions, which must have almost depopulated his realms of all the young men and those of middle age, Frederick succeeded in so filling up his depleted ranks as to have in the opening spring of 1759 two hundred thousand men in field and garrison. Indeed, regardless of all the laws of nations, he often compelled the soldiers and other men of conquered provinces to enlist in his armies. How he, in his poverty, obtained the pecuniary resources requisite to the carrying on of such a war, is to the present day a matter of amazement.

England furnished him with a subsidy of about

four million dollars. He immediately melted this coin, gold and silver, and adulterated it with about half copper, thus converting his four millions into nominally eight millions. But a few weeks of such operations as he was engaged in would swallow up all this. The merciless conscription, grasping nearly every able-bodied man, destroyed nearly all the arts of industry. The Prussian realms, thus impoverished by war's ravages and taxation, could furnish the king with very meagre supplies. When the king invaded any portion of the territory of the allies, he wrenched from the beggared people every piece of money which violence or terror could extort. Wealthy merchants were thrown into prison, and fed upon bread and water until they yielded. The most terrible severities were practiced to extort contributions from towns which had been stripped and stripped again. Still violence could wrench but little from the skinny hand of beggary. These provinces, swept by war's surges year after year, were in the most deplorable state of destitution and misery.

From the schedule which Frederick has given of his resources, it seems impossible that he could have raised more than about fifteen million dollars annually, even counting his adulterated coin at the full value. How, with this sum, he could have successfully confronted all combined Europe, is a mystery which has never yet been solved. It was the great object of both parties in this terrible conflict to destroy every thing in the enemy's country which could by any possibility add to military power. All the claims of humanity were ignored. The starvation of hundreds of thousands of peasants—men, women, and children—was a matter not to be taken into consideration. The French minister, in Paris, wrote to Marshal De Contades on the 5th of October, 1758,

"You must make a desert of Westphalia. With regard to the countries of Lippe and Padeborn, as these are very fertile provinces, you must take great care to destroy every thing in them without exception."

Early in the spring of 1759 the Prussian king had gathered the main body of his troops in fortresses and strong positions in the vicinity of Landshut, on the southwestern frontier of Silesia. The enemy, under General Daun, faced him, in longer and denser lines, equally well intrenched. At the same time, powerful bands of the allies were in various parts of Europe, menacing the domains of Frederick at every vulnerable point. The allies dreaded the prowess of their foe. Frederick was compelled to caution by the exhaustless numbers of his opponents. Thus for many weeks neither party entered upon any decisive action. There was, however, an almost incessant series of fierce and bloody skirmishes.

The ability which Frederick displayed in striking his enemies where they would most keenly feel the infliction, and in warding off the blows they attempted in return, excited then the surprise of Europe, and has continued to elicit the astonishment of posterity. It would but weary the reader to attempt a description of these conflicts at the outposts, terrible as they often were.

During this time, in May, the king wrote a very bitter and satirical ode against Louis XV.—"the plaything of the Pompadour," "polluted with his amours," "and disgracefully surrendering the government of his realms to chance." The ode he sent to Voltaire. The unprincipled poet, apprehending that the ode might come to light, and that he might be implicated, treacherously sent it to

the prime minister, the Duke De Choiseul, to be shown to the king. At the same time, he wrote to Frederick that he had burned the ode. In the account which Voltaire himself gives of this disgraceful transaction, he writes:

"The packet had been opened. The king would think I was guilty of high treason, and I should be in disgrace with Madame De Pompadour. I was obliged, in order to prevent my ruin, to make known to the court the character and conduct of their enemy.

"I knew that the Duke De Choiseul would content himself with persuading the King of France that the King of Prussia was an irreconcilable enemy, whom it was therefore necessary, if possible, to annihilate.

"I wrote to Frederick that his ode was beautiful, but that he had better not make it public, lest it should close all the avenues to a reconciliation with the King of France, incense him irremediably, and thus force him to strain every nerve in vengeance.

"I added that my niece had burned his ode from fear that it should be imputed to me. He believed me and thanked me; not, however, without some reproaches for having burned the best verses he had ever made."[128]

The latter part of June, an army of a hundred thousand Russians, having crossed the Vistula, was concentrated, under General Soltikof, at Posen, on the River Warta, in Poland. They were marching from the northeast to attack the Prussian forces near Landshut in their rear. General Daun, with a still larger force of Austrians, was confronting Frederick on the southwest. The plan of the allies was to crush their foe between these two armies. Frederick had lost the ablest of his generals. The young men who

were filling their places were untried.

The Russians, triumphantly advancing, entered Silesia, and reached Crossen, on the Oder, within a hundred miles of Frederick's encampment.

Some trifling unavailing efforts had been made for peace. In reply to a letter from Voltaire, alluding to this subject, Frederick wrote, under date of 2d July, 1759:

"Asking *me* for peace is indeed a bitter joke. It is to Louis XV. you must address yourself, or to his Amboise in petticoats.[129] But these people have their heads filled with ambitious projects. They wish to be the sovereign arbiters of sovereigns. That is what persons of my way of thinking will by no means put up with. I like peace as much as you could wish, but I want it good, solid, and honorable. Socrates or Plato would have thought as I do on this subject had they found themselves in the accursed position which is mine in the world.

"Think you there is any pleasure in living this dog's life, in seeing and causing the butchery of people you know nothing of, in losing daily those you do know and love, in seeing perpetually your reputation exposed to the caprices of chance, passing year after year in disquietudes and apprehensions, in risking without end your life and your fortune?

"I know right well the value of tranquillity, the sweets of society, the charms of life. I love to be happy as much as any one whatever. But, much as I desire these blessings, I will not purchase them by baseness and infamies. Philosophy enjoins us to do our duty faithfully, to serve our country at the price of our blood, of our repose, and of every sacrifice which can be required of us."[130]

Soon after this Frederick dispatched a young and impetuous officer, General Wedell, invested with dictatorial powers, at the head of twenty-six thousand men, to attack the Russian army, at every hazard, and arrest its march. The heroic little band of Prussians met the Russians at Züllichau. One of General Wedell's officers remonstrated against the attack.

"The risk is too great," said he; "Soltikof has seventy thousand men, and no end of artillery. We have but twenty-six thousand, and know not that we can bring a single gun to where Soltikof is."

Still the order was given for the assault. The Prussians plunged into the dense ranks of their foes, regardless of being outnumbered nearly three to one. A terrible battle was fought. General Wedell was overpowered and beaten. He retreated across the Oder, having lost six thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The victorious Russians did not pursue him. They marched down the river to Frankfort, where they effected a junction with other troops, giving them an effective force of ninety-six thousand fighting men.

Frederick received the disastrous news on the 24th of July, the day after the calamity. In the exercise of an unusual spirit of forbearance, he sent word to the defeated general, "It is not your fault; I dreaded something of the kind." The king's brother Henry was in command of a few thousand men near Bautzen, in Saxony. Frederick wrote to him to forward his troops immediately, so as to form a union with the retreating army under Wedell. Henry himself was to repair to the vicinity of Landshut, and take command of the army which was to be left in that vicinity confronting General Daun. The king

took about thirty thousand picked troops, and hurried to the north to gather up by the way the troops of Henry and of Wedell, and with that combined force of forty-eight thousand men make a new attack upon the ninety-six thousand Russians.[131]

It was an act of desperation. The king fully appreciated its peril. But the time had long since passed when he could rely upon the ordinary measures of prudence. In despair was his only hope.

On the 29th of July the king joined his brother Henry at Sagan, on the Bober, about sixty miles above or south of Frankfort. The marches which had been effected by the king and his brother were the most rapid which had *then* ever been heard of. Greatly perplexed by the inexplicable movements of the Russians, the king pressed on till he effected a junction with the remnant of Wedell's defeated army, near Müllrose, within twelve miles of Frankfort. He reached this place on the 3d of August. To Count Finckenstein he wrote:

> "I am just arrived here after cruel and frightful marchings. There is nothing desperate in all that. I believe the noise and disquietude this hurly-burly has caused will be the worst of it. Show this letter to every body, that it may be known that the state is not undefended. I have made about one thousand prisoners from Haddick.[132] All his meal-wagons have been taken. Finck,[133] I believe, will keep an eye on him. This is all I can say. To-morrow I march to within two leagues of Frankfort. Katte must instantly send me two hundred tons of meal and one hundred bakers. I am very tired. For six nights I have not closed an eye. Farewell.

F."

The Russians, with empty meal-wagons and starving soldiers, had taken possession of Frankfort-on-the-Oder on the 29th of July. The city contained twelve thousand inhabitants. The ransom which the Russian general demanded to save the city from pillage by the Cossacks was four hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Pillage by the Cossacks! No imagination can conceive the horrors of such an event. Nearly one hundred thousand men, frenzied with intoxication, brutal in their habits, restrained by no law, would inflict every outrage which fiends could conceive of. Well might fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, turn pale and feel the blood curdle in their veins at the thought. Four hundred and fifty thousand dollars ransom! That was nearly forty dollars for each individual, man, woman, and child! Compliance with the demand was impossible. Frankfort, in its impoverishment, could by no possibility raise a tenth part of the sum. Dreadful was the consternation. There was no relenting; the money or the pillage!

With the utmost exertions, inspired by terror, thirty thousand dollars were at length raised. The Russian general, Soltikof, naturally a humane man, seeing, at the close of a week of frantic exertions on the part of the magistrates of Frankfort, the impossibility of extorting the required sum, took the thirty thousand dollars, and kept his barbarian hordes encamped outside the gates.





FREDERICK CROSSING THE ODER.

Frankfort is on the west side of the Oder. The Russian army was encamped on the eastern side of the river. The force collected there consisted of about seventy-eight thousand Russians and eighteen thousand Austrians. Frederick had, by great exertions, gathered fifty thousand troops to attack them. He was approaching Frankfort from the southwest. In a secret midnight march he crossed the river by bridges of boats some miles north of the city, near Cüstrin. At four o'clock in the morning of the 11th of August his troops had all accomplished the passage of the stream, and, to the surprise of the Russians, were marching down upon them from the north.

Vastly superior as was the Russian army in numbers, General Soltikof did not venture to advance to attack his terrible foe. He had selected a very strong position on a range of eminences about one hundred feet high, running for several miles in an easterly direction from the river. Upon this ridge, which was called “the Heights of Kunersdorf,” the Russian general had intrenched himself with the utmost care. The surrounding country was full of bogs, and sluggish streams, and a scraggy growth of tough and thorny bushes, almost impenetrable.

Had the Prussian troops been placed on those heights, behind that formidable array of ramparts, and palisades, and abatis, they could with ease have repelled the assaults of three or four times their number. But now they were to undertake the desperate enterprise of advancing to the assault under the greatest disadvantages, with one to attack where there were two to defend. Frederick rapidly advanced from crossing the stream, and the same evening, Saturday, August 11th, encamped at Bischofsee, at the distance of about two miles to the northeast of the intrenched camp of his foes. The king, accompanied by a small escort, rode forward to the knolls of Trettin, and anxiously surveyed with his glass the fearful array of his foes in their long, compact, well-defended lines, arranged in an elongated irregular parallelogram.

About three o’clock the next morning, Sunday, August 12th, Frederick’s army, in two columns, was again in motion. By a slightly circuitous march through the dense forest the king placed his troops in position to approach from the southeast, so as to attack the left flank of the enemy, being the northern extremity of the parallelogram.

I shall not attempt to describe the battle which ensued—so bloody, so disastrous to the Prussians. It was, like all other desperate battles, a scene of inconceivable confusion, tumult, and horror. At eight o'clock in the morning, General Finck (who was in command of the right wing of the Prussians) was in position to move upon the extreme northern point of attack. It was not until half past eleven that Frederick, in command of the main body of the army, was ready to make a co-operative assault from the east. At the point of attack the Russians had seventy-two cannons in battery. The Prussians opened upon them with sixty guns. Templeton describes the cannonade as the loudest which he had yet ever heard.

After half an hour of rapid and terrific fire, the Prussian troops were ordered to advance and storm the works of the foe on the Mühlberg Hill. Like wolves in the chase, these men of iron nerves rushed forward through torrents of grape-shot and musket-shot, which covered their path with the dead. In ten minutes they were in possession of the hill-top, with all its batteries. The left wing of the Russian army was thrown into a maelstrom whirl of disorder and destruction. One hundred and eighty of the artillery pieces of the enemy fell into the hands of the victors.

Frederick was overjoyed. He regarded the day as his own, and the Russian army as at his mercy. He sent a dispatch to anxious Berlin, but sixty miles distant: "The Russians are beaten. Rejoice with me." It was one of the hottest of August days, without a breath of wind. Nearly every soldier of the Prussian army had been brought into action against the left wing only of the foe. After a long march and an exhausting fight, they were perishing with thirst. For

twelve hours many of them had been without water. Panting with heat, thirst, and exhaustion, they were scarcely capable of any farther efforts.

Just then eighteen thousand fresh Russian troops advanced upon them in solid phalanx from their centre and their right wing. It was nearly three o'clock in the afternoon. The fugitive Russians were rallied. With new impetuosity the re-enforced band hurled itself upon the Prussians. They speedily regained their hundred and eighty guns, and opened upon the ranks of Frederick such torrents of grape-shot as no flesh and blood could endure. Huge gaps were torn through his lines. His men recoiled, whirled round, and were driven pell-mell from the hill.

Thrice Frederick in person led the charge against the advancing foe. He had three horses shot under him. A gold snuffbox in his pocket was flattened by a bullet. His friends entreated him not thus to peril a life upon which every thing depended. He was deaf to all remonstrances. It is manifest that, in his despair, he sought a soldier's grave.

On came the Russians in ever-increasing numbers. Frederick's heavy artillery, each piece drawn by twelve horses, could not be brought forward through the bogs, and the entangling woods, and over the rugged heights. Though the Prussians fought with all the energies mortal valor could inspire, and though the king flew from post to post of peril and of death, animating his troops by voice and gesture, and by his own reckless courage, it was all in vain. Hope soon died in all hearts. The king was heard despairingly to exclaim, "Is there not one bullet which can reach me, then?"

Frederick had seen many dark days before, but

never one so dark as this. In the frenzy of his exertions to retrieve the lost battle, he cried out to his soldiers, his eyes being flooded with tears, “Children, do not forsake me, your king, your father, in this pinch!” The retreat became a flight. In endeavoring to cross the little stream called the Hen-Floss, there was such crowding and jamming at the bridges that the Prussians were compelled to leave one hundred and sixty-five guns of various calibre behind them. Had the Russians pursued with any vigor, scarcely a man of the Prussian army could have escaped. But General Soltikof stood in such fear of his opponent, who had often wrested victory out of defeat, that he attempted no pursuit.

In broken bands the Prussians retreated down by the way of Oetscher to the bridges at Göritz, where they had crossed the Oder, and where their heavy baggage was stationed. Frederick was among the last to quit the fatal field. As a swarm of Cossacks approached the spot where he stood, a party of his friends charged them fiercely, cutting to the right and left, and held them for a moment at bay. One of Frederick’s adjutants seized the bridle of his horse, and galloped off with the unresisting monarch.

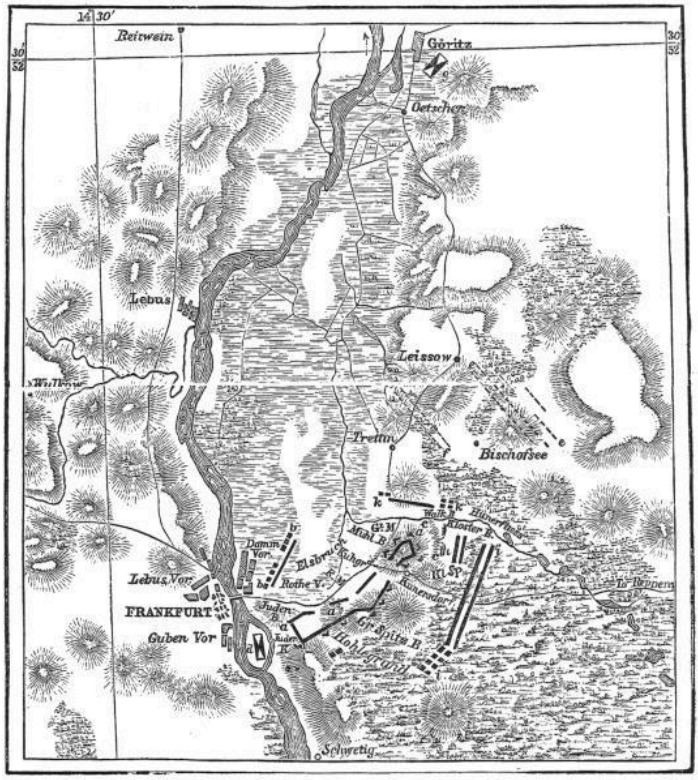
At the bridges Frederick found but three thousand men of his late army. The huts around were filled with the wounded and the dying, presenting an aspect of misery which, in these hours of terrible defeat, appalled his majesty. In one of these huts, surrounded by mutilated bodies, groans, and death, Frederick wrote the following dispatch to his minister (Finckenstein) at Berlin. It was dated Oetscher, August 12, 1759:

> “I attacked the enemy this morning about eleven. We beat him back to the Jews’ Church-

yard, near Frankfort.[134] All my troops came into action, and have done wonders. I reassembled them three times. At length I was myself nearly taken prisoner, and we had to quit the field. My coat is riddled with bullets. Two horses were killed under me.[135] My misfortune is that I am still alive. Our loss is very considerable. Of an army of forty-eight thousand men, I have at this moment, while I write, not more than three thousand together. I am no longer master of my forces.

In Berlin you will do well to think of your safety. It is a great calamity. I will not survive it. The consequences of this battle will be worse than the battle itself. I have no resources more; and, to confess the truth, I hold all for lost. I will not survive the destruction of my country. Farewell forever.

F."



BATTLE OF KUNERSDORF, AUGUST 12, 1759.

a a a. Russian Army. b b. Austrians, under Loudon. c c. Russian Abatis. d. Russian Wagenburg. e e. Position of Prussian Army Evening of 11th. f f. Vanguard, under Finck. g. Prussian Heavy Baggage. h. Attack of Prussian Grenadiers. i i. Prussian main Army. k k. Finck's Line of Attack.

Probably the reader will infer from the above letter that the king felt that the hour had come for him to die, and that he intended to resort to that most consummate act of folly and cowardice—suicide. He had always avowed this to be his intention in the last resort. He had urged his sister Wilhelmina to imitate his example in this respect,

and not to survive the destruction of their house. Ruin now seemed inevitable. In the battle of Kunersdorf Frederick had lost, in killed and wounded, nineteen thousand men, including nearly all the officers of distinction, and also one hundred and sixty pieces of artillery. The remainder of his army was so dispersed that it could not be rallied to present any opposition to the foe.

Though General Soltikof had lost an equal number of men, he was still at the head of nearly eighty thousand troops flushed with victory. He could summon to his standard any desirable re-enforcements. An unobstructed march of but sixty miles would lead his army into the streets of Berlin. The affairs of Frederick were indeed desperate. There was not a gleam of hope to cheer him. In preparation for his retirement from the army, from the throne, and from life, he that evening drew up the following paper, placing the fragments of the army which he was about to abandon in the hands of General Finck. By the death of the king, the orphan and infant child of his brother Augustus William (who had died but a few months before) would succeed to the throne. Frederick appointed his brother Henry generalissimo of the Prussian army.

This notable paper, which reflects but little credit upon the character of Frederick, was as follows:

> "General Finck gets a difficult commission. The unlucky army which I give up to him is no longer in a condition to make head against the Russians. Haddick will now start for Berlin, perhaps Loudon too.[136] If General Finck go after these, the Russians will fall on his rear. If he continue on the Oder, he gets Haddick on his flank. However, I believe, should Loudon go for

> Berlin, he might attack Loudon and beat him. This, if it succeeded, would be a stand against misfortune, and hold matters up. Time gained is much in these desperate circumstances. Cöper, my secretary, will send him the news from Torgau and Dresden. You must inform my brother[137] of every thing, whom I have declared generalissimo of the army. To repair this bad luck altogether is not possible. But what my brother shall command must be done. The army swears to my nephew. This is all the advice in these unhappy circumstances I am in a condition to give. If I had still had resources, I would have staid by them.
>
> FREDERICK."

It will be perceived that this paper is slightly less despairing than the preceding letter which he had written to Count Finckenstein. Frederick, having written the order to General Finck, threw himself, in utter exhaustion, upon some straw in a corner of the hut, and fell soundly asleep. The Prussian officers, passing by, gazed sadly through the open door upon the sleeping monarch. A single sentinel guarded the entrance.

The next morning Frederick crossed the river to Reitwein, on the western bank. Here, during the day, broken bands of his army came in to the number of twenty-three thousand. It would seem that a night of refreshing sleep had so far recruited the exhausted energies of the king that he was enabled to look a little more calmly upon the ruin which enveloped him. He that day wrote as follows from Reitwein to General Schmettau, who was in command of the Prussian garrison at Dresden:

> "You will, perhaps, have heard of the check I have met with from the Russian army on the

13th[138] of this month. Though at bottom our affairs in regard to the enemy here are not desperate, I find I shall not be able to make any detachment for your assistance. Should the Austrians attempt any thing against Dresden, therefore, you will see if there are means of maintaining yourself; failing which, it will behoove you to try and obtain a favorable capitulation—to wit, liberty to withdraw, with the whole garrison, moneys, magazines, hospital, and all that we have at Dresden, either to Berlin or elsewhere, so as to join some corps of my troops.

"As a fit of illness has come on me, which I do not think will have dangerous results, I have, for the present, left the command of my troops to Lieutenant General Von Finck, whose orders you are to execute as if coming directly from myself. On this I pray God[139] to have you in his holy and worthy keeping.

F."



FREDERICK ASLEEP IN THE HUT AT OETSCHER.

The consternation at Berlin, as contradictory reports of victory and defeat reached the city, was indescribable. M. Sulzer, an eye-witness of the scene, writes under date of Berlin, August 13th, 1759:

"Above fifty thousand human beings were on the palace esplanade and the streets around, swaying hither and thither in an agony of expectation, in alternate paroxysms of joy, of terror, and of woe. Often enough the opposite paroxysms were simultaneous in the different groups. Men crushed down by despair were met by men leaping into the air for very gladness."

As we have mentioned, the Russian general had

such a dread of Frederick that he did not dare to pursue him. In his report of the victory to the Czarina Charlotte, speaking of his own heavy loss of over eighteen thousand men, he writes, “Your majesty is aware that the King of Prussia sells his victories at a dear rate.” To some who urged him to pursue Frederick, he replied, “Let me gain but another such victory, and I may go to Petersburg with the news of it myself alone, with my staff in my hand.”

Frederick remained at Reitwein four days. He was very unjust to his army, and angrily reproached his soldiers for their defeat. It is true that, had every soldier possessed his own spirit, his army would have conquered, or not a man would have left the field alive. The Russians, with almost inconceivable inactivity, retired to Lossow, ten miles south of Frankfort-on-the-Oder. The king, having by great exertions collected thirty-two thousand men, marched up the valley of the Spree, and placed himself on the road between the Russians and Berlin.

While on this march he wrote from Madlitz, under date of August 16th, to Marquis D’Argens, at Berlin:

“We have been unfortunate, my dear marquis, but not by my fault. The victory was ours, and would even have been a complete one, when our infantry lost patience, and at the wrong moment abandoned the field of battle. The Russian infantry is almost totally destroyed. Of my own wrecks, all that I have been able to assemble amounts to thirty-two thousand men. With these I am pushing on to throw myself across the enemy’s road, and either perish or save the capital. This is not what you will call a deficiency of resolution.

"For the event I can not answer. If I had more lives than one, I would sacrifice them all to my country. But, if this stroke fail, I think I am clear scores with her, and that it will be permissible to look a little to myself. There are limits to every thing. I support my misfortune. My courage is not abated by it. But I am well resolved, after this stroke, if it fail, to open an outgate to myself, and no longer be the sport of any chance."[140]

Four days after, in anticipation of an immediate attack from the Russians, he again wrote to the same address, "Remain at Berlin, or retire to Potsdam. In a little while there will come some catastrophe. It is not fit that you suffer by it. If things take a good turn, you can be back to Berlin. If ill luck still pursue us, go to Hanover, or to Zelle, where you can provide for your safety."

The next day, the 21st of August, he wrote to D'Argens to come and visit him, and bring his bed with him. "I will have you a little chamber ready." But the next day he wrote,

"Yesterday I wrote to you to come; to-day I forbid it. Daun is marching upon Berlin. Fly these unhappy countries. This news obliges me again to attack the Russians between here and Frankfort. You may imagine if this is a desperate resolution. It is the sole hope that remains to me of not being cut off from Berlin on the one side or the other. I will give these discouraged troops brandy, but I promise myself nothing of success. My one consolation is that I shall die sword in hand."

Just after dispatching this letter he received one from D'Argens, to which he immediately, on the same day, returned the following reply:

"Certainly I will fight. But do not flatter yourself about the result. A happy chance alone can help us. Go, in God's name to Tangermünde. Wait there how destiny shall have disposed of us. I will reconnoitre the enemy to-morrow. Next day, if there is any thing to do, we will try it. If the enemy still holds to the Wine Hills of Frankfort, I shall not dare to attack him.

"The torments of Tantalus, the pains of Prometheus, the doom of Sisyphus, were nothing to the torments I have suffered for the last ten days. Death is sweet in comparison with such a life. Pity me, and believe that I still keep to myself a great many evil things, not wishing to afflict or disquiet any body with them. Believe me that I would not counsel you to fly these unlucky countries if I had any ray of hope. Adieu, *mon cher*."

The rumor that Daun was marching upon Berlin proved a false alarm. On the 4th of September the king again wrote D'Argens from his encampment at Waldau, a few leagues south of his last position, just over the border in Saxony:

"I think Berlin is now in safety. You may return thither. The barbarians are in the Lausitz. I keep by the side of them, between them and Berlin, so that there is nothing to fear for the capital. The imminency of danger is passed. But there will be still many bad moments to get through before reaching the end of the campaign. These, however, only regard myself. Never mind these. My martyrdom will last two months yet. Then the snows and the ices will end it."

General Schmettau had in Dresden a garrison of but three thousand seven hundred men. It will be remembered that he would doubtless be compelled

to capitulate, and to do so on the best terms he could. But his Prussian majesty, being now a little more hopeful, wrote to him again, urging him to hold out to the last extremity, and informing him that he had dispatched to his aid General Wunsch, with a re-enforcement of eight thousand men, and General Finck with six thousand. The courier was cut off. General Schmettau, entirely unconscious that relief was coming, closely besieged, and threatened with the massacre of his whole garrison should the place be taken by storm, on Tuesday evening, the 4th of September, surrendered the city.

It was a sore calamity to Frederick. Had General Schmettau held out only until the next day, which he could easily have done, relief would have arrived, and the city would have been saved. Frederick was in a great rage, and was not at all in the mood to be merciful, or even just. He dismissed the unfortunate general from his service, degraded him, and left him to die in poverty.

Frederick had now under his command twenty-four thousand men. They were mostly on the road between Frankfort and Berlin, for the protection of the capital. His brother Henry, in the vicinity of Landshut, with his head-quarters at Schmöttseifen, was in command of thirty-eight thousand. The Russians and Austrians numbered one hundred and twenty thousand. There was, however, but little cordial co-operation among the allies. Each was accused of endeavoring to crowd the other to the front of the battle against the terrible Frederick.

The Russians did not attempt to march upon Berlin. About the middle of September General Soltikof gathered all his forces in hand, and commenced a march into Silesia to effect a junction

with General Daun. Frederick followed, and, by a very rapid march, took possession of Sagan, on the Bober, where he was in direct communication with Henry. On the 24th of September the king wrote to his younger brother Ferdinand, in Berlin:

> "You may well suppose that, in the present posture of affairs, I am not without cares, inquietudes, and anxieties. It is the most frightful crisis I have had in my life. This is the moment for dying, unless one conquer. Daun and my brother Henry are marching side by side. It is possible enough all these armies may assemble hereabouts, and that a general battle may decide our fortune and the peace. Take care of your health, dear brother.
>
> F."

There was much manœuvring, in which Frederick displayed his usual skill, quite circumventing his foes. Daily he became less despairing. On the 25th of October he wrote to Fouquet:

"With twenty-one thousand your beaten and maltreated servant has hindered an army of fifty thousand from attacking him, and has compelled them to retire to Neusatz."

On the 10th of October Frederick was attacked by the gout, and for three weeks was confined to his room. This extraordinary man, struggling, as it were, in the jaws of destruction, beguiled the weary hours of sickness and pain by writing a treatise upon *Charles XII. and his Military Character*. On the 24th of October, the Russian commander, quarreling with General Daun, set out, with his whole force, for home. On the 1st of November the king was carried

in a litter to Glogau. Cold weather having now set in, General Daun commenced a march for Bohemia, to seek winter quarters nearer his supplies. Frederick, his health being restored, rejoined his troops under Henry, which were near Dresden. The withdrawal of both the Russians and Austrians from Silesia greatly elated him. On the 15th of November he wrote to D'Argens from Maxen, a village a little south of Dresden:

"Yesterday I joined the army, and Daun decamped. I have followed him thus far, and will continue it to the frontiers of Bohemia. Our measures are so taken that he will not get out of Saxony without considerable loss."

General Finck was stationed at Maxen, with about fifteen thousand men, to cut the communications of Daun with Bohemia. Frederick, in his undue elation, was quite sure of inflicting terrible blows upon Daun. He issued imperative commands to General Finck to fight the allies regardless of their numbers. The Prussian general did not dare to disobey this command and withdraw from his commanding position, even when he saw himself being surrounded with such superior forces as would almost certainly crush him.

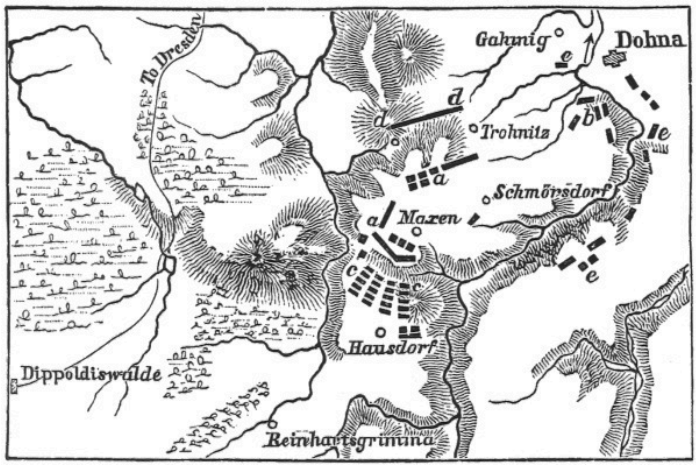
In a very triumphant mood, the king, on the 19th of November, wrote a boastful and irreverent "Ode to Fortune," in that easy rhyme which he called poetry. The substance of this ode, translated into prose, was as follows:

"I am a poor heretic. I have never been blessed by the holy father. I never attend church. I worship neither God nor the devil. Often have those shaven scoundrels, the priests, declared that I had become extinct.

"But behold the caprice of Fortune. After a hundred preferences of my rivals, she smiles upon me, and packs off the hero of the hat and sword, whom the pope had blessed, and who had gone on pilgrimages. He skulks out of Saxony, panting like a dog whom the cook has flogged out of the kitchen."

This ode, "an irrepressible extempore effusion," as he termed it, the royal poet forwarded to D'Argens. The day but one after writing this, General Daun, having effectually surrounded General Finck with nearly fifty thousand men of the allied troops—nearly four to one—after a severe conflict, compelled the surrender of his whole army. The following plan of the battle of Maxen will show how completely Finck was encircled. General Daun claimed that he marched back into Dresden, as prisoners of war, eight generals, five hundred and twenty-nine officers, and fifteen thousand privates, with all their equipments and appurtenances.[141] The next day, the 22d, Frederick wrote to D'Argens:

"I am so stupefied with the misfortune which has befallen General Finck that I can not recover from my astonishment. It deranges all my measures. It cuts me to the quick. Ill luck, which persecutes my old age, has followed me from Kunersdorf to Saxony. I will still strive what I can. The little ode I sent you, addressed to *Fortune*, was written too soon. One should not shout victory until the battle is over. I am so crushed by these reverses and disasters that I wish a thousand times I were dead.



BATTLE OF MAXEN, NOVEMBER 20, 1759.

a a. Prussian Army. b. Prussian Detachment, under Wunsch. c c. Austrian Attack, under Daun. d d. Attack of Brentano and Sincere. e e e. Reich's Army.

"From day to day I grow more weary of dwelling in a body worn out and condemned to suffer. I am writing to you in the first moment of my grief. Astonishment, sorrow, indignation, and scorn, all blended together, lacerate my soul. Let us get to the end, then, of this execrable campaign. I will then write to you what is to become of me, and we will arrange the rest. Pity me, and make no noise about me. Bad news goes fast enough of itself. Adieu, dear marquis."

The king, as usual, was merciless to General Finck. As soon as he returned from Austrian captivity he was tried by court-martial, and condemned to a year's imprisonment in the fortress of Spandau, and was expelled from the army. He afterward retired to Denmark, where he was kindly received.

General Daun, elated by this victory, relinquished the plan of retiring to Bohemia, and decided to remain in Saxony for the winter. Frederick had but thirty-six thousand men in Saxony. Daun commanded seventy-two thousand.

The Elbe was now frozen. The storms of winter covered the icy fields with snow. Daun retired to Dresden. Frederick established himself in the little town of Freiberg, about thirty miles southwest from Dresden. His troops were in cantonments in the adjoining villages. Here he took up his abode in a humble cottage. Thus terminated the fourth campaign of the Seven Years' War.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE STRUGGLE CONTINUED.

Winter Encampment.—Death of Maupertuis.—Infamous Conduct of Voltaire.—Reproof by the King.—Voltaire's Insincerity.—Correspondence.—The King publishes his Poems.—Dishonorable Conduct of the King.—New Encampment near Dresden.—Destruction of Frederick's Army in Silesia.—Atrocities perpetrated by the Austrians.—Astonishing March.—The Austrians outwitted.—Dresden bombarded and almost destroyed by Frederick.—Battle of Liegnitz.—Utter Rout of the Austrians.—Undiminished Peril of Frederick.—Letter to D'Argens.

IT was early in January, 1760, that the two hostile armies went into winter quarters. General Daun, with his seventy-two thousand triumphant troops, held Dresden. He encamped his army in an arc of a circle, bending toward the southwest from the city, and occupying a line about thirty miles in extent. Frederick, with thirty-two thousand troops depressed by defeat, defiantly faced his foe in a concave arc concentric to that of Daun. The two antagonistic encampments were almost within cannon-shot of each other.

Never were the prospects of Frederick more gloomy. He had taken up his residence for the winter

in a very humble cottage near the hamlet of Freiberg. He must have been very unhappy. Scenes of suffering were every where around him. It was terribly cold. His troops were poorly clothed, and fed, and housed.

"It was one of the grimmest camps in nature; the canvas roofs grown mere ice-plates, the tents mere sanctuaries of frost. Never did poor young Archenholtz see such industry in dragging wood-fuel, such boiling of biscuits in broken ice, such crowding round the embers to roast one side of you while the other was freezing. But Daun's people, on the opposite side of the Plauen Dell, did the like. Their tents also were left standing in the frozen state, guarded by alternating battalions no better off than their Prussian neighbors."[142]

Thus affairs continued through the winter. There were two frostbitten armies facing each other on the bleak plains. With apparently not much to be gained in presenting this front of defiance, each party breasted the storms and the freezing gales, alike refusing to yield one inch of ground.



THE WINTER CAMP.

During the previous summer, the philosopher Maupertuis, after weary wanderings in the languor of consumption, and in great dejection of spirits, had been stricken by convulsions while in his carriage at Basel. He had lost favor with the king, and was poor, friendless, and dying. His latter years had been imbittered by the venomous assaults of Voltaire.

While in health and prosperity, quaffing the wines of Frederick, he was an avowed infidel, and eagerly joined the ribald companions of the king in denouncing all religion as the fanaticism of weak minds. But in these hours of pain, of loneliness, and of approaching death he could find no consolation in

the teachings of philosophy. He sent for two Christian ministers to visit him daily, and daily had the Bible read to him. It was a death-bed repentance. Bitterly he deplored a wasted life. Sincerely he seemed to embrace the doctrines of Christianity.[143] He died, after a lingering sickness, far from home and friends, on the 27th of July, 1759.

Voltaire made himself very merry over the dying scene of Maupertuis. There was never another man who could throw so much poison into a sneer as Voltaire. It is probable that the conversion of Maupertuis somewhat troubled his conscience as the unhappy scorner looked forward to his own dying hour, which could not be far distant. He never alluded to Maupertuis without indulging in a strain of bitter mockery in view of his death as a penitent. Even the king, unbeliever as he was in religion or in the existence of a God, was disgusted with the malignity displayed by Voltaire. In reply to one of Voltaire's envenomed assaults the king wrote:

"You speak of Maupertuis. Do not trouble the ashes of the dead. Let the grave, at least, put an end to your unjust hatreds. Reflect that even kings make peace after long battling. Can not you ever make it? I think you would be capable, like Orpheus, of descending to hell, not to soften Pluto, and bring back your beautiful Emilie, but to pursue into that abode of woe an enemy whom your wrath has only too much persecuted in this world. For shame!"[144]

Soon after Frederick wrote to Voltaire upon this subject again, still more severely, but in verse. The following is almost a literal translation of this poetic epistle:

"Leave the cold ashes of Maupertuis in peace. He was noble and faithful. He pardoned you that vile

libel of Doctor Akakia which your criminal fury scribbled against him. And what return are you making? Shame on such delirious ravings as those of Voltaire! Shall this grand genius, whom I have admired, soil himself with calumny, and be ferocious on the dead? Shall he, like a vile raven, pounce upon the sepulchre, and make prey upon its corpses?"

The friendship of these two remarkable men must have been of a singular character. Voltaire thus maliciously wrote of the king:

"He is as potent and as malignant as the devil. He is also as unhappy, not knowing friendship."

Voltaire had, as a pet, a very vicious ape, treacherous, spiteful, who pelted passers-by with stones, and, when provoked, would bite terribly. The name of this hateful beast was Luc. Voltaire gave his friend Frederick the nickname of Luc. He corresponded freely with the enemies of his Prussian majesty. A few extracts will reveal the character of the friendship of the philosopher. Some days after the battle of Kunersdorf Voltaire wrote to D'Argental:

"I do not love Luc; far from it. I never will pardon him his infamous procedure with my niece,[145] nor the face he has to write me flattering things twice a month without having ever repaired his wrongs. I desire much his entire humiliation, the chastisement of the sinner; whether his eternal damnation I do not quite know."

Again he wrote, a few months after, to the Duke of Choiseul: "He has been a bad man, this Luc. And now, if one were to bet by the law of probability, it would be three to one that Luc would go to pot [*sera perdu*], with his rhymings and his banterings, and his injustices and politics, all as bad as himself."[146]

Frederick affected great contempt for public opinion. He wrote to Voltaire:

"I have the lot of all actors who play in public—applauded by some, despised by others. One must prepare one's self for satires, for calumnies, for a multitude of lies, which will be sent abroad into currency against one. But need that trouble my tranquillity? I go my road. I do nothing against the interior voice of my conscience. And I concern myself very little in what way my actions paint themselves in the brain of beings not always very thinking, with two legs, and without feathers."

It is evident that the king, thus surrounded with perils and threatened with utter destruction, was anxious for the termination of the war. But still this inflexible man would not listen to any suggestions for peace but on his own terms. He wrote to Voltaire, urging him "to bring back peace." At the same time he said,

"In spite of all your efforts, you will not get a peace signed by my hands except on conditions honorable to my nation. Your people, blown up with self-conceit and folly, may depend on these words."

But that he was fully awake to his perils, and keenly felt his sufferings, is manifest from the following extract from another of his letters:

"The sword and death have made frightful ravages among us. And the worst is that we are not yet at the end of the tragedy. You may judge what effect these cruel shocks make on me. I wrap myself in my stoicism the best I can. Flesh and blood revolt against such tyrannous command, but it must be followed. If you saw me you would scarcely know me again. I am old, broken, gray-headed, wrinkled. I

am losing my teeth and my gayety. If this go on, there will be nothing of me left but the mania of making verses, and an inviolable attachment to my duties, and to the few virtuous men whom I know."

In the above letter the king alludes to the "mania of making verses." Strange as it may seem, he this winter, when apparently almost crushed beneath the weight of cares and sorrows, when every energy of mind and body seemed called into requisition in preparation for a new campaign, published an edition of his poems.

The allies represented a population of ninety millions. The realms of Frederick embraced scarcely five millions of inhabitants. The allies decided that they would no longer make an exchange of prisoners. It was manifest that, by merely protracting the war, even without any signal successes on the part of the allies, Frederick would find all his resources of men exhausted. Frederick, who was never very scrupulous with regard to the means which he employed for the promotion of his ends, immediately compelled his prisoners of war, of whatever nationality, to enlist in his service.

"Prisoners, captive soldiers, if at all likely fellows," writes Archenholtz, "were by every means persuaded and even compelled to take Prussian service. Compelled, cudgel in hand, not asked if they wished to serve, but dragged to the Prussian colors, obliged to swear there, and fight against their countrymen."[147]

Frederick also seized money wherever he could find it, whether in the hands of friend or foe. His contributions levied upon the Saxons were terrible. The cold and dreary winter passed rapidly away. The spring was late in that northern clime. It was not

until the middle of June that either party was prepared vigorously to take the field. It was generally considered by the European world that Frederick was irretrievably ruined. In the last campaign he had lost sixty thousand men. Universal gloom and discouragement pervaded his kingdom. Still Frederick, by his almost superhuman exertions, had marshaled another army of one hundred thousand men. But the allies had two hundred and eighty thousand to oppose to them. Though Frederick in public assumed a cheerful and self-confident air, as if assured of victory, his private correspondence proves that he was, in heart, despondent in the extreme, and that scarcely a ray of hope visited his mind. To his friend D'Argens he wrote:

"I am unfortunate and old, dear marquis. That is why they persecute me. God knows what my future is to be this year. I grieve to resemble Cassandra with my prophecies. But how augur well of the desperate situation we are in, and which goes on growing worse? I am so gloomy to-day I will cut short.

"Write to me when you have nothing better to do. And don't forget a poor philosopher who, perhaps to expiate his incredulity, is doomed to find his purgatory in this world."

Again, and at the same time, he wrote to another friend:

"The difficulties I had last campaign were almost infinite, there were such a multitude of enemies acting against me. Pomerania, Brandenburg, Saxony, frontiers of Silesia, were alike in danger, and often all at one time. If I escaped absolute destruction, I must impute it chiefly to the misconduct of my enemies, who gained such advantages, but had not

the sense to follow them up. Experience often corrects people of their blunders. I can not expect to profit by any thing of that kind on their part in the course of this campaign."[148]

Four campaigns of the Seven Years' War have passed. We are now entering upon the fifth, that of 1760. The latter part of April Frederick broke up his encampment at Freiberg, and moved his troops about twenty miles north of Dresden. Here he formed a new encampment, facing the south. His left wing was at Meissen, resting on the Elbe. His right wing was at the little village of Katzenhäuser, about ten miles to the southwest. Frederick established his head-quarters at Schlettau, midway of his lines. The position thus selected was, in a military point of view, deemed admirable. General Daun remained in Dresden "astride" the Elbe. Half of his forces were on one side and half on the other of the river.

The stunning news soon reached Frederick that General Fouquet, whom he had left in Silesia with twelve thousand men, had been attacked by a vastly superior force of Austrians. The assault was furious in the extreme. Thirty-one thousand Austrians commenced the assault at two o'clock in the morning. By eight o'clock the bloody deed was done. Ten thousand of the Prussians strewed the field with their gory corpses. Two thousand only escaped. General Fouquet himself was wounded and taken prisoner. To add to the anguish of the king, this disaster was to be attributed to the king himself. He had angrily ordered General Fouquet to adopt a measure which that general, better acquainted with the position and forces of the foe, saw to be fatal. Heroically he obeyed orders, though he knew that it would prove the destruction of his army.

Silesia was at the mercy of the foe. Frederick regarded the calamity as irreparable. Still in a few hours he recovered his equanimity, and in public manifested his accustomed stoicism. The victorious Austrian soldiers in Silesia conducted themselves like fiends. Their plunderings and outrages were too shocking to be recited. “Nothing was spared by them,” writes Frederick, “but misery and ugliness.”

There was a small garrison at Glatz, at Silesia, which, though closely besieged, still held out against the Austrians. Frederick thought that if he could by any stratagem draw General Daun from Dresden, he could, by a sudden rush, break down its walls and seize the city. He moved with celerity which completely deceived the Austrian commander. At two o’clock in the morning of Wednesday, July 2d, his whole army was almost on the run toward Silesia. They marched as troops never marched before. For twelve hours their speed was unintermitted. The next day, in utter exhaustion, they rested. But on Friday, as the village clocks were tolling the hour of midnight, all were again on the move, the king himself in front. Again it was a run rather than a march through a dreary realm of bogs, wild ravines, and tangled thickets. At three o’clock on Saturday morning the march was resumed.

General Daun was soon informed of this energetic movement. He instantly placed himself at the head of sixty thousand troops, and also set out, at his highest possible speed, for Glatz.

Sunday, July 6th, was a day of terrible heat. At three o’clock in the morning the Prussian troops were again in motion. There was not a breath of wind. The blazing sun grew hotter and hotter. There was no shade. The soldiers were perishing of thirst.

Still the command was “onward,” “onward.” In that day’s march one hundred and five Prussian soldiers dropped dead in their tracks.

General Daun thought that such energy as this could not be a feint. He was much nearer to Glatz than was Frederick. Monday, July 7th, the Prussian troops rested. General Daun pressed on. Tuesday night he was two days’ march ahead of Frederick. In the mean time, the Prussian king, who had made this tremendous march simply to draw the foe from Dresden, suddenly turned, and with the utmost velocity directed his troops back toward the city.

General Maguire had been left in Dresden with but about fourteen thousand men for its defense. On Saturday, July 13th, the Prussian army appeared before the city. All the night they were erecting their batteries. Early Sunday morning the cannonade began. As Daun might speedily arrive at the head of sixty thousand troops for the relief of the garrison, the bombardment was conducted with the utmost possible energy. Day and night the horrible tempest fell upon the doomed city. Adversity had soured the king’s disposition, and rendered him merciless. He had no compassion upon the innocent inhabitants. It was his aim, at whatever cost, to secure the immediate surrender of the place. He cruelly directed his terrific fire upon the thronged dwellings rather than upon the massive fortifications. Street after street blazed up in flames. It was Frederick’s relentless plan by “fire torture” to force the citizens to compel Maguire to the surrender. But the Austrian commander hardened his heart against the misery of the Saxon people, and held the place.

General Daun was proverbially slow-footed. For thirteen days the wretched city burned and bled. In a

memorial to the world, which the King of Poland, as Elector of Saxony, published on the occasion, he said,

"Had the enemy attacked Dresden according to the rules and the customs of war, had they directed their efforts against the ramparts, the king would, without doubt, have lamented the evils which would have resulted from it to his people, but he would have lamented them without complaining. But the Prussians made war on the innocent townsmen. Their fire was wholly directed against the houses. They endeavored to destroy a town which they could not take."

In truth, when General Daun approached, and Frederick saw that there was no possibility of his taking the city, he, in the wantonness of his rage, set fire to upward of a hundred houses in the suburbs which had hitherto escaped the flames. Three hundred and fifty houses were destroyed within the walls. More than that number were half destroyed, shattered by bombs, and scorched with flames. These were terrible calamities falling upon a city already exhausted by four years of the most desolating war. The King of Poland closed his appeal by saying,

"The king thinks it scarcely worth while to mention his palaces and his gardens sacked and ruined, in contempt of the regard usually paid from one sovereign to another. Is there a man in all Europe who does not see in these terrible effects an implacable hatred and a destructive fury which all nations ought to concur in repressing?"[149]

Frederick, being constrained by the approach of General Daun to raise the siege of Dresden, retired to his intrenched camp at Schlettau. Leaving fifteen thousand men to guard the camp, he, on the 1st of

August, before the dawn, crossed the Elbe, and was again on the rapid march toward Silesia. His army consisted of thirty thousand men, and was accompanied by two thousand heavy baggage-wagons. In five days the king marched over one hundred miles, crossing five rivers. Armies of the allies, amounting to one hundred and seventy-five thousand Austrians and Russians, were around him—some in front, some in his rear, some on his flanks.[150]

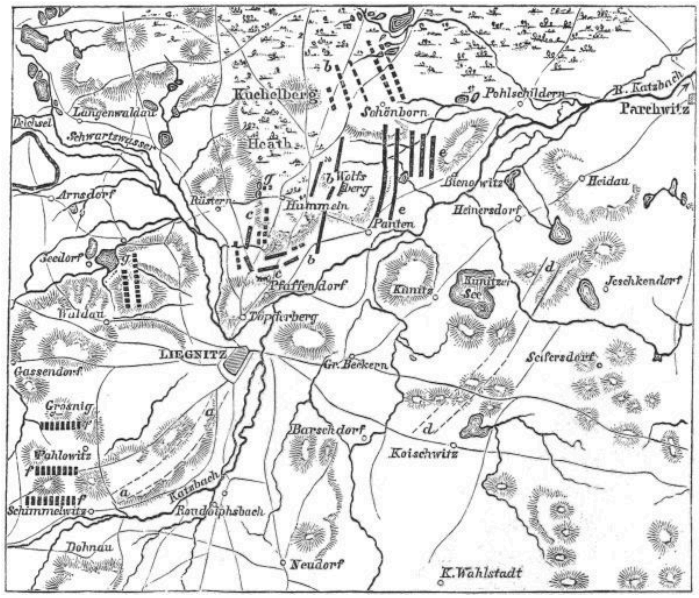
On the 14th of August Frederick had reached Liegnitz. His foes surrounded him in such numbers that escape seemed impossible, and destruction sure. General Loudon, with thirty-five thousand allies, was scarcely a mile east of him. General Lacy, with an immense swarm of cavalry, was at the distance of but a few thousand yards on the west. General Daun, with his immense army, approaching from the southwest, had taken possession of Liegnitz. Frederick was encamped upon some heights a few miles east of the city. To human view, the position of his Prussian majesty was desperate.

"He was clinging on the head of slippery abysses, his path hardly a foot's breadth, mere enemies and avalanches hanging round on every side; ruin likelier at no moment of his life."

On the night of the 14th Frederick had stationed his lines with the greatest care to guard against surprise. At midnight, wrapped in his cloak, and seated on a drum by a watch-fire, he had just fallen asleep. An Irish officer, a deserter from the Austrians, came blustering and fuming into the camp with the announcement that General Lacy's army was on the march to attack Frederick by surprise. Frederick sprang to his horse. His perfectly drilled troops were

instantly in motion. By a rapid movement his troops were speedily placed in battle array upon the heights of the Wolfsberg. They would thus intercept the enemy's line of march, would take him by surprise, and were in the most admirable position to encounter superior numbers. To deceive the foe, all the Prussian camp-fires were left burning. General Loudon had resorted to the same stratagem to deceive Frederick.

To the surprise of General Loudon, there was opened upon his advance-guard of five thousand men, as it was pressing forward on its stealthy march, in the darkness ascending an eminence, the most destructive discharge of artillery and musketry. The division was hurled back with great slaughter. Gathering re-enforcements, it advanced the second and the third time with the same results. Cavalry, infantry, artillery, were brought forward, but all in vain. Frederick brought into action but fifteen thousand men. He utterly routed the hostile army of thirty-five thousand men, killing four thousand, and taking six thousand prisoners. He also captured eighty-two cannon, twenty-eight flags, and five thousand muskets. His own loss was eighteen hundred men. The battle commenced at three o'clock in the morning, and was over at five o'clock.



BATTLE OF LIEGNITZ, AUGUST 16, 1760.

a a. Prussian Camp, left with fires burning. b b b. Prussian Main Army. c c. Ziethen's Division. d d. Loudon's Camp, also left with fires burning. e e e. Loudon's Army attacked by the Prussians. f f f. Approach of Daun. g g. Lacy's Cavalry.

Frederick remained upon the field of battle four hours gathering up the spoils. The dead were left unburied. The wounded were placed in empty meal-wagons. General Loudon fled precipitately across the Katzbach River. To deceive the Austrians in reference to his movements, Frederick wrote a false dispatch to his brother Henry, which he placed in the hands of a trusty peasant. The peasant was directed to allow himself to be taken. The plan worked to a charm. The other portions of the allied army, deceived by the dispatch, retreated as Frederick wished to have them. He soon formed a junction with his brother Henry, and being astonished himself at his almost

miraculous escape, marched to the strong fortress of Breslau, which was still held by a small Prussian garrison, and where he had large magazines.

But, notwithstanding this wonderful victory and narrow escape, it still seemed that Frederick's destruction was only postponed for a short time. He was in the heart of Silesia, and was surrounded by hostile armies three times more numerous than his own.

Twelve days after the battle of Liegnitz Frederick wrote as follows to his friend, the Marquis D'Argens, who was at Berlin. The letter was dated Hermannsdorf, near Breslau, 27th of August, 1760:

> "Formerly, my dear marquis, the affair of the 15th would have decided the campaign. At present it is but a scratch. A great battle must determine our fate. Such we shall soon have. Then, should the event prove favorable to us, you may, with good reason, rejoice. I thank you for your sympathy. It has cost much scheming, striving, and address to bring matters to this point. Do not speak to me of dangers. The last action cost me only a coat and a horse. That is buying victory cheap.[151]
>
> "I never in my life was in so bad a posture as in this campaign. Miracles are still needed to overcome the difficulties which I foresee. I do my duty as well as I can. But remember, my dear marquis, that I can not command good fortune. I am obliged to leave too much to chance, as I have not the means to render my plans more certain.
>
> "I have the labors of Hercules to perform, at an age, too, when my strength is leaving me, when my infirmities increase, and, to speak the truth, when hope, the only consolation of the

unhappy, begins to desert me. You are not sufficiently acquainted with the posture of affairs to know the dangers which threaten the state. I know them, but conceal them. I keep all my fears to myself, and communicate to the public only my hopes and the trifle of good news I may now and then have. If the blow I now meditate succeeds, then, my dear marquis, will be the time to express our joy. But, till then, do not let us flatter ourselves, lest unexpected bad news deject us too much.

"I live here the life of a literary monk. I have much to think of about my affairs. The rest of my time I give to literature, which is my consolation. I know not if I shall survive this war. Should it so happen, I am resolved to pass the rest of my days in retirement, in the bosom of philosophy and friendship.

"As soon as the roads are surer I hope you will write more frequently. I do not know where we shall have our winter quarters. Our houses at Breslau have been destroyed in the late bombardment. Our enemies envy us every thing, even the air we breathe. They must, however, leave us some place. If it be a safe one, I shall be delighted to receive you there.

"Here is business which I must attend to. I was in a writing vein, but I believe it is better to conclude, lest I should tire you and neglect my own duties. Adieu, my dear marquis. I embrace you.

FREDERICK."[152]

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE END OF THE FIFTH CAMPAIGN.

Incessant Marches and Battles.—Letter from Frederick to D'Argens.—Letter to his Brother Henry.—Berlin summoned to Surrender.—Sacking of the City.—Letter to D'Argens.—Desperate Resolves of Frederick.—The Resort of Suicide.—Remarkable Address of Frederick to his Generals.—Bloody Battle of Torgau.—Dismal Night-scene.—Familiarity of the King with the Soldiers.—Winter Quarters at Freiberg.—Singular Letter to the Countess of Camas.—Death of the Princess Amelia.—Anecdotes of the King.—His domestic Habits.—His unscrupulous Measures to obtain Men and Money.—Letter of Charlotte of Mecklenburg.

SIEGES, skirmishes, battles innumerable ensued. The Russians and the Austrians, in superior numbers and with able leaders, were unwearied in their endeavors to annihilate their formidable foe. The conflict was somewhat analogous to that which takes place between the lion at bay in the jungle and a pack of dogs. The details could scarcely be made intelligible to the reader, and would certainly prove tedious.[153]

Frederick so concentrated his forces as, ere long, to have about fifty thousand troops with him at Breslau. Weary weeks of marchings and fightings, blood and woe, passed on. Painful blows were struck

upon both sides, but nothing decisive was accomplished. In the midst of these harassments, perils, and toils, the king wrote to D'Argens, on the 18th of September, from Reisendorf:

"I will not sing *jeremiades* to you, nor speak of my fears or anxieties; but I can assure you that they are great. The crisis I am in changes in appearance, but nothing decisive happens. I am consumed by a slow fire; I am like a living body losing limb after limb. May Heaven assist us, for we have much need of it.

"You speak of my personal safety. You ought to know, as I do, that it is not necessary for me to live. But while I do live I must fight for my country, and save it if it be possible. In many little things I have had luck; I think of taking for my motto, *Maximus in minimis, et minimus in maximis*.[154]

"It is impossible for you to imagine the horrible fatigues which we undergo. This campaign is worse than any of the others. I sometimes know not which way to turn. But why weary you with these details of my toils and miseries? My spirits have forsaken me. All my gayety is buried with those dear and noble ones to whom my heart was bound. The end of my life is melancholy and sad; but do not, therefore, my dear marquis, forget your old friend."[155]

To his brother Henry he wrote, "I have had a bad time of it, my dear brother; our means are so eaten away; far too short for opposing the prodigious number of our enemies set against us. If we must fall, let us date our destruction from the infamous day of Maxen. My health is a little better, but I have still *hémorroïdes aveugles*. That were nothing, however, were it not for the disquietudes I feel. For these three days I have had so terrible a cramp in continuance

that I thought it would choke me. It is now a little gone. No wonder that the chagrins and continual disquietudes I live in should undermine, and at length overturn, the most robust constitution."

Early in October the allies planned an expedition for the capture of Berlin. The city had no defenses but weak palisades, which were garrisoned by but twelve hundred men. General Czernichef led a column of twenty thousand Russians, General Lacy another of fifteen thousand Austrians, and General Soltikof a third column of twenty thousand more.

On the 3d of October the vanguard of this army, three thousand strong, was seen in the distance from the steeples of Berlin. The queen and royal family fled with the archives to Magdeburg. The city was summoned to an immediate surrender, and to pay a ransom of about four million dollars to rescue it from the flames. The summons was rejected. General Tottleben, in command of the advance, erected his batteries, and at five o'clock in the afternoon commenced his bombardment with red-hot balls. In the night a re-enforcement of five thousand Prussians, under Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, who had marched forty miles that day, entered the city, guided by the blaze of the bombardment, to strengthen the garrison. Tottleben retired to await the allied troops, which were rapidly on the march. In the mean time, on the 8th, General Hülsen arrived with nine thousand Prussian troops, increasing the garrison in Berlin to fifteen thousand. Frederick was also on the march, to rescue his capital, with all the troops he could muster. But the Russians had now arrived to the number of thirty-five thousand. The defenses were so weak that they could easily take or destroy the place.

The garrison retired to avoid capture. Berlin surrendered on the morning of October 9th. For three days the enemy held the city. The semi-barbaric soldiers committed fearful outrages. The soldiers sacked the king's palaces at Potsdam and Charlottenburg, smashing furniture, doors, windows, mirrors, statuary, cutting the pictures, and maltreating the inmates.

On the 11th it was announced that Frederick, with nearly the whole Prussian army, was within five days' march of Berlin. The allies held him in such dread, when he had any thing like an equality of numbers with them, that they fled from him at the rate of thirty miles a day. But terrible were the ravages which they inflicted on the Prussian people during this retreat.

The Russians marched to Poland. The Austrians returned to Saxony. As soon as Frederick heard of their retreat, instead of continuing his march to Berlin, he also turned his columns southward. On the 27th of October he crossed the Elbe, about sixty miles above Dresden, and found himself in the vicinity of General Daun, whose army outnumbered that of Frederick two to one. The situation of Frederick was extremely critical. Under these circumstances, he wrote to D'Argens on the 28th:



SACKING THE PALACE.

"You, as a follower of Epicurus, put a value upon life. As for me, I regard death from the Stoic point of view. Never shall I see the moment which will oblige me to make a disadvantageous peace. No persuasion, no eloquence, shall ever induce me to sign my own dishonor. Either I will bury myself under the ruins of my country, or, if that consolation appears too great to the *Destiny* which persecutes me, I shall know how to put an end to my misfortunes when it is no longer possible to bear them. I have acted, and continue to act, in pursuance of this conviction, and according to the dictates of honor, which have always directed my steps. My conduct shall continue, at all times, to be conformable to these principles.

"After having sacrificed my youth to my father, and my maturer age to my country, I think that I have acquired the right to dispose of my old age as I please. I have told you, and I repeat it, my hand shall never sign a disgraceful peace. I shall continue this campaign with the resolution to dare all, and to try the most desperate things, either to succeed or to find a glorious end.

"Indeed, how many reasons has one at fifty years of age to despise life! The prospect which remains to me is an old age of infirmity and pain, with disappointments, regrets, ignominies, and outrages to endure. In truth, if you really consider my situation, you ought to blame my intentions less than you do. I have lost all my friends. I am unfortunate in all the ways in which it is possible to be so. I have nothing to hope for. I see my enemies treat me with derision, while their insolence prepares to trample me under foot. Alas!

"'Quand on a tout perdu, quand on n'a plus d'espoir,
La vie est un opprobre, et la mort un devoir.'[156]

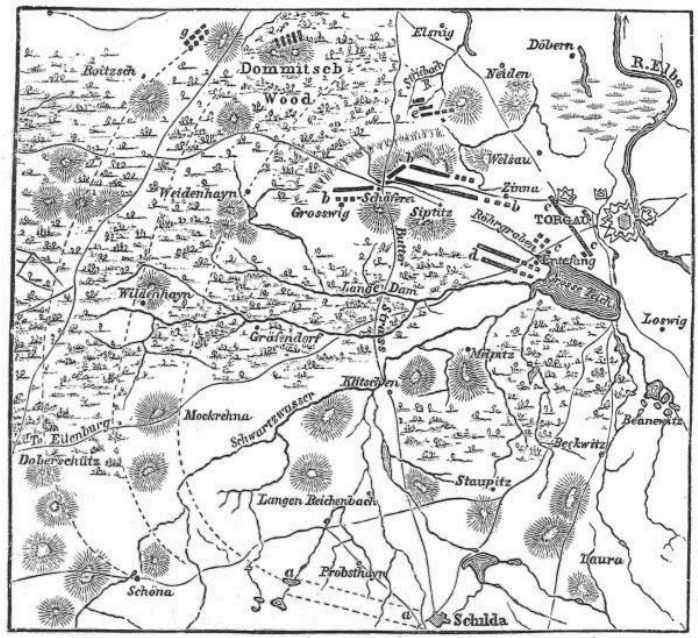
"I have nothing to add to this. I will only inform your curiosity that we passed the Elbe the day before yesterday; that to-morrow we march toward Leipsic, where I hope to be on the 31st, where I hope we shall have a battle, and whence you shall receive news of us as it occurs."

It is not strange that Frederick, being destitute of religious principle, should have ever contemplated suicide as his last resort. On the 2d of November the king came in sight of the encampment of General Daun at Torgau, on the Elbe, some score of leagues north of Dresden. The king was at the head of forty-four thousand troops. Marshal Daun had eighty

thousand, strongly intrenched upon heights west of the city, in the midst of a labyrinth of ponds, hills, ravines, and forests. We shall not attempt to enter into a detail of the battle. The following plan of the battle will give the military reader an idea of the disposal of the forces.

The position of the Austrians on the heights of Siptitz, an eminence which rose two hundred feet above the bed of the river, seemed impregnable. Sixty-five thousand Austrians stood upon those heights, protected by earth-works and a formidable abatis. They had four hundred guns in battery, a larger number than had ever before been brought upon a battle-field. To attack then and there was an act of desperation. On the evening of the 2d the king assembled his generals and said to them,

"I have called you together, not to ask your advice, but to inform you that to-morrow I shall attack Marshal Daun. I am aware that he occupies a strong position, but it is one from which he can not escape. If I beat him, all his army must be taken prisoners or drowned in the Elbe. If we are beaten, we must all perish. This war is become tedious. You must all find it so. We will, if we can, finish it to-morrow. General Ziethen, I confide to you the right wing of the army. Your object must be, in marching straight to Torgau, to cut off the retreat of the Austrians when I shall have beaten them, and driven them from the heights of Siptitz."



BATTLE OF TORGAU, NOVEMBER 3, 1760.

a a. Prussian Camp at Schilda. b b b. Austrian Army. c c c. Rear-guard, under Lacy. d. Prussian Detachment, under Ziethen. e. Frederick's Division beginning the Attack. f. Hülsen's Infantry. g. Holstein's Cavalry.

At an early hour on the morning of the 3d Frederick broke up his camp south of the foe, and, by a circuitous route of fourteen miles, came down upon the Austrians from the north. General Ziethen marched in almost a straight line for Torgau, to cut off the retreat. It was two o'clock in the afternoon when Frederick, emerging from the forest, ordered his men to charge. The assault was as impetuous and reckless as mortal men could possibly make. Instantly four hundred pieces of artillery opened fire upon them.

"Archenholtz describes it as a thing surpassable only by doomsday; clangorous rage of noise risen to the infinite; the boughs of the trees raining down upon you with horrid crash; the forest, with its echoes, bellowing far and near, and reverberating in universal death-peal, comparable to the trump of doom."[157]

Frederick exclaimed, in astonishment, "What an infernal fire! Did you ever hear such a cannonade before? I never did."

The first assault was made by six thousand grenadiers upon the extreme western wing of the Austrian army. The terrible conflict lasted nearly an hour. The Prussians were driven back, leaving nine out of ten of the assailing force dead or wounded behind them. The Austrians pursued, and encountered slaughter equal to that which they had inflicted.

New columns were formed. Soon after three another charge was ordered. It was sanguinary and unsuccessful as the first. Frederick himself was wounded by a nearly spent case-shot which struck him on the breast. The blow was severe and painful. Had the ball retained a little more impetus it would have passed through his body. It is said that the ball struck him to the earth, and that for some time he was void of consciousness. Upon reviving, his first words to his adjutant, a son of Old Dessauer, who was sorrowfully bending over him, were, "What are you doing here? Go and stop the runaways."

It was now half past four o'clock. The sun of the short November day was rapidly sinking. Hasty preparations were made for another charge, aided by a body of Prussian cavalry which had just reached the ground. The gathering twilight was darkening

hill and valley as the third assault was made. It was somewhat successful. By this time the two armies were quite intermingled. Marshal Daun was severely wounded, and was taken into Torgau to have his wounds dressed. The hour of six had now arrived. It was a damp, cloudy, dark night. The combatants were guided mainly by the flash of the muskets and the guns. “The night was so dark,” says Archenholtz, “that you could not see your hand before you.” Still for two hours the battle raged.

Marshal Daun, as he retired with a shattered leg to have his wound dressed, resigned the command to General Buccow. In a few moments his arm was shot off, and General O’Donnell took the command. He ordered a retreat. The Austrian army, at nine o’clock in the evening, in much disorder, were crossing the Elbe by three bridges which had been thrown across the stream in preparation for a possible disaster. The king, disappointed in a victory which did not promise great results, passed the night conversing with the soldiers at their watch-fires. He had ever indulged them in addressing him with much familiarity, calling him Fritz, which was a diminutive of Frederick, and expressive of affection. “I suppose, Fritz,” said one of the soldiers, “after this, you will give us good winter quarters.”

“By all the devils,” exclaimed the king, “I shall not till we have taken Dresden. Then I will provide for you to your heart’s content.”

The king was not a man of refined sensibilities. Not unfrequently his letters contained coarse and indelicate expressions. He was very profane. Voltaire says of him, “He has a pleasing tone of voice even in swearing, which is as familiar to him as to a grenadier.”

The battle of Torgau is to be numbered among the most bloody of the Seven Years' War. The Austrians lost twelve thousand in killed and wounded, eight thousand prisoners, forty-five cannon, and twenty-nine flags. The Prussian loss was also very heavy. There were fourteen thousand killed or wounded, and four thousand taken prisoners.

The Austrians retired to Dresden for winter quarters. Frederick was left in the field which he had won. Gradually he withdrew to his old camping-ground at Freiberg, where his troops had been cantoned the previous winter. On the 10th of November, 1760, he wrote from Meissen to the Marquis D'Argens at Berlin:

"I drove the enemy to the gates of Dresden. They occupy their camp of last year. All my skill is not enough to dislodge them. We have saved our reputation by the day of Torgau. But do not imagine that our enemies are so disheartened as to desire peace. I fear that the French will preserve through the winter the advantages they have gained during the campaign.

"In a word, I see all black, as if I were at the bottom of a tomb. Have some compassion on the situation I am in. Conceive that I disguise nothing from you, and yet that I do not detail to you all my embarrassments, my apprehensions, and troubles. Adieu, my dear marquis. Write to me sometimes. Do not forget a poor devil who curses ten times a day his fatal existence, and could wish he already were in those silent countries from which nobody returns with news."

The next day, the 11th, Frederick wrote from Neustadt to the Countess of Camas, who at Berlin was the grand mistress of the queen's household. The

trifling tone of this letter, which was penned in the midst of a struggle so awful, is quite characteristic of the writer:

"I am punctual in answering, and eager to satisfy you. You shall have a breakfast-set, my good mamma; six coffee-cups, very pretty, well diapered, and tricked out with all the little embellishments which increase their value. On account of some pieces which they are adding to the set, you will have to wait a few days. But I flatter myself this delay will contribute to your satisfaction, and produce for you a toy that will give you pleasure, and make you remember your old adorer.

"It is curious how old people's habits agree. For four years past I have given up suppers as incompatible with the trade I am obliged to follow. On marching days my dinner consists of a cup of chocolate.

"We have been running about like fools, quite inflated with our victory, to see if we could not chase the Austrians out of Dresden. But they made mockery of us from the tops of their mountains. So I have withdrawn, like a naughty little boy, to hide myself, out of spite, in one of the most cursed villages of Saxony. We must now drive these gentlemen of the imperial army out of Freiberg in order to get something to eat and a place to sleep in.[158]

"This is, I swear to you, such a dog's life [*chienne de vie*] as no one but Don Quixote ever led before me. All this tumbling, toiling, bother, and confusion have made me such an old fellow that you would scarcely know me again. The hair on the right side of my head has grown quite gray. My teeth break and fall out. My face is as full of wrinkles as the furbelow of a petticoat. My back is bent like a fiddle-bow, and

my spirit is sad and downcast, like a monk of La Trappe.

"I forewarn you of this, that, if we should meet again in flesh and bone, you might not feel yourself too violently shocked by my appearance. There remains nothing to me unaltered but my heart, which, as long as I breathe, will retain sentiments of esteem and tender friendship for my good mamma. Adieu."[159]

On Saturday, the 25th of October of this year, George II., King of England, died. The poor old gentleman, who had been endowed with but a very ordinary share of intelligence, was seventy-seven years of age. On Monday he had presided at a review of troops in Hyde Park. On Thursday he stood upon the portico of his rural palace in Kensington to see his Guards march by for foreign service. Saturday morning he rose at an early hour, took his cup of chocolate as usual, and, opening his windows, said the morning was so fine he would take a walk in his garden. It was then eight o'clock. His valet withdrew with the cup and saucer. He had hardly shut the door when he heard a groan and a fall. Hurrying back, he found the king upon the floor. Faintly the death-stricken monarch exclaimed, "Call Amelia," and instantly died.

"Poor deaf Amelia (Frederick's old love, now grown old and deaf) listened wildly for some faint sound from those lips now mute forever. George II. was no more. His grandson, George III, was now king."[160]

George II. had always hated his nephew Frederick. His only object in sustaining the war was to protect his native electorate of Hanover and to abase France.[161] The new sovereign, in his first

speech to Parliament, said:

"I rely upon your zeal and hearty concurrence to support the King of Prussia and the rest of my allies, and to make ample provision for carrying on the war, as the only means of bringing our enemies to equitable terms of accommodation."

It seems that in England there were two parties in reference to the war. Sir Horace Walpole, in a letter under date of December 5th, 1760, wrote to Sir Horace Mann, at Florence:

"I shall send you a curious pamphlet, the only work I almost ever knew that changed the opinions of many. It is called 'Considerations on the present German War.' The confirmation of the King of Prussia's victory near Torgau does not prevent the disciples of the pamphlet from thinking that the best thing which could happen for us would be to have that monarch's head shot off."[162]

Notwithstanding the opposition, Parliament voted to continue the subsidy to Frederick of about three million four hundred thousand dollars (£670,000). This sum was equal to twice or three times that amount at the present day.

Frederick, having cantoned his troops at Freiberg and its vicinity, on the 27th of November wrote again to the Countess of Camas:

"We have settled our winter quarters. I have yet a little round to take, and afterward I shall seek for tranquillity at Leipsic, if it be to be found there. But, indeed, for me tranquillity is only a metaphysical word which has no reality."

Frederick was so busy cantoning his troops that he did not take possession of his head-quarters in

Leipsic until the 8th of December. He occupied the Apel House, No. 16 Neumarkt Street, the same which he had occupied before the battle of Rossbach. The same mistress kept the house as before. Upon seeing the king, the good woman exclaimed, in astonishment, “How lean your majesty has grown!”

“Lean indeed I am,” the king replied. “And what wonder, with three women[163] hanging on the throat of me all this while!”

Thus ended the fifth campaign of the Seven Years’ War. Though the king had thus far averted the destruction which seemed every hour to be impending, his strength and resources were so rapidly failing that it seemed impossible that he could much longer continue the struggle. Under these despairing circumstances, the king, with an indomitable spirit, engaged vigorously in gathering his strength for a renewal of the fight in the spring.

“In the midst of these preparations for a new campaign against a veteran army of two hundred and eighty thousand enemies, Frederick yet found sufficient leisure for peaceable occupations. He consecrated some hours every day to reading, to music, and to the conversation of men of letters.”[164]

D’Argens spent the winter with the king at Leipsic. He gives the following incident: “One day I entered the king’s apartment, and found him sitting on the floor with a platter of fried meat, from which he was feeding his dogs. He had a little rod, with which he kept order among them, and shoved the best bits to his favorites.”

The marquis looked for a moment upon the singular spectacle with astonishment. Then raising his hands, he exclaimed,

"The five great powers of Europe, who have sworn alliance, and conspired to ruin the Marquis of Brandenburg, how might they puzzle their heads to guess what he is now doing! Scheming some dangerous plan, think they, for the next campaign, collecting funds, studying about magazines for man and horse; or is he deep in negotiations to divide his enemies, and get new allies for himself? Not a bit of it. He is sitting peaceably in his room feeding his dogs."[165]

The king was quite unscrupulous in the measures to which he resorted to recruit his army. Deserters, prisoners, peasants, were alike forced into the ranks. Even boys but thirteen and fourteen years of age were seized by the press-gangs. The countries swept by the armies were so devastated and laid waste that it was almost an impossibility to obtain provisions for the troops. It will be remembered that upon the capture of Berlin several of the king's palaces had been sacked by the Russian and Austrian troops. The king, being in great want of money, looked around for some opportunity to retaliate. There was within his cantonments a very splendidly furnished palace, called the Hubertsburg Schloss, belonging to the King of Poland. On the 21st of January, 1761, Frederick summoned to his audience-room General Saldern. This officer cherished a very high sense of honor. The bravest of the brave on the field of battle, he recoiled from the idea of performing the exploits of a burglar. The following conversation took place between the king and his scrupulous general. In very slow, deliberate tones, the king said:

"General Saldern, to-morrow morning I wish you to go with a detachment of infantry and cavalry to Hubertsburg. Take possession of the palace, and pack

up all the furniture. The money they bring I mean to bestow on our field hospitals. I will not forget *you* in disposing of it."

"Forgive me, your majesty," General Saldern replied, "but this is contrary to my honor and my oath."

The king, in still very calm and measured words, rejoined, "You would be right if I did not intend this desperate method for a good object. Listen to me. Great lords don't feel it in their scalp when their subjects are torn by the hair. One has to grip their own locks as the only way to give them pain."

"Order me, your majesty," said General Saldern, "to attack the enemy and his batteries, and I will cheerfully, on the instant, obey; but I can not, I dare not, act against honor, oath, and duty. For this commission your majesty will easily find another person in my stead."

The king turned upon his heel, and, with angry voice and gesture, said, "Saldern, you refuse to become rich."

In a pet Frederick left the room. The heroic general, who had flatly refused to obey a positive command, found it necessary to resign his commission. The next day another officer plundered the castle. Seventy-five thousand dollars of the proceeds of the sale were appropriated to the field hospitals. The remainder, which proved to be a large sum, was the reward of the plundering general.

"The case was much canvassed in the army. It was the topic in every tent among officers and men. And among us army chaplains, too, the question of conflicting duties arose. Your king ordering one thing, and your conscience another, what ought a

man to do? And what ought an army chaplain to preach or advise?

"Our general conclusion was that neither the king nor General Saldern could well be called in the wrong. General Saldern, in obeying the inner voice, did certainly right. But the king, also, in his place, might judge such a measure expedient. Perhaps General Saldern himself would have done so had he been King of Prussia."[166]

The Duke of Mecklenburg had a sister, Charlotte, a bright and beautiful young girl of seventeen. Her heart was so moved by the scenes of misery which she witnessed every where around her that she ventured to write a very earnest appeal to Frederick for peace.

> "It was but a few years ago," she wrote, "that this territory wore the most pleasing appearance. The country was cultivated. The peasants looked cheerful. The towns abounded with riches and festivity. What an alteration at present from such a charming scene! I am not expert at description, neither can my fancy add any horrors to the picture. But sure even conquerors themselves would weep at the hideous prospect now before me.
>
> "The whole country, my dear country, lies one frightful waste, presenting only objects to excite terror, pity, and despair. The business of the husbandman and the shepherd are quite discontinued. The husbandman and shepherd are become soldiers themselves, and help to ravage the soil they formerly occupied. The towns are inhabited by old men, women, and children. Perhaps here and there a warrior, rendered unfit for service by wounds and want of limbs, is left at

his door. His little children hang round him, ask a history of every wound, and grow themselves soldiers before they find strength for the field.

"But this were nothing did we not feel the alternate insolence of either army as it happens to advance or retreat. It is impossible to express the confusion which even those create who call themselves our friends. Even those from whom we might expect redress oppress us with new calamities. From you, therefore, it is that we expect relief. To you even women and children may complain, for your humanity stoops to the most humble petition, and your power is capable of repressing the greatest injustice. I am, sire, etc.,

"CHARLOTTE SOPHIA, of Mecklenburg-Strelitz."

This letter was extensively circulated in England. It was greatly admired. It so happened that the court was then looking around for a bride for their young king. The result was that in the course of a few months Charlotte became Queen of England, as the wife of George III.

It is not known that Frederick paid any attention to this appeal. Impoverished as his realms were, large sums of money were absolutely necessary for the conduct of a new campaign. The king levied a contribution upon Leipsic of nearly a million of dollars. The leading citizens said that in their extreme destitution it was impossible to raise that sum. The king threatened to burn down the city over their heads. The combustibles were gathered. The soldiers stood with the torches in their hands to kindle the conflagration. But then the king, apparently reflecting that from the smouldering ashes of the city he could glean no gold, ordered the

city to be saved, but arrested a hundred of the chief merchants and threw them into prison.

These men, of the highest distinction, were treated with every indignity to extort the money from them. They were incarcerated in gloomy dungeons, with straw only for their beds, and with bread and water only for their food. But even this severity was unavailing. Seventeen were then selected from their number, and were informed that they were to be forced into the ranks as common soldiers. Their muskets and their knapsacks were given to them, and they were ordered to Magdeburg to be drilled. By this application of torture the money was obtained. And now, while the storms of winter were sweeping the frozen fields, both parties were gathering their strength anew for the struggle of the sixth campaign.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE END OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.

Commencement of the Sixth Campaign.—The Fortified Camp at Bunzelwitz.—Skillful Engineering.—Unintermitted Toil of the Soldiers.—Retreat of the Russians.—Loss of Schweidnitz.—Peculiar Treatment of General Zastrow.—Close of the Sixth Campaign.—The King at Breslau.—Desponding Letter to D'Argens.—Death of Elizabeth of Russia.—Accession of Peter III.—His Marriage with the Daughter of a Prussian General.—Takes the Baptismal Name of Catharine.—Assassination of Peter III.—Curious Proclamation by the Empress.—Commencement of the Seventh Campaign.—Alliance of Russia with Prussia.—Withdrawal from the Alliance.—Termination of the War.

THE fifth campaign of the Seven Years' War closed with the year 1760. By exertions such as mortal man perhaps never made before, Frederick succeeded, during the winter, in raising an army of ninety-six thousand men. In the mean time the allies had concentrated in Bohemia, to crush him, seventy-two thousand Austrians and sixty thousand Russians. The capture of four fortresses would drive Frederick hopelessly out of Silesia. Early in May, Frederick, leaving his brother Henry with about forty thousand men to protect Saxony, set out with fifty thousand for the relief of Neisse, which was then besieged.

General Goltz, probably the most able of the Prussian commanders, was detached to the fortified camp at Glogau.

“But, alas! poor Goltz, just when ready to march, was taken with sudden, violent fever, the fruit probably of overwork; and in that sad flame blazed away his valiant existence in three or four days; gone forever, June 30, 1761, to the regret of Frederick and of many.”[167]

The Russians were entering Silesia from the northeast by the way of Poland. Frederick, by one of his incredibly rapid marches, for a time prevented the junction of the two hostile armies. After innumerable marchings and manœuvrings, during which Frederick displayed military ability which commanded the admiration even of his foes, the Prussian king found himself, on the 16th of August, at Nicolstadt, in the very heart of Silesia, at the head of fifty-seven thousand men. In front of him, obstructing his advance, there were sixty thousand Russians. In his rear, cutting off his retreat, there were seventy-two thousand Austrians. From a commanding eminence Frederick could watch the movements of both of these hostile bands. Both Russians and Austrians stood in such awe of the prowess of their redoubtable antagonist that they moved cautiously, like hounds surrounding the lion at bay.

At three o’clock in the morning of the 20th of August, and after the march of a few hours, the little army of Frederick commenced constructing a fortified camp near the poor little village of Bunzelwitz, about half way between the Silesian fortresses of Schweidnitz and Striegau. Spades were provided. Fifty thousand men were instantly

employed, according to a well-matured plan, in digging and trenching. The extraordinary energies of Frederick seemed to nerve every arm. Here there was speedily reared the camp of Bunzelwitz, which has attained world-wide renown.

An ordinary eye would not have seen in the position any peculiar military strength. It was an undulating plain about eight miles long and broad, without any abrupt eminences. A small river bordered it on the west, beyond which rose green hills. On the east was the almost impregnable fortress of Schweidnitz, with its abundant stores. Farm-houses were scattered about, with occasional groves and morasses. There were also sundry villages in the distance.

Frederick himself was chief engineer. The army was divided into two forces of twenty-five thousand each. Carlyle gives a graphic description of this enterprise.

“And twenty-five thousand spades and picks are at work, under such a field engineer as there is not in the world when he takes to that employment. At all hours, night and day, twenty-five thousand of them: half the army asleep, other half digging, wheeling, shoveling; plying their utmost, and constant as Time himself: these, in three days, will do a great deal of spadework. Batteries, redoubts, big and little; spare not for digging. Here is ground for cavalry, too. Post them here, there, to bivouac in readiness, should our batteries be unfortunate. Long trenches are there, and also short; batteries commanding every ingate, and under them are mines.”

Many of the trenches were sixteen feet broad by sixteen feet deep. Under each battery there were two mines. In case of capture, the mines and the victors

could be blown high into the air. Knowing that the batteries were all mined, the Russian and Austrian soldiers would be slow to make charges in which victory would be certain death. The small villages around were all strongly fortified.

"Würben, in the centre, is like a citadel looking down upon Striegau Water. Heavy cannon, plenty of them, we have brought from Schweidnitz. We have four hundred and eighty cannon in all, and one hundred and eighty-two mines. Würben, our citadel and centre, is about five miles from Schweidnitz. Before our lines are palisades and *chevaux-de-frise*. Woods we have in abundance in our circuit, and axes for carpentries of that kind. There are four intrenched knolls; twenty-four big batteries capable of playing beautifully, all like pieces in a concert."[168]

Frederick had been three days and nights at work upon his fortress before the allies ventured forward to look into it. It was then a Gibraltar. Still for eight days more the spade was not intermitted. Cogniazo, an Austrian, writes: "It is a masterpiece of art, in which the principles of tactics are combined with those of field fortifications as never before."

The Austrians took position upon the south, at the distance of about six miles. The Russians were at the same distance on the west, with their head-quarters at Hohenfriedberg.

It would seem that Frederick's troops must have had iron sinews, and that they needed as little repose as did their master. Those not at work with the spade were under arms to repel an assault. Two or three times there was an alarm, when the whole fifty thousand, in an hour, were in battle-array. Frederick was fully aware of the crisis he had encountered. To

be beaten there was irretrievable ruin. No one in the army performed more exhausting labor than the king himself. He seemed to be omnipresent, by day and by night. Near the chief battery, in a clump of trees, there was a small tent, and a bundle of straw in the corner. Here the king occasionally sought a few moments of repose. But his nervous excitement rendered him so restless, that most of the time he was strolling about among the guard parties, and warming himself by their fires.



THE KING'S BIVOUAC.

"One evening," writes Carlyle, "among the orders is heard this item: 'And remember a lock of straw, will you, that I may not have to sleep upon the ground, as last night!' Many anecdotes are current to this day about his pleasant, homely ways, and affabilities with the sentry people, and the rugged hospitalities they would show him at their watch-

fires. ‘Good evening, children.’ ‘The same to thee, Fritz.’ ‘What is that you are cooking?’—and would try a spoonful of it, in such company; while the rough fellows would forbid smoking. ‘Don’t you know he dislikes it?’ ‘No! smoke away,’ the king would insist.”

General Loudon was in command of the Austrians, and General Butturlin of the Russians, who were arrayed against Frederick. They could not agree upon a plan of attack. Neither commander was willing to expose his troops to the brunt of a battle in which the carnage would necessarily be dreadful. Thus the weeks wore away. Frederick could not be safely attacked, and winter was approaching.

At ten o’clock at night on the 9th of September, the Russian camp went up in flame. The next morning not a Russian was to be seen. The whole army had disappeared over the hills far away to the north. Frederick immediately dispatched eight thousand men under General Platen to attack the flank of the retreating foe, and destroy his baggage-wagons. The feat was brilliantly accomplished. On the 15th of September, before the dawn of the morning, General Platen fell upon the long train, took nearly two thousand prisoners, seven cannon, and destroyed five thousand heavily-laden wagons.

Frederick remained at Bunzelwitz a fortnight after the retreat of the Russians. In the mean time the French and English were fighting each other with varying success upon the banks of the Rhine. It is not necessary to enter into the details of their struggles. Frederick’s magazines at Schweidnitz were getting low. On the 26th of September he broke up his camp at Bunzelwitz, and in a three days’ march to the southeast reached Neisse. The Austrians did not

venture to annoy him. Frederick had scarcely reached Neisse when he learned, to his amazement and horror, that General Loudon, with a panther-like spring, had captured Schweidnitz, with its garrison and all its supplies. It was a terrible blow to the king. The Austrians could now winter in Silesia. The anguish of Frederick must have been great. But he gave no utterance to his gloomy forebodings.

"The king," writes Küster, "fell ill of the gout, saw almost nobody, never came out. It was whispered that his inflexible heart was at last breaking. And for certain there never was in his camp and over his dominions such a gloom as in this October, 1761, till at length he appeared on horseback again, with a cheerful face; and every body thought to himself, 'Ha! the world will still roll on, then.'"

Frederick's treatment of the unfortunate General Zastrow, who was in command at Schweidnitz, was quite peculiar. Very generously he wrote to him:

> "MY DEAR GENERAL VON ZASTROW,—The misfortune which has befallen me is very grievous. But what consoles me in it is to see by your letter that you have behaved like a brave officer, and that neither you nor your garrison have brought disgrace or reproach upon yourselves. I am your well-affectioned king.
>
> "FREDERICK.
>
> "P.S.—You may, in this occurrence, say what Francis I., after the battle of Pavia, wrote to his mother: 'All is lost except honor.' As I do not yet completely understand the affair, I forbear to judge of it, for it is altogether extraordinary."

Notwithstanding this letter, Frederick refused to

give General Zastrow any further employment, but left him to neglect, obscurity, and poverty. Zastrow wrote to the king imploring a court-martial. He received the following laconic reply:

"It is of no use. I impute nothing of crime to you. But after such a mishap it would be dangerous to trust you with any post or command."

The freezing gales of winter soon came, when neither army could keep the open field. Frederick established his winter quarters at Breslau. General Loudon, with his Austrians, was about thirty miles southwest of him at Kunzendorf. Thus ended the sixth campaign.

The winter was long, cold, and dreary. Fierce storms swept the fields, piling up the snow in enormous drifts. But for this cruel war, the Prussian, Russian, and Austrian peasants, who had been dragged into the armies to slaughter each other, might have been in their humble but pleasant homes, by the bright fireside, in the enjoyment of all comforts.

"The snow lies ell-deep," writes Archenholtz; "snow-tempests, sleet, frost. The soldiers bread is a block of ice, impracticable to human teeth till you thaw it."

It was on the 9th of December that the king, after incredible exposure to hunger, and cold, and night-marchings, established himself for the winter in the shattered apartments of his ruined palace at Breslau. He tried to assume a cheerful aspect in public, but spent most of his hours alone, brooding over the ruin which now seemed inevitable. He withdrew from all society, scarcely spoke to any body except upon business. One day General Lentulus dined with him,

and not one word was spoken at the table. On the 18th of January, 1762, the king wrote in the following desponding tones to D'Argens:

"The school of patience I am at is hard, long-continued, cruel, nay, barbarous. I have not been able to escape my lot. All that human foresight could suggest has been employed, and nothing has succeeded. If Fortune continues to pursue me, doubtless I shall sink. It is only she that can extricate me from the situation I am in. I escape out of it by looking at the universe on the great scale, like an observer from some distant planet. All then seems to me so infinitely small; and I could almost pity my enemies for giving themselves such trouble about so very little.

"What would become of us without philosophy, without this reasonable contempt of things frivolous, transient, and fugitive, about which the greedy and ambitious make such a pother, fancying them to be solid! This is to become wise by stripes, you will tell me. Well, if one do become wise, what matters it how? I read a great deal. I devour my books, and that brings me useful alleviation. But for my books, I think hypochondria would have had me in Bedlam before now. In fine, dear marquis, we live in troublous times and in desperate situations. I have all the properties of a stage hero—always in danger, always on the point of perishing. One must hope that the conclusion will come, and if the end of the piece be lucky, we will forget the rest."[169]

"The darkest hour is often nearest the dawn." The next day after Frederick had written the above letter he received news of the death of his most inveterate enemy, Elizabeth, the Empress of Russia. As we have mentioned, she was intensely

exasperated against him in consequence of some sarcasms in which he had indulged in reference to her private life. Elizabeth was the daughter of Peter the Great, and had inherited many of her father's imperial traits of character. She was a very formidable foe.

"Russia may be counted as the bigger half of all he had to strive with; the bigger, or at least the far uglier, more ruinous, and incendiary; and, if this were at once taken away, think what a daybreak when the night was at the blackest."[170]

The nephew of Elizabeth, and her successor, Peter III., was a very warm admirer of Frederick. One of his first acts was to send to the Prussian king the assurance of his esteem and friendship. Peter immediately released all the Prussian prisoners in his dominions, entered into an armistice with Frederick, which was soon followed by a treaty of alliance. The two sovereigns commenced a very friendly correspondence. Frederick returned all the Russian prisoners, well clothed and fed, to their homes. The change was almost as sudden and striking as the transformations in the kaleidoscope. On the 23d Peter issued a decree that there was peace with Prussia, that he had surrendered to his Prussian majesty all the territorial conquests thus far made, and had recalled the Russian armies.

Peter III. had been left an orphan, and titular Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, when eleven years of age. His mother was a daughter of Peter the Great. His aunt, the Czarina Elizabeth, who had determined not to marry, adopted the child, and pronounced him to be her heir to the throne. Being at that time on friendly terms with Frederick, the Empress Elizabeth had consulted him in reference to a wife for the

future czar. It will be remembered that the king effected a marriage between Peter and Sophia, the beautiful daughter of a Prussian general, Prince of Anhalt-Zerbst, and at that time commandant of Stettin. His wife was sister to the heir-apparent of Sweden. Carlyle, speaking of this couple, says:

"They have a daughter, Sophie-Frederike, now near fifteen, and very forward for her age; comely to look upon, wise to listen to. 'Is not she the suitable one?' thinks Frederick in regard to this matter. 'Her kindred is of the oldest—old as Albert the Bear. She has been frugally brought up, Spartan-like, though as a princess by birth. Let her cease skipping ropes on the ramparts yonder with her young Stettin playmates, and prepare for being a czarina of the Russias,' thinks he. And communicates his mind to the czarina, who answers, 'Excellent! How did I never think of that myself!'"

This was in January, 1744. The young lady, with her mother, by express invitation, and with this object in view, visited the Russian court. Sophia embraced the Greek religion, received in baptism the new name of Catharine, and on the 1st of September, 1745, was married to her second cousin Peter. "And with invocation of the Russian heaven and Russian earth they were declared to be one flesh, though at last they turned out to be *two fleshes*, as my reader well knows."[171]



THE EMPRESS CATHARINE.

About a year before this, on the 17th of July, 1744, Frederick's sister Ulrique had been married to Adolf Frederick, the heir-apparent to the throne of Sweden. Eighteen years of this weary world's history, with its wars and its woes, had since passed away. On the 5th of April, 1751, the old king of Sweden died. Thus Adolf became king, and Frederick's sister Ulrique Queen of Sweden. And now, on the 5th of January, 1762, the Empress of Russia died, and Peter III., with his wife Catharine, ascended the throne of that majestic empire.

The withdrawal of Russia from the alliance against Frederick, though hailed by him with great joy, still left him, with wasted armies and exhausted finances, to struggle single-handed against Austria and France united, each of which kingdoms was far more powerful than Prussia. The winter passed rapidly away without any marked events, each party

preparing for the opening of the campaign in the ensuing spring. On the 8th of June, 1762, Frederick wrote to D'Argens:

"In fine, my dear marquis, the job ahead of me is hard and difficult, and nobody can say positively how it will all go. Pray for us; and don't forget a poor devil who kicks about strangely in his harness, who leads the life of one damned."

Peter III. was a drunken, brutal, half-crazed debauchee. Catharine was a beautiful, graceful, intellectual, and dissolute woman. They hated each other. They did not even pretend to be faithful to each other. Catharine formed a successful conspiracy, dethroned her husband, and was proclaimed by the army sole empress. After a series of the wildest scenes of intrigue, corruption, and crime, the imbecile Peter III., who had fled to the remote palace of Ropscha, was murdered, being first compelled to drink of poison, and then, while writhing in pain, he was strangled with a napkin. Whether Catharine were a party to this assassination is a question which can now probably never be decided. It is certain that she must have rejoiced over the event, and that she richly rewarded the murderers.



ASSASSINATION OF PETER III.

In the following curious proclamation, the Empress Catharine II. announced to her subjects the death of her husband:

“The seventh day after our accession to the throne of all the Russias we received information that the late emperor, Peter III., was attacked with a violent colic. That we might not be wanting in Christian duty, or disobedient to the divine command by which we are enjoined to preserve the life of our neighbor, we immediately ordered that the said Peter should be furnished with every thing that might be judged necessary to restore his health by the aids of medicine. But, to our great regret and affliction, we were yesterday evening apprized that, by permission of the Almighty, the late emperor departed this life.”

The seventh campaign of the Seven Years’ War commenced on the 1st of July, 1762. Peter III. had

sent an army of twenty thousand men to the support of Frederick. Aided by these troops, united with his own army, Frederick had emerged from his winter quarters, and was just about to attack the Austrian army, which was intrenched upon the heights of Burkersdorf, a little south of Schweidnitz, which fortress the Austrians then held. The evening before the contemplated attack the Russian General Czernichef entered the tent of Frederick with the following appalling tidings:

"There has been a revolution in St. Petersburg. The Czar Peter III., your majesty's devoted friend, has been deposed, and probably assassinated. The Czarina Catharine, influenced by the enemies of your majesty, and unwilling to become embroiled in a conflict with Austria and France, has ordered me to return instantly homeward with the twenty thousand troops under my command."

For a moment the king was quite stunned by the blow. The withdrawal of these troops would expose him to be speedily overwhelmed by the Austrians. By earnest entreaty, Frederick persuaded Czernichef to remain with him three days longer. "I will require of you no service whatever. The Austrians know nothing of this change. They will think that you are still my ally. Your presence simply will thus aid me greatly in the battle."

General Czernichef, though at the risk of his head from the displeasure of Catharine, generously consented so far to disobey the orders of his empress. The next day, July 2, 1762, Frederick, with his remaining troops, attacked the foe, under General Daun, at Burkersdorf. From four o'clock in the morning until five in the afternoon the antagonistic hosts hurled themselves against each other. Frederick

was the victor. “On fall of night, Daun, every body having had his orders, and been making his preparations for six hours past, ebbed totally away, in perfect order, bag and baggage; well away to southward, and left Frederick quit of him.”[172]

Early the next morning, Czernichef, greatly admiring the exploit Frederick had performed, commenced his march home. Just before this there was a change in the British ministry, and the new cabinet clamored for peace. England entered into a treaty with France, and retired from the conflict. Frederick, vehemently upbraiding the English with treachery—the same kind of treachery of which he had repeatedly been guilty—marched upon Schweidnitz. After a vigorous siege of two months he captured the place.

Nearly all of Silesia was again in the hands of Frederick. He seems to have paid no regard to the ordinary principles of honor in the accomplishment of his plans. Indeed, he seems to have had no delicate perceptions of right and wrong, no instinctive appreciation of what was honorable or dishonorable in human conduct. He coined adulterated money, which he compelled the people to take, but which he refused to receive in taxes. In his *Military Instructions*, drawn up by his own hand, he writes:

“When you find it very necessary, yet very difficult, to gain any intelligence of the enemy, there is another expedient, though a cruel one. You take a rich burgher, possessed of rich lands, a wife, and children. You oblige him to go to the enemy’s camp, as if to complain of hard treatment, and to take along with him, as his servant, a spy who speaks the language of the country; assuring him at the same

time that, in case he does not bring the spy back with him, after having remained a sufficient time in the enemy's camp, you will set fire to his house, and massacre his wife and children. I was forced to have recourse to this cruel expedient. It answered my purpose."[173]

A man's moral nature must be indeed obtuse who could thus recommend the compulsion of a peaceable citizen to act the part of a traitor to his own country, under the alternative of having his house fired and his wife and children massacred.

Winter was now approaching. The Austrians in Saxony made a desperate attack upon Prince Henry, and were routed with much loss. The shattered Austrian army retired to Bohemia for winter quarters. Under the circumstances, it was a victory of immense importance to Frederick. Upon receiving the glad tidings, he wrote to Henry:

"Your letter, my dear brother, has made me twenty years younger. Yesterday I was sixty, to-day hardly eighteen. I bless Heaven for preserving your health, and that things have passed so happily. It is a service so important rendered by you to the state that I can not enough express my gratitude, and will wait to do it in person."

On the 24th of November the belligerents entered into an armistice until the 1st of March. All were exhausted. It was manifest that peace would soon be declared. Commissioners to arrange the terms of peace met at the castle of Hubertsburg, near Dresden. On the 15th of February, 1763, peace was concluded. *Frederick retained Silesia*. That was the result of the war.

According to Frederick's computation, he had

succeeded in wresting this province from Maria Theresa at an expense of eight hundred and fifty-three thousand lives, actual fighters, who had perished upon the field of battle. Of these, one hundred and eighty thousand were Prussians. Of the hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children who, in consequence of the war, had perished of exposure, famine, and pestilence, no note is taken. The population of Prussia had diminished, during the seven years, five hundred thousand.

The day in which the treaty was signed Frederick wrote to the Marquis D'Argens as follows: "The best thing I have now to tell you of, my dear marquis, is the peace. And it is right that the good citizens and the public should rejoice at it. For me, poor old man that I am, I return to a town where I know nothing but the walls, where I find no longer any of my friends, where great and laborious duties await me, and where I shall soon lay my old bones in an asylum which can neither be troubled by war, by calamities, nor by the wickedness of men."

Archenholtz, who was an eye-witness of the miseries which he describes, gives the following account of the state of Germany at the close of the conflict:

"Whole provinces had been laid waste. Even in those which had not been thus destroyed, internal commerce and industry were almost at an end. A great part of Pomerania and Brandenburg was changed into a desert. There were provinces where hardly any men were to be found, and where the women were therefore obliged to guide the plow. In others women were as much wanting as men. The most fertile plains of Germany, on the banks of the Oder and the Wesel, presented only the arid and

sterile appearance of a desert. An officer has stated that he had passed through seven villages without meeting a single person excepting a curate."[174]



THE OFFICER AND THE CURATE.

On the 15th of March, 1763, Frederick left Leipsic, and on the 30th entered his capital of Berlin, from which he had been absent six years. It was nine o'clock in the evening when his carriage drove through the dark and silent streets to his palace. His arrival at that hour had not been anticipated. It is said that he repaired immediately to the queen's apartment, where he met the several members of the

royal family. As soon as it was known that the king had arrived, Berlin blazed with illuminations and rang with rejoicings.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE PARTITION OF POLAND.

The King patronizes literary and scientific Men.—Anecdotes.—The Family Quarrel.—Birth of Frederick William III.—Rapid Recuperation of Prussia.—The King's Tour of Observation.—Desolate Aspect of the Country.—Absolutism of Frederick.—Interview between Frederick and D'Alembert.—Unpopularity of Frederick.—Death of the King of Poland.—Plans for the Partition of Poland.—Intrigues of Catharine.—Interview between Frederick and the Emperor Joseph.—Poland seized by Russia, Prussia, and Austria.—The Division of the Spoil.—Remorse of Maria Theresa.—Indifference of Frederick to public Opinion.

THERE still remained to Frederick twenty-three years of life. He now engaged very vigorously in the endeavor to repair the terrible ravages of war by encouraging agriculture, commerce, and all useful arts. He invited the distinguished French philosophers Helvetius and D'Alembert to visit his court, and endeavored, though unavailingly, to induce them to take up their residence in Berlin. They were both in sympathy with the king in their renunciation of Christianity.

There are many anecdotes of Frederick floating about in the journals whose authenticity can not be

vouched for. The two following are doubtless authentic. Frederick, as he was riding through the streets of Berlin, saw a crowd looking upon a picture which was posted high up on a wall. He requested his groom to see what it was. The servant returned with the reply, “It is a caricature of your majesty, seated on a stool, with a coffee-mill between your knees, grinding with one hand, and picking up the beans which have fallen with the other,”

“Take it down,” said the king, “and hang it lower, that the people may not hurt their necks in looking at it.”

The crowd heard what he said. With bursts of laughter they tore the caricature in pieces, scattered it to the winds, and greeted the king, as he rode away, with enthusiastic shouts of “Our Fritz forever.”

The Crown Prince Frederick had married the daughter of the Duke of Brunswick. She was a very beautiful, proud, high-spirited woman. Her husband was a worthless fellow, dissolute in the extreme. She, stung to madness, and unrestrained by Christian principle, retaliated in kind. A divorce was the result. The discarded princess retired to the castle of Stettin, where she lived in comparative seclusion, though surrounded with elegance.



FREDERICK THE GREAT, ÆT. 59.

Upon one occasion she ordered a very rich silk dress directly from Lyons. The custom-house dues were heavy. The custom-house officer detained the dress until the dues should be paid. The haughty princess, exceedingly indignant, sent an order to him to bring the dress instantly to her, and she would pay the demand. As soon as he entered her apartment,

she snatched the dress from his hands, and with her open palm gave him two slaps in the face, ordering him immediately to leave the house[175]

The officer drew up a statement of the facts, and sent it to the king, with the complaint that he had been dishonored in discharging the duties intrusted to him by his majesty. The king sent the following reply:

"To the custom-house officer at Stettin. The loss of the excise dues shall fall to my score. The dress shall remain with the princess; the slaps to him who received them. As to the pretended dishonor, I entirely relieve the complainant from that. Never can the appliance of a beautiful hand dishonor the face of an officer of customs."

Frederick, with his own pen, gives the following account of this family quarrel, which resulted in the divorce of the Crown Prince and Elizabeth:

"Not long ago we mentioned the Prince of Prussia's marriage with Elizabeth of Brunswick. The husband, young and dissolute, given up to a profligate life, from which his relatives could not correct him, was continually committing infidelities to his wife. The princess, who was in the flower of her beauty, felt outraged by such neglect of her charms. Her vivacity and the good opinion she had of herself brought her upon the thought of avenging her wrongs by retaliation. Speedily she gave into excesses scarcely inferior to those of her husband. Family quarrels broke out, and were soon publicly known. The antipathy which ensued took away all hope of succession. The brothers of the king, Henry and Ferdinand, avowed frankly that they would never consent to have, by some accidental birth, their rights of succession to the crown carried off. In

the end, there was nothing for it but proceeding to a divorce."[176]

Within three months after the divorce, the Crown Prince, anxious for an heir, married, on the 18th of April, 1769, the Princess Frederica Louisa, of Hesse-Darmstadt. A son was born to them, who became Frederick William III.

Under the energetic administration of Frederick, Prussia began, very rapidly, to recover from the desolation which had overwhelmed it. The coin, in a little more than a year, was restored to its purity. In the course of two years Frederick rebuilt, in different parts of his realms, fourteen thousand five hundred houses. The army horses were distributed among the impoverished farmers for plow teams. Early in June, 1763, the king set out on a general tour of inspection.

"To form an idea," he writes, "of the general subversion, and how great were the desolation and discouragement, you must represent to yourself countries entirely ravaged, the very traces of the old habitations hardly discoverable. Of the towns some were ruined from top to bottom; others half destroyed by fire. Of thirteen thousand houses the very vestiges were gone. There was no field in seed, no grain for the food of the inhabitants. Sixty thousand horses were needed if there were to be plowing carried on. In the provinces generally there were half a million population less than in 1756; that is to say, upon four millions and a half the ninth man was wanting. Noble and peasant had been pillaged, ransomed, foraged, eaten out by so many different armies; nothing now left them but life and miserable rags.

"There was no credit by trading people even for

the necessaries of life. There was no police in the towns. To habits of equity and order there had succeeded a vile greed of gain and an anarchic disorder. The silence of the laws had produced in the people a taste for license. Boundless appetite for gain was their main rule of action. The noble, the merchant, the farmer, the laborer, raising emulously each the price of his commodity, seemed to endeavor only for their mutual ruin. Such, when the war ended, was the fatal spectacle over these provinces, which had once been so flourishing. However pathetic the description may be, it will never approach the touching and sorrowful impression which the sight of it produced."

The absolutism of Frederick placed all legislative, judicial, and executive powers in his hands. He was law-maker, judge, and executioner. The liberty, property, and lives of his subjects were at his disposal. He could call others to assist him in the government, but they were merely servants to do his bidding.

"During the war," writes Frederick, "the councilors and ministers had successively died. In such time of trouble it had been impossible to replace them. The embarrassment was to find persons capable of filling these different employments. We searched the provinces, where good heads were found as rare as in the capital. At length five chief ministers were pitched upon."

The rich abbeys of the Roman Catholics were compelled to establish manufactures for weaving damasks and table-cloths. Some were converted into oil-mills, or "workers in copper, wire-drawers, the flaxes and metals, with water-power, markets, and so on."

While on this tour of inspection, the celebrated French philosopher D'Alembert, by appointment, met the king at Geldern, and accompanied him to Potsdam. D'Alembert was in entire sympathy with the king in his renunciation of Christianity. In 1755 D'Alembert had, by invitation, met Frederick at Wesel, on the Rhine. In a letter to Madame Du Deffand, at Paris, dated Potsdam, June 25, 1763, D'Alembert wrote:

"I will not go into the praises of King Frederick, now my host. I will merely send you two traits of him, which will indicate his way of thinking and feeling. When I spoke to him of the glory which he had acquired, he answered, with the greatest simplicity,

"'There is a furious discount to be deducted from said glory. Chance came in for almost the whole of it. I would far rather have written Racine's *Athalie* than have performed all the achievements of this war.'

"The other trait I have to give you is this. On the 15th of February last, the day of concluding this peace, which is so glorious to him, some one said to him, 'It is the finest day of your majesty's life.' The king replied,

"'The finest day of life is the day on which one quits it.'"[177]

Helvetius, another of the distinguished French deistical philosophers, was invited to Berlin to assist the king in his financial operations. To aid the mechanics in Berlin, and to show to the world that the king was not so utterly impoverished as many imagined, Frederick, on the 11th of June, 1763, laid the foundation of the sumptuous edifice called "The New Palace of Sans Souci."

Frederick, though now at peace with all the world, found no nation in cordial alliance with him. He had always disliked England, and England returned the dislike with interest. The Duchess of Pompadour, who controlled France, hated him. Maria Theresa regarded him as a highway robber who had snatched Silesia from her and escaped with it. Frederick, thus left without an ally, turned to his former subject, now Catharine II., whom he had placed on the throne of Russia. On the 11th of April, 1764, one year after the close of the Seven Years' War, he entered into a treaty of alliance with the Czarina Catharine. The treaty was to continue eight years. In case either of the parties became involved in war, the other party was to furnish a contingent of twelve thousand men, or an equivalent in money.

On the 5th of October, 1763, Augustus, the unhappy King of Poland, had died at Dresden, after a troubled reign of thirty years. The crown was elective. The turbulent nobles, broken up into antagonistic and envenomed cliques, were to choose a successor. Catharine, as ambitious as she was able and unprincipled, resolved to place one of her creatures upon the throne, that Poland, a realm spreading over a territory of 284,000 square miles, and containing a population of 20,000,000, might be virtually added to her dominions. Carlyle writes:

"My own private conjecture, I confess, has rather grown to be, on much reading of those *Rulhières* and distracted books, that the czarina—who was a grandiose creature, with considerable magnanimities, natural and acquired; with many ostentations, some really great qualities and talents; in effect, a kind of she Louis Quatorze (if the reader will reflect on that royal gentleman, and put him into petticoats in

Russia, and change his improper females for improper males)—that the czarina, very clearly resolute to keep Poland hers, had determined with herself to do something very handsome in regard to Poland; and to gain glory, both with the enlightened philosophe classes and with her own proud heart, by her treatment of that intricate matter."

In the court of the czarina there was a very handsome young Pole, Stanislaus Poniatowski, who had been an acknowledged lover of Catharine. Though Catharine had laid him aside for other favorites, she still regarded him with tender feelings. He was just the man to do her bidding. By skillful diplomacy she caused him to be elected King of Poland. That kingdom was now entirely in her hands, so far as it was in the power of its monarch to place it there.

This, however, stirred up great strife in Poland. The nobles were roused. Scenes of confusion ensued. The realm was plunged into a state of anarchy. Frederick, being in cordial co-operation with the czarina in all her measures, instructed his minister in Warsaw to follow her policy in every particular. It has generally been supposed that Frederick was the first to propose the banditti division of the kingdom of Poland between Prussia, Russia, and Austria by means of their united armies. This is not certain. But, whoever may have at first made the suggestion, it is very certain that Frederick cordially and efficiently embarked in the enterprise.[178]

Poniatowski was elected King of Poland on the 7th of September, 1764, and crowned on the 25th of November. He was then thirty-two years of age, and the scarcely disguised agent of Catharine. Two or three years passed of wars and rebellions, and all the

usual tumult of this tumultuous world. In August, 1765, the Emperor Francis died. He was at Innsprück, attending the marriage festivities of his second son Leopold. About nine o'clock in the evening of the 18th, while sauntering through the rooms in the midst of the brilliant gala, he was struck with apoplexy. He staggered for a moment, fell into the hands of his son Joseph, and instantly died.

Joseph, the oldest son of Maria Theresa and Francis, by the will of his mother became emperor. But Maria Theresa still swayed the sceptre of imperial power, through the hands of her son, as she had formerly done through the hands of her amiable and pliant husband. The young emperor was fond of traveling. He visited all the battle-fields of the Seven Years' War, and put up many monuments. Through his minister at Berlin, he expressed his particular desire to make the acquaintance of Frederick. The interview took place at Neisse on the 25th of August, 1769. His majesty received the young emperor on the grand staircase of the palace, where they cordially embraced each other.

"Now are my wishes fulfilled," said the emperor, "since I have the honor to embrace the greatest of kings and soldiers."

"I look upon this day," the king replied, "as the fairest of my life; for it will become the epoch of uniting two houses which have been enemies too long, and whose mutual interests require that they should strengthen, not weaken, one another."

There were dinner-parties, and military reviews, and operas to beguile the time. The interview lasted three days. The king and the emperor often walked out arm in arm. Frederick wrote:

"The emperor has a frankness of manner which seems natural to him. In his amiable character, gayety and great vivacity are prominent features."

Under cover of these festivities important political matters were discussed. The question of the partition of Poland arose, and arrangements were made for another interview. Soon after this, Frederick sent to Catharine a sketch of a plan for partitioning several provinces in Poland—Russia, Prussia, and Austria each taking a share. "To which Petersburg, intoxicated with its own outlooks on Turkey, paid not the least attention."[179] The second interview, of five days, commenced on the 3d of September, 1770, at Neustadt, near Austerlitz, which has since become so famous.

The Prince De Ligne, in a long letter to Stanislaus, King of Poland, gives an interesting account of several conversations which ensued. In this narrative he writes:

"I forget how the conversation changed. But I know that it grew so free that, seeing somebody coming to join in it, the king warned him to take care, saying that it was not safe to converse with a man doomed by the theologians to everlasting fire. I felt as if he somewhat overdid this of his 'being doomed,' and that he boasted too much of it. Not to hint at the dishonesty of these free-thinking gentlemen, who very often are thoroughly afraid of the devil, it is at least bad taste to make display of such things. And it was with the people of bad taste whom he had about him, and some dull skeptics of his own academy, that he had acquired the habit of mocking at religion."

The king was not a little vain of the keen thrusts he could occasionally give the clergy. In a letter to

Marie-Antoine, Electress of Saxony, dated Potsdam, May 3, 1768, he, with much apparent complacency, records the following witty achievement:

"It is a pity for the human race, madam, that men never can be tranquil. But they never can be any where. Even the little town of Neufchâtel has had its troubles. Your royal highness will be astonished to learn how. A parson there had set forth in a sermon that, considering the immense mercy of God, the pains of hell could not last forever. The synod shouted murder at such scandal, and has been struggling ever since to get the parson exterminated. The affair was of my jurisdiction, for your royal highness must know that I am pope in that country. Here is my decision:

"'Let the parsons who make for themselves a cruel and barbarous God be eternally damned, as they desire and deserve; and let those parsons who conceive God gentle and merciful enjoy the plenitude of his mercy.'

"However, madam, my sentence has failed to calm the minds. The schism continues, and the number of damnatory theologians prevail over the others."[180]

The king could be very courteous. He gave a dinner-party, at which General Loudon, one of the most efficient of the Austrian generals, and who had often been successfully opposed to Frederick, was a guest. As he entered the king said,

"General Loudon, take a seat by my side. I had much rather have you with me than opposite me." *Mettez vous auprès de moi. J'aime mieux vous avoir à côté de moi que vis-à-vis.*[181]

Catharine was at this time engaged vigorously in

a war with the Turks. Frederick, by his treaty with the czarina, was compelled to assist her. This ambitious woman, endowed with extraordinary powers, was pushing her conquests toward Constantinople, having formed the resolve to annex that imperial city to the empire, and thus to open through the Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles new avenues for Russian commerce.

Count Von Kaunitz, an able but proud and self-conceited man, was prime minister of the Emperor of Germany. His commanding mind exerted quite a controlling influence over his imperial master. Kaunitz records the following conversation as having taken place at this interview between himself and Frederick:[182]

"These Russian encroachments upon the Turk," said Kaunitz, "are dangerous to the repose of Europe. His imperial majesty can never consent that Russia should possess the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia. He will much rather go to war. These views of Russia are infinitely dangerous to every body. They are as dangerous to your majesty as to others. I can conceive of no remedy against them but this. Prussia and Austria must join frankly in protest and absolute prohibition of them."

"I have nothing more at heart," Frederick replied, "than to stand well with Austria. I wish always to be her ally, never her enemy. But the prince sees how I am situated. Bound by express treaty with her czarish majesty, I must go with Russia in any war. I will do every thing in my power to conciliate her majesty with the emperor—to secure such a peace at St. Petersburg as may meet the wishes of Vienna."[183]

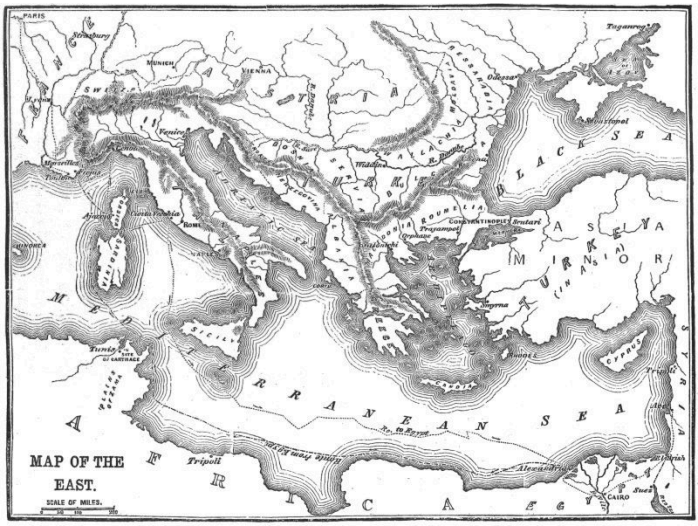
Singularly enough, the very next day Frederick

received an express from the Divan requesting him, with the aid of Austria, to mediate peace with Russia. The Turks had encountered such reverses that they were anxious to sheathe the sword. Frederick with great joy undertook the mediation. But he found the mediation far more difficult than he had imagined. Catharine and Maria Theresa, so totally different in character, entertained a rooted aversion to each other. The complications were so great that month after month the deliberations were continued unavailingly. Maria Theresa was unrelentingly opposed to the advance of Russia upon Constantinople.

Thus originated with the Empress Catharine, one hundred years ago, the idea of driving the Turks out of Europe, and of annexing Constantinople to her majestic empire. From that time until now the question has been increasingly agitating the courts of Europe. Every day, now, the “Eastern Question” is assuming greater importance. The following map very clearly shows the commanding position of Constantinople, and the immense strength, both in a military and a commercial point of view, it would give to the Russian empire.

Meneval, private secretary of Napoleon I., records that, in one of the interviews of the emperor with Alexander, the czar offered to co-operate with Napoleon in all his plans if the emperor would consent that Russia should take Constantinople. The French emperor replied, after a moment’s hesitation,

“Constantinople! never. It is the empire of the world.”



MAP OF THE EAST.

There can be but little doubt, however, that the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles will ere long be in the hands of Russia. “I know that I or my successors,” said the Czar Nicholas, “must have Constantinople. You might as well arrest a stream in its descent from a mountain as the Russians in their advance to the Hellespont.”[184]

There was a famine in Poland, and the famine was followed by pestilence. A general state of tumult and discord ensued. Maria Theresa had gathered a large army on the frontiers of Hungary to watch the designs of Russia upon Turkey. Availing herself of this disturbed state of Poland, Maria Theresa marched her troops into one of its provinces called Zips, which had once belonged to Hungary, and quietly extended her boundaries around the acquisition. Catharine was much exasperated by the measure.

The czarina had, about that time, invited Prince Henry, the warlike brother of Frederick, to visit her. They had met as children when the czarina was daughter of the commandant at Stettin. Henry was received with an extraordinary display of imperial magnificence. In the midst of this routine of feasting, balls, and masquerades, Catharine one day said to Henry, with much pique, referring to these encroachments on the part of Maria Theresa,

"It seems that in Poland the Austrians have only to stoop and pick up what they like. If the court of Vienna has the intention to dismember that kingdom, its neighbors will have the right to take their share."[185]

Frederick caught eagerly at the suggestion, as the remark was reported to him by his brother. He drew up a new plan of partition, which he urged with all his powers of address upon both Russia and Austria. The conscience of Maria Theresa was strongly opposed to the deed. Catharine and Kaunitz were very greedy in their demands. Circumstances assumed such an aspect that it was very difficult for Maria Theresa to oppose the measure. At length, through the extraordinary efforts of Frederick, on the 5th of August, 1772, the following agreement was adopted:

Russia took 87,500 square miles. Austria received 62,500. The share which fell to Frederick was but 9456 square miles. Small in respect to territory as was Frederick's share, it was regarded, in consequence of its position and the nature of the country, equally valuable with the other portions.

"Frederick's share," writes Mr. Carlyle, "as an anciently Teutonic country, and as filling up the always dangerous gap between his Ost Prussen and

him, has, under Prussian administration, proved much the most valuable of the three, and, next to Silesia, is Frederick's most important acquisition."

In carrying out these measures of partition, which the world has usually regarded as one of the most atrocious acts of robbery on record, resort was had both to bribery and force. The King of Poland was the obsequious servant of Catharine. A common fund was raised by the three powers to bribe the members of the Polish diet. Each of the confederate powers also sent an army to the Polish frontiers, ready to unite and crush the distracted people should there be any forcible resistance. Thus the deed was accomplished.

Maria Theresa was a devout woman, governed by stern convictions of duty. Her moral nature recoiled from this atrocious act. But she felt driven to it by the pressure brought upon her by her own cabinet, her powerful and arrogant prime minister, and by the courts of Prussia and Russia. While, therefore, very reluctantly giving her assent to the measure, she issued the following extraordinary document:

"When all my lands were invaded, and I knew not where in the world to be brought to bed in, I relied on my good right and the help of God. But in this thing, where not only public law cries to Heaven against us, but also all natural justice and sound reason, I must confess never in my life to have been in such trouble, and I am ashamed to show my face. Let the prince (Kaunitz) consider what an example we are giving to all the world, if, for a miserable piece of Poland, or of Moldavia, or Wallachia, we throw our honor and reputation to the winds. I see well that I am alone, and no more in vigor. Therefore

I must, though to my very great sorrow, let things take their course."[186]

A few days afterward, in an official document, she writes: "I consent, since so many great and learned men will have it so. But long after I am dead, it will be known what this violating of all that was hitherto held sacred and just will give rise to."[187]

Frederick had cultivated a supreme indifference to public opinion. Not believing in any God, in any future retribution, or in any immortality, and regarding men merely as the insects of an hour, like the myriad polyps which, beneath the ocean, rear their stupendous structures and perish, his sense of right and wrong must necessarily have been very different from that which a believer in the Christian faith is accustomed to cherish. In allusion to this subject, he writes:

"A new career came to open itself to me. And one must have been either without address or buried in stupidity not to have profited by an opportunity so advantageous. I seized this unexpected opportunity by the forelock. By dint of negotiating and intriguing, I succeeded in indemnifying our monarchy for its past losses by incorporating Polish Prussia with my old provinces. This acquisition was one of the most important we could make, because it joined Pommern to East Prussia, and because, rendering us masters of the Weichsel River, we gained the double advantage of being able to defend that kingdom (East Prussia), and to draw considerable tolls from the Weichsel, as all the trade of Poland goes by that river."

The region thus annexed to Prussia was in a deplorable state of destitution and wretchedness. Most of the towns were in ruins. War had so

desolated the land that thousands of the people were living in the cellars of their demolished houses.

"The country people hardly knew such a thing as bread. Many had never tasted such a delicacy. Few villages possessed an oven. A weaving-loom was rare; a spinning-wheel unknown. The main article of furniture in this bare scene of squalor was a crucifix, and a vessel of holy water under it. It was a desolate land, without discipline, without law, without a master. On nine thousand English square miles lived five hundred thousand souls—not fifty-five to the square mile."[188]

With extraordinary energy and sagacity Frederick set about developing the resources of his new acquisition. Houses were built. Villages rose as by magic. Marshes were drained. Emigrants, in large numbers, mechanics and farmers, were transported to the new lands. Canals were dug. Roads were improved, and new ones opened. One hundred and eighty-seven school-masters were sent into the country. Every where there was plowing, ditching, building.

"As Frederick's seven years' struggle of war may be called superhuman, so was there also, in his present labor of peace, something enormous, which appeared to his contemporaries almost preternatural, at times inhuman. It was grand, but also terrible, that the success of the whole was to him, at all moments, the one thing to be striven after. The comfort of the individual was of no concern at all."[189]

The weal or woe of a single human polyp was, in the view of Frederick, entirely unimportant in comparison with the great enterprises he was ambitious of achieving. For this dismemberment of

Poland Frederick was severely assailed in a book entitled “Polish Dialogues.” In answer to a letter from Voltaire, he wrote, under date of March 2, 1775:

“The ‘Polish Dialogues’ you speak of are not known to me. I think of such satires with Epictetus, ‘If they tell any truth of thee, correct thyself. If they are lies, laugh at them.’ I have learned, with years, to become a steady coach-horse. I do my stage like a diligent roadster, and pay no heed to the little dogs that will bark by the way.”

CHAPTER XXXV.

LIFE'S CLOSING SCENES.

Character of the Crown Prince.—Stratagem of the Emperor Joseph II.—Death of the Empress Catharine of Russia.—Matrimonial Alliance of Russia and Prussia.—Death of the King of Bavaria.—Attempt to Annex Bavaria to Austria.—Unexpected Energy of Frederick.—Court Intrigues.—Preparations for War. —Address to the Troops.—Declaration of War.—Terror in Vienna.—Irritability of Frederick.—Death of Voltaire.—Unjust Condemnation of the Judges.—Death of Maria Theresa.—Anecdote.—The King's Fondness for Children.—His Fault-finding Spirit.—The King's Appearance.—The Last Review.—Statement of Mirabeau.—Anecdote related by Dr. Moore.—Frederick's Fondness for Dogs.—Increasing Weakness. —Unchanging Obduracy toward the Queen.—The Dying Scene.

TOWARD the end of the year 1775 the king had an unusually severe attack of the gout. It was erroneously reported that it was a dangerous attack of the dropsy, and that he was manifestly drawing near to his end. The Crown Prince, who was to succeed him, was a man of very little character. The Emperor of Germany, Joseph II., thought the death of Frederick would present him an opportunity of regaining Silesia for Austria. The Austrian army was immediately put in motion and hurried to the

frontiers of Silesia, to seize the province the moment the king should expire. This was openly done, and noised abroad. Much to the disappointment of the emperor, the king got well. Amidst much ridicule, the troops returned to their old quarters.[190]

Frederick was probably not surprised at this act on the part of the emperor. He undoubtedly had sufficient candor to admit that it was exactly what he should have done under similar circumstances.

Catharine of Russia had a son, Paul, her heir to the throne. It so chanced that she died just at the time Prince Henry of Prussia was visiting St. Petersburg. Through his agency Paul was induced to take as a second wife a niece of Frederick's, the eldest daughter of Eugene of Würtemberg. Thus the ties between Russia and Prussia were still more strengthened, so far as matrimonial alliances could strengthen them. The wedding took place in Berlin on the 18th of October, 1776.

Several years now passed away with nothing specially worthy of record. Frederick did not grow more amiable as he advanced in years. Though Frederick was often unreasonable, petulant, and unjust, and would seldom admit that he had been in the wrong, however clear the case, it can not be doubted that it was his general and earnest desire that justice should be exercised in all his courts.

In September, 1777, the King of Bavaria died. The emperor thought it a good opportunity to annex Bavaria to Austria. "Do but look on the map," says Carlyle, in his peculiar style of thought and expression: "you would say, Austria without Bavaria is like a human figure with its belly belonging to somebody else. Bavaria is the trunk or belly of the Austrian dominions, shutting off all the limbs of

them each from the other; making for central part a huge chasm."

France would hardly object, since she was exhausted with long wars. England was busy in the struggle with her North American colonies. Russia was at war with the Turks. There was no power to be feared but Prussia.

"Frederick," said Kaunitz, "is old and broken. He can not live long. Having suffered so much, he has an absolute horror of war. We need not fear that he will again put his armies in motion."

But no sooner did Frederick get an intimation that Austria was contemplating this enlargement of her domains than he roused himself to prevent it with all the vigor of his earlier years. It was a very delicate matter; for Charles Theodore, the elector, and his nephew August Christian, heir to the electorate, a young gentleman of very illustrious pedigree, but of a very slender purse, had both been bribed by Austria secretly to co-operate in the movement. The reader will be interested in Carlyle's account, slightly abbreviated, of Frederick's skill in diplomacy:

"Heir is a gallant enough young gentleman. Frederick judges that he probably will have haggled to sign any Austrian convention for dismemberment of Baiern, and that he will start into life upon it so soon as he sees hope.

"'A messenger to him,' thinks Frederick; 'a messenger instantly; and who?' For that clearly is the first thing. And a delicate thing it is; requiring to be done in profoundest secrecy, by hint and innuendo rather than speech—by somebody in a cloak of darkness, who is of adroit quality, and was never

heard of in diplomatic circles before, not to be suspected of having business of mine on hand.

"Frederick bethinks him that in a late visit to Weimar he had noticed, for his fine qualities, a young gentleman named Görtz, late tutor to the young Duke Karl August, a wise, firm, adroit-looking young gentleman, who was farther interesting as brother to Lieutenant General Von Görtz, a respectable soldier of Frederick's. Ex-tutor at Weimar, we say, and idle for the moment; hanging about court there, till he should find a new function.

"Of this ex-tutor Frederick bethinks him; and in the course of that same day—for there is no delay—Frederick, who is at Berlin, beckons General Görtz to come over to him from Potsdam instantly.

"'Hither this evening, and in all privacy meet me in the palace at such an hour' (hour of midnight or thereby); which of course Görtz, duly invisible to mankind, does. Frederick explains: an errand to München; perfectly secret, for the moment, and requiring great delicacy and address; perhaps not without risk, a timorous man might say: will your brother go for me, think you? Görtz thinks he will.

"'Here is his instruction, if so,' adds the king, handing him an autograph of the necessary outline of procedure—not signed, nor with any credential, or even specific address, lest accident happen. 'Adieu, then, herr general lieutenant; rule is, shoes of swiftness, cloak of darkness: adieu!'

"And Görtz senior is off on the instant, careering toward Weimar, where he finds Görtz junior, and makes known his errand. Görtz junior stares in the natural astonishment; but, after some intense brief deliberation, becomes affirmative, and in a minimum

of time is ready and on the road.

"Görtz junior proved to have been an excellent choice on the king's part, and came to good promotion afterward by his conduct in this affair. Görtz junior started for München on the instant, masked utterly, or his business masked, from profane eyes; saw this person, saw that, and glided swiftly about, swiftly and with sure aim; and speedily kindled the matter, and had smoke rising in various points. And before January was out, saw the Reisch-Diet, at Regensburg, much more the general gazetteerage every where, seized of this affair, and thrown into paroxysms at the size and complexion of it: saw, in fact, a world getting into flame—kindled by whom or what nobody could guess for a long time to come. Görtz had great running about in his cloak of darkness, and showed abundant talent of the kind needed. A pushing, clear-eyed, stout-hearted man; much cleverness and sureness in what he did and forebore to do. His adventures were manifold; he had much traveling about: was at Regensburg, at Mannheim; saw many persons whom he had to judge of on the instant, and speak frankly to, or speak darkly, or speak nothing; and he made no mistake.

"We can not afford the least narrative of Görtz and his courses: imagination, from a few traits, will sufficiently conceive them. He had gone first to Karl Theodor's minister: 'Dead to it, I fear; has already signed?' Alas! yes. Upon which to Zweibrück, the heir's minister, whom his master had distinctly ordered to sign, but who, at his own peril, gallant man, delayed, remonstrated, had not yet done it; and was able to answer:

"'Alive to it, he? Yes, with a witness, were there hope in the world!' which threw Görtz upon instant

gallop toward Zweibrück Schloss in search of said heir, the young Duke August Christian; who, however, had left in the interim (summoned by his uncle, on Austrian urgency, to consent along with him), but whom Görtz, by dexterity and intuition of symptoms, caught up by the road, with what a mutual joy! As had been expected, August Christian, on sight of Görtz, with an armed Frederick looming in the distance, took at once into new courses and activities. From him no consent now; far other: treaty with Frederick; flat refusal ever to consent: application to the Reich, application even to France, and whatever a gallant young fellow could do.

"Frederick was in very weak health in these months; still considered by the gazetteers to be dying. But it appears he is not yet too weak for taking, on the instant necessary, a world-important resolution; and of being on the road with it, to this issue or to that, at full speed before the day closed. 'Desist, good neighbor, I beseech you. You must desist, and even you shall:' this resolution was entirely his own, as were the equally prompt arrangements he contrived for executing it, should hard come to hard, and Austria prefer war to doing justice."[191]

While pushing these intrigues of diplomacy, Frederick was equally busy in marshaling his armies, that the sword might contribute its energies to the enforcement of his demands. One hundred thousand troops were assembled in Berlin, in the highest state of discipline and equipment, ready to march at a moment's warning.

On Sunday, April 5, 1778, Frederick reviewed these troops, and addressed his officers in a speech, which was published in the newspapers to inform

Austria what she had to expect. Eager as Frederick was to enlarge his own dominions, he was by no means disposed to grant the same privilege to other and rival nations. The address of Frederick to his officers was in reality a declaration to the Austrian court.

"Gentlemen," said Frederick, "I have assembled you here for a public object. Most of you, like myself, have often been in arms with one another, and are grown gray in the service of our country. To all of us is well known in what dangers, toils, and renown we have been fellow-sharers. I doubt not in the least that all of you, as myself, have a horror of bloodshed; but the danger which now threatens our countries not only renders it a duty, but puts us in the absolute necessity, to adopt the quickest and most effectual means for dissipating at the right time the storm which threatens to break out upon us.

"I depend with complete confidence on your soldierly and patriotic zeal, which is already well and gloriously known to me, and which, while I live, I will acknowledge with the heartiest satisfaction. Before all things I recommend to you, and prescribe as your most sacred duty, that in every situation you exercise humanity on unarmed enemies. In this respect, let there be the strictest discipline kept among those under you.

"To travel with the pomp of a king is not among my wishes, and all of you are aware that I have no pleasure in rich field-furniture; but my increasing age, and the weakness it brings, render me incapable of riding as I did in my youth. I shall, therefore, be obliged to make use of a post-chaise in times of marching, and all of you have liberty to do the same. But on the day of battle you shall see me on

horseback; and there, also, I hope my generals will follow that example."

Kaunitz, the Austrian prime minister, was by no means prepared for this decisive action. In less than a week Frederick had one hundred thousand soldiers on the frontiers. Austria had not ten thousand there to meet them. Kaunitz, quite alarmed, assumed a supplicatory tone, and called for negotiation.

"Must there be war?" he said. "I am your majesty's friend. Can we not, in mutual concession, find agreement?"

The result was a congress of three persons, two Prussians and one Austrian, which congress met at Berlin on the 24th of May, 1778. For two months they deliberated. The Austrians improved the delay in making very vigorous preparations for war. Frederick really wished to avoid the war, for he had seen enough of the woes of battle. They could come to no agreement.

On the 3d of July Frederick issued his declaration of war. On that very day his solid battalions, one hundred thousand strong, with menacing banners and defiant bugle-notes, crossed the border, and encamped on Bohemian ground. At the same moment, the king's brother, Prince Henry, with another army of one hundred thousand men, commenced a march from the west to co-operate in an impetuous rush upon Vienna. These tidings caused the utmost consternation in the Austrian capital. An eye-witness writes:

"The terror in Vienna was dreadful. I will not attempt to describe the dismay the tidings excited among all ranks of people. Maria Theresa, trembling for her two sons who were in the army, immediately

dispatched an autograph letter to Frederick with new proposals for a negotiation."

Frederick had not grown old gracefully. He was domineering, soured, and irritable, finding fault with every body and every thing. As his troops were getting into camp at Jaromirtz on the 8th of July, the king, weary with riding, threw himself upon the ground for a little rest, his adjutants being near him. A young officer was riding by. Frederick beckoned to him, and wrote, with his pencil, an order of not the slightest importance, and said to the officer, aloud, in the hearing of all, purposely to wound their feelings,

"Here, take that order to General Lossow, and tell him that he is not to take it ill that I trouble him, as I have none in my suite that can do any thing." It often seemed to give Frederick pleasure, and never pain, to wound the feelings of others.

"On arriving with his column," writes General Schmettau, "where the officer—a perfectly skillful man—had marked out the camp, the king would lift his spy-glass, gaze to right and left, riding round the place at perhaps a hundred yards distance, and begin, 'Look here, sir, what a botching you have made of it again!'

"And then, grumbling and blaming, would alter the camp till it was all out of rule, and then say,

"'See there; that is the way to mark out camps.'"[192]

Through the efforts of Maria Theresa there was another brief conference, but it amounted to nothing. Neither party wished for war. But Austria craved the annexation of Bavaria, and Frederick was determined that Austria should not thus be enlarged. Thus the summer passed away in unavailing diplomacy and in

equally unavailing military manœuvrings. While engaged in these adventures, Frederick received the tidings of the death of Voltaire, who breathed his last on the 20th of May, 1778. The soul of Frederick was too much seared by life's stern conflicts to allow him to manifest, or probably to feel, any emotion on the occasion. He, however, wrote a eulogy upon the renowned *littérateur*, which, though written by a royal pen, attracted but little attention.

During the winter Russia and France interposed in behalf of peace. The belligerents agreed to submit the question to their decision. Austria was permitted to take a small slice of Bavaria, and for a time the horrors of war were averted.

Soon after this an event occurred very characteristic of the king—an event which conspicuously displayed both his good and bad qualities. A miller was engaged in a lawsuit against a nobleman. The decree of the court, after a very careful examination, was unanimously in favor of the nobleman; the king, who had impulsively formed a different opinion of the case, was greatly exasperated. He summoned the four judges before him, denounced them in the severest terms of vituperation, would listen to no defense, and dismissed them angrily from office.

"May a miller," he exclaimed, fiercely, "who has no water, and consequently can not grind, have his mill taken from him? Is that just? Here is a nobleman wishing to make a fish-pond. To get more water for his pond, he has a ditch dug to draw into it a small stream which drives a water-mill. Thereby the miller loses his water, and can not grind. Yet, in spite of this, it is pretended that the miller shall pay his rent, quite the same as at the time when he had full water

for his mill. Of course he can not pay his rent. His incomings are gone.

"And what does the court of Cüstrin do? It orders the mill to be sold, that the nobleman may have his rent! Go you, sir," addressing the grand chancellor, "about your business, this instant. Your successor is appointed; with you I have nothing more to do." The other three were assailed in the same way, but still more vehemently, as the king's wrath flamed higher and higher. "Out of my sight," he exclaimed at last; "I will make an example of you which shall be remembered."



CONDEMNATION OF THE JUDGES.

The next day, December 11, 1779, the king issued the following protocol in the newspapers:

“The king’s desire always was and is that every body, be he high or low, rich or poor, get prompt justice. Wherefore, in respect to this most unjust sentence against the miller Arnold, pronounced in the Neumark, and confirmed here in Berlin, his majesty will establish an emphatic example, to the end that all the courts of justice in the king’s

provinces may take warning thereby, and not commit the like glaring unjust acts. For let them bear in mind that the least peasant, yea, what is still more, that even a beggar, is, no less than his majesty, a human being, and one to whom due justice must be meted out. All men being equal before the law, if it is a prince complaining against a peasant, or *vice versa*, the prince is the same as the peasant before the law.

"Let the courts take this for their rule; and whenever they do not carry out justice in a straightforward manner, without any regard of person and rank, they shall have to answer to his majesty for it."

The discarded judges were arrested, imprisoned for a year, and fined a sum of money equal to the supposed loss of the miller. In this case the judges had heard both sides of the question, and the king but one side. The question had been justly decided. The case was so clear that the new judges appointed by the king, being conscientious men, could not refrain from sustaining the verdict. Still the king, who would never admit that he was in the wrong, ordered no redress for those who had thus suffered for righteousness sake. After Frederick's death the court compelled the miller to refund the money which had been so unjustly extorted for damages.

On the 29th of November, 1780, Maria Theresa died. The extraordinary character which she had developed through life was equally manifested in the hour of death. She died of congestion of the lungs, which created a painful and suffocating difficulty of breathing. Her struggles for breath rendered it impossible for her to lie upon the bed. Bolstered in her chair, she leaned her head back as if inclined to

sleep.

“Will your majesty sleep, then?” inquired an attendant.

“No,” the empress replied; “I could sleep, but I must not. Death is too near. He must not steal upon me. These fifteen years I have been making ready for him; I will meet him awake.”

For fifteen years she had been a mourning widow. Her husband had died on the 18th of August. The 18th day of every month had since then been a day of solitary prayer. On the 18th of every August she descended into the tomb, and sat for a season engaged in prayer by the side of the mouldering remains of her spouse.



MARIA THERESA AT THE TOMB OF HER HUSBAND.

The Emperor Joseph had been embarrassed in his ambitious plans by the conscientious scruples of his mother. He now entered into a secret alliance with the Czarina Catharine, by which he engaged to assist her in her advance to Constantinople, while she, in her turn, was to aid him in his encroachments and annexations to establish an empire in the West as magnificent as the czarina hoped to establish in the East.

Delighted with this plan, and sanguine in the hope of its successful accomplishment, the czarina named her next grandson Constantine. Austria and Russia thus became allied, with all their sympathies

hostile to Frederick. Old age and infirmities were stealing upon the king apace. Among the well-authenticated anecdotes related of him, the following is given by Carlyle:

"Loss of time was one of the losses Frederick could least stand. In visits, even from his brothers and sisters, which were always by his own express invitation, he would say some morning (call it Tuesday morning), 'You are going on Wednesday, I am sorry to hear' (what *you* never heard before). 'Alas! your majesty, we must.' 'Well, I am sorry; but I will lay no constraint on you. Pleasant moments can not last forever.' This trait is in the anecdote-books; but its authenticity does not rest on that uncertain basis. Singularly enough, it comes to me individually, by two clear stages, from Frederick's sister, the Duchess of Brunswick, who, if any body, would know it well."

We have often spoken of the entire neglect with which the king treated his virtuous and amiable queen. Preuss relates the following incident:

"When the king, after the Seven Years' War, now and then in carnival season dined with the queen in her apartments, he usually said not a word to her. He merely, on entering, on sitting down at table, and leaving it, made the customary bows, and sat opposite to her. Once the queen was ill of gout. The table was in her apartments, but she was not there. She sat in an easy-chair in the drawing-room. On this occasion the king stepped up to the queen and inquired about her health. The circumstance occasioned among the company present, and all over the town, as the news spread, great wonder and sympathy. This is probably the last time he ever spoke to her."[193]

"The king was fond of children; he liked to have his grand-nephews about him. One day, while the king sat at work in his cabinet, the younger of the two, a boy of eight or nine, was playing ball about the room, and knocked it once and again into the king's writing operation, who twice or oftener flung it back to him, but next time put it in his pocket, and went on. 'Please your majesty, give it me back,' begged the boy, and again begged: majesty took no notice; continued writing. Till at length came, in the tone of indignation, 'Will your majesty give me my ball, then?' The king looked up; found the little Hohenzollern planted firm, hands on haunches, and wearing quite a peremptory air. 'Thou art a brave little fellow. They won't get Silesia out of thee?' cried he, laughing, and flinging him his ball."[194]

The fault-finding character of the king, and his intense devotion to perfecting his army, both increased with his advancing years. After one of his reviews of the troops in Silesia, in the year 1784, he wrote in the following severe strain to the commanding general:

"Potsdam, September 7, 1784.

"MY DEAR GENERAL,—While in Silesia I mentioned to you, and will now repeat in writing, that my army in Silesia was at no time so bad as at present. Were I to make shoemakers or tailors into generals, the regiments could not be worse. Regiment Thadden is not fit to be the most insignificant militia battalion of a Prussian army. Of the regiment Erlach, the men are so spoiled by smuggling they have no resemblance to soldiers; Keller is like a heap of undrilled boors; Hager has a miserable commander; and your own regiment is very mediocre. Only with Graf Von Anhalt, with

Wendessen, and Markgraf Heinrich could I be content. See you, that is the state I found the regiments in, one after one. I will now speak of their manœuvring.

"Schwartz, at Neisse, made the unpardonable mistake of not sufficiently besetting the height on the left wing; had it been serious, the battle had been lost. At Breslau, Erlach, instead of covering the army by seizing the heights, marched off with his division straight as a row of cabbages into that defile; whereby, had it been earnest, the enemy's cavalry would have cut down our infantry, and the fight was gone.

"It is not my purpose to lose battles by the base conduct of my generals; wherefore I hereby appoint that you, next year, if I be alive, assemble the army between Breslau and Ohlau; for four days before I arrive in your camp, carefully manœuvre with the ignorant generals, and teach them what their duty is. Regiment Von Arnim and regiment Von Kanitz are to act the enemy; and whoever does not then fulfill his duty shall go to court-martial; for I should think it a shame of any country to keep such people, who trouble themselves so little about their business."

The king seemed to think it effeminate and a disgrace to him as a soldier ever to appear in a carriage. He never *drove*, but constantly *rode* from Berlin to Potsdam. In the winter of 1785, when he was quite feeble, he wished to go from Sans Souci, which was exposed to bleak winds, and where they had only hearth fires, to more comfortable winter quarters in the new palace. The weather was stormy. After waiting a few days for such a change as would enable him to go on horseback, and the cold and wind increasing, he was taken over in a sedan-chair

in the night, when no one could see him.

In August, 1785, the king again visited Silesia to review his troops. A private letter, quoted by Carlyle, gives an interesting view of his appearance at the time:

"He passed through Hirschberg on the 18th of August. A concourse of many thousands had been waiting for him several hours. Outriders came at last; then he himself, the unique; and, with the liveliest expression of reverence and love, all eyes were directed on one point. I can not describe to you my feelings, which, of course, were those of every body, to see him, the aged king; in his weak hand the hat; in those grand eyes such a fatherly benignity of look over the vast crowd that encircled his carriage, and rolled tide-like, accompanying it. Looking round, I saw in various eyes a tear trembling.

"His affability, his kindliness, to whoever had the honor of speech with this great king, who shall describe it! After talking a good while with the merchants' deputation from the hill country, he said, 'Is there any thing more, then, from any body?' Upon which the president stepped forward and said, 'The burned-out inhabitants of Greiffenberg have charged me to express once more their most submissive gratitude for the gracious help in rebuilding; their word of thanks is indeed of no importance; but they daily pray God to reward such royal beneficence.' The king was visibly affected, and said, 'You don't need to thank me; when my subjects fall into misfortune, it is my duty to help them up again; for that reason am I here.'"

On Monday, the 22d of August, the great review commenced near Strehlen. It lasted four days. All the country mansions around were filled with strangers

who had come to witness the spectacle.

“The sure fact, and the forever memorable, is that on Wednesday, the third day of it, from four in the morning, when the manœuvres began, till well after ten o’clock, when they ended, there was rain like Noah’s; rain falling as from buckets and water-spouts; and that Frederick, so intent upon his business, paid not the slightest regard to it, but rode about, intensely inspecting, in lynx-eyed watchfulness of every thing, as if no rain had been there. Was not at the pains even to put on his cloak. Six hours of such down-pour; and a weakly old man of seventy-three past! Of course he was wetted to the bone. On returning to head-quarters, his boots were found full of water; ‘when pulled off, it came pouring from them like a pair of pails.’”[195]



THE LAST REVIEW.

Lafayette, Lord Cornwallis, and the Duke of York were his guests at the dinner-table that day. The king suffered from his exposure, was very feverish, and at an early hour went to bed. The next day he completed his review; and the next day "went—round by Neisse, inspection not to be omitted there, though it doubles the distance—to Brieg, a drive of eighty miles, inspection work included."[196]

From this exhausting journey for so old a man the king returned to Potsdam through a series of state dinners, balls, and illuminations. On the night of the 18th of September he was awoke by a very severe fit of suffocation. It was some time before he

could get any relief, and it was thought that he was dying. The next day gout set in severely. This was followed by dropsy. The king suffered severely through the winter. There is no royal road through the sick-chamber to the tomb. The weary months of pain and languor came and went. The renowned Mirabeau visited the king in his sick-chamber on the 17th of April, 1786. He writes:

"My dialogue with the king was very lively; but the king was in such suffering, and so straitened for breath, I was myself anxious to shorten it. That same evening I traveled on."

That same evening Marie Antoinette wrote from Versailles to her sister Christine at Brussels:

"The King of Prussia is thought to be dying. I am weary of the political discussions on this subject as to what effects his death must produce. He is better at this moment, but so weak he can not resist long. Physique is gone. But his force and energy of soul, they say, have often supported him, and in desperate crises have even seemed to increase. Liking to him I never had. His ostentatious immorality has much hurt public virtue, and there have been related to me barbarities which excite horror.

"He has done us all a great deal of ill. He has been king for his own country, but a trouble-feast for those about him—setting up to be the arbiter of Europe, always assailing his neighbors, and making them pay the expense. As daughters of Maria Theresa, it is impossible we can regret him; nor is it the court of France that will make his funeral oration."[197]

The Prince of Ligne, a very accomplished courtier, about this time visited the sick and dying

king. During his brief stay he dined daily with the king, and spent his evenings with him. In an interesting account which he gives of these interviews, he writes:

"Daily for five hours the universality of his conversation completed my enchantment at his powers. The arts, war, medicine, literature, religion, philosophy, morality, history, and legislation passed in review by turns. The great times of Augustus and Louis XIV.; the good society among the Romans, the Greeks, and the French; the chivalry of Francis I.; the valor of Henry IV.; the revival of letters, and their changes since Leo X.; anecdotes of men of talent of former days, and their errors; the eccentricities of Voltaire; the sensitive vanity of Maupertuis; the agreeableness of Algarotti; the wit of Jordan; the hypochondriacism of the Marquis D'Argens, whom the king used to induce to keep his bed for four-and-twenty hours by merely telling him he looked ill—and what not besides? All that could be said of the most varied and agreeable kind was what came from him, in a gentle tone of voice, rather low, and very agreeable from his manner of moving his lips, which possessed an inexpressible grace."[198]

Dr. Moore gives the following account of a surprising scene, considering that the king was an infirm and suffering man seventy-three years of age:

"A few days ago I happened to take a very early walk about a mile from Potsdam, and seeing some soldiers under arms in a field at a small distance from the road, I went toward them. An officer on horseback, whom I took to be the major, for he gave the word of command, was uncommonly active, and often rode among the ranks to reprimand or instruct the common men. When I came nearer I was much

surprised to find that this was the king himself.

"He had his sword drawn, and continued to exercise the corps for an hour after. He made them wheel, march, form the square, and fire by divisions and in platoons, observing all their motions with infinite attention; and, on account of some blunder, put two officers of the Prince of Prussia's regiment in arrest. In short, he seemed to exert himself with all the spirit of a young officer eager to attract the notice of his general by uncommon alertness."[199]



FREDERICK AND HIS DOGS.

Frederick was very fond of dogs. This was one of his earliest passions, and it continued until the end of

his life. He almost invariably had five or six Italian greyhounds about him, leaping upon the chairs, and sleeping upon the sofas in his room. Dr. Zimmermann describes them as placed on blue satin chairs and couches near the king's arm-chair, and says that when Frederick, during his last illness, used to sit on his terrace at Sans Souci in order to enjoy the sun, a chair was always placed by his side, which was occupied by one of his dogs. He fed them himself, took the greatest possible care of them when they were sick, and when they died buried them in the gardens of Sans Souci. The traveler may still see their tombs—flat stones with the names of the dogs beneath engraved upon them—at each end of the terrace of Sans Souci, in front of the palace.

"The king was accustomed to pass his leisure moments in playing with them, and the room where he sat was strewed with leather balls with which they amused themselves. As they were all much indulged, though there was always one especial favorite, they used to tear the damask covers of the chairs in the king's apartment, and gnaw and otherwise injure the furniture. This he permitted without rebuke, and used only to say,

"'My dogs destroy my chairs; but how can I help it? And if I were to have them mended to-day, they would be torn again to-morrow. So I suppose I must bear with the inconvenience. After all, a Marquise De Pompadour would cost me a great deal more, and would neither be as attached nor as faithful.'"

One of Frederick's dogs, Biche, has attained almost historic celebrity. We can not vouch for the authenticity of the anecdote, but it is stated that the king took Biche with him on the campaign of 1745. One day the king, advancing on a reconnoissance,

was surprised and pursued by a large number of Austrians. He took refuge under a bridge, and, wrapping Biche in his cloak, held him close to his breast. The sagacious animal seemed fully conscious of the peril of his master. Though of a very nervous temperament, and generally noisy and disposed to bark at the slightest disturbance, he remained perfectly quiet until the Austrians had passed.

At the battle of Sohr, Biche was taken captive with the king's baggage. The animal manifested so much joy upon being restored to its master that the king's eyes were flooded with tears.

On the 4th of July the king rode out for the last time. Not long after, the horse was again brought to the door, but the king found himself too weak to mount. Still, while in this state of extreme debility and pain, he conducted the affairs of state with the most extraordinary energy and precision. The minutest questions received his attention, and every branch of business was prosecuted with as much care and perfection as in his best days.

"He saw his ministers, saw all who had business with him, many who had little; and in the sore coil of bodily miseries, as Hertzberg observed with wonder, never was the king's intellect clearer, or his judgment more just and decisive. Of his disease, except to the doctors, he spoke no word to any body.

"The body of Frederick is a ruin, but his soul is still here, and receives his friends and his tasks as formerly. Asthma, dropsy, erysipelas, continual want of sleep; for many months past he has not been in bed, but sits day and night in an easy-chair, unable to get breath except in that posture. He said one morning to somebody entering, 'If you happened to want a night-watcher, I could suit you well.'"[200]

There is something truly sublime in the devotion with which he, in disregard of sleeplessness, exhaustion, and pain, gave himself to work. His three clerks were summoned to his room each morning at four o'clock.

"My situation forces me," he said, "to give them this trouble, which they will not have to suffer long. My life is on the decline. The time which I still have belongs not to me, but to the state."

He conversed cheerfully upon literature, history, and the common topics of the day. But he seemed studiously to avoid any allusion to God, to the subject of religion, or to death. He had from his early days very emphatically expressed his disbelief in any God who took an interest in the affairs of men. Throughout his whole life he had abstained from any recognition of such a God by any known acts of prayer or worship. Still Mr. Carlyle writes:

"From of old, life has been infinitely contemptible to him. In death, I think, he has neither fear nor hope. Atheism, truly, he never could abide: to him, as to all of us, it was flatly inconceivable that intellect, moral emotion, could have been put into *him* by an Entity that had none of its own. But there, pretty much, his Theism seems to have stopped. Instinctively; too, he believed, no man more firmly, that Right alone has ultimately any strength in this world: ultimately, yes; but for him and his poor brief interests, what good was it? Hope for himself in divine Justice, in divine Providence, I think he had not practically any: that the unfathomable Demiurgus should concern himself with such a set of paltry, ill-given animalcules as one's self and mankind are, this also, as we have often noticed, is in the main incredible to him.

"Inarticulate notions, fancies, transient aspirations, he might have, in the background of his mind. One day, sitting for a while out of doors, gazing into the sun, he was heard to murmur, 'Perhaps I shall be nearer thee soon;' and, indeed, nobody knows what his thoughts were in these final months. There is traceable only a complete superiority to fear and hope; in parts, too, are half glimpses of a great motionless interior lake of sorrow, sadder than any tears or complainings, which are altogether wanting to it."

Dr. Zimmermann, whose work on Solitude had given him some renown, had been sent for to administer to the illustrious patient. His prescriptions were of no avail. On the 10th of August, 1786, Frederick wrote to his sister, the Duchess Dowager of Brunswick:

> "MY ADORABLE SISTER,—The Hanover doctor has wished to make himself important with you, my good sister; but the truth is, he has been of no use to me. The old must give place to the young, that each generation may find room clear for it; and life, if we examine strictly what its course is, consists in seeing one's fellow-creatures die and be born. In the mean while, I have felt myself a little easier for the last day or two. My heart remains inviolably attached to you, my good sister. With the highest consideration, my adorable sister, your faithful brother and servant,
>
> FREDERICK."

The last letter which it is supposed that he wrote was the following cold epistle to his excellent wife, whom, through a long life, he had treated with such cruel neglect:

"MADAM,—I am much obliged by the wishes you deign to form; but a heavy fever I have taken hinders me from answering you."

Scarcely any thing can be more sad than the record of the last days and hours of this extraordinary man. Few of the children of Adam have passed a more joyless life. Few have gone down to a grave shrouded with deeper gloom. None of those Christian hopes which so often alleviate pain, and take from death its sting, cheered his dying chamber. To him the grave was but the portal to the abyss of annihilation.

Days of pain and nights of sleeplessness were his portion. A hard cough racked his frame. His strength failed him. Ulcerous sores broke out upon various parts of his body. A constant oppression at his chest rendered it impossible for him to lie down. Gout tortured him. His passage to the grave led through eighteen months of constant suffering. Dr. Zimmermann, in his diary of the 2d of August, writes:

"The king is very chilly, and is always enveloped in pelisses, and covered with feather-beds. He has not been in bed for six weeks, but sleeps in his chair for a considerable time together, and always turned to the right side. The dropsical swelling augments. He sees it, but will not perceive what it is, or at least will not appear to do so, but talks as if it were a swelling accompanying convalescence, and proceeding from previous weakness. He is determined not to die if violent remedies can save him, but to submit to punctures and incisions to draw off the water."

Again, on the 8th, Dr. Zimmermann wrote: "The king is extraordinarily ill. On the 4th erysipelas

appeared on the leg. This announces bursting and mortification. He has much oppression, and the smell of the wound is very bad."

On the 15th, after a restless night, he did not wake until eleven o'clock in the morning. For a short time he seemed confused. He then summoned his generals and secretaries, and gave his orders with all his wonted precision. He then called in his three clerks and dictated to them upon various subjects. His directions to an embassador, who was about leaving, filled four quarto pages.

As night came on he fell into what may be called the death-sleep. His breathing was painful and stertorous; his mind was wandering in delirious dreams; his voice became inarticulate. At a moment of returning consciousness he tried several times in vain to give some utterance to his thoughts. Then, with a despairing expression of countenance, he sank back upon his pillow. Fever flushed his cheeks, and his eyes assumed some of their wonted fire. Thus the dying hours were prolonged, as the friendless monarch, surrounded by respectful attendants, slowly descended to the grave.

His feet and legs became cold. Death was stealing its way toward the vitals. About nine o'clock Wednesday evening a painful cough commenced, with difficulty of breathing, and an ominous rattle in the throat. One of his dogs sat by his bedside, and shivered with cold; the king made a sign for them to throw a quilt over it.

Another severe fit of coughing ensued, and the king, having with difficulty got rid of the phlegm, said, "The mountain is passed; we shall be better now." These were his last words. The expiring monarch sat in his chair, but in a state of such

extreme weakness that he was continually sinking down, with his chest and neck so bent forward that breathing was almost impossible. One of his faithful valets took the king upon his knee and placed his left arm around his waist, while the king threw his right arm around the valet's neck.

It was midnight. "Within doors all is silence; around it the dark earth is silent, above it the silent stars." Thus for two hours the attendant sat motionless, holding the dying king. Not a word was spoken; no sound could be heard but the painful breathing which precedes death.

At just twenty minutes past two o'clock the breathing ceased, the spirit took its flight, and the lifeless body alone remained. Life's great battle was ended, and the soul of the monarch ascended to that dread tribunal where prince and peasant must alike answer for all the deeds done in the body. It was the 17th of August, 1786. The king had reigned forty-six years, and had lived seventy-six years, six months, and twenty-four days.

One clause in the king's will was judiciously disregarded. As a last mark of his contempt for his own species, Frederick had directed that he should be buried at Sans Souci by the side of his dogs.

In the king's will, the only reference to any future which might be before him was the following:

"After having restored peace to my kingdom; after having conquered countries, raised a victorious army, and filled my treasury; after having established a good administration throughout my dominions; after having made my enemies tremble, I resign, without regret, this breath of life to Nature."

He left a small sum for the support of his

amiable, blameless, and neglected queen, saying, “She never gave me the least uneasiness during my whole reign, and she merits every attention and respect for her many and unshaken virtues.”

“All next day the body lay in state in the palace; thousands crowding, from Berlin and the other environs, to see that face for the last time. Wasted, worn, but beautiful in death, with the thin gray hair parted into locks, and slightly powdered.”[201]

At eight o’clock in the evening his body was borne, accompanied by a battalion of the Guards, to Potsdam; eight horses drew the hearse. An immense concourse, in silence and sadness, filled the streets. He was buried in a small chapel in the church of the garrison at Potsdam. There the remains of Frederick and his father repose side by side.

“Life’s labor done, securely laid
In this, their last retreat:
Unheeded o’er their silent dust
The storms of life shall beat.”

FOOTNOTES

[1] "He got no improvement in breeding, as we intimated; none at all: fought, on the contrary, with his young cousin, afterward our George II., a boy twice his age, though of weaker bone, and gave him a bloody nose, to the scandal and consternation of the French Protestant gentlemen and court dames in their stiff silks. 'Ahee your electoral highness!' This had been a rough unruly boy from the first discovery of him."—CARLYLE.

[2] *Geständnisse eines Œsterreichischen Veterans*, i., p. 64.

[3] "When his majesty took a walk, every human being fled before him, as if a tiger had broken loose from a menagerie. If he met a lady in the street, he gave her a kick, and told her to go home and mind her brats. If he saw a clergyman staring at the soldiers, he admonished the reverend gentleman to betake himself to study and prayer, and enforced this pious advice by a sound caning administered on the spot. But it was in his own house that he was most unreasonable and ferocious. His palace was hell, and he the most execrable of fiends."—MACAULAY.

[4] "It was the queen-mother who encouraged the prince in his favorite amusement, and who engaged musicians for his service. But so necessary was secrecy in all these negotiations that if the king, his father, had discovered he was disobeyed, all these sons of Apollo would have incurred the danger of being hanged. The prince frequently took occasion to meet his musicians a-hunting, and had his concerts either in a forest or cavern."—BURNEY, *Present State of Music in Germany*, ii., 139.

[5] "One of the preceptors ventured to read the 'Golden Bull' in the original Latin with the prince royal. Frederick William entered the room, and broke out, in his usual kingly style, 'Rascal, what are you at there?' 'Please your majesty,' answered the preceptor, 'I was explaining the "Golden Bull" to his royal highness.' 'I'll Golden Bull you, you rascal!' roared the majesty of Prussia. Up went the king's cane, away ran the terrified instructor, and Frederick's classical studies ended forever."—MACAULAY.

[6] "Frederick William and George II., though brothers-in-law, and, in a manner, brought up together, could never endure each other, even when children. This personal hatred and settled antipathy had like to have proved fatal to their subjects. The King of England used to style the King of Prussia *my brother the sergeant*. The King of Prussia called the King of England *my brother the player*. This animosity soon infected their dealings, and did not fail to have its influence on the most important events."—

Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg, by FREDERICK II., vol. ii., p. 69.

[7] "It was a marriage much beneath what this princess might have pretended to. But Frederick William loved such alliances—first, because they were at hand, and brought about without trouble, and thus his daughters were taken off his hands at an early age; and, secondly, because to these little princes the honor of obtaining a Princess of Prussia was sufficient, whereas great sovereigns would have required a more considerable dower than the avaricious habits of Frederick William permitted him to give."—*Life of Frederick II., by* LORD DOVER.

[8] "The sad truth, dimly indicated, is sufficiently visible. His life for the next four or five years was extremely dissolute. Poor young man, he has got into a disastrous course; consorts chiefly with debauched young fellows, as Lieutenants Katte, Keith, and others of their stamp, who lead him on ways not pleasant to his father, nor conformable to the laws of this universe. Health, either of body or mind, is not to be looked for in his present way of life. The bright young soul, with its fine strengths and gifts wallowing like a rhinoceros in the mud bath. Some say it is wholesome for a human soul; not we."—CARLYLE, ii., p. 21.

[9] "Never in any romance or stage play was young lady, without blame, without furtherance, and without hinderance of her own, so tormented about a settlement in life—passive she all the while, mere clay in the hands of the potter, and begging the

universe to have the extreme goodness only to leave her alone."—CARLYLE.

10 The Prussian minister Reichenbach, at London, wrote to M. Grumkow, under date of March 14, 1730: "Reichenbach flatters himself that the king will remain firm, and not let his enemies deceive him. If Grumkow and Seckendorf have opportunity, they may tell his Prussian majesty that the whole design of this court is to render his country a province dependent on England. When once the Princess Royal of England shall be wedded to the Prince Royal of Prussia, the English, by that means, will form such a party at Berlin that they will altogether tie his Prussian majesty's hands."

11 Carlyle.

12 *Memoires de la Margrave De Bareuth.*

13 "A Captain Fouqué comes to Cüstrin on duty or as a volunteer by-and-by. He is an old friend of the prince's; a ready-witted, hot-tempered, highly-estimable man. He is often with the prince. Their light is extinguished precisely at seven o'clock. 'Very well, lieutenant,' he would say, 'you have done your orders to the Crown Prince's light. But his majesty has no concern with Captain Fouqué's candles,' and thereupon would light a pair. Nay, I have heard of lieutenants who punctually blew out the prince's light, as a matter of duty and command, and then kindled it again as a civility left free to human nature. In short, his majesty's orders can only be fulfilled to the letter. Even in the letter his majesty's orders are severe enough."—

CARLYLE, vol. ii., p. 218.

14 Voltaire, in his unreliable "*Vie Privée du Roi de Prusse*," t. ii., p. 51, says that, when Frederick became king, he settled upon Doris, who was then married and poor, an annuity of seventy-six dollars. Thiebault, far more accurate, in his "*Souvenirs de Vingt Ans de Séjour à Berlin*," says he gave her a pension of one hundred and fifty-six dollars. It does not speak well for Frederick that he could have so meanly requited so terrible a wrong.

15 "The first idea of Frederick William was to deliver his son over to be condemned by the ordinary tribunal of Prussia, well knowing that his judges would never venture to decide except according to his wishes. Indeed, he took a very summary as well as a very certain mode of effecting this object; for, whenever their sentiments were not approved by him, he was in the habit of going into the court where they sat and there distributing kicks and blows to all the judges in turn, at the same time calling them rogues and blackguards! From men so circumstanced Frederick would have no chance of acquittal."—*The Life of Frederick II.*, *by* LORD DOVER, vol. i., p. 33.

16 "The prince had been some weeks in his prison at Cüstrin when one day an old officer, followed by four grenadiers, entered his chamber weeping. Frederick had no doubt that he was to be made a head shorter. But the officer, still in tears, ordered the grenadiers to take him to the window and hold his head out of it, that he might be obliged to look on the execution

of his friend Katte upon a scaffold expressly built for that purpose. He saw, stretched out his hand, and fainted. The father was present at this exhibition."—*Memoirs of the Life of Voltaire*, p. 26.

17 "General Ginkel, the Dutch embassador, here told me of an interview he had with the king. The king harbors most monstrous wicked designs, not fit to be spoken of in words. It is certain, if he continue in the mind he is in at present, we shall see scenes here as wicked and bloody as any that were ever heard of since the creation of the world. He will sacrifice his whole family—every body, except Grumkow, being, as he imagines, in conspiracy against him. All these things he said with such imprecations and disordered looks, foaming at the mouth all the while, as it was terrible either to see or hear."—DICKENS's *Dispatch, 7th December, 1730*.

18 Carlyle.

19 *Life of Frederick II.*, *by* LORD DOVER, vol. i., p. 127.

20 The grandmother was a very gay, fashionable woman, entirely devoted to pleasure.

21 The prince used a harsher term, which we can not quote.

22 A ruble was about eighty-five cents of our money.

23 To Frederick cultivating tranquillity.

24 Her husband.

25 The above extracts are taken from

Correspondance Familière et Amicale de Frédéric II., Roi de Prusse, avec U. F. de Suhm.

[26] Thibault, *Souvenirs de Vingt Ans de Séjours à Berlin*.

[27] William III. of England.

[28] Baron Bielfeld, in his letters, gives the following account of the prince's admission to the masonic fraternity: "On the 14th the whole day was spent in preparations for the lodge. A little after midnight we saw the Prince Royal arrive, accompanied by Count W——. The prince presented this gentleman as a candidate whom he recommended, and whose reception he wished immediately to succeed his own. He desired us likewise to omit, in his reception, not any one rigorous ceremony that was used in similar cases; to grant him no indulgence whatever; but gave us leave, on this occasion, to treat him merely as a private person. In a word, he was received with all the usual and requisite formalities. I admired his intrepidity, the serenity of his countenance, and his graceful deportment even in the most critical moments. After the two receptions we opened the lodge, and proceeded to our work. He appeared delighted, and acquitted himself with as much dexterity as discernment."—*Letters of Baron Bielfeld*, vol. iii., p. 36.

[29] Baron Bielfeld gives the following account of the personal appearance of the king at this time: "If we judge by his portraits, he was in his youth very handsome. But it must be confessed that he does not now retain any traces of beauty. His eyes are

indeed lively, but his looks are frightful. His complexion is composed of a mixture of high red, blue, yellow, and green. His head is large. His neck is quite sunk between his shoulders, and his figure is short and gross."—*Letters*, vol. iii., p. 67.

30 Frederick had taken the fancy of calling his companions by classical names. Suhm was Diaphanes; Keyserling was called Cæsarion, etc.

31 Bielfeld informs us that "about one in the afternoon he sent for Ellert, his first physician, and asked him if he thought that his life and his sufferings could continue long, and if the agonies of his last moments would be great. The physician answered, 'Your majesty has already arrived at that period. I feel the pulse retire. It now beats below your elbow.'

"The king inquired, 'Where will it retire at last?'

"'To the heart,' the doctor replied. 'And in about an hour it will cease to beat at all.'

"On which the king said, with perfect resignation, 'God's will be done!'"—*Letters*, vol. iii., p. 127.

32 Frederick William, in his reviews of the giant guard, was frequently attended by the foreign ministers who chanced to be at his court. On one of these occasions he asked the French minister if he thought that an equal number of the soldiers of France would venture to engage with these troops. With politeness, characteristic of the nation, the minister replied that it was impossible that men of the ordinary stature should

think of such an attempt. The same question was asked of the English embassador. He replied, “I can not affirm that an equal number of my countrymen would beat them, but I think that I may safely say that half the number would try.”

[33] Voltaire, after he had quarreled with Frederick, gave the following amusing account of a gift he received from the king soon after his accession to the throne: “He began his reign by sending an embassador extraordinary to France, one Camas, who had lost an arm. He said that, as there was a minister from the French court at Berlin who had but one hand, he, that he might acquit himself of all obligation toward the most Christian king, had sent him an embassador with one arm. Camas, as soon as he arrived safe at his inn, dispatched a lad to tell me that he was too much fatigued to come to my house, and therefore begged that I would come to him instantly, he having the finest, greatest, and most magnificent present that was ever presented to make me on the part of the king his master. ‘Run, run, as fast as you can,’ said Madame Du Châtelet; ‘he has assuredly sent you the diamonds of the crown.’ Away I ran, and found my embassador, whose only baggage was a small keg of wine, tied behind his chaise, sent from the cellar of the late king by the reigning monarch, with a royal command for me to drink. I emptied myself in protestations of astonishment and gratitude for these *liquid* marks of his majesty’s bounty, instead of the *solid* ones I had been taught to expect, and divided my keg with Camas.”—*Memoirs*, p. 34.

[34] "As the bishops of Liege had been in possession of the contested districts for more than a century, and as Frederick William had not, any more than his predecessors, adopted any vigorous measures to gain possession of them, it is not probable that the claim of Frederick was very well founded. At all events, his conduct was violent and unjust. The inhabitants of these districts had been guilty of no crime but that of avowing their allegiance to the prince whom they had been accustomed to obey, and whom they appear to have considered as their lawful sovereign. When Frederick, therefore, sent his troops to live upon the inhabitants of those districts at discretion, he committed an act of tyranny and of cruelty which nothing in the circumstances of the case could justify."—*Memoirs of Voltaire*, p. 44.

[35] *Memoirs*, p. 47, 48.

[36] "His majesty," says M. Bielfeld, "did not appear to be greatly moved. But what followed convinces me that he possesses the art of composing his countenance, and that the emotion passed within; for he rose soon after, sent for M. Von Eichel, secretary of the cabinet, and commanded him to write to Marshal Schwerin and M. Von Podewils, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and order them to come immediately to Reinsberg. These gentlemen arrived forthwith. They daily held long and very secret conferences with his majesty. They say that sovereigns have sometimes authority even over their infirmities. The fever has shown itself docile to the will of the monarch, for after two

slight attacks it has entirely left him."—*Letters*, vol. iv., p. 18.

37 Macaulay, speaking of the claims of Frederick to Silesia, says: "They amount to this, that the house of Brandenburg had some ancient pretensions to Silesia, and had, in the previous century, been compelled, by hard usage on the part of the court of Vienna, to waive those pretensions. It is certain that, whoever might have been originally in the right, Prussia had submitted. Prince after prince of the house of Brandenburg had acquiesced in the existing arrangement. Nay, the court of Berlin had recently been allied with that of Vienna, and had guaranteed the integrity of the Austrian states. Is it not perfectly clear that, if antiquated claims are to be set up against recent treaties and long possession, the world can never be at peace for a day?"—*Life of Frederick the Great*, by MACAULAY, p. 62.

38 "The King of Prussia, the *Anti-Machiavel*, had already fully determined to commit the great crime of violating his plighted faith, of robbing the ally whom he was bound to defend, and of plunging all Europe into a long, bloody, and desolating war, and all this for no other end whatever except that he might extend his dominions and see his name in the gazettes. He determined to assemble a great army with speed and secrecy to invade Silesia before Maria Theresa should be apprised of his design, and to add that rich province to his kingdom."—*Life of Frederick the Great*, by MACAULAY, p. 61.

39

No, notwithstanding your virtues,
notwithstanding your attractions,
My soul is not satisfied.
No, you are but a coquette;
You subjugate the hearts of others, and do
not give your own.

40 In this wicked world power seldom respects weakness. No sooner was the emperor dead than four claimants sprang up to wrest from Maria Theresa a part or the whole of the kingdoms she had inherited from her father; and this, notwithstanding nearly all the powers of Europe had guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction. The Elector of Bavaria claimed Bohemia, from an article in the will of the Emperor Ferdinand I., made two centuries before. The King of Poland demanded the whole Austrian succession, in virtue of the right of his wife, who was the eldest daughter of the Emperor Joseph, elder brother of Charles VI. The King of Spain claimed all the Austrian possessions, in consequence of his descent from the wife of Philip II., who was daughter of the Emperor Maximilian. The King of Sardinia hunted up an obsolete claim to the duchy of Milan. But for the embarrassment into which these claims plunged Maria Theresa, Frederick would hardly have ventured to invade the province of Silesia. The woes which, in consequence, desolated the nations of Europe, no mind but that of the omniscient God can gauge.

41 The husband of Maria Theresa.

42 Voltaire's *Age of Louis XV.*, vol. i., p. 54.

[43] Id.

[44] *Military Instructions*, p. 171.

[45] The army with which Frederick invaded Silesia consisted of a general force of 28,000 men, which was followed by a rear-guard of 12,000. He had, in all, about 12,000 cavalry. The remainder were foot soldiers. The artillery consisted of 20 three-pounders, 4 twelve-pounders, 4 howitzers, and 4 large mortars of fifty-pounds calibre. His artillerymen numbered 166.

[46]

Straverunt alii nobis, nos posteritati:
Omnibus at Christus stravit ad astra viam.

[47] Charles Etienne Jordan was thirty-six years of age. He was the son of wealthy parents in Berlin, and had been a preacher. The death of a beloved wife, leaving him with an only daughter, had plunged him into the profoundest melancholy. Frederick, when Crown Prince, took a great fancy to him, making him nominally his reader, giving him charge of his library. He is represented as a man of small figure, genial, and affectionate, of remarkable vivacity, very courteous, and one who was ever careful never, by word or action, to give pain to others.

[48] His next younger brother, Augustus William, who had accompanied him on the expedition.

[49] Colonel Keyserling was a Courlander of good family. He had been officially named as “Companion” of the Crown Prince in his youthful days. Frederick entitled him

Cæsarion, and ever regarded him as one of the choicest of his friends. He was a man of very eccentric manners, but warm-hearted and exceedingly companionable.

50 Algarotti was a Venetian gentleman of much elegance of manners and dress. He was very fervent in his utterance, and could talk fluently upon every subject. He was just of the age of Frederick. Being the son of wealthy parents, he had enjoyed great advantages of study and travel, had already published several works, and was quite distinguished as a universal genius, a logician, a poet, a philosopher, and a connoisseur in all the arts. He was a great favorite of Frederick, and accompanied him to Strasbourg and on this expedition to Silesia. Wilhelmina describes him as "one of the first *beaux esprits* of the age," and "as one who does the expenses of the conversation."

51 Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau was one of the most extraordinary men of any age. His life was but a constant whirlwind of battle, almost from his birth in 1676, to his death in 1747. His face was of the "color of gunpowder," and his fearless, tumultuous soul was in conformity with the rugged body in which it was incased. The whole character of the man may be inferred from the following prayer, which it is said he was accustomed to offer before entering battle: "O God! assist our side. At least, avoid assisting the enemy, and leave the result to me." Leopold, called the *Old Dessauer*, and his son, the *Young Leopold*, were of essential service to Frederick in his wars. Pages

might be filled illustrative of the character of this eccentric man.

52 *Military Instructions*, p. 113.

53 It was the day before. But it is not surprising that the bewildered young king should have been somewhat confused in his dates.

54 Monsieur le Baron Bielfeld, *Lettres Familières et Autres*, tome i., p. 3.

55 "Some men," says a quaint writer, "have a God to swear by, though they have none to pray to."

56 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xi., p. 90.

57 "Valori was one night with him, and, on rising to take leave, the fat hand, sticking probably in the big waistcoat pocket, twitched out a little diplomatic-looking Note, which Frederick, with gentle adroitness (permissible in such circumstances), set his foot upon, till Valori had bowed himself out."—CARLYLE, vol. iii., p. 330.

58 *The Iron Crown.* It was so called because there was entwined, amidst its priceless gems and exquisitely wrought frosted gold, some iron wire, said to be drawn from one of the spikes which had been driven through one of the hands of our Savior.

59 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, vol. ii., p. 84.

60 "Sure enough, the Sea Powers are checkmated now. Let them make the least attempt in favor of the queen if they dare. Holland can be overrun from Osnabrück quarter at a day's warning. Little George

has his Hanoverians, his subsidized Hessians, Danes, in Hanover; his English on Lexden Heath. Let him come one step over the marches, Maillebois and the Old Dessauer swallow him. It is a surprising stroke of theatrical-practical Art, brought about, to old Fleury's sorrow, by the genius of Belleisle, and they say of Madame Châteauroux; enough to strike certain Governing Persons breathless for some time, and denotes that the Universal Hurricane, or World Tornado has broken out."—CARLYLE, vol. iii., p. 357.

61 Count Brühl was for many years the first minister of the king. He was a weak, extravagant man, reveling in voluptuousness. His decisions could always be controlled by an ample bribe. His sole object seemed to be his own personal luxurious indulgence. "Public affairs," he said, "will carry themselves on, provided we do not trouble ourselves about them."

Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, in his letters from Dresden, writes: "Now, as every thing of every kind, from the highest affairs of the state down to operas and hunting, are all in Count Brühl's immediate care, I leave you to judge how his post is executed. His expenses are immense. He keeps three hundred servants and as many horses. It is said, and I believe it, that he takes money for every thing the king disposes of in Poland, where they frequently have very great employments to bestow."

62 *Histoire de mon Temps.*

63 *Campagnes de le Roi de Prusse*, p. 5.

[64] *Œuvres de Frédéric*, xvii., p. 196.

[65] *Campaigns of the King of Prussia*, p. 57.

[66] *Correspondance de Frédéric II.*

[67] "Huge huzzaing, herald-trumpeting, bob-major-ing, burst forth from all Prussian towns, especially from all Silesian ones, in those June days, as the drums beat homeward; elaborate illuminations in the short nights, with bonfires, with transparencies; transparency inscribed 'Frederico Magno (To Frederick *the Great*),' in one small instance, still of premature nature."—CARLYLE.

[68] Bielfeld, 251.

[69] *Histoire de mon Temps.*

[70] Bielfeld, p. 251.

[71] It would seem that Voltaire was sent to Frederick as the secret agent and spy of the French minister. "Voltaire," writes Macaulay, "was received with every mark of respect and friendship. The negotiation was of an extraordinary description. Nothing can be conceived more whimsical than the conferences which took place between the first literary man and the first practical man of the age, whom a strange weakness had induced to change their parts. The great poet would talk of nothing but treaties and guarantees, and the king of nothing but metaphors and rhymes. On one occasion Voltaire put into his majesty's hand a paper on the state of Europe, and received it back with verses scrawled on the margin. In secret they both laughed at each other. Voltaire did not spare the king's

poems, and the king has left on record his opinion of Voltaire's diplomacy, saying, 'He had no credentials, and the whole mission was a mere farce.'"

As a specimen of the character of the document above alluded to, we give the following. Voltaire, in what he deemed a very important state paper, had remarked,

"The partisans of Austria burn with the desire to open the campaign in Silesia again. Have you, in that case, any ally but France? And, however potent you are, is an ally useless to you?"

The king scribbled on the margin,

"Mon ami,
Don't you see
We will receive them
A la Barbari!"

[72] *Œuvres de Frédéric*, XXVII., vol. i., p. 387.

[73] Letters of Bielfeld, vol. i., p. 188.

[74] In Pöllnitz's memoirs and letters he repeated the rumor that the great elector's second wife, an ancestor of Frederick, had attempted to poison her step-son.

[75] Voltaire is proverbially inaccurate in details. It was the king's invariable custom to rise at *four* in summer and six in winter.

[76] "In his retreat Frederick is reported to have lost above thirty thousand men, together with most of his heavy baggage and artillery, and many wagons laden with provisions and plunder."—TOWER'S *Life and Reign of Frederick*, vol. i., p. 209.

77 Carlyle, vol. iv., p. 50.

78 Carlyle, vol. iv., p. 76.

79 Carlyle, vol. iv., p. 54.

80 Carlyle, vol. i., p. 302.

81 Carlyle, vol. iv., p. 80.

82 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. ii., p. 218.

83 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. iii., p. 123.

84 Scamander, a small stream in Asia Minor, celebrated in the songs of Homer.

85 Robinson's Dispatch, August 4, 1745.

86 *Histoire de mon Temps.*

87 In this, as in most other similar cases, there is considerable diversity of statement as to the precise number of troops engaged on either side. But there is no question that the Austrians were in numbers far superior to the Prussians.

88 Müller, *Tableaux des guerres de Frédéric le Grand.*

89 *Mémoires de Frédéric, Baron de Trenck.*

90 Carlyle, vol. iv., p. 171.

91 Id. ibid.

92 Voltaire, speaking of this action, says: "It was the famous old Prince of Anhalt who gained this decisive victory. He had been a warrior fifty years, and was the first who had entered into the lines of the French army at Turin in 1707. For conducting the infantry he was esteemed the most experienced officer in Europe. This great battle was the last that filled up the measure of his military glory—the only

glory which he had enjoyed, for fighting was his only province."—*Age of Louis XV.*, chap. xvii.

93 "About three pounds ten shillings, I think—better than ten pounds in our day to a common man, and better than one hundred pounds to a Linsenbarth."—CARLYLE.

94 *Commentaire Historique sur les Œuvres de l'Auteur de la Henriade.*

95 *Supplément aux Œuvres Posthumes de Frédéric*, ii.

96 Voltaire boasted that he had gained the cause, because the Jew was fined thirty shillings. But he knew full well, as did every one else, that the result of the suit covered him with dishonor.

97 This was a private letter which reflected severely upon the character of Maupertuis.

98 Thiebault, *Souvenirs de Vingt Ans de Séjour à Berlin.*

99 *Biographie Universelle.*

100 In a letter which the Prince of Prussia, Augustus William, wrote to the king, remonstrating against those encroachments which were arraying all Europe against him, he says: "Russia is persuaded that your designs upon her occasioned the applications which you have made to the court of Vienna to substitute a truce of two years in room of a solemn treaty of peace. She believes that you wanted to tie up the hands of the empress queen so as to put it out of her power to succor her ally; that a war against Russia was the principal object of your intrigues in Sweden; that you have

designs upon Courland; that Polish Prussia and Pomerania would be very convenient to you; and that you find Russia the greatest obstacle to this rounding of your dominions. In short, she believes that she has the same interest in your abasement as the house of Austria."—*Vie de Frédéric II., Roi de Prusse*, t. ii., p. 318.

101 Age of Louis XV., chapter xxxii.

102 Archenholtz, *Histoire de la Guerre de cet Homme*.

103 An uncle of the great Mirabeau.

104 The Duchess of Pompadour.

105 In the years 1508–1509 the celebrated league of Cambrai was formed by Louis XII. of France, Maximilian, Emperor of Germany, Ferdinand, King of Spain, and Pope Julius II., against Venice. The league was called *Holy* because the pope took part in it.

106

"Ainsi mon seul asile en mon unique port
Se trouve, chère sœur, dans les bràs de la
mort."

107 *Correspondance Familière et Amicale*, tome i., p. 31.

108 "Heaven!" This was probably a slip of the pen. Frederick would have been perplexed to explain who or what he meant by "Heaven." It would, however, subsequently appear that he used the word as synonymous with *fate* or *destiny*.

109 The atheistic pen of Frederick will sometimes slip.

110 *Memoires pour servir à la Vie de M. De Voltaire.*

111 Carlyle, vol. v., p. 168.

112 Archenholtz, vol. i., p. 209.

113

"Gieb dass ich thu' mit Fleiss was mir zu thun
gebühret,
Wozu mich dein Befehl in meinem Stande
führet,
Gieb dass ich's thue bald, zu der Zeit da ich's
soll;
Und wenn ich's thu', so gieb dass es gerathe
wohl."

114 "Indeed, there is in him, in those grim days, a tone as of trust in the Eternal, as of real religious piety and faith, scarcely noticeable elsewhere in his history. His religion, and he had, in withered forms, a good deal of it, if we will look well, being almost always in a strictly voiceless state—nay, ultra voiceless, or voiced the wrong way, as is too well known!"—CARLYLE.

115

"Nun danket alle Gott
Mit Herzen, Mund und Händen,
Der grosse Dinge thut,
An uns und allen Enden."

116 *Vie de Frédéric II., Roi de Prusse, Strasbourg,* 1788, t. ii., p. 317.

117 Carlyle.

118 The son of the late Prince of Prussia. He was now heir to the crown.

119 Carlyle.

120 London Magazine, vol. xxvii., p. 670.

121 This confession of the king is worthy of notice. His *philosophy* afforded him no consolation in these hours of anguish. It is faith in Christ alone which can "take from death its sting, and from the grave its victory."

122 *Correspondance de Voltaire avec le Roi de Prusse.*

123 Archenholtz, *Histoire de la Guerre de Sept Ans*.

124 *Histoire de la Guerre de Sept Ans, par Frédéric II.*

125 "The loss of his Wilhelmina, had there been no other grief, has darkened all his life to Frederick. Readers are not prepared for the details of grief we could give, and the settled gloom of mind they indicate. A loss irreparable and immeasurable; the light of life, the one heart that loved him, gone. All winter he dwells internally on the sad matter, though soon falling silent on it to others."—CARLYLE, vol. v., p. 318.

126 Carlyle, vol. v., p. 314.

127 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xix., p. 56.

128 *Mémoires pour servir à la Vie de M. De Voltaire, Ecrit par Lui-même.*

129 The Duchess of Pompadour.

130 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xxiii., p. 53.

131 *Histoire de la Guerre de Sept Ans, par Frédéric II.*

132 General Haddick was in command of an Austrian force marching to join the

Russians. Frederick had surprised one of his detachments.

133 General Finck, one of the most efficient of Frederick's generals, to whom we shall often hereafter refer.

134 This was a mistake. Frederick had probably been misinformed.

135 There were three horses shot under Frederick; but from the third the king dismounted before he fell.

136 Haddick and Loudon were two of the most able generals in the army of Soltikof.

137 Prince Henry.

138 This was a slip of the pen. The battle of Kunersdorf was on the 12th.

139 "I pray God!" Even the heart of the atheist in hours of calamity yearns for a God.

140 The king here undoubtedly refers to the vial of poison which he invariably carried in his waistcoat pocket.

141 "Of the 14,000 men who had made the expedition with him, only 3000 remained unwounded at the time of the capitulation."—*Life of Frederick II.*, by LORD DOVER, vol. ii., p. 134.

142 Carlyle, vol. v., p. 469.

143 *Biographie Universelle.*

144 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xxii., p. 61.

145 Voltaire's niece, Madame Denis, was with him when he was arrested at Frankfort, and she was terribly frightened.

146 *Œuvres de Voltaire*, t. lxxx., p. 313.

147 Archenholtz, vol. ii., p. 53.

148 "The symptoms we decipher in these letters, and otherwise, are those of a man drenched in misery; but used to his black element, unaffectedly defiant of it, or not at the pains to defy it; occupied only to do his very utmost in it, with or without success, till the end come."—CARLYLE.

149 Annual Register, vol. iii., p. 209.

150 Life of Frederick II., by Lord Dover, vol. ii., p. 152.

151 The king had a coat torn from him by a rebounding cannon-ball, and a horse shot under him.

152 *Œuvres Posthumes de Frédéric II.*

153 "No human intellect in our day could busy itself with understanding these thousandfold marchings, manœuvrings, assaults, surprisals, sudden facings about (retreat changed to advance); nor could the powerfulest human memory, not exclusively devoted to study the art military under Frederick, remember them when understood."—CARLYLE, vol. vi., p. 59.

154 Great in small things, small in great things.

155 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xix., p. 139.

156

When one has lost every thing, when one has
no longer hope,
Life is a disgrace, and death a duty.

157 Carlyle.

158 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xix., p. 204.

159 *Correspondance Familière et Amicale de*

Frédéric, Roi de Prusse, t. ii., p. 140.

160 Carlyle.

161 Life of Frederick II., by Lord Dover, vol. ii., p. 170.

162 Walpole's Letters to Sir Horace Mann, vol. i., p. 6, 7.

163 Maria Theresa of Austria, Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, and the Marchioness of Pompadour, who was virtually Queen of France.

164 *Vie de Frédéric II., Roi de Prusse*, t. ii., p. 141.

165 *Prusse*, t. ii., p. 282.

166 Küster, *Charakterzüge des General Lieutenant v. Saldern*, p. 40

167 Carlyle.

168 Archenholtz, vol. ii., p. 262.

169 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xix., p. 281.

170 Carlyle.

171 Carlyle.

172 Carlyle.

173 Military Instructions, written by the King of Prussia, p. 176.

174 Archenholtz, *Histoire de la Guerre de Sept Ans*.

175 "Northern tourists, Wraxall and others, passing that way, speak of this princess down to recent times as a phenomenon of the place. Apparently a high and peremptory kind of lady, disdaining to be bowed too low by her disgraces. She

survived all her generation, and the next and the next, and, indeed, into our own. Died 18th February, 1840, at the age of ninety-six."—CARLYLE.

176 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. vi., p. 23.

177 *Œuvres Posthumes de D'Alembert*, t. i., p. 197, cited by Carlyle, vol. vi., p. 283.

178 *Histoire ou Anecdotes sur la Révolution de Russie en l'année 1762, par M. Rulhière.*

179 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. vi., p. 26.

180 *Correspondance avec l'Electrice Marie-Antoine.*

181 Pezzl, *Vie de Loudon*, vol. ii., p. 29.

182 "Kaunitz," writes Frederick, "had a clear intellect, greatly twisted by perversities of temper, especially by a self-conceit and arrogance which were boundless. He did not talk, but preach. At the smallest interruption he would stop short in indignant surprise. It has happened that at the council-board in Schönbrunn, when her imperial majesty has asked some explanation of a word or thing not understood by her, Kaunitz made his bow and quitted the room."

183 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xxvi., p. 30.

184 Schnitzler, vol. ii., p. 247.

185 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. xxvi., p. 345.

186 Hormayr, *Taschenbuch*, 1831, S. 66, cited by Dr. J. D. E. Preuss, Historiographer of Brandenburg, in his life of *Friedrich der Grosse*, vol. iv., p. 38.

187 Preuss, vol. iv., p. 39.

188 G. Freytag, *Neue Bilder aus dem Leben des deutschen Volkes*, cited by Carlyle, vol. vi., p. 378.

189 Freytag, p. 397.

190 *Œuvres de Frédéric*, t. vi., p. 124.

191 Carlyle, vol. vi., p. 446–449.

192 Schmettau, vol. xxv., p. 30.

193 Preuss, t. iv., p. 187.

194 Fischer, vol. ii., p. 445, as cited by Carlyle.

195 Carlyle, vol. vi., p. 529.

196 Carlyle.

197 *Correspondance Inédite de Marie Antoinette*, p. 137.

198 *Mémoires et Mélanges Historiques et Littéraires, par le Prince de Ligny.*

199 Dr. Moore, View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Germany.

200 Carlyle, vol. vi., p. 535.

201 Rödenbeck, vol. iii., p. 365.

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