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9 vol.

MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
HOUSE OF BRANDENBURG,  
AND  
HISTORY OF PRUSSIA,  
DURING THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.

BY LEOPOLD RANKE.

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Translated from the German  
BY SIR ALEX<sup>R</sup>. AND LADY DUFF GORDON.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LONDON:  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1849.

## TRANSLATORS' PREFACE.

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THE German title of the work now laid before the English public is 'Neun Bücher Preussischer Geschichte' (Nine Books of Prussian History)—an imitation of Herodotus, for which we have, with the consent of the author, substituted a name more suitable to the English dress in which we have endeavoured to clothe Professor Ranke's book.

Though it would be more than needless for us to offer any comment on the Author's well-known ability, we may venture to remark that Professor Ranke has devoted some eight or ten years to the examination of materials especially relating to the period embraced by this history; he was, moreover, one of the Commission appointed to superintend the preparation of the new edition of the Great Frederick's works now in course of publication at Berlin, and has thus been enabled to gain a fresh insight into several portions of that monarch's life, and to throw a new light upon several of his actions.

With respect to our own share in the present work, we can only plead that we have done our best to give intelligible English names to institutions, forms, offices, &c., unknown in England, and for the most

part long since extinct in Prussia. It is impossible to find precise English equivalents for the offices of Landrath, Schulze, Landdroste, &c.—indeed the same title is sometimes applied to very different officers in different provinces: for instance, in the ancient dukedom of Cleves, now incorporated with Prussia, the Droste answered to the first civil magistrate of a borough, or to the French “maire;” while in Hanover and some other parts of Germany the Droste was more like the lord-lieutenant of a county. Nor is it at all easier to render into English the details of the administration of justice, finance, and the like, which we have done in such English terms as seemed to us most nearly analogous to the German original. We mention these very peculiar difficulties of our task in extenuation of any mistakes into which we may have been betrayed by our very limited knowledge, and of those defects of style into which we may have fallen from our anxiety to render the author's very words with the utmost truth and exactness. We are bound to add that we were furnished by Professor Ranke with the proof sheets of his work some time before its publication in Germany, though not long enough to enable us to finish the translation in time to be published simultaneously with the original, according to the wish of the author.

A. & L. D. G.

*Queen Square, Westminster,  
December, 1848.*

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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IF at the beginning of the eighteenth century France had not entirely subjected the Spanish peninsula to her influence, she had at any rate, spite of all opposition, laid the basis of her future domination. Austria, chiefly owing to the success of her Hungarian campaigns, had taken her footing firmly as a great power. Russia, in the midst of the dangerous aggressions of Sweden, had acquired preponderance in the north. England, united with Holland, and freed from all foreign influences, held in her strong grasp the balance of power in Europe. The four great States stood confronting one another like so many planets, each pursuing its peculiar course in accordance with the laws of nature. Of the remaining States, some had been vanquished in war, others were inextricably involved in the policy of foreign countries. The north of Germany had borne its share in victory, and had no mind to be carried away in the vortex of its mighty neighbours. There was still room left for an independent European power, and Prussia determined to fill it. The purpose of the following book is to describe the events by which this was accomplished. From small beginnings—like every really living power—Prussia had already risen to considerable eminence, when, impelled not so much by conscious ambition as by the duty of self-preservation,

she endeavoured to secure for herself a position independent on every side. After a brief glance at her early history, we will examine the epoch of her elevation, and the dangerous contests through which she secured her position—more especially the latter years of Frederick William I., and the earlier of that Frederick whom posterity has called the Great.

This prince has himself written about the events in which he played the decisive part; he has narrated the battles he fought. His writings, for the most part founded on reports drawn up as the events occurred, composed too—as they originally stood—under the inspiration of the most immediate recollection, and intended, above all, to commemorate the great deeds of his army, are invaluable monuments of truthfulness and sagacity: they unite keen observation with comprehensive and right royal views. As a literary work, they contain many happy passages of description. That which has been said of Cæsar's Commentaries applies with even greater force to Frederick's Memoirs. No one could be tempted to treat them as mere historical materials: it is with reluctance that I venture even to quote passages from them, so completely do they bear the stamp of their time, and, above all, of the genius whence they sprung.

It was, however, impossible for this active and gifted monarch, in whose life these very writings are events, to take an historical view of himself. The wish has continually been felt and expressed to obtain

a deeper and more minute insight into the history of Prussia, and especially into that of Frederick II., than he himself has given. There is a general conviction that the gradual course of events may yet be traced with greater accuracy—that a fuller and a closer insight into history may yet be obtained; more especially if free access be granted to the archives of the State, where the most authentic information, in the shape of reports and letters, written day by day during the progress of the events themselves, is deposited.

This advantage has been afforded me in the most ample manner in Berlin, and I cannot be sufficiently grateful for it.

In accordance with the object I had in view, I first of all most carefully examined the voluminous documents relating to the State policy of Frederick William I. With regard to the internal administration of the country, I have still left a rich harvest for future students; my only wish is that this harvest may be duly gathered. A great history of the Prussian government might be written by a man unfettered by theory, able to appreciate the immediate wants of the state at each step of its progress, to estimate each particular crisis in connexion with the existence of the State as a whole, and thus to advance step by step from ancient to more modern times. Neither could I give the negotiations with foreign countries in all their detail, as Puffendorf has done for another period; for I was not writing the

history of Frederick William's reign ; I merely wanted to trace out the general direction and aim of his policy. Even in this, however, I could not help coming across Frederick II. ; and I have been enabled for the first time to explain, out of the original documents, the real nature of the dissensions in which he was involved with his father. I will not positively assert that all that has hitherto been assumed on this subject is false, whilst I pass it over in silence ; but the discrepancy which I found between the undoubtedly authentic documents and the version of the affair which has been commonly received, inspired me with such distrust of the latter, that even had it been possible in any degree to reconcile the one statement with the other, I could not have brought myself to repeat it. And let none find fault because I have interwoven much that is personal and characteristic with the history of a State : it is in the spirit of the epoch of which I had to treat that the one should be most intimately blended with the other. It is only after the accession of Frederick II. that the restriction which this imposed upon the progress of the country was removed. Then, for the first time, the nation, which during several well-employed years of peace had come to maturity, entered with vigour upon its appointed career, under the guidance of a prince who always looked to the main point, judged promptly and correctly, took great resolutions, and in a struggle for life and death attained the position needful for his purpose. If the

study of Frederick's own writings is enough to deprive one of all courage to undertake an historical work on this period, that courage revives when, on searching the archives, we discover the abundant activity—which Frederick scarcely mentions, but by which he marked each day with genius and energy, and influenced the common course of events,—the support afforded to him both in the council and in the field by men of the rarest gifts, many of whom have yet to be recalled to fame,—the untiring energy with which his people followed him through every danger.

But unless I chose wilfully to expose myself to the influence of a partial view, it was incumbent upon me not to limit my inquiries to one quarter only, however important that might be: I ought in justice to hear both friend and foe.

In this respect the neighbouring courts of Dessau and of Dresden afforded me some information; in the former, the papers of Prince Leopold, who was a warmer adherent of Frederick than has usually been supposed; in the latter, the correspondence of Frederick's opponent, Count Brühl,—as far as I was allowed to examine this or any other evidence of the policy of the court of Dresden of that day. But it was of incomparably greater importance for me to search the archives of Paris and London, the two great centres of European politics. In the rich collection of documents preserved in the archives of the Foreign Office at Paris, the King of Prussia fills a most prominent place: at any rate there was no lack



among the French of watchful endeavour to understand him—his lightest words, as well as his most elaborate speeches, were carefully recorded. At the same time we are enabled to comprehend the far-reaching line of policy with which Frederick was for a long time so intimately connected.

In London, on the other hand, the system of the opposite party was revealed to me. In the circles which are here described, Maria Theresa, Frederick's great opponent, appears in full activity. I should think myself happy were I to succeed in portraying her well-known character and womanly heroism in more definite and intelligible lines than has hitherto been done.

During the course of my labours I felt the difficulty of keeping my subject matter constantly in view, and while occupied with the examination of countless documents, bearing upon the most difficult questions of foreign or domestic policy, I frequently felt the insufficiency of my powers. But adverse criticisms of quite a different nature await me: I will neither enumerate nor attempt to obviate them. I only rely for a just estimate of my book upon the same liberal spirit which opened to me the archives whence I have drawn my materials.

The ancients wrote the history of their own times with an uncompromising regard to truth; I only ask toleration for the endeavour to bring as faithfully as I am able before my readers events which occurred a hundred years ago, and in so doing to disregard the party attachments and hostilities of the present day.

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MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
HOUSE OF BRANDENBURG  
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HISTORY OF PRUSSIA.

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FIRST BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE ORIGIN AND RISE OF THE POWER OF  
BRANDENBURG AND PRUSSIA.

By the side of the great princes who founded or extended the supreme power in Germany, history gives a place to other heroes whose undying glory it is to have opposed the former in their career: it would indeed be difficult to decide which of the two have contributed most largely to the developement of the nation.

The great sovereigns inspired the German nation with the consciousness of its own unity; and by the foundation of the Empire they not only won for Germany a high rank amongst nations, but gave her a resistless impulse towards civilization, made way for the spread of Christianity, and established public order upon a solid foundation. On the other hand, those territorial princes who opposed these monarchs



defended the freedom of the national genius, which was not in harmony with ideas developed in other countries and under other circumstances, and often propounded without examination or due perception of their import. They likewise prevented the destruction of individual life and liberty by the pressure of the external forms in which these ideas had been clothed during the course of these events.

After devoting to the former the attention due to their personal character, and to the importance of their achievements, we ought not to leave the latter unnoticed: they present a series of characters which become more and more remarkable as we advance from one epoch to another.

At first these territorial princes, when not themselves enabled by birth or by the fortune of war to grasp at the imperial crown, could not fail to succumb in the struggle against a power which was of necessity strong both within and without its own dominions, called upon as it was to resist the pressure of so many powerful and barbarous foes. But the nation has not forgotten their efforts. One of them especially, Duke Ernest of Swabia, is still remembered as a man who preferred forfeiting the Emperor's favour to breaking faith with his friend; and when for this offence he was excommunicated by the bishops and outlawed by the princes of the Empire, he retreated into the depths of the forest, where, seeing himself surrounded and overpowered by foes, he purposely sought his death.

But a time came when men of this stamp acquired a new importance, and, above all, an invincible sup-

port, in the rising power of the territorial sovereignty which was deeply rooted in the German nation.

Henry the Lion affords perhaps the most remarkable illustration of this crisis in German history. It is true that the contest for power and consideration in which he engaged with the Emperor mainly benefited the Pope and the Lombards; but when he afterwards determined to be what he really was by birth—a German territorial prince—and when he defended the inheritance of his fathers in lower Saxony against the imperial armies, he set an example which was followed by many princely families and by many towns and provinces upon which contests were forced, or which sought them of their own accord. Frederick the Warlike, again, had to fight many a hard battle for the territorial independence of Austria, upon which the house of Habsburg afterwards mainly founded its power. In central Germany another Frederick, he of the Bitten Cheek, a prince of the house of Wettin, made his name famous. At one time he no longer possessed a single castle wherein to reside, not a single war-horse to carry him into battle. A chronicle of the time describes him wandering as a fugitive through the country, in such guise that a herdsman tending his flock might have seized him; but soon after we find him gaining victories, the memory of which has fed the pride of his countrymen for generations. He withstood the armies of two Emperors, both inflamed by the greatest lust of conquest. Frederick himself perished body and soul in the struggle, but he left the land of his fathers undiminished to his house. I do not pretend here to examine whether it would not have

been better, as some have asserted, if this or that opponent of the Emperor had been compelled to yield to him. The German people was accustomed to consider the imperial crown as the collective property of the princes and estates in whom the power of disposing of that dignity was vested. Should he upon whom it was conferred make use of the power with which it endowed him to increase the might of his own house, each individual prince felt himself fully justified in resistance. Not one of all the opponents of the different Emperors for a moment entertained the thought of destroying the Empire, upon which they themselves leant for support; they merely wished to defend their own political existence against any undue exercise of the imperial power. In this view taken by the territorial princes the towns and circles fully agreed. Of all the Emperors—and many of them possessed most brilliant qualities—not one since Otho the Great has been distinguished by any title of honour given by the people. The Emperors were fortunate if they were not altogether forgotten. Among the territorial princes, on the contrary, we meet with many bearing such names as the Joyous, the Bold, the Iron, the Earnest, the Glorious, the Wise, and the Good. They stood much more within the reach of popular sympathy; in them the power and importance of personal character were far more plainly shown, and provincial pride was enlisted in their favour; while the Emperor moved in so remote a sphere that he never awakened in the minds of the people any real interest or fellow-feeling; these indeed can never be excited by mere admiration.

By degrees, however, a complete change took place in the relations between the princes and the Emperor.

In earlier times the Emperor, in his imperial character, was looked upon as the firm and living centre of the whole German nation: by him the governors of the several provinces were appointed or dismissed. Subsequently, however, the estates, and more especially the territorial princes, came to be considered as those in whom alone was vested a really firm and enduring power; the Emperor was regarded as a vicegerent, to whom certain powers had been confided, and from whom they might, if necessary, be taken away.

It was under these circumstances that the temporal princes of Germany leagued themselves together for the performance of the greatest undertaking which they had ever collectively attempted.

We do not mean to attribute to the views of a certain number of German princes the origin of the religious or theological idea which led to the Protestant Reformation—that had a far deeper source; but the princes and the estates gave to the movement that support and assistance which were necessary to prevent it from being crushed at its very beginning.

Their original scheme was a purely national one. They wished, by giving to the estates a more active influence in the affairs of government, to remodel the Empire, which in its actual state of weakness was inefficiently and partially administered, and thus to restore it to its former power and energy. But this brought them into collision with the abuses which had

crept into the government of the church, and gave rise to the project of remodelling the spiritual as well as the temporal power, and, in accordance with the views of those teachers who were opposed to the old doctrines, to give to it a more purely national character.

Most of the temporal princes were agreed upon this point; the corporate bodies, with but few exceptions, joined the princes, and the greater part of the nation eagerly gave in its adhesion to these views. But they were met by a strong opposition, chiefly on the part of the powerful ecclesiastical portion of the German hierarchy, and were forced to stop very far short of the aim which they had in view. After many tedious disputes at the Diets, after engaging in a war against the Emperor full of perilous reverses, this idea had to be given up; the princes and estates were forced to confine themselves to merely defensive measures.

Something, however, was effected : that which could not be carried out with respect to the government of the Empire was achieved in particular provinces and districts subject to princes or to corporations, and acquired a permanent existence. The imperial government, as it was then constituted, and the Emperor, were bound by laws to recognise this innovation, and to extend to the new order of things the universal peace and protection of the Empire.

Even this result was of immense importance. The German nation thus gained a high position in the region of intellectual life; it was the first to break through the pale of that hierarchy which encircled western Europe (as similar forms of be-

lief encompassed the East), and to give a place in the world to the original idea of positive religion unfettered by arbitrary dogmas. This tendency found a ready acceptance in all parts of Europe, but was more especially suited to the peculiar genius and nature of the German mind, from the unfathomed depths of which it arose with resistless might. There are many who look upon this epoch—the second half of the sixteenth century—as the golden and classic age of German culture, which indisputably was never more generally diffused than at that time; and we should be disposed to agree with them, were it not that mere theological disputations occupied far the greater share of the mental activity of the time. The princes who so actively assisted in this work found their own power established on a firmer basis by its achievement. In all cases the exclusion or the remodelling of the ecclesiastical powers strengthened the union between the estates of the various provinces and their respective princes. During this period, too, the development of the provincial Diets—especially in the north and in the east of Germany—was most remarkable. In one point only, that of the ecclesiastical constitution, some innovations were made; and even in this case they were as slight as possible: all other traditional institutions were preserved and strengthened.

This one innovation was, however, sufficient to call into existence a danger which threatened the whole movement. This it was that first embarrassed the destinies of the German people and of the German spirit.

Catholicism, which had been so vigorously attacked by the German nation and had been driven out of so many wide districts, had in the mean time been purged of many errors and abuses, but was once more filled with the spirit of persecution; and it had now regained full possession of southern Europe, where the greatest monarchy then existing, namely the Spanish, into whose coffers the wealth of the Indies flowed, displayed unlimited devotion to its interests. Catholicism once more spread over Germany, and in spite of all opposition took possession of the ecclesiastical provinces. Among the temporal princely houses there were two which, although they had long wavered, had at length not only refused to join the rest, but had also become the most zealous supporters of the restored Catholic doctrines: these were the houses of Austria and Bavaria. It is obvious that the latter power wasted its energies upon a mistaken line of action. Austria, on the contrary, although in fact merely a territorial principality like the rest, had been so long in possession of the imperial dignity, that she had an evident and mighty interest in reviving the idea of the ancient power of the Empire. The religious differences had strengthened, instead of weakening, the power of the imperial throne: the great ecclesiastical bodies, which formerly had often opposed the Emperor, now looked mainly to him for support, and the prospect was now opened to him of recovering his power over the whole of Germany by means of an alliance among the spiritual estates of the Empire.

This was the origin of that war which for thirty years devastated Germany. Never was a nation

visited by a heavier calamity than the thirty years' war, which combined all the evils of civil and foreign warfare, and perilled the political and intellectual existence of the nation. As, however, we shall have to return to this subject hereafter, we need now only allude to the consequences which are known to every one—namely, that, although at one moment it appeared as if Protestantism, and those territorial princes who supported it, would be annihilated, or at any rate reduced to the minimum of independence, the event was quite otherwise; the territorial princes not only retained their full independence, but even rose to greater influence than ever: whereas the imperial power, though it was upheld by its alliance with the ecclesiastical estates of the Empire, and thus retained considerable might, was surrounded by so many barriers, or rather opposing influences, that it could never again venture such an attempt as the last upon the liberties of others.

Thus then the power of the territorial princes advanced to another grade. At the beginning of the new movement they had been kept under owing to their imperfectly defined political station; but soon they separately rose to power by their individual force, and joined their efforts with those of the nation at large. They thus strengthened their influence with the estates without wholly shaking off the authority of the imperial Crown. Latterly, however, the territorial princes of the north and east of Germany rendered themselves nearly independent of the Emperor, and, what was more important, they obtained a voice in the affairs of Europe. These princes had clearly become



too strong for the preservation of the unity and external power of the nation. At all events, their new might imposed upon them grave and onerous duties. The first—which still appears to us to be the most important of all—was to oppose the influence which foreign states had acquired during the war, and which threatened to deprive Germany of the consideration of Europe, and to destroy her internal unity. The second duty was so to arrange the public affairs of their own territories as to promote order and to increase the general welfare and influence of the nation at large.

Under these conditions, and, if we are not mistaken, impressed with an unusually strong sense of its duties, the house of Brandenburg and Prussia took its place by the side of the other princely houses, and gradually rose to be one of the most powerful of them all.

The uncontrollable course of events had rendered essential to the German princes the assumption of an independent position towards Germany and Europe, and the establishment of forms of government suited to the wants and capabilities of their respective states: this was indeed attempted by several other powers, but by none was it so successfully carried out as by the house of Brandenburg.

The purpose of our first Book is to show the means by which this was effected, chiefly during the course of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries: but we must first revert to the earliest period of the history of Brandenburg, in order to take a general though cursory view of the origin and development of its power.

## CHAPTER II.

VIEW OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE HOUSE  
OF BRANDENBURG.

THE March of Brandenburg is one of those districts which was first peopled by the advance of the German nation towards the east during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It was in the beginning, like Silesia, Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Prussia, and Livonia, a German colony settled upon an almost uncultivated soil: from the very first, however, it seems to have given the greatest promise of vigour.

In the adjacent districts the Slavonic princes had themselves favoured the immigration of the German race into their territories, and it is unquestionable that in so doing they acted in contradiction to their origin and past history. On the remote shores where the Teutonic knights established themselves there arose moreover an internal spirit of opposition between the settlers whom the order had drawn thither, and who remained fixed to the soil, and the ever-fluctuating society of the order itself, which was entitled to sovereign power over them. In the March of Brandenburg, on the other hand, the princely house under whose guidance the colonization had been effected formed a cognate centre, round which the settlers naturally gathered. Possession was taken of the soil upon the ground of the rights of the princely Ascanian house—we know not whether these rights were founded upon inheritance,

purchase, or cession. The process of occupation was so gradual that the institutions of the old German provinces, like those constituting the northern march, had time to take firm root in the newly-acquired territory; and owing to the constant necessity for unsheathing the sword, the colonists acquired warlike habits which tended to give them spirit and energy. Manifold as were the rights and privileges conceded to the numerous nobles who settled in these districts for the purpose of cultivating and defending the soil,—to the bishops and abbots who took upon themselves military as well as ecclesiastical functions,—to the corporations of the towns and villages,—the powerful influence of the margrave predominated over these various social elements, and served to connect and to advance the whole. The Ascanians were a warlike but cultivated race, incessantly acquiring new possessions, but generous and open-handed; and new life followed in their footsteps.\* They soon took up an important political position among the German princely houses: their possessions extended over a great part of Thuringia, Moravia, Lausitz, and Silesia: the electoral dignity which they assumed gave to them and to their country a high rank in the Empire. In the Neumark and in Pomerellen the Poles retreated before them, and on the Pomeranian coasts they protected the towns founded by the Teutonic order from the invasion of the Danes.

It has been asked whether this race might not have

\* Pulkawa, in Dobner Monum. III. 212. *Joannes et Otto fratres adolescentes sancti,—in concordia unione—in simul opprimentes hostes exaltantes amicos et terras et reditus ampliantes.*

greatly extended its power; but they were not destined even to make the attempt.

It is said that at the beginning of the fourteenth century nineteen members of this family were assembled on the Margrave's Hill near Rathenau. In the year 1320, of all these not one remained, or had even left an heir.

The fact that a false Ascanian prince of the name of Waldemar found adherents proves how deeply rooted was the love for this race in the hearts of the people. In like manner, after the extinction of the family of Hohenstaufen, there appeared a new Frederick II.; and a false Sebastian and a false Demetrius gained followers after the old dynasties had died out in Portugal and in Russia. These facts show the vitality of genealogical attachments and the reluctance felt by nations in early times no longer to see at their head the descendants of their old hereditary ruling houses.

In Brandenburg, moreover, it really appeared as if the extinction of the ruling family would entail ruin upon the country. It had formed a close alliance with the imperial power—which at that moment was the subject of contention between the two great families of Wittelsbach and Luxemburg—was involved in the quarrels of those two races, injured by all their alternations of fortune, and sacrificed to their domestic and foreign policy, which was totally at variance with the interests of Brandenburg. At the very beginning of the struggle the March of Brandenburg lost its dependencies. Shortly afterwards an Archbishop of Magdeburg and a Duke of Mecklenburg could

with impunity commit acts of violence and rapine upon the country. At length a powerful noble family, in the possession of above twenty strongholds, and at the head of an armed band of followers supported by blackmail and protection money, usurped an irregular sort of princely power:—One day one of the family of the Quitzows was received by some town under his protection with the sound of music and rejoicing, and was thus accompanied to his house. The next day this same protector, whose claim to protection money had not been discharged to his satisfaction, thought himself entitled to drive off the cattle from the common pasture-ground: and when a body of burghers pursued him, he attacked and dispersed them and threw the richest and most considered among them into the dungeons of his castle. War and plunder were the rule, peace and concord the exception. “The nearer you approach to the March,” says a contemporary chronicler,\* “the more unsafely do you travel: each one hath usurped a power that he had not before, and doeth only that which he listeth.” † At length the Emperor Sigmund, the last of the house of Luxemburg, found himself so fully occupied with the

\* Wusterwitz, whose account of these times unfortunately has not yet been found in the original. *Angelus Annales Marchiæ*, p. 185.

† Die Mark, die leider langzyter von krieg und andre stücke wegen swerlich vervallen und als verderblich gewest ist. (The March has, alas! long been grievously visited by wars and other afflictions, whereby it is nearly ruined.) Document of the 8th of July in Riedel Cod. dip. II. III. 178. The Latin version in Buchholz, *Geschichte der Churmark*, V. 174, is still more explicit: *Marchiam misere proh dolor bello aliisque calamitatibus afflictam et ruinae totali proximam.*

disturbances in the Empire and the dissensions in the Church, that he could no longer maintain his power in the March, and intrusted the task to his friend and relation, Frederick, Burgrave of Nürnberg, to whom he lay under very great obligations, and who had assisted him with money at his need.

Frederick came of a family the origin of which can be traced back into those dark ages when the names of even the most important houses were very imperfectly distinguished from each other. The first fact for which we find distinct historical evidence is that his ancestors possessed the imperial fortress of Nürnberg, whence by purchase, inheritance, or infeoffment, and by dint of talent and good fortune, they extended their possessions on every side throughout the Franconian circles. They took an active part in the affairs of the Empire at large, and indeed of all Christendom. One of the family mainly promoted the election of Rudolph of Habsburg as Emperor, and thus withdrew him from the petty local feuds in which he was involved, to place him at the head of the affairs of the Empire by which his house was destined to become so powerful. Another member of this family was present at the battle of Nicopolis, where he saved the life of the Emperor Sigmund, his brother-in-law, who led the Christian host. This was the brother of Frederick, Burgrave of Nürnberg, the same who was now Sigmund's vicegerent in the March of Brandenburg, and who by his determined conduct had chiefly assisted Sigmund in obtaining the imperial throne.\*

\* Böhmer *Regesta imperii* 1246—1313, p. 56. Kopp, *König Rudolph*, I. 813.

It was a great point gained, after so long a period of anarchy, to find a powerful and prudent prince ready to undertake the government of the province. He could do nothing in the open field against the revolted nobles, but he assailed and vanquished them in their hitherto impregnable strongholds surrounded with walls fifteen feet thick, which he demolished with his clumsy but effective artillery.

In a few years he had so far succeeded that he was able to proclaim a Landfriede, or public peace,\* according to which each and every one who was an enemy to him, or to those comprehended in the peace, was considered and treated as the enemy of all. But the effect of all this would have been but transient, had not the Emperor, who had no son, and who was won by Frederick's numerous services and by his talents for action, made the Electorate hereditary in his family. Sigmund's daughter conveyed his other rights and claims to the house of Austria. The most important day in the early history of the March of Brandenburg and the family of Zollern was the 18th of April, 1417, when in the market-place of Constance the Emperor Sigmund formally invested the Burgrave with the dignity of Elector, placed in his hands the flag with the arms of the March, and received from him the oath of allegiance.†

From this moment a prospect was afforded to the territory of Brandenburg of recovering its former pros-

\*The document is to be found in Raumer Codex diplomaticus Brandenb. I. 82.

† There is a genuine description of this ceremony in the letter from the Frankfort ambassador, in Aschbach's Kaiser Sigmund, II. 444.

perity and increasing its importance, while to the house of Zollern a career of glory and usefulness was opened worthy of powers which were thus called into action.

The Elector Frederick I., and his two sons Frederick II., and Albert called Achilles, who followed him in succession, remind us of those fabulous heroes of antiquity who come from remote regions to introduce order and discipline among the races indigenous to the soil, and in so doing establish their own power.

Frederick I. was often forced to draw the sword in order to maintain the peace which he had established: for this purpose he thought himself justified in melting the church-bells to make cannon. His warlike character was by no means incompatible with a liberal taste for literature. It is well known that he was a constant reader and admirer of Petrarch, and he valued his German books so highly as to mention them in his will. The personal conferences between the princes of the Empire of that time were of advantage in promoting the interchange of opinions among men of equal rank and power, and thus tending to quicken and mature their understandings. In the management of ecclesiastical and political affairs no one showed greater acuteness and moderation than Frederick I.; from his house at Basle the first message of peace was sent forth to the Hussites.

Frederick II., less fortunate in the field than in the cabinet, succeeded nevertheless in freeing the province of the Altmark from the feudal claim of immediate jurisdiction made upon it by the Archbishops of Magdeburg. He likewise redeemed the



Neumark from the Teutonic knights, to whom it had so long been pledged.\* The memory of this prince attaches to the castle which, after overcoming innumerable impediments, he erected at Cöln on the Spree, in the very centre of the two provinces of the Altmark and the Neumark, which he had once more united. But in the midst of all the zeal and activity in increasing his possessions, which formed so strong a feature in his character, he was careful, as he expresses it in his will, not to leave to his descendants any ill-gotten property. It is impossible to read this document, which is at the same time a confession of faith, and still more the statutes of the order of knighthood which Frederick II. established on the mountain near Altbrandenburg, without being touched by the gentle influence of the spirit of moral and religious purity which animated him.† The immediate object of the order in question was to unite the quarrelsome nobility of the Marches and of Franconia under the common influence of a more elevated spirit.

The plans drawn up by Albert Achilles for his campaign in Pomerania prove that this prince, in addition to the personal courage which gained for him

\* Chmel. *Regesten Friederichs*, III. p. 178, mentions the privilege of Frederick III., according to which all that had been unjustly taken from the March of Brandenburg was to be duly restored thereunto.

† Hie hebt sich an die Furred in unser lieben Frauen Brüderschaft, &c. (Here beginneth the address to the brotherhood of our dear Lady), with several other documents, in *Joh. Dav. Köhler Sacra et illustris sodalitas b. Mariæ virginis in monte ad vetus Brandeburgum*: in the *Scriptt. Rer. Brandenburgicarum*, I. 571.

his heroic epithet, possessed, we will not say the genius of a great commander, but the talents of a skilful and far-sighted general.\* Although his energies were for the most part directed towards other districts, it is impossible to forget what he effected for the March of Brandenburg. He recovered the feudal rights of his house upon Pomerania, which involved such important consequences; and while on the one side he settled the disputed limits of the Ukermark, on the other he maintained Crossen and Züllichau against the far superior forces of Matthias Huniades. With the exception of some trifling subsequent additions, the limits of the Marches have remained such as he fixed them.

After his death the two branches of the family separated for above a century.

∧ The younger branch, which possessed the Franconian principalities, richer in the spirit of enterprise than in wealth or extent of territory, took an active part in the affairs of the Empire, and of Europe generally; and likewise succeeded in making various additions to its territory.

The elder branch—to whose share fell the electoral dignity and the possession of the Marches, which now once more became a distinct country—devoted itself chiefly to the internal administration of its own dominions.

No one would compare these electoral Margraves with the founders of the race, either as to their per-

\* Margrave Albert's plan for passing the Randow, and other documents of a like nature, are given by Raumer in Ledebur's Archives, I. p. 271. It appears as if the Margrave had attempted new combinations in war.

sonal qualities or as to the greatness of their achievements; but they were worthy and honourable men, full of zeal and energy, who devoted themselves with unremitting labour to the task imposed upon them by their position.

We will not dwell upon the details of their lives—it suffices to say that, impelled and supported by the spirit of the times, they endeavoured, to the utmost of their ability, to carry into effect the great ideas of justice, religion, and civil liberty, which lie at the foundations of society.

We may here remark that the German books of law drawn up in times when the supreme power was comparatively weak are exclusively devoted to local interests and peculiarities, and thus foster a tendency to division. In the Roman law, on the contrary, which carries within itself the elements of a well-organized state of society, such as that out of which it arose, general ideas are scientifically worked out; it sets out with the assumption of a strong central government, exercising equal justice over all alike.

It was a most important advance when, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, the Elector of Brandenburg, Joachim I., acting upon the example set by the Emperor, made every effort to introduce into his dominions the Roman, or, as it was then called, the imperial written law—the only law that he recognised—and to give it predominance over the legal customs of the country. In one of his edicts he assumes princely rights and powers, and directs, like the Emperor himself, “out of the pleni-

tude of his power and the fulness of knowledge.\* The university of Frankfort was not, however, founded for this purpose only; it was intended to give to the natives of Brandenburg generally an opportunity—to use the words of the original document—of winning for themselves the priceless pearl of science: † nevertheless, its establishment had immediate reference to legal studies. The first Chancellor was a doctor of law, from Bologna; the first Ordinarius of the faculty of jurisprudence had, in addition to his theoretical studies, practised as a lawyer both at Rome and in the imperial chamber. We soon find a professor of law so celebrated that his admiring scholars filled the streets as they accompanied him home from the lecture-room. A new central court was established, where judgment was to be pronounced in accordance with the Roman law; not that the patrimonial and municipal courts were altogether deprived of their privileges—it sufficed for the present that the general principles of the Roman law were recognised and followed. ‡ The powerful nobles, who had hitherto resisted the decrees of the local and royal courts, obeyed those of this new cen-

\* Documents communicated by Raumer in Ledebur's Archives V. 329.

† *Pro acquirenda scientiæ margarita*; an expression which doubtless is to be found in the motion made by the estates of Brandenburg.

‡ Thus at least I understand this matter, which has given rise to so much controversy among the historians and jurists of Brandenburg. Compare Riedel: *Geschichtliche Nachrichten vom markischen Provinzialrechte*, in his Magazine, I. 32. Laspeyres: *die Reception des Römischen Rechtes in der Mark Brandenburg in Reyscher's and Wilda's Review*, VI. 1.

tral tribunal. The sovereign, upon whose powers of jurisdiction all this was based, reserved to himself the right of hearing the vassals of those estates which composed the local courts, for he would not suffer that justice should be denied to any man. The cessation of feuds and acts of violence was chiefly owing to the change which took place in the state of the law, which no longer encouraged, or even tolerated, such disorders.

The great change in ecclesiastical affairs known under the name of the Reformation of the Church began at this period.

The March, like most of those districts which were colonized late, was rich in ecclesiastical endowments. If the statement be true that ten thousand members of the clergy lived in this district, it is obvious how important it was to restore to civil life so large a number of subjects of the realm who felt themselves to be, before all things, members of an universal corporation. Besides this, a strong repugnance prevailed to pay tithes to distant bishopricks: absolution was no longer allowed to be sold, either to defray the cost of building St. Peter's at Rome, or the expenses of a war against the Russians as enemies of the Latin Church. Men were tired here, as well as elsewhere, of seeing religious feelings turned to account for worldly purposes, and of the innumerable abuses which had crept into the Church.

The prince who dared to make the innovation acted upon the idea that, as neither of the two highest potentates chose to take the matter in hand, he was called upon, by his duty towards God, to pro-

ceed to the work. He insisted as strongly upon his authority as a prince as his father had done, but he would have effected as little, had not the estates been on his side.

However strongly the Hohenzollerns reckoned upon the authority derived from the imperial power, all their more important undertakings were effected only with the agreement and assistance of the estates.

The first Landfriede, or public peace, of 1414, was proclaimed with the sanction of the estates: the assembled estates compelled the city of Berlin to yield obedience to the prince. Somewhat later, when fresh opposition to his ordinances arose in the Altmark, the majority of the estates constituted itself into a court of judicature, and sentenced his subjects to submission.\* The estates furnished the money required for the conquest of the Neumark, and supported the claim of the prince upon Pomerania with all their might; the Kammergericht, or imperial chamber, was established with the concurrence of the lords, knights, and estates; the most distinguished members of the various estates influenced the determination of Joachim II., and, when he announced it, it was unanimously adopted by all the rest. By their advice the work of secularization was commenced, which, it is true, benefited themselves to a certain degree, but which, above all, placed the princely power upon a broader basis.

The active part taken by the estates could not fail to give them a great influence upon public affairs, and a large share of power. As they sanctioned the

\* Raumer Codex diplomaticus, II. 201.

needful taxes "from loyalty and good will," as they said, and not "from duty," both the imposition and the application of these taxes were left chiefly to their direction. During the discussion of public affairs a council of nobles acted in concert with the privy counsellors of the prince.\* Thus arose that mixed form of government, at once monarchical and representative, which Protestantism so frequently helped to establish. Under John George, called the Economist because he retrieved the decayed finances of the country, the prince and the estates, the nobility and the citizens, the ecclesiastical and the temporal powers, were duly balanced: the land was better cultivated than ever, and the state was enriched by commercial prosperity. There could as yet be no question of the country possessing any extensive political importance; nevertheless, the prince, especially in connexion with his neighbour of Saxony, exercised no small influence upon the affairs of the Empire.† The Ascanian Margravate was not alone re-established, but immensely raised in power and civilization. The princes of the house of Hohenzollern had succeeded in repressing the powerful influences which disturbed the public peace, and in uniting and keeping together a large territory which had been gradually diminished and invaded on

\* Landtagsrecess mit denen Städten, 2 Oct. 1549, in Mylius Corpus Cont. March. VI. p. 76, 78. Articuli denen Landständen verschrieben. (The articles prescribed to the provincial Diet.) Ibid. p. 88. 1550, Oct. 14.

† Malaspina avvertimenti al Pp. Sisto V. 1586. Il duca di Sassonia e Marchese di Brandenburg saliti in tanta riputazione che erano assoluti arbitri della Germania nè faceva S. M. cosa alcuna se da questi non fosse prima approvata.

all sides: moreover, by the adoption of new and pregnant ideas, they had caused their country to take a prominent part in the general intellectual progress of the age. All this was done in concurrence with the estates, which were thus brought into a perfect community of interests and opinions with their princes.

If, on the one hand, the March shared in the general increase of wealth and prosperity which prevailed throughout Protestant Germany, on the other it was exposed to the same general dangers, arising from the progress of the restored Catholic doctrine, which threatened everything with a retrograde movement.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century there was no house so odious to the promoters of the restored Catholic doctrine, indeed none stood so much in their way, as the house of Brandenburg. Not that this family was more important in itself than many others, or that its opinions were peculiarly hostile; this was by no means the case. The house of Hohenzollern had until now always continued on excellent terms with its old ally the house of Habsburg. Between princes gifted with moderation, such as Maximilian II. and Joachim II., there were but few points of difference, in spite of the dissimilarity of their creeds. But owing to this very circumstance the house of Brandenburg had by degrees acquired rights which greatly increased their importance, and enabled them to become the most powerful supporters of Protestantism.

The Margraves of the Franconian line had, as we have already seen, made vast additions to their terri-



tory, and had prepared the way for more, while the Electors were busied in the affairs of their own dominions. In Silesia they had acquired Jägerndorf and several adjacent properties by purchase; this acquisition was chiefly important from the influence which it gave them over a province which was still considered almost independent, and which was completely self-governed. But that which was of far greater importance was, that a member of this house, Margrave Albert the elder, found occasion and powerful inducement to convert the possessions of the Teutonic order in Prussia, not however till they were diminished by more than half, into a dukedom, and under the protection of his nearest ally, the Jagellonian king of Poland, who would no doubt have otherwise made himself master of the other half of these possessions: this he accomplished with the assent of his estates. Both these districts were alike in origin, cultivation, and religion, to the Marches of Brandenburg. Besides this, Albert's son acquired by his marriage with Maria Eleonora of Cleves—whose inheritance had been specially secured to her by the Emperor—a well-founded claim to the dukedom of Cleves, which he left to his descendants and to the house of Brandenburg.

At the commencement of the seventeenth century it came to pass that the several lines of the family of the Franconian Margraves died out one after the other, leaving all their possessions and rights to the electoral branch. By this combination several German provinces, Franconia, Prussia, the Marches, Cleves, and Juliers, and a principality in Silesia, fell under one

sceptre. Such a number of provinces had not been united under one ruler since the time of Henry the Lion, and his position was of a totally different character.

Whether it was that Joachim Frederick was afraid of exciting the envy of other princes by the union of all these provinces, or that he lacked the political courage requisite for undertaking an affair of such magnitude, he did not conceive the project of bringing and keeping them all under one sceptre.\* He preferred satisfying the claims made upon him by his half-brothers, by giving up to them the Franconian possessions: the Silesian principality he bestowed upon his second son. His ambition went no further than that his eldest son should inherit the lands towards the east and west, together with Cleves, Prussia, and the two Marches.

It was, however, vain to expect that this would lessen the disfavour with which the house of Brandenburg was now regarded. Austria could not tolerate the formation of a German power which approached more nearly to herself in importance than any other, and it added greatly to the anxiety and embarrassment of the promoters of the Catholic restoration that this new power was a Protestant one, and that it would now afford a fresh support to the Protestant party throughout the Empire, which hitherto had been wavering and weak.

\* It was precisely "um dieser hoch angelegenen, beschwerlichen Sachen willen der preussischen jülichischen jägerndorfschen,"—on account of this most weighty and difficult question of the right of Prussia to Juliers and Jägerndorf, that the secret council was established. The constitution thereof, according to the corrected copy of  $\frac{1}{2}$  Dec. 1604, is to be found in Klaproth and Cosmar's Staatsrath, p. 304.

The imperial vice-chancellor exhorted the Emperor to refuse his sanction to the incorporation of Juliers and Cleves with Brandenburg; not that he had any lawful objection to offer—indeed he did not attempt to say that he had—but simply because the power of those who had seceded from the Roman Catholic faith would thereby be exceedingly increased: they indeed already rested all their hopes upon the house of Brandenburg.\* It had always been one of the main objects of the Hispano-Austrian policy to allow no independent or hostile government to rise into power in those western territories: it still kept this idea steadily in view. Something little short of a regular feud broke out upon the lower Rhine in consequence.

Now that the imperial court had allowed itself to be induced to forsake its accustomed moderation in the conduct of the affairs of the Empire, and, for the sake of furthering the interests of a particular religious party, to oppose claims of succession, the validity of which no one called in question, it was vain to think of remaining any longer upon friendly terms with it. Brandenburg was compelled to abandon that peaceful attitude which it had hitherto preserved with such advantage to its own provinces and to the interests of the Lutheran faith, and to join the league of those German princes who were determined to resist the Catholic tendency which had shown itself so strongly in the conduct of the imperial government. John Sigismund, the eldest son of Joachim Frederick, who saw even in

\* A paper by Lewin von Emden (in Lünig's Staatsconsilien) no doubt formed the basis of the well-known opinion of Strahlendorf on this affair.

the Lutheran doctrines and ceremonies too near an approach to Catholicism, did not hesitate to join the sterner sect of Calvin, whose followers now mainly carried on the war. He now surrounded himself exclusively with men holding these opinions; his privy council in 1615 consisted, with but few exceptions, of zealous Calvinists. Meanwhile the general war, of which we have already spoken, broke forth. It originated in the disturbances which arose in the Austrian hereditary possessions, where a Calvinist prince had in his turn seized upon a territory to which he had no right, and had broken the conventions existing among the German princes. The war then spread over all Germany, first reaching those who had taken part in the Bohemian quarrel, next spreading to their allies and friends, and finally involving those who had not borne the slightest share in the Bohemian troubles, but had taken up arms to prevent their allies from being utterly ruined. From upper Germany the war spread to the lower Empire. It was the intention of the united and triumphant Catholic party to restore exactly the old forms of the Church and the hierarchy of the Empire, and to invest them with exclusive dominion.

If we inquire into the causes of this sudden ruin of the Protestants, we shall find that it was chiefly owing to the narrowness of their views, and to their blindness to their common danger.

The system of government by estates (Ständewesen), which had been everywhere introduced, rested upon the assumption of an all-protecting,

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even-handed, imperial power. No one could bear, so to speak, to admit the idea that the imperial government could assume any other character, or pursue any other course. The estates of Würtemberg had ceased to collect the imposts which might have rendered the defence of their country possible, at the very time when the enemy appeared triumphantly upon their frontiers. Here and there abortive consultations were held as to the necessity of constructing some works of defence after the enemy had already entered the country, or else the measures for the defence of the country were so ordered that only limited powers of superintendence were intrusted to the princes. Far different was the autonomy in the Catholic principalities, where the art of government had been learnt from the examples of the Popes and the Italian princes;—there each country was ruled by one will, and for a long time all clung together with a strong conviction of having one common purpose.\*

The house of Brandenburg was involved in this ruin from precisely the same causes.

The union of so many various provinces was very far from proportionately increasing the power of the prince. Each province was fully occupied with its own internal affairs; and in the most powerful and important among them all, the Churmark or Electoral March of Brandenburg, the change in the religion and in the political system of the

\* Maximilian of Bavaria reigned for 39 years without once summoning the Estates. Rudhart, *Geschichte der Landstände von Baiern*, II. p. 270.

country had produced a feeling of discontent which deadened all its energies. The news of the defeat of the King of Bohemia, which was the commencement of the general disasters, was received with pleasure in the March. Even when war approached their frontiers, the estates thought that they had done enough when they garrisoned the fortresses in which most of the wealth of the country had been deposited. At first they voted for this service a body of only three thousand men, which number, as their zeal diminished, was again reduced to nine hundred. They were fully satisfied that they had only to persevere in their devotion to the Emperor. Their narrow provincial minds were totally unable to understand the state of the country, or to foresee the approaching contest between the great political and intellectual powers of the day.\* The consequence of this was that Wallenstein's troops, utterly regardless of this professed neutrality, poured into the towns and circles of the Marches, and made booty of the money which the estates had neglected to use for their own defence. And now for the first time the whole extent of the schemes of the victorious party became apparent to the dullest sight.

One of the most important principalities of the Empire was bestowed upon an imperial general. By this proceeding the independence of all the hereditary princely houses, which had hitherto formed the centre of most of the events then passing in Germany, was

\* Correspondence between the Elector George William and David von Lüderitz, in König. *Historische Schilderung von Berlin*, I. p. 326.

seriously endangered. That which had happened to one, seemed to threaten all.

When we remember how greatly the secularization of the ecclesiastical possessions contributed to strengthen the power of the territorial princes, it is manifest what was meant when the restitution of these possessions was now formally insisted upon by the imperial government.

A part of the funds arising from this restitution was to be applied to the foundation of a large university in the north of Germany, under the direction of the Jesuits, in order to extirpate the doctrines out of which had arisen the state of things then existing in Germany.\*

Representatives of the imperial power now appeared in the immediate vicinity of the March: the imperial general, Wallenstein, advanced into Mecklenburg, and an Austrian prince took possession of the archbishoprick of Magdeburg—a see which had hitherto kept up a close alliance with the March. The Catholic party not only demanded restitution of the ecclesiastical possessions in Brandenburg, but even of the income derived from them for half a century past. The duchy of Prussia was made the object of similar demands: it was asserted that this duchy

\* A list of the abbeys, convents, and monasteries, which were restored by the Commissioners in the circles of Upper and Lower Saxony (Mailath's *Geschichte von Osterreich*, III. p. 168), enumerates above 120, without counting the bishopricks and archbishopricks. These Commissioners proposed to establish the University either in Goslar, Hameln, or Nordhausen—somewhere in the neighbourhood of Göttingen and Halle. *Ibid.* 474.

was the property of the Church, to which it must be restored.

The government of Brandenburg was not at this time in a condition to oppose these views with vigour and effect. At a period when each man found the strongest motive for action in his own particular religious confession, the greater portion of the privy council of Brandenburg were followers of Calvin; the estates, almost without exception, Lutherans; and the prime minister a Catholic. Each tendency that in its turn gained the upper hand in the conduct of affairs was welcomed by one or the other of these three parties. The Prince, who was not without understanding, but unwarlike, and painfully conscious of his own weakness,\* was each time borne along by the current so long as the new turn of events inspired him with hopes, until, by some fresh change, these were once more turned into cares. All the rest of Protestant Germany united could not check such a course of things as this.

At the same time it is manifestly impossible that the Empire could, by pursuing the policy we have described, have been restored to its pristine power

\* *Relatione di Germania*, 1628, describes him as “*di bell aspetto, di buon ingegno ma non troppo vivace ni belligero.*” He once said that “*Hiobs Geduld werde gepriesen, weil er von Gott heimgesucht worden, die sich aber von Menschen vexiren, braviren und mit Stillsitzen das ihrige nehmen lassen, die wird kein Historienschreiber loben können.*” (The patience of Job was praised because his trials were from God; but they that suffered themselves to be vexed, braved, and robbed of their own by men, and sat still the while, such as these no writer of history would ever extol.) In a letter from Schwarzenberg, in *Cosmar's Life of Schwarzenberg*, p. 52.



and freedom, for it was only upon the mutual recognition of its various elements that the power of Germany could rest; and the real vitality of the nation, which had been developed with so much toil and effort, would in this case have been totally destroyed: the government would have been bestowed upon any prince who could be persuaded that his conscience was never so easy as when he followed the directions of his confessor in every particular; and everything would ere long have fallen a prey to ecclesiastics and soldiers.

The posture of affairs was such that even the Catholic estates of the Empire trembled for the principle of territorial power, and rose up to resist its annihilation. - On the one hand, the Pope feared for his seat in Rome, and called in the ancient jealousy of the French court to aid him against the house of Austria; while, on the other, the Protestants of northern Germany lived in daily dread of being reached by the war of conversion which was rapidly spreading in all directions.

Out of the general conflict of all the powers which constituted the European world, arose the perception of a great political truth.

As by degrees the permanent existence of the territorial princes and of Protestantism became more and more doubtful, a feeling was awakened that these elements were absolutely essential to the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe, and to the independent developement of other nations. The collective interests of all countries imperatively demanded the existence of some independent Pro-

testant power, more especially in the north of Germany.

We are, however, forced to confess that Germany was not then in a position to defend her own cause, or to win back her past importance.

The help of a foreign prince was needed—one who, taking up arms in the interests of his own country and of the Protestant faith, should overthrow the armed power which threatened to overwhelm the Lutheran states. This need of foreign assistance was however a most dangerous precedent; and the deliverance which it effected necessarily gave to this foreign power an influence which more than ever embarrassed the destinies of Germany.

Matters went on well enough so long as the gifted and well-meaning monarch who first conceived and executed this project was alive; but after his death nothing remained but the shameless rapacity of the Swedish character exhibited by their despotic generals, who now fought merely each for his own particular interests, and by an adroit diplomatist, who drew in the whole of Europe to assist him in attaining his ends.

Scarcely saved from the destruction prepared for them by their legitimate sovereign the Emperor, the Lutheran estates found themselves condemned to another kind of dependence by the authority of those allies whom they themselves had summoned to their assistance.

Some of the Lutheran estates now went over to the side of the Emperor, who, taught by bitter experience, endeavoured to resume the impartial attitude

which he had formerly maintained. By this proceeding, however, the estates drew down upon themselves the fury of their warlike brethren in religion, whose might, even with the Emperor's assistance, they were unable to withstand.

During this period of weakness, the succession to the duchy of Pomerania, to which the house of Brandenburg had rights of some centuries standing, became vacant. The Swedes, who already held military possession of this district, now laid claim to a territory which was so conveniently situated with regard to Sweden. In vain did the Elector ally himself with the Emperor, in order to wrest Pomerania from the hands of the Swedes, and to assert the claims of the Empire, and at the same time his own, upon it. Instead of obtaining possession of a new province, the Elector only caused the best of his hereditary fiefs to become the theatre of the fiercest scenes of devastation. No German province has ever been visited by more terrible calamities than was the March of Brandenburg during a war which almost turned the whole district into a desert.

In the midst of this general ruin of his own affairs and those of his country, without hope or comfort, the Elector George William died, and was succeeded by his only son, a young man only twenty years of age.

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## CHAPTER III.

## THE ELECTOR FREDERICK WILLIAM.

MISFORTUNE is often the best school for men. Thus it was probably much more favourable to the formation of a manly character in this young prince, that during his boyhood he had been forced to seek shelter from the bands of marauding soldiers which infested the country, at one time in the forests of Letzlingen, at another within the walls of Cüstrin, than if he had grown up in the enjoyment of ease and pleasure amid the enervating influences of a court education. He was afterwards sent to the friendly house of Orange, in that free workshop for every branch of learning, the Netherlands. He was already man enough not to forget, in the hour of trial, the good lesson he had learnt; but of all his experiences, that which was the most simple was also the most important—namely, the intimate knowledge that he acquired of a country which, though involved in the general war, nevertheless enjoyed an unequalled degree of internal welfare and contentment. This was the time at which the Republic was at the very height of its prosperity.

He beheld a sad contrast on his return to his hereditary dominions: he found them laid waste and utterly powerless, the several provinces disunited, and totally wanting in any sound line of policy. The country was a constant and easy prey to the violence of all the belligerent powers.

“On one hand,” says the Elector Frederick William, in a treatise written by him during the early years of his reign, and which is still extant,—“on one hand I have the King of Sweden, on the other the Emperor: here I stand between the two awaiting that which they will do unto me—whether they will leave me mine own, or whether they will take it away.”\* When he read the Bible—and this was the only history which was then strongly impressed upon the minds of men—he almost doubted whether any prince had ever been placed in such sore necessity as he then was: neither David nor Solomon, he thought, had ever found it so hard to discover what they ought to do.

He had a strong feeling that he ought not to separate from the Emperor lightly; but it would have been wilful self-deception to imagine that he should receive any effectual assistance from that quarter. He beheld his real position with perfect clearness. “Of what use,” exclaimed he, “could such princes be to the Emperor as would suffer themselves to be driven away from their possessions and their people?” [Above all, it was necessary first to make himself master of the March, where his father’s minister, Count Schwarzenberg, had taken up an almost independent position, and was determined to pursue his old line of policy, with the assistance of the generals

\* *Bedenken, ob ich eine Partei jetzt oder ins künftige nehmen soll.* (Considerations as to whether I should make a resolve now or at a future time.) Original Document in the Elector’s own hand in the Royal Archives at Berlin. This is the oldest and one of the most important documents that I have used in this work.

of the army which had been levied under the Emperor's name and authority. It is impossible to read, without astonishment and interest, how Frederick William burst his bonds, brought into subjection those imperial leaders who held possession of the various fortresses in his dominions, and finally got rid of them. We are reminded of the bold and happy stratagems of Italian party warfare, with this difference, that, in the Elector's case, talent was enlisted in the service of the righteous cause. Frederick William was compelled to employ an union of force and cunning in order to obtain possession of the fortresses built by his forefathers, and of his own hereditary dominions. There was no need of proceeding to acts of violence against his father's minister, as has long been supposed. This man's end affords a remarkable study of human nature. Schwarzenberg was in an excited state, varying between sickness and health, when it happened one day that the officers of one of the regiments devoted to the Emperor demanded of him, in violent terms, the payment of their arrears. He was forced to satisfy them out of his private purse. Immediately after he heard, indirectly it is true, but with indubitable certainty, that his new master did not look upon him with favour.\* We

\* This seems to be the meaning of the information which he received from Ratisbon, "welchergestalt ein Oberster berichtet, er hätte zu Königsberg einen Sr. Churfl. Durchlaucht vornehmen Diener verstanden, dass es übel um Sie (den Grafen Schwarzenberg) stünde—darüber Sie zu beben aufingen." (In such wise did an officer report, that when at Königsberg he had understood from one of the chief servants of the Elector that it stood ill with him—Count Schwarzenberg—upon hearing the

cannot take upon ourselves to say that his conscience smote him, but he must have been well aware how heavy was the guilt which the Elector ascribed to him. At that very moment he was seized with a fever which in a few days put an end to his life. The elements which he had struggled to hold together were now for ever disunited: he felt himself open to attack on both sides; and the destruction of the policy which he had pursued put an end to his existence.

Now that Frederick William was no longer fettered by his connexion with the Emperor, he could venture to make some advances to the Swedes. It was only after a tedious and difficult negotiation that he at last succeeded in inducing the Swedes to evacuate those places in the March which they still held. The Hessians likewise quitted the western districts of Cleves, and the Elector could now breathe more freely. At length he was enabled to arm a small body of troops—a right which had been contested, but upon which everything depended. This procured for him a certain consideration, as well as some sort of security against the fluctuating masses of troops by which he was surrounded. He needed this force to support him in the negotiations which had been set on foot in the mean time, but which were interrupted at every step by fresh hostile outbreaks, and were on

which he began to tremble.) Report of the Privil Council, 14 March, 1641, in *Cosmar's Life of Schwarzenberg*: Appendix 54. The Elector always believed that Count Schwarzenberg had conspired against his life. He spoke on this subject as late as 1683 to the English minister.

the whole most effectively forwarded by formidable warlike manifestations.

The Elector was determined not to give up his intention of obtaining possession of those additions to his territories, the prospect of which had called forth such violent opposition from his rivals. In the year 1647 Frederick William concluded an agreement with Pfalz Neuburg, by which, after mature consideration, he recognised the outline which had been drawn up for the partition of the succession of Cleves, effacing, however, from the former treaty, several clauses disadvantageous to himself. He likewise secured to himself the possession of two countships, one of which, the March, was at that time nearly the most considerable in the Empire, as well as of the old duchy of Cleves—all situate on the western frontier of the Empire.\* Both princes agreed to lay their treaty before the Emperor for approbation, but to observe the terms of it even should the Emperor withhold his sanction. They likewise agreed to make common cause in defending both their dominions against all other powers. It was a matter of considerable importance that in the treaty of Osnabrück these resolutions were tacitly adopted, or at any rate that the claims formerly made by other princes were not insisted upon. The times, indeed, were past when the order of Teutonic knights could entertain any hopes of regaining pos-

\* Düsseldorf, 8 April, 1647. Dumont, VI. 1. 392. Compare Helwing *Geschichte der brandenburgisch-preussischen Staaten*, III. 425. An agreement drawn up in the year 1649 completed the treaty in regard to Ravensberg. The main object of the settlement with respect to the succession, dated 9th Sept., 1666, was to change the provisory condition into a definitive one.



session of the duchy of Prussia; nor would any attempt to alter the internal condition of the March of Brandenburg have been at all more feasible. The German hierarchy was then occupied with far different matters than the recovery by the Church of those possessions which had become secular fiefs.

Of all the former possessions of the house of Brandenburg, one only was now wanting—the duchy of Jägerndorf, which the Emperor had seized and bestowed upon some one else. A special discussion took place on this subject; but in the general negotiations another territory was the subject of continual discussion; this was the duchy of Pomerania, the cession of which involved questions of as much importance to the Empire at large as to Brandenburg. At length the Emperor and the imperial council recognised the just claims of the house of Brandenburg, but at the same time declared themselves unable to assist the Elector in supporting them.

Frederick William replied that Pomerania was a province which God had given to his ancestors and to himself, and that he wished for nothing but to be left in quiet possession of it;\* that he had no mind to offer it for sale, but, if he was to lose it, or any part thereof, he demanded such compensation for his loss as might satisfy him.

Here, however, he encountered great difficulties. He complains that those among his neighbours who

\* In a consultation of 2nd May, 1647, he says, among other things, that the estates of Brandenburg were bound to support him in his enterprise upon Pomerania, as they had advised him to conclude the peace of Prague.

most strenuously insisted upon the cession of the province, now most violently opposed his receiving any compensation. But Frederick William was already too powerful for the Emperor to risk driving him, by a refusal, to take part with the French or the Swedes.\* It was therefore determined to take a momentous step in the history of the Empire—to secularise the sees of Halberstadt, Minden, and Magdeburg in his favour, in consideration of the loss of Vorpommern. The rest of Pomerania, with Camin, remained in his possession. In later times this compensation has been considered as disproportionately large, but such was not the view taken of it then.† At all events it is manifest that Frederick William himself was by no means satisfied. Of all the princes of the house of Brandenburg, he is the only one who ever showed a strong predilection for maritime life and maritime power. It was the dream of his youth that he would one day sail, along shores obedient to his will, all the way from Cüstrin, out by the mouths of the Oder, across to the coast of Prussia. His sojourn in the Netherlands had strengthened, though it had not inspired, his love of the sea. The best proof how painful this cession was to the Elector is the fact that he shortly afterwards offered to the crown of Sweden, not alone the three sees of Halberstadt, Minden, and Magdeburg, but a sum of two

\* *Ne Galli affectum Brandenburgicorum lucrarentur soli. Adami Relatio de pace Osnabr. p. 458.*

† *Contarini Relazione della pace di Munster findet es eine ricompensa di maggior entrata se bene non di tanta conseguenza, quanto quella della Pomerania ceduta, stanti i riguardi del Baltico.*

millions of thalers in addition, for the possession of Pomerania.\*

According to the view which we now take of the matter, it is fortunate that his wishes were not fulfilled; for Brandenburg was now forced into a connexion with central Germany, the advantages of which far outweighed those it might have gained by a maritime position.

Thus then, without having made any conquests, the house of Brandenburg came out of this war with far more extensive possessions than it had held on first taking part in it.

But by the mere acquisition of a certain number of provinces nothing was done towards the developement

\* Letter to Salvius, dated 28 Dec., 1648; in which he states that what the Chancellor of Osnabrück had said to him was perfectly true. "Dass ich gegen ihn gedacht hätte, wann es der Cron Schweden beliebig, ich allemal gerne und willig für das Pommerische Theil und Fürstenthum Rügen, so der Cron vor ihre Satisfaction bewilligt worden, nicht allein die drei Stifter als Magdeburg Halberstadt und Minden, sondern auch noch 2 Millionen jedoch auf leidliche Termine und Jahre aufzubringen und zu geben angeboten. Würde es für eine sonderbare Freundschaft von Ihrer kön. Würde und der Kron zu schätzen haben, wenn es der Herr, bevorab als ein vornehmer Minister dahin befördern und bringen könnte, und würde er mich hiedurch zum höchsten obligiren." (I hinted to him that, if the King of Sweden would agree to it, I would freely and willingly give, not only the three bishoprics of Magdeburg, Halberstadt, and Minden, but two millions into the bargain, to be raised and paid within a reasonable period, in exchange for the island of Rügen and the part of Pomerania that had been given to the Crown of Sweden as a compensation. It would be esteemed a singular mark of friendship on the part of his Excellency the King, if this could be done by any means in the minister's power, and he would thereby oblige me exceedingly.)

of Germany or of Europe. It yet remained to be seen whether the prince who had been so successful in maintaining his own rights would now embrace that line of policy which the state of public affairs required.

In this he was powerfully assisted by the present security of the independence of the territorial powers, combined as it was with the Protestant form of worship, which had been established by the treaty of peace. Beyond a doubt, then, what was most needed was strength enough to maintain this independence. Experience had already shown the evil resulting to Germany from the want of vigour and power of resistance in the governments of the various states. If two opposing religious systems were henceforth to exist in the Empire, it was essential that each should afford a sufficient counterpoise to the other, so that neither need constantly fly to some foreign power for assistance against every danger that threatened it.

Alliances had been formerly made for this object, but these had invariably been forcibly broken up, or had split upon some internal dissension. It was therefore of immense advantage for German Protestantism that a power should arise which should be able to defend itself unaided, and effectually to resist all foreign interference.

But this was far from being all that was required. It might safely be assumed that Sweden would always afford protection to the religious element; but this was not consistent with the German idea of Protestantism, which had never separated itself from the Emperor and the Empire. A most dangerous in-

fluence upon the internal relations of the German commonwealth would be thus given to a line of policy necessarily directed towards entirely foreign interests. During the course of the wars, the two powers which had been introduced into Germany had, by dint of intolerable violence and oppression, extorted important cessions of territory. The time was now come for endeavouring to regain that which had been thus lost. The honour of the German name had to be supported, or rather to be restored. Thus it happened that the interest of Protestantism and of individual territorial princes was bound up with a common national interest tempering the acerbity of the former. Constituted as the German Empire then was, it was possible for a prince to conceive and pursue both these principles simultaneously. All that was needed was that he should be in a position to do so on the strength of his own unaided authority.

In order to attain to this position it was absolutely essential to the house of Brandenburg that the provinces united under its rule should no longer be dependent upon foreign powers, which was especially the case so long as the duchy of Prussia formed a province of Poland.

[In the year 1654, when the Swedes, who had not as yet been checked by any great reverses, began the war afresh against the King of Poland—at first with irresistible success—Frederick William found himself in much the same position on his eastern frontier as that in which he had been ten years before in Germany itself.

It would carry us far beyond our present limits

were we to enter upon a minute investigation of the line of policy which Frederick William pursued in these eventful times;—how at first he hoped and intended to maintain a neutral position, but soon found himself compelled to make common cause with the Swedes; how after a while he forsook their alliance, and entered into negotiations with the King of Poland. The most important result was that during this campaign he formed an army which by its glorious deeds gave fresh lustre to the long-tarnished military fame of Brandenburg, and that he put an end to the irksome subjection in which he had stood to the crown of Poland. When he joined the Poles, they could not refuse to grant him the same terms which the Swedes had offered. In November, 1657, at a solemn meeting at Bromberg, beneath the vault of heaven, the King and the Elector ratified by oath a treaty releasing the duchy of Prussia from its former allegiance to the crown of Poland, and declaring it a sovereign state.\* The results of subsequent wars and the treaties of 1660 recognised and confirmed this newly acquired independence. It now therefore became possible to pursue a line of policy which was not every moment liable to be thwarted and embarrassed by foreign influences.]

Accordingly, the Prince could now turn his attention to the establishment of a system of government suited to the demands of the time.

\* *Pactis sub nudo æthere utrinque jurejurando firmatis.* Puffendorf, *Carolus Gustavus*, IV. 31—a book together with another by the same author, “*Fredericus Wilhelmus*,” not altogether unimportant for the history of Brandenburg.

The races united under this dynasty offered good materials for the purpose, inasmuch as they were mostly of north German origin and of the Protestant faith—men of simple, strong, and active minds. But geographically they were almost disunited, and their former prosperity had been brought grievously low by the effects of the war. The provinces possessed each a separate constitution, to which they clung as a means of putting a check upon arbitrary power, and of keeping up the separation between themselves. The three chief provinces—Cleves, Prussia, and the March—kept each other at a distance by their indigene laws, according to which none but the natives of each province could hold office therein. All their ideas and feelings were essentially provincial, and their union under one and the same government was altogether insufficient to combine them into one nation.

At this particular period the rights and privileges of constitutional states were greatly abridged throughout Europe. Absolute monarchy was established in Denmark by the solemn resolution of the Diet, and fostered in Sweden by a king who now at length turned his active mind to the internal affairs of his country; Louis XIV. made use of the disorders of the Fronde to render his own power and administration quite independent of the parliament and of the nobility; and in England restored monarchy just now carried everything before it. Frederick William was compelled by his position, and incited by the public opinion of his country, to engage in a similar contest, and to

strive to develop the idea of sovereignty as he had conceived it.\*

In the duchy of Prussia this contest was the most immediately necessary, and at the same time the most serious in its nature.

Nowhere had such barriers been raised against the princely power as in that province. The chancellor had the right of refusing to set his seal to any order emanating from the Duke; the privy counsellors had the entire control of the household expenses, and of the royal domains; the Landtag, or provincial Diet, to which delegates were sent provided with instructions from the circles which elected them, decided all important questions. In fact, Prussia was nearly as much like a republic as Poland, with this difference only, that the crown of Poland exercised the chief influence over it. The King of Poland reserved to himself the right of annulling such ordinances as displeased him. If the Duke hesitated to obey, the King could command. He fixed a certain time within which the rejected passages were to be replaced by others founded upon his own suggestions.

We should not judge the conduct pursued in this matter by the Elector aright, if we beheld in it an attack upon the constitution of the province, and were

\* When he confirmed the privileges conceded to Magdeburg, it was with the proviso, "in wie fern solche seiner erbfürstlichen Hoheit nicht entgegen sein würden" (inasmuch as they are not contrary to those of his princely highness). These he held to be of the first importance. Documents in Dreihaupt: Saalkreis, I. 473.



either to blame it as an infringement of established rights, or to defend it as essential to the general welfare. The fact is that this old constitution no longer had any real existence. It rested entirely upon the influence exercised by the King of Poland, which had ceased with the convention of Welau, and the oaths taken at Bromberg. The question now at issue was how to construct a new constitution upon the ruins of the old one.

The estates endeavoured to replace the support they had lost in the King of Poland by imposing fresh restrictions upon the Elector of Brandenburg. Like the Arragonese and the Hungarians after the manifesto published by King Andreas, they imagined that he was to reign over them only so long as he should abide by the conditions which they wished to impose upon his authority, and no longer. They demanded that the conduct of the government should undergo a searching investigation before every meeting of the Diet; and that if it was discovered that their privileges had been in any way infringed, they should hold themselves absolved from their oaths of allegiance.

Frederick William had no idea of a government of this nature. He offered to the estates a constitution which gave them very considerable rights, among others that of partly controlling the taxation of the country; but he was immoveable in his determination\*

\* "Und weiss man wohl, dass sie sich Dinge gegen meine Vorfahren angemast und vorgenommen, welche in ihren Freiheiten nicht begriffen sein; dass ich alles gern klärlich gesetzt haben will ist die Ursach, dass ich meinen Kindern keine Schwierigkeiten nach meinem Tode verlassen möchte." (And it is well known that they dared to attempt things against my forefathers, the which were not included in their liberties: the

to maintain the power of doing "that which it pertaineth to a righteous prince to do."\* His first object was to reduce this to a fixed system.

This led to violent discussions between the Elector and the estates. The estates endeavoured to renew their former connexion with the court of Poland, and it seems as if they had met with some encouragement from that quarter. The Schöppenmeister, or high sheriff, Rhode, who at Königsberg successfully played the part of a powerful demagogue, and whom no one ventured to resist, proposed to form a league for restoring the former happy state of things, when Prussia was subject to Poland; and thus secured to himself the King's favour.† The Elector's troops guarded the public roads, in order to cut off all communication between Königsberg and Warsaw, while the citizens planted cannon on the walls of their town.

reason why I wish to have all things clearly defined is, that I may leave to my children no difficulties after my death.) They would refuse to do homage to his children if they were infants. Letter to Schwerin, 27 Feb. 1662.

\* The favourite hand-book of German politics in those days was Seckendorf's *Fürstenstaat*, in which, although it is laid down that the prince is bound to treat his subjects as freeborn people, to hearken to the advice of his estates, and to observe the contracts he had made with them, still his power overtops everything. The chief object of government is pronounced to be the maintenance of the welfare and prosperity of all, both in ecclesiastical and temporal matters. The prince is invested with the judicial, and even with the legislative power; he must be strong enough to make his rule beneficially felt by all his subjects; he must possess the means of repressing disobedient subjects, foreign foes, and all such as do acts of violence. (II. § I., § IV., first edition of the book in 1656.)

† Documents in Baczko, *Geschichte Preussens*, V. 682.

To the dismay of his family, the Elector resolved to visit the revolted city in person. We read in the letters of some of its members how they commended him to the protection of God and of his angels, lest any evil should be resolved against him.\* He encountered the most obstinate resistance. It was only by his decision in seizing a favourable opportunity that he got the person of the high sheriff into his hands. He was moreover warned by the estates, that, if they had a hundred grievances, and he remedied ninety and nine of them, they would still refuse him allegiance for the sake of the remaining one. "I can do nothing here," he once exclaimed, "but chafe within myself. The Lord deliver me from men that will hear no reason."†

By slow degrees, however, reason prevailed. The estates had gone much too far: they were not only in rebellion against their prince, but still more against an historical fact which had been accomplished during the conflict of the European powers, and which they were not in the remotest degree able to annul. At length they resolved to come to an understanding upon the most important points, without reference to Poland; and at last a compromise was agreed upon by which the respective rights of the Elector and of the estates were somewhat more equally balanced. Indeed, Frederick William found these terms more advantageous to himself than those which he had originally proposed.‡

\* Letter of the Countess Hedwig Sophie, dated 10 Sept. 1662, in Orlich's Frederick William, 1836. Appendix, p. 93.

† Compare the Statthalters Letter in Orlich: Geschichte Preussens im siebzehnten Jahrhundert, 1838. I., p. 329.

‡ 16 May: to Schwerin. Hätten die Stände bei der Regi-

On the 16th of October, 1663, the estates swore allegiance to him as their only true and liege lord.

This was a most important day for the house of Brandenburg and for Germany at large. The former treaties now first acquired substance and reality, and the influence of Poland was destroyed. This was the decisive reaction against the losses which Brandenburg had sustained from Poland during the fifteenth century.

Nevertheless the Prussian state was not yet completely formed. The mere juxtaposition of the various distinct provinces, together with an increased vitality of the princely power, had not yet brought this to pass. The incentive to form a new system of government was afforded by causes which remained unintelligible to the provinces, separated as each was from the rest. It lay in the absolute political necessity for acquiring national importance, and creating national self-dependence. We have already shown how pressing was this necessity for the interests of the Protestant religion, and for those of the state, the German Empire, and the general system of Europe; and yet the Elector, who looked upon the general interests of the Empire as identical with his own, was the only man who seemed to have a distinct perception of this truth.

As the whole movement was imbued with a milimentsverfassung mehr erhalten, als jetzo bei dem Landtagsabschied. Ich danke dem Höchsten dass es jetzo so weit damit gekommen: der wolle mir ferners beistehen. (The estates would have enjoyed greater advantages by the constitution—which he had offered them—than they now gain by the decree of the Landtag. I thank the Almighty that the matter hath advanced thus far, and implore his further assistance.)

tary character, it was necessary that Brandenburg should be prepared for war, placed as it was amid the strongly-armed military powers which rose up in mutual rivalry on all sides. The most intelligent of his contemporaries extol the "heroic audacity" of the Elector in creating a standing army as the only means of protecting the German Empire against the terrible power of the neighbouring states. It was, in fact, a measure not of arbitrary ambition, but of actual necessity. The question was how to find the means to raise and to maintain so large an army without oppressing the country.\*

To obtain these supplies by a voluntary understanding among the different provincial estates was an idea which no one could have entertained in those times: it would have been impossible to carry out

\* Proclamation, dated 14 Oct., 1661. *Wie dann die bisher geübte collectandi ratio fast gehässig und viele Leute durch den blossen Namen der Contribution in unserm Lande sich zu setzen abgehalten werden, auch grosse Streitigkeiten wegen Prägravation—sonderlich zwischen den Städten vorgehn, und dagegen doch in andern Orten fast eben so viel ja mehr gesteuert wird, nur dass es nicht durch dergleichen Collecten sondern durch andere Mittel geschieht und dieselben in gutem Stande nicht allein verbleiben, sondern von Tage zu Tage an Volk und Reichthum zunehmen. (Seeing that the collectandi ratio, heretofore in use, is much abhorred, and that many persons by the mere name of the contribution have been deterred from settling in our territories; seeing likewise that great contentions have arisen from the unequal pressure of this burthen, especially between cities, whereas in other places almost as much, nay, and even more, hath been collected by taxes, only not in the same form, but by other methods of collection; and that these places do notwithstanding not only continue in the same condition, but do increase daily in people and wealth.) (MSS. in the Royal Library.)*

such a scheme in the actual state of provincial feeling. The first step was to induce the most important of those provinces, and the one which had always been the most devoted to the house of Brandenburg—namely, the Kurmark—to furnish an adequate contribution towards the supplies.

We must take a somewhat nearer view of an attempt upon which so much depended.

It must be admitted, to the honour of the estates of the March of Brandenburg, that they had until now supported their rulers to the best of their power, more especially in the matter of redeeming the royal domains which had been pledged; but a request for money to support a standing army, proposed too at a time when all were rejoicing in the newly-concluded peace—in the year 1661—was profoundly distasteful to them. They pointed to the example of Swedish Pomerania, which, though it had fallen under a foreign rule, had been relieved from this heavy burden upon the resources of the province. They called upon the Elector to disband his army, to dismiss the regiments with their staffs, to cast or purchase no more cannon, and to reduce to mere companies such troops as were necessary to garrison his fortresses.\*

\* Adverse reply of 27th Nov. In der Niederlanden habe man diese Mittel externis necessitatibus tempore belli ergriffen; hier aber wolle man sie in statu pacato den Ständen gegen ihre Privilegien obtrudiren, jeder Stand verharre am besten bei seinem jus quæsitum.—In den circulis des h. Reichs auch bei den grossen Reichs- und Ansastädten sey ein solcher modus contribuendi unerhört: er werde von den Juristen gemissbilligt. (That in the Netherlands these measures were taken externis necessitatibus tempore belli; whereas in Brandenburg it was attempted

Frederick William replied that, as the maintenance of his dominions now depended upon his army, he must and would continue in readiness for war, seeing that danger threatened him on every side. Moreover, that without security the country could have no chance of welfare.

The determined will of the prince, his displeasure, which they afterwards accused themselves of having excited by the offensive wording of the memorial they had presented, the recollection of the duties imposed upon them by the recesses of the Empire,—all this induced the estates to grant 20,000 thalers per month, the lowest sum at which the Elector had fixed his demands, and henceforth to raise it as before in the shape of a contribution. Small as this sum appears to us now, it pressed heavily on the people in those days, and was made doubly onerous to the exhausted country by the method of collecting.

A painful picture of the times is presented by a set of tables drawn up in the seventeenth century, containing a comparison of the number of houses of which, in the good old times, each city in the March was composed, with that which was left standing at the end of the thirty years' war. In many cities one-half, in some two-thirds, in a few even five-sixths, of the houses had been destroyed. The suburbs of Berlin no longer existed, and within its walls the houses had diminished

in *statu pacato* to force them upon the estates contrary to their privileges; each estate should take its stand upon its *jus quæsitum*.—In the *circulis* of the Holy Empire, and in the great imperial and Hanse towns, such a *modus contribuendi* was a thing unheard of; moreover, it was disapproved by all jurists.) (Ibid.)

by at least one-fourth. The city contained only three hundred burghers.

And these cities were now burthened with a contribution levied upon town-lands, and more particularly upon houses. Not only was the tax oppressive in itself, but it acted as an impediment to all improvement. No one was likely to build during the actual stagnation of trade, with the certainty of subjecting himself to an additional tax of this kind. Every day the bailiff's cart was seen driving through the streets loaded with furniture and goods which had been seized for arrears of the contribution.

When the deputies of the provincial Diet reassembled in January, 1667, it had become manifest that inevitable ruin threatened the country unless a stop were put to this state of things. The Elector could not find words to describe the woful lamentations with which he was daily and hourly assailed,\* adding, at the same time, that he could not abate anything of his demands; nay, that he should think himself fortunate if he were not forced to require yet more from his people; that at present he could see no way out of the difficulty but to try some other tax instead.

He had frequently announced this intention before,

\* "Winseln und jammerlichen Klagden." ("Whinings and lamentable complaints.") Proposition of 26th Jan., 1667. One memorial of the people of Frankfort, for example, complains of the monthly contribution of 1150 thalers imposed upon them; and says that many had to pay 20 or 30 thalers a-month, and could leave to their children nothing but tumbledown houses, heavily taxed, and an incredible number of taxgatherers' receipts.



and had suggested a tax on articles of consumption, an idea borrowed from the United Netherlands. A few disconnected attempts had indeed already been made to establish a system of the kind, but so narrow in scale and purpose that no advantage had been commonly felt from it. Now, however, the prince returned to the task in real earnest. His plan was to relieve the owner of land or houses from the intolerable burthens which oppressed him, and on the other hand to make every inhabitant of the country, whether he were the owner of a house or not, pay for the protection which he enjoyed by contributing his share towards the public expenses.

Again, however, he failed in carrying out his project against the will of the nobles.

The deputies first alleged as an excuse that they could not consult upon a subject concerning which they had received no instructions, and that this matter was not mentioned in the writs of summons which called them together. The Elector replied to this by a recommendation to them to return to their several circles, and to procure the defective instructions;\* but the consultations which hereupon ensued in these circles produced equally unfavourable results. The prelates, counts, and nobles on either side of the Elbe and the Oder strengthened each other at their meetings in hostility to these innovations. When the deputies returned, they brought with them the declaration that

\* 6th Feb., 1667, to the people of Altmark and Priegnitz—those of Mittelmark and Ruppin—to the nobles of Neumark and to the cities. The Altmark and Priegnitz cities were on the side of the nobles.

the general imposition of a tax of this nature appeared to them out of the question, as it would deprive the nobility of all but the empty name of its privileges.\* They reminded the Elector of the services they had rendered to his house and its power; and they opined that the Elector would never put a class from which so many brave generals and great ministers had sprung upon a level with burghers and peasants, for that the glory of his reign depended upon his affording due protection to ancient rights and privileges.

On the other hand, the cities, which had always for the most part taken side with the Elector, were now unanimous in their approval of his scheme. Wherever the magistrates hesitated, the guilds and companies tumultuously declared themselves in favour of it, and at length hurried the magistrates away with them. The delegates of the cities designated the Elector's intention as an inspiration from God: they besought him, as the father of his country, to give ear to the many thousands of voices that were sighing for relief in all the various cities and villages, and to introduce throughout the province a tax on articles of consumption in lieu of the contribution.†

\* *In togâ et sago.* They maintained that the nobles by no means enjoyed so many exemptions as was supposed. They were obliged to remit obligations to their peasants, who would not otherwise stay on their land. What the peasants did pay them went chiefly to the building of houses and the purchase of cattle. Sometimes the houses of the nobles had been burthened with obligations to furnish horses; they were scarce able to maintain themselves, and to breed up their children in the practice of liberal arts and polite learning. 24th March, 1667.

† Memorials dated 23rd and 28th March, 1667. Christians, disregarding the strictness of the law, should come to the assist-

This was a most important crisis for the whole constitution of the country. It could not be said of the suggestions made by the Elector, that in themselves they tended to lessen the influence of the estates. Indeed, the scheme was borrowed from the republican Netherlands, where the charge of a large standing army was defrayed by the proceeds of indirect taxation, in the form of an excise on articles of consumption. Had the nobles but made a virtue of necessity, and agreed to this change in the system of taxation, they would naturally have had the chief control over the expenditure of the proceeds, and would have kept in their own hands the power of granting the supplies in future. The constitutional system of government might thus have risen above its mere local position, to one of active and general influence.

The Elector was by no means powerful enough to venture to impose a general tax upon towns and country alike, in accordance with the wishes of the towns, without the consent of the nobility. For a moment, even, he seemed to be on the point of giving up his scheme altogether, and an edict was actually drawn up, according to which the welfare of the cities was to be provided for by a better division of the contri-

ance of their agonising fellow-Christians. The impost is in accordance with the word of God and with nature, "als welche eine gemeine Last gemein und mit gesamter Hülfe zu tragen anweist"—("which adviseth men to bear a common burden in common, and aiding one another.") No privilege ought to prevail over the law of the common good of all. Finally, the guilds declared that "sie würden den Executoribus die Häse brechen"—("they would break the necks of the bailiffs.")

bution. This instantly excited discontent throughout the country, and an evil report that the prince had suffered himself to be turned against the common weal by the nobility.\* At this very time, however, Frederick William had already taken his resolution: and he adopted the only course left open to him by the constitution of the province. He granted permission to the towns, separately from the country, to introduce the system of taxation which they demanded.

This was rendered more feasible by the fact, that for a long time the nobility and the townships had formed perfectly separate financial bodies, each bound only to contribute a certain fixed sum; and this was regarded as the basis of the whole constitution. By this arrangement the opposition which was immediately offered by the nobles to the new tax was rendered totally powerless. Neither of the two bodies had any right to meddle with the manner in which the other chose to fulfil its engagements.

In April, 1667, the cities received permission to introduce the system of excise, or to retain the old tax, according to their own choice. The government only reserved to itself the right of raising, by some other means, the amount of difference, in case the proceeds, under the new system, should fall short of those of the contribution. The first trial of the new scheme was made with much fear and hesitation at Berlin, where it produced results which far surpassed

\* The declaration of the cities, dated 11th April: he had unfortunately been diverted from the intention with which God had inspired him. On the 15th the Elector pronounced his determination to introduce the excise-bill.

all expectation. In the autumn of this year, 1667, the burgomaster, town-council, and citizens of Berlin reported that assistance had been given to many poorer payers of the contribution: and with the co-operation of these functionaries the new tax was brought into more extensive and regular action. Frankfort, Prenzlau, and Brandenburg were the first to follow the example set by the capital, and all the other towns did the same in their turn.

And, indeed, no tax has ever proved better fitted for the circumstances under which it was imposed, or productive of greater advantages, than this.

People could once more venture to build new houses, now that they were relieved from a tax so heavy that but few had means to pay it. As early as in the year 1671 a learned burgomaster of Berlin reports, that within two years, in that town alone, above one hundred and fifty houses had been repaired, and many others newly built.\* In several subsequent edicts the Elector boasts that this was everywhere the case: within a few years the condition of the towns was completely altered for the better, and gave pro-

\* Michael Zarlang: profligatus fuit exitialis ille hactenus observatus modus collectandi secundum ædium et mansionum annuum tributum,—unde consumptibilium vulgo accise modus magno civium commodo introductus est. Inde hoc biennio præterito et quod excurrit supra 150 ædificia ex ruinis reparata partim, pars etiam non contemnenda de novo exstructa. The town-council adds, that almost all the empty spaces, of which there were above 150, had been built over, and the old houses repaired, and that there was a great crowding to buy houses. From papers deposited in Aug., 1671, in the ball of the steeple of the church of St. Nicholas, and which are very valuable. Küster, A. u. R. Berlin, I. 275, 292.

mise of still further improvement. The sum fixed for the maintenance of the troops was not only raised, but even exceeded.

This favourable result smoothed the way for the gradual introduction of the same tax into other provinces. When we picture to ourselves the intolerable pressure of the previous state of things, we can well understand that the introduction of the excise was a great relief. The inhabitants of the adjoining districts, where the change had not been so speedily introduced, immigrated in large numbers into the province of Brandenburg.

This change, however, produced a complete revolution in the constitution of the state.

During a convocation, held in the year 1683, the rights and privileges of the estates were once more brought under discussion. It is remarkable that they did not then demand the right of imposing taxes, but only a consulting voice on the introduction of new taxes.\* The Government was far from contesting

\* In the memorial of 29th May, 1683 (MS. of the Royal Library), they refer to the *per recessus et pacta conventa*, as the fundamental law of the repeated assurances given by the head to the members, "dass Extraordinäraufgaben sonder vorhergegangener Consultation mit den Ständen, ob solche zuträglich oder nicht, nicht sollten eingeführt werden;"—"that extraordinary imposts were never to be levied, without previous consultation with the estates as to whether such taxes were advisable or no.") They would entreat, as they were now as it were degraded from their character as estates, "dass man ihnen das *Votum consultativum* in Auflegung neuer und ungewöhnlicher Steuern nicht entziehe,"—"that they might not be deprived of the *Votum Consultativum* on the imposition of any new and unusual taxes.")

their claim to this privilege, and it excused itself for having lately disregarded it on one or two occasions on the ground of urgent necessity, before which all rights and recesses must at times give way: but another difficulty lay in the internal condition of the estates as a body. The delegates of the cities had likewise been summoned to the above-named convocation, and had duly made their appearance. But they soon discovered that their interests were entirely at variance with those of the nobility. For instance, they insisted, first of all, upon the execution of the edict promulgated by the Elector, according to which the exclusive right of brewing, and making brandy, enjoyed by the nobles, was to be abolished, and the taverns were to be removed into the towns. This demand ran directly counter to the interest of the nobles, who had hitherto had the monopoly of supplying, not alone all the villages, but even many of the towns, with beer and brandy. Before the slightest attempt could be made to settle this, and several other differences that fell under discussion, the deputies of the nobles took their departure, without so much as giving the delegates of the towns notice thereof.\* After a split of this kind, it was scarcely possible to summon another convocation of the estates as a corporate body.

\* The cities complain that they were detained to the detriment of the "publici" and "privati;" and that they at last learned with amazement, "wie die Herren Deputati der Ritterschaft nobis insciis davon gereist,"—"that the Deputies of the nobles had gone away, nobis insciis.") Extract in Orlich, *Gesch. des Pr. Staates*, I. 456.

We do not accuse any one as the author of this turn of affairs.

The nobles, it is true, ought to have resolved to concede that which was imperatively necessary; but some excuse is to be found for them in the fact that the exigencies of the times lay far beyond the reach of their vision, arising, as they did, rather from the position which the prince now filled in the European world, than from any local or provincial causes.

One necessary consequence of this was, however, that the nobles retained importance only in their own neighbourhood, and kept only those prerogatives which concerned their own immediate affairs. The contribution on land fixed in the year 1686 was very nearly the same as it has remained ever since; save that, from time to time, especially during the reign of Frederick William's successor, some few additions were made to it. The nobility was still far from powerless, but it exercised its power only within a very limited sphere, and had altogether lost its ancient lawful influence over the general administration of government.

Neither could the towns boast of possessing any such influence. They had not wrung from the nobility, in regular debate, the change which had been effected in the system of taxation, but owed it entirely to the will of the prince, who was now forced to procure for them the opportunity of duly carrying the measure into effect. His word had established the matter, and his right arm must now uphold it. He employed his own officers in the collection and administration of the tax, and would suffer no opposi-



tion to their authority, which was in general very actively exercised.\*

On the other hand, the prince gradually obtained complete possession of the general administration of government. There was none to measure the necessities of the state, or to call the prince to account.

Not that the prince's power had become unlimited: the power of the nobles entirely neutralized that of the prince over a large portion of his subjects and vassals, but a wide field was still left open for the uncontrolled exercise of his power. There he was limited only by the productive powers of the country, and the endeavours of the prince were thus forcibly directed to increasing this productiveness to the utmost. By this means his government acquired a popular and economical administrative character. The prince would at once have annihilated his own power had he attended to the sole object of amassing a treasure: he was forced, in order to attain his own objects, to tax his invention to the utmost for means of promoting the general good.

This state of things was in perfect harmony with the ideas which Frederick William cherished. He held that there were certain political rights that a prince should never leave in the hands of the estates, which sought only their own class-interests. He was

\* In the resolution concerning the complaints made by the cities in the year 1683 it is written "dass aller Orten wo fremde Einnahmer, die Einnahme accurater respicirt werde, als in denen wo die Receptores eigne Güter haben,"—"that in all places where there were foreign receivers, the receipts were more closely inspected than in those where the Receptores had private property of their own.")

entirely of opinion that the nobles ought to be restricted exclusively to the management of the affairs of their order; but, also, that the magistrates of the towns should be taught accurately to distinguish between municipal dues and the royal revenue. He even intended to inquire into their administration of the former, and to limit their privileges. Without doubt his motive for employing foreigners and learned men, whom he frequently promoted to the highest offices of the state, was to prevent the interests of any particular class from gaining an undue ascendancy in his government.\* He at least always had the good of the whole community at heart. He said, indeed, that he trusted for the maintenance of his power to the force of arms: he raised and equipped the regiments which formed the basis of the Prussian army; and he it was who framed the Articles of War, which have since

\* The Todtengespräche (Dialogues of the Dead), 80 Entrevue, 1724, p. 1171, make one of them, Paul von Fuchs, say, "die Wohlfahrt meines grossmächtigsten Oberhauptes urtheilte ich mit der Wohlfahrt seiner Unterthanen so unzertrennlich verbunden zu sein, dass ohne Nachtheil aller beider keine von der anderen abgesondert, noch weniger die eine mit Abbruch der anderen geschaffet werden könne. Jene sei nur der Mittelpunkt, zu welchem alle Rathschläge wie die Linien in einem Cirkel sich strecken,—diese hingegen der Umkreis."—"I conceived the prosperity of my exalted prince to be so inseparably bound up with that of his subjects, that the one could not be separated from the other without injury to both, still less that the prosperity of the one could be promoted by the detriment of the other: for the one is the centre to which everything tends as the radii within a circle; the other, on the contrary, is the circumference thereof," &c.) Most likely a translation from a Latin original, which I have not seen.

needed only some extension. But he likewise made the canal which bears his name. One of the happiest days of his life was that on which, after dining in the dry bed of the cutting, he caused the sluices to be opened, and saw the waters pour in which were to unite the Elbe and the Oder. Ere long vessels from Breslau and from Hamburg met together at Berlin;\*—a royal post connected the towns of Memel and Cleves, and, once established, he allowed no question of finance to stand in its way. For the benefit of his spinning and linen land, as he called the March, he erected the depôt at Bielefeld, as a means of superintending and encouraging this branch of industry. New lights were thrown upon the improvement of agriculture, owing to the unceasing activity he displayed in this matter.† Above all, he devoted great attention to the welfare of the rural population, and held out inducements to industrious colonists to settle in his dominions: farmers from Oldenland were established in the Wische; Dutchmen in

\* Sam. Grosser: *gaudent Hamburgi commercia viarum, quibus navigia—merces Berolinum deferunt opportunis flexibus.*

† Joan Scarlet *Agricultura Borussico Brandeburgica* endeavours to prove for East Prussia, “wie die Agricultat könne also eingerichtet werden, dass es den Commerciën und der Navigatio höchst dienlich sein kann, und dadurch können auch nicht allein Sr. Churf. Durchl. Zollinraden, sondern auch ihre Inraden aus ihren Domänen und zwar nicht allein gedoppelt, sondern auch bald in infinitum vermehrt werden,”—(“how agriculture could be so managed as to be of great service to commerce and navigation, and that thus the customs, and likewise the revenues, of his Highness the Elector’s domains might not only be doubled, but increased ad infinitum.”) He likewise suggests the application of chemical science to agriculture.

the moorlands of the Havel and the Warthe; and Frenchmen in the towns, which now rose from their ruins.

Military business would seem to have augmented, rather than lessened, his attention to general education and literature. In the midst of all the perils by which Prussia was threatened he founded the University of Duisburg, for the convenience of the inhabitants of his western provinces;\* and from his camp in Jutland he transmitted directions for the appointment of the first librarian at Berlin.†

He was a man of naturally simple habits; who, while crossing the market-place, would stop to buy a few nightingales which were offered for sale, because he loved to have singing-birds in his rooms—who with his own hands used to graft in his kitchen-garden cuttings which had been brought from a foreign country—who helped to cut the grapes on the Weinberg in Potsdam, and to catch the young carp out of the fish-pond. With all this, however, he chose to keep up a certain state in his outward appearance: he was fond of wearing the order which distinguished him from all his subjects;‡ and he sent to Paris or to the Netherlands for the most costly jewels for his wife. He took it somewhat amiss if any one ventured to remind him of the cost of any of his fancies, for he

\* Johann Moritz von Nassau-Siegen, who very much promoted all enterprises connected with agriculture, filled the Elector's place during his absence. Seyler: *Leben und Thaten Friedrich Wilhelms*, p. 39.

† Wilken *Geschichte der berliner Bibliothek*, p. 13.

‡ It is easy to see by the accounts of his expenses how often this had to be renewed. Riedel.

thought that he lived in a manner that gave no one any right to find fault with his expenses. When he had once said that he wished to buy anything he never allowed the sum asked to deter him from so doing.

I have read a vast number of original letters written by the Elector to his confidential counsellor, Otho von Schwerin. In these letters public affairs and domestic events are discussed in a manner indicating the most intimate friendship. For instance, the prince wishes the minister a right joyful good morning—or God's assistance during the approaching delivery of his beloved wife. But the minister was not permitted on this account to mingle any personal interest of his own with the affairs of the state: and once he is seriously reminded by the prince not to show passion where his opinion only is asked.

Frederick William's strongly-marked features, upon which the frame of mind habitual to him during the course of a long life was deeply impressed, beamed with an extraordinary combination of gravity and benevolence, majesty and kindliness: such at least is the expression of countenance given to him in his portraits, and described by those who knew him.\* It does not, however, appear that he was born with these qualities. On the contrary, his temper was naturally violent, as several of those with whom he came in contact were made to feel. Still there was a kind of softness in his nature, which rendered him accessible to foreign influences. But as in youth he

\* Pufendorf, p. 1652: *majestas venerationem provocare apta sed quam luculentæ bonitatis stricturæ temperabant, ut non minus amoris conciperes.*

had been disciplined by misfortune, so in after years he was formed by the difficult circumstances in which his lot was cast, by the constant struggle against enemies superior to him in power, and by the danger in which he was continually placed by the increasing fluctuations in the affairs of Europe. Had he once suffered himself to be led away by the impulse of the moment in his treatment of such a complication of difficulties, his ruin must have been inevitable. The qualities essential to him were patient endurance of delay, prudent foresight, and a power of repressing his emotions: it was necessary to study most carefully, not only what was to be done, but what could be done. Even Oxenstierna once praised the zeal with which, in his youth, the Elector attended the sittings of his privy council, and his industry in taking notes of all the different votes of the members: he continued to show the same untiring energy up to the very end of his life. Even while suffering severely from gout he would sit for hours together at work with his secretaries, reading through the whole correspondence, in order to inform himself thoroughly of all that was passing.\* Some of the more secret correspondence was reserved for his private perusal, but by far the greater part of the business was laid before the council. Frederick William was considered one of the ablest men of his day: he had reflected much, and had had great experience; but it not unfrequently happened that in the council-chamber

\* *Nec ullius recreationum illecebris nec acerrimis morbi articularis doloribus, quibus ingravescente ætate sæpius infestabatur, inde avelli (potuit).* Pufendorf, 1633.

he abandoned his preconceived opinion, convinced that some other view was better than his own.\* His decision was compared to the inclination of the tongue of the scales: it invariably leaned towards the side on which was the greater weight of argument, as it seemed, independently of his will. "And," says the Elector, "that which I have once resolved in my privy council, I am determined to have done."† We have already seen how little regard he paid to traditional rights. His maxims were—consider well, but execute at once; and no privilege should stand in the way of a needful reform. As soon as a matter was once taken in hand he thought that his authority was at stake if he did not carry it out. He was without mercy in dealing with individual opponents, even with such as had done good service, as the example of Paul Gerhard sufficiently proves. His rule was by no means easy or popular: we find complaints that words were reckoned as criminal as deeds, and that one was often made to pay for the sins of all.‡ That which gave the prince his great moral ascendancy was the ever-present estimate of the necessities of his position, which guided him in all that he undertook, combined with a strong direct will. His mind had a wide grasp; to us it may seem almost too wide, when we call to mind that he brought the coast of Guinea into

\* There is an example of this in the report quoted by Von Raumer. (*Europa seit 1763*, I. 466.)

† Letter to Schwerin, 8th Feb., 1671.

‡ Zarlang. *Non ea temporum felicitas, qua sentire quæ velis, et dicere quæ sentias audeas; non enim ut quondam dicta impune manent.*

direct communication with Brandenburg, and ventured to compete with Spain on the ocean, or that he meditated establishing an university for the promotion of general learning, which was to be utterly independent of any of the Christian confessions of faith. He did not despair of the results of the occult sciences, and he loved to hear of the marvels of far distant lands. With all this, however, he was eminently practical. The developement of his power was mainly owing to his skilful application of his foreign experience to the wants of his own dominions. This union of practical activity with an imagination that did not shrink from the impracticable, gave a sort of heroic grandeur to his nature, which distinguished it from those characters in which everything can be calculated beforehand, and which, therefore, it is not worth while to study. Around him we feel the atmosphere breathed by genius. His actions stand out upon a vast background: the mainspring of his active intelligent life was religion. During his later years he has recorded how his mother once gave him this precept: to love God and his subjects above all other things, and to hate vice; then would God set up his seat for ever. He adds, that he had taken this as the daily guide of all his actions. He twice refused the crown of Poland because he would not desert the faith by which his salvation was assured.\* But however firmly he held

\* In 1661, when his wife opposed it, because, although the Poles promised him complete religious liberty, they would never keep their word; and in 1668, when many senators let him know that they would gladly bestow the crown upon him if he would accept it; he replied, "er halte das einmal für unmöglich, indem es eine Staatsursache, solche zwei Mächte als die polnische



to his own views, however concisely he could sum up the various arguments of the adverse doctrines, he never thought himself bound to show greater favour at his court to Calvinists than to Lutherans. His religion did not expend itself in a particular confession of faith. Unfettered by outward forms, he felt himself in direct and solemn personal communication with God. He always entertained the belief that he stood under the immediate guidance of the Almighty, who had often miraculously interfered to save him, and he even carried this conviction into the administration of his affairs. The comparative security of the present times does not allow us fully to conceive those moments of danger and difficulty in which Frederick William was so often placed. At these times, when all the arguments and counter-arguments that policy could suggest failed to satisfy his mind, during the sleepless nights which followed these deliberations Frederick William prayed to God to inspire him with a knowledge of what was best for him to do; and he steadily adhered to whatever idea then occurred to him. His was a solid, severe, and powerful mind; but, at the same time, flexible, benevolent, and filled with aspirations after the Eternal. Towards the King

und meine nicht zusammenkommen zu lassen; meine Religion, da ich meiner Seligkeit in versichert bin, umb eine Crone zu verlassen, solches werde ich in Ewigkeit nicht thun."— ("I hold this to be impossible, seeing that it is a principle of state not to permit that two such powers as Poland and my territories should be united:" adding, "And as to changing my religion, whereby I am assured of salvation, for the sake of a crown, that I will never do, though I should live to all eternity.")

of France, as towards the Emperor, his pride was unbending: before God he had no consciousness of self. Government was not only his business, but his very life, and he connected it with the deepest mysteries of human existence.

The large conceptions which he formed of all things directed all his actions and endeavours towards great objects.

After pointing out the principles upon which his domestic policy was conducted, we must now give a slight general sketch of the position which he occupied with reference to European affairs, in which he, first of all his house, took an independent part, in order to show what was his view of his own interests, and those of Germany in general, in respect of other powers, and what were the measures he adopted for their advancement.

The whole of the Elector's policy turned upon the fact, that he deemed it less advisable, during the intricacies of the war with Poland about Prussia, to be allied with Sweden, France, and the Protector of England,—all of which powers had joined in a simultaneous attack upon Spain, the Emperor and Germany, and Poland,—than to join his forces to those ancient European powers that were thus threatened. He had the greatest share in the election of Leopold I., for his voice it was that doubtless carried the day.\* Others, as well as himself, attribute to him

\* According to a MS. Italian Relatione concerning the election of the Emperor in 1657, the Elector of Triers reproaches his colleagues of Mayence and Cologne, "che un elettore giovane e secolare mostrasse maggior zelo degli arcivescovi piu riguardevoli d' Alemagna."

the chief merit in the affair. This alliance, by which the peace of Oliva was obtained, was renewed in the year 1666, without reference to the circumstances by which it had formerly been determined: this was the first general alliance between Austria and Brandenburg.\* It was Frederick William's intention henceforth to take part with the Emperor and the Empire, and, in league with them, to resist the two foreign powers that had forced their way into Germany—the French and the Swedes.

We will not here repeat, what has been so often told before, how Frederick William was the first of all the princes of his time who dared to oppose Louis XIV., when, in 1672, that monarch directed his schemes of conquest and aggrandisement against Holland. The Elector himself was not menaced until Louis XIV. commenced hostilities against the German Empire, and prevailed upon the Swedes, after some hesitation on their part, to make common cause with him.

In October, 1674, we find Frederick William on

\* 10th May, 1666, in Pufendorf, X. 26; it is however so slightly mentioned, that it might easily be overlooked. The difference is, that by the treaty of 1658, which is to be found in Pufendorf, VI. § 17, the two parties promise each other mutual aid in case their old or new possessions should be attacked by the King of Sweden: in the second treaty of 1666, they were to aid each other against whosoever might attack them: *quocunque titulo vel prætextu a quocunque*. The first treaty was to last ten years, the second adds a further period of ten years: *durabit hoc fœdus non solum pendente termino prædicti prioris decennii, sed post ejus termini lapsum ad alios decem annos*. In the year 1672 a still further period of ten years was added. Pufendorf, XI. 50.

the French side of the Rhine. He wished to fight a battle against Turenne, who suffered himself to be attacked under unfavourable circumstances. It was even said that the Elector had flattered himself that he might push on to Paris.

But in the mean time the Swedes broke loose, marched into the province of Brandenburg, and, after a brief show of moderation, renewed the scenes of the thirty years' war.

Frederick William was at the same time threatened by Hanover and by Sobieski, King of Poland.\* The Elector was fully aware of the dangers which surrounded him on all sides, but his courage rose with his difficulties. The Empire declared the Swedes to be the common enemies of all Germany, and promised the Elector to compel them to give him full satisfaction for the mischief they had done.† The republic of the United Netherlands gave him the same assurance. These promises inspired the Elector with fresh courage to attack the intruders.

Without doubt the greatest day in the Elector's life was that on which he overtook the retreating Swedish

\* We are indebted to Stenzel, *Preus. Gesch.*, II. 347, for the knowledge of the alliance between Louis XIV. and Sobieski.

† According to the Imperial edict of 16th July, 1675, such measures were to be taken that the Elector of Brandenburg should not alone be delivered from the enemies who attacked him, but "dass er wegen des erlittenen Schadens behörige Satisfaction erlangen möge,"—"that he should receive sufficient compensation for his losses." *Pachner Reichsschlüsse*, I. cccclxxviii. On 18th Jan. 1676, the marshal of the Empire was instructed not to summon the King of Sweden, or to allow any one to vote in his name, seeing that he had been declared to be an enemy to the Emperor and to the Empire. *Pachner*, II. 2.

troops at Fehrbellin, and engaged them with his well-disciplined but far less numerous force. His most experienced generals dissuaded him from the attack, but he was determined not to allow the ruthless enemy that had ravaged his land during seven months to escape unpunished. His soldiers rushed upon the Swedes, shouting their battle-cry, "With God!" and utterly routed them. Thus the first great battle that the Brandenburgers won unassisted was one which they fought in lawful self-defence. The Elector ascribed it all to the direct interposition of God, whose watchful care of him at the moment of utmost need he saw, as he believed, with his own eyes, and accounted it a miracle.\*

Hereupon he determined to rid himself altogether of this troublesome neighbour, to conquer Pomerania, and thus to compensate himself for the injury he had sustained. He hoped the Emperor would in the mean time try his luck against the French. "So that at length," said the Elector, "the Roman Empire, relieved from the influence of all foreign nations, might rest in constant peace and safety."

The Elector, who felt himself engaged in a war of life and death, was thoroughly successful.

In the year 1675 he took the strong castle of Wolgast. He narrates, with immense satisfaction, that, owing to the number of grenades which he threw into

\* On the medal, on which Froben is represented falling just before him, is the inscription: *a domino hoc factum est mirabile in oculis nostris.* (Olrich's *Medaillenkabinet*, 43, 44, 45, 46.) Eman. Froben, though not belonging to the army, followed his master into the field, and while riding in front of him was killed by a bullet, which must otherwise have struck the Elector.

the besieged place, that side of the castle wherein was the powder-magazine was set on fire, that he then fired the rest with red-hot balls, and thus forced the numerous garrison to evacuate the fortress. "All men may see," he exclaimed, "that the hand of God is with us."

In the year 1676 he found great assistance in all his enterprises from a small squadron under the Brandenburg flag, which he had in part hired, and which he stationed at convenient points along the coast. By this means he took the cities of Anclam and Demmin, and the islands at the mouth of the Oder.

In the year 1677 he made preparations for attacking the important fortified town of Stettin, which he had already surrounded, for his plan of campaign was by no means wanting in strategical skill. The Swedish garrison offered a desperate resistance, in which it was supported by the citizens, who still had a firm belief in the military power of Sweden, and never doubted that in due time they should be relieved.\* Frederick William, on his part, vowed that he would either take the town or be buried before its walls. At length the commandant declared that he could no longer hold out against the good fortune that everywhere attended the Elector. The citizens said, plausibly enough, that their conscientious conduct towards the crown of Sweden made them the more worthy to be taken under the gracious protection of a prince so zealous for virtue

\* Tageregister was sich in der Belägerung der weitberühmten pommerischen Hauptstadt Stettin zugetragen. (Journal of what took place during the siege of the far-famed city of Stettin, in Pomerania, 14th Oct.)

as the Elector. They took the oaths of allegiance, nothing doubting that it would last for ever.

By November, 1678, the Swedes were driven out of every part of Pomerania. But they now invaded Prussia from Livonia. In the hope of again giving them battle, the Elector hurried off towards the endangered district: his army was conveyed in sledges across the frozen waters of the Haff in January, 1679: but the enemy fled before him in wild disorder in all directions. Dead corpses, which they left on the road, and scattered baggage, betrayed their line of retreat to their pursuers. A medal, struck at this time, represents the eagle of Brandenburg roused from its eyrie, and dashing down upon the northern lion while busied with his prey.

Meanwhile, however, things had not gone on so prosperously on the western frontiers. The French had taken Freiburg on the upper Rhine, and a number of strong places in the Netherlands.

Spite of this the Elector called upon the Emperor to continue the war. Now that the Swedes were disposed of, the whole of their undivided forces might be concentrated against the French, who could thus be driven out of Germany altogether, or, at any rate, be forced to conclude a peace\* which should be advan-

\* Pufendorf, XVI. § 79. Meinders says, in a paper concerning the *statum Serenissimi* in 1679, "der Churfürst habe gehofft, es würden des gesammten Reichs Kräfte, so wegen der Schweden dieses Ends gethanen Invasionen fast mehr als zur Hälfte divertiret und von Frankreich abgezogen worden, wider dieselben allein gewandt, und dadurch ein sicherer und reputirlicher Friede gesucht werden."—"The Elector had hoped that the united forces of the whole Empire, which had as yet been di-

tageous to the Empire, and should secure Strasburg, which must otherwise inevitably be lost. He drew up the plan for another campaign, in which he was to take the field himself at the head of 20,000 men.

Although it must be admitted that in this matter Frederick William chiefly consulted his own interest, it is evident that the German Empire could never regain its former importance unless it was able to shake off the influence of foreign powers.

But the allies, — Holland as well as Spain, — as soon as they were relieved from the dangers which immediately threatened themselves, grew tired of the war; the Emperor declared that he had only taken up arms in their cause, and manifested a strong desire for peace.

Under existing circumstances a peace would not alone establish the power of France in the west, but it would also decide the condition of the north of Europe. Louis XIV. demanded, as one of the necessary conditions of peace, that Sweden should be reinstated in the possession of the territory of which she had been deprived. The Elector reminded the Emperor that these were the same enemies whose armies had so often been seen before the gates and towers of Vienna, and whom, at the sacrifice of his

verted from the French by the invasion of the Swedes, would be now turned against France alone, and a secure and reputable peace established." The Elector wrote to the Prince of Orange in 1678, o. D., that if they did not hurry on the peace too fast, he hoped soon to have done with Pomerania:—"und alsdann E. L. mit einer guten Anzahl Volkes beizustehen und wirklich zu assistiren:" ("and then to be able to support your Grace with a good number of troops, and really to assist you.")



own health, and of the substance and blood of his subjects, he had but just succeeded in driving out of the confines of the Empire; he could not believe it possible that the "implacable foe" was to be brought back again and placed by his side. He represented this likewise to the imperial Diet, but in vain: the promised compensation was never again alluded to; peace was concluded on the conditions laid down by France; and the Elector was forced to give up the territories he had won. Nothing was left to him but a small tract of country which he had acquired at the former division of Pomerania, just enough, as a Venetian said, "to keep him in mind of the rest." He was even compelled to hear his political conduct blamed in his own house, and at his own court. He was told that he ought to have given ear to the suggestions of the French when they offered, in the middle of the campaign, to give him Stettin, and not to have adhered to an alliance which had proved so treacherous; that those who used their best endeavours in the service of the German Empire were much to be pitied.

The Elector was thrown into such a state of mind that he would have been glad to see Louis XIV. himself become Emperor of Germany, as in that case, at least, Strasburg would not have been alienated from the Empire, which now was inevitable. His ambition was now turned against his former allies, especially Austria, against which he could raise claims of the most extensive kind. The great question of the claim upon Silesia was revived, which was destined one day to lead to a totally unexpected conclusion.

We will here take occasion to describe the state of the case as briefly as possible.

In the year 1537 the Elector Joachim II. made a treaty of succession with the Dukes of Liegnitz of the line of Piast, which was closely connected by friendship with the house of Brandenburg. By virtue of this treaty the Dukes of Liegnitz were, on the extinction of the electoral house, to succeed to the territories which it held in fief from the crown of Bohemia, while, on the other hand, in the event of a failure of heirs in the ducal family, the house of Brandenburg was to inherit its Silesian principalities, Liegnitz, Wohlau, and Brieg. The document mentions the doubts which were entertained as to whether Brandenburg had the power of making such an agreement without the sanction of the King of Bohemia. But there could be no doubt whatever that the Dukes of Liegnitz had a full right to do as they liked in their share of this transaction. The power of a reigning duke in Silesia must not be confounded with that of the German territorial princes. In Silesia this power grew up much later, out of the subordination, more or less voluntary on their part, of the several ducal families, which still reserved to themselves a degree of independence by no means common in the rest of Germany. They considered themselves as free lords of the soil, and perfectly at liberty to sell, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of their possessions according to their own will and pleasure.\* Moreover, the Dukes of Liegnitz could show an especial document in which

\* Gebhardi Geschichte von Schlesien, p. 432.

this privilege was conceded to them in express terms by the royal house of Jagellon.\*

It is not to be wondered at that Ferdinand I. of Austria, then King of Bohemia, and reigning Duke of Silesia, was ill pleased at an agreement which might possibly throw so considerable a province into the hands of a powerful neighbouring house. Emboldened by the victories which his brother Charles V. had obtained over the troops of the Smalcaldic League, with which the Silesians were closely allied, Ferdinand compelled the Dukes of Liegnitz to give up the treaty of succession, and forced the provincial estates to swear allegiance to the crown of Bohemia.

It was equally natural that the house of Brandenburg should refuse to give up a right which it had already secured, and accordingly the Elector denounced the step taken by the King as a measure savouring less of right than of might, and protested against it. In this posture matters were suffered to remain; no one felt much inclined to revert to the subject of dispute, as the case contemplated in the treaty of succession seemed so very remote. In the year 1675, however, this case most unexpectedly occurred by the death of the young Duke George William.

The house of Austria took immediate possession of the country, and the Elector, who was deeply engaged in his Pomeranian enterprise, thought it more expedient to be silent for the nonce. But after

\* Documents in the paper *Rechtsgegründetes Eigenthum*, B. C. D.

the experience he had gained at the peace of Nimeguen, where all the old disputes were revived, and the claims upon Jägerndorf were once more urged, the Elector thought the time was come for bringing forward his outstanding claims on Silesia. He required the Emperor to name the time when he might receive in fief the Silesian duchies of Liegnitz, Wohlau, and Brieg, which were his by inheritance.

But the imperial court, which likewise thought that it had justice on its side, utterly refused to assent to these demands. The Spanish ambassador told the ambassador from Brandenburg that the house of Austria would never suffer a Protestant family to gain a footing in the midst of its hereditary possessions; more especially as the remnant of the Lutheran party in Austria would gather round the intruder.

It was this very circumstance that gave to the house of Brandenburg an additional interest in the acquisition of the Silesian provinces, by which a prospect was opened to it, not only of an increase of territory, but of influence upon Germany and Europe.

Austria was not altogether without fear that Frederick William, smarting under a sense of injury, might undertake to assert his claims, with the assistance of France, a power with which he had of late stood in close and friendly communication. The Elector had already informed the King of France of his own rights upon the principality of Jägerndorf, and had received from him a promise of support. An ally like the Elector was all that was yet wanting to makè that monarch supreme in Europe. At Vienna nothing was considered so dangerous as this alliance. The imperial

court rejected a subsidiary body of troops which the Elector offered to send against the Turks, pressing as the danger was from that quarter. The Emperor was afraid that the Brandenburg troops might take possession of the Silesian principalities during their march through the country: he was seriously alarmed lest the Elector should ally himself with Louis XIV., and dissolve his connexion with the Empire.

This, however, was a scheme that never entered into the thoughts of the Elector; far from it, he had already become aware that a permanent alliance with France was out of the question.

The acts of oppression committed by Louis XIV. at this period could not fail to provoke the resistance of every power in Europe that still retained any feeling of independence: his religious persecutions, above all, roused the indignation of the Protestant princes. Frederick William was the very first to oppose the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

This time it was not alone anxiety for the future welfare of Germany, but for that of the Protestant cause generally, that drove Brandenburg back towards the house of Austria. Both powers clearly saw, from their several points of view, the necessity of joining forces against France. Ere long an alliance was projected, of which the conclusion was only delayed until some compromise could be found with respect to the differences which had so lately arisen between them.

This, however, was no easy task, for the ministers of Brandenburg refused to give up their very import-

ant claims in return for a trifling compensation, while, on the other hand, the imperial commissioners would not hear of granting a compensation in territory.

At length, however, a skilful imperial diplomatist, Baron Freitag von Gödens, contrived a compromise, by which the difficulties were smoothed over for the time, but which contained the germ of much future mischief.

The effect of this compromise was, that Austria ceded a very small district, and in return Brandenburg formed an alliance of the closest nature with the imperial house.

In the secret articles of this treaty, signed on the 22nd of March, 1686, at Berlin, Brandenburg promised to make common cause with Austria in all German and European affairs; to take immediate steps for resisting the attacks of the French upon the Palatinate; furthermore, in the event of a new election of a German Emperor, to give his vote to one of the Archdukes; and, above all, in case the Spanish succession should become vacant, to support the claims of the German line, on conditions which were to be more accurately defined at the time. On her part, Austria was to grant certain subsidies, which, however, were far from large; 100,000 guilders during peace, and 100,000 thalers during war. The main point was, that she consented to some concessions with regard to Silesia. The Emperor declared that, "In order to preclude all misunderstandings that might possibly arise out of this subject, and as a mark of friendship towards the electoral house of Brandenburg, and more especially as a means of confirming

the close alliance between the two houses," he would cede to the Elector and his heirs male the circle of Schwiebus in Silesia, and the Lichtenstein right of succession upon east Friesland: the Elector, on his part, on entering into possession, was to resign all his former claims.

Upon reading these articles the question naturally suggests itself,—What induced the ministers of Brandenburg to disregard declarations which they had so often repeated, and, in return for a trifling concession, not only to give up considerable claims and rights, but to burthen themselves with obligations which must fetter their future policy for an indefinite period? And these were the very men who had always said that it was better to accept nothing, and to preserve the full integrity of their claims for a future contingency.

According to a statement drawn up by Ilgen, who at this time took a very active part in the conduct of foreign affairs, of which he subsequently was at the head, the explanation is to be found in the fact, that the principal ministers, who were likewise those most determined on this point, were kept in ignorance of these secret articles. The supplementary articles alone were communicated to them, such as the treaty relating to subsidiary troops to be sent by Brandenburg against the Turks, and the recess concerning the cession of Schwiebus, in which, moreover, all allusion to the agreement concerning the Spanish succession was carefully omitted.\* Two only of the ministers,

\* The treaties are, 1. One referring solely to the Turkish war, dated 25th Dec. 1685, quoted by Pufendorf, only that he

Paul von Fuchs and Prince George of Anhalt, were aware of the existence of the secret articles.

They were both well-meaning men, who doubtless thought that they had brought about a result highly advantageous to the house of Brandenburg—which would thus at least gain an increase of territory—as well as to the general interests of Germany. But they were greatly mistaken.

In reply to another question that might be asked, namely, how it was that Austria could at length be brought to consent to this alienation of territory? the event soon proved that this was never really intended. Freitag simultaneously carried on a secret negotiation with the son of the Elector, which ended in the resumption by Austria of the ceded district. Freitag represented to the Prince that the claims had been entirely set up by the partisans of France, with the sole object of preventing the alliance. The Hereditary Prince, who looked upon the adherents of the French cause as his personal enemies, and who was afraid that the influence of his step-mother might lead his father to make a will disadvantageous to himself, to cancel which he should be glad to find

states the amount of men at 8000, whereas they were to be only 7000. 2. An ostensible one, touching Schwiebus, dated 7th May 1686, signed on one side by Freitag, on the other by Grumbkow, Meinders, Fuchs, and Rhetz. 3. The defensive alliance, dated 7th May, printed by Förster, an extract from that which we shall presently mention, but with most important omissions, and one addition. 4. The actual secret alliance of 22nd May 1686, in 24 articles, signed by Freitag on the side of Austria, and by Fuchs only on the part of Brandenburg, and ratified at Vienna on the 8th of April.



support from the Emperor, lent a willing ear to these representations. Ill informed as to the justice of his own claims, as he himself afterwards relates,\* without the advice of a single person—for absolute secrecy had been enjoined upon him—the Prince suffered himself to be persuaded to give first a verbal, and then a written, promise that he would restore the circle of Schwiebus to the Emperor as soon as he should himself succeed to the government.

The old Elector had no suspicion of what was going on. He never doubted that he had permanently secured the position in which his own house was to stand with regard to the imperial court. The “weather-wise helmsman,” as he was called by an English ambassador, believed that he had now entered upon the right course. His imagination, always fertile in vast schemes, suggested to him the idea that, as Sweden now showed some leaning towards the German alliance, a decisive blow might be struck against the supremacy of France. His project was to penetrate into the interior of the country, and to march straight upon Paris. He thought it probable that this would enable the princes of the blood who for the present were held in subjection once more to rise into power, the parliaments to recover the influence of which they had been deprived, and the oppressed Protestants to be restored to their rights.† He contemplated the revival of the

\* Letter written by Frederick, in his camp before Bonn, 1<sup>st</sup> Sept. 1689.

† According to a plan which he drew up in 1688, and which still exists, Austria was to bring into the field 154,000 men, Holland 35,000, and Spain 10,000; a large Imperial army was to be stationed on the Upper Rhine, and to penetrate into Bur-

parliamentary government in France, and a partial establishment of the Evangelical faith.

Had this been possible, the subsequent history of the world would indeed have been different. The Elector seems to have felt that no peaceful development and improvement in the condition of Germany was likely to take place, unaccompanied by a similar change in the state of her powerful western neighbours.

But he was not permitted even to attempt the work: "his sands of life were run out." This was his own phrase, and he had in his room a picture with the device of an hour-glass. He died in April, 1688, before the war was begun.

Frederick William cannot be placed in the same category with those few great men who have discovered new conditions for the development of the human race. But he may unhesitatingly be ranked with those famous princes who have saved their countries in the hour of danger, and have succeeded in re-establish-

gundy and Lorraine; the army of the Prince of Orange and of the Elector of Brandenburg, consisting of 57,000 men, was to march straight into France and upon Paris; the strictest discipline was to be maintained, so as to irritate no one. "Ich will wohl versichern, dass sowohl die Prinzen von Geblüt als auch andere solches gerne sehen: das Parlament, welchem seine Autorität ganz benommen, würde sich zu uns schlagen—sowohl die Catholischen als die unterdrückten Evangelischen würden concurriren sich des tyrannischen Jochs zu entledigen:"—"I can affirm, that the princes of the blood, as well as other people, would rejoice thereat; the parliament, which has been robbed of all its authority, would join us; the Catholics, as well as the oppressed Protestants, would concur in the attempt to throw off the tyrannical yoke.")

ing order—with an Alfred, a Charles VII., a Gustavus Vasa. He followed the path trodden by the German territorial princes of old; but among them all there was not one who, finding his state reduced to such a miserable condition, so successfully raised it to independence and power. He instilled into his subjects a spirit of enterprise—the mainspring of a state. He took measures which secured to his country an increase of power and prosperity. What the world most admired, and indeed what he himself most valued, was the condition of his army. It contained at the time of his death 175 companies of foot, and 76 of cavalry; the artillery had recently been increased in proportion; and the Elector's attention had been constantly directed to its improvement: the whole strength of the army was about 28,000 men. There was nothing that he recommended so earnestly to his successor as the preservation of this instrument of power. By this it was that he had made room for himself among his neighbours, and had won for the Protestant cause of north Germany the respect that was its due.

The state of his dominions, however, still fell far short of his wishes and ideas.

At the time of his death he was still busied with numberless projects for reforming the internal administration of the state. He had planned a new survey of the country, in order to remove the unequal pressure of the land-tax upon his subjects, to commute personal services for fixed payments in money, and to separate the exchequer business and the chief control from the actual administration of the finances. The

idea had also occurred to him that it would be advisable to leave only so much of the extensive royal domains under the management of his own agents, or farmers, as was needed for the maintenance of his court, and to let all the rest separately to a number of different persons. He meditated a legal reform upon general principles, which have been followed ever since, the publication of a clear exposition of the law, so that every one should be able to know his rights and duties, a more speedy termination of lawsuits, and a reduction of fees and perquisites. He endeavoured to contrive some means of putting an end to usury, to the exactions of innkeepers, and to every sort of cheating.\* On all occasions he was led by the

\* Kurzer Bericht der besonderen Vorschläge so der hochseligste Churfürst angenommen und erwählet gehabt, seinen Estat und Land in gute Ordnung und bessere Verfassung zu setzen. (A short account of the divers projects entertained and selected by the late Elector, whereby to set his state and his country in good order, and under a better rule.) Dresden Archives. Among other things there is a question of vindicating the sovereign rights; and of maintaining and demonstrating the distinction between the sovereign-princes and the estates, in *jure pacis belli et consiliorum*; and how until then the servants and states of the said prince had turned this to their own advantage. — Again, the method pursued at the treasury was to be altered. “Gangbare von dem Caduken gesondert, das Caduke wieder gangbar gemacht werden: alles könnte auf Pächte holländischer und französischer Art gebracht werden, die liegenden Gründe, so nicht zur Hofstatt gehörig, durch manierliche Vererbung ausgethan, oder zu gewissen Aufwendungen gebraucht:” — (“That which was in good repair was to be separated from what was out of repair; and the latter to be again placed in a good state of repair. All the land was to be leased out after the Dutch or French method, and such of the domain lands as did not belong exclusively to the royal household let out upon heritable leases or assigned to

idea which had animated him in his contests with the estates,—to protect the public weal from the aggressions of private rapacity. He considered all interests of a public and general nature as objects of especial care and attention on the part of the sovereign, of whose calling he entertained a very exalted idea. To compass this, however, it was essential that the prince should find officers who would not be guilty of any infringement of the rights and liberties of individuals. Frederick William had long been forced to contend against a factious spirit, which could not be completely extinguished until the government of the newly formed state was able to maintain its authority against all foreign influences. Unhappily this prospect was as yet far distant. We have already seen that the Elector failed in enforcing his claims, even when in accordance with the common interests of Germany, much more when he had to contend with the powerful Diet of the Empire, or with the Emperor himself. He was deceived in thinking that the trifling compensation with which he was forced to rest content had been granted to him in earnest; and yet it by no means satisfied his ambition. Frederick William, without doubt, was determined to win for himself a particular branches of expenditure.”) He intended to alter the Rentkammer, or office for the collection of the royal land revenue, and, after dismissing the board, to let the land upon lease, and to receive the rent in hard money from the hands of a few wealthy merchants who should be interested in the speculation. On the other hand, he meant to appoint a secret finance committee, consisting of four or five persons, who should have nothing to do with the revenue, but should be always and solely occupied in devising means for increasing the income and the value of the property.

place among the northern kings: had he been able to keep possession of Pomerania, he would likewise have assumed a royal crown. In every state the development of a peculiar internal constitution is accompanied, step by step, by increased political influence.

The power bequeathed by the Elector to his successor was in itself the strongest motive for incessant labour and exertion.

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## CHAPTER IV.

## FREDERICK I.

FREDERICK I., the next heir and successor to the throne, though far inferior to his father in native energy of character, cannot be accused of having flinched from the task imposed on him.

Above all, the warlike fame of the Brandenburg troops suffered no diminution under his reign. His army took a very prominent and active part in the most important events of that period.

Prince William of Orange might, perhaps, have hesitated whether to try the adventure which made him King of England, had not the Dutch troops, which he was forced to withdraw from the Netherlands for his expedition, been replaced by some from Brandenburg.\* The fact has indeed been disputed, but on closer investigation its truth has been established beyond doubt, that many other Brandenburg soldiers in his service, and that of his republic, followed him to England, where they contributed essentially to his success.†

\* Burnet's History of his own Times, III. 1326. "And this gave the Prince of Orange great quiet."

† I follow Pufendorf (III. 46) and Dalrymple, who are the best informed authors. The Brandenburg regiment, which is especially mentioned in the accounts of the expedition to England, and of the battle of Limerick, belonged to the Margrave Albert Frederick. In order to trace out the connection between

In the war which now broke out upon the Rhine, the young Elector, Frederick, took the field himself, inflamed by religious enthusiasm, patriotism, and personal ambition. On one occasion, at the siege of Bonn, when he was anxious about the result, he stepped aside to the window and prayed to God that he might suffer no disgrace in this his first enterprise. He was successful in his attack upon Bonn, and cleared the whole lower Rhine of the hostile troops; he at the same time gained a high reputation for personal courage.

Long after, at the beginning of the Spanish war of succession, the presence of the Elector contributed in a great measure to the speedy termination of the first important siege,—that of Kaiserswerth, a point from which the French threatened at once both Holland and Westphalia.

But it was not only when led by the Elector that his troops distinguished themselves by their courage; they fought most bravely at the battle of Höchstädt. Prince Eugene, under whose command they stood, could scarce find words strong enough to praise the “undaunted steadfastness”\* with which they first

Brandenburg and the Prince of Orange, a search should be made, not in the national archives of Holland or England, but in those of the house of Orange at the Hague.

\* “Steadfastness,” and not “courage,” which would amount to tautology, is his expression. The letter, which is to be found in the *Theatrum Europeum*, XVII. 106, has been retranslated from French into German. In the original (in the Dessau Archives), dated 16th Aug. 1704, from the camp at Wittlislingen, the words run thus: “Maassen ich denn mit Augen gesehen wie beforderist von der Infanterie welche auf dem rechten Flügel gewesen, so hoch als niedere Offiziere und Gemeine mit einer unerschrocke-



withstood the shock of the enemy's attack, and then helped to break through his tremendous fire. Two years later, at Turin, they helped to settle the affairs of Italy in the same manner as they had already done in those of Germany; headed by Prince Leopold of Anhalt, they climbed over the enemy's entrenchments, under the full fire of his artillery, shouting the old Brandenburg war-cry of "Gah to"—go on. The warlike enterprise of Brandenburg never spread over a wider field than under Frederick I. Then it was that they first met the Turks in terrible battles; they showed themselves in the South of France at the siege of Toulon; in their camp the Protestant service was performed for the first time in the territories of the Pope, and the inhabitants of the surrounding country came to look on, and displayed a certain satisfaction

nen Standhaftigkeit wider der Feind gefochten, dessen Gewalt etliche Stunden lang ausgehalten und endlichen gesambter Hand durch ihr starkes Feuer denselben in eine solche Confusion haben setzen helfen, dass er ihrer Tapferkeit mit grosser Präcipitanz entfliehen und uns das Veld, anmit diese so herrliche Victori überlassen müssen:" ("Inasmuch as I saw with mine own eyes, how first and foremost the infantry on the right flank, officers and privates, fought with a most undaunted resolution against the enemy, whose attack they withstood for the space of some hours, and at length all at once, by their steady and strong fire, did help to throw the enemy into such confusion, that he was forced to fly with great precipitancy before their valour and to leave us masters of the field and of this glorious victory.") He says of Prince Leopold of Anhalt, that "er habe mit grossem Valor keine Gefahr gescheuet und seine Untergebenen ganz herzhafft angeführet, das dahero des erhaltenen Siegs zu seinem unsterblichen Ruhm ihm ein grosser Antheil gebühre:" ("his valour was such, that he shunned no danger, and did lead on his followers most courageously, and that to his undying honour a great share of the victory is owing to him.")

at the sight.\* But the Netherlands were always the scene of their greatest achievements, and at that time an excellent school for their further progress in the art of war; there they might at once study sieges under the (Dutch) commanders, Vauban and Coehorn, and campaigns under Marlborough, one of the greatest generals of all times. ? !!

Throughout all the years of his reign Frederick steadily adhered to the great alliance which his father had helped to form, so long as that alliance continued to subsist; and, indeed, the interest which he took in the affairs of Europe at large was in the end of great advantage to himself and to his house. That very alliance was the original cause of his gaining a crown,—the foundation of the Prussian monarchy.

It will not be denied, even by those who think most meanly of the externals of rank and title, that the attainment of a higher step in the European hierarchy, as it then stood, was an object worth striving for.†

The western principalities and republics still formed a great corporation, at the head of which was the German Emperor. Even the crown of France had to submit to manifold and wearisome negotiations in order to obtain the prædicate of “majesty,” which,

\* Buchholz Geschichte der Kurmark, IV. 281, from the mouth of the chaplain.

† Relatione di Cornaro, 1690. Brandenburg si considera il più potente per la ampiezza de stati e per la forza di mantener numero considerabile d'eserciti, onde dal partito ch'egli s'appigli prende in gran parte il muovimento e regola il volere degli altri. Lo coltiva la M. S. con ogni finezza di studio et egli si fa conoscere più interessato per casa d'Austria di quello sieno stimati li altri elettori.

until then, had belonged exclusively to the Emperor. The other sovereigns then laid claim to the same dignity as that enjoyed by the King of France, and the Venetian Republic to an equal rank with these, on the score of the kingdoms which she once possessed; and, accordingly, the electoral ambassadors to Vienna had to stand bareheaded, while the Venetian covered his head. The Electors and reigning Dukes were but ill pleased with such precedence, and in their turn laid claim to the designation of "Serenissimus," and the title of "Brother," for themselves, and the style of "Excellency" for their ambassadors. But even the most powerful among the Electors found it difficult to advance a single step in this matter, because whatever privileges were conceded to them were immediately claimed by all the rest, many of whom were mere barons of the Empire. It is evident that Brandenburg was interested in being freed at once from these negotiations, which only served to impede and embarrass all really important business. There exists the distinct assertion of a highly-placed official man that the royal title had been promised to the Elector Frederick William: his son now centred his whole ambition in its attainment.\*

Frederick, while Elector, was one of the most popular princes that ever reigned in Brandenburg. His contemporaries praise him for his avoidance of all dissipation, and his life entirely devoted to duty; while

\* Pufendorf gives an example of the difficulties which the Elector Frederick William encountered in England, XIV. 72, XV. 31. The Duke of York was accused of having a hand in this, as he grudged this honour to the Protestants.

his subjects were still asleep, say they, the prince was already busied with their affairs, for he rose very early. A poet of the time makes Phosphorus complain that he is ever anticipated by the King of Prussia. His manners were gracious, familiar, sincere, and deliberate. His conversation indicated "righteous and princely thoughts." Those essays, written by him, which we have read, exhibit a sagacious and careful treatment of the subjects under consideration. He shared in a very great degree the taste of his times for outward show and splendour; but in him it took a direction which led to something far higher than mere ostentation. The works of sculpture and architecture produced under his reign are monuments of a pure and severe taste; the capital of Prussia has seen none more beautiful. He complacently indulged in the contemplation of the greatness founded by his father, the possession of a territory four times as large as that of any other Elector, and the power of bringing into the field an army which placed him on a level with kings. Now, however, he desired that this equality should be publicly recognised, especially as he had no lack of treasure and revenue wherewith to maintain the splendour and dignity of a royal crown. In the mind of the father this ambition was combined with schemes of conquest; in the son it was merely a desire for personal and dynastic aggrandizement. It is certain that the origin of such a state as the kingdom of Prussia can be attributed to no other cause than to so remarkable a succession of so many glorious princes. Frederick was resolved to appear among them distinguished by some important ser-

vice rendered to his house: "Frederick I.," said he, "gained the Electoral dignity for our house, and I, as Frederick III., would fain give it royal rank, according to the old saying that 'the third time makes perfect.'"

It was in the year 1693\* that he first began seriously to act upon the project of obtaining a royal crown. He had just led some troops to Crossen, which were to serve the Emperor against the Turks; but the imperial ministers neither arrived in due time to receive them, nor, when they at length made their appearance, did they bring with them the grants of certain privileges and expectancies which Frederick had looked for. In disgust at being treated with neglect at the very moment in which he was rendering the Emperor a very essential service, he went to Carlsbad, where he was joined by his ambassador to Vienna, who had been commissioned by the imperial ministers to apologize for the omissions of which they had been guilty. In concert with his ambassador, and his prime minister Dankelmann, the brother of the former, Frederick resolved to make public the wish which he had hitherto entertained in secret, or only now and then let drop in conversation; the ambassador accordingly received instructions to present a formal memorial.

At that time, however, nothing could be done. The Count of Ottingen, who was hostile to the Protestant princes, was once more in favour at the court of

\* Respecting the assumption of the kingly title, some further details are to be found in a treatise on the subject read by me before the Academy.

Vienna; the peril from without had ceased to be pressing, and the coalition had begun gradually to dissolve; the only result of the negotiation was a vague and general promise.

The Elector did not, however, give up his idea. The elevation of the Saxon house to the throne of Poland, the prospect enjoyed by his near kindred of Hanover of succeeding to that of England, and perhaps the very difficulties and opposition which he encountered, tended to sharpen his appetite for a royal crown. The misunderstandings which arose amongst the great European powers, out of the approaching vacancy of the throne of Spain, soon afforded him an excellent opportunity of renewing his demands. The court of Vienna was not to be moved by past, but by future, services.

It would be unnecessary to enter into the details of the negotiation on this subject: it suffices to say that the prince devoted his whole energy to it, and never lost sight of any advantage afforded by his position.

Suggestions of the most exaggerated kind were made to him,—for instance, that he should lay his claims before the Pope,\* who possessed the power of grant-

\* *Réflexions sur la Couronne et la Majesté royale due à S. A. E. Monseigneur l'Electeur de Brandenbourg, et à sa ser<sup>me</sup> et très puissante Maison.* (It appears to be by P. Vota.)

“ Vos richesses éclatent dans vos nombreuses troupes parfaitement réglées et disciplinées, dans les bâtimens étonnans que vous érigez partout, dans la pompe et la splendeur de la table, des meubles, des habits, des festins, des théâtres, des chasses, et de toutes les fonctions d'un véritable monarque, mais particulièrement dans les libéralités plus que royales de votre maison inépuisable.”

The

ing the royal dignity in a far higher degree than the Emperor; while, on the other hand, some of the more zealous Protestants among his ministers were anxious to avoid even that degree of approach towards the Catholic element implied in a closer alliance with the Emperor, and desired that the Elector's elevation in rank should be made to depend upon some new and important acquisition of territory, such, for example, as that of Polish Prussia, which then seemed neither difficult nor improbable. Frederick, however, persisted in the opinion that he was entitled to the royal dignity merely on account of his own sovereign dukedom of Prussia, and that the recognition of the Emperor was the most important step in the affair. He was convinced that, when the Emperor had once got possession of the Spanish inheritance, or concluded a treaty upon the subject, nothing more was to be hoped from him; but that now, while the Elector of Brandenburg was able to render him as effectual assistance as any power in Europe, some advantage might be wrung from him in return.\*

Influenced by these considerations, he resolved to lay proposals before the Emperor, which acquired

The point chiefly insisted on was the relation in which he stood towards the Pope, and that Frederick would not choose to follow the example of Henry IV.

“Je dis seulement que sans choquer sa conscience, qui est très tendre en fait de religion, on pourrait trouver quelque tempérament recevable des deux partis pour réunir l'église sous le seul et véritable pasteur.”

\* A paper drawn up by Fuchs, with long annotations, or rather resolutions, written in Frederick's own hand; certainly the most important document in the whole affair.

uncommon significance from the circumstances under which they were made.

At that very time, in March, 1700, England, Holland, and France had just concluded a treaty for the division of the Spanish monarchy, in which the right of inheritance of Austria was utterly disregarded, in order to preserve the European balance of power. Spain and the Indies were, indeed, to fall to the share of the young Archduke Charles, but he was to be deprived of Naples, Sicily, and Milan; and should the Archduke ever become Emperor of Germany, Spain and the Indies were to be given up to another prince, whose claims were far inferior to his. This treaty was received with disgust and indignation at Vienna, where the assistance of Heaven was solemnly implored, and its interference in the affair fully expected.

At this juncture Brandenburg offered to make common cause with the Emperor, not alone against France, but even against England and Holland, with whom it was otherwise closely allied. The only recompense was to be the concession of royal rank to the Elector.

The principal opposition to this offer arose out of the difference of confessions. It is also quite true that the Emperor's confessor, Pater Wolf,\* to whom

\* Several distinguished men have asserted, but the opinion is not well founded, that it was by some mistake in the cipher that this matter was referred to Pater Wolf. In the despatches, at any rate, the ciphers are perfectly correct. Pater Wolf had been long known at the Court of Berlin, and had made himself extremely useful to it. But at a subsequent period, people have not been able to comprehend how any but those high in office could be selected to manage important negotiations.



the Elector wrote with his own hand, helped to overrule it, and took part in the negotiations. But the determining cause was, without doubt, the political state of affairs. A concession which involved no loss could not surely be thought too high a price to pay for the help of the most warlike of the German powers on so important an occasion. In the month of July, 1700, at the great conference, the imperial ministers came to the resolution that the wishes of the Elector should be complied with; and as soon as the conditions could be determined, involving the closest alliance both for the war and for the affairs of the Empire, the treaty was signed on the 16th of November, 1700. On the side of Brandenburg the utmost care was taken not to admit a word which might imply anything further than the assent and concurrence of the Emperor. The Elector affected to derive from his own power alone the right of assuming the royal crown.

He would, nevertheless, have encountered much unpleasant opposition in other quarters, but for the occurrences which, very opportunely for him, now took place in France and Spain.

The last Spanish sovereign of the line of Habsburg had died in the mean time; and on opening his will it was found to be entirely in favour of the King of France, whose grandson was appointed heir to the whole Spanish monarchy. Hereupon Louis XIV. broke the treaty of partition which had recently been made under his own influence, and determined to seize the greater advantage, and to accept the inheritance. This naturally roused all the antipathies

entertained by other nations against France, and England and Holland went over to the side of Austria.

The opposition which these two powers had offered to the erection of a new throne was now silenced, and they beheld a common interest in the elevation of the house of Brandenburg.

Frederick had, moreover, already come to an understanding with the King of Poland, though not with the Republic; so that, thus supported, and with the consent of all his old allies, he could now celebrate the splendid coronation for which his heart had so long panted.

We will not here describe the ceremonial of the 18th of January, 1701; to our taste it seems overcharged when we read the account of it. But there is a certain grandeur in the idea of the sovereign's grasping the crown with his own hand: and the performance of the ceremony of anointing after, instead of before, the crowning, by two priests, promoted to bishopricks for the occasion, was a protest against the dependence of the temporal on the spiritual power, such as perhaps never was made at any other coronation either before or since. The spiritual element showed itself in the only attitude of authority left to it in Protestant states, that of teaching and exhortation. The Provost of Berlin demonstrated from the examples of Christ and of David that the government of kings must be carried on to the glory of God and the good of their people. He lays down as the first principle, that all rulers should bear in mind that they have come into the world for the sake of their subjects, and not

their subjects for the sake of them. Finally, he exhorts all his hearers to pray to God that he will deeply impress this conviction upon the hearts of all sovereign princes.

The institution of the order of the Black Eagle, which immediately preceded the coronation, was likewise symbolical of the duties of royalty. The words "Suum cuique," on the insignia of the order, according to Lamberty, who suggested them, contain the definition of a good government, under which all men alike, good as well as bad, are rewarded according to their several deserts. The laurel and the lightning denote reward and punishment. The conception at least is truly royal.

Leibnitz, who was at that time closely connected with the Court, and who busied himself very much with this affair, justly observes that nothing is complete without a name, and that, although the Elector did already possess every royal attribute, he only became truly a king by being called so.

Although the new dignity rested only on the possession of Prussia, all the other provinces were included in the rank and title; those belonging to the German Empire were thus in a manner chosen out from among the other German states, and united into a new whole, though, at the same time, care was taken in other respects to keep up the ancient connection with the Empire. Thus we see that the elevation of the Elector to a royal title was an important, nay even a necessary, impulse to the progress of Prussia, which we cannot even in thought separate from the whole combination of events.

The name of Prussia now became inseparable from an idea of military power and glory, which was increased by splendid feats of arms, such as those which we have already enumerated.

But a totally different and very remarkable manifestation of intellect and activity now seemed disposed to attach itself to the newly created monarchy.

Frederick William had already opened the gates of Berlin to those Frenchmen who were exiled by Louis XIV., and now Frederick welcomed them with a cordiality which excited some jealousy amongst his own subjects, and caused the number of French residents to increase rapidly. Among them were a few learned men, who from this place of safety carried on the literary war which had been violently interrupted by the French Government in concert with their opponents.

It was perfectly consistent with the character and position of a new government, which stood in determined opposition to what was then, in the fullest sense of the word, the Catholic Empire, that its capital should be the seat of a defensive war on the field of literature, against the attacks made upon Protestant opinions by the dominant party. The writers of the Anglican Church, the learned men of the Dutch universities, and the fugitives settled in Berlin, formed a coalition like that of the states to which they belonged. The former endeavoured to uphold upon the field of reason and inquiry the opinions which the latter supported with the sword.

One of these men resident in Berlin was Jacob Lenfant, of whom it was said, that after every inter-

view with his friends, who frequently visited him, he felt no lassitude, but instead a fresh ardour for literary labour. This was doubtless caused by the mutual encouragement given by men all holding the same opinions, and vying with each other in the task of discovering the weak points of their adversaries. They were engaged in constant war against the doctrines of the Jesuits. Lenfant occupied himself mainly with the transactions of the great ecclesiastical councils of the fifteenth century. He wrote, for the first time, a history of the Council of Constance, out of the genuine documents which had just been collected. Bishop Burnet places this work on a level with that by P. Sarpi on the Council of Trent.

A still more illustrious name is that of Isaac de Beausobre. His book upon the Manicheans is one of the most instructive and ingenious that ever was written upon any heretical sect.

Both were very popular preachers, Lenfant owing to his vivacity, Beausobre to the dignity and power of his language. The French translation of the New Testament, executed by these two men in common, is a book which has produced great effects, as it possessed great value both as a work of learning and of piety: it was received with great approbation by all of the reformed religion, even by the English.

These men found fellow-labourers in Vignoles and Lacroze.

The former was induced, by the assertion of Richard Simon that it was impossible to compile a chronology of the Old Testament, to make the attempt while still resident in France. By dint of the most

persevering industry, he at length completed and published at Berlin a work of this kind, which still continues to be well thought of. The latter, however, possessed a still greater faculty for abstruse learning. He answered Harduin's Paradoxes with consummate skill; for these writers likewise held themselves bound to combat the excesses of the French schools;—and again, his Coptic researches have, after a long lapse of time, acquired a degree of importance, with regard to the study of the history of the earliest ages of the world, which he himself could never have anticipated.

It was, no doubt, of the highest importance that the Protestant principle should receive such efficient literary support and development in the rising capital of northern Germany, which had been placed by the French immigrants in the closest intercourse with every branch of French literature,—at that time the literature of the whole of Europe.

Moreover, a new movement had begun to show itself in the bosom of German Protestantism, and promised, after much strife and opposition, to invest it with a new character. Out of the depths of Lutheran theology, and the views of life with which it is connected, arose new tendencies, opposed to the actually prevailing systems, although based on the same foundation.

Outward orthodoxy was opposed by a greater rigour of morals, and a more active faith, in the person of Philip Spener and his friends, who imposed on themselves the task of endeavouring to awaken in the young teachers of the people a stronger spirit of practical piety.

On the other hand, there arose a juristic school, resolved no longer to allow the whole social life of the state to be governed by the spiritual principle, but to restrict it to its peculiar province of preserving public peace and order.

These were views, which might indeed be exaggerated on the one hand, and misrepresented on the other; but which were not without sufficient foundation, and certainly thoroughly Protestant. It was, after all, the Reformation which had given rise and stability to a deeper feeling of religion, and a moral detestation of a mere ritual service of works, and which had insisted upon the independent and unalienable rights and duties of the state. It was determined that a perfectly free career should be opened to both these principles in Brandenburg.

One motive for this was, that the leaders of the dominant system had always manifested great hostility to the Protestant house of Brandenburg, and had instilled the same feeling into their disciples. Lutheranism, strictly so called, was at the beginning intimately connected with representative institutions, especially those of a provincial nature. The government of a state which owed its elevation entirely to its own power could not feel called upon to support such a form of religion.

In short, when Spener and his friends were banished from Saxony, where the established opinions maintained their authority, a far wider field of action was opened to them in the territory of Brandenburg. The university of Halle was founded mainly for the purpose of no longer abandoning the candidates for

the 6000 cures contained in the country to influences which were both hostile and narrow-minded. Here Spener's disciples soon displayed great energy and activity in doctrine and practice; while their master, more gentle and refined than ever, exercised his sacred calling in the capital, and under the protection of the court.

Already Frederick had imposed the honourable task of writing his father's history with fearless sincerity upon Samuel Pufendorf, the man who first freed the study of nature from the trammels of a theological system, and who followed the light of reason without denying the truths of revelation.

The literary movement of the time, which was the expression of general conviction, was still more powerfully influenced by Christian Thomasius. He applied the same maxims to ecclesiastical as to political government. Formerly the functions of ecclesiastical authority were confined to enforcing the pure and true doctrine as laid down by the decision of theologians, whereas Thomasius made their duty to consist in preventing any dissensions among the latter from disturbing the tranquillity of the public. He thus came to the assistance of the party which strove to promote tolerance at all events between the two Protestant parties, a result which Frederick I. made it his chief ambition to accomplish.\* Altogether, few professors lecturing at German universities have ever produced greater effects than Thomasius, not indeed

\* Report of Pater Vota: il regnante si persuadeva e gloriava d'aver uniti di fede e di cuore i Calvinisti e i Luterani, che compongono i suoi vasti domini.



always so much owing to the subject-matter of his discourses, as by his manner of seizing upon what was most important and significant. The prefaces and dedications of books of the most various kinds contain grateful mention of him, or of those among his scholars who were imbued with his spirit.\* Much more, doubtless, remains unsaid.

The university of Halle was constituted upon a system which has stood the test of experience. Only so many professors were appointed as were absolutely necessary, but care was taken to select such as were known to be assiduous and not given to frequent interruptions, and they were well paid according to the exigencies of the times, so that they were not driven to any unworthy expedients for captivating the favour of their hearers. These measures were taken mainly at the advice of the learned and experienced Samuel Stryck, who himself filled one of the highest posts in the faculty of law, and who was followed by a great number of students from Wittenberg.

The third faculty likewise seemed filled with scientific activity. Hofmann, who pursued the beaten track with sober sagacity, stood in an opposition to the boldly speculative Stahl, arising from no personal antipathy, but from the very nature of the science which they cultivated. The former of these distinguished physicians made great improvements in the existing practice of medicine, the latter gave rise

\* In the paper on German literature, 1780, and elsewhere, Frederick II. refers to Thomasius, "in historischen Kenntnissen" (for historical knowledge).

to a new science, and originated a new method of cure.

Paul von Fuchs, in the memorable speech with which he opened the university, especially insists upon the intimate connection between general science, the state, and society; *e.g.* between mathematics, history, and the art of war. "Where," said he, "do you find a nation which has become mighty without science?" The proper symbol of the Prussian monarchy he beheld in Pallas, who presides at once over the arts of peace and of war.\*

The question has arisen whether every branch of learning can be cultivated at universities, or whether institutions devoted solely to scientific inquiry and investigation, without regard to the instruction of youth, are not equally necessary. At the suggestion of Leibnitz, Frederick I. made an attempt to found an institution of this kind.

The views of Leibnitz were principally directed to the encouragement of the physical and mathematical sciences. He wished to establish a society like those of France and England, in which however mere accidental novelties, calculated only to excite curiosity, were to be avoided. For the use of this society an observatory was to be built, and a laboratory to be fitted up with the most complete chemical apparatus; these at all events were considered indispensable to the court of a great prince.

\* So says Cellarius in the panegyricus, Friderico I. dictus (2 sheet), at the time of the coronation: ubi jam literæ quam maxime coluntur, in Brandenburgicis putate regionibus, ibi quam plurima victoriarum monumenta sunt.

He remarked upon the utility of the study of the physical sciences for the purposes of common life,—their intimate connection with agriculture, mining, and metal-working; he likewise pointed out that the developement of these sciences offered the most effectual means of converting heathen nations to Christianity. It was during an excursion to Oranienburg, in March 1700, that this scheme was first laid before Frederick and taken into consideration by him. The success of the negotiations concerning the crown had just become certain, and his mind was filled with the most various hopes and views for the future; he embraced the idea with delight. He even extended Leibnitz's plan to a totally different branch of science. Moved probably by the example of the recently published *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* of the French language, he expressed a wish that the new society should devote a similar labour to that of German, and, as he said, assist in preserving the purity of the principal German tongue. The whole idea was royal, and at the same time national; it was an endeavour to open to Germany a career in which she might be able one day to measure herself with other nations,\* and richly has that endeavour been crowned with success. The Prussian government could never have found a better ally than in the spirit of progress and improvement inherent in the whole German nation.

\* See suggestions and memorials in Leibnitz's German works by Guhrauer, II. 267. The first act in the matter of the Academy is the letter of Wedel, the master of the Requests, who made the address to Jablonsky on the 19th March, 1700. Leibnitz, p. 148.

Frederick I. had judgment and education as well as ambition enough to entertain ideas of this kind, and his somewhat despotic spirit of general benevolence found occupation in this field.

His wife, Sophie Charlotte, who was more deeply imbued with the spirit of European culture, took part in a totally different manner in literature and science. She not only possessed so much general knowledge that in many branches of science she might have vied even with those who had made each of these branches their especial study, but she took that lively interest in the pursuit and advancement of learning which arises out of an insatiable thirst after the discovery of truth. She knew what were the problems that yet remained unsolved.

The theological controversies which still continued largely to occupy men's minds, although they had ceased to disturb the world, were frequently discussed at length, and by no means superficially, in her presence.

Pater Moritz Vota, the confessor of the King of Poland, an experienced ecclesiastical diplomatist, frequently visited the court of Berlin, partly with the hope, as is shown in his memoirs, of converting the King and Queen. He was a Jesuit, and a man of the world, and, moreover, possessed of the most various knowledge; though now an old man, his quickness of apprehension might have shamed many a youth. The Queen took great pleasure in his company, and frequently invited him, sometimes asking one or the other Protestant preacher to meet him, but only one at a time, for fear of confusion. She then listened

with the greatest attention to the arguments which they employed against each other. They began by discussing the question whether Peter was ever in Rome, then the supremacy of the see of Rome, the immunities and duties of the ecclesiastical order, until at length they arrived at the questions which then divided the Catholic Church, *e.g.* the part taken by the Pope in the affair of the Jansenists. One of Vota's favourite ideas was, that a reunion of the Church might possibly take place on the ground of the doctrines of the fathers and of the early councils. When Beau-sobre or Lenfant objected to this, that even the Greek fathers had not always rightly understood the language of Scripture, but that much foreign matter belonging to the new Platonic school had been interpolated, Vota was filled with a holy indignation that wonderfully became him. There still exists a remarkable letter from the Queen on this subject, the materials of which were doubtless furnished by her learned friends and counsellors:\* the composition of it however is such as might beseem an intelligent princess; though serious and profound, it is written in a flowing and agreeable style.

It was with as little effect that the freethinker Toland endeavoured to instil into her his bold and dangerous theories.

On the other hand, however, the works of Bayle, more especially the Dictionnaire, which, spite of its

\* Reprinted in Erman: *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de Sophie Charlotte*, 247. When Vota gives us to understand that he was near converting the Queen, he must have forgotten this letter.

folio shape and its learned quotations, was diligently studied at Charlottenburg, made a profound impression on her mind. It was in the regions of doubt and contradiction, situate between reason and belief, to which this author leads his readers, that an intimacy was formed between the Queen and Leibnitz, who had no easy task with her. She was remarkable for the acuteness with which she instantly detected the insufficiency of an argument, and opposed to it the most ingenious objections; it appeared as if the whole series of deductions involved by any assertion presented itself to her mind at once, with perfect distinctness; the clearness of her thoughts rendered her an acute questioner, and she was apt to ask, as was then said, the reason of the reason. By her Leibnitz was led on to a field of inquiry upon which he otherwise would scarcely have entered, and under the influence of her society he drew up the outline of his Theodicee. So little is extant of the Queen's own writing, that we can form no certain conclusion as to the nature of the convictions which she formed for herself; hers was one of those characters which carry their dislike of all external practices in religion to the utmost;\* at all events she was benevolent and affable, compassionate towards the distresses of others, and unshaken under her own; she thought herself justified in the belief that she stood well with her God, and often spoke of the peace of God. She required no amusements beyond a walk in the gardens of Lietzen-

\* Nevertheless the *Vita Sophiæ Carolæ*, MS., probably by Leibnitz himself, says, "Sacrificium piarum precum in spiritu et veritate obtulit."

burg, which have since borne her name, a drive in the environs of the town, and an occasional visit to her home; she wanted nothing but sun and fresh air, and, above all, occupation for her mind. When she sat with her ladies at needlework, an employment which she did not despise, something was read aloud. Musical compositions by her are still extant, which show a considerable natural gift. But her chief talent—and indeed the one most proper to a completely organized female mind—was that for conversation. The very reverse of her husband, who rose early, and loved to vary his daily labours with pomp and ceremonial, she delighted in long evenings spent in unconstrained social intercourse and interesting conversation. No empty flattery dared to approach her, still less anything tasteless or offensive; she well knew how to distinguish what was real from what was false, and she displayed a taste and judgment which might with great advantage to literature have been more extensively applied and made public. The learned men \* by whom she was surrounded never forgot the union of beauty and intelligence, of dignity and politeness, exhibited in her person, and she produced the same impression upon the society which formed her court. She knew her attendants

\* Leibnitz involuntarily alludes to her in the verses upon Hildegard, the wife of Charlemagne, "Attamen hanc speciem—the most beautiful in the world—superabant lumina mentis." *Annales Imperii*, I. 108. Larrey, in the history of Louis XIV., II. 417. Lenfant, in the introduction to Vota's Correspondence in Erman, 244. The most beautiful relic out of her papers is a letter to a lady named Pöllnitz (Erman, 71), which Varnhagen has quoted.

thoroughly, and did not spare their faults in her intimate conversations with them ; she repelled impertinent pretension with marked coldness, and was ever anxious to draw out modest merit ; she was proud, open-hearted, and full of charm ; she never attempted to interfere in public business ; only now and then, when she had seen through some matter of personal interest, she gave her opinion, and then instantly drew back within her own sphere. The court adopted some of her pursuits, and its hours were divided, as Toland tells us, between study and amusement. In fact, the great merit of the Queen lay in the impulse which she gave to the mental activity of the higher classes, an impulse which they readily obeyed.

Thus then the affairs of Prussia, both external and internal, were full of the fairest promise. Dohna once told the King how much he admired his happiness in possessing all that could add to his glory and his contentment—excellent troops, money in his treasury, beautiful palaces and country seats to dwell in, and an incomparable wife. The King replied that he did not sleep so quietly as people might think ; that it was not so easy to reconcile all the various interests of the state, or to satisfy the greediness of his courtiers.

There were, moreover, other stumbling-blocks in the way, of a totally different nature from those mentioned by the King, and which became more apparent every day.

King Frederick never felt so happy as when seated on his throne, clad in the insignia of royalty and surrounded by the Margraves, his brothers, who appeared



in princely splendour; by the knights of his order, which was then worn on a splendid chain hung across the back and shoulders; by his chamberlains with their golden keys; by the members of his privy council and of his ministry in their embroidered dresses of office; and by the generals and colonels of his army. The officers of his body-guard appeared in a splendid uniform of white satin, edged with gold lace, and made after the ancient Swiss fashion. Everything appertaining to the court,—wardrobes, stables, cellars, kitchens, and plate-rooms,—were furnished with the greatest abundance. Four-and-twenty trumpeters announced that the dinner was served. The hunting-lodge, and, above all, the royal orchestra, were filled by a numerous staff. The King would not be deprived of the court fool, who so frequently told him in jest the truth which was concealed by others; he also liked to have a few blackamoors and a baptized Turk or two in his service. Then the blue liveries of his servants were so covered with gold lace, that nothing more than the very edges of the red velvet borders with which they were trimmed were visible. The King took an active part in the direction of all these trifles, and in the arrangement of splendid festivals; and he was assured by all that no one possessed so much talent for such things. Those, however, who desired the improvement of the affairs of Brandenburg in essentials were not so well pleased. That which was feared from the beginning seemed likely to be the case, namely, that the splendour of the throne would endanger the economy of the state. It once even became necessary to represent to the

King that the expenses of his household were now twice as large as they had been during the first years of his reign,—when, however, extraordinary causes of outlay had been necessary,—and that no corresponding source of revenue had been opened.

The court was governed by a spirit of faction, which likewise infected all the various departments of government, and which was the cause of sudden falls and equally sudden elevations of the heads of opposing parties and their adherents.

The principal struggles were linked with the names of Dankelmann and Wartenberg.

Apart from a few uncertain and accidental notices, we may gather thus much, that Dankelmann endeavoured to use the authority of an old tutor, in order to moderate the king's ruling passion for ostentation, and to maintain a certain economy and order in the expenditure of the state and of the royal household. Wartenberg,\* on the other hand, was an agreeable and dexterous courtier, who had made his way to power through appointments about the court, and who encouraged all the King's weaknesses, and promoted every kind of expense.

Owing to these causes, many laudable efforts after improvement, some of which were dictated by a

\* Besser reckons up all Wartenberg's offices—Treasurer, Prime Minister, Master of the Horse, Director of the Royal Domains, Keeper of the Privy Purse, Postmaster-General, Marshal of Prussia, Chancellor and Knight of the Order of the Black Eagle, as well as Protector of all the Royal Academies. Great princes, says Besser, have two kinds of servants, some for business and others for their own persons; but in the noble Count we find both services united. Besser's *Schriften*, p. 167.

really exalted feeling, were accompanied by a sense of insecurity; the ground upon which men stood seemed ever shifting beneath their feet.

The real state of affairs—the ambitious grasp of the schemes which were conceived, the recklessness with which they were at first put into execution, and the hopeless manner in which all were wrecked by the disorder of the internal administration—is exemplified in a remarkable degree in an attempt which was made to grant heritable leases of the royal domains; and as these administrative movements belong to the very essence of a growing state, I must here devote a few words to this transaction.

Simultaneously with the imposition of taxes upon articles of consumption, the great Elector had diligently applied himself to the management of the domains, and, after several different experiments, he had finally returned to the peculiar system of farming called *Arende*. The same system had been adhered to under his successor, and had afforded the best results; the revenue derived from the domains in the territory of Magdeburg was more than doubled between the years 1683 and 1702.

Meanwhile Frederick William had not been completely satisfied with the existing system; and the spirit of improvement, which had been aroused and directed to financial administration, rendered him less and less easy to content with the actual profits; the more so as the outlay of the state was daily increasing.

Suddenly a man rose up from the midst of the administrative body, who offered to raise a far larger

revenue from the domains, if only they were managed in a different manner.

Christian Frederick Luben von Wulffen had formerly been employed in the Kammer, or office for the management of the domains of the electoral March of Brandenburg, and among the archives of that province he had discovered certain ancient projects, which had been carried into effect elsewhere as early as the sixteenth century. Wulffen was a man of grasping ambition, and not unconnected with the war of party intrigue that divided the court of Prussia, but he possessed a vein of genuine talent for conceiving projects of great extent, and for carrying out new systems of administration.\*

In the year 1700, when every new proposal met with a ready reception, this man brought forward a plan for letting the royal domains on heritable leases, beginning by the great manor-farms, which had hitherto been let for ordinary terms of lease;—and for giving them up wholly to the management of the farmers and cottiers, who should rent them at a certain annual hereditary rent. This system, he said, would scarcely be advisable in the case of a landed proprietor who was able to watch over his estates in person; but it was eminently fitted for a prince who owned numerous and scattered farms and domains. He reckoned that a farm, which under the existing system was

\* Compare König: Berlin, III. 184, 267. But much more instruction is to be obtained from a compilation from the acts made by Privy Counsellor Riedel, under the title of “Generelle Darstellung des Erbverpachtungswesens in den Domänen und dessen Wiederaufhebung unter Friedrich I.” It is to be hoped that this collection will be published.

rated at a rent of 500 thalers, did not in fact, when all the abatements were made which the prince was forced to grant, bring in above half that sum ; whereas the same land divided amongst several farmers might be made to afford a clear profit of above 600 thalers yearly. But his scheme was not of a merely fiscal nature, it appears to have contained the first idea of an agricultural code, which was afterwards adopted, though on quite different grounds. His plan was to relieve the peasants attached to the royal farms and domains from the onerous services which they were bound to render to the farmers of these domains, and to commute their personal services for a fixed payment in money ; he was of opinion that the establishment of new fee-farms would tend to increase the population of the country, would lead the rising generation to devote themselves to agriculture, and would perhaps attract a number of foreign settlers ; in the multitude of subjects he beheld the glory of the sovereign and the safety of the country, as no enemy would dare to invade a territory thickly inhabited by independent proprietors.

These schemes were quite in harmony with the spirit of benevolence and love of progress which animated the King, whose ambition it was to found a solid and glorious throne, based upon and supported by the newly awakened energies of the nation. The privy council could not oppose Luben's scheme, for it had always advised that every endeavour should be made to induce good farmers, and men of property, to settle in the country ; and Count Wartenberg took up the affair with great warmth. After the advice of several

other experienced men had been taken, it was resolved that a commission should be appointed for carrying the plan into effect, in which Luben was to be included, and which was to be independent of every other department of government: this commission undertook to bring about a certain fixed increase in the revenue derived from the crown lands. On the 2nd of April, 1701, a proclamation appeared, which determined those domains of the old March where the first trial of the new farming system was to be made. Deliverance from the burthen of taskwork was proclaimed to the vassals, and those who could give sufficient sureties were invited to undertake the heritable leases.

The experiment thus tried in seven farms of the old March was followed by the best result. Buildings, stock, and implements were sold at good prices, and the amount of the quit-rents which were agreed upon raised the increase of profit above what had been promised. In the autumn of 1701 the King inspected the new arrangements in person, and, after he had given them his approval, an attempt was made to extend them to the other provinces, beginning, in the spring of 1702, with the middle March and Magdeburg. These endeavours were met by a resistance which could scarcely have been expected on the part of these provinces.

The two *Amtskammern* (or offices for the management of the domains) of Halle and Berlin, convinced that they had hitherto performed their duty to the utmost, were indignant at the intrusion into their own circle of jurisdiction of a new and independent au-

thority, acting in direct opposition to all their established ideas. They had but just, and with the greatest difficulty, erected all the farm-buildings, which Luben now hastened to sell, and they were still burthened with an unusual amount of debt, which they had hoped to pay off by a gradual increase in the profits to be obtained under the old system. They now had the mortification of seeing this increase artificially brought about all at once, and converted to other uses. The Kammer of Halle refused to acknowledge the officers appointed by Luben as royal servants, turned a deaf ear to their representations, and declined all communication with them. Luben, who was not to be stopped in his progress, directed the farmers who held the land in fee to pay no more into the treasury of the Kammer than they had paid during the last years of the Arende; the Kammer, on the other hand, laid claim to the increased payments promised by the fee-farmers, and laid executions for the amount upon their farms.

It is a great mistake to look upon the Prussian officers of government as mere passive tools. Experience teaches them certain general practical convictions, to which they obstinately adhere. In this instance a war broke out between two departments of government, one of which was in possession of the permanent routine business, and the other charged with the execution of an extraordinary commission. An angry correspondence began; a commission of inquiry was appointed; minute inquiries were made into the condition of the domains already brought under the action of the new system; and the result

was, that the new system was confirmed, and the project of introducing heritable rents was adopted for all the other provinces.

It was not the custom of the time to deal very gently with people who belonged to the opposition. All those members of the *Amtskammern* of Halle, Berlin, and Halberstadt, who had opposed Luben's scheme, were dismissed the service, and those only allowed to remain who gave in their adherence to the new order of things. The exchequer, in which Luben now received an appointment, undertook to carry out the whole scheme. That which hitherto had been only an extraordinary experiment was in the year 1704 expanded into a system.

For the present the progress of the affair received no further check.

During the years 1704—1706 twelve large manors and a number of farms in the electoral March were let upon heritable leases. In Magdeburg the domains which were to be let were divided among the commissioners; and in the year 1706 the whole arrangement was completed, with the exception of a few accessories. In these provinces, and also in Halberstadt, in the neighbourhood of agricultural towns and great villages, there was no difficulty in finding people belonging to the country who already possessed the stock and the implements necessary for the cultivation of the land which they took in fee. The new system was put in practice in the Neumark in the year 1706, because the leases of many of the domains in that district then fell vacant. In the course of three years twelve manors and a great number of



farms were let in fee. The same process began in Pomerania in 1707. The increase of profit to the government afforded by the heritable leases over those for a term of years was 20,000 thalers in the Kurmark, 12,000 in the Neumark, and 16,000 in Magdeburg; this was enough to stimulate the ardour of the court to the utmost. In the beginning of the year 1710 the civil officers of the crown, from the highest to the lowest, were expressly exhorted to take the royal land in fee, and the most favourable terms were offered as an inducement. It seemed as if the whole patrimonial property of the sovereign was to be parcelled out amongst those who happened to belong to his administration, or to be in the possession of money. The members of the royal treasury were accused of having come to an understanding among themselves to grant each other contracts for heritable leases of the crown lands on unduly favourable terms.

When things had reached this pass, the opposition, which had formerly been violently put down, now declared itself with redoubled force.

It had always been objected to the new system, that a great loss must in the end accrue to the state by thus giving up the land as an inheritance for ever at its actual value, for that nothing was more likely than that the price of land should materially increase in course of time.\* Luben's answer showed small in-

\* Among others, Professor Ludewig, of Halle, wrote a treatise "de Conductione Perpetuaria in Regno et Provinciis Regni Borussiae," in order to prove "dass wie von hundert Jahren her der Preis der Sachen wohl funfzig Mal höher gestiegen, fol-

sight into the future. He maintained that since a communication had been opened with both the Indies, and the intercourse between all parts of the globe had been established, the price of everything was irrevocably fixed. At this time a young man was growing up who had a better right than any one else to exert his influence upon this occasion—we mean the Crown-Prince, who entertained very different opinions as to the laws which determine the value of money; he was convinced that the crown-lands would ere long rise very considerably in value, and he beheld in the new system of leases a loss of capital which he was bound not to endure.

Another objection was, that the money raised from the sureties and fee payments was spent by the court, and that the administration of the royal domains was thus deprived of its revenues and thrown into the utmost confusion.

On examining more closely into the use actually made of the large sums which were raised by the operation of letting the royal domains on heritable leases, we find that the greater part of them was devoted to the purchase of land. Among other

glich eben dadurch der Wehrt des Geldes, das vielen aus Amerika und andern Bergwerken genommenen Silbers halber gefallen sei, also auch dergleichen noch künftig zu besorgen," ("that, as within a hundred years the price of all articles has increased fiftyfold, and in like manner, and in consequence thereof, the value of money has fallen, owing to the quantity of gold and silver ore brought from America and other mining countries, the same is also to be expected in future," &c.) He himself makes this extract. This is still the chief argument against heritable leases.

estates, the countship of Hohenstaufen was bought for above 330,000 thalers, besides Brachwitz in the Uckermark, the part of Tornow belonging to the family of Marwitz, and Belgard, which was bought for 33,333 thalers. Besides this, some of the money was expended upon works of public utility, such as bringing salt-works into proper condition, draining marshes and the like. Moreover, it cost a considerable sum of money to bring the new system into action: more than 600,000 thalers can be accounted for in this manner.

This was about the amount of the increased revenue from the crown-lands during the first ten years; but the deposits and the sale of farming stock and implements had afforded at least as much more; and, on examining into the application of this sum of money, it appears beyond a doubt, from accounts which are still extant, that it went to pay the debts of the royal household: in the course of one year, between 1707 and 1708, 100,000 thalers were taken from the fund raised by the contracts for heritable leases, and applied to this purpose.

This abuse was owing to the circumstance that the Director-in-chief of the royal domains, Count Wittgenstein, who in 1704 had mainly determined the adoption of the new system of leases, was likewise Lord-Marshal, and had the administration of the civil list. Thus he procured, as Director of the domains, whatever money he wanted as Lord-Marshal. His subordinates complained that he did not allow the accounts, either of the civil list or of the provincial revenue, to be duly checked and inspected.

The action of such a fiscal system could not fail to produce a most pernicious effect upon the general management of the domains. The terms of the leases were raised too high, and the solvency and trustworthiness of those to whom they were granted was not duly considered.

In Magdeburg, where the whole affair went on best and most smoothly, many of the landholders turned out to be unable to pay, and had to be reminded of their obligations by forcible measures. In the Kurmark the treasury was soon compelled to give up all hope of the promised increase of revenue. In the Neumark the farmers refused to pay, because their farms had been rated too high; the treasury was again unable to satisfy the court. In Pomerania it was discovered that, in order to get tenants for the land, the commissioners had granted them exemption from the excise and contribution, and even from all the ordinary and extraordinary taxes; and as this agreement could not be allowed to subsist, the farmers on their side refused to fulfil their obligations. In Cleves, where Luben began his operations in 1709 with great hopes of success, he was met by such opposition from the Drosten,\* who trembled for their Bann rights—from the collectors of the rates, revenue, and taxes, who feared the loss of their places—from all those

\* In the ancient Dukedom of Cleves the Droste was the chief civil magistrate—answering somewhat to the French Maire—of a certain number of Bauerschaften. The Bannrecht was the right to levy taxes on merchants attending fairs within the Bann or territory under the jurisdiction of the Droste, as well as to impose other fines.—*Trans.*

employed under the old system of administration—and even from the peasantry liable to service, who greatly preferred rendering personal services to paying money, at all events on the day when the latter became due—that he found these hindrances insurmountable, and abandoned the attempt in despair.

The results of this measure did indeed fall far short of the expectations which had been formed from it. The public treasuries were in a state of utter confusion, and almost of insolvency; large sums had disappeared; none of the promised advantages were forthcoming, and there was no increase of culture or of population.

The insolvency of a fire-insurance office was not the only thing laid to the charge of Count von Wittgenstein; his principal adversary, Boguslav von Kameke, attacked his whole administration, and at the same time the conduct of his patron and protector, Count Wartenberg, who had so warmly espoused the system of heritable leases.\*

Kameke's arguments were irresistibly strengthened and confirmed by the evident disorder of public affairs; and a complete revolution suddenly took place both in the court and the administration, partly indeed owing to other influences. Luben was dismissed from office, Wittgenstein was sent to Spandau, and even Wartenberg was displaced in spite of the King's reluctance to take such a step.

Such was the justice of those times;—the failure of any measure, either of internal or external policy,

\* Kameke's decree is dated Nov. 1710.

was severely visited upon its principal authors, who were held personally responsible for its success.

As the greater number of the contracts for leases had not yet received the royal signature, they were all revoked without the slightest hesitation.

It may be conceived what confusion and distress this created in several of the provinces, in many private estates, and finally in the royal revenue. A severe winter was followed by a famine in the province of Prussia, and the government possessed no means of giving any assistance to the starving people; mercantile considerations prevented the prohibition of the export of grain; and finally a pestilence broke out, which almost depopulated Lithuania.

Enough has been said to show that this important measure utterly failed in its object, and was followed only by ruin and disaster.

On the whole, however, we have seen that this reign, as well as the last, was marked by great and comprehensive ideas; the Academy of Sciences was intended to rouse the learned zeal of the nation, and the Academy of Arts, which was founded by Frederick I., was expected to become a school for the whole of Germany, especially with regard to architecture. An experienced and travelled connoisseur asserts that he had nowhere found more competent teachers or more industrious scholars.\* Efforts were made to ennoble manufactures by artistic studies;

\* Lorenz Beger, *thesaurus Brandenburgicus*: neque in Belgio neque in Gallia neque in ipsa artium parente Italia et Roma majorem vel artificum excellentiam vel discipulorum solertiam deprehendi.

the learned Frenchmen who had been received at the court carried on a written war against the Catholic element in the literature of the times of Louis XIV.; while the German writers opened fresh paths in the domain of Protestant speculation, which was thus defended by their foreign allies. The luxury of the court produced this good effect at least, that it encouraged commerce and manufactures, especially those branches which supplied that luxury. Several indispensable commercial regulations were made, as, for instance, a law fixing the rate of exchange, which anticipated every objection previously raised against laws of this nature, and was received with universal approbation. Another project was the institution of a commercial college, which was likewise to perform the functions of a board of trade, and to exercise a certain supervision over the erection of manufactories, so as to insure to them a certain degree of completeness.\* But the most remarkable measure of all was the attempt to establish a militia force in addition to the regular troops.

The beginning was made with the peasantry on the royal domains, among whom the unmarried men under forty years of age were exercised as soldiers. When once their fears of being sent to join the army were allayed, they delighted in the exercise, which took place on holiday afternoons in summer under the command of non-commissioned officers of the army, who went from village to village for the purpose. Once in a month the young men of the whole domain assembled for a

\* Marperges Geographische Beschryvinge etc. verdaalt door van der Aa, 191, 280.

sort of review. The uniforms and arms were supplied out of the domain fund, and confided to the safe keeping of the treasurer. Confident hopes were entertained that a whole population thus drilled would for ever prevent the recurrence of invasions like that of the Swedes in 1657. Each domain and each village would arm in its own defence, and in any very pressing emergency it would be possible to employ the militia as a reinforcement to the regular troops, at all events within the frontiers of Prussia.\* In the royal proclamations this new obligation upon the peasantry is prefaced by the abolition of task-work, which shows the connection between this measure and the change in the agricultural system. The popular movement which had even then begun in the Prussian states might have led to far different and better results, if only the ideas of the time had been more mature, or the conduct of the administration more prudent. But the disorder of the public finances, the false estimate of the resources of the country, which suddenly proved

\* The regulation says that it may be expected "dass ein solcher exercirter Bauer, woraus doch auch der meiste Theil der reglirten Truppen genommen ist, alsdan in Consideration seiner eigenen Interessen, wenigstens so guth standhalten werde, als ein mit Gewalt und wider Willen aus fremden Provinzen geworbener."—"that such a peasant, when well drilled,—and indeed it is chiefly from this class that the greater portion of the regular troops were taken,—would, in defence of his own interests, be at least as steady under fire as a man pressed into the service, by force and against his will, from some distant provinces.") Gansauge: das brandenburgisch-preussische Kriegswesen, 1440, 1640, 1740, p. 209. Toland in his statement mentions the provincial militia: he was astonished at the good appearance of these troops.



to be so much less than had been supposed, the want of fixed and abiding institutions, the incessant strife and shifting of parties, and also the occurrence of calamities which could not have been foreseen or averted, all combined to throw everything into confusion.

The first elements of strength and prosperity were still wanting. Prussia had as yet no real political existence. The foreign policy of Frederick I. was met by an opposition at least as strong as that which encountered his internal administration.

While his troops were aiding in the subjugation of the rich provinces of lower Hungary to the Austrian crown, he was compelled, in compliance with the promise he had made as crown-prince, to cede the district of Schwiebus, which had been the price of his father's alliance. He did indeed warn the imperial ministers that this restitution would have the effect of reviving his claims upon Silesia;\* but this was too remote a possibility to deter them from seizing upon the immediate advantage which had once been secretly conceded.

Somewhat later again, while Prussia so strenuously defended the interests of her allies in the war of the Spanish succession, she found but small opportunity for advancing her own. It was fortunate that her claims upon Welschneuenburg were already established, and independent of the Orange succession,

\* Pufendorf, *Fridericus III.*, § 7. *Prætensionem in tres ducatus dimidiam fere Silesiam complexos, serius ocuis fuisse vindicandam ista transactione abolitam.*

which soon became the subject of most odious disputes between Prussia and her closest allies.

Another grievous error was the nature of the share taken in the war by the Prussian troops, who were distributed in several small bodies—an arrangement which effectually deprived the new crown of the consideration which a single compact army would have procured for it. The result was, that, in the negotiations and treaties which accompanied the peace, Brandenburg was passed over both in fact and in form.\*

With all this the troops were so fully employed towards the west, that the eastern frontier was left exposed to imminent danger. On one occasion humiliating entreaties had to be offered to Charles XII. instead of armed resistance; and in the year 1711 Prussia was compelled to submit to the passage of Russian and Saxon troops through her territory.

To no one were these mistakes and misfortunes more galling than to the Crown-Prince. He continued to complain of Wartenberg's successors, by whom he thought himself intentionally slighted, and indeed oppressed; above all, he totally condemned their whole course of policy, the internal as pernicious, the foreign as cowardly and hopeless.

A scene of truly dramatic contrast took place one day early in the year 1713, when Frederick I., who,

\* We learn from the Memoirs of Bonet, the Prussian resident in England, quoted by Lamberty, VII. 515, that even in 1712 the court of Berlin still hoped to bring about a peace, by which the Empire would be secured for ever, Strasburg restored to Germany, and all men's rights assured to them, when the unexpected change of policy took place in England.

though not very old, had long suffered severely from asthma, seemed so feeble that his life was almost despaired of. The Crown-Prince, who never spoke of his father but with every expression of filial reverence and affection, was deeply affected; but, says he, "I could not but laugh within myself when I beheld the consternation of the ministers."

After this moment of danger, Frederick I. still lived to enjoy a moment of deep gratification. He had rallied somewhat in health and stepped to the window, where he was greeted with loud and heartfelt shouts of joy by the multitude which had assembled, anxious for the life of their King. As we have already said, he was more beloved than any of his predecessors or successors; his system of government, and his natural benevolence, had won for him the affection of the people, who did not attribute the faults of the administration to the will or disposition of their sovereign;—but this manifestation of attachment was destined to be the last. Frederick I. died on the 25th of February, 1713, and with him the whole system which had existed during his reign.\*

\* Il est certain qu'il est mort la nuit du Vendredi au Samedi, qui étoit le 25 (earlier therefore than was supposed). Aussitôt qu'il fut expiré le nouveau roi monta à cheval et fit mettre les sceaux à plusieurs des maisons royales. La mort du roi fut déclarée aussitôt qu'il fut de retour. MS. account by a contemporary.

THE FIRST YEARS OF KING FREDERICK WILLIAM THE  
FIRST.

THE next heir, Frederick William, ascended the throne with a resolution to manage matters very differently.

“Tell the Prince of Anhalt,” says he, in the first letter which we have seen written after his accession, “that I am the finance minister and the field-marshal of the King of Prussia; this will uphold the King of Prussia as he should be upheld.”

These words truly described the union of authority and labour in which he was determined henceforth to live, as well as the direction which the activity of his mind was to take.

He had been brought up in a school “where great men are formed, and wheré princes are valued according to their bravery and skill;” namely, in the armies in the Netherlands. Marlborough, whose words we have just quoted, and who occasionally saw Frederick William, treated all outward signs of dignity as things of no account but to a vain imagination, and held the real power of a prince to consist solely in the number of troops he could maintain.\* No one lent a more attentive ear to these opinions than the Crown-Prince of Prussia. He often reproached his father’s ministers for thinking that they could

\* Letter of Colonel Grumbkow to King Frederick I., 31st Jan., 17th Feb. 1709, given in Schöning’s *Leben Natzmers*, p. 309.

obtain that from European powers by the pen, which could only be wrung from them by the sword.\* He was convinced that his influence in Europe would be in exact proportion to the size of the army which he could bring into the field.

It has been remarked that no great progress is ever made in art or science but by men who take a pleasure even in their minutest details; and thus it was with Frederick William, whose political theory was accompanied by an incredible love for the minutiae of military service. There was a received tradition in the old Prussian army that the Prince, at his own expense and upon his own responsibility, without the knowledge of his father, had raised a battalion in the Mittenwalde, consisting of able officers and well-armed soldiers, who were recruited one by one, and sent to the Crown-Prince by the old Prince of Anhalt. The Crown-Prince's great pleasure was to make them go through the manual exercise as practised in the Netherlands. The act of commanding seemed to delight him; and he despised the sneers to which this fancy exposed him. Nor did he give up this toy when he became King: his pet battalion was the nucleus of the tall regiment of Potsdam in which he endeavoured to realize his military ideal.

On coming to the throne, Frederick William fixed

\* To Leopold of Anhalt, 11th Aug. "Ich muss über die B. lachen. Mit der Feder wollen sie dem König Land und Leute schaffen: ich sage mit dem Degen, oder er kriegt nichts."—"I can't choose but laugh at the. . . . They want to gain lands and subjects for their sovereign by the pen; but I say it must be by the sword, or he will get nothing.")

his chief attention on these two points—the increase and right organization of his army. During the very first months of his reign he altered everything connected with the care and maintenance, dress and lodging, of the army: he said himself, and, as every one admitted, with truth, that he showed a fatherly care for his troops. Soon after he promulgated his articles of war; which were a fresh version of those of the great Elector, but still more severe as to discipline. Whosoever should resist, were it only by word of mouth, the commands of his corporal or sergeant, was to run the gauntlet; and if any one should offer forcible resistance, he was to suffer death. These articles were originally founded upon the ancient laws of the German landsknechts, and still remind us of them from time to time, spite of the difference between those roving freebooters and the strict subordination and discipline of the well-trained regiments of modern days, which have that character of permanence and unity that belongs to corporate bodies.

Frederick William never for a moment doubted that by the laws of God all his subjects were bound to serve him in an army which was only organized for their protection, and for the general good of his country and his people; \* nevertheless, he would not hear of a national militia; he even forbade the very word militia.† The only thing that seemed to him worth a

\* Edict in Mylius, III. 1. No. XV.

† By the edict of the 9th of March, 1713, the militia (Landmiliz) was disbanded. Even in the reign of Frederick I. conflicts had taken place with respect to the recruiting for the regular army and the enrolling men in the militia: the population was not sufficient to allow of both.

thought was a standing army, ready at a moment's notice to throw the weight of the Prussian sword into the balance of European affairs. In the first year of his reign he raised seven new regiments.

In the pursuit of this one object, he looked upon every other expenditure of money as mere extravagance.

Besides, a court like that of his father was quite contrary to all his tastes and ideas. Lords of the bedchamber, lords in waiting, and many others attached to the court, were immediately dismissed in a body, and the salaries of those retained were considerably reduced. But we find from the letters of those times that the latter did not complain nearly so much as might have been expected, as they were in their turn exempted from very heavy expenses. It was only one here and there, like Besser, the master of the ceremonies, who was filled with consternation: he had devoted his life to the study of court etiquette, and his name was first on the list of pensions to be struck off. Informed through some private channel of this fact, Besser appealed to the new monarch in a memorial, in which he could not help displaying a high idea of his own importance: the King flung the paper into the fire; \* he had no need of a master of the ceremonies. Besser was forced to give up his carriage and horses, and to live in a very modest

\* *König Lebensbeschreibung Bessers, XCIII.* I also found the following general notice in MS.—*Le roi congédia tous les tapissiers de hautelisse, qui étoient gagés du roi, les vernisseurs, peintres, sculpteurs, architectes, en général tous les artistes qui tiroient des gros gages. . . . Toutes ces gens-là quittèrent Berlin, ce qui y fut un vide considérable.*

manner, until he was at length fortunate enough to obtain an appointment in Saxony, in which his learning was not thrown away.

When the expenditure caused by the court was thus reduced, or rather cut off, the question naturally arose, how the trade of Berlin, which mainly depended upon the court, could be maintained, and how the town could meet its pecuniary obligations? The innovations made by the King excited universal discontent. Many, whose livelihood was thus endangered, determined to quit the country, and gave ear to the offers made to them by other states, especially by Saxony.\*

To the expenditure of the court the King substituted the wants of his army, which he resolved should be equipped in native materials, manufactured entirely by native industry. He entirely adopted Colbert's system, which then spread over Europe: he forbade the exportation of wool, and the importation of foreign cloth. We have heard it asked whether it would not have been better to continue to import cloth as before from foreign countries, and to give greater encouragement to the production of wool at home? We will not stop to examine whether Prussia would have become richer or not by following this course; but she would have fallen under the dominion of the commercial influences which govern the world, and with which she would have been unable to contend on their own field of action. It would have been contrary to that desire for independence in which

\* Lettre de M. Lecoq au Roi de Pologne 1713. 17th June. Comme rien n'est plus sensible que de se voir ôter le pain, tout le monde crie hautement et sans ménagement.



those ideas originated. One of the former ministers, who, however, did not stand very high in the new King's favour, had the merit of carrying out Frederick William's idea. As yet, the native manufacture of everything required for the clothing of the soldiery was exceedingly imperfect: it was a great advance when the work of the weavers could be used at all for the service of the army. But it was soon seen that this was not enough: the work was bad, the price exorbitant, and it was found necessary to take further steps with regard to manufactures. The minister to whom we have alluded, the receiver-general Kraut, induced better workmen to come, and contrived at length to bring the price of the wool into a certain proportion to the money to be expended. In due course of time he succeeded in producing cloth of such fine texture, and at the same time so cheap, that it not only drove the foreign manufacture out of the market, but even found its way into other countries: there was now a scarcity rather than a superfluity of wool: the Lagerhaus, as the establishment was called, gave employment to thousands of industrious hands in Berlin and throughout the country.\*

Contrary as it may seem to received opinions, we will yet venture to affirm that the establishment of a large army promoted the increase of trade and the prosperity of the towns at this period of their existence.

The produce of the tax on articles of consumption, upon which rested the whole system of finance, would have been small indeed but for the garrisons.

\* König Berlin, IV. 1, 23; 2, 185.

Frederick William left this tax much as he found it, but he increased the duty on foreign goods in order to protect the native manufactures. He was the first sovereign in Germany who brought the protective duties and the excise into that close connexion in which they have since remained. He believed in the doctrine, that to keep gold in the country was to have found the philosopher's stone.

Moreover, but for the increased demand for provisions created by the army, the peasantry would have been totally unable to pay their taxes.

The payments in kind, which were still made for the service of the cavalry, were contrary to Frederick William's principles; and when he removed the cavalry to town quarters, he commuted the rations and forage which they had hitherto received from the peasants for a fixed payment in money, which was levied with the taxes.

These he endeavoured to simplify as much as possible. He abolished all those taxes which were levied for some particular purpose, for legations, for building castles, or, as in Pomerania, for fortifications, for the salaries of the judges, for marches, convoys, loans, and other local expenses: all these were abolished, and the fertility of the soil was taken as the guide in levying a single tax to supersede the rest. In early life Frederick William had employed himself diligently in dividing the various districts of the country into classes according to their fertility, and he caused the quota of each of these classes to be levied accordingly. A fixed settlement of the contribution each was to pay appeared to him to be equally necessary

for the government of the treasury and the economy of the state and for the housekeeping of individuals.\*

At the same time he zealously applied himself to the management of the royal domains.

We have already alluded to the share which he had in the abolition of the system of heritable leases: he looked upon it as one of his most important duties to regain possession of such of the royal domains as were at the time of his accession still in the hands of the holders of these heritable leases: he caused the fines which they had paid to be reimbursed to them, but ordered them instantly to quit with bag and baggage possessions which belonged to him, the King, and which were his by the law of God and man. The danger of this experiment afforded him occasion to renew, in the strongest terms, an old regulation of his house, according to which the lands inherited from forefathers could not be alienated; he extended this regulation to all possessions and sources of income which had been since or might be hereafter acquired. The King everywhere restored the leases for terms of years, and had the satisfaction of finding his income still further increased. The discovery had but just been made of the different proportion which the seed-corn bore to the produce, according to the different nature of the soil; and observation had taught how much the acre was capable of bearing. The holders of heritable leases, who now took leases for

\* Thile's *Nachricht von der Churmärkischen Contributions- und Schosseinrichtung*, 1768, Part III., proves how numerous and how great were the disproportions which still subsisted between the various circles.

terms of years, bid against each other for the land: and the revenue from the royal domains was increased by about one-third. The necessity which these farmers now felt for exertion in order to hold their own caused a great improvement in husbandry.\* The leases were always granted for six years; and the King caused the closest inspection to be held on their renewal. The president of the Provinzialkammer, or provincial chamber, in whom was vested the management of the royal domains, was directed to visit them as soon as the snow had melted, to see whether the number of acres and the quality of the land coincided with the estimate, and, if necessary, to have them re-measured; in short, he was to acquire so accurate a knowledge of the land, that neither the farmers nor his own advisers and coadjutors should be able to deceive him. Estimates were to be made for every improvement, and these were never to be exceeded by a single farthing: the farmers who were bound by their securities were never to be allowed to fall into arrear with their rents.† The Hofkammer, or court exchequer, which had had so much to do with the introduction of heritable leases, was abolished, and a new central office for the general management of the royal domains established, under the direction of which the provincial officers connected with this service were placed. The King himself

\* So says the Chancellor J. P. v. Ludewig, in his remarkable pamphlet: *über die von dem König neu errichtete Profession in Oekonomie-, Polizei- und Kammersachen.* Halle, 1727, p. 74.

† Instructions drawn up for the guidance of the office for managing the royal domain in the March, 7th Jan. 1717, in *Rödenbeck Beiträge zu den Lebensbeschreibungen Friedrich Wilhelms I. und Friedrich des Grossen I.* 17.

exercised a supervision over all the public offices that kept alive their zeal through fear rather than hope. He had as much talent for agriculture as for the military service, and had made himself as perfect a master of the science.

It was said at the time, though it is not exactly what might have been expected of Frederick William, that in his youth a passage from an ancient Greek author had deeply impressed the importance of this study upon his mind. He had read a chapter in Xenophon wherein it is said of the Persian king that he paid as much attention to agriculture as to war; that he travelled over the various provinces of the kingdom himself, or caused them to be visited by others; and that, according to the state in which he found them, he bestowed rewards or inflicted punishments. Frederick William likewise devoted the energies of his life to these two subjects equally.

But that which gave such a peculiar character to his government was the homely thrift with which he conducted it: the constant balance of income and expenditure was carried into the smallest details, and the public officers were kept under the strictest discipline, each acting as a check upon the others. Like Pope Sixtus V., Frederick William in his youth kept account-books, which have been preserved, and which show as great a natural instinct for order and economy as those of Sixtus, with this difference, however,—that the expenditure for military purposes forms by far the largest item from the very first.\* This disposition in the King was ascribed to the influence and example

\* Account of the expenditure from 1698—1702, in Rödénbeck's Beiträge, I. 131.

of his tutor, Count Dohna; the result of nature and education was confirmed in him by the spectacle of the opposite extreme of reckless extravagance which threatened such disastrous results during the reign of Frederick I. "When I came to the throne," says Frederick William somewhat later, "I traced a plan for myself, founded upon economy and *ménage*;" for thus he describes the thrifty conduct of his government. His first arrangements were made with the assistance of privy-counsellor Creuz, whom he had found peculiarly trustworthy as the auditor of his regiment, and who now acted as comptroller-general long before he was actually invested with that office.\*

We will here mention only the most salient points of Frederick William's government: from the very first he struck out a new course, utterly opposed to that of his predecessor, and indicative of what was to follow. It was only in later times that his plan was fully developed; he began by obtaining possession of a few provinces, which were destined to serve as a foundation for the rest.

Frederick William was fortunate enough to begin his reign with a very considerable acquisition in the west; and he shortly added to this one of the greatest and most important on the eastern side of his kingdom.

\* Manteuffel: 1713, 19th April. Toutes les affaires domestiques de même que celles de finances passent par les mains de Creuz: il n'a pas de département, mais il fait la fonction d'un contrôleur général, et c'est justement ce qui lui donne le plus de crédit. Count Dohna might then be considered as in fact prime minister, Creuz and Ilgen as the principal agents of government.

He never would have gained this point by a steady adherence to the Grand Alliance. But when that was dissolved, and the claims put forward by France acquired from the co-operation of England a weight which the armies of Louis XIV. had failed to give them, Frederick William took advantage of the contest between the two pretenders to the Spanish throne successfully to press a claim which he had upon the now extinct dynasty. Louis XIV., in the name of Philip V. and the Emperor, agreed to cede to Prussia the territory of upper Guelders, a most important addition and support to the possessions of Cleves and Westphalia. This favourable result was, however, mainly owing to Frederick I. The negotiation had been principally conducted by Ilgen, one of the few men who have as yet gained distinction by the management of foreign affairs in Prussia, which have usually been directed solely by the sovereign himself. Long practice had rendered Ilgen's acute and laborious mind perfectly familiar with all political interests and combinations, and he pursued them with a degree of prudence, patience, and diligence that often in the end mastered every difficulty. Ilgen, Anhalt, and Grumbkow had attached themselves to Frederick William before his accession; Ilgen from natural impulse and from foresight, the others partly because they had been passed over. Ilgen had the satisfaction of subscribing to the treaty of Utrecht for the King on the fiftieth day of his reign—for it was not until then that the decisive declarations could be obtained from the court of Vienna which were needed for the conclusion of

a treaty which promised to be so favourable to the interests of the territorial powers, and which caused the royal dignity of the King of Prussia to be recognised throughout the west as in the east of Europe.

Meanwhile another question arose out of the complicated state of affairs in the north, which, if not more difficult, was of still greater significance for the independent position of the house of Brandenburg, and of which the result was of such importance that it obliges us to examine it more closely.

Frederick I. had always made it a rule to take as little part in the northern wars as possible, as he would otherwise never have been able to apply his forces elsewhere. In his treaties with his western allies, he had always made it a condition that they were to indemnify him for any annoyance or injury he might sustain from that quarter. He was mainly instrumental in keeping these two sides of Europe asunder.

Now, however, the expedition of Charles XII. against Russia changed the whole aspect of affairs in the north. The Swedish provinces on the German side of the Baltic, whence all the attacks had hitherto proceeded, were invaded by the northern allies. The fate which had already befallen the Polish provinces now threatened those belonging to the German Empire.

In order to ward off this imminent peril, a convention was entered into during the summer of the year 1710 by the European and German powers which were still allied against France, according to which the Swedish possessions in Germany were to remain



neutral: no act of hostility was to be suffered to take place, either issuing from or directed against them. The Empire agreed to this convention, and a considerable army was to be set on foot in order to carry it into effect.

Every one hoped that the King of Sweden, whom his destiny had led into far distant lands, would be well pleased with a convention by which his German provinces were secured from the attack of an enemy manifestly his superior in strength.

This might reasonably have been expected from any other prince, but not from Charles XII.

In his distant camp he allowed his fancy to conceive the boldest schemes, by means of which he hoped to exercise fresh influence upon general politics. He would not consent to forego the use of the troops then stationed in his German provinces, in the attack upon Poland and Russia, which he intended to direct from Turkey. He declared that he would by no means consider himself bound by treaties made without his consent, and that he chose to reserve to himself the right of making use of such means as God had given him against his enemies in such nanner and in such place as might seem best to himself, and without any limitation whatsoever.\*

From this, however, it followed that his enemies

\* *Declaratio regis Sueciæ ad urbem Benderam 30 Nov. 1710, sese nulla ratione teneri posse legibus istius fœderis ipso invito et vix citra partium studium initi,—sibi reservatam velle omnimodam ac nullis legibus circumscriptam facultatem utendi mediis et viribus quas Deus concessit adversus hostes suos, ubicumque locorum et quocumque tempore usus et ratio belli id poposcerit.*

were at liberty to do the same. If the Empire could not restrain its own vassals and members from attacking other nations, it clearly forfeited all right to prevent foreign powers from seeking retaliation. In the year 1711, Russian, Polish, and Danish troops poured into Pomerania and met with no opposition. The Swedish general, who had flattered himself with the hope of entering Poland from that quarter, was forced to retreat before them, and the whole north-eastern part of Germany was plunged into war. The ruthless manner in which the war was conducted was shown at Altona, a town in which the Swedes far exceeded the example set them by their forefathers in the preceding century.

Brandenburg and Prussia were not only injured by the war, but also partially involved in it.

The Swedish general once threw out a threat that he intended to make Brandenburg the seat of war. The court of Berlin replied that, with God's assistance, they hoped to prevent his doing so; but it may be doubted whether this could have been effected, considering the manner in which the Prussian forces were scattered. At any rate it was impossible, notwithstanding the King's wishes to the contrary, to refuse to the Russian and Polish troops a free passage across certain districts, nor could he even altogether prevent them from taking up their quarters here and there in the territory of Brandenburg.

It was this want of the means of defence, which so strongly made itself felt precisely at the time when Frederick William I. succeeded to the throne, that first directed all his energies towards military views

and projects, to the exclusion of all other subjects. It was essential, first of all, that the country should be able to defend itself.

The dangers of the present moment were not the only subject of anxiety; they likewise afforded a fresh proof of the unsatisfactory position in which the country was altogether placed.

As yet, the only evil of such a neighbour as Sweden had lain in its restless and warlike propensities; but now that this power could no longer defend itself, a fresh source of danger was opened. By degrees Brandenburg had got used to the neighbourhood of the Swedes; but the house of Brandenburg could scarcely be expected to allow Polish Saxony to hold the provinces at the mouth of the Oder, as had once been actually determined by a provisional treaty,—still less could it endure to see the powerful empire of Russia in possession of that important line of coast. The King of Prussia could not allow provinces won by a Margrave, his ancestor, and zealously defended by his forefathers, the Electors, to pass into foreign hands.

From the Empire, however, Frederick William could obtain no assistance, deeply as this power was interested in the matter; and he felt great reluctance to go to war himself, and great hesitation in allying himself with either party, for which, moreover, he had no determining legal grounds.

The following was the solution of this embarrassed state of public affairs:—

Charles Frederick, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, the presumptive heir to the crown of Sweden, when

attacked by the King of Denmark, one of the northern confederates, and threatened with the loss of his possessions in Holstein, appealed for assistance to the King of Prussia, as the prince who, next to the Emperor, was most deeply interested in the maintenance of lawful order in the German Empire. He represented, moreover, that no other sovereign had as much concern in establishing a balance of power in the north. The Duke's ministers, Bassewitz and Görz, two men notorious for the boldness of their projects and the skill with which they executed them, left no means untried to enlist the sympathies of Frederick William on the side of the Duke with respect both to the preservation of his hereditary dominions and of his prospect of succeeding to the crown of Sweden.

King Frederick William showed no disinclination to listen to the proposals made to him, but he said that he had a thorn in his foot which dated from the peace of Westphalia, and that this must first be extracted. The state of affairs had very naturally awakened in him the recollection of the ancient rights of his house upon Pomerania.

The two ministers soon perceived that some important concessions must be made to the house of Brandenburg if the Duke, whom they looked upon as the future King of Sweden, was to receive assistance from Prussia. They did not scruple to offer Stettin to the King in case their Prince should succeed to the crown of Sweden.\* For the present they

\* Proposal of Bassewitz: "dahingegen, auf den Fall, da nemlich die schwedische Cron dem jungen Herzoge von Holstein

proposed to garrison the fortresses of Pomerania with the troops of Prussia conjointly with those of Holstein. They expressly observed that it would be a step towards obtaining possession of Stettin, should the King be able to throw a few troops into that town; and they pledged themselves to gain the consent of the King of Sweden to the measure.

Upon these terms a treaty was concluded on the 22nd of June, 1713, between Prussia and Holstein, according to which Stettin and Wismar were to be occupied by the contracting parties conjointly, Lower Pomerania was to be protected from any hostile attack, and all possible means were to be employed to reinstate the Duke in the possession of his lost territories.\*

This was a convention which the crown of Sweden might justly be expected to ratify, considering the embarrassments by which it was hemmed in on every side. Such an ally as the King of Prussia, though

heimfallen würde, derselbe Sr. Kgl. Majestät und dem Königl. Hause die Stadt Stettin samt dem Pehnestrom und alles was zwischen demselben und der See belegen ist, erb und eigenthümlich abtreten würde."—"On the other hand, in case that the Swedish crown should come to the young Duke of Holstein, the latter should deliver up to the King's Majesty, and to his royal house, the town of Stettin, together with the River Peene, and all the territory lying between that stream and the sea.") A letter from Görz says, "Si le Roi de Pr. s'allie avec la maison de Gottorp, il peut faire entrer par le canal de celle-ci des troupes dans Stettin. C'est déjà un bon pied pour la future acquisition. Cette acquisition se pourra faire non seulement du consentement du Roi de Suède, mais encore avec l'approbation des amis de la couronne."

\* Dumont, VIII. 1, 293, Art. I. IV. Besides this, we have at this point made use of many unpublished materials.

indeed he could not suffer the warlike exploits of the Swedes to continue as before, would afford most valuable support during peace; and should Holstein be eventually added to Sweden, the latter kingdom would lose nothing in extent of territory by these concessions.

In the mean time, however, the northern confederates perceived the advantages they might derive from the alliance of a rising power like Prussia, and accordingly made advances to the Prussian court. Peter the Great, who on a visit thither "snuffed an odour of Swedes," as he expressed it, showed every disposition to allow Prussia to take possession of Stettin and the district surrounding it.

Thus Lower Pomerania, the very territory which had been denied to the great Elector by the unanimous voice of the European powers, was now offered to his grandson by both the hostile parties. It seemed a very prudent expedient to garrison the town first with the troops of a neutral power, and then to let it pass into the hands of Prussia. By this means at any rate Pomerania would escape being made the scene of further disturbances.

This proposition did not, however, appear so obvious or so acceptable to every one. The Swedish governor of Stettin, General Meierfeld, considering it incompatible with his duty to recognise, or to assist in carrying out, a treaty made by the presumptive heir to the throne, preferred standing a regular siege, and held out until he was compelled to capitulate by the army of the northern confederates.

The King of Prussia had been most pressingly

urged by the northern confederates to aid them in this undertaking, and nothing would have been easier for him than to obtain possession of the whole province, assisted by this alliance. But Frederick William went to work in all matters of foreign policy with great caution and conscientiousness. His ministers, likewise, represented to him that, although it was the duty of a great prince to promote to the utmost the good of his house and of his country, he must, at the same time, take care that his actions were consistent with the law of nations; and that Prussia was not at war with Sweden. Frederick William, in a strong ebullition of political conscientiousness, declared that he would have nothing to do with the transaction.

Nevertheless, after General Meierfeld had been forced to yield Stettin by capitulation, Frederick William listened to other proposals more consonant with the neutral position he had hitherto maintained.

One of the articles of the capitulation was, that the city was to be delivered up to the troops of Prussia and Holstein; and the northern confederates declared their readiness to accede to these terms on condition that they were to be reimbursed the expenses of the campaign, which they reckoned at 400,000 thalers. Frederick William undertook to pay this sum, not with the uncertain prospect of possibly gaining possession of Stettin himself, but upon the distinct pledge that the money should be returned upon his surrender of the place. Maurice Vellingk, the Swedish Governor-General, who had been invested by his Sovereign with full powers to treat in cases of urgent necessity, especially with Prussia, concluded this treaty. The

King did not hesitate for a moment, as he estimated far above the money which was owing to him the advantage which he should procure for the country by ridding it of the armies of the confederates. But in order to complete the arrangement, he likewise took upon himself a political obligation. The confederates promised to cease from all further acts of hostility against Pomerania, and Frederick William, on his part, pledged himself to permit none to be attempted against the confederates from Pomerania. Under these conditions, Stettin, the district subject to its jurisdiction, together with the country extending to the Peene, were sequestered and placed under his charge until such time as peace was concluded.

It is easy to trace how one occurrence naturally arises out of another. The King of Prussia took upon himself to do that which the Empire could not have done,—to release Pomerania from the dangers in which it was involved by the wars of the north. It cannot, however, be denied that this convention presented one most extraordinary feature.

The sovereign prince to whom lower Pomerania belonged—namely, Charles XII.—had not been consulted in the matter. It is true that it was impossible that he should be consulted, as he had voluntarily exiled himself to a distant and unapproachable country; but as he had not given his consent to the convention, it might be doubted whether it was valid and binding.

We have to discriminate between two distinct points in this transaction.

The presumptive heir to the throne was willing to



give up a part in order to secure the rest, and at some future time to resign Stettin to the King of Prussia; the northern confederates had given their assent, and the interests of Prussia imperatively demanded this sacrifice, by which, indeed, Frederick William had mainly been induced to take part in these affairs. It is, however, quite obvious that Charles XII. could not be bound, either by the law of nations or by ancient custom, to confirm a stipulation of this kind.

But the case was otherwise with respect to the treaty by which Stettin and its dependencies were sequestered. This convention had been made by one fully empowered to act for Charles; it was of incalculable advantage to his country; and it involved a political necessity, which had already been established by the Emperor and the Empire—namely, the peaceful settlement of a German province, which the Swedish monarch could scarcely consider so completely his own as the rest of his possessions: to this part of the convention, therefore, he was unquestionably bound to adhere.

But they knew Charles XII. but little who could suppose that he would consent to ratify a stipulation which imposed upon him any respect for the rights of others, or subjected him to the influence of any foreign policy. While he was yet in Turkey, he issued a declaration repudiating the convention made by Vellingk, and referring Prussia for all claims of compensation to Holstein.\* When, towards

\* Demotika, 24th March, 1714. He must leave it to the direction of the King of Prussia, "wegen einiger an meine Feinde mit Vorwissen des fürstlich holsteinischen Hauses Mi-

the end of the year 1714, Charles returned quite unexpectedly, it was evident that no change had taken place in him. The burghers of Stralsund greeted him with heartfelt joy; but if they hoped at last to find him disposed for peace, they were grossly deceived. Charles XII. still cherished the hope of making a complete revolution in the north by means of assistance to be obtained from France and England, and by the exertions of his party in Poland. His mind was entirely bent upon forming political alliances, and raising money and troops.

At first he said nothing about Stettin, but the King of Prussia and his ministers were not disposed to wait until Charles was strong enough to dictate his own terms to them.

Having received no answer to the first diplomatic note that he addressed to the Swedish monarch, Frederick William despatched Count Schlippenbach, one of his most distinguished generals, to Stralsund, to obtain from Charles XII. the recognition of the treaty of sequestration.

nister ausgezahlten Gelder sich an dasselbe als ihren rechten Mann halten zu wollen,"—"to call the princely house of Holstein to account in respect of certain moneys paid to mine enemies by the ministers, and with the consent of the said princely house.") To this the king replied on the 24th of August, "dass es ziemlich das Ansehen gewinne, als wollte das genannte fürstliche Haus sich auch eben wie S. Maj. seiner Verbindlichkeit entledigen, dass ihm von beiden Seiten gleichsam das ledige Nachsehen gelassen werden will."—"That truly it appeared as though the princely house in question had as great a mind as his Majesty to throw off its obligations, and that it seemed as though both sides would leave nothing to him but the bare looking after his money.")

Maurice Vellingk, the Prince of Hesse, and General Daldorf,—who then enjoyed the King's confidence,—and, indeed, all who were about Charles XII., endeavoured to persuade him to treat with Prussia, which, likewise, offered to advance a considerable sum of money. They succeeded so far that the King appeared willing to acknowledge himself a debtor to the Prussian government for the actual expenditure it had incurred;—but when they endeavoured, in the next place, to exact from him a pledge not to make any attack upon the northern confederates from Lower Pomerania, no power could prevail upon him to give any such promise. He was wholly intent upon carrying on the war against Poland and Moscow; the news that the Russians were on their march filled him with a joyful ardour for war. He began to collect troops, and it was even reported that he had received subsidies from France, and that in the following spring he would take the field at the head of a large army.

Compromise was, therefore, now out of the question. It appears from some autograph letters from Frederick William to his ministers, that he still sought only to obtain guarantees for the due fulfilment of the obligations which he had contracted; and that he was ready to give up Stettin when peace was declared. "I wish," said he, "to do nothing unjust; I demand nothing that is against my conscience; God will assist me."\* In January, 1715, the question was again

\* Potsdam, 10th Dec. Dieu nous donnera la meilleure assistance: puisque je ne cherche rien d'injuste et contre ma conscience, que d'être garanti de mon argent.

discussed at Berlin in all its bearings; but no one could suggest any means of bringing about a peace. The most conscientious and dispassionate of all the generals, old Natzmer, gave it as his opinion, that, were Prussia even to give up the money which she had advanced, it would avail nothing, as Charles XII. demanded that Stettin should instantly be evacuated, and would not desist from his threatened invasion of Poland, which was directly in contravention of the covenant with the northern confederates;—thus, then, that the King of Prussia was bound to go to war with him, and, added the others,—at once. It mattered nothing, said they, that Charles XII. was as yet unprepared; he was one of those who are wont to act “with confusion, and yet with success.” If he were once to get the upper hand even against Denmark, the utmost was to be feared from him; for his was a revengeful and unforgiving temper.\*

But the most cogent reason for undertaking the war against Sweden was this: it was no longer possible to tolerate, so close upon the confines of Prussia,

\* *Bedenken (der Minister) ob S. K. M. bei den jetzigen pommerschen Affairen sich nicht moviren und stille sitzen oder deshalb Mesures nehmen sollen.*—(Considerations [on the part of the ministers] as to whether H. R. H. ought, in the present state of affairs in Pomerania, to sit still and not to move, or whether he should take some measures about the matter.) The King writes to the Prince of Anhalt on the 9th of Jan. 1715, “Die Herren Schweden sind noch so fier, als sie gewesen sind zu Altranstädt. Aber Gott gebe dass wir das Frühjahr erleben, alsdann wird man sehen, ob sie dan dasselbige Langage führen.”—(“My gentlemen the Swedes are as proud as they were at Altranstädt. But God grant that we live till the spring, and we shall then see whether they will still hold the same language.”)

a martial nation, entirely devoted to conquest, and governed by a king who thought of nothing save deeds of arms.

The hero of so many adventurous campaigns, who was determined to recommence them, and to preserve the threatening attitude assumed by his ancestors, was now encountered by a new enemy, unlike any of his former ones—by a prince who loved the art of war more than war itself, whose mind was not bent upon conquest for its own sake, but who, by slow degrees, fixed his eyes upon the acquisitions most desirable to him, and long took counsel of his conscience before beginning to act. Now, however, that Frederick William's decision was taken, he brought into the field a well-appointed army, more numerous than that of his antagonist.

As soon as the aspect of affairs became threatening, Frederick William had entered into a secret treaty with Russia, by which that power confirmed his claims upon Stettin, while he, in return, consented that Livonia and Esthonia should fall to the share of Russia at the conclusion of the war.\*

As Frederick William wished to secure himself

\* 12th June, Bergmann, IV. 359. According to a remark of Ilgen's, Görz had at first made a secret convention with Saxony against the Prussian interests, but subsequently Holstein would not observe the neutrality. At any rate the northern courts complained that, if the King of Sweden came again, Holstein would assuredly join him altogether: "sie müssen Stettin feindlich tractiren, wofern der König nicht die Holsteinische Garnison sofort herausschaffe,"—"they must treat Stettin as an enemy, unless the King did instantly dismiss the Holstein garrison.")

against all contingencies, he was anxious to obtain for his enterprise the express sanction of the Emperor, as the common liege lord of both the King of Sweden and himself. The imperial ministers, however, would not speak out so plainly; but they declared that, if Charles XII. could not be induced to make peace, no one could blame the King of Prussia if he satisfied his conscience and fulfilled his engagements towards his allies by undertaking an affair which was perfectly compatible with his position as the head of one of the circles of the Empire.\*

Thus it happened that, after long delay, Prussia at length resolved to make common cause with the northern confederates.

The first idea was merely to place troops upon the frontiers; but it soon became evident that nothing could be effected by this, and it was then determined to attack Charles XII., if necessary, in that very stronghold in which the Swedes had first found a footing on German soil. "He must beat us," said Frederick William, "or perish in the fortress."

The first general review of the newly-formed Prus-

\* Or rather, "weil solches ohnedem mit dem Kreis ausschreibenden Amt nicht incompatibel wäre;"—"as such a proceeding was not incompatible with the duties of a head of one of the circles of the Empire." Moreover, they praised the moderation which Frederick William had shown up to that time in regard to the hard proceedings of the King of Sweden. 13th April, 1715. Voss, the imperial resident in Berlin, spoke in such a manner, that, as he said, the King "nicht anders glaubt, als dass S. Kais. Mt. es gerne sehen wenn wir den König von Schweden wirklich attackiren,"—"could not doubt but that his imperial Majesty would be pleased to see us attack the King of Sweden.") (28th April, 1715.)

sian army was held in the camp at Schwedt. The Prince of Anhalt had superintended all the preparations. The troops appeared in clean, new uniforms, with well-furnished arms and accoutrements, and in excellent order; and made a most warlike show. As they advanced towards the frontier they were joined, on the one side, by the Saxon auxiliaries, while, on the other, the Danes arrived by land and by sea. The whole force consisted of 60,000 men.\*

To this army Charles XII. could not oppose above 14,000 men, and it could not even be said that he had posted these troops where their services would be most effective.

The Prussian officers, at least, were astonished that he had neglected to occupy passes like that of Loitz, where a few troops might have stopped the advance of the whole army; and that he had left positions like the island of Usedom almost unfortified, although he must have expected the first attacks to be made in those quarters. But a strictly defensive war, mainly carried on by taking advantage of the strongest points, was foreign to his genius. He was not able to prevent the landing of the confederates on the island of Rügen, which decided the fate of his strongest place, the city of Stralsund. It was not till the landing had been already effected by the confederates, and they had thrown up outworks for the protection of their

\* Journal de la Campagne de Poméranie, 1715, 4th July. On the 23rd of May, it says, "Le roi, sans être obligé à rien, a fait voir l'ordre dans ses affaires: il a été premier en campagne," &c. The King reckons the troops at 32,000 Prussians, 8000 Saxons, and 20,000 Danes.

camp, that Charles XII. reached the spot and made a desperate attack upon his enemies' lines, during which he exposed himself to personal danger with matchless bravery; but in vain—he had come too late. The siege of Stralsund was carried on with redoubled vigour on account of the failure of so many previous attempts. Even General Natzmer had been against the undertaking.\* The storming of the hornwork and the outworks covering the Frankenthor are brilliant deeds in the annals of northern sieges. At length, towards the latter half of the year 1715, Charles XII. saw that Stralsund could no longer hold out.

He then proposed that which had been offered to him in the previous year, to acknowledge the sequestration, and to treat with Augustus, King of Poland. The confederates answered that the town must first capitulate, and then they would discuss conditions of peace.

But even now Charles XII. would not submit to conclude a peace with his foes amid the ruins of a half-conquered fortress; he succeeded in making his escape into Sweden, and the town instantly fell into the hands of the confederates.

Charles XII. reminds us of one of those Vikings who, after ravaging the shores of the Baltic, at last bring down upon themselves the reaction of fate, retire into the north, and disappear. This monarch's final misfortunes were chiefly owing to this,—that he himself

\* He designates it as “the costliest, weightiest, and thorniest enterprise in the world.” It is said of this attack, 1600 hommes sous les ordres du Lieut.-Gén. Köppen, Gladj. du Roi, et auteur du susdit projet de surprendre le retranchement du Frankenthor, dont les Suédois ont fait tant de bruit, se sont glissés, &c.



remained ever unchanged, and refused to understand or to admit the changes which, during his absence, had taken place in his own dominions and throughout Europe. The resources of Sweden were exhausted, and the people exasperated against him. Prussia, governed by a man of energetic character, was stronger than ever; and northern Germany had made rapid advances in military skill and discipline. Meanwhile the two powers upon which Charles XII. mainly relied for assistance—England and France—could not be brought to take an active part in the matter.

At this juncture, too, the accession of the house of Hanover took place in England—a change fatal to his prospects. Any attempt to keep the German and English interests separate must prove ineffectual. The fact that there was a Pretender still living, who occasionally made some noise in the world, caused the opponents of the Stuarts, who were then in possession of the government, to gather still more closely round the sovereign in whom these interests centered. Now, Hanover was prosecuting a claim no less urgent than that of Brandenburg against the Swedish government. The King of Denmark had ceded Bremen and Verden to Hanover, and England in return guaranteed the claims of Denmark upon the territory of Holstein-Gottorp.

This reacted immediately upon France. The Regent Duke of Orleans entered into the closest alliance with England, and upon this alliance the state of European affairs at that time mainly depended. It was evident, therefore, that the Regent could not take part with Sweden so completely as Louis XIV. had

done at the peace of Nimeguen. In the year 1716 France consented that Prussia should keep possession of Stettin.

But the accession of the house of Hanover to the throne of England was in itself an event of the greatest importance and promise to Prussia. George I. was Frederick William's father-in-law, and the two houses then seemed to constitute but one family. This does not imply that they were always united, although, indeed, they seldom were opposed. They supported, in common, the German cause against Sweden, and the Protestant interests against Catholicism. The authority of an Elector of Hanover, suddenly raised to the throne of Great Britain, and the power of Prussia, which now began to be formidable, changed the whole balance of German and European affairs.

A remarkable circumstance took place about this time in Berlin, which showed the dislike with which the military rule of the King was viewed, at the same time that it proved the astonishment excited by the independent political attitude assumed by Prussia, a power new in the history of that century, and apparently not yet firmly established.

A Hungarian adventurer of the name of Clement, who had hung about most of the courts of Europe, at first in the suite of Ragozy, and afterwards on his own account, and who had contrived to make himself appear of consequence to several distinguished statesmen by procuring for them secret and apparently confidential despatches, now sought to form connexions for this purpose in Berlin, and thus got into the society of several persons who were, in the highest

degree, discontented with the government. These men complained that the King bestowed all the good places on officers in the army, to the exclusion of all other classes, especially literary men; that he had deprived them or their friends of their pensions, or even only that he looked ungraciously upon them in the street. Lehmann,\* the most capable of these malcontents, met Clement at Baruth, and, while walking together in the garden of the palace, they excited each other in the heat of conversation to the wildest schemes. Clement talked of the possibility of inducing the imperial and other courts to combine for the purpose of deposing a prince so eccentric as Frederick William. Lehmann suggested that it would be necessary, at the same time, to secure the persons of Ilgen and Kraut, the two ministers whose diligence and zeal had created the foreign and domestic power of Prussia. He thought it possible not only to do this, but likewise to surprise Berlin. Lehmann went with his new friend to Berlin, laid before him a plan of the fortifications of the city, and showed him all its weak points. He demonstrated how it was possible to surprise the town, to seize the treasure, and to plunder the castle and the principal houses. It seems that they meant to imitate what they had read, in St. Real's book, of the Duke of Ossuna's attempt upon Venice. The Hungarian adventurer probably saw, more clearly than his angry and fanciful

\* "Als ein ungemein capables Subject zur Correspondenz empfohlen."—"Recommended as an eminently capable subject for conducting a correspondence." An expression of Clement's in a report from Berlin, dated 24th July, 1719. (Dessau Archives.)

companion, the utter impracticability of all these schemes; and, in order to make money by the affair, Clement had the atrocious impudence to denounce to the government schemes partly engendered in his own brain, as devised by the King's neighbouring foes. For a moment Frederick William was deceived, but soon saw through the device, and seized the intended conspirators, who were executed together with Clement.\*

That spirit of intrigue which attempts to compass great ends by means of the most petty combinations was at this time rife in Europe. Men of far superior intellects and resources, like Görz and Alberoni, illustrate this fact. These two men once imagined that they could overthrow the Protestant succession in England, which had been established by the united efforts of the country and after bitter struggles. Charles XII. of Sweden and the Spanish court allowed themselves to be led away by ideas of this

\* Letter to the Prince of Anhalt, dated 19th July. "N-Schr. Bube hat alle die Briefe an Clement geschrieben auf französisch und ist Bube so ein Schelm gewesen wie Lehmann. Clement der saget nun alles heraus und saget, das das ganze Project Lehmann und seiner Invention ist, das gestehet Lehmann auch: wenn es möglich wäre gewesen, hätten sie es wollen dazu treiben, dass ich vom Kaiser sollte aus dem Lande gejagt werden."—"Bube" [who died in prison, as the King said from poison, which the scoundrel had taken to prevent the truth from being discovered] "wrote all his letters to Clement in French, and Bube was as great a rogue as Clement. Clement hath confessed all, and saith that the whole project was Lehmann's and his invention; and Lehmann confesses this also. Had it been possible, they would have tried to have had me driven out of the country by the Emperor.")

nature, upon which they built the most gigantic projects.

The greatest powers of discernment—those by which real talent is most strongly distinguished from superficial cleverness—are shown in an accurate discrimination between that which is ephemeral and subject to change in passing events, and that which is durable, and which rests upon a foundation which it would be vain to attempt to shake.

England and Prussia, threatened from opposite quarters, only drew all the more closely together.

On the 4th of August, 1719, these two powers concluded a treaty by which Frederick William renewed his promise to maintain the Protestant succession in England, and to assist the house of Hanover with a certain number of troops whenever it might be attacked. On his side George I., not only as Elector of Hanover, but likewise as King of England, guaranteed to Prussia the possession of that portion of the provinces formerly belonging to Sweden which Frederick William then occupied. When we read, in the secret article which was appended to those destined to be made public, that George I. especially promised to assist his son-in-law in the event of his being attacked in Prussia or in Pomerania on account of this alliance, we are led to surmise that this was looked upon as possible, and that an attack was expected from Russia or from Poland. This, however, did not occur. After the unexpected death of Charles XII. English influence prevailed in Sweden. Peter the Great, who once more directed his forces against that kingdom, was content to retain possession of the Baltic provinces

which he had conquered. No one could have wrested them from him, especially as the French court then seemed to wish that he should retain them, although it subsequently complained of his so doing; and thus a peace was concluded which for ever put an end to the ascendancy of Sweden on the German side of the Baltic. On the 20th of January, 1720, a treaty was signed by which Sweden agreed to cede to the King of Prussia and his heirs for ever the town of Stettin, the district between the Oder and the Peene, the islands of Usedom and Wollin, together with the Pomeranian Haff and its three outlets into the Baltic. The Swedish diet declared that in the actual state of affairs in Sweden it could not disapprove these terms, and it accordingly ratified the peace.

The possession of the mouths of the Oder, a river which ran through such a large tract of the Prussian dominions, and of a town like Stettin, so near the capital, and so conveniently placed for the Baltic, which was, by this very treaty, thrown open to a less restricted trade, was of incalculable advantage to Prussia.

It was with heartfelt delight that Frederick William received the oaths of allegiance at Stettin in the year 1721. He restored to the burghers their weapons, of which they had for a time been deprived, and established in the town a French colony which promised to increase its prosperity.

Altogether, this geographical extension gave to the various provinces united under the Prussian sceptre the character of a compact and independent power.

From the eastern confines of the perfectly Ger-

manized provinces—for beyond these there were only colonies which had not as yet connected the whole district with Germany—Prussia extended, though by no means continuously, as far as the ancient western marches of the German nation; already she touched France on the one side, and Russia on the other. In the latter direction she had spread her dominion over regions in which the Scandinavian and the Slavonic nations had encountered each other at the remotest periods of antiquity, where, during the last centuries, the Poles, Russians, and Swedes had so often fought; and in these regions she now had to keep alive the principle of German civilization. It was quite in accordance with the great historical character and position of the country that all its powers of colonization were directed towards this eastern frontier. To the westward, Prussia now included those districts which had so often been the theatre of the struggles between Spain and Holland for religious domination, and between Austria and France for political ascendancy. The support which the German and Protestant interests were now sure to receive from a government so powerful and so jealous of its privileges might undoubtedly be looked upon as a gain for the whole of Europe.\* The real basis of the power of Prussia, however, was formed by the central provinces upon the Elbe and the Oder, which, under a careful course of administration, arose slowly, but surely, out of the state of desolation into which they had been plunged by the thirty years' war. These provinces were the

\* Old Marperger already applies the saying of Curtius: *Una manu orientem, altera occidentem tangit.*

cradle of the military and administrative system, which gave unity and consistency to the whole nation. This system was the strongest expression of the territorial independence of a German principality; in order to maintain this independence it was necessary to assume a distinctive and unbending character.

Although it is perfectly true that without the aid of Protestantism the Prussian monarchy would never have become powerful and independent, and likewise that it gained fresh consideration for the Protestant faith, nevertheless the aim and object of its existence was by no means of a confessional nature. The first German prince whose joyful recognition of the rising power of Brandenburg and Prussia has been recorded was a Catholic, the Elector Max Emanuel of Bavaria, who had been deposed and exiled by Austria. At Paris he expressed to the Prussian ambassador his satisfaction at seeing that there was one, at least, among the princes of the Empire who took measures for the maintenance of his own independence, adding that he hoped that this would benefit them all, and more especially himself.\*

Time alone could show what position this new north German independence would assume towards the Emperor and the Empire, as well as towards the other powers of Europe—whether, amid their dissensions, and the new questions which daily arose out of

\* Qu'il souhaitoit fort l'amitié du Roi de Prusse, voyant avec plaisir un prince dans l'Empire qui avoit réglé ses affaires sur un pied à pouvoir soutenir au besoin les privilèges et prérogatives dudit Empire, qu'il pouvoit peut-être un jour survenir des conjonctures à devoir prendre des mesures ensemble.



them, it would be strong enough to adopt and to pursue a line of policy consonant with its own nature, and vigorous enough to develop itself in a manner which should satisfy the growing exigencies of human life.

Much had already been accomplished, but far more still remained to be done.

## SECOND BOOK.

## CHAPTER I.

## STATE OF PARTIES IN EUROPE.

WHILST considering the peculiar growth of the state formed by the union of Brandenburg and Prussia, we have hitherto been able to avoid entering circumstantially into the general history of European affairs. But this duty is now imposed upon us, for it was mainly owing to the state of parties in Europe that the conditions were brought about under which Prussia rose to the rank of a European power; and this elevation is the principal subject of our history. Much must be done before a state reaches that period of existence at which it can show itself equal in power and rank to its neighbours; and can, by the force of attraction or repulsion, take an active part in general affairs, and make room for itself in the world.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century the whole system of the European powers had undergone very considerable changes, and they now occupied positions more consonant with their real character and influence.

The former system was entirely founded upon the rivalry and continuous warfare between France and

the house of Austria. This was by no means at an end, but its conditions were totally altered.

When we call to mind the vast results produced by the union of Austria and Spain, the manner in which this union was effected and maintained, the intimate connexion in which it stood with the religious disturbances, we cannot but perceive how important it was to the world in general, and to the two powers themselves, that this union was now dissolved. Austria reverted to the original course of internal and territorial policy, founded chiefly on that union of the German archduchies with Bohemia and Hungary, which had often been attempted since the thirteenth century, and was effected in the seventeenth. This position was further strengthened in a geographical point of view by the acquisition of some provinces in the north of Italy, to which a few other more distant ones were speedily added. The whole epoch of the Burgundian family had been devoted to founding a territorial power in the south-east of Europe. The precious metals, sent from the mines of South America, had, at times, contributed to this end; now, however, the loss of this source of revenue would be less severely felt.

Spain and her colonies now formed a world by themselves; a great reaction was caused by Spain having lost possession of the Netherlands, through which she had been brought into immediate contact with the northern, western, and German states. But the question also arose, whether Spain would not henceforth be too much dependent upon France. The French plenipotentiaries at the congress, where negotiations for peace were carried on, made no secret of

their opinion that the Spaniards were bound to comply with all the wishes of the French monarch.

Without doubt the French monarchy gained much additional influence in the south of Europe by the establishment of a branch of the house of Bourbon on the Spanish throne; but it is well known that France owed this result not so much to her superiority in arms as to a series of fortuitous circumstances. On comparing the former condition of France with her state at that time, we perceive that the French monarchy, with all its power, was very far from exercising the same influence as in the palmy days of Louis XIV.

The English throne was no longer occupied by a Stuart, in want of French money or French cooperation to promote his views with regard to religion. The revolution of 1688, the preponderating influence which it gave to the Protestant aristocracy and to the parliamentary form of government, had been permanently secured by the accession of the house of Hanover, which owed the British crown to these very circumstances. In fact, all this had been done despite of France; and England might now remain on good terms with a power whose interference with her domestic policy she had no longer any reason to dread.

In the east of Europe, Sweden, whose hereditary policy had invariably been to draw the sword on the side of France, had lost much of her terrors, whereas Russia was advancing with rapid strides, and, under the influence of German civilization, had developed the native energies of her Slavonic element into a power which took counsel only of itself.

The position assumed by the four states, France, Austria, England, and Russia, and the still incomplete, but well-defined and permanent outlines of their respective courses of policy, were the result of the two great wars at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Among these great powers, in the midst of the German territories, which so frequently received their impulse from France, arose the state of Prussian Brandenburg, far inferior in might, it is true, but still gaining by slow degrees strength enough steadily to keep in view objects congenial to its own character and profitable to its independence.

The first attempts that were made in this direction, under the new order of things, are remarkable enough to deserve attention for their own sake, although their nature still partakes of doubt and change, and the gradual assumption of a new rank is not without a savour of hesitation; but we are also called upon to examine them more closely, inasmuch as they opened the way to conditions upon which all the great destinies of Prussia have hinged.

We must, therefore, patiently unravel the thread of events by which these destinies were prepared.

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## CHAPTER II.

## THE TREATY OF VIENNA, 1725.

EVEN now the peace of Europe was by no means secure, and attempts were frequently made to overthrow all that had so recently been established; moreover, questions arose which were the inevitable result of accidents far beyond the control of man.

The most important of all was, that doubts were entertained as to the future existence of one of the four great states—namely, of Austria—and that, even before this power had fully ascertained its position with respect to the rest of Europe, or had concluded peace with all the other powers.

After Joseph I. had died without male issue, and Charles VI. had already been married several years without having any children, fears were entertained at Vienna that, ere long, the same fate awaited the German branch of the house of Habsburg which had already visited the Spanish line.\* The victories obtained over the Turks filled the Austrian statesmen with grief, when they reflected that the state might

\* Prince Eugene relates (Works, IV. p. 84) that Count Wratislav often said, "Gott gebe uns einen Prinzen, sonst ist an nichts anderes zu denken, als dass die österreichischen Erbländer Spolia gentium werden." (God grant us a prince, otherwise we have nothing to expect but that the Austrian hereditary dominions will become the *spolia gentium*.)

expire with the Emperor; and that his death would probably entail the dissolution of the monarchy. "To what purpose are all this bloodshed, these conquests, and the devastation spread over whole provinces," asks one of these statesmen, "if such be the prospect?"

As the whole diplomatic history of the second half of the seventeenth century turned solely upon the anticipated extinction of the Austrian dynasty in Spain, and upon the schemes based upon this contingency, so, in like manner, the agitations relating to the succession of the house of Austria began many years before the death of Charles VI. The expectation of this event produced the same influence upon all diplomatic proceedings as that of the other had done before.

All the energies of Austrian policy, both domestic and foreign, now co-operated to prevent the dismemberment of the Empire.

The first man who thought seriously upon this subject, as far as we know, was Count Sinzendorf, who was then Vice-President of the Council (*Reichshofraths-Vicepräsident*). It was chiefly at his instigation that the Emperor, on the 19th of April, 1713,\* in a solemn assembly of his privy council, promulgated a family statute, according to which the hereditary kingdoms and possessions of his house were to

\* Exceptions are raised by Wandersmann (*Anemonen*, II. 121) against the accuracy of this date, because the expressions to which he objects do not appear in the original text, nor in Olenschlager's *Geschichte des Interregni*, I. 12, but in later transactions.

descend whole and undivided to his male heirs, failing them to his daughters, and in their default to the arch-duchesses, the daughters of his deceased brother; but in any case, as he expressly repeated, whole and undivided, and according to the right of primogeniture. A pestilence was raging in Vienna, which daily struck down numbers on all sides, when the Emperor published his decree settling the order of succession, to which was given the name of Pragmatic Sanction, a title which had been used by the old Roman Emperors, and renewed by the court of Spain.

The Pragmatic Sanction acquired its full significance by the circumstance that, after the early death of his only son, the Emperor had nothing but daughters born to him; the oldest of these, Maria Theresa, who was born on the 13th of May, 1717, was destined to profit by the new order of succession, always supposing she could obtain the requisite sanction from the other European powers.

Prince Eugene of Savoy and Count Sinzendorf especially were convinced that no time should be lost in obtaining this sanction, and that, although it was possible that God might still bless the Emperor with a male heir, it was not the less imperative upon his ministers to guard against the opposite contingency; they called to mind the misfortunes which had been brought, not only upon Spain, but upon other countries also, as, for example, upon Sweden, by the lack of an acknowledged order of succession.\*

There was no difficulty in gaining the consent of

\* Eugene's Memoirs (3 Jan. 1719), in *Eugene's Works*, V. 55.



the estates of the Netherlands, which had fallen to the share of the house of Habsburg out of the Spanish succession, or of those of the hereditary dominions of Austria. After some hesitation Hungary likewise agreed to extend the hereditary rights of her crown to the female sex, and to acknowledge the clause by which she was inseparably united to the rest of the imperial dominions; but in Bohemia a difficulty presented itself.

Not that the estates had any hesitation in complying with the wishes of the court, but Bohemia was not only a kingdom, but likewise an electorate of the German Empire; and it was contrary to the ancient laws of the Empire, and to immemorial custom, to confide this office to a woman.

Prince Eugene's remarks on this subject are very curious: he admits that such a proceeding is not in accordance with the great fundamental laws of the Empire, or with the "most strict observance," but contends that sound reason is in its favour; for that, as the Hereditary Princess was undoubtedly competent to succeed to the crown, which is the chief dignity, it was absurd to deny her the electoral dignity which was attached thereto; "that the much-vaunted fundamental laws of the Empire were themselves subject to the law of European expediency, and to the accidents and changes of the various states."\*

This was not said for Bohemia alone, but for the electors and the Empire. The experienced soldier and statesman appealed to the posture of affairs in Europe

\* Note of Prince Eugene, 24th Jan., 1724. Works, VI. 34. Compare V. 56.

to show the necessity of adopting his line of policy: he was resolved to make the Golden Bull give way before the work of maintaining the balance of power in Europe, to the existence of which the influence of Austria was indispensable.

The first point was to see whether this view of politics would find general acceptance, and whether it would be possible to secure its adoption by treaties; for without this precaution it was not to be hoped that the various powers and families which had claims upon the Austrian succession would bow to so new a family statute. Although Eugene was firmly convinced that the affair would not be finally settled by treaties only—for, as he said, there never had been a treaty since the world began that had been considered as absolutely permanent, or that had been carried into effect according to its original spirit—he nevertheless advised that the recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction should be made the first condition of every treaty to be concluded with any foreign state, in order that, in case of any attack upon Austria, formal reference might be made to it according to the law of nations.

It may be asked whether, with these views, it would not have been better to abandon the diplomatic line of action, and to prepare for any possible hostilities from without, by an increase of the military force of the country; but no minister of those days could have carried out so decisive a measure: the general condition of Europe at this time rested upon articles of peace and treaties between states, though, indeed, they were often broken and infringed; perhaps their importance was more apparent than real, as the internal strength

of the several powers, and their relation to each other, after all constituted the real basis of European affairs.

The first treaty of any importance that was concluded in this sense, and which went far beyond the purpose of maintaining the balance of power in Europe, was proposed by a dynasty from whom it could least have been expected—namely, by the Spanish line of the house of Bourbon, which had not yet brought its long and violent contest with Austria to a pacific termination.

The principal motive to this is not, as has been supposed, to be found in the affront received by the Spanish from the French court, when Louis XV. sent back the Infanta, to whom he was betrothed, and chose rather to marry the daughter of Stanislaus Lescinski; there were other less personal reasons, arising out of the interests of the two kingdoms.

Spain could not endure the mercantile ascendancy enjoyed by England both in India and in Europe, and wished, above all, to reconquer Gibraltar and Minorca.

Charles VI. was quite as little disposed to endure the supremacy in trade of the two maritime powers. If this sovereign ever had a strong predilection for any branch of affairs, it was for commerce and navigation.\* Any one could make a fortune out of him by bold and at all plausible schemes of this nature. This taste of

\* Foscarini storia arcana im Archivio storico italiano S. V. 83, speaks of the "strana passione avuta da S. M. nei commerci et in ogni altra industria il cui fine sia generare ricchezza;" of an "inclinazione per cui rendeva si disposto a secundare leggermente ogni vano promettitore di ideali profitti."

the Emperor's was not without influence upon the Austrian dominions; the growth of Trieste was mainly owing to his encouragement. But his projects did not stop here; at Ostend, in the Netherlands, he founded a company of merchants endowed with privileges, from which he expected a revival of Belgian trade. Austrian vessels from Trieste and Ostend were to meet in the friendly port of Lisbon. At that time imperial ships were even seen in the Indian Ocean.

Struck by these new efforts of the Austrian government, Ripperda, a Dutchman born, who had made his way in the Spanish service, and whose name frequently appears in the history of those times, conceived the project of forming a new alliance between Austria and Spain. These two powers united would, he conceived, possess inexhaustible resources and invincible strength, and easily defend themselves against all their enemies. Ripperda was sent to Vienna in November, 1724, in order that he might himself carry into effect that which he had suggested.

In this attempt he succeeded beyond all expectation.

A peace was immediately concluded, according to which either party renounced all claims upon the possessions of the other; and Spain expressly sanctioned the new family statute of Austria, extending the succession to the female line, on the ground that it was consonant with the true intentions of their respective ancestors, and had been welcomed by the general voice of Europe.\*

When this had been settled a second twofold agree-

\* *Pax inter Carolum VI. et Philippum V. Viennæ, 30 Aprilis 1725. Art. XII. in Dumont VIII. II. 108.*

ment was concluded, according to which, on the one hand, Spain acknowledged the Ostend Company, placed the Austrian subjects on the same footing in her seaports with those of the most favoured foreign nations, and promised to take them under her special protection on both sides of the line; and the Emperor, in his turn, offered his services towards forcing England to give up Gibraltar and Port Mahon.\*

But even this mutual participation in each other's most peculiar interests did not satisfy the newly-awakened desire for an alliance which had so suddenly seized the two powers.

In his very first instruction Philip V. directed his ambassador, with the proudest consciousness of Catholic orthodoxy, to negotiate an alliance of the two monarchies against the Turks and the Protestants, and, at the same time, a union of the closest kind between the families. It is manifest that it was this hope and prospect that, in fact, gave life to the whole negotiation. Ere long Ripperda succeeded in concluding a treaty which fully satisfied all the wishes of the Spanish court.

Constant reference has since been made by both the powers, and in all literature, to the real terms of this treaty; but it was not till more than a century after its conclusion,—in our own times,—that they have been made public. †

\* *Fœdus inter sacram cæsaream et catholicam Majestatem et sacram catholicam Majestatem d. 30 April, ibid. 113. Traité de navigation et de commerce . . . fait à Vienne le 1 Mai, ibid. p. 114.*

† Alejandro de Cantillo: *tratados de paz desde el anno de 1700 que han hecho los monarcas españoles de la casa de Borbon.*

The whole turned upon the Emperor's declaration that he was quite willing to marry his eldest daughter, Maria Theresa, whose right to the whole Austrian succession had just been established, to the Infant Don Carlos, the eldest son of Philip's second wife. This declaration, however, was accompanied by a very important reservation. According to the account given of the matter by Ripperda, the views of the imperial court were at first turned rather towards Don Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias; and the former, as ambassador, directed its choice upon Don Carlos. The treaty likewise recognised the necessity of keeping up a separation between the three powers, France, Spain, and the Emperor of Germany; express stipulations were made for the prevention of marriages between the imperial, or the Spanish, and the French royal family. The succession to Tuscany, Parma, and Piacenza was assured to Don Carlos, who would thus, by his marriage with the Hereditary Princess of Austria, bring these countries as an addition to the Austrian monarchy, which already embraced Naples and Sicily. No positive mention is made in the treaty of the private wishes of Spain to get Don Carlos hereafter elected King of the Romans, but it is manifest that this was intended. Philip V. promised to use all his power and influence at the election, in order to keep the imperial crown in the house of Austria, which would then have become his own. Should this, as was expected, lead to a war with both France and England, the project was to win back from the former

Madrid, 1843. *Tratado muy secreto de amistad y alianza.* Ibid. p. 231. Art. 2, 8.

all the conquests that she had made at the expense of the houses of Austria and Spain, including Burgundy; to restore Lorraine to the state in which it had been in 1633; and to take away Gibraltar and Minorca from the latter by the force of arms. The treaty was drawn up on the model of that which had formerly been concluded between the two lines of the house of Habsburg, against the French and the Turks; for if a war of religion were to break out either within or without the confines of the Empire, the two contracting powers were to make common cause against the Protestants.\*

Such were the terms of this treaty, which seemed calculated to restore the old ascendancy of Spain and Austria. Nevertheless, there is room for doubt whether the court of Vienna was ever really in earnest about the matter, or whether it was not rather yielding to the importunities of Spain. The reservation to which we have already alluded greatly strengthens this surmise. This was that the marriage of the eldest archduchess was certain only in case the Emperor should die before she should arrive at a marriageable age. The only unconditional clause of the treaty was that which enjoined that two out of the three archduchesses then living should marry into the Spanish family. The language used by Eugene would lead us to suppose that all that the court of Vienna really wanted was to obtain a guarantee to the Pragmatic Sanction. This could only be accomplished by presenting a wide and brilliant prospect to

\* As it is called in the instruction: *Alianza defensiva et ofensiva contra el Turco y los principes protestantes.*

the Queen of Spain. The treaty, when finally concluded, although it did not concede all she desired, nevertheless offered immense advantages in exchange. If Austria once more had the wealth of the Indies at her disposal, she would be able again to assume a threatening attitude towards the other European powers.

As was to be expected, this conclusion of peace between two great powers that had, until now, been on terms of hostility, the few conditions of their alliance which had become known, and, above all, its general tendency, which was guessed before its complete development, created a commotion throughout Europe.

France had fixed her eyes upon the Austrian succession, as she had formerly done upon that of Spain; and was determined not to suffer any partial distribution of it to take place, least of all one so evidently hostile to her own interests.

The two maritime powers had long since protested against the establishment of the Ostend Company; Holland especially had cited one of the articles of the peace of Westphalia against it; and now privileges were granted to this company which gave it the advantage over every competitor; \* moreover, it was to be maintained by the force of arms.

\* In the second article of the *Traité de Navigation*, the Austrian ships are permitted to buy everywhere, even in America, "toutes les choses dont ils auront besoin, soit pour leur nécessaire, soit pour la réparation des navires, ou autrement." As they were only excluded from trading with the East Indies, it was taken for granted that they were permitted to trade with America. Colonel Bladen asserted in the English parliament that



This alone was enough to exasperate the English nation, which already lavished abuse upon the Emperor, saying that he now repaid the sacrifices with which England had secured to him the possession of his Italian dominions, by endeavouring to ruin her trade. This exasperation was inflamed by rumours of a secret alliance for various hidden purposes. That this existed was, as we have seen, quite true; but, as usual, the conjectures raised upon its probable objects far outstripped the truth. A secret article was produced by which it appeared that the courts had united in order to attempt the restoration of the Pretender to the English throne; \* this, if accomplished, would have been quite sufficient to destroy all the progress that had been made during the last hundred years.

The north of Europe also seemed as though it must inevitably be involved in the general outbreak of hostilities. Sweden and Russia had agreed, by a secret article at the peace of Stockholm, to assist the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp in regaining possession of the territory which Denmark had taken from him during the last war, and which had been guaranteed to this power by England. The Emperor Charles VI. seemed strongly inclined to join his endeavours to those of Sweden and Russia, provided the latter would take part in his own alliance with Spain. The treaty on

this contained "a permission to vend their merchandizes for ready money; so that it was manifest that the subjects of the Austrian Low Countries were allowed more extensive privileges than ever had been granted to any other nation," which was against all treaties. Parliamentary History, VIII. 506.

\* Coxe has given this in his *Memoirs of Horatio Lord Walpole*, 1820, I. p. 252.

this subject was not drawn up until somewhat later ; but it appears by the records of Peter the Great that he was occupied so early as the 7th of January, 1725, with his own adhesion to the league between Spain and Austria, which must therefore by that time have been tolerably firm.

It seemed as if the war which had so lately ceased was on the point of breaking out afresh in all parts of Europe from Kronstadt to the Straits of Gibraltar.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE TREATY OF HANOVER.

THE general posture of affairs at this time caused peculiar difficulty and embarrassment to the newly-arisen state of Prussia, which came in contact with both systems, but belonged to neither, and which was intimately connected with all the neighbouring powers without sharing the policy of any of them.

Prussia was not yet able to take her place as a fifth power by the side of the other four, but she was already so powerful that nothing could occur in European or German affairs without her active participation. The question now was, whether, upon the threatened approach of a general collision, she would adopt a line of policy advantageous to herself, and useful to the general interests of Europe.

Most of the actual subjects of contention were entirely foreign to the interests of Prussia. It mattered very little to King Frederick William what privileges the Ostend Company enjoyed in the provinces of America, or what nation hoisted its flag upon the rock of Gibraltar; and he did not think himself called upon to take part in the affairs of other countries. Neither did it immediately affect himself which of the two lines of the house of Oldenburg was to rule over the territory of Holstein-Gottorp.

No sooner, however, had the contending parties abandoned these individual subjects of dispute for the field of general politics, than questions arose which were of immediate and urgent importance to Prussia.

Her very existence was based upon the balance of power in Europe: she must have fallen an easy prey to any nation that succeeded in acquiring a preponderating influence.

It was manifest that a union between Spain and Austria, such as was now projected, must be dangerous to Prussia, which was necessarily an object of hostility to those powers, both on religious and political grounds.

The events of late years had violently stirred up the religious animosities of the German Empire. The confirmation given at Ryswick to that clause in the peace of Baden which was so peculiarly unfavourable to Protestantism, and the violent ardour for making converts displayed by a bigoted and fanatical priesthood, and by a few princes whom it had misled, kept the Protestant party in a constant state of exasperation. This was increased when, on the second centenary jubilee of the Reformation, the news arrived that the Hereditary Prince of Saxony, upon whose firmness the Protestants still relied, had followed the example of his father, and had gone over to Catholicism. As his conversion was accompanied by his marriage with one of the daughters of the Archduke Joseph, a niece of the Emperor, it was of course ascribed to the influence of the latter, and called forth the complaint that, if this was to

be the course of affairs, it would be quite as well to have the Pope himself for an Emperor. Charles VI., at all events, seemed to have forgotten that the Emperor of Germany ought to belong equally to both sides. We see then how alarming was so close an alliance between him and the Spanish government, which placed Protestants in the same category with infidels.

But the King of Prussia likewise complained that in political matters also he had always been treated with disrespect, and even with hostility; that he was never duly heard in the Supreme court of the Empire, but rather condemned at once.\* The Emperor had taken the part of the allodial fief of Limburg, of the abbot of Werden, and of the chapter of Quedlinburg, one after another, against the King; and with respect to the latter, he had even charged some of the King's neighbours with the execution of his decrees.†

\* The method pursued by the imperial court was this: "dass alle jura dieses Hauses auch gantze Provintzien und Lande die gleichwohl unsere Vorfahren besessen, und in deren Possession wir uns auch befinden, uns streitig und zweifelhaft gemacht, andre Stände im Reich, die Verwandten unsers Hauses selbst und unsre eigne Unterthanen selbst solche jura zu impugniren, und deshalb bei dem Kaiser zu beklagen angehetzet, ja gar welches fast unerhört durch den Reichsfiscal dazu gezwungen werden." (All the jura of this house, even whole provinces and territories which have been held by our forefathers, and which we do now hold, are made the subject of dispute and doubt. Other estates in the Empire, the connexions even of our own house,—our very subjects,—are induced by the Emperor to impugn these jura, and to make complaint unto him. Nay, what is almost unheard of, the imperial Fiscal urged these men on.)

† "Weil man zu Wien die Maxime hat dass man uns auf alle Weise klein machen müsse, dass wenn wir schon in einer Sache

It is manifest that Frederick William could not be much attached to the Emperor at the time at which these great dissensions broke out. He had besides several other inducements to lend a willing ear to the enemies of the Emperor who now addressed themselves to him, more especially to the English court.

Whenever George I. went over from England to Hanover, he always, if possible, arranged a meeting between himself and his daughter and son-in-law. Sometimes he went to Berlin; in order to see his grandchildren, who were then growing up; but more often the King and Queen of Prussia went to Hanover, or to a hunting-seat called the GÖhrde, on the borders of the Altmark, where huge forests of oak and beech mark the ancient boundaries which separated the Saxon and the Wendish nations. In the summer of 1725 King George I. visited Hanover, accompanied by the English minister, Lord Townsend, a man who combined fire and boldness with experience and a thorough knowledge of business. Frederick William and Sophia Dorothea went to see him, and they spent most of their time together in the gardens of Herrenhausen, which then passed for the finest in the world.

The wish entertained by the Queen of Prussia to bring about a fresh alliance between the two families was exceedingly favourable to the policy of England. Most likely this scheme had often been talked of before, but nothing definitive had been settled until *recht hätten die raison d'état nicht zuliesze uns damit aufkommen zu lassen.*" (Because the court of Vienna acts upon the maxim of lowering us in every way; so that, even if our right was clear, the *raison d'état* would not permit us to enjoy it.) *Beschwerden, or Memorial, of January, 1725.*

now.\* The Queen, who was most affectionately received by her father, now hoped to obtain a positive promise from him to this effect; and Lord Townsend says in one of his letters that he does not think that there will be any difficulty about the matter.

Townsend took this opportunity of discussing public affairs—a manner of transacting business which Frederick William did not like. He had often had cause to repent having been led in personal intercourse by the fire and impetuosity of his character to give utterance to too violent an expression of his resentment. On the other hand, the King had also, on another occasion, been too yielding, and had conceded more than he afterwards thought right. But the very thing which a man most fears in himself he will be always in danger of doing; once more Frederick William personally took part in negotiation, in which Lord Townsend stirred up his whole soul. The recent occurrences at Thorn, where a tumult which had broken out on the occasion of a Jesuit procession had been punished by the Poles in a manner that infringed the acknowledged rights of the Protestants, roused all his religious sympathies. This projected alliance between the Emperor and Spain seemed to threaten general danger.

Lord Townsend represented to him that a hostile alliance between the other powers of Europe had become necessary.

\* Princess Frederica Wilhelmina is in error when she asserts that two years before this, in a treaty made at Charlottenburg with regard to her marriage with the heir-presumptive to the crown of England, some agreement was made. This treaty contains nothing of the sort, even in the secret articles.

He would not, however, have carried his point had he not held out hopes of assistance in an affair which was just now the chief object of Prussian policy—namely, the revived dispute concerning the succession to Juliers. It was the combination of these two interests which carried the point with Frederick William. We must explain them successively to our readers.

When the Elector Frederick William determined to waive his claim to one half of this succession, and to content himself with the actual possession of the other half, he reserved his right to the former in the event of the extinction of the house of Neuburg. This prospect was then extremely remote and uncertain, as the Count Palatine Philip, with whom the Elector had made this agreement, was surrounded by eight fine sons. It so happened, however, that some of these sons took holy orders; others, who continued in the world, nevertheless remained unmarried; and those who did marry had either no children at all or only daughters. The last of the brothers, Charles Philip, at this time Elector Palatine, a prince whose name had been rendered odious by his religious persecutions, had only two daughters, and the extinction of the male branch of this line was now inevitable. The Elector Charles Philip wished nothing so much as to make over the succession to the territory of Juliers to his son-in-law, the Count Palatine of Sulzbach, who seemed to be in great favour with the imperial court; but the King of Prussia was by no means disposed to submit to be deprived of that which he looked upon as his un-



questionable right. As to England, she had expressly recognised the claims of Prussia upon Juliers and Berg in a treaty concluded at Charlottenburg in 1723, which included all former treaties, and reciprocally admitted not alone the possession of all states and dominions, but likewise all the rights and prerogatives of both parties. George I. had promised, in a secret article, that, in the event of the extinction of the male line of the house of Neuburg, he would support the just right of the King of Prussia, and suffer no injustice to be done him. The repetition of the word *right* does not imply any reservation, but is rather intended to bring out the real intention of the treaty more strongly. Prussia could also reckon upon the co-operation of France, then the best ally of England, whose decision relating to a district so near her own frontiers was almost conclusive. Negotiations on this subject had been going on for some time, and in December, 1724, France had declared her intention of taking upon herself the same engagements, with respect to Juliers and Berg, to which England had already subscribed.\* The only hindrance to the formal conclusion of this agreement was caused by the King of Prussia himself, who felt some hesitation in binding himself by alliances the consequences of

\* Letter from Rothenburg, dated 15th Dec., 1724: Vre Excellence verra par le second art que le Roi s'est déterminé, à la considération de S Maj Prne, à prendre sur l'affaire de Clèves et de Juliers les mêmes engagements que le Roi d'Angleterre a pris à cette égard par l'article secret du traité de Charlottembourg; persuadé que cette facilité ne fera que resserrer les nœuds de l'union qui subsiste entre Sa Majesté et le Roi de Pr, et dont elle désire le maintien.

which were so important, and, at the same time, so difficult to foresee with certainty. But the impression made by the new alliance between Spain and Austria, which was generally, and as it turned out truly, supposed to relate to this succession among other things, banished all scruples. The scheme of an alliance was now laid before the King of Prussia, who added a few marginal notes, but, on the whole, gave it his approval. One of his most important observations was to the effect that he did not choose to be involved in any hostilities with Russia, contrary to his former treaties with that power. Ilgen was sent for in the most violent haste: this minister was more opposed than even the King to anything that should fetter the future policy of Prussia, and he never lost sight of the advantages which must arise out of a good understanding with the Emperor; but under the existing circumstances, and as the proposed alliance was of a purely defensive character, he withdrew all opposition to it. Accordingly, on the 3rd of September, 1725, the Treaty of Hanover was concluded between France, England, and Prussia.

The most important point in this treaty was that the three powers guaranteed not only each other's possessions, but likewise each other's rights. France expressly promised to come to the assistance of the other allied powers should any attempt be made by the German Empire to injure them: they agreed to consider in common any proposals that might be made to them relating to the imperial succession, and to accept none that appeared to them insufficient for the protection of their own interests and the maintenance

of the balance of power in Europe. We see that the greatest stress in the whole agreement was laid on the resistance to be offered to the anticipated imperial projects, and on the mutual guarantee of each other's rights; but so general and vague an engagement did not satisfy the King of Prussia. The treaty was made known from the very first, and has frequently been printed, and extracted from, times without end, but it is not yet wholly known. That which rendered it so important to Prussia is a secret article which, in the original document, was inserted before the special ones, and has really been kept secret until now. In it both France and England promise not to permit the territory of Juliers and Berg, which was claimed by Prussia, to be sequestered at the extinction of the house of Neuburg, or to be made the subject of a formal lawsuit; neither would they suffer any wrong or violence to be done to his Prussian Majesty in the affair, but, on the contrary, endeavour to induce the contending parties to submit to the decision of some impartial power.\* Moved equally by general con-

\* The article runs thus: S. M. le roi de Prusse ayant présenté à S. M<sup>e</sup> tres chretienne et à S. M. Britannique, que lors de l'extinction des princes de la maison de Neubourg elle auroit des pretentions a exercer sur la succession de Berg et de Juliers et ayant demandé a LL DD MM de vouloir bien luy estre favorables en luy assurant l'effet des conventions faites cy-devant sur ce sujet et leurs dites MM. Tres Ch<sup>tes</sup> et Britannique voulant en tout ce qui depend d'Elles donner a S M le roi de Prusse des temoignages de leur attention pour les choses qui l'interessent, Elles promettent que le cas arrivant qu'il n'y eut plus de princes de la maison de Neubourg, elles favoriseront et seconderont les justes prétentions de S M Prussienne et Elles tacheront par les moyens les plus efficaces à porter toutes les parties interessées à sou-

siderations and by the prospect of this private advantage, the King consented to sign the treaty. }

Thus, then, in the general struggle which seemed on the point of breaking out all over Europe, Frederick William decisively joined the anti-Austrian party.

This was indeed a bold step in policy, considering the turn which the affairs of Brandenburg had taken, and the obligations by which a prince of the Germanic Empire was bound to the Emperor.

It was rendered more hazardous by the difficulties which presented themselves on the side of the party which Prussia had joined as soon as the necessity for increasing the forces of the country had become apparent; the alliance of Hanover was never, in fact, concluded to the full extent that had originally been intended.

Holland, whose co-operation was absolutely indispensable, could never have been prevailed upon to agree to the secret article. The clause by which the contracting powers mutually guaranteed not only each other's possessions, but likewise each other's rights, in itself sufficed to give the alarm to the Dutch, who were quite sagacious enough to perceive its appli-

*mettre leurs prétentions à l'arbitrage des puissances impartiales dont on conviendra dans la suite. Et à cette fin elles empêcheront que les susdits Duchés ne soient mis en sequestre ny que l'affaire ne soit reduite en procès formel ny qu'on y procéde contre S. M<sup>e</sup> Prussienne par voye de fait afin qu'il ne soit fait aucun tort a S. M<sup>e</sup> Prussienne, mais au contraire toute la justice qui lui est du. Cet article secret aura la meme force, etc. follow the words as in the three separate articles, to the end, with the same date.*

cation to Juliers and Berg. The allies did not venture to communicate the secret article to them at all.

When, on the other hand, Holland wanted to make a serious attack upon the Ostend Company, and required from the other allied powers the assurance of sufficient aid for this purpose against the Emperor, the King of Prussia would not consent to give it. He said that it mattered little to the world whether the Dutch got better or worse prices for the coffee and china which they imported and for their own native manufactures, and that he would not draw his sword in a matter of this kind.

Nor did Frederick William feel himself at all more called upon to interfere in keeping the territory of Gottorp in the possession of Denmark, which the other powers were anxiously endeavouring to draw into the alliance. He repeated that which he had already said before signing the treaty—that, if Russia attempted to reinstate the Duke in Silesia, he, for his part, would offer no opposition; but that, if the Russians were to attack Bremen and Verden, or to molest Hanover, he would resist them with all his might.

In short, it was impossible to reconcile the interests of Prussia, Denmark, and Holland in this matter.

Ere long, too, Frederick William took offence at the line of conduct pursued by France and England.

It appeared to him that the proceedings which the maritime powers intended to adopt towards the Ostend Company were of an aggressive nature, and entirely incompatible with a purely defensive alli-

ance, such as he had supposed that of Hanover to be. It almost looked as if the maritime powers had planned nothing less than the conquest of the Austrian Netherlands; he was moved to indignation by the idea that he was engaged in an alliance of which the ultimate purpose had not been communicated to him; his pride rose up in arms at the thought that the other allied powers wanted to make use of him as an understrapper, as he expresses it, as a subaltern.

All the political considerations that were opposed to the alliance next occurred to him, somewhat late it is true: he asked himself how it would be if this should really lead to war; it was clear that the chief burthen of it would fall upon him, as his kingdom was not defended like England by the sea, or like France by fortresses. He requested to be informed what it really was that was demanded of the Emperor; and, in case he should refuse to comply, what means were to be taken to compel him to do so, what contingent each of the allies was to furnish, and where the war was to be carried on. He added, that, for instance, he himself, who might expect to receive the first attack, must be put in a condition to place a sufficient force upon the borders of Silesia to enable him, if necessary, to invade that province, or even Bohemia. He demanded that an auxiliary force of 28,000 foot and 10,000 horse should be held in readiness for him in the month of May; Prussian officers were to be present at the inspection of these troops, and to ascertain that their numbers were complete; and at the first summons from the King the troops were to appear at their

various appointed places of meeting.\* Moreover, as he was not defending his own cause, but that of others,

\* In an autograph statement of the King's it stands thus:—

“Die Alliance bestehe in König England, König Frankreich, König Preussen, König Sardinien, in Kurfürstenthum Baiern, in den Holländern, Landgraf Hessen;—

Die Alliirte sollten sagen: der Kaiser soll die ostendische Compagnie niederlegen, der Kaiser soll dies oder das thun; will er nun nit thun was die obigen Alliirte haben wollen, also müssen die Alliirte eine Disposition machen den Kaiser dazu zu zwingen, nemlich die mus so sein.

Die drei erstere Könige und Holl. die stellen ihr Contingent von so viel Truppen, die soll der oder der commandiren; die Armee soll sich onweit Maastricht zusammenziehen, und die kaiserlichen Truppen aus Brabant delogiren. Holland giebt Artillerie, England giebt Brot, Frankreich . . . Preussen . . .

Der Kaiser wird gewiss mit Polen und Moscau Allianz machen, dem König in Preussen Amusement zu geben; die nordische Armee von was vor Truppen soll die seyn? wer soll commandiren, und wer soll furniren.

In Italien da muss der König von Sicilien (Sardinien) agiren, Frankreich muss gegen die spanische Grenze eine Armee haben, auch eine gegen Schwaben die Reichfürsten en ordre oder échec zu halten;

Dieses wäre so eine Disposition, die Engeland, Holland, Frankreich machen mus und Preussen fragen ob er accordiren wil, und wovor; da Preussen grossen Risiko hat und Hasard, da seine Länder können le champ de la guerre werden, und dabei sehr leiden; und ich wissen muss was ich dagegen zu gewarten haben werde.”

(The alliance consists of the King of England, the King of France, the King of Prussia, the King of Sardinia, the Elector of Bavaria, the Dutch, and the Landgrave of Hesse;—

The allies are to say,—that the Emperor shall abolish the Ostend Company; the Emperor shall do this and that. If he will not do what the above-named allies require, the allies shall make disposition to force the Emperor thereunto; which must be after this manner.

The first three monarchs and the Dutch are to furnish their contingent of so many troops, to be commanded by this or that man. The army to meet somewhere near Maastricht, and to

he thought it just that he, whose dominions would probably become the theatre of war, should be secured against injury and loss; he therefore demanded that the guarantee which he had already received should be further extended and secured.

Hereupon the allies answered that, if the Emperor were to attack the Prussian provinces from Silesia, the English fleet should bombard Naples.

Before making the above-named demands, Frederick William had assembled his principal generals and ministers, and had desired them to speak out their opinions on the matter, as they should one day answer it to God. And these conditions, so solemnly considered, and determined with reference not only to the danger which threatened him, but also to the obligations imposed on him by the Hanoverian alliance, were now met by an answer which, to him, who viewed all transactions with reference only to their immediate and absolute utility, seemed a mockery.

Nor did it at all enter into his calculations that

drive the imperial troops out of Brabant. Holland is to supply artillery, England bread, France . . . Prussia . . .

The Emperor will assuredly ally himself with Poland and Moscow, in order to give *amusement* to the King of Prussia: of what troops is the northern army to consist? who is to command them, and who to furnish the supplies?

The King of Sicily [Sardinia] must act in Italy: France must have an army on the Spanish frontiers; and one near Swabia, to hold the princes of the Empire *en ordre* or *échec*.

This is a disposition which England, Holland, and France must make, and must ask Prussia whether he will agree thereunto, as Prussia thereby runneth great risk and hazard, seeing that this kingdom may become *le champ de la guerre*, and thereby suffer severely; and I must know what I have to expect in return.)



England and France should avail themselves of his alliance, though without his aid, to carry on a war against the Emperor. Frederick William wanted only to defend himself against the ascendancy of the house of Austria, which had been represented to him in so formidable a light; by no means to attack or overthrow it:

Even an attack upon the Austrian Netherlands, with a view to the destruction of the Ostend Company, appeared to him unjustifiable. When the Prussian envoy to the imperial Diet had examined the former negotiations, he reported that the Burgundian circle, which included these provinces, was still regarded as an integral part of the Empire, and that any attack upon them would be an attack upon the Empire.

Moreover, the King, on recalling all that he had heard from the foreign ambassadors at Herrenhausen, was seized with the notion that after all nothing less was intended than the complete overthrow of the house of Austria; he fancied that he remembered having heard it said that the allied powers would do all they could to pull it down, and would divide the Emperor's dominions after his death.

If such was the case then, the danger of an undue preponderance of power which had hitherto threatened him on one side was now merely transferred to the other. The King asked himself what would be the next step when the house of Austria had been overthrown: was an English or a French Emperor to be set up in its stead? He felt that it was better far to keep an Emperor belonging to the German nation and of Austrian blood.

It is only to minds of the very highest order that all sides of a question present themselves at once and in all their bearings; to others who are more affected by the impressions of the moment they only reveal themselves little by little.

If the Austrian line would but abstain from such hazardous combinations as that with Spain, its continuance was, on the whole, exceedingly desirable in a political point of view. Moreover, the dissolution of that union of various states and provinces which formed the Austrian dominions must almost inevitably tend to the advantage and increase of France, and perhaps of England, as had formerly been the case with the Spanish monarchy; for there would then be no one able to resist their supremacy.

This was all that Frederick William really meant when he talked of the possibility of a French or an English Emperor: he said that it reminded him of the fable of the stork and the frogs; they certainly would have made themselves completely masters of the German Empire.

The King of Prussia had been driven, partly by numerous disgusts which he had received from the imperial court, partly by the encroachments of the Catholic party, and partly by family considerations, to join the Hanoverian alliance; but he was now filled with anxiety and uneasiness by the aggressive tendencies displayed by that alliance, to the imminent peril of the German Empire. In the summer of 1726 he had already begun to repent of the step that he had been led to take.

## CHAPTER IV.

## RETURN TO NEUTRALITY.

ONE evening in June the King was sitting at a window of his palace, looking at the people walking up and down by the water-side, when he saw among them his old acquaintance Count Seckendorf, a General in the service of the Emperor. The King beckoned to Seckendorf to come in, and desired him to sit beside him.

Count Seckendorf, though a North German and a Protestant, and, moreover, the nephew of the Seckendorf who has obtained so great a reputation as the historian of Lutheranism, had nevertheless risen to the highest posts in the imperial army, and had obtained considerable influence in public affairs. Seckendorf seemed to the Protestant princes well fitted to be their representative at a court, the favourable or unfavourable dispositions of which were still of such immense importance to them; while, on the other hand, Seckendorf gained fresh influence and consideration from the confidence which the Protestant princes reposed in him.\* He had become acquainted with

\* On the 21st of September, 1725, he requested the King of Prussia "sich für ihn bei Hannover zu interessiren,"—"to make interest in his behalf with Hanover,"—so that he might be promoted to the office of Storemaster-General in the imperial army.

Frederick William I. many years before, during the campaigns in the Netherlands, and had since kept up a correspondence with that monarch. He once said that from his earliest youth he had pledged his faith and devotion to the King; on another occasion he declared that a letter from Frederick William, received after a long interval of silence, had given him, as it were, new life.\* When he was absent from the King he neglected no means of retaining his favour: he sent him delicacies for his table—Italian truffles, “right goodly fieldfares from Dresden;” and, above all, procured for the monarch the agreeable spectacle of tall soldiers, selected chiefly from the Heyducks. Then again, when he was in the King’s company he was the very man of all others to please him. As he had served in many campaigns, and had frequently been employed in diplomatic missions—for example, at the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht—Seckendorf possessed the most varied knowledge of the world: his conversation was agreeable and instructive. In some of his qualities he resembled the King: he was, like him, exceedingly thrifty, irreproachable in his conduct with respect to women, outwardly very religious, and equally indefatigable, whether at work, in travelling, or in the chase. Frederick William liked no one

He then went himself to Hanover. The King likewise wrote a letter of recommendation for him to Ratisbon.

\* On the 23rd of January, 1720, from the camp at Trapani. He hoped “mündlich weiter Rapport zu erstatten,”—(“to be able to give further intelligence by word of mouth.”) Again, on the 12th of February, he hoped “bald aus diesen verdriesslichen Ländern zu kommen,”—(“soon to quit those disagreeable countries”) (Lower Italy and Sicily).

better than Seckendorf to keep him company during his long noonday meal, or in the evening over his beer and tobacco. This was the more important, as, with all his apparent openheartedness and ease of manner, Seckendorf was anxious above all to deserve that praise which Prince Eugene had bestowed on him, of being a skilful negotiator. It may be doubted whether such a position as his, in which a man is forced to serve two opposite parties, does not entail the necessity of too great a degree of versatility to be consistent with real uprightness of character. In the numerous letters by him which are still extant, Seckendorf appears not exactly as a contriver of stratagems and deceits, but as suspecting them on every occasion, and endeavouring not only to elude but even to turn them to his own account. He always, if possible, approached the point he wished to gain under cover of some other purpose, with keen circumspection, ever patient and adroit. He is a personage who will frequently appear in our pages.

It was not chance that directed Seckendorf to the banks of the Spree at this moment.

The court of Vienna was fully sensible of the inconvenience, and even danger, that would arise out of a breach with Prussia.

Frederick William was far too plain and straightforward to lay a plan for obtaining any advantage by assuming an appearance of hostility. Angered and annoyed at being, as he conceived, ill used, he had quite naturally taken up a threatening attitude; this, however, instantly had the effect of drawing upon him the increased attention of the cabinet of Vienna. If

Austria had ever intended by joining Spain to construct a great Catholic league, it soon became manifest that the execution of such a scheme was impossible. The King of Poland, among others, threw many more difficulties in the way than had been expected. On both accounts the court of Vienna determined to make advances to the King of Prussia. As early as the month of January, 1726, it had made friendly overtures to the King, and complimented him upon the good and patriotic sentiments which he had displayed in the affair of Ostend; and now Seckendorf, who happened to be staying at his estate of Meuselwitz, was commissioned by Prince Eugene to go to Berlin, and to give the King to understand that it only depended upon himself to be on good and friendly terms with the Emperor.\*

General Seckendorf was so fortunate as to find the monarch to whom he was sent ready to display the very inclination which he had been charged to awaken in his mind.

The King, whose heart was always upon his lips, asked, as soon as the first greeting was over, whether Seckendorf did not believe him to be a good friend to Hanover. When the minister answered in the affirmative, the King proceeded to say, "My Lord General, on the word of an officer, I am far more of an imperialist than of a Hanoverian." He continued in the same strain, using the most explicit terms, and made no objection when Seckendorf proposed to inform Prince Eugene of what had passed.

\* 5th May, 1726, in Förster Friedrich Wilhelm I. Urkundenbuch, II. p. 59.

The King finally declared that, if the Emperor would support him in his just claims, and would treat him with the respect due to his station, especially in refraining from the publication of unseemly chancery decrees, he would openly go over to the side of the Emperor.\* These few words contained the germ of a great, and we might almost say, a fortunate event.

In the summer and autumn of 1726, and during the first months of the following year, the general state of Europe seemed to threaten imminent war.

It is true that Ripperda, who was as vainglorious a babbler as he was an audacious schemer, could no longer maintain his position in Spain. But his fall only increased the ill-will between Spain and England, for he was seized by an alcalde in the house of the English ambassador, where he had taken refuge. The appearance of an English squadron in the West Indian seas prevented the Spanish galleons from putting to sea with their freights of silver. On the other hand, some English vessels were fired upon in a Spanish harbour, and all trade between the two countries was stopped. After bitter recriminations had been exchanged between them, a Spanish army marched against Gibraltar, led by the Marquis de las Torres, who boasted that within the space of six weeks he would deliver the orthodox kingdom of Spain from the presence of the foreign heretics. On the 27th of February, 1727, the siege was begun.

In all this the English saw the effect of Austrian intrigue, and their hostility to the Emperor increased

\* A paper which was subsequently dictated by the King himself contains these details.

in intensity every day. The imperial ambassador, Count Königsegg, really exercised great influence in Spain; he did not attempt to deny that he had advised the attack upon Gibraltar, and he carried on an active correspondence with the Spanish authorities in the interior of the country. The Dutch and the English agreed to capture all the vessels belonging to the Ostend Company, wherever they might happen to find them, and then to await what the Emperor would do. In December, 1726, one of the most confidential servants of George I. said to the Prussian minister at the court of London, that, if the Emperor did not dissolve this commercial company, it would as surely bring about a war against him as that he was standing there. At the opening of parliament on the 28th of January, 1727, the King of England accused the courts of Madrid and Vienna of a design to place the Pretender on the English throne; and when the imperial ambassador published a memorial in reply to this charge, wherein he drew a distinction between the nation and the government, and referred especially to the former, he raised a perfect tempest of indignation against himself. Both houses of parliament gave him to understand that they were not to be lulled into a delusive security by evasive declarations or artful denials.\* Hereupon this ambassador was forced to leave London, while

\* If time shall evince that the giving up the trade of this nation to one power, and Gibraltar and Port-Mahon to another, is made the price and reward of imposing upon this kingdom a Popish Pretender, what an indignation must this raise in the breast of every Protestant Briton! Parliamentary History of England, vol. VIII. p. 524.



those of England quitted Vienna and Ratisbon. In order to be prepared against all hazards, imperial troops were sent to the Netherlands.

It may be that these quarrels were not so formidable, and that neither party was so much in earnest, as it seemed. But the danger was, that some accidental first blow might give occasion for a general outbreak between these elements of opposition.

The plan of a campaign was drawn up, according to which an army consisting of Danes, Swedes, Hanoverians, and Hessians, was to be placed in the field in the north and east of Europe, under the flags of England and France, in order to invade Silesia, as had been done in the thirty years' war.

On the other hand, a scheme was laid in Vienna for attacking the King of England in his Hanoverian dominions, for which he was known to entertain a strong partiality.

Both parties hoped to have the King of Prussia as an ally—England and France on the strength of the Treaty of Hanover, the Emperor as his feudal chief. Prince Eugene wished to learn, through Seckendorf, which of the territories in the King's immediate neighbourhood—which in all human probability would speedily be in open hostility to him and to the Emperor—would be most agreeable to Frederick William.\*

This, however, did not accord with the intentions of the King of Prussia. He made advances to the Emperor, and signed a preliminary treaty with him in the year 1726, of which we shall presently have

\* 22nd Jan., 1727, in Förster, II. 331.

occasion to speak further; but when the Emperor proposed to him to become a party to the Treaty of Vienna, and to enter into the alliances arising out of it—for instance, that with Russia—this lay quite beside the policy of Frederick William. The King had no mind to change sides, in order to rob those with whom he was still allied of a portion of their territories. While he was thus wavering in his inclinations, and negotiating with both parties, the idea struck him that he would not alone remain neutral himself, but would, if possible, prevent the other powers from coming to open hostilities. He would induce the King of England to promise not to invade Silesia or Bohemia, or, indeed, any of the hereditary possessions of the house of Austria; while, on the other hand, the Emperor was to engage not to attack the territory of Hanover.\* The King of Prussia was determined at any rate to maintain peace in his own immediate neighbourhood, even should war break out in other regions.

In February, 1727, he sent one of his officers, Von Polenz, to England with proposals of this nature. The Duchess of Kendal, George I.'s mistress, gently rebuked the inconstancy of the King of Prussia; and George I. said that, before giving a definite answer, he must confer on the subject with

\* The words:—"Je suis seur, que si V. Mé veut bien y entrer et declarera, de vouloir entre prendre rien d'offensif contre l'empereur dans les états qu'il a en Allemagne et sur les frontières du coté de la Boheme et de la Silesie, j'espère de pouvoir disposer la cour de Vienne à s'obliger pareillement que ny elle ny ses alliés n'inquieront non plus les états de V<sup>e</sup> Mé dans l'empire." 18th February.

the French monarch; but it was manifest from his conduct and that of his court that the proposal was exceedingly agreeable to them; for they already feared that the connexion between the Emperor and the King of Prussia was much closer. A great weight seems to have been taken off the minds of the English and German ministers; the Prussian resident said that they were as pleased as if they had been born anew.

The proposal was less relished in Vienna, where the objection was raised that George I. could attack the Emperor in Italy or in the Netherlands, whereas the Emperor could only touch him in his Hanoverian possessions, where he was sure to produce the greatest effect. Prussia surely could not wish to see feuds of the Empire, such as Milan or Mantua, or the Burgundian circle, attacked, while the Emperor's hands were tied from retaliating in other parts of the Empire.\*

\* Eugenio of Savoy (for thus he signed himself) to the King, the 12th of March, 1727, in Förster, III. p. 391. And yet this was merely the sketch of the project. The real plan is dated the 20th of April, and has several addenda: for example, at the very beginning. "E. M. Schreiben—worden, hätte ich sogleich nach dessen Empfang meiner Schuldigkeit nach zu beantworten mir die Ehre gegeben wenn ich mir nicht erlaubt zu sein geglaubt, vorher jener Antwort, welche der König von England über das von E. Mt. gethanes Schreiben ertheilen wurde abzuwarten, um sodann meiner wenig Meinung über dessen Inhalt—eröffnen zu können," &c. ("I should have done myself the honour to have answered your Majesty's letter, as in duty bound, on receiving it, had I not thought myself permitted first to wait for the answer which the King of England would make to your Majesty's letter, in order to give my humble opinion thereupon," &c.) In other respects the letter is in similar terms, for the

Nor was the scheme better received at Versailles, as by this means the Emperor would be at liberty to direct all his forces against France; but these very objections shewed that the proposal had struck home.

Many other circumstances contributed to forward these views—the death of the Empress Catherine, and the aversion shown throughout Germany to the connexion with Spain. The Emperor would find himself in a perilous situation if, after the death or defection of his allies, his enemies remained more closely united; but the position assumed by Prussia called the attention of the latter to their own danger, and it cannot be doubted that the conduct pursued by Frederick William paved the way for peace. In the spring of 1727, while every one was expecting the breaking out of war, negotiations for peace were seriously begun; and before the end of May the preliminaries were actually concluded.

One of the first effects produced on Europe by the rise of the military might and political independence of Prussia was to prevent the states which were divided upon the maritime and continental balance of

answer from England contains nothing remarkable. The important point was as follows: "So kommt zu betrachten, dass des Kaisers entfernte Lande, als die italienischen und Niederlande so gelegen, dass England an dem Ort wo es will, solche anzugreifen vermag, wohingegen der Kaiser den König in keiner andern Gegend, als in seinen deutschen Erblanden beikommen—kann." ("It is to be considered that the Emperor's distant possessions, such as those in Italy and the Netherlands, are so situated, that the King of England can attack them whenever he pleases, whereas the Emperor can attack the King in none of his possessions, save only in his German hereditary dominions.")

power from making Germany the scene of their hostile encounter.

We must here crave permission to look back to the period of the thirty years' war, when, if Prussia had possessed this power, neither the Austrian Catholic party, assisted by Spain, would have laid waste the north of Germany, nor yet would the German and Swedish army, aided and abetted by France and occasionally by England, have penetrated thither. It is true that the religious impulse was then far stronger, and, so to speak, fiercer; but it is well known how often it was linked with political interests: now, however, the world had advanced to that point at which the latter held the animosities of the former in check. A large state cannot depend exclusively upon a single confession of faith: it requires for its existence a variety of forces independent of religious truths. If the various German nations were ever again to make war upon each other, it would not be for the sake of religious differences, which cannot be settled thus; still less would the contest arise out of questions of foreign policy, however nearly they might touch the interests of Germany. If such a war was to break out, it could only be caused by interests of state affecting the German powers alone.

Meanwhile Austria and Prussia were occupied in arranging amicably the principal questions which were then likely to arise.

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## CHAPTER V.

## NEGOTIATIONS AT WUSTERHAUSEN AND AT BERLIN.

IN the year 1726, as we have already mentioned, negotiations had commenced in right earnest, and were carried on with every promise of success.

Everything turned and depended upon the recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction. It was evident that nothing could be more advantageous to the house and monarchy of Austria at that time, than that one of the most powerful princes of the Empire, whose example would be followed by the rest, should be induced to recognise the Pragmatic Sanction; but this would have been impossible had the Emperor persisted in his intention of marrying his daughter to one of the Spanish princes. A meeting was held at Mannheim of some of the chief princes of the Empire, who expressly protested against this match. Frederick William, too, would only hear of the German branch of the house of Austria, and he constantly received assurances calculated to set his mind at rest on this point. If only this question were satisfactorily settled, he declared himself willing to recognise the new order of succession; but he too had a favour to ask in return, for he looked upon his consent as perfectly voluntary, and it appeared to

him only reasonable and right to demand some recompence for so great a service : he made his consent depend upon the Emperor's recognition of his right to Juliers and Berg. It was not his intention altogether to exclude the claims of the Sulzbach branch of the Palatine house, which had many powerful connexions and supporters ; he was willing to give up Juliers to that house, and to content himself with Berg. He demanded that the imperial court should pledge itself to compel the Palatine houses to accept this compromise. Frederick William declared that it was only on these just, rightful, and moderate conditions that he could consent to continue the negotiations.\*

Thus we see that matters of the greatest interest to both houses were involved in this question : with the house of Austria it was the preservation of the monarchy as a whole ; while with Prussia it was the acquisition of a considerable province on the ground of ancient hereditary right. Before the two powers

\* The duchy of Juliers consisted of Juliers, Berg, Cleves, and Guelders, together with the countships of Marck, Ravensberg, and Ravenstein. On the death of John William, the last Duke of Juliers, in 1609, a quarrel arose as to the succession between the families of Saxony, Brandenburg, and Neuburg : this lasted until 1675, when the Neuburg branch of the Palatine Electoral family held the provinces constituting the duchy of Juliers, while Saxony and Brandenburg took the title. After the extinction of the Neuburg branch, Juliers came into the possession of the Sulzbach branch of the family, which subsequently succeeded to the electoral possessions of Bavaria ; in whose hands these territories remained until the peace of Luneville in 1801. At the Congress of Vienna, in 1814, the old claims of the Brandenburg family were recognised, and the duchies of Juliers and Berg were incorporated with Prussia.—*Transl.*

could co-operate, it was necessary that they should come to an understanding on both points.

The reply which Seckendorf brought back from Vienna, whither he had gone in the mean time, proved that, at any rate on the part of Austria, there was no backwardness in the matter. The Emperor agreed to undertake the negotiation with the Palatine house on the terms proposed by the King of Prussia; should not the negotiation be concluded within a certain time, to be fixed by the King himself, the Emperor was to endeavour to procure for him some other sufficient compensation.\*

\* Seckendorf's statement, dated Grossmachnow, 27th Sept., 1726. "S. Maj. erklären (sich) weiter auch dahin, dass im Fall wider Vermuthen auf die anberaumte Zeit dieser Vergleich nicht könnte bewerkstelligt werden S. Kais. Kathol. Maj. alsdann mit Sr. Königl. Mt. über anderweitige Satisfaction *ratione* ihrer Prätension auf Jülich und Berg übereinzukommen trachten wollen." ("His Majesty further declares that, in the event of this covenant not being executed within the given time, his imperial Catholic Majesty would then treat with his Majesty touching further compensation *in ratione* of his pretensions to Juliers and Berg.") Seckendorf ends with the following words: "Nach diesem Beweise wahrer Intention, Sr. Kön. Maj. in Preussen Desideria wegen der jülich und berg'schen Succession zu erfüllen, zweifele man auch nicht dass der König nunmehr die Fortsetzung der angefangenen Handlungen allergnädigst ordiniren, damit sie zum vergnüglichen Schluss kommen, um alsdann desto ehr zu dem vorgeschlagenen Vergleich wegen Jülich und Berg nach Masse S. K. M. in Preussen die Zeit determiniren wieder zu gelangen." ("After this proof of a sincere intention to meet his Prussian Majesty's *desideria* with regard to the succession of Juliers and Berg, his Imperial Majesty cannot doubt that the King will graciously direct the negotiations to be continued, in order to their being brought to a happy issue, the sooner to determine the time when the proposed treaty regarding Juliers



This was the utmost that could at present be expected at Berlin.

The King demanded that the treaty should be concluded within six months ; furthermore he stipulated that the Emperor should not treat with any others, who might put forth rival claims, but with the Palatine alone. Hereupon he signed a treaty at Wusterhausen on the 12th of October, 1726, in which he, on his part, recognised the new order of succession. It is obvious, however, that this was by no means a definitive agreement, but that it only formed the basis of some future treaty. The King and his ministers repeatedly declared that the convention was not valid until the arrangement with regard to Berg was actually enforced.

But even as it now stood, the treaty was not without effect. The King saw with pleasure that in all matters connected with the Empire he was treated with far greater consideration and respect than formerly, and the religious grievances ceased ; it was of great advantage to Austria to have induced Prussia to assume a neutral position.

But it may easily be imagined that a negotiation like that concerning Juliers and Berg could scarcely be really begun, much less ended, in six months, according to all the forms which prevailed in all parts of Germany, and more especially in Austria. After a time the Prussian court received the announcement from Vienna that it was impossible then to bring the Neuburg branch of the Palatine house to agree to and Berg should be arranged in a manner to suit the King of Prussia.")

any compromise. It is obvious that hereupon the Treaty of Wusterhausen could no longer be looked upon as having any existence.\*

Meanwhile the general affairs of Europe were in a very unsettled state.

Although the preliminaries of peace had been arranged, it was still impossible actually to found a peace upon them. Congresses met and separated without producing any results.

It frequently seemed as if the hostilities between Spain and England, which continued in spite of all endeavours to restore peace, and in the course of which the English, on their side, suffered severely from the Spanish privateers, would produce a general war. The English government called upon France to invade Spain according to the agreement. As the court of St. James's thought that the obstinacy of Philip V. was to be traced to the influence exercised over him by the Emperor, it took care, so as to be prepared for every contingency, to sign treaties promising subsidies to Hesse and Brunswick, and to keep up the closest connexion with Sweden.

The clearsighted statesman who at this time directed the foreign policy of the house of Austria perceived that things might possibly take a totally unexpected turn. He saw reason to suspect that France purposely prevented the reconciliation between Eng-

\* The King remarked upon this proposal, "Wofern der Vergleich nicht zu Stande kommt, ist diese Alliance null und nichtig"—(should this treaty come to nothing, the alliance is null and void.) The treaty given by Dumont, VIII. p. 139, is a pure invention.

land and Spain, and the termination of their disputes, and was only waiting for a convenient opportunity for making an attack upon Lorraine or Italy, in the common interest of the Bourbon family, which was once more in the ascendant.\*

Whichever of these contingencies might occur, Austria would have the greatest need of a powerful and trustworthy ally like the King of Prussia, and the Emperor left no means untried of gaining him over to the side of Austria.

In the event of the outbreak of the threatened hostilities with England, the imperial court determined to offer to the King of Prussia, as an equivalent for his claims upon Berg, an increase of territory to be taken from the conquered provinces.† The advantage of this would be, that in this case the Empire would retain the alliance of the Palatine house. I can hardly suppose that Seckendorf, who was charged to use the greatest discretion in the matter, ever proposed this

\* Eugene to Sinzendorf, 20th Oct., 1728. Works, VI. p. 114.

† Charles VI. to Seckendorf, 22nd Jan., 1727, in Förster, III. p. 331. Dir ist am besten bekannt, was aus den dem König benachbarten und nach allem Ansehen bald feindlich werdenden Ländern am anträglichsten sein könnte—Was Vortheil demselben aus Bremen und Verden oder aus den vereinigten Provinzen Anständiges zukommen könnte, wodurch denn ein Aequivalent leichtlich ausfindig zu machen wäre. (It is best known to you which of all the countries in the immediate vicinity of Prussia would be most agreeable to him—and according to all appearances these countries will soon be hostile to him.—What advantage would accrue to him from Verden and Bremen, or what would suit him out of the united provinces, from which an equivalent might readily be taken.)

scheme without circumlocution. In June, 1727, he announced that the Emperor, though as anxious as ever to bring the matter of the succession of Berg, if possible, to a satisfactory conclusion, wished at the same time to hear other proposals which might tend to give the King pleasure and satisfaction in time of war and of peace, and to conclude an indissoluble friendship with him. The King however did not agree to this scheme: he replied that the Emperor's friendship would be most welcome to him; but that, as to Berg, the succession was one to which he had a claim before God and man, and that he could go to war in such a cause with a good conscience; moreover, that it was not to his taste to enter into remote engagements.\*

This determination on the part of the King of Prussia, combined with the fact that the Sulzbach branch of the Palatine house drew nearer and nearer to France, induced the court of Vienna again to take the question of the succession into formal consideration. In the early part of the year 1728 Seckendorf

\* Der von Ilgen kennt meine alten Sentiments, das ich gerne meine Hände frei habe und gern von mir allein dependire, da wo ich A sage, ich auch B sagen muss; was aber die bergische Affaire ist, ist das Agrandissement vor mein Haus nur eine Sache da ich vor Gott und Menschen Recht habe, wenn ich mich darum schlage, ich es mit gutem Gewissen thun kann, aber in weitläufige Engagements einzugehen, weiss nit ob es von meiner Convenience ist. (Ilgen knows my old sentiments, and that I like to have my hands free, and to depend upon myself alone, and that, when I say A, I must likewise say B. But with respect to the affair of Berg, the aggrandisement of my house is a matter that I hold to be righteous before God and man; when I fight for this, I can do it with a good conscience, but to enter into complicated engagements will not suit my convenience.) (Original Document, probably of the 6th of June, 1727.)

was at Vienna, and again examined, as he tells us, all the voluminous papers connected with this subject, with the assistance of Count Wurmbrand, the president of the imperial court (Reichshofrathspräsident). During this time he referred to Berlin for the elucidation of several doubtful points. At the beginning of May Seckendorf returned to Berlin. In his credentials he is desired to inform the King of Prussia of the Emperor's sincere desire "to be on more intimate terms with him, and to promote the interests of his royal and electoral house to the utmost of his power." At the first audience he had with the King at Potsdam, Seckendorf made such disclosures with regard to Berg, that the King did not doubt that he should now attain his object if the matter were prudently conducted. The King exhorted Ilgen in the most solemn and heartfelt manner once more to strain every nerve, and to crown all the good services which he had for so many years past rendered to the house of Brandenburg, by gaining for it the duchy of Berg.\*

Ilgen and his colleague Borecke had long thought

\* 9th May. Sie haben so viel Avantagen vor dieses Haus zu Wege gebracht; also bin persuadirt, dass sie itzund allen ihren Verstand zusammensuchen, die Sache durch Gottes Beistand so zu fassen, dass sie zu Weg komme; der ich Gott von Herzen bitte dass er sie möge Gesundheit und langes Leben verleihen, zum Besten mir und meiner Lande; das gebe Gott Amen. (You have brought about so many advantages for our house, that I am persuaded that you will now summon up all your judgment, in order, by God's assistance, so to compass this matter that you may succeed. I pray to God with my whole heart to grant you health and a long life to the advantage of myself and my country; God grant this. Amen.)

that the best and surest means of successfully establishing this claim lay in a friendship with the Emperor, provided the latter were really in earnest.

The proposals which Seckendorf laid before them during their first conference on the 12th May, 1728, fell in with this view.

Seckendorf proposed that, if the King of Prussia would guarantee to the eldest Archduchess the succession to all the Austrian hereditary dominions, and would promise to defend her claim with the sword, the Emperor, on his part, would "assist the King in obtaining the duchy of Berg."

The court of Berlin was fully aware of the importance of the step it was taking in thus guaranteeing that which was not only not recognised by the powers of the Empire and of Europe generally, but against which a vehement opposition might even be expected. But the advantages offered in return were held to be a sufficient inducement to enter at once into the scheme. The only question was, what were to be the forms by which the Emperor would secure the duchy of Berg to the King, and what were the conditions with which they would be joined.

There was no intention of referring the matter to a legal decision, as this might possibly have been given against Prussia: the present question was one only of political expediency.

Neither could any result be expected from a renewed endeavour to come to a compromise with the Sulzbach branch of the Palatine house, as one attempt had already failed, and this house had now thrown itself on the support of foreign powers.

The following scheme was at length devised. The Emperor, who was himself descended from Eleonora, the eldest daughter of Philip William the last Duke of Juliers, was to declare himself the legitimate heir to the succession of Juliers and Berg, and thereupon to divide his rights between Sulzbach and Prussia, giving Juliers to the former, and the duchy of Berg to the latter house.

This was a form which had better have been avoided. Those who approved it were warned both at the time and subsequently that this making over of the Austrian rights could add nothing to those of Prussia, which had been frequently declared by the Emperor himself to be the best of all. The main point, however, was gained,—namely, the Emperor's promise that the King should hold and enjoy the possession of Berg, and should be defended therein to the utmost.

The Emperor wished to add one condition to this concession: at the same time that he promised the duchy to the King, he wished to retain the town of Düsseldorf for the Palatine house. But the King would not hear of having a province without its capital, and refused to bind himself by any of the engagements imposed upon him if he did not get Düsseldorf too. At last Seckendorf said that, when the horse had been given away, the difficulty about the bridle would soon be got over. Nothing further was said about it in the treaty, except that in case of necessity the Emperor should have the right of placing troops or cannon in Düsseldorf; the town was included as unconditionally as the province in the

act of cession. The Prussian ministers expressed their uneasiness lest the Elector Palatine should name the Prince of Sulzbach, whom he meant to make his heir, to be Stadtholder during his lifetime, so that some difficulty would be found in removing him. To this Seckendorf replied, that if there were a dozen Elector Palatines in Düsseldorf the Emperor would be bound by this treaty to drive them all out of it. Prince Eugene likewise declared that, even should such be the case, the King would of a surety have the duchy; the existence of a Stadtholdership would not destroy his rights of possession according to any of the forms recognised by law.

There was yet another difficulty to be considered. The case was put, that perchance the imperial privy-counsellor, whose decision the Emperor could not positively command, might recognise neither the claims of the King of Prussia nor even those of the Emperor, but might decide in favour of the Prince of Sulzbach. The King, in this case, would go away, empty handed.

It was represented that Prussia took upon herself heavy engagements, which would be of immediate and essential service to the imperial house; and that the treaty would be bad indeed if the advantages promised to Prussia in return were to be left uncertain. To meet such a contingency the Emperor was called upon to promise an equivalent.\*

\* 18th Oct. Declariren sie an Kaiser, dass wo mir der Kaiser nit maintainirt bei Possess von Berge, oder mir ein Aequivalent jetzt benennet, ich an Tractat mich nicht binde und ich von abgehen will; denn ich thue willigst alles vor den Kaiser und soll



This was the more reasonable as the support given by Prussia was simply for the advantage of the imperial family, whereas the service which the Emperor undertook to render was essentially belonging to his imperial office.

Many consultations were held on this subject, both at Berlin, at Wusterhausen, and at Britz, where Ilgen, who was on his deathbed, was then staying. But Ilgen's sickness, and even his death, did not delay the negotiation. One day the other Prussian minister, Borcke, had brought matters so forward that Seckendorf declared himself ready to consent to an article which he designated as most secret of all, by which the Emperor would be bound, in case Prussia should fail to obtain possession of Berg, to promise the King an equivalent out of his own possessions.†

alles thun vor nichts, und in grosser Ungewissheit; dieses thue wahrhaftig nit. (You will declare to the Emperor that, if the Emperor does not maintain me in the possession of Berg, or appoint some equivalent, I do not hold myself bound by the treaty, and will depart from it; for though I am most willing to do anything for the Emperor, yet now I am to do everything for nothing and in great uncertainty; and truly this I will not do.)

† The *Articulus secretissimus*, as proposed by Seckendorf, ran thus: Sollte wider alles Verhoffen die Commission oder auch der Reichshofrath wider S. K. M. in Preussen, oder auch wider ihre Romisch Kaif. und Kathol. Maj. in der Jülich und Borgschen Sache sprechen, so sollen und wollen J. Rom. Kais. und Kathol. Maj. gehalten sein, Ihre Kön. Mt. ein wahres Aequivalent ex propriis zu geben. (If, contrary to all expectation, the commission or the Aulic counsellor should decide against his Majesty of Prussia, or against his Imperial and Catholic Majesty the Emperor, in the matter of Juliers and Berg, his Imperial and Catholic Majesty the Emperor shall and will be bound to give to

I have reason to suppose that this might have been obtained, owing to the threatening aspect of public affairs, as war again appeared imminent towards the end of the year 1728, and I almost think it would have been the best thing that could have happened under any circumstances, as definite and conclusive stipulations are always the best for both parties. Nevertheless Seckendorf had scarcely allowed this declaration to escape him before he repented of it, and used every effort to cancel it.

If we were asked when Seckendorf gave the strongest proof of that personal influence over the King of Prussia which has been so much talked of, we should say it was in this instance.

He argued that such a case as that now assumed would never really occur; that the succession would soon become vacant, as the youngest brother of the house of Neuburg was already sixty-four years of age, and that the King would then enter into possession of Berg and Ravenstein, whence he would draw several hundred thousand thalers yearly; that the Emperor was bound by the explicit terms of the treaty to support him in the enjoyment of his rights. "Who would wish," said he, "to raise a question which had lain dormant for a hundred years? But granted that it were raised, the King's rights were so good that he need not fear an unfavourable issue; and even in the event of such an extreme case, who could execute such a sentence in the teeth of the Emperor and the King?" Seckendorf asserted that Ilgen, too, had his Prussian Majesty a proper equivalent, *ex propriis.*) (Original Document, about the 11th of December.)

latterly been of this opinion. But that which he mainly insisted upon was that it must be the undeniable object of the court of Vienna to keep Prussia on its side; and this he demonstrated with such clear arguments that they carried conviction to the King's mind.\* Frederick William, commonly so jealous to secure certain and definitive terms for the future, now resolved to drop any mention of an equivalent. It appeared to him impossible that Austria should ever renounce her engagements towards him.

Borcke by no means shared the King's sentiments in this matter. He drew up a special memorial (*décharge*), stating that the King had empowered him to yield on this point, but that he would not take upon himself the responsibility of such a step. Thus, on the 23rd of December, 1728, this treaty, which was then described as an eternal alliance, was signed at Berlin. King Frederick William, who had so long held towards Austria an attitude of distrust and even of hostility, reverted to the policy of his father. With especial reference to the first and second articles of the agreement, the King renewed the guarantee which he had already given respecting the hereditary dominions of the imperial family, both within and without the Empire, according to the terms of the order of succession, or Pragmatic Sanction, promulgated in April, 1713, in favour of Maria

\* Seckendorf's Memorial is dated 19th Dec. The King wrote concerning it to Borcke and Knyphausen, "Ich glaube dass er recht hat, denn es ist des Kaisers sein eigen Interesse, Preussen für sich zu haben." (I believe that he is right, for it is the Emperor's own interest to have Prussia on his side.)

Theresa. He promised, if necessary in order to maintain it, to bring into the field a body of ten thousand men, to be employed in Hungary, but not in Italy; though, should the Emperor be attacked in the latter country, he might employ these troops in the defence of his other provinces. Frederick William promised to maintain intact the reservata of the imperial might, more especially the supreme judicial power, and indeed to espouse all the Emperor's interests both within and without the Empire; he even pledged himself to vote at the election of the King of the Romans for whomsoever the Emperor might select as the husband of his eldest daughter. Frederick William made only one reservation—he was no longer to be bound by this treaty if the Emperor gave his daughter in marriage to Don Carlos, or to any other prince not a German. “We will have no Spaniard,” says he in one of his marginal notes, “and no Frenchman, but a German.” He declares this to be his right old German, patriotic resolve. The article itself suggests the choice of a prince sprung from the good old blood of the princes of the Empire.\*

In return for this the Emperor made over to Prussia

\* Seckendorf: S. Ks. Mt. hat mir anbefohlen, E. K. Mt. nochmaln zu versichern dass sie in dieser wichtigen Heiraths-sache mit ihrer Erzherzogin sicherlich keine Resolution fassen, und sich vor Jemand erklären würden, wo sie nicht vorherho E. K. M. Meinung und Rath darüber eingeholet. (His Imperial Majesty hath commanded me once more to assure your Majesty that he will resolve on nothing in this important matter of the marriage of the Archduchess, and will declare himself in favour of no one, until he hath previously asked your Majesty's opinion and advice.)

his claims to the duchy of Berg, without excepting Düsseldorf, and declared his consent, that on the decease of the three brothers of the Neuburg family without male heirs, the King of Prussia should assert *in possessorio et petitorio* the rights which he had himself inherited as well as those which the Emperor resigned in his favour, and thereupon take possession, even should the Stadtholdership have been previously intrusted to a prince of the house of Sulzbach. The Emperor furthermore pledged himself to assist the King of Prussia with a considerable body of troops in case he should be attacked.\* In all important matters, especially those connected with Poland, he promised always to negotiate with him confidentially.

This was the end attained in the course of events, and after the manifold turns taken by the negotiation.

I have already noticed, and will not again enlarge upon, the greatness of the service which Frederick William rendered in thus preserving peace between the great powers which threatened to make war upon each other; the merit was the greater considering the military character of his own state.

It is, however, another question whether the line of policy followed by the King was the right one at

\* The treaty (23rd Dec., 1728) is in Förster's *Friedrich Wilhelm I. Urkundenbuch*, II. 215, but is taken from an incorrect copy. The four articles at the end appear in the original as *Articuli secretissimi*; then follows an *Articulus separatus*, which is taken from the treaty of Wusterhausen.—On the 3rd of February, 1729, the ratifications were exchanged. The ministers expressed a wish that the treaty might result to the honour of his Majesty and to the advantage of his house. The King wrote upon their representation, "May God give his blessing."

that moment; whether he did not enter into the Hanoverian alliance too hastily, so that he soon saw himself compelled to back out of it; and whether the new alliance with Austria accorded with the real interests of his state.

This alliance offered great advantages—it united the two strongest powers of Germany, opened a prospect of peace, and restored mutual confidence between the two religious parties. It was of especial importance for Prussia that the Emperor should recognise and support her claim to the succession of Berg; but, on the other hand, the engagement taken by Prussia to defend the Austrian order of succession, which was opposed by the rest of Europe, was far more comprehensive. It was a real and immediate gain to Austria to have the friendship of Prussia in the approaching embarrassments, whilst the advantages which Prussia might hope to enjoy were remote and uncertain. Subsequently this treaty had as strong an influence upon the destinies of both powers as the convention concerning Schwiebus.

First of all it called forth the most odious dissensions between King Frederick William and his nearest of kin—dissensions which soon invaded his own family; or rather the act of signing the treaty was one of the effects of this discord.

We must now speak of these domestic dissensions, as the next heir to the throne, who meanwhile had grown to man's estate, and who has roused the interest of the whole world in his behalf, played a prominent part in these scenes. He now for the first time began to be talked of.

## CHAPTER VI.

## YOUTH OF FREDERICK II.

FREDERICK WILLIAM had married at an unusually early age, in order that the elder line of his house (the younger being represented by the half-brothers of his father) might be continued as soon as possible. Three children were born to him in a few years from the time of his marriage, but the daughter alone survived, the two sons died; the crown of Prussia was without a direct heir, when, on the 24th of January, 1712, another son was born, a child of delicate and uncertain health, but, as those about him soon observed, of strong and tenacious vitality.\*

The world welcomed the new-born prince in the spirit of the olden times and of the existing state of society.

The members of the household have left on record that the founder of the royal dynasty, Fre-

\* Compare the letters of Frederick I., published in *Lebebers neuem Archiv*, vol. III., from the Archives of Hanover. The King says, in his letter of the 24th of January, 1712, notifying the boy's birth, that God had replaced the grandson he had lost during the past year, and had rejoiced his heart, "heut Vormittag und halb zwölf Uhr," ("this day at about half-past eleven in the forenoon,") by the birth of a healthy grandson, the Prince of Prussia and of Orange.

derick I., who beheld in the birth of a grandson the proof that his prayers were heard, while the glad tidings were announced to the city by the sound of bells, raised his hands over the new-born child, commended its life and the future destinies of his country to God, and remained kneeling, sunk in contemplation, till he thought these prayers also were heard. Thanksgivings were put up to God in the churches, that, after so many grievous accidents, He had built up anew the house and kingdom of his anointed servant the King, and had established them before the whole world.

In the true spirit of the great alliance which had divided the policy and the destiny of the land for the last quarter of a century, the States-General and the Emperor Charles VI. were invited to be present at the baptism.\* It is characteristic of the familiar and affectionate connexion which prevailed between sovereigns and people in old times that the former made the young Prince of Prussia and Orange (for that was the title given him in memory of his grandmother, the daughter of Frederick Henry of Orange) a present, such as was usually given by relations of the wealthier classes—two gold cups and a gold cassette, with an annuity for life of 4000 gulden. The Emperor, in accepting the office of godfather, the invitation to which was accompanied with the expression of wishes for his success against his ene-

\* Letters are extant acknowledging the honour of being chosen as sponsors, written by Sophia, the Electress of Hanover, dated 3rd Feb., and Eleonora, Duchess of Lüneburg, dated 6th Feb.



mies in council or in war, expresses the hope that the good understanding which had ever been cultivated between his own house and that of Prussia may endure to the end of the world. Under the influence of these sentiments a name borrowed from the houses of Habsburg and Burgundy was added to that hereditary in the house of Hohenzollern; the infant prince was christened Charles Frederick, though it was determined to call him only Frederick.\* He was solemnly dedicated to the maintenance of an alliance of which he was destined to be the destroyer. Legendary story is fond of surrounding the cradle of its hero with prognostics of his career; history more frequently finds them reversed.

Frederick William confided the care of his son's infancy to the same hands which had tended his own: Madame de Roucoulle, a Frenchwoman, who, escaping from religious persecution, had led her whole family into emigration without any male protector or escort, has the honour of having conducted the early education of two of the most energetic princes that ever sat upon a throne.† She cannot be reproached

\* No authentic record of this point has yet been found; but what decides the matter historically is a letter written by the Emperor, his godfather, on 6th Jan., 1731, with this superscription: "Ihro Liebden Carl Friederich Cronprinzen von Preussen und Churprinzen von Brandenburg meinem lieben Vetter." ("To his Grace, Charles Frederick, Crown-Prince of Prussia, and Electoral Prince of Brandenburg, my dear cousin.")

† She was *Sous-gouvernante* under Frau von Kameke. "Comme elle ne parle que Français, elle a appris sa langue aux enfants du Roi, qui la parlent avec la même facilité que la langue Allemande. Pöllnitz, *Lettres*, I. 35. Compare Erman: *Mémoires sur Sophie Charlotte*, 128.

with the fault so common in persons of her force of character,—she did not try to break the will of the children intrusted to her care.

In the same manner, as soon as the prince was seven years old, General Finkenstein was appointed his head preceptor by the monarch, to whom he had filled the same post. He was one of those rare men before whose virtue malignant calumny shrinks back ;\* quietly laborious, a frugal and intelligent man of business, an admirable architect, a pious Christian, and a brave soldier. He had formerly carried a pike, as a common soldier, in France, where he had been a prisoner of war, and who, though a foreigner, had raised himself to a high position by his brave and successful exploits. When Louis XIV. turned his arms decidedly against Germany, Finkenstein returned to the banner of his country, and contributed not a little to the glory of the Prussian arms, rivalling Prince Leopold at Höchstädt, and carrying off the palm in the storming of the French intrenchments at Malplaquet. It was he whom Frederick afterwards quoted as an exemplification of his maxim, that “he who has not learned to obey will never be able to command.”†

Lieutenant-Colonel Kalkstein, the sub-governor whom Frederick-William placed about his son, had also been known to him in the Netherlands as a

\* Pauli Leben grosser Helden, VIII. 280, says of him, “wenn unsre Kirche sich das Recht anmasste Heilige zu ernennen, so würde Finkenstein die Hoffnung haben darunter aufgenommen zu werden.” (“If our church pretended to the right of making saints, Finkenstein might hope to be one of them.”)

† Qui ne sait obéir, ne saura commander. Art de la Guerre, chant I.

brave soldier. Trustworthy as these men were, the King thought it expedient to give them precise and circumstantial instructions; these are highly characteristic of their author. He took as a groundwork those written for his own education in the year 1695; altering them to suit the changes which time and circumstances had produced in his views.

He had always regarded with equal disgust and pity the pains taken to inspire the young princes of Germany with so high a value for the antiquity of their houses, the purity and nobility of their blood, the number of high-sounding titles with which they were addressed by the courtiers, and the ignorance in which they were left of all the real conditions and exigencies of life. He entirely forbade such training. Every one who approached the Prince was to be warned not to flatter him; if, in spite of this, any one continued to do so, he was to be denounced. On no account in the world was his son to be made arrogant; the high-sounding phrases "our dearly-beloved consort," "our well-beloved son, the Electoral Prince," in which his father had delighted, the mention of the "noble" or "magnificent" land, and "the millions of its inhabitants," were dropped by Frederick William, and in their place were substituted the simple expressions "my wife," "my son," "the country;" he even changed the *We* into *I*. The old instructions insisted on the respect and submission to be paid by the Prince to the paternal authority: on which the King observed that this submission ought not to be slavish: the expression, in his own handwriting in the margin, is, that the Prince should have confidence

in him, regard him as his best friend, and cherish "brotherly love" for him; that was what his instructors should endeavour to implant in his heart. He attaches no value to any but the most necessary kind of knowledge on subjects connected with daily life. He entirely rejects the study of genealogy, which had formerly been recommended. Instead of the "History of the Electoral and Princely house of Brandenburg," he will hear of nothing but Prussian history connected with the science of politics; the Prince must learn geography with the map before him, and must be perfect master of arithmetic. It is very remarkable that the Elector utterly forbids Latin; he no longer attached any meaning to the golden Bull which makes the knowledge of that language imperative on an electoral prince. The child was not to be plagued with grammar rules; it was sufficient if he acquired a current French and German style by practice.

Such were the negative rules of the Prince's education; its positive objects were three.

As his governors were distinguished warriors, so his associates were to be principally officers; his tastes, for glory and valour; and his affections, for the army: he must be thoroughly impressed with the feeling that he would be utterly despicable if not a soldier.

Secondly, he was to be a good economist; he must be inspired with aversion and disgust for ostentation and needless expense, and still more for gaming and every kind of prodigality.

Lastly, he must be a good evangelical (*i. e.* Pro-

testant) Christian. The baselessness of the Catholic religion was to be explained to him as distinctly and forcibly as possible; as to the heretical sects, such as Arians, Socinians, and Quakers, it was better to say nothing to him about them.

These religious views are particularly conspicuous in a scheme for the daily employment of time,\* prescribed in the year 1725, and full of the exaggerated zeal of that period.

The Prince must rise early and quickly, and immediately pronounce a short prayer kneeling; as soon as he has dressed himself rapidly, and swallowed a slight breakfast of tea, a longer prayer was to be uttered in the presence of all the servants, likewise kneeling, a chapter of the Bible read, and a psalm sung with a loud voice; the fencing lessons are to alternate with religious instruction; the Prince is to accompany the King to parade every morning except Sundays, when he is to march at the head of his company to church. (The strange sort of instruction given him in general history was dictated by the

\* Instruction und Bestallung welche ich F. W.,—meines Sohnes des Kronprinzen verordneten Oberhofmeister und Sous-gouverneur meinen Generallieutenant Graf von Finkenstein und Obristen von Kalkstein ertheilt. (Instruction and appointment which I, Frederick William, have given to Lieutenant-General Count von Finkenstein and Colonel von Kalkstein, the appointed tutor and sub-governor of my son, the Crown-Prince.) Printed by Cramer, in his 'Contributions to the History of Frederick William,' No. I. The original copy, with corrections in Frederick William's own handwriting, exists in a private collection of MSS. This exhibits his character in a more original light than the more elaborate instruction composed upon it by Marschall, wherein the roughness of the King's style is smoothed down.

same spirit.) He was made to read the 'Theatrum Europæum,' the first volume of which contains the history of religious wars.\*

It is obvious that Frederick William did not aim at a liberal cultivation of natural endowments, nor at the acquirement of general knowledge; education and instruction had with him a special and pre-determined aim; he wished to make his son a man like himself, and it appeared probable that his method would succeed.

In February, 1719, General Finkenstein reports that the Prince pursues his studies with industry. When the weather is fair he goes to the stables, mounts his horse, visits the cadets, and shoots at a mark. A company was formed for him out of these cadets.

There are letters extant written by the Prince at this early age;† in which, with the handwriting of a

\* In Cramer, p. 21, we also find the "Reglement wie mein ältester Sohn Friedrich seine Studien zu Wusterhausen halten soll."—"Rules for the guidance of my eldest son Frederick in his studies at Wusterhausen." Instead of *studien* (studies) it should be *stunden* (hours): the date is 3rd Sept., 1725, not 1721. The copy from which these words were printed was very defective. The "Instruction wie mein Sohn Fr. seine Stunden soll halten zu Potsdam"—(Instruction how my son is to spend his hours at Potsdam) seems to explain the matter. The instruction for the Joachimsthal gymnasium or school, dated 1731. (Mylius, I. 11. 254), contains much that is similar, e. g. § 14, § 15.

† A few letters, dated 21st and 27th July, 1717, directed to the King, can scarcely be attributed to the Prince, as his hand was evidently guided by another person: the first letter which may be fairly said to be written by him is dated 21st Feb., 1719.

child, but in the expressions of an old captain, he gives an account of the state of his company, of which he regularly sent in a list; or he relates how far he has got in the 'Theatrum Europæum;' it shows the sentiments this book had excited in his mind, that he sent his father a satire, which had appeared in his absence, against the Pope and the Pretender. In another letter he informs his father that the Queen can tell him of two or three handsome recruits, only she must not know that he has mentioned them; or he expresses his regret that he could not be present at a certain muster to see the King's fine troops. In a short time some of these men were sent to him for his company, and accepted by him with gratitude. His whole life was absorbed in military employments; a small armoury was fitted up for him in the palace, and furnished with every sort of weapon. "My cradle," says he somewhere, "was surrounded with arms, and I was reared in the midst of the army." He was already fond of the chase; he is full of delight at a pack of hounds with which he hunts hares. In October, 1720, he relates how he shot a partridge flying.

At this moment it appeared as if everything would wear the same form as under the rule of his father. Frederick corresponded with Prince Leopold about tall soldiers and the adventures of the chase. Gundling, who entertained the King's society in an evening with a kind of literary conversation, in which however he descended to play the part of a court jester, also dined with the son; and these dinners were very jovial. In his letters, Frederick sometimes writes the name of God in capital letters.

There exists a little essay written in his ninth year, in which he enounces orthodox opinions concerning God and Christ, and the influences of Satan, with a great air of conviction. The tradition of the psalm tunes, which he was particularly fond of, has been handed down to us.

But it is not consistent with the plans of nature and Providence in the sequence of generations that the rising should exactly resemble the departing, or that the children should reproduce the thoughts and the ways of their parents.

These very early letters already exhibit traces of an address, acuteness, and delicacy which were widely remote from the character of his father's mind. The little essay just mentioned is very remarkable. The first sentence which Frederick ever wrote from his own reflection is, "One must have one's heart in the right place." Another maxim that occurs in it would never have been written by his father, "We must love nothing too vehemently." Intelligence is observable in every word the boy wrote. All who saw him perceived the living presence of natural talents; and it was not to be expected that these would move exactly in the track marked out by his father.

The man who had the greatest influence over the peculiar developement of the growing boy was his daily teacher, Duhan de Jandun.

He too was a Frenchman. He had first attracted the notice of Frederick William in the trenches at Stralsund as a brave volunteer, and he deemed him peculiarly fitted to instruct the Prince according to his military views.

Duhan, however, had more natural taste for study



than for arms, and this produced a strong effect upon his pupil. Frederick himself once, in an overflow of feeling, described the relation subsisting between himself and his tutor. He expresses the most lively gratitude to him for having broken through the circle of ideas and objects in which he was imprisoned, and roused him out of the ignorance in which, as he says, his awkward and timid innocence lay dormant. Duhan raised his conceptions to a different kind of merit from that which had ever come before him in his intercourse with Prince Leopold and his father: he spoke to him of the glory of a sovereign, not derived merely from the sword, but like that attained by Titus and the Antonines; had raised his views from the boisterous activity and brute strength of the heroes of the 'Theatrum Europæum,' and the confused struggles of politico-religious wars, to the wisdom which it is possible to display in more tranquil times—to the poets and the thinkers of antiquity.

The effect ascribed to the teacher is without doubt, in great measure, the natural operation of the ancient and modern writers on so apprehensive and aspiring a spirit. Duhan had, however, the merit of making them known to his pupil.

Duhan was wholly incapable of giving his pupil any methodical instruction.\* He understood little more than his mother tongue, and, instead of studying the history of Brandenburg, he set the Prince to make French verses.

There is no circumstance so important in the life of

\* In the rules laid down for the geographical instruction, Kalkstein was to do the greater part. He says himself that he did more in teaching the Prince than the others.

a man in this advanced stage of the world as the relation he holds or acquires to literature. Duhan first encouraged in his pupil that taste for reading, which was also the natural bent of his genius.

In after life Frederick remarked that one never learned so well from men as from books; that the most instructive conversation was with the dead, who speak without reserve, and have no purpose to answer in what they say; that we may infer from the writings of historians what judgment posterity will pass on ourselves. This is the closest and most immediate relation of the individual mind to the universal life of the human race; the point of junction is perhaps that which decides the character and destiny of each individual.

A feeling prevailed among the Germans of that time that they were behind other nations in the free developement of individual character, and especially behind their western neighbours, from whom they had received so many other impulses. There is a description given by Pater Bouhours of an eminent mind, which is worth quoting. He says, such a mind thinks justly, penetrates deeply, and at the same time delicately; it is at once comprehensive and precise, modest and original. One of the earliest writings of Thomasius shows what an impression this conception of a superior intelligence and refined taste produced in Germany; the recognition of its justness was the first step in that author's career.

Frederick was completely imbued with the conviction of the superiority of French civilization. He read none but French books. He extremely relished the precision and the wit of their style, for which he

had himself a natural turn; and their whole views of life and of the world were agreeable to him.

And, as is usual with the young, he immediately applied these views to the persons and things around him. He fancied he could find no one at his father's court who came up to his conception of an accomplished man; or, if such an one existed, he must have addicted himself much to French literature.

When it is considered how powerfully the youthful mind is affected by the moral and intellectual atmosphere which surrounds it, especially by military tastes and pursuits, the opposite direction which Frederick took to all about him is very remarkable; especially as he eventually showed much more military than literary talent: it would be still more remarkable if we did not know that the Queen, his mother, contributed to it.

Sophia Dorothea had never adopted the tastes and views of her husband; the simple, straitened household, denuded of all the ornament and enjoyment of life, did not satisfy her; she blamed many of the King's projects, and suffered her two elder children to do the same; she directed their attention to countries where life afforded more enjoyment; she loved and encouraged learning. Under such influences, with such a thirst after mental culture, the young Prince began to regard the strict and narrow military life to which he was condemned as a sort of pedantry, and to conceive a disgust at reviews and parades. He thought that a taste for intellectual pleasures, such as are afforded by music, the theatre, and agreeable society, was not less becoming in a prince.

It was therefore a great event in his life when, in

February, 1728, he was allowed to visit the court of Dresden.

The misunderstandings which had existed between Frederick William I. and Augustus II. had been arranged; and however different, or rather opposite, their modes of thinking had hitherto seemed, it gradually appeared that they had many things in common. Augustus especially evinced in his latter years an increasing passion for military affairs; while Frederick William followed the old traditions of courts, at any rate in his fondness for long and sumptuous banquets. Augustus II. had formed a society of those of his courtiers who enjoyed his particular intimacy, called the Round Table, and had declared himself its patron. King Frederick William, who was admitted as a member or brother, was soon named co-patron, with the right of convoking the society, and of admitting fresh members. Patron and co-patron were the titles by which the two monarchs addressed each other, and were addressed by their most confidential servants. They made a formal agreement that each should be free to visit the other without ceremony or announcement, and take dinner or supper with his royal host, or with any one he pleased, without any considerations of rank. The main thing, however, was still the preconcerted meetings, at which they entertained each other with great magnificence and cost. The first took place in the Carnival of 1728, when the King and the Crown-Prince of Prussia visited Dresden. It would be needless to describe the festivities, of which various descriptions, in prose and verse, appeared at the time, and have often been quoted since. The

impression which Dresden made on father and son is more deserving of notice. Frederick William admired the solid magnificence of this court, compared to which the splendours of his father's had been but "trumpery:" were it possible to make gold, he should think that the King of Poland possessed that secret. He compared the hunting establishment, the pheasantry, the orangery, the collections (for example, the Green Vaults), with his own, and confessed that these were incomparably finer. Nor did he omit to bestow his attention on military affairs. He declared that the fortress of Königstein was worth coming five hundred miles to see; but that, on the other hand, the armoury at Dresden was far inferior to that at Berlin. Some of the infantry regiments he thought very good, others miserable; several of the officers appeared to him men of merit, but he was greatly shocked at the small consideration they enjoyed, so that, as he writes to the Prince of Dessau, they were made to "parade with the lackeys."\* He, on the contrary, thought it was his duty to treat them with the respect usually paid to them at Berlin; he endeavoured to give importance to the humblest ensign.

It is infinitely to be regretted that we have not a letter by the Crown-Prince going as much into detail. It would hardly contain a similar declaration to that which we find in one of his father's—that "there had been temptation enough, but that God had preserved him through it; he was pure in the sight of God."

\* Letter from Frederick William to the Prince of Anhalt, dated Potsdam, 13th Feb., 1728, after having arrived the evening before.

That voluptuous court, in which the relations of the sexes were emancipated from all restraint or decorum, must have been full of seductions for the youthful Prince, to whom the world now disclosed itself for the first time, freed from the rigours of home.\* I have not been able to discover any names; but it is certain that fortune or his genius led him to the feet of a lady who shared and strengthened his taste for poetry and literature.

The superiority of Dresden in the cultivation of music formed a permanent bond of union between the two courts. The Crown-Prince and his elder sister, as we are told by their mother, cherished a passion for music.† At the request of the Queen, who spoke to the ambassador, Augustus II. had the courtesy to permit his musicians, Quanz and Weiss, to make a

\* I set the bare assertion of the brother against the highly-coloured stories told by the sister. In an autograph notice by Augustus William, which is unfortunately very short, it is said of Frederick, *Jamais il n'a eu du penchant pour le sexe, et encore moins pour le mariage.*

† Let us hear what the Queen says. Suhm announces on the 30th of July that she had thanked the King of Poland for his kindness in *luy envoyant des gens de sa musique et en lui permettant de les garder quelque tems.* She then adds, *Vous savez la passion de mes enfans pour la musique, ils m'ont engagé à augmenter le nombre de mes musiciens, il me manque un homme comme Quanz; pourrois-je espérer que le Roi, qui a un si grand nombre d'habiles gens, voulût me céder celui-là, je lui en aurois bien de l'obligation.*—More especially the Crown-Prince, “*qui apprend à jouer la flûte traversière avec un succès étonnant,*” wished for Quanz, who had already arrived (6th Aug.)—Shortly afterwards the Queen thanks the King of Poland for allowing four of his best musicians to remain so long, *qu'elle se serviroit de la liberté que V. Mé lui avoit donné de faire venir de tems en tems Quanz.*

considerable stay at Berlin from time to time, though he would not give up their services altogether. Weiss gave lessons to the Princess on the lute, while Quanz taught the flute to the Prince. The exquisite skill with which the inventive master first constructed and then used that instrument is well known. This accomplishment was a source of endless pleasure to Frederick during the whole of his life. At that time he thought himself happy if, after parade and dinner, he could throw aside his uniform, put on his brocade dressing-gown, and occupy himself with books and music.

But such pursuits were in direct opposition to the wishes and views cherished by his father, and to the whole turn of his mind; and Frederick soon began to experience his displeasure.

The King found fault with the Prince that he did not learn to ride and to shoot better than he then could do; and reproached him with effeminate manners and womanish gestures. He was particularly displeased to find that Frederick showed no inclination to occupy himself with the management of his little household, and kept him all the more close as to money; the consequence of this was that the Prince incurred debts; and on one occasion when these were partly paid, not without hard words, he did not feel himself bound to undeceive his father in the idea that he had satisfied all the creditors.

It was not alone in their views of the interests of daily life, but likewise of those of eternity, that the father and son were opposed.

Frederick William, though like his whole house attached to the reformed (Calvinistic) confession, had a repugnance to one of the most important articles of faith of that church—the dogma of absolute election by grace.\* It was at variance with that feeling of equality and justice which animated all his thoughts and actions; and, without inquiring into the coherence of the whole system of belief, he declared himself on this point for the Lutheran view. The Prince, on the contrary, conceived a strong attachment for this particular doctrine, which he thought grand and mysterious, and which appeared to him to follow more logically from the words of Scripture. The preachers who conducted his religious education had not dared to say a word to him on the subject; but he was now sufficiently independent not to need their instructions.† He seized every opportunity of

\* In the remarks written with his own hand on the instruction, Frederick William says, “sollen ihn nicht zum Particularisten machen, sondern soll die universalische Gnade glauben von Christus.” (You are not to bind him to any particular faith, but he is to be made to believe in the universal mercy of Christ.)

† The court chaplain, Andrea, says, “er habe den Kronprinzen nicht anders unterrichtet, als die h. Schrift und die Glaubensbekenntnisse der Reformirten insonderheit auch des Chf. Johann Sigismunds, welches Deponent sammt allen Hofpredigern nach Sr. K. Mt. Befehl zweimal unterschrieben es erforderten:—er habe den Kronprinzen auf die Gnade in Christo und ein gottseliges Leben hinzuführen gesucht. Von dem Rathschluss Gottes habe er wegen der Jugend des Kronprinzen noch abstrahirt ‘und ihm nur gesagt, dass diese Materie vor ihn den Kronprinzen noch zu hoch sei,’—that (“he taught the Crown-Prince nothing but what was enjoined by the Holy Scriptures and the confessions of the reformed faith, more especially that of



looking through catalogues of books, and when he came to a title connected with this controversy he immediately procured the book. Having once taken up a side in the controversy, it cost him no great effort to peruse such authors as Jacques Basnage, by whom he was confirmed in his opinions.

His frugal soldier-like father, who in religious matters strictly adhered to a simple formula applicable to the business of daily life, was utterly opposed to his son's tastes for literature and art, his inclination for profound investigation, and his liking for the external enjoyments of life. The King never could understand that these tastes could end in anything honourable or good; he only saw that they sometimes led men astray, and he utterly and absolutely rejected and condemned them.

The Prince wished to undertake a long journey, for instruction as well as amusement, accompanied perhaps by Kalkstein, who had once spoken on the subject to the King; but Frederick William probably feared that he would then contract completely foreign tastes and manners, and become alienated from himself: he would hear nothing of it.

In the summer and autumn of 1728 an open misunderstanding broke out between them. The Prince

the Elector John Sigismund, to which he, the deponent, together with all the other court preachers, hath twice subscribed;— he had endeavoured to lead the Crown-Prince into the grace of Christ, and he had only spoken shortly of predestination, owing to the Crown-Prince's youth, 'and had only said to him that this matter was as yet too abstruse for him.' " What the Prince read was the '*Histoire de la religion des églises réformées,*' by Jacques Basnage.

complained that his father's favour seemed to have given place to positive hatred ; he had carefully examined himself, he said, but his conscience reproached him with no offence. The King replied in terms of bitter reproach—taunted him with his “ effeminate ” habits—and told him that he ought, out of love for his father, if for no other reason, to pursue a different line of conduct, but that he followed only his own obstinate head.\*

This, however, does not prove that his growing dissatisfaction had as yet weakened his paternal love. It was at this period that, in a letter to the Prince of Dessau, he mentions an illness which the Prince had had. “ So long as our children are well,” says he, “ we don't know how much we love them.”

And in spite of all their disputes Frederick's heart remained unchanged. Shortly after the painful explanation we have just mentioned, in October, 1728, an unparalleled scene occurred between father and son.

There was a great dinner at Wusterhausen in celebration of St. Hubert's day: the Prince sat opposite to the Queen, next to the Saxon minister, Suhm, and repeated, what he had often said to him before, that he could no longer endure the bondage in which he lived ; and that he entreated King Augustus to endeavour to obtain permission for him to travel, in order that he might enjoy a little more liberty. Contrary to his natural inclinations, and hurried away by the example of the company, he drank more than usual ; he spoke so loud as to be

\* The letter (11th Sept. 1728) quoted by Cramer, 33.

heard across the table; even the Queen's manifest alarm did not restrain the Prince's complaints of his sufferings; yet every time he looked at his father he was troubled, and interrupted himself, exclaiming "I love him nevertheless." The Queen left the room, but the Prince would not go until he had taken leave of his father. He drew the hand which the King stretched out to him across the table, and covered it with kisses; and, in this state of excitement and emotion, he went up to him, clasped him round the neck, and threw himself upon his lap. There was not a single person present who was not acquainted with their dispositions towards each other; some loudly cheered the Prince, others shed tears. "Enough," said the King; "enough; only be an honest lad."\* At the smoking party, in the evening, nobody alluded to this incident, nor did the Prince make his appearance; but the King was in unusually high spirits.

Yet there were persons who told him that this was all acting.

The old misunderstanding returned but too soon. In the instructions which, in March, 1729, the King wrote for Colonel von Rochow,† who was to be about

\* Letter of Suhm, dated 21st Oct., 1728, in the Dresden Archives.—When the King went to Prussia in 1728, he gave Kalkstein, at his request, a new letter of instruction, wherein the Prince's attendants were named: the lessons to be given him by the engineer, Major Senning, were fixed for the early morning and evening. (16th June.) After the King's return, Kalkstein asked for leave of absence for himself and for Finkenstein. In the spring of 1729 Rochow was placed about the Prince's person.

† "Instruction vor den Obristlieutenant von Rochow der bei

the Prince as companion and friend, he reiterates his old complaints—that the Prince had no turn for solid things; thought only of indolent occupations; was careless of his person; and had his head full of arrogance founded upon nothing. The Colonel was to do everything in his power to make an honest man and a brave officer of him: if all his efforts were in vain, it must be regarded as a calamity.

Frederick, on his side, was the willing protector of those who had incurred punishment or disgrace, and treated those who stood well with the King with marked contempt.

The King declared that, when he saw him coming, at thirty paces' distance he could descry the evil thoughts that were in his heart; and he treated him accordingly. He even said to him—that any other officer who disliked the King's face could get his discharge, but the Prince could not; he must remain and “conform himself,” or he would lead a disagreeable life.

He gave as much publicity as possible to his dissatisfaction. He expressed it first to his household, then to the officers of the regiment, and lastly to the Generals. This did not produce the smallest effect on the Prince's mind or conduct, it only rendered his situation intolerable, and engendered in him the wish to escape from the court even without his father's consent.

meinem ältesten Sohn Friedrich sein soll, ihm Gesellschaft zu leisten, als ein guter Freund.” (Instructions for Lieutenant-Colonel von Rochow, who is to be about the person of my eldest son Frederick, to keep him company as a good friend.) 17th March.

He was only restrained from coming to some violent resolution by the uncertain state of the relations of Prussia with England, which, indeed, involved all Europe, but in which he had the strongest personal interest, inasmuch as they regarded his marriage.

The dynastic portion of European history in this, as in many other cases, has the closest connexion with public affairs. We must therefore now direct our attention to the domestic troubles of the court of Prussia.

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## CHAPTER VII.

DISPUTES BETWEEN THE COURTS OF PRUSSIA AND OF  
ENGLAND.

WHILE in the year 1725 Frederick William was employed in forming a political alliance with England, his Queen, as we have already mentioned, was negotiating a new family connexion with that country.

The first proposition was for a marriage between the eldest Prussian Princess, Frederica Wilhelmina, and the future heir-apparent to the crown of England, Frederick, son of the Prince of Wales. The English nation appeared to wish it; the English minister at the court of Berlin was very favourable to it; and King George I. gave his daughter, whose heart was set upon the marriage, the most flattering assurances.

These, however, were not binding, nor were they even given in writing.\* It was the opinion in Berlin that the affair was not agreeable to the German ministers in Hanover, nor to some other persons im-

\* Frederick William to Wallenrodt, 12th Aug. 1727, "dass der hochselige König wie Lord Townshend gegen euch vorgegeben, über dieses Sujet jemals an uns geschrieben und uns deshalb eine positive Promesse gegeben habe, dessen erinnern wir uns nicht."—"We do not remember that his gracious Majesty, as it seems Lord Townshend told you, ever wrote to us on this subject, or gave us a distinct promise."

diately about George I. That prince only repeated that he would not be urged; that his own blood was dearer to him than any other, but that he could not make things mature which were immature. He had held out a hope that he would send Prince Frederick, who was residing in Hanover, to Berlin, in order to prepare the way for his future marriage by a more intimate personal acquaintance with the Princess; but though the young Prince was extremely anxious to go, and though it might have been very advantageous to him to serve some time in a more rigid school under the eye of the King of Prussia, this journey did not take place. The political differences which were then beginning tended to alienate the minds of the sovereigns from each other. When the death of George I. unexpectedly occurred during his journey to Hanover, nothing was as yet settled.

The opinion that an old personal hatred immediately broke forth between his successor, George II., and Frederick William I., is entirely groundless.

We have now before us autograph instructions from the King of Prussia to his minister, Wallenrodt, expressive of nothing but the most ardent wish for the establishment of a good understanding with England.

He repeats his promise never to permit the German provinces belonging to the King of England to be oppressed or molested; only that monarch must not attack the Emperor from thence, or bring foreign troops into Germany. On grounds common to both of them, he pressed upon him the necessity of endea-

vouring to bring about a settlement of the affairs of Silesia, for otherwise, he said, the Emperor would find an opportunity for taking up arms, which it was an ancient maxim of the princes of the Empire not to afford him.

The idea of a family alliance was so far from being given up, that it was now considerably extended.

A project had long been agitated between the two sisters-in-law, Caroline, now Queen of England, and the Queen of Prussia, born princesses of Anspach, to unite their families for ever, not only by this marriage of the Prussian princess with the heir apparent of England, but also by that of the Crown-Prince of Prussia with an English princess. This was now for the first time officially discussed.

King Frederick William I. was at this moment so far from opposing it, that he expressly charged his minister Wallenrodt (12th August, 1727) to speak with the new Queen upon the subject.\*

He however made a condition, characteristic both of his personal pride and of Prussian ambition. It had always appeared to him that the English government had endeavoured to make use of the relationship

\* Er könne ihr einen Begriff darüber machen, dass eine doppelte Heirath zwischen unser und der k. englischen Familie das beste und sicherste Fundament zu einem beständigen immerwährenden guten Vernehmen zwischen beiden königlichen Häusern unfehlbar sein werde; hievon müsse man den Anfang machen. (He was to make her understand that a double marriage between our own and the royal family of England would infallibly be the best and surest foundation towards a lasting good understanding between the two royal families;—they must start from this point.)



existing between the two houses as a motive to political alliance;\* he wished to keep these things perfectly distinct, and, above all, to restore personal confidence. Whatever assurances he might choose to give as to the affairs of Germany, or indeed of Europe in general, he would not hear anything of a new alliance.

As the object of the whole scheme of government which he carried out with such unceasing efforts was to render himself independent of all foreign influence, nothing touched him so nearly as the smallest attempt to gain an ascendancy over him, or to hurry him into this or that line of policy, as if he were not in a position to act on his own judgment and responsibility.† The chief cause of the rupture of the alliance with Hanover was, that he suspected the government of that country of having other objects in view than those communicated to him. The amicable relations which he formed with the imperial court had no character of subordination; on the contrary, his pride was flattered that a sovereign invested with such magnificent pretensions and privileges should so eagerly seek his friendship. “I may say without vanity,” exclaimed he once, “that I have won honour for the house of Brandenburg. I have never in my life sought an alliance; never made the first advances

\* For example: if the Congress of Cambray assembled, the Prussian minister, supposing one was sent thither, was not to oppose English interests.

† “Je veux savoir tous les secrets également comme le Roi Très-Chrétien et le Roi de la Grand Bretagne, et régler avec eux tout ce qui se passera et comme partie, mais pas en subalterne et inférieur, mais également comme les dits Rois.” (From a Declaration of the year 1726.)

to any foreign power whatsoever. My maxim is, to injure no one, but to let no one tread on my toes." The great rule of state with him was, never to stand by the support of others; never to conclude a treaty without an equal interchange of advantages. This principle he would not abandon in the matrimonial alliances of his children, however suitable they might be: he was willing to contract the marriages, but without any renewal of the political alliance. The English government, on the contrary, adhered to the principle that the political and family interests were indissolubly blended. When the affair was opened to Queen Caroline, who, at the beginning of her husband's reign, exercised some influence\* (the ambassador spoke only in his own name), she assured him that she wished nothing more earnestly than the double marriage; that she knew of no better wife for her son than the Princess of Prussia, who had sense, and knew how to conduct herself. "But, for God's sake," said she, "let us not begin the romance at the hinder end; first let us settle business, and then I shall be able to work at the marriages with some effect."†

It did, perhaps, appear as if the English court regarded these marriages as a favour to be requited with concessions. The bare thought was sufficient

\* "C'est la Reine qui représente le premier ministre." An expression of some English nobleman. A German report, dated Feb. 1728, from which we gather this, says "S. Majestät wollen nicht zugeben, dass die Ministri regieren sollen, sondern sie selbst alleine." (Her Majesty will not allow the ministry to govern, nor any one but herself alone.)

† Ne commençons pas le roman par la queue, ne commençons pas par la conclusion. Remettez premièrement les affaires.

to exasperate Frederick William. "If the gentleman is worthy of the lady," said he, speaking of his daughter, "the lady is worthy of the gentleman." He replied to his ambassador that it seemed as if they wanted to force him to enter into new obligations, and meant to use these marriages as a means; but that he saw no such advantage in them as would induce him to sacrifice the interests of his house, or subject himself to onerous obligations for the sake of securing them. He expressed himself still more strongly on the subject to his ministers at home. He was half inclined to give his daughter to Duke John Adolphus of Weissenfels, or some other powerless German prince.

But if his repugnance sprang from a point of honour, other circumstances conspired to enhance it.

Disputes had already arisen respecting the will of George I., which his successor refused to produce: these were followed by others concerning the inheritance of the unfortunate Duchess of Ahlden, mother of George II. and of the Queen of Prussia. Border quarrels broke out, especially about Mecklenburg, some circles of which country Hanover held invested as security for the exorbitant costs of an execution that had been obtained against it, against which investment the King of Prussia had issued a *conservatorium*; and also about East Friesland, which, in the near event of a vacancy in the succession, would fall to Prussia, to the great dissatisfaction of the Hanoverian minister. It was not by mere chance that, towards the end of the year 1728, Frederick, then Prince of Wales, was suddenly recalled to

London; it was feared that he would go, of his own accord, to Berlin, to visit his intended bride.

As Frederick William was at that very moment concluding the treaty by which he attached himself so closely to the Emperor, and England (the negotiations with which power had hitherto led to nothing) was strongly opposed to this combination,—while the whole of Europe was oscillating between peace and war, it appeared for a moment as if a trifling cause would have sufficed to inflame the dispute between these two nearly related sovereigns into actual hostilities.

The cause was afforded by acts of violence committed, as they had often been before, by Prussian recruiting officers; but George II. was no longer disposed to endure them. In 1729 he made his first visit, as King, to his German possessions. Without even announcing his arrival to the King of Prussia, still less sending him any warning of what he meditated, he ordered some Prussian soldiers, who were on their way through his territory, to be seized and thrown into prison, and declared that he would not release them till the Hanoverians who had been pressed into the Prussian service were given up.

This was not made known in Berlin through any official channel, but by the newspapers; and it may easily be conceived what an excitement it produced in the court and the army. It was not, they declared, an act of hostility against which they were called upon to defend themselves that George II. had committed: he had offered them an affront which must be avenged. Frederick William was greatly

inclined to seize upon a few garrisons in the Lüneburg territory, so that he might have prisoners to exchange in return; at all events, might obtain satisfaction by arms.\*

Both parties did actually put themselves into a warlike attitude. George appealed to his friends in Wolfenbüttel, Cassel, and Copenhagen, and even had recourse to the French. In Berlin nothing was seen or heard of but preparations for war, and the Crown-Prince already began to show the warlike spirit natural to him; he hoped to distinguish himself in the field, and tried to force the King to entertain a more favourable opinion of him.

But things were not such as to lead to a bloody conflict. It would have been like one of the private wars of the middle ages, or those by which questions of general interest were sometimes decided even so late as the Reformation; but those times were over; the two sovereigns were far too powerful not to have involved others in their hostilities.

After many abortive attempts at mediation, Frederick William at length himself proposed that the subjects whom Hanover claimed should be examined, and that those among them, in whose case the cartel subsisting between the two countries had been

\* Seckendorf says he gave the advice, 28th July: "On veut avoir satisfaction, coûte qui coûte; j'ai fait différer la réponse (wherein it was stated that it would be reckoned a breach of the peace if everything were not replaced in statu quo) jusque après la revue des troupes de Hesse, afin que ceux là retournent dans leur quartier; j'ai proposé pour expédient que les Hanovriens doivent relâcher tous les Prussiens, et que le Roi en même temps relâchera all those who had been made prisoners.

violated, should be released; they had been talked of as amounting to hundreds—only twenty appeared; they were set at liberty, and the Prussian soldiers who had been detained were delivered up in exchange.

Meanwhile the great affairs of Europe also took a somewhat different turn. In November, 1729, at Seville, the English, in conjunction with France, succeeded in detaching Spain from the Emperor, and bringing her over to their side. The cause of this was, that the Queen Elizabeth Farnese began to doubt whether the promises of marriage, with which she had flattered herself for four years, would ever be fulfilled; and thought it better to secure her son's future prospects by a new treaty with France and England. These powers promised her that the fortified towns in the part of Italy already assigned to the Prince, viz. Tuscany, Parma, and Piacenza, should be garrisoned with Spanish troops; in consideration of which she engaged to abolish the lasting restrictions and burdens on the trade with South America.

The Treaty of Seville was mainly the work of Sir Robert Walpole and his brother, who were forced into it by the clamours of the English nation, and especially of the mercantile part of it. But the mere conclusion of this treaty did not settle the matter; for what was to be done if the Emperor refused to admit these garrisons into the towns?

The best way to deprive him of the power to make any such resistance seemed to be to alienate Prussia from him; he would then be obliged to

accept the conditions proposed to him,\* or, at any rate, there would be nothing to fear in the north of Germany from him or his allies.

Scarcely was the agitation arising from the quarrel about the recruits allayed,—a quarrel which had excited so much attention, noise, and alarm,—when England returned to her old projects of marriage. It was no longer a mere court affair; we find that the nation hailed the project with general satisfaction, while the ministry strengthened itself by a return to the Whig principles from which it had occasionally seemed to deviate. Some of the foremost members of the party—for example, the Duke of Newcastle—joined the administration, and party questions were decided to the satisfaction of the most zealous Whigs by large majorities. At that time the Tories inclined to Austria, the Whigs to Prussia. The orators of the latter party often complained that the government neglected a power now as strong again as formerly, and which would willingly attach itself to England if only treated with due consideration. These reproaches were not altogether unfounded, as the assenting remarks which Frederick William

\* Robert Walpole, 1730: To distress the Emperor . . . is the only way of bringing him to reason. The Prussian ambassador writes thus in Jan. 1729: “Man glaubt dass wenn man Ew. Königl. Mt. völlig von dem Kaiser abziehen könnte, man alsdann gewonnenes Spiel haben, und der Kaiser sich bequemen Spanien sich auch alsdann besseren Kaufes müsse geben.” (It is believed that, if it were possible wholly to separate your Majesty from the Emperor, the game would be won, and the Emperor would have to comply, and that Spain would be more easily forced to come to terms.)

wrote in the margin of the reports of such speeches prove. The English ministers determined to send Sir Charles Hotham, who appeared peculiarly fitted by birth, youth, and personal advantages for such a mission, as envoy extraordinary to Berlin.\* The object they had in view was a lasting family alliance, and, as a means to it, the double marriage.

It cannot be denied that it would have been most desirable for Prussia to cement her alliance with her powerful neighbour, with the court, the ministry, and the nation at large. We know that this was the object of the most ardent wishes of the Queen of Prussia, the Crown-Prince, and the Princess; nor were the Prussian ministers opposed to it. After repeated deliberations, Knyphausen and Borck declared, with a certain solemnity, that, as loyal and dutiful subjects of the crown, they were bound to declare their decided opinion that the double marriage was in every respect desirable.

The question thus again submitted to Frederick William I. was the most difficult, thorny, and perhaps the most important to the peace and welfare of his whole life, that he had ever had to decide; it touched all his relations, public, domestic, and personal.

He was not blind to the advantages of the connexion, and he would willingly have secured to his daughter, whom he loved, the good fortune to inhabit "the magnificent land," and to enjoy the splendid position of Queen of England. But, on the other

\* On the 22nd of March, 1730, the regular ambassador, Du Bourgai, announced Hotham's approaching arrival.



hand, his connexion with the Emperor was of a stricter nature than was thought or suspected; and he had a remote perception that, though nothing was at present said about a political alliance, that was in fact the ultimate object in view.

For his son especially, he regarded the proposed marriage as by no means so expedient. "There is no need," said he to his ministers, "to be in a hurry with regard to him." He himself, he added, was not yet at the natural close of his life, and two other goodly branches adorned his stem; the Crown Prince might wait till he was thirty before he married. And, putting aside these general considerations, what was the necessity for choosing an English princess? The King feared that such a one, reared in the luxury of a brilliant court, would not be able to adapt herself to the simplicity of Prussian manners; she would contrive costly entertainments and ambitious displays; she would disturb the established order of the household, and would spend so much money that it would be impossible to keep up the army on its present foot; this would enfeeble his government, and his whole house and state would fall into decay.\*

\* One of the most detailed papers which is extant of his writing. At the end he says, "Was ist Alliance? Ist man dann besser Freund in der Welt? Ja, unter Particuliers; aber grosse Herren, die gehen nach dem Interesse. Indessen wünsche von Herzen meinen Blutsfreunden alles Glück und Wohlseyn, wenn es nur nicht à mes dépenses und gegen meine Verfassung ist, die über den Haufen zu schmeissen: denn das stichet den Herren Engländer-Hannoveranern in die Augen. Meine Verfassung c'est la pierre de touche." (What is alliance? [by marriage.] Are people more friendly to each other in the world? Yes,

The more he thought of these objections the more he was convinced of their force; he wished for the marriage of his daughter, not for that of his son; but as England made the latter the indispensable condition of the former, his mind was sometimes shaken and fluctuating, spite of the vehemence and firmness of his language. This divided state of his own inclinations gave increased force and animation to the struggles of the conflicting parties in his court and family.

Whatever be their exaggerations and errors, the Memoirs of the Princess Frederica Wilhelmina must always be considered one of the most remarkable records of the state of the Prussian court of that period. From these it is evident that neither she herself nor the Queen had the least idea of the grounds which made the King reluctant to give an immediate consent to the proposals. They saw in him a domestic tyrant, severe only towards his family, and weak to indifferent persons. The hearts on both sides became filled with bitterness and aversion. The Crown-Prince too, who was still at an age when a young man is obnoxious to the influence of a clever elder sister, was infected with these sentiments. With a view to promote her marriage, he suffered himself to be induced to draw up in secret, a formal declaration that he

certainly among private folks; but great lords look to interest. Meanwhile, I wish from my heart all good fortune and happiness to my blood relations, provided only it be not à mes dépenses and against my constitution, which they want to throw to the dogs; for it is a thorn in the eyes to the English and Hanoverians. My constitution c'est la pierre de touche.)

would give his hand to no other than an English princess.

On the other hand, it is inconceivable to what measures the other party had recourse in order to keep the King steady to his resolution. Seckendorf had entirely won over General Grumbkow, the King's daily and confidential companion, to his side; both of them kept up a correspondence of a revolting nature with Reichenbach, the Prussian resident in London. This Reichenbach, who boasts somewhere of his indifference to outward honours, and who was at all events clearly deficient in an inward sense of honour, not only kept up a direct correspondence with Seckendorf, in which he informed him of all that was passing in England in relation to the marriage, and assured the Austrian agent that he might reckon on him as on himself, but, what is far worse, he allowed Grumbkow to dictate to him what he was to write to the King, and composed his despatches according to his directions.\* It is hardly conceivable that these letters should not have been destroyed; they were however found among Grumbkow's papers at his death. Reichenbach, who played a subordinate part, but who regarded himself as the third party to this conspiracy, furnished, on his side, facts and arguments which were to be urged orally to the

\* In a letter of the 17th of March, 1730, Reichenbach announces qu'il a envoyé hier par un courrier de 57 (Kinsky) à Bruxelles, et de là par l'ordinaire à Berlin, une telle lettre à 120 (le Roi de Prusse conformément aux ordres de Grumbkow et de Seckendorf), et il a employé tout ce qu'il a trouvé dans la dernière lettre de Grumbkow.

King in support of his statements. Their system was, to represent to the King that the only purpose of England was to reduce Prussia to the condition of a province, and to form a party around him that might fetter and control all his actions,—representations to which Frederick William was already disposed to lend an ear.

He wished to avoid having an English daughter-in-law, because he feared he should be no longer master in his own house; perhaps she would think herself of more importance than him; he should die inch by inch of vexation.

On comparing these intrigues, carried on on either side of the King, we must admit that the former—those in his own family—were more excusable, since their sole object was the accomplishment of these marriages; upon the mere suspicion of which the King broke out into acts of violence which terrified his family and his kingdom, and astounded Europe. The designs of the other party were far more serious; their purpose was to bind Prussia in every point to the existing system, and to keep her aloof from England. Of this the King had no idea; he received without suspicion whatever Reichenbach wrote, or Grumbkow reported to him.

The position of things therefore was not favourable when the English government came to the resolution to open a formal and official negotiation. This the English court well knew, but hoped to break up the whole cabal that surrounded the King.

On the 2nd of April Sir Charles Hotham arrived

at Berlin, and on the 4th had an audience of the King at Charlottenburg.

His proposals were at first of an entirely general nature. He referred to a letter sent by the Queen in the preceding December, and added, that he was come to learn the personal dispositions of the King on the subject. The King declared that this letter had referred only to a marriage between the Prince of Wales and his daughter (the draft of the letter seems to have been lost); that he was highly satisfied with the proposition of the ambassador, and received it with the pleasure of a father who hopes to secure to a beloved child the greatest happiness that earth can bestow. He begged Sir Charles to say nothing about it; he would rather that the rumour were current that the negotiations were broken off; then he would go to Berlin and surprise his daughter with the tidings for which she longed as for the coming of a Messiah. He was thinking how he should surprise her by asking her consent in the presence of the envoy.\*

But the projects of the English court and ministry

\* "Er möchte so gut seyn, und seyn still davon bis ich in die Stadt käme: hätte er dann Ordre, so wollte in seiner Gegenwart meine Tochter um ihren Consens fragen, und was wegen der Heirath, und ihren Transport nach England auf was Art, sollen sie (die Minister) mit ihm alles abreden." (If you would be so good as to be silent until I come to Berlin, I would then in your presence ask my daughter to give her consent, and the ministers should then consult with you all about the marriage and the manner of the journey to England.) The King said he would give the Princess 40,000 thalers; the Queen had brought him as much.

were by no means so simple nor so much in accordance with the King's wishes. Hotham observed that his immediate commission was to send the answer of the King of Prussia to England by a king's messenger; hereupon an official answer assenting to the single marriage was given, in which mention was made only of the marriage of the princess; this Hotham sent off, accompanied, however, by a dispatch of his own. With regard to political affairs, the King himself had alluded to them, and had given it to be understood that proposals of that nature must originate with England. Hotham informed his government of a report concerning the Crown-Prince, which had come to his ears. It was affirmed that the King had said to his private secretary, that he was tired of quarrelling with his son, and would consent to the marriage, if George II. would make him Stattholder of Hanover.\* At a former period the King had certainly expressed this desire, but the assertion that he had recently repeated it is at variance with all his notes written at that time. Be that as it may, Hotham had heard it, and he reported it in his dispatches to his own court as something that he believed to be true.

\* According to Hotham's account, which we learn from an extract given by Raumer (*Europa*, 1763—1783, I. 503), the King had told this to the secretary of his Cabinet on the 5th of April. However, there is a resolution of the same date, drawn up in his own handwriting and addressed to the minister, which the latter must therefore have known, "von der doublen Mariage höre nit, steht auch nit in dem Briefe von meiner Frau." (I will hear nothing of the double marriage, nor is it mentioned in my wife's letter.)

The commencement of his negotiations was, according to his representations, on the whole not unfavourable. It was deemed possible in England to carry the intended project into execution, and a king's messenger was sent off with fresh and further instructions. After his arrival, on the 4th of May, Hotham had a second audience, which was much more remarkable than the first.

In the course of conversation he ventured to make an attack on the faction which was thought, at both courts, to govern the King. He complained of Reichenbach, who manifested a want of respect towards the King of Great Britain: and that even in letters, the original of which could be produced. For a moment, Frederick William thought of asking by what means the English got possession of these letters; but he happened to be in a yielding mood, and passed the matter over. He said that, if Reichenbach was disagreeable to the court of St. James's, he must be useless there, and should be recalled.

The main thing, however, now was, the proposal of marriage. Hotham began by formally demanding the hand of the eldest princess of Prussia for the Prince of Wales: Frederick William replied that such an alliance would be perfectly agreeable to him. But this was only one part of the offer of England; Hotham proceeded to say that the King of Great Britain wished to cement still more closely the alliance with the royal house of Prussia; and, with the concurrence of the whole nation, which, indeed regarded that alliance as necessary, had destined one

of the princesses, his daughters, for the Crown-Prince of Prussia, and had charged him to make certain proposals to that effect.

These proposals, which he immediately proceeded to communicate, appeared to comprehend all that could be desired by the Prussian court.

George II. offered to appoint the princess whom the Crown-Prince might marry Stattholderess of his electoral hereditary territories of Brunswick and Lüneburg; her consort, the Crown-Prince, would then reside with her in Hanover, would have the same establishment and retinue as the King himself, were he there, and at the cost of the crown of England.

This offer appeared at the first glance more generous than it really was. It was required that the Crown-Prince should repay the expenses of his establishment whenever he should ascend the throne of Prussia; and should, moreover, engage immediately to go over to England whenever it was required. This was not mentioned at the first conference; and it is undeniable that the whole opening of the business showed an urgent desire for a more intimate alliance and proved the increased influence of Prussia. The King's countenance betrayed his surprise and satisfaction.

He had, however, sufficient self-command not to show any eagerness in entering on the negotiation. He said that, as the Queen, his consort's letter contained nothing about the marriage of the Crown-Prince, and this was, consequently, a fresh proposal, it was evident that he must advise with his



ministers before he could enter further on the matter.\*

When he came to deliberate upon it, various doubts and difficulties presented themselves.

It appeared to him not consistent with his honour to permit England to maintain the Crown-Prince, as if he himself were too penurious to do so; he was afraid that the Prince's residence in Hanover would have the effect of estranging him from his country, and that he himself would be very far from obtaining an obedient daughter-in-law; he persisted in the opinion that the Crown-Prince was too young, but the chief obstacle appeared to him to be of a political kind. The disputes between Austria and the parties to the Treaty of Seville (of whom England was the centre) had thrown the whole of Europe into a fresh ferment; what then would be the consequence if war broke out between them? Would not Prussia be in the greatest perplexity? The King, who always saw things in their extremest results, fancied that he might actually be placed in such a situation as to be forced to take up arms against his own son, then Stattholder of Hanover. He required a promise, at least, that England would not attack the Emperor within the limits of the Empire; and in order to extract some permanent advantage, whatever might be the result of these negotiations, he revived the question of the succession to the duchy of Berg,

\* Letter of the King to the ministers, dated 9th May, wherein he also gives an account of the audience, of which Hotham would not give full information.

and demanded a renewal of the guarantee by the King of England.\*

On the 11th of May an official answer was drawn up. It declared that there was no objection to the first marriage, but that the King could not give his consent to the second until the differences with the Emperor were settled, and Berg was guaranteed to himself; and even then he reserved to himself the right of determining the time when the marriage should take place. He added orally, that the Crown-Prince must first come forward into public life and acquire the qualities essential to the head of a family: he must attain the age of twenty-eight before he could marry.

Just at this time the Prussian court went to attend a grand military fête, at a camp which the King of Poland had prepared at Mühlberg. Here, in the very camp, intelligence arrived that the stipulations contained in the reply sent by Prussia, were thought by the Court of England to embrace too remote a period, and too many objects; King George would not accede to conditions so entirely unconnected with the marriages. The King replied that, in that case, there was nothing further to be done; only it must not be said that he had declined the honour of

\* He makes it a condition *sine qua non*, "dass K. Mt. von Grossbritannien und die Crone Engelland zum faveur dieser Mariage sich vor immer verbindlich erklären dem Kgl. Pr. Hause die Garantie der künftigen Succession in den jülich-bergischen Landen zu leisten." (That his Majesty of Great Britain and the Crown of England, in consideration of these marriages should declare themselves for ever bound to guarantee to the royal house of Prussia the future succession of Juliers and Berg.)

such an alliance : to regard it as premature was not to decline it.

And, indeed, in this light the affair was regarded in England ; spite of all the obstacles and delays, people continued confidently to expect that the marriages would take place. Among other documents in proof of this, we have a letter from the Queen of England to the Queen of Prussia, of the 16th of June, written under a strong feeling of their approaching connexion, without a trace of irritation, and full of tender recollections of their youthful days.\*

The demeanour of the Crown-Prince greatly contributed to inspire this confidence. Though the greatest secrecy was necessary, Hotham had found means to put himself in connexion with him ; a transient word, dropped during a hunting party, was sufficient to keep this alive. Frederick had also declared himself explicitly. He had sent the most earnest entreaties to his uncle not to reject his father's propositions, let them be of what nature they might ; nay, even to require no security for the execution of them ; only, in the first place, to conclude his sister's marriage, that she might not be made miserable ; it was sufficient, he said, that he repeated the promise he had already given to take no other wife than the Princess Amelia of England. He had firm-

\* J'ai mis, she says among other things, mes intérêts en vos mains, ma chère sœur, comme celle qui connaît mon cœur pour son Roi et toute sa famille Royale : je me souviens de nos jeunes ans quoique fort anciens du Roi de Prusse ; nous nous sommes toujours aimés comme frère et sœur, et je vous prie, ma chère, d'être mon garant que cela sera toujours de mon côté, et le bon cœur du Roi de Prusse m'est garant de son côté.

ness enough to keep his word, if they would only repose confidence in him.\* Though the English court did not enter so cordially into his views as he had hoped, it was careful not to break off the negotiations. Sir Charles Hotham at length observed that affairs of this nature could better be transacted orally than in writing; he begged for some explanations which he would convey in person to England. The King gave him these explanations, which principally regarded two points; he promised, on his word as a king, that, whenever he should determine on the marriage of the Crown-Prince, he would prefer an English princess to any other, and would choose the one most suitable in age; moreover, that he would consent to the conclusion of this marriage within ten years at latest.† Hotham expressed the hope that he should return in a short time with such instructions as would enable him to proceed at once to the conclusion of the affair. It is not improbable that the English court would, in consequence of the King's promise, have consented to the single marriage: at least, the Prussian minister, Count Degenfeld, understood on his arrival in England that Queen Caroline was much inclined to that measure.

In judging the conduct of Frederick William in this affair, we can make no defence for the violent and brutal language into which he occasionally broke

\* The letter is in Raumer, 513.

† *Le Roi donne sa parole royale qu'il préférera toujours le mariage du Prince Royale son fils avec une princesse d'Angleterre à tout autre.* (Declaration of 9th July.)

out: but in substance he was not so blameable. His objections, whether of a personal, or domestic, or political nature, were well founded, and are not to be ascribed solely to the influence of a Grumbkow or a Seckendorf. Grumbkow, who had no official post in the ministry of foreign affairs, was by no means constantly consulted, and it appears from his notes that he was sometimes misinformed of what was passing. A real and unconquerable difficulty, of which very few indeed had the slightest knowledge, was presented by the King's secret treaty with Austria, in which he beheld the principal security for the future extension of the power of his house. He was unwilling to engage in a connexion which was openly or covertly at variance with that alliance. His great desire was to see peace restored between Austria and England, in order to engage the latter to join in the guarantee of Berg. These were his motives for desiring a delay, the longer the better; with his ways of thinking, it was a great point—and, indeed, all that could be expected—that he consented to give the promise that his son should eventually marry the English princess. With this the other party should have been satisfied, and should have awaited from future vicissitudes the accomplishment of their wishes, or a change in the system of Prussia.\*

But Hotham, just before his departure, impru-

\* Schulenburg asserts, que le Roi même avoit avoué, que depuis, s'ils avoient accepté le simple mariage, le double s'en seroit surement suivi. Vitze, 4th Oct., to Grumbkow, 1731 (in Forster, III. 70).

dently took a step which was sure to cause fresh confusion.

On the 10th of July he had an audience of leave, at which he presented his successor Guy Dickens. Everything passed off in the most favourable manner, and the King appeared in perfect good-humour, when Hotham pulled out a letter, which he asked permission to communicate, as a sequel to that correspondence of Reichenbach, so much complained of. It was in Grumbkow's handwriting, and in it he spoke with great contempt of the intercepting of private letters, practised by the English court. Grumbkow had written this letter on purpose that it might be intercepted and read.\* Hotham now presented it to the King, in the hope of overthrowing Grumbkow, in like manner as he had caused the recal of Reichenbach. But he must have been inexperienced in the arts of negotiation; if he had but reflected he must have foreseen that, with so irritable a monarch, he would probably produce the very opposite effect. The request for the recal of an ambassador did not run entirely counter to European usages; Frederick William had suppressed his natural displeasure at it and had given way, but he was very differently affected by this attempt to overthrow his most confidential minister by the same

\* Report by Grumbkow of the 15th July: "Tout de coup M. le Chevalier Hotham tira de sa poche une lettre de moi écrite de ma main . . . où je taxe ceux qui ont ouvert me lettres et y donnent un sens pervers d'infamie. Le Roi, qui ne s'attendoit pas à une telle récidive de leur part après qu'il eut l'affaire assoupie par le rappel de Reichenbach, fut fort ému."

odious means. It seemed to him evident that the English wanted to intrude into his private affairs, and to give the law to him in his own house,—the most exasperating idea that could possibly be presented to his mind. He threw the letter upon the ground, turned his back to the ambassador, and left the room.

It was reported at the time that the King raised his foot against Hotham, as if he meant to insult him personally, and that he afterwards went so far as to ask his pardon: both are gross exaggerations.

On the assertion of the ambassador, that this incident concerned his court no less than himself, the King emphatically declared that the sacred person of his Britannic Majesty was in no way involved in an affair which exclusively concerned Sir Charles Hotham; but he did not choose to part even from him in anger. He sent to ask him whether he would accept it as a satisfaction if he were once more invited to the royal table. But Sir Charles's pretensions were far higher; he demanded that the King should grant him another audience, at which his Majesty should receive from his hands the letter which he had thrown down, and should promise to investigate the affair. Had this been granted, it is true that he would have been found to be perfectly in the right; as it was not granted, he resolved to leave the court without taking leave. At this new provocation, Frederick William sent word to the King of England that this ambassador was not fitted, either by his sentiments or his manners, to keep up a good understanding between the two courts.

Unquestionably Hotham was not the man to ma-

nage such difficult delicate affairs. In London, no sooner was he appointed, than he talked confidentially with Reichenbach, who immediately apprised Grumbkow and Seckendorf of his hostile dispositions towards them. In Berlin he entered far too deeply into the intrigues and dissensions by which the King was surrounded; he rather trusted to what others said of the monarch, than sought to penetrate his real thoughts and opinions; he entered upon his business with a haughty assurance, which excited the suspicion that he had come over in the expectation of being not only ambassador, but prime minister of Prussia; and of exercising an influence equal to that of Seckendorf, only in a contrary direction. But he was quite incompetent to measure himself against the agent of Austria, or against Grumbkow, who knew every rock and whirlpool of that perilous navigation.

It is obvious that such an incident as the foregoing necessarily threw fresh and powerful obstacles in the way of the negotiation; still, even now, it was not broken off.

That it was not, was the effect of a circumstance of a merely personal nature, connected with these events. Considered by and in itself, it was not perhaps of great importance, but it became of the very greatest from the quality of the actors in it, and the manner in which it reacted on themselves.



## CHAPTER VIII.

ATTEMPTED FLIGHT OF THE CROWN-PRINCE, AND  
ITS CONSEQUENCES.

WE saw above what was Frederick's situation, and how the idea that he could not continue to live in his father's house took firm possession of his mind.

Even in the year 1729, he meditated setting out, without leave, on the journey that he was not permitted to undertake. He borrowed what, under the circumstances, might be called a considerable sum of one Vernezobre, a man then well known in Berlin, who had got a great deal by speculations in Law's Mississippi scheme, and now lived by lending money on interest. The Prince then ordered a travelling carriage in Leipzig. He had, however, some difficulty in making these preparations, especially since Kait, one of the pages who assisted him just at this time, entered active service, and was removed to Wesel.\*

Nor was every other prospect closed upon him.

At one moment things assumed a very warlike appearance; the life of a camp would have given him

\* *Acta inquisitorialia in puncto desertionis* of Lieutenant-Colonel the Crown-Prince of the King's regiment. His valet-de-chambre, Gummersbach, says that the King once asked him, after Kait's removal, whether that was right; he answered, it would have been well had he been removed sooner. Their connexion, therefore, excited suspicion even then.

greater freedom ;—had war really broken out, and had fortune favoured his wishes, he would have entered on a totally different existence. Even his father had often led him to look forward to a campaign.

Instead of this, the reconciliation with England took place. When Hotham came to Berlin, he found the Prince in a state of dejection, which heightened the sympathy he was calculated to inspire. On hearing of the proposals of the 4th of May, which bore so immediately on his own future fate, he however recovered his spirits. Well might he rejoice in the prospect of escaping from a position embittered by insult and oppression, and of being raised to an honourable and nearly independent station, in one of the most important electorates ! He acceded to everything that was proposed to him ; the chance of being summoned to England, where his sister would then be living as Princess of Wales, was rather an inducement than the contrary. It soon, however, appeared, that if these hopes were ever destined to be realized, it could only be after many years of privation and of service.

It may safely be assumed that at this prospect all his former thoughts revived with redoubled strength. If he promised to conclude the English alliance, even contrary to his father's will—for he could not be made to understand that the King had the power of disposing of his hand—if he pledged his word to fulfil his engagement, these promises rested on the design (which others clearly perceived) of taking refuge in flight from the iron bondage in which he lived.

This became more intolerable to him every day. At the camp of Mühlberg, where the eyes of so many

strangers were upon him, he was once subjected to corporeal ill-usage, like a refractory boy, expressly to make him feel that his father regarded him in no other light. The violent King, who never weighed the effect of his words, added insult to this brutal treatment. He said, that had he been so treated by his father, he should have shot himself; but that Frederick had no sense of honour; he would submit to anything.

This rekindled in the Prince's mind the desire of attempting an immediate escape. He asked Count Hoym, the Saxon minister, whether it were possible for two or three officers to pass through Leipzig without being reported. Count Hoym replied, that the Governor of Leipzig was vigilant and severe. Hoym had an inkling of the Prince's design, and warned him that he was narrowly watched. He refused to give him a letter of recommendation. The Prince reflected that, if he ran away from the place in which he then was, the suspicion of having favoured his escape would fall on the King of Poland, and desisted from the project.

He already reckoned on a better opportunity. Frederick William determined to undertake a journey to Upper Germany, or, as it was still called, the Empire; in the course of which he hoped to gain over some of the courts to the policy of the Emperor, as opposed to the alliance of England, France, and Spain, and then to proceed down the Rhine to Cleves; it was supposed that the Crown-Prince would accompany him. As this journey lay towards the western frontier of the kingdom, it appeared to afford the greatest facilities for escaping into a foreign territory.

Von Kait had been succeeded in the confidence of the prince by Lieutenant von Katte, a young man of some accomplishments, who had studied at the pædagogium of Halle, and had addicted himself to literature and music; the written remains that have come down to us, show a certain vigour of mind and much youthful eloquence; it is possible, that he was pleased at the importance which his intimacy with the Crown-Prince gave him in certain places; in general the business of life sat lightly on him, and his friends esteemed him rather daring and reckless than prudent and deliberate.

With this friend, who evinced the most entire devotion to him, many plans were now discussed.

One was as follows:—Katte was to get himself sent recruiting, and to go in the direction of Upper Germany; in an inn by the roadside, at Canstatt, he was to await the arrival of the royal carriages; a servant, distinguished by a red feather, was to give the signal that he was there; the Prince was then, under some pretext or other, to alight, and while he was believed to be in the inn, was to mount a horse, standing ready for him, and gallop off with Katte and his escort. This was to be sufficiently numerous to enable them to defend themselves against any party that the King could, at the moment, dispatch in pursuit of them. They would thus reach the French frontier, which was at no great distance. In the course of the following year war would probably break out between France and the Emperor, in which they could take part; if they distinguished themselves and acquired a reputation, the King would

change his opinion of them, and beg them to return.\* The project is full of youthful love of adventure. In the Prince's mind, discontent at feeling his powers cramped in military service during peace, ardent curiosity to see the world, and a desire for distinction, were mingled with his domestic disgusts.

Sometimes, however, his fancy travelled rather towards England. In the camp at Mühlberg Frederick had once accidentally met Guy Dickens, the Secretary of the English Legation, who was just about to go to London; the prince had begged him to inquire at the English court whether he would be received and protected if he could get over. His anxiety to speak to Guy Dickens on his return, may easily be imagined. The manner of their meeting affords a curious proof of the suspicious constraint under which he lived, and which rendered any other mode impossible; it took place one evening at ten o'clock, under the great gateway of the royal palace.

Katte conducted the Englishman to the spot, and then walked up and down, keeping watch against any interruption. The disclosures made by Dickens were not in accordance with the Prince's wishes. He told him plainly, that they would not have him in England; George II. would not incur the suspicion of having seduced the Prince from his allegiance, which might set fire to the four corners of Europe: they entreated him to give up the idea; if he were in debt,

\* Examination of the Prince at Mittenwalde, 2nd Sept. To Katte's objections he replied, that that must be a bad cause which was forsaken on account of difficulties; these very difficulties rendered it all the pleasanter.

if he wanted money, he had only to name the sum, they would take care he should have it.\*

The Prince seems with difficulty to have convinced himself that this decision was irrevocable. He conceived the idea of sending his friend Katte to London, to endeavour to give the affair a more favourable turn, and actually prepared a sort of letter of credence. On maturer reflection, however, he thought Katte ill fitted for such a mission, and the whole thing impracticable. And as it was again doubtful whether he was to accompany the King, who had wavered about it, he determined within himself, if he did not go, to remain quietly at Potsdam; if, however, the King took him, he would then revert to his scheme of escaping at the first favourable moment. The young are fond of making their resolutions depend on circumstances out of their own power. Katte promised in that case, to be at hand, and to take part in the risk.†

At length the King declared that the Prince should accompany him. The two friends felt themselves pledged to each other, and to the enterprise.

Katte contrived to come one night in secret to Potsdam, in order to have a final and conclusive con-

\* Compare *Informatio ex Actis* (which refers chiefly to Katte) in König's collection. Preuss: *Lebensgeschichte Friedrichs des Gr. IV.* 470. *Jugend und Thronbesteigung Friedrichs des Grossen* 87.

† Examination of the Crown-Prince (2nd September). He was to promise not to go, if he were allowed to remain in Potsdam. But if he went with the King, Katte should go with him. This compromise seems to have been made in consequence of the advice of Guy Dickens.

ference; nothing, however, could be settled, since Katte had not yet the certainty, on which all depended, that he should be sent recruiting. Whether he obtained this or not, they agreed that he should do nothing, and should not leave Berlin without further intelligence from Frederick. He took the Prince's valuables, consisting of a few rings and snuff-boxes, a few thousand dollars in cash, his Polish order, in brilliants (from which, however, a good many of the real stones had been already taken out), with these Katte was to follow on the first notice; and his books, of which Duhan had given him the key, were to be sent to Hamburg after him. They could also rely that, in this event, Kait would manage to escape from his garrison and join them. The names that they were to assume were settled; but neither the time nor the place of meeting.

On the 16th of July the King set out on his journey. Frederick William exhibited himself everywhere, as his companion Seckendorf says, in a patriotic light; he endeavoured to bring the princes, members of the associated circles, to subscribe to the Emperor's declaration against his opponents of Seville; he showed the French who approached him, how little he was inclined towards them.

Meanwhile, all his son's thoughts were bent on taking refuge with those very French.

The preparations which he was able to make, in the absence of his confidant, amounted to little. As his uniform would have betrayed him in a moment, he had a roquelaure of scarlet cloth made—in profound secret, as he thought, but everybody knew it.

Katte sent him a letter by a kinsman of his, to whom Frederick expressed himself so imprudently, in the hope of gaining him over, that he warned the persons about the Prince, especially Lieutenant-Colonel Rochow, who was intrusted with the immediate surveillance of his person.\* This was rendered more strict in consequence. He succeeded in one thing only; by appealing to the example of Kait he gained over his brother, a page who accompanied the King, and obtained his promise of assistance.

Perhaps, however, the scheme would never have come to any thing, had not a fresh scene of family discord taken place at Feuchtwangen, where his father, on very slight provocation, attacked him with extreme violence.† All that he would have to undergo during the following autumn, in the dismal days at Wusterhausen, with everybody apparently against him, and all who surrounded the King bent on widening the breach between them, now rose up before his mind; they were now approaching the point at which the French frontier was most easily reached—he resolved to risk the attempt.

He wrote to Katte to send his effects on before, and to prepare everything, so that he might be able, at the first news of his (Frederick's) escape, to take horse

\* Er avertire ihn als ein guter Freund, er möge auf seinen hahen Untergebenen ein wachsames Auge haben. (He warned him, as a sincere friend, to keep a sharp eye upon his illustrious prisoner.)

† Katte quotes from a letter of the Crown-Prince (Examination of the 30th August), "bei Gelegenheit dass er ein Messer von der Markgräfin an die Erde fallen lassen." (On the occasion of his letting the Margravine's knife fall on the ground.)



instantly and come to him : he mentioned a castle, belonging to Count Rothenburg, in France, as the place of meeting. He wrote to the elder Kait at Wesel, bidding him repair forthwith to the Hague, and privately inquire whether the Prince would be likely to find an asylum there ; the younger Kait assisted him in all the necessary arrangements for his escape.

The occasion which they intended to seize was the following :—

On the last night before his arrival at Mannheim, the King was to sleep at a village called Steinfurt. At that time the greatest simplicity of habits prevailed. There were in the village two rows of barns, in one of these the King was to pass the night ; the Prince in the opposite one. On retiring to rest the King said that he did not intend to start the next morning at three, as usual, but at five, as the distance to Mannheim was not great.

The Prince thought that it would be easy for him, while all the rest were asleep, to make his escape. Kait promised to have horses ready at the appointed time, and to accompany him.

The morning approached ; Kait actually went for the horses ; at the first dawn the Prince arose, dressed himself, took all his money on his person, put on his red roquelaure, and went out to wait for the horses.

Meanwhile, however, the valet, who had been told by Lieutenant-Colonel Rochow to keep watch over the Prince during the night—in the day he would himself be answerable for him—gave the alarm ; and scarcely was Frederick outside the gate, where he

stood leaning against a carriage that happened to be there, than Rochow came up, and, in an easy unembarrassed manner, bade him good morning. At this moment Kait rode up with the horses. Rochow asked him, with some asperity of tone, where he was going with those hacks? Kait answered that they were the horses for the pages to ride; with which reply Rochow was satisfied.

That the Prince had intended to make his escape from this place, and at the very hour at which the whole party were generally in motion, nobody as yet suspected. Seckendorf now came out of the King's barn, towards which Frederick had turned his steps. Rochow asked him in a playful and unsuspecting manner how he liked the Prince's new cloak.

At length all were on foot. There was nothing remarkable in the circumstance that the Prince arrived at Mannheim a little later than the King; they walked about the city together, and went to church together on the following day. As yet no one knew anything of the project but the page Kait, whom the Prince again requested in Mannheim to procure him horses.

Kait, however, was unable to endure this state of things. He was by no means one of the Prince's real intimates, and had only recently been taken into his confidence; he was at the bottom of his heart alarmed and unhappy at deceiving the sovereign whom he served. At length, while at Mannheim, moved by a sudden feeling of duty and remorse, he threw himself at the King's feet, and confessed all.

Hereupon, in one of the antechambers of the Elector's palace, the King called Rochow to the

window, and told him that Frederick had tried to make his escape: it was the King who informed the Prince's attendants, not they who told him. This, however, said the King, was not the time or place to speak about it; they must wait till they got to Wesel, within his own dominions. Rochow should answer it with his head to bring the Prince there "alive," said the exasperated monarch, "or dead." Rochow replied that the Prince should not escape; he could depend on the people who were about him.\*

They next proceeded to Darmstadt. While there the Prince was so far from suspecting that he had been betrayed, that he even repeated his request to Kait. But the treatment he experienced soon opened his eyes to the fact, even if no one told him.

On their arrival at Bonn the Prince entreated Seckendorf to intercede for him; but, great as was the favour which the Austrian agent enjoyed, he was utterly powerless in this matter. The King was not only enraged at what he knew, but suspected that there was a mystery still behind, and determined instantly to come to the very bottom of an affair connected with intrigues the most odious to him in the world.

On the evening of the 12th of August, the Court arrived at Wesel. Late as it was, the King immediately summoned the Prince to a solemn examination.

\* Relation welche S. Kgl. Maj. von des Kronprinzen intendirten Retraite mir zu Papier dictirt haben, wie S. Hoheit und übrige darin benannte Personen zu vernehmen. Von Mylius. (Statement which His Majesty the King dictated to me of the Crown-Prince's intended escape, how his Royal Highness and other persons therein mentioned were to be examined. By Mylius.)

He admonished him to confess honestly to God and to his father all the circumstances of his intended desertion, for he chose to regard the affair in the light of an offence against military duty.

The Prince made no attempt to deny the facts; he even named his two confidants, the elder Kait and Katte, on the presumption that they had both escaped.

Kait, who had received a warning from the Prince, had in fact quitted Wesel a few days before, and had reached Holland: the King demanded that he should be given up, but in vain; he got safe to England.

Katte, on the other hand, always preparing and never executing; warned, as it appears, though not by the Prince's letter, which never reached him, was arrested.

Two other examinations took place in Wesel, but the affair could not be brought to a conclusion there; independently of which, the King was obliged to return to Berlin, according to his previous arrangements. The precautions which he took for his son's journey home show what apprehensions the wavering and half-hostile conduct of his neighbours excited in his mind. Their route and destination were kept secret; the Hessian and Hanoverian territories avoided; but even in other parts of Germany the King thought it possible that there might be parties lying in wait to carry off the Prince. The horses were not put to in the villages or towns, but without their gates; nothing was served but cold meat, which was eaten either in the carriages or in the open fields, far from woods or hedges. Orders were given that, in case of an attack,

the Prince was under no circumstances whatever to be allowed to fall into the hands of any ambuscade.\*

We shall not repeat the unauthorized stories of the outbreaks of paternal violence in which the King is said to have indulged at his return. Orders like those we have just cited best show in what a state of excitement he was ; what wide-spread combinations, extending into the interior of his own family, appeared to him possible. To discover these was the object of his ardent curiosity.

In the first place, Katte underwent three interrogatories within four days. He drew up a circumstantial narrative of the events, which he called *species facti*, the only misrepresentation in which was, that he laid greater stress on his dehortations than they deserved. But the King was not satisfied with this ; he ordered a special inquisition to sit upon his conduct, and even wished to apply the torture. Grumbkow, however, observed to him that he might be called to account for this, and the idea was relinquished.

All the other attendants or associates of the Prince, of whatever degree, were arrested—the valet, the page, Lieutenant-Colonel Rochow, Lieutenants Ingersleben and Spaen, with whom he had been acquainted in Potsdam ; his former sub-governor, Kalkstein ; Vernezobre, who had, as we have related, first lent him money ; the goldsmith who had sold him

\* Instruction vor den General Buddenbrock, auf was Art er des Königs Sohn Friedrich von Wesel nach Cüstrin wohlverwahrt bringen soll. (Instructions to General Buddenbrock as to the manner in which he is to bring the King's son Frederick well guarded from Wesel to Cüstrin.)

jewels and bought others of him; even a young girl named Dorothea Ritter, daughter of a schoolmaster lately settled at Potsdam, who had spoken to Frederick two or three times at her door, and to whom he had given a few trifling presents—a crime she was made to expiate in the cruellest manner.

The following narrative of the affair is composed from the answers contained in the legal documents. The most remarkable feature in it is the demeanour of the Prince.

He confessed that he had done very wrong, and did not attempt to justify himself. But he would not admit that his attempted flight ought to be treated as desertion: his desire to escape from his father's displeasure could not, he says, be called by that name. Nothing fell from him that could possibly bring trouble on his mother or sister. As to his relations to England, about which his father was peculiarly curious, but which were not of so determinate a character as the King imagined, he expressed himself with the greatest reserve.

In the course of an interrogatory which he underwent on the 8th of September, at Mittenwalde, on the way to Cüstrin, he first learned that Katte had not escaped; and it was hinted that his complicity would probably cost him his life. He caused it to be represented to his father that he ought to regard him as the sole culprit, and Katte as the victim of his seductions; that he, as the King's son, had at all events merited the heavier punishment; and that he should never recover his peace of mind so long as he lived, if any man suffered death on his account.

Affairs were in this state when he reached Cüstrin, where he was first put under strict arrest, viz. in a room guarded with new strong locks and bolts, two sentinels standing at the door, and one on the staircase. The officer on guard slept in the anteroom, and nobody was allowed to stay with him more than four minutes. The King himself drew up the articles which were to serve as the basis of a new interrogatory, which was conducted on the 16th of September by the Auditor-general Mylius. The most remarkable among them are the concluding ones, to which Mylius made some objections, on the score of the consequences that might ensue from them ; but the King reiterated his inflexible command that these questions were to be put.\* The first is, What does the man deserve who violates his honour, and lays plots to desert? The Prince replied that he did not think he had acted contrary to honour. Secondly, If he still thought himself worthy to become sovereign of the country? The Prince: "I cannot be my own judge." Thirdly, Whether he wished his life to be granted him or not? The Prince: "I submit myself to the King's mercy." It was the most difficult hour he had ever passed, and put all his presence of mind to the test. At length Mylius put the fourth and last question. Since Frederick had

\* "Ich befehle es euch: es ist meine strenge Ordre, die ich habe selber meinem Secretär in die Feder dictirt; ich befehle euch, meine Ordre auf meine Verantwortung zu exequiren." ("I command you to do this: it is my strict order which I have myself dictated to my secretary; I command you to execute my order upon my responsibility.")

rendered himself unworthy of the succession, had violated his honour, and forfeited his life, would he consent, in order to save the latter, to renounce his inheritance in such a form that the renunciation should be confirmed by the empire? The Prince answered in a calm, collected manner, that the value he set on his life was not great, but that he thought his Majesty would not be so wholly without mercy towards him. After the conclusion of the interrogatory, the fear flashed across his mind that his father meant to condemn him to perpetual imprisonment. He entreated the commission to hear him once more, which was granted on the 1st of October. The commission thought that he was about to communicate something more concerning the participation of England in the plot; he however confined himself to the last article, and declared that perpetual imprisonment would be intolerable to him; he had rather renounce the succession, or suffer death. If he were to die, he begged that he might know it in time; but if he could obtain the King's mercy by renunciation, he would submit to his will therein; the King might do with him what he pleased, he should never cease to love and honour him.

When the interrogatories were ended, a court-martial was appointed at Köpenick to pronounce sentence on the Prince and his accomplices. It was composed, according to the law and usage in the case, of officers of the Prince's rank, of three Major-Generals, three Colonels, three Lieutenant-Colonels, three Majors, and three Captains.\* The president was

\* The Generals von Schwerin, Count Dönhof, von Linger;



Lieutenant-General Schulenburg, a man who united a military character and habits with very decided religious tendencies, exactly to the taste of the King. The two auditors Mylius and Gerbett were present.

On the 25th of October, 1713, the first volume of the acts were read to the court, and on the 26th, the second. They then swore to pronounce justly on the acts read to them, according to the best of their knowledge and conscience, and in compliance with the Articles of War, the laws and customs of the kingdom, and without any fear or regard of man whatsoever. On the 27th they gave in their sentence according to their several ranks.

With regard to the Crown-Prince, they were unanimous that it did not befit them, as vassals and subjects, to sit in judgment on circumstances that occurred in the royal family; it would, indeed, said the generals, be contrary to their duty to institute such an inquiry into them as would be necessary in order to form a sound judgment. Some observed that the Prince was already enough punished by his arrest; others (the lieutenant-colonels), that the Articles of War contained nothing applicable to this case. It is evident that the Prince's opinion—that his design had nothing in common with desertion—was the prevalent one among his judges. The whole court laid peculiar stress upon the Prince's entire submission to the mercy of his father and King.

Colonels von Derschau, von Sterling, von Wachholz; Lieutenant-Colonels von Weiher, von Schenk, von Milagsheim; Majors von Einsiedel, von Lestewitz, von Lüderitz; Captains von Podewils, von Jeetze, von Itzenplitz.

I cannot find that King Frederick William made the smallest objection to this sentence, or that he ever seriously thought of punishing his son with death. It is true that many who knew his ungovernable temper, and had heard some of his violent expressions, feared the worst. The sovereigns with whom he was on friendly terms hastened to intercede for the culprit. King Frederick of Sweden reminded Frederick William of the confidence with which his family, his people, and all Protestants looked up to him. King Augustus of Poland begged him not to treat the affair with military severity, but with the magnanimity of a great prince. The Empress Anne of Russia represented that the Crown-Prince, of whose extraordinary capacity and qualities so much was said, had doubtless been led astray for a moment by thoughtless people. The same sentiment is expressed by Charles VI. in his letter of intercession. "As yet," he goes on to say, "the Crown-Prince is not fully persuaded of the friendly inclinations of the Emperor towards the royal electoral house of Brandenburg, but this appeal in his favour will convince him of it; the common welfare of the two houses depends on their perpetual amity.\* It were impossible to deny that so many representations may have had some effect on the King, yet there is no ground for affirming that they

\* "Diese aus aufrichtig und liebreichster, neigung . . . . ergehende Vorschrift." (This order inspired by a hearty and tender affection.) In Seckendorf's Life, where this letter, together with the King's answer and that of the Crown-Prince are first published (IV. 285), this order is stated to have been delivered about the 1st November. The Crown-Prince's answer was dictated to him word for word.

decided him—not even that of the Emperor—though his answer, in which he replies to the Emperor's expressions of friendship in similar ones, seems to render this probable. Seckendorf, to whom the decision was left whether anything could be done for the Crown-Prince, and, if so, when and what, presented a memorial, of which he had himself drawn up the sketch, on the 31st of October, when the sentence of the court-martial was delivered to the King, and accepted by him, so far as it regarded the Crown-Prince, without opposition.

With the sentence, which, after some differences of opinion, the court-martial had pronounced on Katte, the King was not satisfied.

Three of the classes of officers sentenced him to death, on the ground that he had had dealings with foreign ministers, and had meddled in what had occurred between the King and his son; but they at the same time recommended him to mercy. The two others, on the contrary, remarked that his plans had not been executed, and ought not therefore to be punished with death; but as his offence was unquestionably very great, since things could never have gone so far had he not seconded the Prince's designs, they sentenced him to perpetual imprisonment in a fortress. The president, who in his own person had a whole vote, assented to this judgment;\* and, as opinions were thus rendered equal, they all adopted

\* Vote of the President, "da die Sache doch nicht zum Effect gekommen, ja noch nicht einmal Zeit und Ort festgesetzt gewesen." (Since the matter hath not yet come to pass, nor even the time or place been definitively settled.)

the milder sentence, according to the legal usage in such cases, and this was laid before the King as their unanimous judgment.

The King declared that it was a sentence dictated by the fear of man, and summoned the court-martial again for the 31st of October, in order that it might alter its sentence on Katte; it adhered, however, to the one it had given, each class separately, and all united.

Hereupon the King resolved himself to change the sentence. "To that end," says Mylius, "is the sentence that hath been pronounced sent in to the sovereign lord of the land and of the army, that he may, according to his greater wisdom and his absolute power, either soften or, it may be, aggravate it."\*

The King himself said that Katte, though an officer in the guards, and therefore peculiarly bound to his person, had yet "intrigued with the rising sun," and had engaged in corrupt practices (*Durchstechereien*) with foreign ambassadors; he had thus incurred the penalty of high treason, and the sentence of death by the sword; if he spared him he should never be able to trust any man, bound to him by oath and duty, again. Katte once more made an appeal to the King's mercy in a long memorial. He accused himself of youthful thoughtlessness and error; but represented that his romantic project, free from all concealed designs, his heart touched and misled by love and pity, cried aloud for mercy; a withered tree is spared for awhile, but he would now put forth fresh buds of fidelity and duty.

\* Zumal wo bonum publicum solches erfordern sollte. (Especially where the bonum publicum should require it.) Mylius, in a resumé intended for England.

The King, however, remained inflexible; he sent him word that it were better he should die than that justice and judgment should cease upon the earth. He had resolved that Katte should be beheaded before the Prince's eyes in the fortress of Cüstrin.

This sentence was executed on the 6th of November.

Early in the morning Frederick learned what a sight he was doomed to see. He demanded that the execution might be delayed, and an estaffette dispatched to the King, to say that he, the Prince, was ready to submit to renunciation of the crown, to death,—or what was worse than either—to perpetual imprisonment, if only his friend were spared. But who would have dared to suspend the execution, imperatively commanded and now in actual preparation? At seven o'clock the command was given for the whole garrison to be drawn out on the walls, where they formed a circle round the place of execution; soon after a company of the gens-d'armes of the guard, to which Katte belonged, brought up the criminal. From the time that Katte found that there was no hope of pardon, he had turned his mind wholly to the consolations of religion; the preacher had brought him to believe that he had been conducted by this terrible road to the salvation of his soul: he now appeared collected and courageous. It is perfectly true that the place of execution was immediately under the windows of the Prince, near the guard-house, above the Mill-gate. Katte already stood in the midst of the circle, and they were about to read his sentence, when the Prince, who was forced to appear at the window, called out to

him, to beg his forgiveness.\* Katte answered that he knew of nothing that he had to forgive, untied his neckcloth himself, and turned his face towards the Prince: thus he chose to die with his eyes fixed upon him. At this sight Frederick fainted: † when he came to himself all was over; the head and the trunk of the victim placed together lay on the ground. He would not quit the window till, in the afternoon, two or three of the town's-people came to lay the body in the coffin and take it away: even then he did not turn his eyes from the fatal spot until evening. In the night he was heard talking to himself: the next morning he said that the King had tried in vain to take Katte from him, he was incessantly before his eyes. When the same clergyman who had prepared his friend for death came to visit him, and began to talk to him on religious subjects, the thought suggested itself to him that he was doomed to follow his friend in a few days.

Who can calculate the effect which this desperate struggle to extricate himself from oppression and

\* Lepel reports the words: "Je vous demande mille pardons," whereupon Katte immediately answered to this effect, "Monseigneur, vous n'avez rien à me demander," which indeed can have no other meaning but the one given in the text.

† Report of General Lepel's, of 8th Nov. "Die Execution ist vor seinen (des Prinzen) Augen verrichtet worden und hat der Katte nachdem er sich entblösset das Gesicht gegen ihn gekehret worüber der Kronprinz in Ohnmacht gefallen, und der Capitän zutreten und ihn halten müssen." (The execution was performed before the Prince's eyes, and Katte, after undressing, turned his face towards him; whereupon the Prince swooned away, and the captain advanced to support him.)

outrage, and, after its failure, the redoubled weight of iron necessities which press upon existence;—which the sight of his friend, a victim to their inexorable power, the hovering between life and death, were calculated to produce on a mind still unsteady and immature, but capable of great things !

It appears to me worthy of remark that, in the whole course of the interrogatory, there is not a word of hatred nor a trace of political designs. How totally different from Don Carlos of Spain, for example, who, in a state of feverish excitement, talked of murdering his father; or from the Russian Alexis, who secretly determined to undo all that his father had done; and who, regarding him as the oppressor of his country and himself as its destined liberator, refused to inherit the throne from his father, choosing rather to receive it as a gift from the Emperor Charles VI.\*

In the present case, if there were any political objects at all, they were solely on the side of the King, who was determined to put an end for ever to all attempts on the part of foreigners to intermeddle in his family or in his policy. He occupied nearly the same stage of political existence as Cardinal Richelieu, who, a century before, struggled with implacable zeal against the efforts of Spain to influence the sovereign power in France in the persons of the mother and the brother of his sovereign. With this difference, however, that here we have before us a father determined to have a son and successor moulded according to his own views, and a son whose natural turn of mind and tastes re-

\* Some of his confessions in Bergmann, *Peter der Grosse*, IV. 240, 279. Afanassjew, 283.

volted against them ; who, without any ulterior object, had formed to himself a totally different scheme of life, had been pursuing it in bye-paths which would have led him further and further from the prescribed goal, and was now compelled by violent storms to abandon it, and to retrace his steps.

While the Prince's fears that sentence of death was hanging over him were at their height, the King sent him word that, as he had been informed by the preacher of his contrition and remorse, he would give him some signs of forgiveness, and soften the rigour of his imprisonment. Frederick could hardly believe this message, nor was he convinced of its truth till his father's letter, in his own handwriting, was showed to him.

But this favour was not unconditional : the King would grant him no mitigation of his punishment, unless he would bind himself by a new oath of allegiance.

He required that Frederick should swear to be constantly true and obedient to his father, never and by no means to attempt to withdraw himself from the royal and paternal power ; if he did not for the future conform his life in every particular to the will and pleasure of his father, he would for ever forfeit the royal and electoral succession.\*

\* The King to the preacher, 8th Nov. The King had rejected one of the first formulas as insufficient. He caused the Crown-Prince to be distinctly reminded, that *reservationes mentales* were unknown in Prussia ; whereupon the Prince said, that he was perfectly aware that an oath should be taken in the sense in which it was understood by the person exacting it ; but he wished first to see it.



This he swore in the presence of Generals Grumbkow and Glasenapp, and certain high civil officers who had come for that purpose to Cüstrin, and also of the men who had been lately placed about him as peculiarly trustworthy.

These were the chamberlains Natzmer and Rohwedel, and a royal councillor Wolden, to whom the supervision of all the rest was confided;\* they, too, were compelled to swear—which they did in trembling—that they would acknowledge only one God, and one king, Frederick William, as their masters.

The Prince had now to learn in a severe school; he was absolutely confined within the walls of Cüstrin, and to the society of those men to whose supervision his father had intrusted him.

The King's intention had always been to put him to work at the government of the country; for, he said, a prince who understood nothing of administration and public economy, fell into the hands of favourites and was despised.

On the day after taking this oath the Prince was introduced into the war-office and the office of the crown lands. He took his place at a table as Auscultator, with one of his two chamberlains. † There he had to

\* As it is said in the instructions: *welche S. K. Mt. dero Kronprinzen Hoheit vorgesetzt, um zu Cüstrin bei ihm zu seyn, und auf ihn Achtung zu geben.* (Who were placed about the person of the Crown-Prince to be with, and to watch, him at Cüstrin.)

† The first protocol of a sitting in his presence was one of 20th Nov. There was a complaint made by the Duke of Merseburg, touching the exclusion of Saxon wares, especially cloth, from Frankfort on the Oder.

work every day from seven to half-past eleven, and from three till five; we have the protocols of the sittings, in which his signature stands below those of the councillors. In the evening, President Münchow or Director Hille was to instruct him in financial affairs, which he did not yet understand. He was to write no letters, not even to his brothers or sisters; only at stated intervals to the King and Queen: neither to practise nor to hear any music; to see as few strangers as possible: no one was to be permitted to speak to him of foreign politics; only of God's word and the constitution of the country. Only three books were allowed him: the German Bible, the hymn-book, and Arndt's 'True Christianity.' If he had any spare time, the old papers of Margrave Hans, of Cüstrin, the brother of Joachim II., one of the earliest German princes who showed a true feeling for national economy, were to be laid before him: he might study those.\*

The King rejected the proposition made by Münchow and Hille, to give the Prince at least some books on finance and police. "People learned nothing from books," he said (how contrary to the opinion of his son!); "the Prince had already been

\* "Wenn er mehr Lust zu lesen hat, sollen sie ihm aus dem Cüstrinschen Archiv die Schriften und Documente der alten Verfassung des Markgrafen Hans holen lassen, da er sich mit Lesen dieser nützlichen Sachen divertiren kann: wenn er das ganze Archiv ausgelesen, soll Wolden darüber berichten." (If he felt a strong desire to read, they should get for him out of the Cüstrin archives the letters and documents of the old constitution of Margrave Hans, and he might divert himself with the perusal of these useful things. When he had read through the whole of the archives, Wolden was to report the same.)

spoiled by useless reading." We find that the papers of the old Margrave were actually sent for to Berlin.

The Prince's companions thought to conciliate the King by sending him, not long after, a project for the improvement of the spinning factories in Prussia, drawn up by the Prince. At first the King would not believe it was his; when he was convinced, he said that he would not have him employ himself in schemes of improvement, but learn to make estimates of land and attend to the breeding of cattle; for he must learn by experience how much toil it cost the husbandman to get together as many groschen as go to a thaler, so that he might one day make a careful use of the latter. In May, Frederick actually completed an estimate of the produce of a given number of acres of land, which was sent to the King. Hille says that neither he nor the president could have made a better; the Prince had learned admirably.

Another question of a most delicate nature presented itself in the few first months of his confinement at Cüstrin, viz., the differences of opinion on points of religion, to which we have alluded. The King's blood boiled at the thought that his son had espoused the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination; according to which (as he understood it) some could do nothing but good, others, predestined to damnation, nothing but evil; he thought this unscriptural and soul-destroying. Frederick, however, was master of the arguments in favour of this dogma, which he regarded as the most important. I imagine that the theological essays by him, which Katte declared he

had seen, handled this point. He knew that Luther had at first entertained similar views, and he would not give them up; the persons about him made this the subject of incessant discussions. They brought him to confess that he regarded the doctrine rather as philosophical than theological, and without any value to practical Christianity; but the King replied, that was an evasion, and that he was unfortunately compelled to fear that his son was not dealing sincerely with him. Hille, who was a man of generally cultivated mind, and not without talents, then took great pains in conversation, as well as in letters, to point out the evil consequences of this system. As the Prince would not admit these, his opponents tried to prove to him that he was in that case driven to adopt an hypothesis, which rendered the whole thing a mere verbal dispute.\* Hille maintained that this argument overcame the Prince's objections. From Frederick himself we know nothing on the subject beyond his assertion that he did not choose to suffer martyrdom for his opinion.

The King was highly satisfied when he heard of this concession; he expressed himself somewhat more kindly, and sent sermons in order fully to convince the Prince of his past error.

It may be questioned whether this was not the way to disgust him with both opinions; if the one ap-

\* The Prince uses similes by way of arguments to the preacher Müller: e. g. that of the wheels in a clock, which must fit well one into the other. The passage in the 2 Epist. of Peter ii. 1, was new to him in this view. On the other hand, Frederick supported his argument by 9 cap. Rom.

peared illogical, and the other led to consequences at variance with certain incontrovertible principles, both must necessarily become indifferent to any inquiring mind.

Frederick sometimes felt most bitterly the subjection in which he was held. One day the thought crossed his mind that even here, in his prison, he would break out into open resistance against his father and die with honour. He was, however, prevailed on to believe that endurance of evils has also its honour.

He was doubtless strengthened in this endurance by letters which sometimes reached him, written anonymously and in a feigned hand, probably by his elder sister, and expressing an ardent admiration of his conduct;\* he displayed, they said, so much self-control, he did nothing out of season, he was perfect in all he did, he subdued his great heart to the behests of reason.

It would have been absolutely impossible to carry the King's commands into complete execution.

The King might indeed order that his son should never see a Frenchman, never read a French book or newspaper, nor indeed any paper but the Berlin, the Hamburg, and the *Intelligenzblatt*; but this was only calculated to enhance his partiality for the French. He persisted in writing verses in that language, though he was told that it was unbecoming his country and station; there are some extant (in which he seeks to

\* It is said of him :

*Celui-ci est parfait en toutes ses actions,  
Maître de ses passions il sait les commander,  
Son grand cœur est soumis aux loix de la raison,  
Il ne fait jamais rien qui ne soit de saison.*

console himself for the vexations he has to endure) bearing indications of the mind to which this mode of expression was hereafter to become a second nature. Those about him observed with astonishment how entirely he was under the influence of French taste; Hille declared that an epigrammatic turn gave the prince greater pleasure than simple sound sense; wise precepts had no effect on him, it was necessary to show him the ridiculous side of things.\* Frederick made a jest of his own situation in ironical "Ordres," drawn up with all the formal pedantry of the chancery.

His attendants, who never forgot that he was the Crown-Prince, and their future master, connived at everything that was not absolutely incompatible with the strict orders they had received. Even Grumbkow became better disposed towards him. As the Prince and his attendants had unconsciously committed several mistakes, the minister at length suggested what it would be expedient to write to the King from Cüstrin, with a view to gain his favour, and what to himself, in ostensible letters.

After a year of penance, the King determined to see his son again. The meeting took place in the government-house in Cüstrin, on the 15th of August, 1731. I shall not describe it, as it is already well known,† and some things had been premeditated on

\* Hille to Grumbkow, 18th Dec., 1730. Dites ou écrivez lui tout ce que vous voulez; si cela n'est pas assaisonné de quelques traits d'esprit, il s'en moque. S'il y en a, il admire, il pèse avec exactitude s'il y en a trop ou trop peu du sel attique: mais pour ce qui est du réel, il se ne met pas guère en peine.

† Report of Grumbkow to Seckendorf in Förster, III. 50.

the side of the prince. But when the King represented to him with paternal earnestness, what would have been the consequences, if his plan had succeeded, especially how unhappy it must have made the Queen, and asked him why he set himself in opposition to a father, who laboured only for him, and could not even gain his friendship in return, Frederick was overcome; the iron band that bound his heart burst in twain, he felt that the King really loved him, and throwing himself at his feet with profound emotion, he gave utterance to filial feelings that lay far beyond the reach of premeditation. He confessed some things which he had till now concealed; father and son seemed reconciled for ever. "One must be blind," says Hille, "if one did not see the finger of Providence in the matter."

The Prince now received permission occasionally to quit Cüstrin, and to visit the neighbouring crown lands.

His confinement had been so long and severe, that he felt it a happiness once more to breathe the fresh air. He had more pleasure in galloping over the open country than in the chase, though he sometimes hunted; his father, who was pleased that he took that diversion, always received a minute account of the incidents of the chase.

The villages which he chiefly frequented were Quartschen, Carzig, and Wollup. He was much struck at hearing that the last had formerly produced only 1600 thalers yearly; whereas, under his father's system, it now yielded an income of 22,000 thalers. He carefully examined the buildings, cattle, fields, in

short the whole farm, and found that it was susceptible of still greater improvements, particularly by draining the waste marshy spots.

So complete a revolution in tastes and sentiments, as the King desired, was not, however, wrought in the Prince. His was a mind far too energetic and too peculiarly constituted, ever to become subject to another. But the school in which he had learnt at Cüstrin—the intercourse with men who, though they treated him with respect and attention, dared to tell him the truth, broke through his narrow and exclusive habits of mind.\* It soon became evident that he had tastes not only for amusement and for witty and polite literature, but likewise for serious and laborious pursuits. He engaged in the study of finance with an ardour of which no one believed him capable; and as soon as he had surmounted the first difficulties, began to combine the ideas which it presented to him, according to a method of his own, and to evince that interest in the administration which can only be felt by those who understand the subject. He also showed a genuine inclination for military affairs. He expressed a wish to have a company in Cüstrin, and another in Frankfort, in order that he might combine sedulous attention to the service, with the prosecution of his agricultural pursuits in that neighbourhood. The King could not as yet believe in the sincerity of this request, for it exceeded all his expectations; yet it was doubtless very seriously meant.

\* Hille once boasts: nous avons assez de courage pour dire les choses comme elles sont, et sans flatterie.



Among the essays which are the undoubted work of Frederick, two are very remarkable—the one on the necessity of promoting the trade of Prussia, by the diminution of internal duties, and of profiting by the advantages afforded by the possession of the mouths of the Oder and the long tract of Baltic coast; the other of a political nature, pointing out the geographical weakness of the Prussian monarchy. The Prince shows that West Prussia and Pomerania (then belonging to Sweden) are indispensable to Prussia on the east; and that on the west, Cleves could not be rendered defensible without the possession of Juliers and Berg. It does not appear that the King ever saw this treatise, but Seckendorf got a copy and sent it to Prince Eugene. That great commander expresses in his answer the greatest astonishment at the extensive views of the young Prince, who, though still flighty and inconsiderate, already showed a degree of spirit and talent that might one day render him dangerous to his neighbours. He already impressed everybody who saw him with the idea of a striking and important personage. Field-marshal Schulenburg, who presented to him the officers of his regiment, was astonished at the manner in which he received them; it was almost regal; he had a secret consciousness of the greatness which he was afterwards to exhibit to mankind.

But the destinies of his private life were not as yet determined. Whilst Frederick's thoughts took a direction at once practical and daring, wholly different from those fantastic schemes in which he had formerly indulged, his father, in order to render any new

aberration impossible, resolved without delay to contract a marriage for him.

In spite of all the misunderstandings that had taken place, and even after the affair with Hotham, the court of St. James's had not abandoned its scheme of a family alliance. It was even inclined, with that view, to make advances to Austria, as Frederick William had demanded: in September, 1730, Harrington made overtures to that effect. But just then, it came out in the course of the inquiry into the flight of the Crown-Prince, that the English plenipotentiaries, though perhaps they did not go so far as the King suspected, had certainly facilitated Frederick's correspondence with their court; they had sent home his questions and communicated the answers, which were not indeed always such as he wished.\* In the vehement indignation which Frederick William felt at this discovery, he sent an official message, couched in the most positive terms, to the English Chargé d'Affaires, Guy Dickens, declaring that a matrimonial alliance between the two houses, whether double (i. e. including that of the Crown-Prince) or single (that of his daughter with the Prince of Wales), was now wholly out of the question: he "would have no English princess in his house," said he in one of his marginal notes;

\* The King to Chambrier, 16th Sept.: Vous ne devez pas dissimuler que la cour d'Angleterre n'avait pas ignoré que le prince meditoit son evasion que le chevalier Hotham avoit été consulté par le prince sur l'exécution de ce projet, etc. Also to Keppel: they ought to have informed him of this matter, "si l'on avoit voulu agir en ami avec moi."

“any more than he would give one of his daughters to an English prince, on any terms whatsoever, be they as advantageous as they might.” This was the first real and complete rupture of the negotiations. In the spring of 1731, the Princess Wilhelmina was betrothed to the Hereditary Prince of Bayreuth, and the King looked about for a consort for the Crown-Prince out of another house.

It was long ago affirmed, and has from time to time been repeated, that there was a project of marrying the future King of Prussia to the heiress of Austria; and much curiosity has been excited as to the truth of the rumour.\* I have been able to discover no other ground for it, than an expression of Katte's, who said that the Prince had complained to him that he was urged by Seckendorf and Grumbkow to a marriage with a Catholic and imperial princess; and that, while in prison, Frederick, in order to soften his father, let drop some words, to the intent that he had no objection to marry the eldest Archduchess, provided always that he was not forced to change his religion. But it appears that there was some misunderstanding. The two ministers steadily denied that they had ever entertained such a thought, and it is quite certain that it never occurred to either the King or the Emperor. At

\* In the kurzgefassten historischen Nachrichten zu Behuf der neuen europäischen Begebenheiten 1730, 37, mention is made of a journey of the Crown-Prince to Vienna, as well as of the appointment of a court for the Archduchess, with the remark that this pointed to some marriage among great people. The article made a great noise at the time.

Vienna, it is true, all idea of Don Carlos had long been dropped, the policy of Austria having taken a totally different direction. But the young Francis of Lorraine, who lived at the court, had early inspired the Archduchess with an affection which had grown with her growth. King Frederick William from the first declared his entire approbation of her choice, and would hear of no other consort for the splendid heiress. The opposite views of religion which so strongly characterized the two states and the two families, presented an insuperable obstacle to any thought of his son.

There was another project then afloat which the King was somewhat inclined to entertain; that of a marriage between the Crown-Prince and the presumptive heiress of Russia, Anne of Mecklenburg.

This princess was a grand-daughter of Iwan, the elder brother of Peter the Great, whose claims had just been recognised by her aunt, the Empress Anne. This project had one advocate at the Russian court. The active and influential minister for foreign affairs, Ostermann, said that if he could but accomplish this master-stroke of policy, he would indulge himself with repose for the rest of his life. Frederick William, however, made conditions to which it was impossible to accede,\* viz.: that not only the Prince

\* According to a report of 10th Jan., 1731, there was no great indisposition to concede this point; the Princess, however, must change her religion. The Bishop of Novogorod, who was her tutor, was a good Lutheran at heart.—Among other objections was this one: it was not quite certain whether the Empress Anne might not marry again, or the Princess Elizabeth be subsequently preferred by the nation.

should remain a Protestant, but also that all the children born of the marriage should be brought up in that faith; and secondly, that the whole Russian army should immediately take the oath of allegiance to him as their future sovereign. And even supposing these demands conceded, the most important question still remained, viz.: in what relation the Prussian state was to stand to the empire of Russia. For a union of the two would have set all Europe in agitation. The Crown-Prince was once asked, whether, if the affair could be brought to bear, he would consent to renounce the throne of Prussia; to which he replied, that he would not be guilty of so great a folly. If he did, people would not believe that he would hold to his engagement, but that at the death of his father he would appear on the frontiers at the head of a Russian army to reclaim his hereditary possessions.

This vigorous and growing intellect was not destined to serve the interests of any foreign state. Frederick William was quite right in seeking for his son a princess who could neither exercise great influence at his own court, nor involve him in engagements abroad. The first interest of Prussia was, to remain exclusively Prussian.

Such being the King's views, he cast his eyes on the Princess Elizabeth Christina of Brunswick Bevern.

The consort of the Emperor Charles VI., a princess of that house, was the aunt of Princess Elizabeth, and there is no doubt that the court of Vienna, through its skilful representative, had

laboured to turn the King's eyes in that direction ; though this was done in the profoundest secrecy, and no one but Grumbkow had the slightest suspicion of it. This union would, they thought, completely put an end to the schemes of England, and bind the Crown-Prince for ever to the house of Austria.\* They assumed that the Prince would be very parsimoniously provided for by his father, and showed great readiness to supply him with money.

It seems to have been very agreeable to the King that the Princess was related to the imperial house ; but what he chiefly insisted on was, that, though not beautiful, she was modest and pious, and could live with him and the Queen. In the beginning of February, 1732, he proposed her to the Prince ; promised him that he should travel as soon as he had an heir, and required him to declare his intentions as soon as possible.

Grumbkow wrote to the same effect. He purposely gave a less flattering description of the Princess than he might have done, in order that Frederick might be agreeably surprised at her appearance. He also insinuated, at Seckendorf's desire (for a falsehood

\* Prince Eugene requests Count Seckendorf (29th Jan., 1732), "alles mögliche unter der Hand anzuwenden, damit des Königs Entschliessung je eher je besser zu Stande kommen möge: wozu etwa die Anwesenheit des Herzogs von Lothringen und wann der Prinz Bevern sich mit ihnen nach Berlin verfüget, eine nochmalige Gelegenheit geben dürfte."—(to do his best secretly to bring about the King's determination, the sooner the better. The presence of the Duke of Lorraine and that of the Prince of Bevern at Berlin, might give you a fresh opportunity.)

cost him nothing), that the imperial court was not pleased at the journey of the Bevern family, lest it should bring upon them the suspicion of interfering in the family affairs of the house of Prussia, especially of the Crown-Prince, who ought to be left completely at liberty in the choice of a wife.

Frederick was once more plunged into a state of the greatest agitation. On the one side he beheld his father, whose intentions were at bottom good, whose rage it was terrible to excite. By acquiescing in this marriage he ensured to himself an infinitely freer and more tranquil life; above all, the prospect of foreign travel was held out to him, and he scarcely remarked what were the conditions attached to this object of his passionate longing. In one of the moments when this took entire possession of his mind, he wrote to his father to declare that, even were the description he had given of the Princess too favourable, he was prepared to submit implicitly to his will.

But this was no sooner done than the opposite considerations suggested themselves.

Should he bind himself for his whole life by ties which he would probably find too irksome to be borne? He dreaded having to blush for an uneducated wife—to endure long years of weariness in her society. The woman with whom he was to pass his life should possess beauty, similarity of tastes, and err rather on the side of freedom than austerity of manners; least of all could he tolerate a sanctified woman, who would have half a dozen hypocrites in her train. Scarcely had the letter to the King been dispatched, when he wrote in a contrary sense to

Grumbkow. If he was to be made miserable, he said, it was indifferent to him in what way; he had been sufficiently punished already for the fault he had committed; he would not bind himself to perpetual unhappiness; he would rather put an end to all his torments by a pistol: he was persuaded that God would not condemn him for escaping from so wretched an existence.\*

Grumbkow, to whom the King had shown the first letter with great exultation, received the second (addressed to himself) on the following day. It must be acknowledged that he had now reason enough to oppose the Prince. He reminded him that he gave way to despondency too soon, and without any sufficient grounds. What would he do if it pleased God to visit him with real calamities? Above all, he declared with the greatest energy and distinctness that the Prince must not reckon upon his assistance on this occasion; he would serve him so far as was compatible with the King's service, but not an inch further. If the Prince chose to play Don Carlos (of St. Real), he himself would not undertake the part of the Duke of Grammont.

Just as Frederick received this abrupt repulse the King's answer arrived. He spoke of his happiness in having so obedient a son, and told him to give up his lodgings in Cüstrin, pay all he owed, and come "with bag and baggage" to Berlin. According to his custom, he fixed the exact day and hour for

\* Je crois que le bon Dieu ne me damnerait pas pour cela, et ayant pitié de moi en échange d'une vie misérable, m'accordera le salut.



Frederick's arrival—Tuesday, the 26th of February, at six o'clock in the evening. It was Shrove Tuesday. It cannot be supposed that Frederick would hesitate to quit the place of his exile and imprisonment. At the appointed hour he arrived.

On his appearance at court people remarked that he had lost something of the youthful grace, the lively devotion to persons or things, which they had been accustomed to love.\* He was grown taller and larger, more thoughtful, colder—in short, more manly.

But he did not dare to resist the King, even in a matter so personal. On the 28th Frederick William, with his usual impetuosity, proceeded to the arrangements for the marriage. After he had asked the consent of the Duke and Duchess of Bevern in person, he sent for Frederick. On his declaration that he felt no repugnance to the Princess, she, too, was called in and interrogated. She answered, like a dutiful child, that she would do whatever her father and mother bade her, and that the person of the Prince was not at all disagreeable to her. The King insisted on his immediately kissing the hands of his future father and mother in law, as a mark of filial respect.

Just at this moment Duke Francis of Lorraine arrived in Berlin, and was received with the greatest cordiality. The King made his tall grenadiers parade before him, had the guns at Berlin fired in his honour,

\* In Nov., 1731, he had been present at his sister's wedding; she was astonished at the change that had taken place in him. *Mém. de Baireuth*, I. 343.

ordered the battalions which he reviewed to shout "Long live Duke Francis," and other demonstrations suited to his own taste and fancy.\* The solemn betrothal of the Crown-Prince took place in the Duke's presence on the 10th of March. The two young men appeared to feel a reciprocal friendship.

The following day the King conducted the Crown-Prince to the general council of ministers, on the condition that he should at first have no power of deciding, and should only seek to acquire information. If he had any doubts, he was not to contradict, but refer to the King's former resolutions. He promoted him, like any other of his councillors, from the lower to the upper office. The Prince was likewise restored to his rank in the army, and immediately appointed colonel of a regiment of foot quartered in Ruppin. He regained his liberty, but we see at what price, and with what obligations to the strictest obedience.

The King expressed great satisfaction at the course affairs had taken. People had thought to give the law to him in his own family—to prescribe to him whom his children should marry, and whom not; he had let them talk about the Russian marriage, and throw the whole world into a rage about it; but he had never had any such intention;—at last he had put an end to all talk, and had shown that he was master in his own house, as well as other people.

Though the King treated this affair as completely personal and domestic, we have already had occasion

\* An article in a newspaper, quoted in Fassmann's *Fred. Wilhelm*, I. 429.

to observe how this sentiment was blended with the haughtiest spirit of political independence. We must also make another remark.

A strict union with another country is not equally expedient for a state or people at every stage of its political existence, and it may be questioned whether in that now under our consideration the peculiar development of Prussia would have been promoted by so intimate an alliance with England as that contemplated. England was too powerful not to have in the end overshadowed her weaker ally, or dragged it along in her wake by her natural preponderance. And further, if the peculiar genius and character of England, which just then began to give birth to various great and splendid works, had been allowed to exercise an open and authorized influence in Berlin, it may be doubted whether the genuine German spirit would not have been stifled and obliterated. Prussia would at all events have acquired a totally different character and aspect. The Crown-Prince, as Statthalter of Hanover, placed in a permanently subordinate situation to the English court, must have burst asunder the ties which bound him to it, or he could never have become the Prussian Frederick.

We shall see hereafter what means he took to place himself, notwithstanding the fetters imposed on him, in connexion with the general progress of civilization and the intellectual tendencies of Europe. Between the storms of his youth, which had now spent themselves, and his accession to the government, a considerable time was granted him, which he improved to that end.

We must now turn our attention to the political consequences of these events.

It cannot be denied that they were mainly advantageous to the house of Austria.

The English government found itself compelled to endeavour to re-establish a good understanding with Austria. Had England gained over Prussia as she desired, the Emperor must have given way. Had the projected marriages taken place, even without any political alliance, Prussia would have occupied a position between the two states, which would have placed the power of mediation in her hands. Now the English court made advances to that of Austria, rather in opposition to Prussia. It was obliged to take that course, since the peaceful and undisturbed commercial intercourse with Spain and her colonies, which the English people most cared about, could be re-established in no other manner. So long as the Spanish garrisons were not received into the fortified towns stipulated with Don Carlos, the treaty of Seville was unfulfilled; the Spanish government felt itself little bound by it, and constantly manifested their ill-humour towards the English. There was, however, as things stood, no other means of gaining the consent of the imperial court to this measure than to aid it in the affair which it had most at heart—the confirmation of the order of succession. This now presented fewer difficulties than formerly, since the Spanish marriages were out of the question; nay, it even appeared desirable, since the selfish schemes of the court of France became more and more apparent. England, therefore, avowed herself ready to support

the interests of Austria, provided that power would make the necessary concessions in return, to which she immediately consented. On the 16th of March, 1731, a new treaty was concluded at Vienna, in which England guaranteed the Austrian order of succession, while Austria consented to the admission of the garrisons in the places stipulated, and at the same time abandoned for ever the project of the Ostend Company, the establishment of which had caused such an agitation.\* Prince Eugene was at the height of satisfaction. He thought that the Spanish troops ought instantly to be received, and the treaty thus put into immediate and unequivocal operation. If Austria's real object in establishing that company, and uniting with Spain, was to bring the opposing maritime powers (for Holland joined with England) to recognise her right of succession, her policy was most secret, adroit, and happy. But in order to ensure its complete success, it was necessary that a man like Frederick William I., in whom German sympathies predominated, and who was satisfied with remote prospects in return for present concessions, now occupied the throne of Prussia. But for this things might have turned out quite otherwise. England now followed the example he had set. The advantage to Austria was undoubtedly immeasurable, if we admit, as we must, that her claims were doubtful, and the guarantee might have been refused.

The King of Prussia was 'so warm a friend to

\* Document in Dumont, Supplement III. 2, 288. *Actus concurrentiæ ordinum generalium ad tractatum Viennemsem.* Ib. 291.

Austria, that he hailed with joy an event which he might have regarded as unfavourable to himself. Nothing, he said, gave him so much pleasure as to see England and Holland come to kiss the Emperor's hand. On the other hand, Seckendorf assured him that, in spite of the re-establishment of a good understanding with the English court, no concessions should be made to it prejudicial to the house of Brandenburg. However good a footing the Emperor might be on with England, he would always be on one of greater amity and confidence with Prussia; and he doubted not that the sentiments and principles of the King on this matter were like his own. "As long as I live," was the King's reply.\*

And in accordance with this declaration he immediately offered the Emperor his support in the most important affair. Having made sure of England, or rather of Hanover, the court of Vienna determined to procure the guarantee of the German Empire. Frederick William had always advised that measure. When the ministers had agreed upon the preliminaries, and drawn up a plan of succession, according to the customary form, and when the principals were about to ratify it, the Emperor requested the King to send his ambassador, who was at that moment absent, to Ratisbon, that he might concert with him the necessary provisions, repeating the assurance that, in none of the affairs regarding the court of Prussia, and

\* 21st Feb., 1731. In this letter Seckendorf adds, *der Kaiser habe zu verstehen gegeben, er wünsche einen so rechtschaffenen patriotischen Herrn kennen zu lernen.* (The Emperor gave to understand that he wished much to become acquainted with so just and patriotic a gentleman.)

particularly that of Juliers and Berg, should anything take place at variance with the engagements already entered into between them; on the contrary, he reiterated his promise "to hold them sacred." The King answered that, next to God, he trusted in no one so much as in his true friend and good ally the Emperor; and that in the matter of the succession—which he used then to call "the good cause"—he would show himself a true friend and a German patriot. It was in great measure owing to the zealous support of Prussia that the proposition passed at the diet, in spite of the opposition of the three Catholic Electors, Saxony, Bavaria, and the Palatinate, and that the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction was raised into a decree of the Empire on the 3rd of February, 1732. The court of Vienna expressed the greatest satisfaction at the King's conduct, and that of his ambassador.

One monument of this cordial understanding, the offspring of this political conjuncture, is, the settlement of the Salzburgers in East Prussia. The imperial court was at this time impartial in matters of religion, disapproved the acts of violence of Archbishop Firmian towards his subjects of another communion, and granted these exiles a passage through its states, which was refused them by others. The prayer of the Salzburgers, who sought protection from Frederick William, was accompanied by an intimation sent by Seckendorf from Vienna, that these pious and industrious men were well fitted to become settlers in Prussia.\* Hereupon the King requested the Arch-

\* Seckendorf's letter is dated 26th Dec., 1731. The King had marked the place with a cross when he first read it through.

bishop to look upon the emigrants as future subjects of Prussia. The zeal with which he provided for their journey and for their establishment in his Lithuanian dominions, did him great honour both with his contemporaries and with posterity.

One of the most influential men in Germany at that time was Count Seckendorf, who was now successfully occupied in extending to other states the alliance which he had already brought about between the two courts. In the spring of 1732, we find him travelling to Cassel and Copenhagen, with a view to gain over these courts, to the interests of which he declared himself the representative. He concluded an extremely important treaty with Denmark, in virtue of which she pledged herself to support the Austrian succession; while, in return, the Emperor, in concurrence with Russia, agreed to accept the proffered indemnity for the Duke of Holstein. In Cassel he concluded a preliminary agreement concerning the transfer of Hessian troops; a cartel was drawn up with Wolfenbüttel for the settlement of certain disputes with Prussia. Seckendorf asserts that the Empress entreated the Duke, her father, to do what he could to oblige the Prussian court, and that he accordingly left it to Seckendorf to settle the points of difference between them. The negotiator who succeeds in maintaining a good understanding between Austria and Prussia must, at all times, be one of the most important men in Germany; his influence must naturally extend over all less powerful princes.

It was mainly owing to Seckendorf that the King, with a view to become better acquainted with the



Emperor and Empress, undertook a journey into Bohemia, in the summer of 1732. On the 31st of July, Frederick William, accompanied by Grumbkow and Seckendorf, arrived at one of the Emperor's estates called Kladrup, near the Silesian frontier, where everything had been prepared for his reception; the Emperor awaited him in Chlumitz, within a short distance, whence they proceeded together to Prague. As is always the case when sovereigns meet—nothing being committed to writing—the archives contain scarcely any account of this meeting. The King's letters show that the fruitfulness of the land and the magnificence of the capital made a great impression upon him;\* and the kind reception he experienced, a still greater. The Empress said that she regarded the Princess of Bevern, the betrothed wife of the Crown-Prince, as her daughter, and Frederick himself as her son. The King appears to have been particularly captivated by Prince Eugene, "Who had never before spoken to him so much from his heart; he was certainly an honourable man, and his very good friend." Business was also discussed, especially that which was of the greatest importance to the King—the affair of Juliers and Berg. In answer to the subsequent inquiries of his ministers, the King replied that a proposal for an amicable arrangement had been made to him, but that he had not thought fit to accept it. This did not interrupt the harmony of the personal relations of the two monarchs. The King had in his possession a letter from Prince

\* Especially to Leopold of Dessau.

Eugene to Seckendorf, to the effect that if the affair of Berg could not be accomplished by negotiation, measures must be taken for attaining it by force; and that, in virtue of the treaty, the King had a right to reckon on the Emperor's assistance now and for ever.

The Emperor's language seemed to imply that he was of opinion that the King should hold himself in readiness to take possession of the country without delay, if occasion offered. With respect to the Polish question, too, which was just arising, the two powers were unanimous with each other and with Russia. On his return to Berlin the King expressed himself perfectly satisfied; he concluded his first conversation with the Austrian ambassador with a "Long life to the *Augustissimus*" (*i. e.* the Emperor). He never spoke of the Emperor or Empress without expressions of personal attachment and respect, and constantly repeated that he would be true to the House of Austria till the day of his death.\*

\* Grumbkow on the 20th, the King on the 26th of August to Seckendorf, in Förster, III. III. 307.

## THIRD BOOK.

## CHAPTER I.

POLICY AND GOVERNMENT OF FREDERICK WILLIAM I.  
1732—1740.

AMONG all the alliances that have ever existed in the world, none gave birth to greater consequences or endured longer than the alliance of the three northern powers in the nineteenth century.

Its foundations were laid, as we have just observed, in the earlier part of the eighteenth; but many and great were the revolutions that took place before its permanent structure was completed amidst the conflict of social and political powers of a kind not even thought of at that period! It is well worth the trouble to investigate on what basis it was first founded, and from what causes it was interrupted. To this inquiry our history now leads us.

The alliance between Austria and Prussia rested, as we have been, at once on their particular interests, and on those of Germany in general. The former were, for Austria, the maintenance of the monarchy in its full integrity; for Prussia, the successful prosecution of her ancient claims to the inheritance on the Lower Rhine. The latter, the preservation of a good

understanding between the two religious parties in Germany; and the exclusion of all foreign influence, whether French or English, which had hitherto prevailed.

The alliance between Austria and Russia was also founded on the weightiest general motives. These mainly consisted in the similarity of their relations to the Turkish Empire. Quarrels, indeed, might have arisen out of them in future, if anything had induced the Turks to concede more influence to the one power than to the other; but of this there was, at that time, not the slightest chance; neither had anything to expect from the Divan, especially under the permanent interference of France, but hostilities which were still pregnant with danger. The conqueror of Zenta declared, that though the superiority of the Ottomans in the art of war was no longer to be feared, their superiority in numbers was still formidable, and rendered stable alliances against them necessary. For Russia, too, it would have been a very sensible loss, whether in resisting or in attacking this enemy, not to have such an ally as Austria at her side. She felt that she had the strongest interest in the maintenance of the power of Austria.

Hence it happened that Russia was instantly ready to acknowledge the order of succession established by Charles VI. As early as August, 1726, the two powers concluded a treaty, one of the highest historical importance of any in the eighteenth century; in virtue of which they promised to assist each other in the defence of their several territories in Europe, and declared themselves ready to co-operate in common enterprises.

The King of Prussia was invited to join in this treaty; but his ministers called his attention to the remote and unforeseen perplexities in which it might involve him—perhaps even in the obligation to furnish succours against the Turk—and he declined it.

There were, however, other occasions in which his own affairs came into the closest contact with those of Austria and Russia: viz., in Poland.

It has often been assumed that even so early as this the three powers had agreed upon the partition of Poland, but this is unquestionably an error. If we consider the relations of those powers, it is obvious that such a thought was very likely to suggest itself. For Prussia, for example, it appeared almost a condition of existence to get possession of the Baltic provinces, formerly subject to the Teutonic Order and the German Empire, but now in the hands of Poland. The other powers made other demands. And as it appeared probable that Poland would not be able to make any efficient resistance, it is true that vague schemes of partition did from time to time arise. One, for example, in 1710, copied from an earlier project, conceived by Charles Gustavus, and based on the co-operation of Sweden, but adapted to actual circumstances; probably the work of a Russian statesman, though Peter I. would hear nothing of it:\* and on this again, a third, of which we shall shortly speak,

\* Doubtless the plan originated in Russia, as Stenzel justly observes: nevertheless I find the following remark, “dass Petrus I. den ganzen Plan nicht allein verworfen, sondern auch diejenigen, welche selbigen formiret, zu Strafe ziehen wollen,”—(that Peter the Great not alone rejected the whole plan, but intended likewise to punish those who formed it.)

put forth at the period of which we are treating. But, notwithstanding these menacing schemes, the conviction prevailed that this aristocratic republic—for such Poland was become under her later kings—constituted an essential member in the collective body of European states, and that her fall would bring with it many new evils. Frederick William, in consequence of the counsels given him by Ilgen, the “faithful unto death,” was against all great changes in Poland, even though they were to lead to considerable territorial acquisitions on his part.

In fact, the only real interest of the three powers was, not to permit that Poland, whether in consequence of a vacancy of the throne, or of any other event, should be developed into a power from which they might have to apprehend danger or annoyance. How easily this might happen was shown by the example of Augustus II., who owed his accession to the throne to the influence of Austria, and his restoration to the arms of Russia, yet in his latter years adopted a policy hostile to both. We must devote a few words to this prince and to his enterprises.

Augustus II. was a man of very extraordinary personal qualities; variously, or rather, as Frederick William said, universally gifted. For whatever he touched, he showed the appropriate skill and talent; and yet he was always attempting something new, whether it were the building of a palace or a church, the drilling of a regiment or the planning of a splendid and luxurious feast, a love affair or a political intrigue. He rushed from one exciting occupation to another, from pleasure to pleasure, without the least regard to duty

or to dignity; he delighted in a mixture of power and licentiousness. Still less had he the least scruples of conscience on the score of extravagance; he rather regarded it as beneficial to the country; the magnificence of the palaces, the number of attendants, the splendour of the court, he thought promoted trade, and furnished the various classes of artificers with the means of subsistence.\* But his hereditary dominions were too small to satisfy his restless activity; he plunged headlong into the "ever-rolling sea" of the troubled affairs of the Polish nation. He had there to contend against an internal opposition which yielded to no expression of will, and was only overcome by strongly influencing numerous individuals. The possession of this throne brought him into immediate contact with all that was mighty in Europe; he had a predilection for the bye-ways of politics; for example, he chose to avoid Prince Eugene in Vienna, and in Petersburg he sought access to the female attendants of the Empress through the wife of his ambassador. His pages helped him to carry on the necessary correspondence; this was the foundation of Brühl's fortune. It formed an essential part of his character and of the charm he strove to throw over life, to indulge in the dreams of a boundless ambition. He once planned to get the supreme power of Germany into the hands of a league of princes, under pretext that the house of Austria was no longer capable of maintaining the dignity of the Empire.

\* The arms of Saxony were supposed to have had their origin at first when Frederick Barbarossa placed on the head of one of the ancestors of that house, a garland of rue.

He never for a moment relinquished the project of urging at the death of Charles VI. the claims which his family had acquired through his son's wife; we have it on Brühl's testimony that he entered into negotiations with France with the view to a partition of the hereditary dominions of Austria.\* Had he succeeded, as he flattered himself, in uniting Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia with the rich provinces of Saxony (as he had already united Lusatia), and then in emancipating himself from the imperial suzerainty, what a part might he have played in Germany! Yet even this did not satisfy Augustus. After long meditation and wavering, how he should become master of Poland, and establish his dynasty in that country, he came to the decision that he must attempt to acquire the sovereignty of at least a portion of it. To achieve this, and to avert the opposition of the neighbouring potentates, if possible to gain their support, he offered them certain provinces of the kingdom. Russia was to have Lithuania, and Prussia the so-called Polish Prussia; but the former without Wilna, the latter without Danzig, which he reserved for himself—to Austria he would cede the district of Zips. Of all the schemes for the partition of Poland, the first which was seriously entertained originated with one of her own kings. In the autumn of 1732, Augustus II. made plain and direct propositions to

\* Letter of Belleisle, 10th May, 1741.—*J'avais commencé par demander, au Comte de Brhulle, quel étoit le partage projecté par le traité du Marquis de Monti; il m'a dit que l'électeur de Saxe devoit avoir alors toute la Bohème y compris la Silésie et la Moravie.*



the Prussian minister, Marschall von Biberstein. Marschall asked him \* whether he had gained over any magnates of the kingdom to his scheme, and whether he could reckon on the army; the King's answers show that he had as yet done little to that end, but that neither did he think it necessary; for it would be easy to manage Poland if the powers were but united. Marschall asked whether he was sure of the consent of his fourth neighbour, the Grand Seignior; the King answered in the florid language of which he was so fond, that "the eagles that can gaze upon the sun would not fear the crescent moon." In the beginning of the year 1733 Augustus made a journey into Poland; at his urgent request General Grumbkow, whom he had specially invited as the confidant of the King of Prussia, was sent to Crossen to welcome him. The conference between them is extremely characteristic. Grumbkow's objections arose chiefly from the position of Austria, who had recently entered into an agreement with Poland; and would be the less likely to take part in so doubtful an enterprise, since she must hold herself prepared for a war with France on account of the succession. King Augustus was not the least embarrassed by this; indeed, the obstacles presented by the force of treaties were at all times very small in his eyes; he would not admit the

\* The instruction by which the authority was given to him, in Förster, II. 119; nevertheless it ought to run, que le Roi de Pologne prétend de l'Empereur, instead of, que la Saxe prétend de l'empire. Among other expressions of Augustus was the following one: il y a deux chemins, la douceur et la force et il n'y a point de risque.

danger of a war, so long as the Empire did not proceed to the election of a King of the Romans. Grumbkow pointed out to him that if it came to a war, and he connected himself in any way with France, he would be attacked in his hereditary domains of Saxony by Austria and Prussia combined; the King replied, that he should not despair of defending himself, but that he wished to stand well with Prussia; if that power would support him, he, on his part, would willingly give his aid in the affair of Juliers and Berg.\* After the old German fashion the deliberation was continued at table, where the King did not spare the champagne. He sent for a map of Poland, and sketched out the plan of a campaign in which Russia and Prussia should either act alone, or he would bring up his troops to join theirs. His eyes dwelt with pleasure on the wide domains which he hoped to acquire for his house. They sat together six hours, but, however free and convivial they appeared, neither of the practised politicians forgot himself for a moment. Once it appeared as if the King was afraid he had said too much, in relating that the court of Vienna had caused overtures to be made to him, and naming the agent they had employed; but Grumbkow did not believe that he was capable of saying more than he intended, and merely concluded that he himself had made proposals to Vienna. Grumbkow had been extremely cautious at table, and had drunk more water than wine. The King was surprised when he

\* A more detailed account given by Grumbkow, 14th Jan., 1733; from which it appears that there is some little truth in all that has been said about this meeting in other places.

saw him come in the following morning fresh and lively, while his own head was confused from the fumes of the wine. As he stood there by the chimney fire, half-dressed and exhibiting all the marks of increasing infirmity, no one could have believed that he harboured in his mind such world-embracing plans. Grumbkow almost thought that he was not in earnest; or that perhaps the French party had put these schemes into his head, in order "to divide the eagles."\*

Even had the three powers been more inclined to entertain a scheme for the partition of Poland than we find any trace of their being at that epoch, the other political views of Augustus would have sufficed to scare them from it. His idea of an armed union of sovereigns was little calculated to tempt the King of Prussia, closely allied as that monarch was with Austria. Frederick William met him with a very simple remark, which went to the root of the matter. He asked him, who was to have the command of such an army: he, the King of Prussia, would certainly not concede it to any other, and it was equally certain that nobody would concede it to him; they had better, therefore, keep to their accustomed chief. The connexion of Augustus with France was in the highest degree offensive to them. The

\* Toute l'idée que je m'en peux former, c'est, que le plan en question est un ponto studiato de la cabale française pour occuper et diviser les aigles en cas qu'ils entreront dans ce chimérique plan ou, ce qui est le plus apparent, pour en cas de refus pouvoir faire voir au patron combien peu on souhaite de le favoriser même dans les occasions où les autres princes trouvent aussi leur avantage.

maintenance of the Austrian succession constituted at this moment the central point of their common efforts—to contest the claims of Austria in alliance with France, and at the same time to invite her to join in an enterprise against Poland, were projects utterly at variance with each other.

Indeed, the powers had been for some time engaged in negotiations of a totally different character, for the very purpose of putting an end to the dangerous activity of the Saxon policy.

In the year 1726 already Russia and Prussia had agreed to use their joint endeavours that at the next vacancy of the throne of Poland a prince should be elected who should be dangerous neither to the liberties of that country, nor to the security of his neighbours; and who might be expected to observe the ancient treaties of the Republic with Brandenburg as well as with Russia.\*

In the year 1729 there was a great deal of discussion between the three powers on the question whether they should unite beforehand to exclude the two next competitors, Stanislaus Leszczyński and the Electoral Prince of Saxony. Russia and Prussia had agreed upon this; Austria resisted, wishing to avoid a breach with Saxony. But as the two former would do nothing to which the latter refused to accede, they

\* Ostermann said in July, that the Crown-Prince appeared too dangerous to his master. In October he said, that his Imperial Majesty of Russia would have been better contented if one of the family of Piast had ascended the throne. He was by no means pleased that Austria had taken part in the consultation, and had obtained knowledge of the stipulations.

did not formally pronounce their vote of exclusion, but contented themselves, as before, with general expressions. The treaty concluded in October, 1729, and after the Empress Anne had ascended the throne ratified by her in October, 1730, was, in fact, a mere repetition of the former. It contained nothing new, except a more emphatic clause concerning the protection of dissidents of the evangelical and Greek confessions. The expressions were so moderate that they might have been communicated to the King of Poland himself.

In a short time it was deemed advisable, especially in Petersburg, to come to a more distinct understanding as to the candidate to be preferred in the event of an election. Prussia and Russia suggested a Polish magnate, who traced his descent to the race of the Piasts, Prince Sangusko; they thought that, as he showed singular prudence and care in the management of his own property, he would be able to conduct the affairs of the country by himself, and not stand in constant need of foreign aid; while his ambition was not so great as to excite the alarm of his neighbours.\*

\* This agreement contained a reciprocal guarantee, especially as to the territories held by both their Majesties on the Baltic (§ 2), together with several secret articles. One of these concerning Schleswick is given by Dumont, VIII. 2, 135. In another one it is stated, "und wenn es demaleinst nach Gottes Willen zur Wahl eines neuen Königs von Polen kommen sollte, so wollen allerhöchst gedachte I. Kgl. und I. Ksl. Mt. nicht nur alsdann sondern von nun an ihre Consilia einmüthig dahin richten, dass der K. Polnische Thron mit einem Successor wieder besetzt werden möge, der so wenig der polnischen Libertät als der Nachbarschaft gefährlich;"—(and when it shall be God's pleasure that an election for another king of Poland shall

The Court of Vienna, on the other hand, proposed the Infant Don Emanuel of Portugal.

It appears very strange that a Portuguese infant should have been thought of for the throne of Poland; but the connexion was not so remote as it appears. Don Emanuel was, through his mother, a grandson of that Elector Palatine who once, with the support of Brandenburg, had tried, with a tolerable prospect of success, to gain the crown of Poland. He was first-cousin to the Emperor. He had long ceased to live in Portugal. It is not exactly known whether he had really quitted it (as was affirmed) because he would otherwise have been compelled to enter the Church; but it is at all events certain that his brother, the King, was not apprised of his departure. With equal address and determination he broke away from the supervision which the Portuguese ambassador tried to exercise over him in Paris. He said he "would learn his business" in the imperial army. He distinguished himself greatly in the profession of arms; in the battle of Peterwardein (1716) he rushed on the enemy with an intrepidity that drew forth a brilliant eulogy from Prince Eugene. Since that time he had visited most of the courts of Europe, acquiring a store of information, and a considerable reputation at home and abroad. The thing which take place, his Most Gracious Majesty, and his Imperial Majesty will not only then, but now, with one accord so direct their Consilia, that the throne of Poland shall be occupied by a successor, who should be as little dangerous to Polish liberty as to his neighbours.)—The King of Prussia added thereto, that his opinion in this was none other, save that this successor should, and must, be a Polish nobleman bred and born.

chiefly recommended him doubtless was, the expectation cherished that his brother, King John V., who had acquired an extraordinary reputation for wealth, by the great works of magnificence and utility he had executed, would assist him to carry through the expensive business of the election. The court of Vienna repeatedly called upon the King to do so;\* and his natural hostility to the Bourbons, whose preponderance menaced Portugal, appeared a sufficient motive to induce him to comply.

The King of Prussia acceded without difficulty to this proposition; he had no other aim than to acquire a peaceful neighbour who would not thwart his present system. The Empress Anne hesitated for a moment:—a visit which Don Emanuel had made to Petersburg appears not to have furthered his cause; however, in the autumn of 1732, she declared herself positively in his favour. Count Löwenwolde, one of the grandees of her court, repaired to Berlin with this declaration, to which he added one of no less importance for Prussia herself.

There had often been a talk of conferring the Duchy of Courland on a Prussian prince, chiefly in order to oppose another combination to the Polish scheme of dissolving it and dividing it into woiwodships.

\* Compare a letter of Eugene's, 23rd Aug., 1716. Works, IV. 99. Foscarini *Storia Arcana*. Madame d'Orleans mentions him in July, 1716. Oliveyra dedicated his *Mémoires de Portugal* to him. In his dedication he praises him in the most pompous phrases, as "tout à la fois un grand prince, un guerrier redoutable, un général habile, un soldat magnanime, un sage politique, un Seigneur généreux, un chrétien vertueux, un héros consommé."

Peter I. had shown a great inclination that way, and the Empress Anne now proposed, more distinctly than ever, to ensure to Prussia the possession of this province at the ensuing election, "out of friendship and respect for the house of Brandenburg."

Frederick William did not like to hear anything more about a thing which had once failed. He feared that he should not succeed, should be put to great expense, and reap nothing but annoyances. But when the proposal was now made to him in a manner so flattering to his house, he esteemed it almost his duty towards that to listen to it.

It was at the hunting-seat at Wusterhausen that Löwenwolde and Seckendorf, entirely alone with the King, negotiated this matter; nor was it till even the punctuation was all settled that Frederick William let his ministers into the secret, and these, after some deliberation, drew up a treaty, which was called after Löwenwolde (December 13, 1732).

The main treaty was so framed that it could, if necessary, be communicated to others. Its principal clause was, that the national right of election should be maintained in Poland, but that the contracting powers would not suffer it to be abused by a faction, to serve the ends of France or of Stanislaus Leszczyński; they would also respect the freedom of election of the Courland nobles, but on condition that it was not exercised to the prejudice of the three allies. Provisions of a more personal character were reserved for secret articles. One of them says, that they would do everything that was at all consistent with the freedom of election to seat the Portuguese Infant Emanuel



on the Polish throne; a sum of money to be applied to that purpose was named; no obligations were, however, to be imposed on the new King that might render him odious to his subjects. The three powers would endeavour to find a suitable match for him which might gain him a party in the country.

The second secret article relates to Courland; the Empress promises to employ every means consistent with the freedom of election of the Courland nobility, to determine their choice upon the second Prussian prince, Augustus William, or, in case of his death, upon one of his younger brothers. This choice was to be guaranteed and maintained by Austria, Prussia, and Russia.\*

It is true that Seckendorf did not formally sign the treaty which he so zealously negotiated; and also that Löwenwolde expressly reserved the ratification of his imperial mistress; but it was impossible to consider this as doubtful, since the proposal originated in their two courts.

The three powers seemed on the whole more strictly united than ever. General Seckendorf played the same part in Berlin that Königsegg had once played in Madrid; reports were sent him from foreign courts, and he wrote with his own hand the instructions to Grumbkow for his conference with Augustus II. The anniversary of the coronation of the first King of Prussia (January 18) was solemnly kept at Peters-

\* It has been maintained that in the treaty Berg was likewise guaranteed by Russia. But this is opposed to the idea of the independence of the Empire in regard to its own internal affairs: there is not a word on the subject.

burg by the Empress Anne. The choice of Prince Antony Ulrich of Brunswick-Bevern, the nephew of the Empress and expectant brother-in-law of the Crown-Prince of Prussia, as consort for Princess Anna of Mecklenburg, the heiress of the throne of Russia, was regarded as the keystone of this alliance. It was directed specially against the schemes of Augustus II., nor is it conceivable that he would ever have been able to break it up.

At this moment, however, that prince fell a victim to diseases which he would not confess to others, or perhaps even to himself; he could not open in person the diet he had convoked, and expired at Warsaw in the night of the 31st of January.\*

The disappearance of this ever-restless spirit, which attempted to move east and west, and to turn upside down the various existing systems of policy, was of itself an important event. It was still more so as occasioning that great vacancy which had always formed a pivot of the political movements of Europe. And such it now proved.

Without the smallest regard to the opposition that was to be anticipated, France took part for Stanislaus Leszczyński. Louis XV., son-in-law of that prince, viewed it almost as a point of honour to restore him to the throne from which he had been driven, and

\* What Grumbkow says of himself in one of his letters, almost belongs to a description of his connexion with the Prussian court. Grumbkow, who had returned excited and agitated by this meeting, thought that during the night he saw the King standing before him in his night-shirt, with his eyes shut. "Dear General Grumbkow," said the apparition, "I died on the 31st January at Warsaw."

furnished his ambassador in Warsaw with the means of procuring him adherents. Votes were solicited and gained almost entirely by bribes; the Poles would have it so. One of the most powerful magnates was heard to say, "that nothing was to be done with honours and distinctions; it had always been the custom to give money, and by that custom they must abide." Yet it would be an error to imagine that money was the sole agent. Stanislaus had adherents, who declared for him from personal attachment or political consistency. Many maintained that he had never ceased to be King, he needed only to be recalled.

It is evident that such a project must have been very disagreeable to Russia, as well as to Austria. It was precisely by the Russian arms that Stanislaus had been expelled, and Count Ostermann, the leading minister at Petersburg, declared with little circumlocution, that Russia would regard a re-election of the expelled king as a declaration of war. Austria had not so direct a political interest in opposing this restoration; but she feared that under Stanislaus the French influence in Poland would predominate, and emanating from that centre would become dangerous to the house of Austria in the approaching struggle for the succession. There was nothing new in these objections. The conferences which we have mentioned had been held precisely on account of them, and with a view to the selection of a candidate agreeable to all. It appears from the documents extant, that Don Emanuel really had friends in Poland.

But another consideration now presented itself to

the court of Vienna. Augustus II. had left a son, the heir of his name, but not of his talents, either for good or evil,\* nearly allied, through his wife, to the house of Austria. Explanations concerning his claims to the succession, of a nature to satisfy that court, were now given. As early as the middle of March Prince Eugene said, in an evening party, that the Saxon minister had given him such assurances that they might hope to be better satisfied with the Prince than with his predecessor. It was obviously very much their interest to conciliate him, since, of all the claimants, he was, if not the first, certainly the second. It may be that the mother of the new Electress of Saxony, the Empress dowager, used her influence in his favour. But the main thing was, the hope of being at once rid of a very objectionable claim, and of seeing a trusty friend seated on the throne of Poland. As it must evidently be easier, with the support of the three powers, to carry the election in favour of the heir of the late King (who had done everything to create a party), than in that of a Portuguese Infant, who was little known, Russia likewise inclined to this solution of the affair.

But the question now arose, how the third power,

\* Foscari, *Relatione di Vienna*. Conosciutolo di spiriti differenti dal padre, e disposto pur anche a ricinoscere la pragmatica si risolvette (la corte) d'inalzarlo;—abandonando l'infante considerato di non aver costumi idonei a conciliarsi favore nella nazione Polacca, dove nemmeno riteneva capital di aderenze proprie e di amici. E credesi inoltre che a questo cangiamento—contribuisse non poco in segreto l'imperatrice vedova, tratta dall'ambitione di veder la figliuola con una corona sul capo.

Prussia, would take this total change of political views?—whether she would approve and share it?

It is evident, at the first glance, that Prussia did not, on her own account, lie under any such necessity of averting French influence from Poland, as the other two powers, to whom the intrigues of France in Turkey had often been dangerous, especially to the house of Austria in Hungary. Looking at the general affairs of Europe, Prussia, considered apart, did not stand in any hostile attitude to France. But, on the other hand, it might become very inconvenient to her if her nearest neighbour in Germany, with whom, from various causes, quarrels and misunderstandings were hardly to be avoided, should now be strengthened by the possession of the Polish crown, which, indeed, maintained its ancient claim to suzerainty. Frederick William could hardly be expected to concede without a struggle that, instead of a Piast, whom he had always wished for, or the Portuguese Prince, whom he would at least have accepted as harmless, a considerable German Prince should ascend the throne of Poland, from whom he had to expect a policy completely at variance with his own. At all events he could not consent to fulfil for such an one that obligation to take up arms in his defence which he had incurred with quite other prospects.

He declared himself not averse to unite with Russia and Austria, provided only Saxony would accept the conditions which he must lay down in return for so great a concession. In May the negotiations were so far advanced that he could name these conditions.\*

\* Prussian Postulata, 12th May: "dass Ihro Kön. Hoheit

He demanded, above all, the recognition and promotion of his claims both to the Grand Duchy of Berg and now to the Duchy of Courland: this was the main thing; for his other demands, recognition of the East Frisian as well as the royal title, and other minor affairs, were either matters of course or signified little. The Prussian minister and even the King did not doubt that the Elector of Saxony would consent to these terms, considering the advantages that were held out to him in prospect.

The court of Dresden, however, believed that, as it was sure of Austria and Russia, it might accomplish its ends without the aid of Prussia.

Its answer was couched in the most courteous and friendly language, but contained a peremptory refusal on all points. In those which regarded Poland it pointed out the limitations to which the King of that country was subjected, and made no sort of offer of service or assistance: in the affair of Berg, it referred to the kinsmen of the feudatory; promised to recognise the East Frisian title, if the Emperor did—as if it had been in its power, in that case, to refuse it—

*der Churfürst verspräche, dass sie den Process beim Reichshofrath in der Cleve Jülich und Bergschen Sache nicht weiter treiben sondern gänzlich liegen lassen; S. Königl. Majestät und dero Successoren an der Cron und Chur, auch allenfalls der weiblichen Posterität das Herzogthum Berg nebt denen Herrschaften Ravenstein und Winnenthal garantire."* (That his Royal Highness the Elector should promise, in the matter of Juliers and Berg, not to urge on the suit in the imperial council, but to let it drop altogether. His Royal Highness and his successors to the crown and electorate, will on his part guarantee to the female posterity the duchy of Berg, together with the principalities of Ravenstein and Winnenthal.)

even the recognition of the royal title appeared doubtful.

A second answer, sent shortly after, was not more favourable.\* King Frederick-William said, "he fell from the clouds, and he must speak plain German to the Saxons."

On a further consideration of his position he could not but perceive that his relations to his allies had materially altered since the death of Augustus II.

The Empress Anne had not yet ratified the treaty proposed in her name. Count Löwenwolde, who had received a cipher by which to keep up a secret correspondence with his court, had not used it, and had never written a word: all inquiries about the affair were answered evasively, and it was obvious that the Russian court had rather hear nothing more of the matter. This conduct is explicable on the supposition of the truth of what the historians of the time unanimously assert; viz., that the Elector of Saxony had promised to Biron, the Chamberlain and favourite of the Empress, that same Courland which, in pursuance of the treaty, was to be bestowed on a Prussian Prince.†

\* 8th June, 1733, directed to the Prussian minister, Lüderitz.

† In a paper drawn up by Tulemeiers, dated 4th Feb., 1734, he says that Biron did not deserve a present, "als er dem Wienerischen Hofe zu gefallen einzig und allein Schuld daran ist, dass die Russische Kaiserin sich mit dem Churfürsten von Sachsen vertieft und der Russisch kaiserliche Hof und jetzt gleichsam à la pointe de son épée forciren will, dass wir den Churfürsten von Sachsen auf dem polnischen Thron befestigen helfen und dadurch zu unserm eigenen Schaden und Verderben arbeiten sollen,"—(in that to please the court of Vienna, he alone

With regard to Austria, an incident occurred which stirred the King's inmost soul.

In June, 1733, the union of the Crown-Prince with the Princess of Bevern, which had been so warmly promoted by the Austrian court, was to take place. The vassals of the crown were apprised of the event in a circular letter, by which they were also released from the customary presents; moreover, it was solemnly announced from all the pulpits in the kingdom, and the grandfather of the Princess, Duke Louis Rudolf, father of the Empress, had undertaken to make the preparations for the wedding in his castle of Salzdahlum, then renowned for its treasures of art. The King and Queen of Prussia, with their whole court, were already arrived, when a letter from Prince Eugene was received by Seckendorf, who had accompanied them hither, commanding him, if possible, to give the affair another turn. On a former occasion, when an alliance between England and Prussia against Austria was feared, the imperial court had done everything to disunite them; now, as it had only to contend with France, and was on a good footing with England as well as with Prussia, it deemed it advantageous to its interests to re-unite those two powers and the two royal families. Seckendorf had already ventured to hint at this, but the King, in the familiarity of his smoking-room, had

brought about that the Empress of Russia is on good terms with the Elector of Saxony, and the Russian imperial court endeavours to force us, *à la pointe de son épée*, to help to place the Elector of Saxony on the throne of Poland, and thus to labour towards our own especial injury and loss.)



checked him angrily. The affair, however, was too important to be relinquished thus; it seemed to involve the renewal of the great European alliance against France. Seckendorf was at length compelled, although very doubtful of the result (Grumbkow having refused to have anything to do with it), to proceed to a formal disclosure, and that without delay, lest it should be too late. The King was in bed when Seckendorf entered his room, with a smiling countenance, as he himself relates. His proposal was as follows: that the King, in spite of all that had occurred, should marry the Crown-Prince to an English princess, and that Frederick's betrothed bride should be affianced to the Prince of Wales. It is clear that even at Vienna the King's character, purposes, and ways of thinking were not known; they imagined that the intrigue of which the English court complained had actually been successful; they had no conception of the earnest and profound sentiments which slumbered beneath the stormy violence of this prince, and formed the basis of all his actions. The King listened to Seckendorf in silence. He allowed him to read aloud Prince Eugene's letter, and the English annotations upon it; nor even then did he break out into any violence, but he declared, with the greatest decision, that such a thing was not to be thought of; doubtless it was an invention of his enemies, in order to exhibit him to the world as a man without principle or honour; but he would not incur such a stain, nor act against his conscience. The betrothed couple were instantly married, 12th June, 1733; the nuptial benediction was pronounced by

Mosheim, whose discourse was printed. The Prince no longer found fault with his wife because she was not an English princess; since his sister's marriage he had entirely abandoned that wish.

The King, however, who always put his whole soul into all his concerns, was not a little alienated by this affair; the personal offence he had received had the effect of wakening him to a sense of his own interests, in so far as they were distinct from those of the two other powers, and rendered it more easy for his ministers to suggest them to him. From that day the negotiations assumed a totally different tone.

In June Seckendorf called upon the King to join in a declaration, the object of which was to exclude Stanislaus Leszczynski from the throne of Poland; but he no longer found the same ready compliance.

The ministers reminded the King that Löwenwolde's treaty was not ratified by Austria or Russia, and therefore could not be binding on Prussia. The objections which had availed against England were now turned against Austria and Russia; Prussia would be a subaltern power if she were implicitly to accede to everything resolved upon by her two neighbours.\* If Prussia, they added, pronounced for the exclusion of Stanislaus, she was bound to maintain it. Now it was known that the King of France would regard the exclusion of his father-in-law as a declaration of war; he would easily conquer the western possessions of Prussia, Cleves, Guelders, and Neuchatel, and they would also have to sustain hostile attacks on the Polish frontier, perhaps even in Pome-

\* Representation of the Minister of the 23rd of June.

rania. And all to what end? To place a prince on the throne of Poland who refused every reasonable concession, and to help to establish an alliance from which perhaps Prussia would have to receive the law; in short, for her own destruction.

As Seckendorf referred to the obligations which the King had incurred by former treaties, and, in virtue of them, demanded that troops should be immediately stationed on the Polish frontier, the King ordered his ministers to tell him, on their faith and oath, the exact truth as to the nature and extent of his obligations; for, he said, he would fulfil them to the letter, but would not go one step beyond. They were not to trust to their memory, but to refer to the archives, and to study the contents of the ratified treaties in their originals.

This was executed with the utmost precision, and Grumbkow, in accordance with the King's wishes, was present at the discussion.

They found only two ratified treaties bearing upon the question; the Berlin treaty of 1728, and the renewal of the Russian treaty of 1730. Neither of them, however, contained more than a very general mention of the matters at issue.

The ministers declared, on their sacred oath and allegiance, that the treaties did not contain a word that could bind the King to prevent the accession of Stanislaus to the throne. If a contrary opinion afterwards prevailed, it was founded on the presumption that Löwenwolde's treaty had been ratified, which was not the case. The ministers judged that the King's hands were perfectly free; let him take what

course he would in this affair, the Emperor was bound to fulfil his engagements with regard to Berg.

Hereupon the two imperial courts were given to understand that Prussia could not take part in so dangerous an undertaking, unless, in the first place, Saxony accepted her postulates, and, in the second, she were certain of compensation for the possible losses she might suffer in the war, or, according to the phraseology of an official statement of the 9th of July, "a proportionate settlement and a compensation" ("eine proportionirte convenienz und ein dedommagement"); on this point a new compact in due form must be drawn up between the courts, unless the other two preferred instantly to ratify Löwenwolde's treaty.

Negotiations were carried on for some time on this point.

Seckendorf said that when the affair of Juliers and Berg was finally arranged, his court would have no hesitation in guaranteeing Courland to a Prussian prince: the Prussian ministers declined accepting conditions so remote.

Seckendorf continued to assert that the imperial court would certainly not conclude a treaty with Saxony, until that power had given satisfaction to Prussia "in her very moderate and reasonable postulates." But he asserted more than he knew. At that very moment the affair had been otherwise decided at Vienna. Conferences had been held in the Emperor's presence on the question, whether it would be expedient to unite with Saxony without the concurrence of Prussia. On the 16th of July it was at length determined, since Prussia made so many diffi-

culties, to pronounce sentence of exclusion against Stanislaus, and to conclude the treaty with Saxony alone. The very same day it was signed.

It contains, it is true, an expression of the expectation that Prussia would unite with the other powers in the affair of the election, and that the Elector of Saxony would pay due regard to the reasonable wishes of Prussia; but there is a vast difference between the postponement of an agreement till the conditions to which it is attached are accepted, and its subscription beforehand. It was easy to foresee that the court of Saxony would grant nothing to the King of Prussia, unless it were forced to do so; nevertheless the court of Vienna concluded the treaty, and that of Russia followed its example.

We do not accuse the statesmen who then conducted the policy of those two powers of any crime. The treaty, of the non-ratification of which Prussia complained, was, for that very reason, binding on neither party. If Prussia complained that they did not longer delay the conclusion of the treaty with Saxony, we must admit that the answer of the two courts is not without force; namely, that the refusal of the King of Prussia to pronounce the exclusion of Stanislaus Lessczynski had rendered any longer delay impossible; he might otherwise have established himself on the throne before anything was done to prevent it.

It cannot, however, be denied that they had materially changed their policy. They renounced their connexion, hitherto so strict, with Prussia, in favour of an alliance with that very Elector of Saxony whom they had so long opposed and excluded.

On a careful examination of the relations of the Russian court, we find that all rested upon this: that whereas Löwenwolde made the establishment of an alliance with Austria and Prussia almost a personal affair, the High Chamberlain, Biron, promoted that with Austria and Saxon Poland. Biron, however, was far the more powerful of the two. It was said of him at that time, that he wanted nothing of being Emperor but the title, so authoritative was his word in every respect.

Austria, which without doubt exercised a concurrent influence in the matter, had constantly only one end in view—to secure the general recognition of her new order of succession. For the attainment of this, nothing appeared to her more urgent than to get rid of the claims of the Elector of Saxony, which unquestionably might acquire great weight if he took part in the pending negotiations. The only decisive means of winning him over was, the throne of Poland. To propose to him conditions in favour of a third party, which might have the effect of disturbing his amicable dispositions, seemed inexpedient. The greatest hopes were attached to this compact. Though France, together with perhaps the courts of Bavaria and the Palatinate, persisted in its adverse demands, Austria thought she should now be able to oppose to her a great European league. She hoped to unite Russia, Saxony and Poland, the maritime powers, and Prussia; an alliance stronger than any that had ever existed: there was now nothing to fear from Sweden, so that France would rather have to think of defending herself than of attacking others.

The two courts and their respective statesmen looked, as is their wont, mainly at the great proximate advantages; there was but one error in their calculations—they estimated the King of Prussia too lightly. Out of consideration for Austria, Frederick William had declined the overtures, first of England, and then of Saxony; had repelled the advances of these courts and made them his enemies; now an attempt was made to drag him in an opposite direction: with the one he was to contract family ties, now become odious to him, with the other, a political alliance. They seemed to think that the King was bound in every respect and for ever, by the promise made him as to the affair of Berg. It appeared as if his alliance in the affairs of the north had been sought only because Augustus II. was untrustworthy, mobile, and fertile in threatening projects. But to the King of Prussia a King of Saxony less ambitious, more bound to the two powers, and moreover rigidly Catholic, was still more objectionable on the throne of Poland than Augustus. And what would be the result if the alliance with England and Holland were concluded? Prussia would be hurried along by the other powers without her consent being asked. The King once said, that they wanted to shut him up like a parrot in a cage, so that he might not be able to move. Frederick William I. was not the man to be insensible to this, or to acquiesce in it. The sum of his ambition, his deepest political desire, was, that Prussia should be able to exert her activity and her influence in accordance with the views which her character enjoined. He determined in his own mind to keep these things distinct as they had always been:

to observe the secret alliance so far as it went; in other respects, to go his own way. To separate himself from the Emperor, even partially, was extremely painful to him; he expressed this with a sincerity and heartiness that left no room for doubt;\* but he had no alternative, and the Polish affairs furnished the first occasion.

If we would see how his general policy gradually underwent an entire change, we must follow him through this affair and all the intricate general combinations connected with it.

He reverted to his first idea, that the Poles should choose a King out of their own body: not Stanislaus, whom though he did not exclude, neither did he recommend; but one of less political importance. There were several other Polish grandees, such as the families of Wisnowiezki, Radziwill, Sanguski, Lubomirski, Sapieha, who, though not attached to Saxony, would not consent that a man repeatedly declared by the Republic an enemy of his country, should now be called to the throne.† It was settled at various dietines, that the

\* We will here only mention one marginal note of the King's, of 26th March, 1733: "Meine Feinde mögen thun was sie wollen so gehe ich nicht ab vom Kaiser oder der Kaiser muss mich mit den Füßen wegstossen sonst ich mit Treue und Blut sein (bin), und bis in mein Grab verbleibe."—(Mine enemies may do what they will, I will not desert the Emperor, unless he should kick me away with his feet, otherwise I will remain true to the death.)

† Stanislaus in fundamento antiquissimarum legum et constitutionum præsertim vero de annis 1593, 1607, 1670,—nomine tenus per constitutiones reipublicæ de annis 1703, 4, § 10, 16, 18 pro hoste patriæ tyranno impostore in omne ævum inhabili ad terram Poloniæ et pro ineligiblei declaratum. The Diary of the election was there printed.



Piast who was to be elected should have no connexion with foreign powers, and should be on an equality with the rest of the nobility. And certainly nothing could have been more desirable, than that the nation should have given itself a chief independent of either of the existing parties. But the above-named magnates could not agree in the choice of such an one; several of them aspired to gain the crown for themselves.\* On the other hand, the Potocki family, with the whole mass of the lesser nobles, and likewise their antagonists the Czartorinskys and Poniatowskys, declared for Stanislaus. At the settlement of the oath of the general confederation they maintained the ascendancy, though not without numerous contests and outbreaks of violence; they erased every condition out of the formula. The Primate, Theodore Potocki, Archbishop of Gnesen, and the French ambassador, held the party together.

On the meeting of the election diet, at the end of August, there was an incontestable majority for Stanislaus; of the adverse party, some did not dare to appear; others, after a short time, retired; and at the first collection of the votes, on the 11th and 12th of September, all was decided. The several woiwodeships and povjatys (districts) had taken their appointed places on the field of election: the Primate then moved forward with an escort of 500 horsemen; he addressed himself first to the men of Great Poland; they shouted, "Long live Stanislaus!" the rest followed their example; of all the povjatys, only two

\* Quot capita tot sensus: quot sensus tot reges. (Letter from Lithuania.)

from Sandomir voted for his exclusion : a single noble declared for the Elector of Saxony, but not without drawing upon himself violent ill-treatment. The Primate was afterwards accused of having caused the dissentient voices to be drowned by the shouts of his followers, but there is no doubt that a nearly unanimous sentiment prevailed on the field, and at length the last opposing voice—that of a Volhynian—was silent. Stanislaus, who had made his way in disguise through the German and Prussian territories, was greeted with universal applause, and proclaimed King with the usual ceremonies.

The right of freely electing their king was regarded by the Poles as a prerogative which distinguished them from all the nations of the world. The speech with which Massalski, the marshal of the convocation, opened the meeting on the field of election, extolled their peculiar felicity that in them God had kept alive the memory of the freedom which he had conferred on man from the beginning. In other countries, it might happen that an hereditary sovereign, still in the cradle, might prescribe laws to the people; the obedience of the Poles was voluntary. It is impossible to see without a sort of pity, that with all this proud feeling of independence, they were unable to attain to any act of true independence; they suffered themselves to be carried away by foreign influence, not perhaps created, but certainly supported by money; and without any definite system or course of action. Russia, their powerful neighbour, had announced to them that she should regard the election of Stanislaus as a declaration of war, and nothing was more certain than that

she would keep her word. What were the preparations made to meet this event? Nothing had been considered, nothing provided. As affairs were now conducted, the Russians would find no resistance; but on the contrary, more effective support than they could ever have hoped. The dissentients, who had quitted the diet of election and had retired to Praga, highly offended that the majority had not even awaited the return of the messenger who had been despatched to them,—but had compelled the primate to make instant proclamation of Stanislaus—betook themselves to the protection of the Russian troops, whom they had invited, and who were now advancing under the command of Lacy.\* Having done this, nothing remained for them but to give their votes to the candidate proposed by the Empress and certain bishops. But before the term allowed for the election diet had completely expired, they returned to the neighbourhood of Warsaw, and took their station on a separate election field, on which in former times one king, Henry of Anjou, had been chosen. Here, imitating the ancient forms, so far as their small number would permit, they chose the Elector of Saxony king of Poland (5th Oct., 1733). The Russians were posted in a neighbouring wood. They were not more than twelve thousand. Who would not have expected that the fiery nobles, a hundred thousand strong, would have risen and driven them out of the country? But the days of such energy

\* Manstein Mémoires sur la Russie S. 33. Seyler Leben Stanislai, 336, with some manifestoes which are instructive, spite of their violence.

were gone by. The Poles of that time placed all their hope on French assistance.\*

Nor indeed did the events then passing in Poland inspire so much interest anywhere as in France. A number of rich individuals, capitalists, and nobles of the court, transmitted considerable sums to the friends of Stanislaus by way of Amsterdam and Hamburg, and used every means to secure his election. A *Te Deum* was sung in honour of it in the royal chapel at Versailles, and the government was obliged to interfere to prohibit a projected illumination at Paris. We have already mentioned that Louis XV. had declared, that he should regard the exclusion of his father-in-law, Stanislaus, as a declaration of war on the part of any court by which it might be pronounced.

These opposing threats, that of Russia to regard the election of Stanislaus, and that of France, his exclusion, as a declaration of war, seemed to be directed against each other; but there was a great difference between them. Russia pointed her menaces against the Polish nation, in so far as it was in favour of Stanislaus; France hers, not against the Poles who might oppose him, but mainly against the foreign courts—especially that of Austria.

We know with what jealousy the progress of the affair of the succession was watched at Versailles. This was redoubled by the consideration that the Duke of Lorraine was destined to receive both the hand of the heiress of Austria, and the dignity of King

\* Lettre d'un Seigneur Polonais, écrite de Königsberg 10 Sept. 1735. Œuvres du philosophe bienfaisant, I. 88.

of the Romans, and that thus his own dominions would form part of the great complex of the imperial territories. Cardinal Fleury's love of peace was constantly censured as the cause of his neglect to oppose the accomplishment of such a plan. Lorraine, it was said, would soon form a formidable military bulwark against France. Marshal Villars, who lived in the recollections of the age of Louis XIV., once asked the Cardinal in the assembled privy council, whether this project were not as dangerous to France, as the league of Augsburg in former times; and whether, as that was indisputably the case, it would not be as necessary to take up arms now, as then? Louis XIV. had no allies, whereas some might now be counted on.

Pacific as Cardinal Fleury appeared, he inherited—as we shall often have occasion to see—the old principles of French policy, the chief aim of which was universal predominance; the only difference was, that he was less noisy and impatient than his predecessor, and prepared his measures in secret. His first step now was to endeavour to make sure of his allies. The Palatinate and Bavaria he had long ago bound to his cause; the former, in great measure, by a promise of support in the affair of Berg. He succeeded in gaining over the King of Sardinia, in whose councils certain ministers who had been offended by the court of Vienna, had great authority. But above all, every difference that could occur with Spain was carefully settled or averted; a treaty was negotiated, and, after a short time concluded, in which the two powers agreed to oppose by force of arms the marriage of

the Duke of Lorraine with the eldest daughter of the King of the Romans, as dangerous to the security of the house of Bourbon.\* All the plans which the Bourbons had ever cherished, and in the accomplishment of which they had only been thwarted by the intervention of the maritime powers and of Protestant Germany, were now revived. Fleury is reported to have said that he thought to win two kingdoms of Austria on one card.

This card in the hazard of politics and war was, the Polish succession. This he was, without doubt, anxious to establish; but he estimated far more highly the opportunity of reviving the ancient struggle with Austria, under favourable circumstances.

The manner in which affairs of state are conducted, would incline us to despair of the utility of human foresight. The whole course of these affairs was foreseen at Vienna, from the very moment that Maria Lessczynska disappeared from a convent at Insbruck in order to be married to the King of France; every successive step was watched, and its object clearly expounded: yet no measures were taken to prevent the fulfilment of the enemy's schemes; on the contrary, the very things were done which he would have desired to ensure their success.

Austria was as little prepared against France, as Poland against Russia; yet neither hesitated to take up the gauntlet that was thrown down: Poland

\* On 7th Nov., 1733, in Cantillo 277, where it is mentioned as the primer pacto de familia entre las coronas de España y Francia.

elected Stanislaus: Austria pronounced his exclusion.

It would surely have seemed but natural that Austria, seeing herself threatened with a war on her western frontier, would at least have thought of regaining the goodwill of the friend whose alliance had already been of such inestimable value to her; towards whom she had incurred obligations; who had no interest in these projects; in a word, the King of Prussia: and would seek, in conjunction with him, to defend at once the cause of Germany and her own.

But a line of conduct was now adopted still more inexplicable than the former.

The King of Prussia felt himself slighted and offended in the affairs of Poland; but no feeling of personal resentment would ever have led him to acquiesce in the French victories on the Rhine; that they should conquer Lorraine lay entirely out of the bounds of his policy. The annexation of that country to Austria was perfectly agreeable to him, inasmuch as it facilitated the establishment of his claims on Berg.

Though offended, he made spontaneous advances to the court of Austria as soon as the war broke out. He offered the Emperor to take part in it with all his forces, to appear on the Lower Rhine in November, 1733, with thirty or forty thousand men, and either to form a coalition with the armies of the Emperor and the empire, or to march his troops alone on any point that seemed most threatened. In return, he demanded nothing but what had already been promised, and according to all human probability, must fall to his share—the duchy of Berg—

only, he added, together with Düsseldorf, and under the condition that he should secure it without delay, by taking preliminary possession. I cannot discover that he ever entertained any other design than this.

It was impossible that Austria could be blind to the advantage of such assistance as that offered, though perhaps she did not estimate it at its full value: above all, she felt an unconquerable aversion to see this powerful and growing military power—which she could no longer hold in subjection—at her side as an independent ally. The King received an answer from Vienna like the previous one from Dresden, clothed in all the forms of the most amicable understanding, but evasive, and in effect declining his offer.\* The Emperor would be satisfied if Prussia would bring into the field the 10,000 men stipulated in the treaty of alliance, and in return, he solemnly promised to do all in his power

\* “Weil aber E. K. M. Dero völlige Macht nicht eher als bis Anfang Novembris können marschiren lassen, so sieht man hingegen die Noth, worin dermalen der Kaiser steckt, vor so gross und pressant an, dass man gezwungen ist, E. R. M. nochmaln umb die nach dem Allianztractat versprochenen 10000 M. Hülfsvölker anzusuchen.”—(“Since, however,” thus writes Seckendorf on 1st Sept., “your royal Majesty cannot bring your forces into the field before the beginning of November, the necessity of the Emperor is such, and so pressing, that he is compelled to ask of your Majesty once more to send the 10,000 men promised by the treaty of alliance.”) The King answered on the 3rd of September, that it pained him much to find that his offer to appear with 41 battalions and 97 squadrons on the banks of the Rhine, in the event of a war, was regarded in a different light from what he intended; but that if his troops remained over the winter on the Lower Rhine, the French would be much embarrassed in their proceedings.



to put Prussia in possession of Berg, as soon as the duchy should be vacant. The King was astonished and hurt. "See," said he, in one of his letters, "how well advised his imperial Majesty is! his conduct in the French business is the same as in the Polish. If the French play the masters now, I will have nothing to do with it; the Emperor may look out for another ally, who will risk everything for him as I would have done."

It was a painful moment for Frederick William, in which he almost doubted of the very basis of his political belief. With infinite labour and difficulty he had set on foot a powerful army, from which he expected consideration and influence in Europe. And now, the very first time he offered its services to an ally, who was in urgent need of them, though he claimed but trifling services in return, his offer was rejected. He once said, it were better to have no army at all; if he were content to have only 10,000 men, he should want no contributions; his country would be much more flourishing, and would become one of the richest in the world. It seemed to him almost as if force had not the importance he had ascribed to it.

We may however venture to say that the force he possessed was not yet enough. His army awakened jealousy, but did not extort unconditional respect. It was well known, that though on certain points he had tried to emancipate himself from the feelings and opinions of a member of the Empire, yet that his ideas were essentially bounded by that circle. Although repulsed by Austria and Russia, and still

smarting from the sting of the old affront on the part of England, he was not in a position, nor indeed in a temper or state of mind to turn to the French side, unless from the extremest necessity.

He was offended, and he had an army; but he did not yet inspire fear.

The imperial court persisted in the notion that the King of Prussia was not to be treated as an ally and an equal, but as an estate of the Empire.

This was indeed the point in the ancient system of the Empire most fatal to the power of the German nation:—that power could only proceed from the independent strength of the larger feudatories. Yet, as soon as such a one rose into importance, he necessarily excited a jealousy in the Suzerain of the Empire, which made him think it expedient to repress the rising power, where repression was possible; and where, as in the present case, that was no longer to be thought of, to put him aside even in so urgent a case as the present.

Nevertheless, the conduct of the imperial court would have been inexplicable, had it not thought itself secure of other allies. The Emperor reckoned with confidence on the support of the maritime powers; it seemed to him impossible that they should not maintain the balance of Europe, for which they had so often drawn the sword, now that it was in such imminent danger.

As to England, King George II. would have been well inclined to renew the relations of the ancient alliance. At the moment when Austria was still doubtful and wavering, his ambassador made a de-

claration which seemed to justify the most sanguine hopes. The nation, parliament, and especially the mercantile portion of the kingdom were not, however, of the same mind. They had not forgotten the attempts lately made by Charles VI. to injure their trade. Judging the matter in a plain and practical manner by its consequences, they had found that the trade of England was not the better for Naples and Sicily being governed by Vienna.\*

To this was added, that the prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, whose system was a thoroughly pacific one, and who kept up friendly relations with France, was not inclined to rush into the difficulties in which his enemies wished to see him involved. He declared that he could do nothing without Holland.

But it was obvious that Holland would do nothing at all. It was clearly of great advantage to Fleury, that he founded his attack on the integrity of the imperial dominions, which had been established by treaties of peace, on a remote cause of war. The republic of Holland had warned the Emperor, even before matters came to a decision, not to mix himself up with Polish affairs, even if he had the right to do so; in their treaties with him, they said, not a single article could be found by which they were bound to send him succours in that case. To this they steadily adhered when war broke out.†

\* The Prussian resident, Borek, was told in 1734 that the English nation was perfectly indifferent as to who should be Duke of Milan; but it would be of advantage to the English trade that Naples and Sicily should revert to Spain, as the imperial court had injured English commerce in those countries.

† Letter from the Republic, 9th July, 1733. *Quum non ob-*

In short, the two maritime powers upon whose assistance Austria had confidently reckoned, refused to move; she would not hear of a free alliance with Prussia;—her destiny must be fulfilled.

The French now invested Lorraine and Bar, never more to leave them. This conquest was, at the moment, so inevitable, that it has hardly been thought worthy of a passing mention in German history. The public attention was claimed by other and more pressing dangers.

There still survived two or three military leaders who represented the times of Louis XIV., and remained firmly attached to the ideas which had then prevailed. So long as the French court followed a different policy, they had been suffered to remain inactive and without influence; they now suddenly came forth from their retirement.

Berwick, who had contributed more than any other commander to the establishment of Philip V. on the throne of Spain, both by his successful manœuvres (as in the year 1706), and by decisive engagements, like the battle of Almanza, now reappeared. He was a man of heroic temperament, and had been living perfectly happy in his retirement at Fitzjames, where he devoted himself to gardening. In Sep-

*scure appareat, quorsum Polonorum mentes maxima ex parte se inclinent, acutissimo C<sup>ae</sup> R<sup>ae</sup> M<sup>ae</sup> vestrae judicio perpendendum relinquimus, an tantum inter candidatos coronam ambientes discrimen esse queat, ut posito, quod M<sup>is</sup> V<sup>ae</sup> jus sit vel alterius electioni intercedere, non satius foret, hanc causam leniter tractare, quam discrimen ad extrema perducere . . . nullo nos pacto vel foedere obligatos nos immiscere bello ex dissidiis de eligendo Poloniae rege, absit omen, surrecturo.*

tember, 1733, he joined the army before Strasburg, crossed the Rhine, and at the end of October occupied Kehl, in order to keep the passage free for his followers.

Villars, who had followed Louis XIV. into Holland in 1672, who had once been on the point of carrying off the Elector of Bavaria to Vienna, and had censured the subsequent policy of his court, chiefly for neglecting the opportunity which offered itself in 1725 of founding a third house of Bourbon, which would have gained possession of the Austrian monarchy, saw with youthful delight that the former system was now revived; old as he was, he joyfully accepted the command of the army of Italy: "I do not think myself at liberty to refuse my services to my own sovereign, or to the King of Spain," says he in his Memoirs, "so long as one drop of blood remains in my veins."\* On the 3rd of November, 1733, Milan was taken by the combined French and Sardinian army; in December, Villars conquered Pizzighetone, then a very strong place; and instantly made himself master of all Lombardy.

Now that the Austrian forces had thus to make head against the enemy advancing both on the Po and the Rhine, the ancient plans of the Spanish court, in which the ambition of the Farnesi was blended with that of the Bourbons, could be carried into execution. Don Carlos, who in consequence of previous arrangements had taken possession of Parma, marched at

\* The last words of the Memoirs. Petitot, 71, 138. Excuses were offered for not making him Constable, which thought likewise appears here.

the head of a considerable army, which Count de Montemar had collected in Tuscany, to conquer Naples and Sicily. I cannot confirm what has so often been asserted, that the aversion of the Neapolitans for the Austrian rule, and their desire to have an independent government, contributed greatly to the success of the French. The impartial and well-informed Foscarini affirms, on the contrary, that the inhabitants of the kingdom had not for centuries shown more devotion to any government than to the existing one; Naples gave unquestionable proof of fidelity in the moment of danger, Palermo alone hailed the change with satisfaction, and that not until after it had been effected.\* But they were certainly not prepared to resist a Spanish fleet, master of the sea and the islands, and an army advancing through the states of the Church. As early as May, 1734, Don Carlos assumed the title of King of the two Sicilies. A few strong places held out for a time, on this side of the straits of Gaëta and Capua, and on the other side of Syracuse and Trapani; but this did not prevent his taking possession.

This enterprise must be regarded as a continuation of the Spanish war of succession. Though at the peace of Vienna the Spanish Bourbon court had renounced its claims, it had done so only in the hope of

\* *Relatione*: dopo perdita la patria (Milano) non si trovò alcuno di quei tanti, che militavano dentro le truppe imperiali, il quale abbandonasse il servizio per cura di riavere le sue rendite . . . raro poi e memorando esempio diedero li S<sup>ri</sup> Neapolitani, i quali accompagnarono la fuga del Vicere con larghissime sovventioni di soldo.

attaining its ends by other means. As these had utterly failed, it now returned to its former policy. When Philip V. sent his son to Italy in 1731, he girded him solemnly with the same sword which he himself had worn, when Louis XIV. took leave of him on his departure for Spain.

Yet this incident can hardly be called a war. It was an occupation of neglected, undefended provinces. Should the Emperor desire to maintain the integrity of his hereditary portion, he must reconquer them.

But from the first, it did not appear as if he would be able to do so. It was the summer of 1734, before he brought two armies into the field, the one in the Mantuan territory, under Mercy; the other, in which were the troops of the Empire, under Prince Eugene, on the Rhine;\* but these seemed fitted at most to withstand a further advance of the enemy, not at all to wrest his conquests from him.

Happily we do not lie under the melancholy duty of describing the campaigns of 1734 and 1735.

In the former, the King of Prussia, who had been preceded by his son, took part in person. He brought up the 10,000 men required of him by the treaty

\* Germany was forced into the war by the Emperor and by Hanover. The King of Prussia had advised, "Anfangs nur defensiv zu Werke zu gehen, und sich vorher in behörige Positur zu setzen, ehe man den Krieg erkläre:"—"to act at first only on the defensive, and to prepare themselves properly before war was declared:" he complains that this was charged against him almost as a crime. On the other hand, the French maintained that the declaration of war might easily have been hindered at the Diet, as Austria and Saxony ought not to have had a voice in a matter in which they were so nearly interested.

of Berlin, from which he would not deviate a hair's breadth; and Prince Eugene acknowledged that the Prussian troops were by far the best of all that appeared in the field. But Prince Eugene did not for a moment think himself strong enough to advance against the French, who had crossed the Rhine in two divisions, and were now besieging Philipsburg, or to attack the entrenchments by which they had surrounded themselves, with a skill for which they were yet unrivalled in Europe;\* and that important fortress was lost before his eyes. He contented himself with covering the advanced territory of the Empire by well-chosen posts near Heilbronn and Bruchsal. When the King of Prussia arrived, the Prince fully explained the grounds of his conduct to him, and was pleased at his approval. Ardently as the Crown-Prince desired a battle, he said that the present inactivity of the veteran leader did him honour.

In the year 1735 things were in a better state of preparation. To the troops of the Emperor and those of the Empire, with which latter there were distinct bodies of Prussians, Saxons, Hanoverians, and Hessians, were now added Russian auxiliaries, who were very carefully provided for. The army might amount to 130,000 men under their prudent leader Prince Eugene, who took the supreme com-

\* Foscarini, Relatione di 1736. Di queste linee si ragionò molto degli imperiali, i quali ammiratori dell' eccellenza dell' opera et della prestezza di condurla conobbero non poter stare egliano a petto dei nemici nelle mecaniche della guerra ed accusavano l' abbandono di simili arti nella militia tedesca.



mand in the beginning of June, and pitched his camp first at Bruchsal, and next at Heidelberg. This was a sufficient force to hold in check the French, who were posted at East and West-hofen, on the left bank of the Rhine, in nearly equal numbers, under Marshal de Coigny. Both sides exhausted their strength in movements which the pedantic tactics of that day prescribed, but without any result. The capture of a French partisan, called La Croix, who, having crossed over the river, fell into the hands of the militia of the Rheingau, or the return of a company of Prussian hussars from a marauding party, with a few prisoners and many wounds, were events in this war.\* Whatever personal bravery might be shown in these affairs, there was no prospect of reconquering the lost fortresses, and still less the whole of Lorraine. The French kept all the advantages which they had gained at the beginning of the war.

In Italy, there was still less chance of a fortunate turn of events. The allies appeared in Lombardy with triple the force of the Emperor, and Count Königsegg, the general to whom, after various changes, the supreme command was committed with some confidence, gained a certain degree of celebrity by

\* A Prussian hussar in one of these encounters received from twelve to fourteen wounds. The King said, "es freut mich, dass meine Husaren wohl gethan haben: in solchem Wasser solche Fische."—(It pleases me to find that my hussars have done so well: birds of a feather flock together.) Before this he wrote thus of his 10,000 men: "Ich hoffe, dass sie sich so werden aufführen wie sich ein Brandenburger aufzuführen gewohnt ist."—(I trust that they will all behave as a Brandenburger is wont to behave.) (25th June.)

retreating into the territory of Trent, without experiencing a defeat.

Great events are sometimes accomplished without great deeds. Little pleasure or interest as they afford to the historian or to his readers, they are extremely worthy of observation. One such is that now under consideration.

If we investigate the causes of the disasters of the Austrians, we shall find, as we have said, that they did not lie in their unpopularity; nor solely in the want of military preparation. It was impossible that the Austrian troops should have been able to defend Naples and Sicily against the united fleets of France and Spain, since they had no navy. That the course and issue of this war was so totally different from that of the Spanish succession, arose entirely from the altered position of the great powers. Austria was incapable of resisting such an attack as she had now to encounter, without the assistance of England and Holland, and the participation of the Protestant states of Germany. The result depended less on feats of arms, than on the political relations of the powers in general. On weighing the conflicting forces against each other, the result appears inevitable; and it will always be so when governments and people, the former leading wisely, the latter fighting bravely, do not unite in a vigorous resistance. But this was an idea as yet foreign to men's minds.

As France was now fully employed in the West, and had little attention to spare for the East, it followed that her preponderance was thrown on the side of the former. The adherents of Leszczyński did not

think themselves called upon to make any serious efforts; they retired first from the capital, and then from place to place; at length a city originally German, though for centuries annexed to the Republic—Danzig, so often besieged in vain—afforded an asylum to the fugitive King: in every other part of the kingdom the Russians were masters.

This course of events had placed the King of Prussia in a very unfavourable position. Now was seen the meaning and importance of the Great Elector's maxim, never to remain neuter; that is, to permit no decision of European affairs to take place without throwing the weight of his power into one scale. From this King Frederick William was now excluded; it however happened that, in both cases, his sympathies inclined towards the defeated party. On the Rhine he was against the advance of the French, which he opposed in his quality of one of the estates of the Germanic Empire; in Poland, he was against the establishment of the Elector of Saxony, and the advance of the Russians upon the mouths of the Vistula.

How gladly would he have prevented the siege of Danzig, which the Russians were now preparing to undertake! He sent a message to the Empress Anne, representing the irreparable mischief which would result from it to his Prussian subjects; she replied, that the behaviour of the Danzigers towards her had been so disrespectful, that she must chastise them for it. In the spring of 1734 General Münnich commenced the siege. Frederick William was forced to look on while a town, in which he took the liveliest

interest, was battered and destroyed by the enemy's guns, and the surrounding country laid waste. The citizens, receiving from the French no other support than ineffectual demonstrations, thought of attaching themselves to Prussia; and did actually go so far as to ask the King whether, if they laid their privileges at the foot of his throne, he would take them under his protection. But a step of this kind would have run counter to the existing order of things in Europe; and Frederick William could not bring himself to attempt it.\*

Proposals were still incessantly made to him from both sides. King Stanislaus, in concert with the magnates of the crown who surrounded him, offered to cede to him a portion of his dominions, which would have connected East Prussia with Pomerania; the Republic consented to sanction this afterwards, and France to guarantee it. The Empress Anne sought to tempt him with the prospect of still greater acquisitions. She offered Frederick William, on condition

\* Wallenrodt, 10th April, 1734. Sollten E. K. M. allergnädigst geruhen, dieser armen Stadt die von allen Puissancen verlassen, und einer so grossen Macht nicht resistiren kann sich zu erbarmen und ihr nur einen Strahl königlicher Gnade zeigen, so ist die grösste Apparence dass sie den polnischen Schutz verlassen und sich in E. K. M. Protection begeben werden: von Seiten der Bürgerschaft ist alles dazu disponirt, und auch der Magistrat wäre zu gewinnen.—(Should your Majesty most graciously please to have mercy upon this poor city, deserted by all powers, and utterly unable to resist so great a might, and to show but one ray of your royal grace, there is every appearance that it will leave the protection of Poland, and throw itself upon that of your Majesty: everything is disposed for this on the part of the burghers, the magistracy likewise is to be won over.)

that he would declare for Saxony, the woiwodship of Pomerellen, with the starosties appertaining to it, and the possession of Elbingen; and even held out fresh hopes of the ratification of Löwenwolde's treaty. Either of these offers, in the actual situation of affairs, would have involved the King in the greatest danger, had he suffered himself to be tempted to accept it. Had he united with the French and their friends, he must have broken with the Emperor, which both his allegiance to the Empire and his interest in Berg forbade. Had he joined the Russians, he could hardly have avoided quarrelling with the French, who were now the strongest, and thus exposing his Rhenish dominions to an invasion. More than all, he had lost all confidence in men. The world, he said, was full of treachery; "he who connects himself with nobody, and keeps himself aloof, fares the best."

For the present, his only care was to resist every sort of encroachment upon his independence, from whatever quarter it was made.

Stanislaus Leszczynski having succeeded, at the last critical moment of peril, and after those weary adventures which he has described with so much talent,\* in taking refuge in the Prussian dominions and reaching Königsberg, the court of Vienna proposed to the King of Prussia to deliver up the fugitive to the Czarina. Frederick William thought the proposal inhuman, and utterly refused to comply. On the contrary, he again advised the Emperor, even now, to

\* *Ceuvres du philosophe bienfaisant*, I. 23—70.

acknowledge Stanislaus, by which means alone he might yet save all the provinces of which his enemies sought to strip him. He repeated what he had always said, that the thing was unjust: why not let him be King in Poland? why not hold to the old friends of Austria, the maritime powers and the Empire? why prefer the friendship of Russia to all others? Austria would get no good by it. God was not with this matter. He writes with the hearty zeal of an old Prince of the Empire, who, spite of all his dislike of the Emperor's policy, retains, as it were, despite of himself, a sort of devoted loyalty to him. "I will pray to God," he says, "to inspire the Emperor with the right way of thinking."

Soon afterwards, it was reported at Berlin that General Münnich, with whom the Prussian government had been engaged in a very disagreeable correspondence while he was besieging Danzig, had let fall hints that if the King was not to be moved by fair means to drive Stanislaus and his followers out of Königsberg, the Russian army was not too far off to pay him a visit in his own dominions, and to carry off Stanislaus by force. The King of Prussia took this threat very seriously. He caused it to be announced to the ambassadors of the three courts, Lichtenstein of Vienna, Brackel of Petersburg, and Ponikau of Dresden, that, should a thought of this kind be entertained—which he did not believe—he would not only instantly withdraw his troops from the Rhine, but would also look to Saxony for compensation for any damage that he might sustain in Prussia. He did not rest till Münnich declared that he had

never held language of the kind, for that he was perfectly aware of the respect he owed to the King of Prussia.\*

It had been intimated to the King, that he had better send the French ambassador out of Berlin, since the Germanic Empire had declared war on the French. He answered, that he was not only a Prince of the Empire, but likewise a Sovereign King, who was entitled to receive foreign ambassadors at his court, whether he might be holding it in Königsberg (in Prussia Proper) or in the March of Brandenburg.† Notwithstanding which, this same minister, the Marquis de la Chétardie, led no very agreeable life at Berlin: he often requested an audience in vain; sometimes unpleasant explanations were interchanged, nor was the smallest indulgence extended to him on any point which could offend the King's sense of independence. One day in June, 1734, M. de la

\* Münnich,  $\frac{7}{8}$  May, 1735. "Versichere auf meine honeur, dass ich weder gegen einen polnischen Herrn oder auch sonsten gegen Jemand, obbesagten Discurs geführt, oder etwas, das dem gleich sein möchte mich vernehmen lassen."—"I do assert upon mine honour, that neither to any Polish gentleman nor to any one else have I uttered the above-named discourse, nor have I ever said anything like it.") The King said that he would bear no affront.

† Frederick William complained in Aug., 1735, that the presence of a French ambassador at Hanover, was looked upon in a different light than at Berlin. He would never allow himself to be considered as a subaltern king depending entirely upon the imperial court. Sinzendorf, holding the letter in his hand, only said: Yes, your Lordship's in Berlin.

Frederick William was a feudatory of the Empire in respect of Brandenburg. In respect of Prussia, which formed no part of the Empire, he was a sovereign King.—*Tr.*

Chétardie went up to him on the parade at Potsdam, and told him that the French government felt itself somewhat aggrieved by the Crown-Prince joining the army; at all events, it must receive a solemn assurance that the King would not bring more than 10,000 men into the field, and would otherwise observe a strict neutrality; if not, it would find itself compelled to proceed to hostilities against him. The King replied, that as his conduct in the affairs of Poland had been of such advantage to the French and their allies (for Stanislaus was nothing to him), he had not expected to have things of this kind said to his face: that he would never enter into an engagement like that demanded of him, would never separate himself from the cause of the Empire, would never allow his hands to be tied; if France wished for war with him, he was ready.\* The ministers, to whom a similar declaration had been made on the part of France, added, that in joining the army the Prince had only in view the perfecting himself in that which was most needful to him as heir to the throne; with respect to the King, he must reserve to himself the right of employing his whole forces, whether they might be needed to maintain his own claims upon Juliers and

\* "Wenn dieses eine Kriegsalteration sein sollte, so müsste der König solches so geschehen lassen, und würde in solchem Falle solche Truppen (die nach geschehener Revue aus einander gegangen) bald wieder zusammenbringen, und alles in der Welt wagen, kein Esclave von Frankreich zu werden."—"If there must be a war, the King would meet it, and would in such case quickly reassemble his troops (which had separated after the review), and would venture everything in the world rather than become the slave of France." Memorandum by Borck.



Berg, or to prevent the arms of France from penetrating too far into Germany. It is very remarkable that the French, although war was declared against them on the part of the Empire, made no serious attacks either on the Middle or Lower Rhine. This can be explained only on the supposition that they wished to show consideration for Prussia. The French were forbidden to attack either Cologne, Mayence, or Coblenz; the Prussian ministers told them that if they invested any one of those towns, or even Rheinfels, they did not know how matters would go on between them.\* The States-General were doubtless of the same way of thinking. So far is it from being true that an understanding subsisted between Prussia and France. There was once a negotiation between them concerning the affair of Berg; but the King consented to it with considerable reluctance, and made higher demands than those to which the Emperor had acceded; accordingly, the two parties did not advance one step nearer towards each other.

As soon as Frederick William came in contact with foreign powers, the consciousness of the point of variance between them and himself was awakened in his mind. As against the Emperor, he urged that

\* The ministers say, while they advised him to enter into this negotiation: "Sollte man spüren, dass E. K. Mt. etwas von Frankreich angemuthet werden wollte, so Ihrer Kön. Mt. und des Reiches Interesse zuwider, so sind E. Königl. M. solches einzugehen keineswegs verbunden."—"Should it appear that any thing is proposed to your Majesty by France against the interest of your Majesty or of the Empire, your Majesty is no ways bound to agree to it.")

he was a Sovereign Prince ; as against France, he pleaded his duties as an estate of the Empire.

His position was a neutral one, but it was not like that of 1727, when Prussia prevented the other powers from coming to open hostilities. She had now to maintain her neutrality in the midst of hostilities which had already broken out, and in which she was forced at one point to take part ; nor was it from love of peace ; the King was forced into an isolated position by his determination to admit of no foreign influence, and he maintained it with his usual wilfulness indeed, but with dignity and manliness—an image of ambition in repose. He is the living representative of the haughty independence of a state, in want of nobody, resting on its own strength while others are fighting out their battles around it. Such, if we may venture to compare things so dissimilar, must be the feelings of a statesman who, sure of his cause, joins neither of the conflicting parties in parliamentary warfare, but patiently bides his time.

In the summer of the year 1735 the King himself drew up a scheme for a general pacification, from which at least the current and tendency of his ideas may be seen. His proposal was that both the rival candidates, Stanislaus and Augustus, should retire and content themselves with the title of King ; that the Poles should then proceed to a fresh election, from which all foreigners, whether Germans or French, should be excluded ; the Poles should choose from among themselves whomsoever they liked, without any interference from without. In the actual state of things in the south of Europe, it seemed to

him that the Emperor could not refuse to abandon his claims to Naples and Sicily; but no further acquisitions were to be conceded to Louis XV., who, on his part, must consent to the marriage of the Duke of Lorraine with the heiress of Austria. Should he refuse, Germany was strong enough to make head against him; he himself would take the field with his whole force, and keep it in the field for four successive years. He made some stipulations to his own advantage, but of a very modest nature. He did not mention Courland, and only repeated the demand made at the breaking out of the war, that he should be allowed to take partial military occupation, and to receive the provisional homage of Berg.

Such were still the views of the King of Prussia: Poland, under a Piast, freed from foreign interference; the maintenance of Lorraine in its connexion with the Germanic Empire; and, for himself, the establishment of his hereditary claims.

But to carry these views into execution would have required a more vigorous intervention than he could resolve to exercise. The neutrality which the King observed might be justified in itself, and indeed was inevitable under the circumstances, but it could not lead to immediate and active influence.

Whilst Frederick William, strongly persuaded of the truth of what Stanislaus Leszczyński set forth in his eloquent pamphlets—that France would never abandon him, and was seriously attached to the interests of Poland—remained constant to the ideas which would have secured the integrity of the Germanic

Empire,\* negotiations prompted by a totally different spirit were going on between the courts of Vienna and Versailles.

In the spring of 1735 Cardinal Fleury, in the most profound secrecy, sent overtures of peace to Austria, through an emigrant Livonian, who had come to Paris on some business of the Count of Neuwied, and afterwards through the Count himself. The conditions were, that Lorraine should lapse to France, if not immediately, at a future time; that Stanislaus Lesszczynski should possess it for his lifetime, and in consideration of that, should renounce the throne of Poland: the Duke of Lorraine to have Tuscany as an indemnity. And so powerfully did the promise to guarantee the inheritance of that duchy operate on the imperial court, that, after some deliberation, it entered upon negotiations. The warlike movements which took place in the autumn of 1735, were only designed to prevent the powers who were not in the secret from entertaining any suspicions. They were, however, carried on to an incredible extent. On the 20th of October Count Seckendorf fought the French during his much-applauded march upon the Moselle; on the 3rd of that same month the preliminaries of a treaty of peace between France and Austria, on the basis proposed by Fleury, were concluded.

The shock to the King of Prussia when he heard

\* King Frederick William had written in the margin, "Ich bin persuadirt, dass Frankreich alle seine Tage kein Friede macht, als (wenn) Stanislaus soll König bleiben."—"I am persuaded that France will not make no peace unless Stanislaus remains King.")

of it may easily be imagined. The two things which he had specially tried to avert—the cession of Lorraine to the French, and the recognition of the King of Saxony in Poland—were established by it. We shall soon see what further effect this peace produced on him. We must first devote a few words to the distribution of the contested territories which was then made, and which has remained nearly unchanged to the present day.

A long time elapsed before the Spanish court could be prevailed upon to renounce Tuscany, which it already regarded as its own property. But, on the other hand, it had the advantage of a secure possession of Naples and Sicily. At length the ambassador in the Lateran received the solemn investiture from the Pope; and the old strife between nations and families was terminated in favour of the French. “In the blood of the covenant,” is the inscription surrounded by the lilies of the order of San Gennazio, which the new King instituted at this moment.

At the death of the last of the Medici, Francis Stephen, Duke of Lorraine, immediately received the act of homage of Tuscany. The stipulations by which the municipal liberties of Florence had formerly been secured were proposed to him in vain. He esteemed himself under no obligations, since the country had been transferred to him, not by any kind of voluntary agreement, but solely in consequence of arrangements made by the great powers of Europe. In February, 1739, the new Grand Duke took possession of the Pitti Palace.

Meanwhile the officials of the five bailiwicks of

Lorraine and Bar took, before the Chancellor and Keeper of the Seals of Stanislaus Leszczyński, the oaths of allegiance, which involved the future union of the duchy with the crown of France. Stanislaus established his residence at Lüneville, and endeavoured to mitigate the bitter regrets of the inhabitants at their separation from the house of their native princes, by a court remarkable, considering his circumstances, for splendour, beneficence, and intellectual culture.

Already, we perceive, the ties were rent asunder which had bound the princely houses to their hereditary domains since countless ages; they were sacrificed to the settlement of European quarrels. The English court was asked what it had to say to these arrangements. It replied, that it did not perceive that they disturbed the balance of power between the states of Europe.

Meanwhile Stanislaus' rival, the Elector of Saxony, took possession of the throne of Poland. The diet of pacification, which was held in the summer of 1736, by no means approved of the manner in which he had obtained it; it expressly decreed that, in future, the election should be carried on in no other place, and be declared by no other persons, than had recently been done in the case of Stanislaus Leszczyński; nevertheless, it acknowledged Augustus III. as king. The two courts, that of Russia, to which this result was mainly owing, and that of Saxon-Poland, formed the closest alliance. By their co-operation the Duchy of Courland was in the following year given to the High Chamberlain of the Empress of Russia. There is no evidence that the French troubled themselves

to inquire whether this would have the effect of disturbing the balance of power in the North or not.

In the course of the deliberations on these changes, ideas were put in circulation which we should not have expected to find in the eighteenth century.

In a memorial, proceeding, as appears from its title, from a college of cardinals, and laid before the court of Vienna, it is stated with peculiar emphasis, that the chief motive for helping to secure the Polish crown to the house of Saxony, was, to render the latter strong enough to reclaim the lost sheep of the house of Israel within its dominions. This consideration was to indemnify Stanislaus for the renunciation demanded from him, and Austria for the compensation she was to furnish. The memorial went on to state, that the alliance between the house of Bourbon and that of Austria must be established, as the sole means of restoring to Catholicism its preponderance in the world. It would now be easier than ever, with their united forces, to subdue Turkey. Austria might reconquer there what she had lost in other parts. But they might even venture upon a conflict with England, did they but remain united; they might, at any rate, strip her of Gibraltar and Mahon—perhaps succeed in changing her government. The German Protestants were the least formidable of all; their princes were so blinded, that they believed everything that was said to them; they might easily be overthrown.\*

\* *Treuherzig gemeinte Vorstellung und recht väterliche Admonition wie nach dem wahren Sinne des apostolischen Stuhls zu Rom die unter den christlichen Potentien obschwebenden Misshelligkeiten aus dem Grunde gehoben,—durch welche Ver-*

The several Catholic courts now entered into the strictest union. The King of Sardinia, to whom two rich and well-situated provinces, those of Novara and Tortona, had been allotted at the peace, married the sister of the Grand Duke of Tuscany; the new King of Naples, a daughter of the King of Poland; between France and Austria, not only a peace, but a cordial alliance seemed for ever concluded. Freed from so formidable an antagonist, the Emperor had the less hesitation in uniting his arms with those of Russia, in the hope of making conquests that might indemnify him for the losses he had sustained.

Among the motives alleged for the previous policy of France, the chief had been that she could not permit the alliance between Russia, Poland, Saxony, and Austria; this she now not only recognised, but became a party to it, together with the whole body of her adherents. The King of Prussia, who viewed everything in a personal manner, could not affect to be satisfied with the conduct of Louis XV., who sacrificed his father-in-law, degrading him from a King of Poland into a Duke of Bar; he would not allow the ambassador, who had always assured him that no such intention existed, ever to come into his sight again.

einbarung christlicher katholischer Fürsten zeitliches Glück mittelst Unterthänigmachung des ganzen Erdzirkels unaussprechlich vergrößert (&c.) werden kann.—(A true and well-meant representation, and right fatherly admonition as to the means of putting an end to the outstanding disputes among the Christian powers, in accordance with the true spirit of the Apostolic chair in Rome,—by which union among Christian Catholic princes, temporal happiness might be unspeakably increased by the subjection of the whole earth, &c.)



The Crown-Prince, looking forward into the future, was still more astonished at the behaviour of Austria, who might have been taught by the conduct of France to Stanislaus, how little she could trust to the promises of that power respecting the guarantee. Others remarked (such are the judgments of the world), that it was a proof of the wisdom of the French, that they did not allow themselves to be governed by passion, but simply followed their interests, in forming friendships, to-day with one, and to-morrow with another.

Frederick William was, however, soon forcibly disturbed from his general reflections, by the painful nature of his own relations. No sooner had hostilities ceased, than the imperial court began to evince towards that of Prussia a coldness and jealousy which the King had never expected.

King Frederick William had punctually fulfilled the obligations of his secret treaty; he had furnished his 10,000 men, and had offered more; it was not his fault that no battle had been fought. Yet he had now to encounter reproaches, especially for having refused to take part in General Seckendorf's last enterprise on the other side the Moselle.

The King had, however, very different reasons from political ones for his conduct in that particular.

Although he had no suspicion whatever that the preliminaries were so nearly concluded, yet everybody perceived that there would be no more serious fighting. It was universally believed that Seckendorf's real object was, to seek more roomy and commodious winter-quarters on the other side the Rhine. Now

the old Prince of Dessau, who was then encamped there, remarked to the King of Prussia, that if his troops were sent thither, they would find the most dangerous opportunities of deserting, in a country so thoroughly exhausted, which they would be compelled to traverse in every direction, and so near to the enemy. This was the real motive of the King's refusal to take part in the expedition; and he could the less be blamed for doing so, since Seckendorf himself wrote to him that there were other troops ready to replace those of Prussia.

Yet this refusal was regarded in Vienna as a sort of desertion, a breach of the treaties.

Whilst the King, in order to avoid all suspicion, was refusing to give audience to the French ambassador, and regulating his own behaviour with punctilious care, he was accused in Vienna of treachery and desertion. The house of Austria did not understand a bearing which combined independent action with such steady fidelity to ancient friendship; it despised an ally who was not one without reservation. Without doubt, reports originating in misconception gave occasion to disagreeable apprehensions. And as Austria was now allied with France, and that power with the house of Neuburg, so that nothing could be more inconvenient or more difficult than to fulfil the treaty of 1728, these grievances may have afforded a not unwelcome pretext for escaping from the obligations which that treaty imposed.

Disputes arose in the diplomatic conferences. The Prussian ambassador once observed, that the King had punctually fulfilled his obligations. Chancellor

Count Sinzendorf shrugged his shoulders, and replied that a great deal might be said on that point.

The King sent a message to the court of Vienna, to the intent, that, as in consequence of the peace, a universal settlement of all the pending disputes in Europe might be looked for, he requested that it would fulfil its promises with regard to the affair of Juliers and Berg; adding, that when the actual possessor died, the King would instantly take civil possession, in conformity with the traditional usages of the Empire. Sinzendorf said, they should see what was to be done; and refused to enter into any explanation. His silence, however, was expressive enough.\*

Frederick William was now treated with a neglect which he felt most deeply. The preliminaries of peace of the 3rd October, 1735, were never communicated to him; he first learnt them from the newspapers. He had always shown the liveliest sympathy in the Duke of Lorraine; had approved of his union with the eldest Archduchess, had himself proposed his elevation to the dignity of King of the Romans, and had advised that it should take place without delay. In return for all this, when the marriage of the Duke with Maria Theresa took place, he did not even receive a common letter of announcement; a neglect of the common forms of society, which was felt by the King as one of the deepest affronts he had

\* In May 1736, the court of Vienna referred to the legal decision which conceded it. The King answered, that the treaty of alliance of 1728 required no decision; but the promise then given must immediately *casu existente* be carried into effect. Then followed the declaration given above, in June, 1736.

ever experienced. He now reviewed his past political life. He recalled to himself the danger in which Austria had stood at the time of the Hanoverian league; what incalculable service he had rendered her by withdrawing from it; how he had then formed an alliance with Austria, and had not only himself guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction, but had likewise carried it through in the Empire; how he had broken, on that account, with his ally of the same blood and the same religion, and had thus excited in his own house a discord of the most violent kind; and now, he was neglected and ill-treated, solely because he had not chosen to raise the house of Saxony to the Polish throne, in defiance of his own policy, and of all previous agreements. There is extant a treatise, which he dictated in his cabinet, on the course of these things,\* which clearly shows how perfectly the whole march of great events was present to his mind; as a composition, it wants form, but is full of fire and indignation, and rich in matter.

He could not say to the court of Vienna all that he thought, but he did remind it of much in plain and harsh words; above all, of the measures once resorted to by the members of the Hanoverian league, which must have brought about the ruin of the house of Austria; he, the King, had been, under God, the only means of averting it; in consideration of this he had been constantly promised, before the death of the

\* *Species facti*; je vous envoie, writes the King on 27th Feb., ma pièce que j'ai dicté mot a mot; elle est curieuse. Grumbkow found it "entièrement conforme aux actes," worked it out and sent it to Seckendorf.

last King of Poland, that his heir in Saxony should never acquire the crown of that kingdom,\* the consequences of which would be most injurious to the house of Brandenburg. Yet this very thing had been done. At the breaking out of the war with France, he might reasonably have doubted whether the *casus fœderis* had really occurred; since there the Emperor had seemed to be the aggressive party; but without even examining into the question, he had brought his 10,000 men into the field. Moreover, he had, against his will and his better judgment—and, as it had turned out, to his injury—allowed his vote for the declaration of a war of the Empire (Reichskriegsdeclaration) to be extorted from him, not without exposing his Rhenish dominions to a risk of French invasion; he had offered to throw himself, with his whole force, into the conflict with the crown of France, but he had been rudely repulsed, out of groundless jealousy. What insignificant things were those with which he

\* “In Polen liessen wir den Churfürsten von Sachsen schalten und walten wie er wollte, ohngeachtet desselben Befestigung eine perniciose Sache vor uns und unsre ganze kön. Posterität wäre: derowegen auch vor erfolgtem Absterben des Königs von Polen Augusti der Kaiserliche Hof uns allemal fest und beständig versichert hätte, es sollte der damalige Churprinz, jetziger Churfürst von Sachsen zu der polnischen Krone nie und in Ewigkeit nicht gelangen.”—(“In Poland we suffered the Elector of Saxony to govern and dispose as he liked, although his permanent establishment there would have been a pernicious matter for us and our whole royal posterity: in consideration whereof, even before the death of Augustus, King of Poland, the imperial court hath frequently assured us of a certainty that the then Electoral Prince,—the present Elector of Saxony—should never get the crown of Poland.”)

was now reproached! It was said that, owing to the excesses committed by his troops, the circle of Westphalia had furnished only 7000 men, instead of 20,000; whereas the total contingent of the circle was only 12,000, many of whom had bought themselves off: or the bad result of the last campaign was laid to his charge, though the Russians had remained with the main army as well as his troops. And now, even on the most insignificant point, he could get nothing but doubtful and evasive answers. If he demanded the respect and consideration due to him, he was mocked with offers of tall recruits; he already saw cause to fear that the Emperor would adopt the views of France in favour of the Palatinate, in the affair of Berg.

So dubious and obscure is human life, that there are moments in which almost every man who has pursued a definite object, feels as if the whole labour of his life were abortive. Such was now, and not without reason, the state of mind of the King of Prussia. His eyes filled with tears, called forth both by the smart of personal indignity, where he had showed devoted attachment, and by dissatisfaction with himself; for he thought that, had things been differently set about, the result must have been totally different. The bitterest feeling on earth is repentance where nothing can be mended. While in this mood, Frederick William's glance fell one day on his son, and he uttered the prophetic words, "There stands one who will avenge me!"\*

\* Journal de Seckendorf, 137, according to Grumbkow's statement. Le roi est outré de la manière ignominieuse dont la cour

How different would have been the achievements of the Germans in Italy, on the Rhine, and in Poland, had the two powers acted in concert!

It is easy to conceive that the imperial court felt a stronger sympathy with its Catholic neighbours than with a power like that of Brandenburg—so independent, aspiring, ambitious, and warlike. But such was the condition of Germany, that, without a union of the two, nothing could now be accomplished by the Empire: to shut their eyes to this fact, was to misunderstand the consequences of the past and the necessities of the future. The imperial house ought never to have given the preference to other allies; an error which it has dearly expiated.

The dissensions to which it gave birth, and which pervaded all the relations of the two countries, form an important part of the history of the world; their consequences will fill that portion of it which we are about to relate.

For the present, the King's attention was exclusively directed to his claim to the succession of Berg. At the breaking out of the Turkish war, he had offered a considerable loan to the court of Vienna, attaching to it no other condition than that the promises contained in the treaty of 1728 should be renewed; now, however, that court feared that a renewal of these engagements might cause some coolness in their relations with France; Austria also thought that she would

*imperiale l'a traité . . il veut être honoré et distingué comme il croit de l'avoir mérité par sa conduite passée, qu'il cherche toujours de justifier, disant en montrant le prince royal : voici quelqu'un qui me vengera un jour.*

he able to dispose of the Turks in a few months, without the aid of Prussian money: this offer too was therefore declined.

The King perceived that he should never succeed in establishing his claims in this way; he must resort to some other.

It appeared to him not impossible that he might be able to come to some agreement with the Elector Palatine, without calling in foreign intervention. The offers he made him were considerable: 1,200,000 thalers for the Elector himself, and a dower of 50,000 thalers to each of the princesses, his daughters, as soon as he should be in actual possession of Berg; but it was soon evident that he would succeed no better with this negotiation. The ministers of the Elector Palatine were either in the French or the imperial interest, and lost no time in acquainting the courts of Vienna and Versailles with offers submitted to their private deliberation. Grevenbroich was the only one among them who really wished to form an independent resolution. He it was, in fact, who had led the way to these negotiations, but he by no means enjoyed the degree of consideration necessary to carry them through. The old Elector was too intensely Catholic to endure the thought of ceding the provinces to a Protestant prince; it were better, he said, that they should be taken from him by force; then he should have nothing to answer for.

King Frederick William likewise addressed himself without delay to the two European powers who were the least implicated in these affairs, England and Holland; but without any result. George II.



declared that if he had ever entered into any engagements on this matter, they were rendered completely void by the breach of the Hanoverian alliance.

With Holland tedious and long-winded negotiations were carried on at the Hague, and once there seemed to be some approach to an understanding. The King of Prussia declared that he should be contented with a provisional arrangement till the affair could be decided, provided only that the fortresses were garrisoned by neutral troops, and the country governed jointly by native and Prussian functionaries; he called this, *status quietus*. But as the Republic rejected his proposal, and insisted on the maintenance of the *status quo*, he returned to his original claims—viz., to take instant possession, in the event of a vacancy.

But so far from accomplishing any of his objects, he only found himself an object of universal alarm and hostility.

The European powers thought that peace was now established in the interior of Europe on a sufficiently firm basis; there was no other question pending than this of Berg, and they were of opinion that they must take some measures to prevent the general tranquillity from being disturbed by such a cause.

Towards the end of the year 1737 Austria, France, England, and Holland combined to make proposals to the two contending princes, which, considering the weight of their united influence, it did not appear easy to reject.

Two different memorials were addressed, the one to Prussia, the other to the Palatinate.\*

\* On 10th Feb., 1738, the four ambassadors appeared, viz.,

In the former, which was delivered in on the 10th of January, 1738, it was said that, in order to prevent the dangerous troubles which the death of the Elector Palatine threatened to occasion, the four powers offered their joint mediation to effect an accommodation; but first entreated the King to give his promise that he would make no attempt to take possession of the duchy while the negotiations were pending—a request in itself sufficiently at variance with his often declared wishes; but this was far from being all. The inclinations of the four powers were clearly in favour of the Palatinate. In the other memorial, originally destined for the Elector Palatine, which was also laid before the King of Prussia, it was plainly said, that the provisional possession of the contested territory should be conferred on the Prince of Sulzbach. The remark was certainly added, that this occupation was in no way intended for his personal advantage; but many examples in recent times concurred to show that possession, once taken, was not easily withdrawn again. Frederick William regarded it as an incalculable advantage, and had always claimed it for himself; and now what he had most ardently wished, and most anxiously laboured to get secured to himself, was granted to his rival.

Here was no question of a tribunal of the Empire, nor of a court of arbitrators (*austrägalinstanz*\*). The

Baron von Demerath, the Austrian; von Ginckel, the Dutch; Mons. de la Chetardie, the French; and Guy Dickens, the English resident, who delivered their memorials all of the same import.

\* The want of a vigorous central power in the Empire led to combinations of princes, prelates, nobles, and cities, who ap-

Emperor himself did not intervene in his character of head of the Empire; but the most considerable powers of the west of Europe, who for some time past had determined all rising disputes, took upon themselves to terminate that relating to Berg as they might see fit. Their decisions had excited the greatest discontent in Spain, and still more recently in Tuscany. The question now was, whether the King of Prussia would submit to their award in what regarded himself. We have seen with what violence he broke with the several powers who attempted to exercise even a partial influence over him. But he was compelled to submit to every possible modification of his claims; what the powers had failed to obtain separately, they now ventured to demand of him collectively. Our knowledge of Frederick William's character leaves us no doubt that this proceeding was as odious to him as the other. He could never be brought to admit that a question of right, involving, as he thought, the highest interests of his house and country, should be decided by others, according to their views, without so much as consulting him. If he submitted to this, he must consent, with his independent and hereditary Prussia, to be a subordinate power, which appeared to him the height of ignominy.

Grumbkow, who had not lost his sovereign's confidence by the devotion to Austria which he had

pointed umpires to whom to refer their disputes. The decisions of these courts of arbitration were called *Austräge*. At a later period, a regular tribunal for the adjudication of such differences was constituted, and was called *Austrägalinstanz*.—*Tr.*

formerly evinced, had fully concurred in a change of policy, which he felt to be inevitable, and was now, at times, one of the most zealous opponents of Austria; he was summoned to the King's counsels at this moment. His advice was, to maintain a bearing at once calm and proud;\* to let the powers do their pleasure; and then to conclude a separate treaty with one or another of them, according to circumstances. This course also appeared best to the King.

The first idea was, not to return any answer to the two memorials; but as that might have appeared like an intentional affront, and have produced a bad impression on the public mind, an answer was given, but one containing mere generalities, and saying as little as possible.

The real answer was to be found in the arrangements made to put the army in such a state that it might be ready to take the field at a moment's warning. Frederick William was determined to take civil possession of Berg, as soon as the Elector died (as had been done in 1609); and, were he obstructed in this, to march his whole army upon the duchy. He appointed Halberstadt as the rendezvous for the eastern, and Duisburg for the western, regiments. He would set everything on the cast: "it was an affair of interest, but still more of honour: better have nothing with honour than abundance with dishonour."

It soon became evident that the powers were by no means so unanimous as had appeared. Holland and England declared that it had never been their

\* *Conduite soutenue sans se baisser ni se hausser et pousser le temps avec l'épaule.*

serious intention to secure provisional possession to the Prince of Sulzbach; if they had acquiesced in that proposal, it had been only with the proviso that it should be dismissed in case the negotiations went on; under this condition, they were not disinclined to revert to the scheme of an interimistic government. Hereupon a rather angry correspondence arose between the maritime powers on the one side, and France and Austria on the other.

This, however, did not justify the court of Berlin in hoping to come to a general understanding with the former. The coolness with the English court still continued, as clearly appeared in a thousand little personal and diplomatic incidents; the two sovereigns were mutually offended, and avoided all intercourse.

But the alienation from Austria daily increased. Frederick William was told that the proposal which was so peculiarly odious to him originated with the Emperor himself, and the explanation of it given by Bartenstein,—“that possession should be ceded to the Prince of Sulzbach, not for himself personally, but in the name of the Elector, who must be supposed to be still living,” did not appease him.\* He said

\* In Aug., 1738, Bartenstein asserted that the imperial court had no engagement with the Sulzbach branch of the Palatine family. “Hingegen gestehet die Cron Frankreich und saget öffentlich, dass sie dem mennlichen Stamm des Hauses Sulzbach den Besitz des Landes Jülich und Berg gerantirt habe. Ich habe den Tractat nicht gesehen, allein die Franzosen sagen es und declariren dabei dass sie obligirt sind es ins Werk zu setzen: ich kann also nicht glauben dass es dem Interesse des Königs von Preussen gemäss sei, es mit der Kron Frankreich

that it was as if they wanted to make him believe black was white, and white black; the only thing that he saw clearly was, that he was to have nothing, and the secret treaty was not to be observed. The court of Vienna would not even listen to the proposal to garrison the fortresses with neutral troops, which, it alleged, might lead to a war, as it would be impossible amicably to remove the troops of the Palatinate which actually garrisoned the strong places. If any attempt was made to expel them by force, France would immediately resort to arms. The King asked whether the Emperor thought it expedient that France should decide the affairs of Germany: in the actual state of things, this question no longer produced any effect. On the contrary, in the beginning of 1739 the Emperor entered into a new agreement with France, in pursuance of which provisional possession was to be conceded for two years to the Prince

zu einem Kriege kommen zu lassen."—(On the contrary, said he, the crown of France confesseth and saith openly that it hath guaranteed the possession of Juliers and Berg to the male branch of the house of Sulzbach. I have not seen the treaty, but the French say so, and declare that they are bound to carry it into execution. I cannot therefore think it to the interest of the King of Prussia to allow it to come to a war with France.) Borck answered, "ich will nicht fragen wie viel Ursache kais. Mt. habe, die Crone Frankreich pro lubitu in deutschen Reichssachen schalten und walten zu lassen; wenn aber diese Cron zudringlicherweise Gewalt brauchen will, so muss man Gewalt mit Gewalt steuern."—(I will not ask what reason his imperial Majesty hath to allow the crown of France to govern and dispose pro lubitu in German matters; but if this crown chooseth to use force and to press it upon us, we must oppose force to force.)

of Sulzbach, during which time no other power should be allowed to take possession: both powers were to concur in maintaining this decision.

This was directly at variance with all the expectations excited by Seckendorf's negotiations, and confirmed by the secret treaty of 1728. The struggle already assumed a very determined character; the King was resolved to take possession with an armed force, in defiance of all opposition: while the Emperor, in conjunction with the French, determined to oppose any forcible occupation, and began to adopt measures of security against the possible events of a war.

It almost appears, exclaimed the King, as if the court of Vienna had entirely laid aside all faith and truth, at least with regard to us; they are determined, according to Machiavel's doctrine, not to be bad by halves; perhaps, however, a time may come when the Emperor will repent having so deeply wounded his best friend, and sacrificed him to strangers.

There was no help;—now, so near the close of his life, he was obliged to adopt a new line of policy. Repulsed on all sides, threatened with French arms by the Emperor, he resolved, since no other way remained open to him, to address himself to France.

The result was such as could hardly have been anticipated, considering the apparently close intimacy between France and Austria: the Cardinal minister replied to the first overtures of Prussia in the most cordial manner; while he affected to take measures to induce the maritime powers to join in his compact with Austria, he secretly engaged in negotiations of a

totally opposite character. Such indeed was the policy of the time, and especially that of the Cardinal, who loved, while appearing to follow the received system, to work his way through subterranean passages in a totally different direction, and when his time was come, to burst forth suddenly with unexpected resources. By these means he had wrested Lorraine and the two Sicilies from Austria, and had become the most powerful man in Europe. In meeting the advances of Prussia he stipulated, above all things, for impenetrable secrecy. The better to maintain this, the negotiations were carried on, not at Versailles or Berlin, but at the Hague, by the plenipotentiaries of the two courts, Fenelon and Luisius.

It is not, however, to be imagined that Fleury intended to yield the whole duchy of Berg to the King of Prussia. He was far too closely connected with the Palatine house, and too much bound to consult the feelings of the Catholic world,—which looked upon Düsseldorf as a frontier fortress against the Protestants, and pronounced the circles of Berg beyond the Agger indispensable as connecting the Catholic countries,—to have it in his power to cede either the former or the latter; the Cardinal said that if he did, he ran the risk of being stoned to death. Moreover, he himself did not deem it expedient to allow a German state, so powerful as Prussia, to possess so much of the bank of the Rhine. After a long struggle, the Prussian ministers were obliged to submit to the limitations proposed by the Cardinal. It was only after determining the tract of land along



the river which was to be reserved to the Palatinate,\* that they obtained some concessions; in return for which they promised to pay that power half a million of dollars.

The question was again agitated in Berlin, whether it would not be better to maintain the claim undiminished, and to wait for more favourable circumstances. The King, however, thought that in this world no one could reach the goal at one bound; had his grandfather contented himself with the portion of Pomerania that was offered him, he would long ago have been master of the whole. He therefore accepted the treaty, as it was drawn up in March, 1739. On the 22nd of May of that year, the ratifications were interchanged at the Hague in the profoundest secrecy.

The alliance thus commenced promised soon to become more close. The quarrel between England and Spain broke out again; great discussions arose concerning the election of a future Emperor: on both accounts it was extremely desirable for the French to have Prussia on their side. In January, 1740, they brought forward the draft of a treaty for mutual defence during fifteen years. King Frederick William was the less disposed to reject this, because he had other claims beside those upon Berg: viz. those on East Friesland, in the prosecution of which he could nei-

\* The line agreed upon—beginning about a mile from Angerort, and running on towards the bridge of Troisdorf, but branching off, before it reaches the bridge, towards the heights of Westhofen towards the confluence of the Agger with the Sieg—gave a larger piece to Prussia than was originally intended.

ther expect support from England, nor, as matters stood, from the Emperor. His only hope was in France. Drafts and projects were interchanged, but led to no decision. In the course of the negotiations, however, various remoter prospects were opened. Cardinal Fleury said, that Prussia deserved, from the good order of her finances and the number and excellence of her troops, to play a considerable part in Europe, and that France would willingly aid her.

It cannot be supposed that the patriotic old King was satisfied with this alliance. It was, perhaps, agreeable to him to find himself not entirely without a prop in the world; but otherwise he regarded it only as a necessity imposed on him by the failure of all his former plans; and while he accepted it, he formed combinations calculated to bring about a total change of policy in succeeding times. Before we approach these, we will devote our attention to the internal foundations on which rested the possibility of a further development of the external power of Prussia.

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## CHAPTER II.

## ARMY AND STATE.

A UNION of German provinces, which altogether did not number more than two millions and a half of inhabitants, and had not even any bond of connexion among themselves, seemed, when compared with the kingdom of France, extending from the Pyrenees to the Upper Rhine, and from the Mediterranean to the Ocean, or with the neighbouring boundless empire of Russia, with the inexhaustible Austria, or with England, mistress of the seas, a very insignificant state. The only thing which gave to Prussia a certain rank among the powers of Europe, and a certain consideration in the world, was, her military force. It was reckoned that France had at that time 160,000, and Russia 130,000 regular troops; but a great part of the former were employed in the garrisons of the numerous fortresses, while in the latter the men actually under arms were very far from corresponding with the army lists. The Austrian army was computed at 80,000 to 100,000 men; but of doubtful efficiency, and dispersed through the various provinces. What Frederick William I. did for Prussia in this rivalry of forces may be instantly measured, when we recollect that he increased the army from 38,000 men,—which placed her on a military level with Sardinia or

Saxon-Poland, to more than 80,000, *i. e.* nearly equal to that of Austria. We possess the accurate calculation of a minister of war at the beginning of the following reign, from which it appears that Frederick William found at his accession an army of 38,459 men; which, in the very first year of his reign, he raised to 44,792. In the year 1719 the army consisted of 53,999; in the year 1729, of 69,892; and in the year 1739 of 82,352, or, including the staff, 83,486. The King's care was equally bestowed on the several arms; he increased the cavalry by more than a half, and the artillery in still greater proportion.\* He suffered no discrepancies between the lists and the actual corps; and the fortresses occupied but a proportionally small number of men; taking the very lowest calculation, he had 72,000 men ready at a moment's warning, or with the smallest possible delay, to take the field.

It is evident from the relative numbers, that it was impossible to raise a standing army of this strength from the populations of Brandenburg and Prussia, except by withdrawing the necessary hands from every other kind of labour. Extraordinary efforts were required to bring together the half of that number of native subjects. For a time, the King wavered between compulsory and voluntary service, between enlistment and impressment: the arbitrary power of the officers, the rivalry and mutual aggres-

\* Massow's report to Frederick II. in the year 1748. Supposing there are some mistakes in individual calculations, which is not impossible, still the relation which one force bears to the other is correct.

sions of the regiments, occasioned numberless disorders and complaints. To prevent these evils, Frederick William gave a systematic organization to an old usage, assigning to each regiment a particular circle, out of which it should regularly keep up its numbers. All the homesteads of the country were distributed in cantons, according to their numbers, among the several regiments and companies, which were to be forcibly recruited from those members of the families who did not enjoy some peculiar exemption, or were absolutely indispensable for trade or agriculture. Neither householders nor their eldest sons or next heirs were taken; councillors of the provincial colleges were present at the levy, in order to prevent any infringement of the legal exemptions. The greater part of the additional troops thus raised, and immediately placed under the commandants, consisted of the younger sons of peasants. In the geographical descriptions of Brandenburg, it is specially remarked how healthy, robust, and laborious the people of that country are; how well they bear changes of temperature, and what excellent soldiers they become. Cato's saying—that a peasantry furnishes the bravest troops, was verified here.

One half of the army, however, was easily collected and maintained by voluntary enlistment. The greatest difficulty arose from the King's passion for men of gigantic height, who were collected from all parts of Europe—Sweden, Ireland, the Ukraine, Lower Hungary, the frontier territory of Austria and Turkey—countries peculiarly prolific in them—at an expense perfectly astounding when compared with his parsimoniousness.

mony in other things. In the states of the Empire, where the sovereigns would not permit him to recruit, he resorted to both fraud and force to get possession of them. The dominions of the other princes were not, however, all closed against him: as Elector, the King had a right to recruit in the imperial cities and their circles; and there were not wanting men who loved the trade of war, and willingly took service with a Prince by whom they were well paid and well treated. The army thus acquired a universal German ingredient; the union of the native soldiers with the recruits from other states excited emulation and mutual vigilance among them, and they blended together in the severe school of military discipline.

It were beyond our bounds to attempt to go into the details of this discipline, or to describe how Prince Leopold of Anhalt laid down the first principles of it on the little meadow at Halle, and the King himself perfected the system at his own Spartan Potsdam. For the chief use of the tall regiment at Potsdam was, to try every new method that appeared necessary, and to put it into perfect execution.\* The main thing was a regular step and rapid firing; or as the King once expressed it, "Load quickly, advance in close column, present well, take aim well;—all in profound silence." The Spanish armies had been wont to advance in deep columns, whereas the Prussian troops now presented a wide front, less exposed to the fire of the artillery, and more efficient from the

\* The other regiments often sent their officers to Potsdam, to acquire by personal inspection what could not be obtained from the orders they received.

force of its musketry. The bayonet attached to the musket was in effect a combination of pike and firelock. The iron ramrod was a great improvement—it accomplished at one stroke what had always required several; one reason for preferring large men was, that they were better fitted by nature for these manœuvres. The whole infantry of the Prussian army could march in four lines, of which the first and the last were composed of the tallest and strongest, and the two central, of somewhat smaller, but yet full-sized men. Their flags bore an eagle gazing at the sun. Their whole aspect was martial and formidable. “Friend and foe,” says Prince Leopold in one of his letters, “admire your Majesty’s infantry—your friends regard it as one of the wonders of the world; your foes admire with trembling.”\*

The leaders of these bands, whose daily business it was to go through the exercise and to drill the new recruits, were for the most part country nobles. In a census taken of the Pomeranian nobility in 1724, it is remarked that, with few exceptions, it consisted of officers of the army on service, or who had served.†

\* He referred to the King’s grandfather, who laid the first stone of this imperishable work. “Da ich denn die Ehre habe, von meinem 17 Jahre an darunter zu dienen, und allen wenigen Ruhm, den ich habe mit E. K. M. Fussvolk erworben.”—(“As I had the honour to serve under him from my 17th year, and to have earned with your Majesty’s foot-soldiers what little glory I possess.”)

† Gundling, Pomeranian Atlas; one portion of Brandenburg on the back of p. 278.

One of the main objects of Frederick William was, to form a thoroughly energetic and efficient corps of officers.

Great complaints were made at that time, in the Austrian service, that the post of officer was not only acquired by purchase, but that it could be sold again; it was not regarded as an honour, but as a kind of alienable property; and even where this was not the case, the deserving veteran was thrown into the background by the inexperienced young man of rank.\*

In the Prussian army too the universal practice still prevailed that the subordinate appointments should be made by the superior officers; ensigns were promoted to be lieutenants, and these to be captains, at their pleasure; the nomination of staff-officers alone was reserved to the King; but even these were proposed by the officers.

Frederick William now took all the nominations into his own hands; not only because he chose to be master everywhere, but because he deemed it important not to leave the appointments to the first step, on which all the succeeding ones depended, to chance, or to the influence of personal considerations; but to bestow them according to his own judgment.

The young nobles who entered the regiments as volunteer corporals, formed the nursery of his army; they were trained to the greatest care both in essential and in trifling things, and subjected to the severest admonitions, nay, even punishments for the slightest

\* According to Foscarini, *Historia Arcana*, p. 113, a company cost 8000, the grade of major 20,000, and a colonelcy 30,000 florins.



neglect. Whenever the King inspected a regiment, he made minute inquiries as to their qualities and conduct, and caused them to be presented to him; and this course of discipline went on till the happy day when the young man was admitted as ensign, and received the badge which he was to guard inviolate, and which communicated somewhat of its own inviolability to his own person.

The King appointed only those who knew the exercise well, were guilty of no excesses, managed their own affairs with prudence, and had a good personal appearance. Their subsequent promotion was determined by the same motives. Lists of conduct were kept, which showed year by year how each had behaved with reference to the duties of religion, to his private life, and to the service; and what degree of intelligence he possessed. The merits of the commanding officers were attested by the state of their regiments at the yearly inspection by the King in person.

It may be thought ludicrous, that every detail of the uniform, down to the most minute, was the subject of an inflexible rule; for example, the width of the ruffles and the stock, the number of buttons on the half-boots, the length of the ends of ribbon hanging from the pigtail. But the motive for this was something more than the uniformity which it is desirable for a regiment to present to the eye; it signified, that in the army all differences were to be obliterated except those dependent on rank in the service. There was little familiar intercourse except between men of the same rank, and any perceptible inequality

between rich and poor would have been intolerable. Frederick William would not suffer any one to appear in civil dress when off duty; from the year 1725 he himself never wore anything but the uniform.\*

His reverence for the garb of a soldier is well known. Nothing displeased him so much at Dresden and Hanover as the practice of measuring rank by station at court: a general or colonel was little thought of if he had not also a place about the court; an equerry of the royal hunt was a more important man than a brigadier.† He, on the contrary, rated the military service above everything. He excited in the officers a feeling for their profession—emanating from himself—which made them regard valour and efficiency in the service as the highest excellence of man, subordination as a law of nature, and duty as an honour.

\* In a MS. note to Mauvillon's *Vie de Frederick Guillaume*, who speaks of this as early as the year 1713, I find the following remarks: *Ce n'a été que vers l'an 1725 qu'il a pris absolument l'uniforme. Il le fit pour y assujettir les officiers généraux. Car jusqu'à ce temps là tous les officiers tant généraux qu'autres avoient porté hors le service des habits de toutes couleurs brodés et gallonnés comme il (chacun) le jugeait a propos. Il y en avoit beaucoup, que (cela) incommodoit et qui faisoient des dettes pour ne pas paraître inferieurs aux autres.*

† Previous to this, the generals of the cavalry and infantry regiments ranked with privy councillors (*Wirklichen Geheimen-Räthen*); but lieutenant-generals now held the same rank. Major-generals stood formerly one degree lower than the master of the horse, but they were now placed above them. Colonels formerly held the same rank as justices of the council, but they were now placed above vice-chancellors and directors of the courts of justice, &c. Compare the Orders settling precedence of 1708 and 1713. Mylius, V. 11. 86. 139.

Among the soldiers, his first care was to cultivate religious feelings. A considerable number of regimental chaplains, distinct from the ecclesiastical organization of the country, and connected by a different system, had great influence in the army, and were zealously supported by the King. He caused copies of the New Testament to be distributed to the companies,\* and ordered that no other hymns but those printed in an appendix at the end should be sung during divine service, so that the soldiers might learn them by heart. Patterns of the true character of a warrior were cited from the Old Testament,—“Benaiah, who slew an Egyptian, a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian’s hand, and slew him with his own spear;” and Shammah, who, when “the people fled from the Philistines, stood in the midst of the ground and defended it, and slew the Philistines.” The future valour of the Prussian army was nourished by examples drawn from the most ancient records of the human race.

The establishment of so powerful an institution necessarily produced a mighty change in all the internal relations of the country.

To advert merely to the condition of the working classes, what an entirely new character did the rural population acquire! Born apparently till now only to till the ground and perform menial services, the peasant

\* Letter of Frederick William to the Crown-Prince, 20th Jan., 1734. For the campaign each company had 22 copies, so as to give one to each tent.

was suddenly raised into importance by the part assigned to him in the warlike organization of the state, and his own indispensable co-operation in it. Frederick William caused the cadasters of the time of the greatest material prosperity of the country, from the year 1624, before the devastations of the thirty years' war, to be examined, and a list of farms and holdings to be made. He ordered that all these should be occupied, if not by regular peasants, by hucksters, servants, and other men capable of bearing arms. Each man acquired a higher value from the time that his mere existence put him in immediate connexion with the supreme power. (Nothing can be more distinct than personal subjection and military subordination, which requires personal qualifications, and is founded on a knowledge and observance of general rules.)

*Ranke's  
Prussian  
Vergangenheit*

We must examine somewhat more nearly the condition of the nobles, which throughout Europe has been more modified by the introduction of standing armies, than by any other circumstance whatsoever.

The difference is, that the original division of the land was calculated on military service;—this was the case everywhere, but especially in the ancient Margraveship; whereas in more recent times, personal service in arms was no longer attached to the possession of land, or to its feudal tenure; but the fiscal establishments which had gradually arisen in every state, and to which the whole country contributed, furnished the means of maintaining and paying an army constantly ready for the field.

Frederick I. already complained that his feudal domains, magnificent as they appeared, did not yield

him the smallest advantage; the fiefs were freed from all burthens except that of furnishing war-horses, and these were rendered useless by the changes in the art of war. The horses which the vassals were bound to furnish were demanded in 1669, 1678, and even so late as 1701, but with little success: the commutation of feudal service for money proved difficult and unproductive, and Frederick I., constantly occupied with large projects, had already conceived the idea of dissolving the feudal tie in consideration of a payment in money. His plan was discussed in the privy council, but not deemed practicable, the main reason of which was,\* that Frederick I., in the usual spirit of his financial administration, wanted to effect a general commutation of feudal services at one stroke, by which he hoped to obtain some millions for military purposes.

Under Frederick William this idea was taken up with greater eagerness. A member of the privy council named von Katsch, who had formerly held an office in the military tribunals, drew up a statement in which he showed that while the feudal lord derived very little profit from his fiefs, the feudal tie was extremely oppressive to the possessors of the land.

\* In the Acts we find, 1st. the decree for the conversion of the fiefs in the royal domains into hereditary property; 2nd. Frederick's letter, dated 25th Nov., 1732, referred to "was er im versammelten Geheimen Rath ohnlängst erklärt habe;"—"what he had lately declared in the assembly of privy councillors.") The answer of the secret councillors of 22nd Dec., 1702, wherein "ihre Dubia zu allerhöchster Dijudicatur vorlegen,"—"they lay before the King their doubts for his royal adjudication.")

The former gained nothing even by escheat, as he was bound by very stringent local laws to confer the land in fief again immediately: while the latter were vexed with fees and exactions, under pretext that they could not make the least change or improvement on the land without a *consensus*, for which the feudal chancery made them pay excessively dear. Minors were kept in constant alarm lest they should unwittingly commit some error, and so incur punishment, while the loss to widows and daughters by escheat was incalculable; they were driven out of house and home, and knew not where to find shelter or subsistence. Were this state of things abolished, and the possessor of the land allowed to manage it according to his judgment, the husbandry of the country would be improved in a few years, and the value of land raised; whereby the internal wealth of the country would be materially increased.

It was in every way repugnant to a mind like that of Frederick William, exclusively directed to the useful, to maintain obsolete rights which were simply burthensome. But what completely won him over to the project was, the demonstration of the possibility of levying a yearly sum upon fiefs, the total amount of which would be a considerable addition to his military chest. And as some nobles to whom he disclosed the plan approved of it, he declared himself ready, in consideration of an annual quit-rent, to abandon his feudal rights over all lands held in fief; not only would he give up his own right of escheat, but would grant the vassals the power to alienate their land, or to raise money upon it at their discretion.

But his position in the country was not such as to enable him by a simple command to introduce an innovation so deeply affecting private rights; he was forced to negotiate with the representative corporations, and the mode in which these negotiations were conducted is not the least remarkable part of the affair.

In the year 1713 the deputies of the prelates, counts, lords, knights, and cities, on either side of the Oder and the Elbe, assembled; the claims which they put forward were considerable; they referred to the old Recesses of 1572, 1602, 1611, 1614, 1615, and, above all, to the great Recess of 1653, and demanded the confirmation of the rights therein guaranteed.

Nevertheless this confirmation was not given. Frederick William replied, that he must first inform himself how far these recesses were still applicable to the altered circumstances of the country; the states acknowledged, though in expressions implying an assertion of their privileges, that this was "a most enlightened purpose." Being invited to explain their wishes more clearly, they specified only a few particulars, relating to fiefs and ecclesiastical patronage; they urged no requests of a political nature. Nor indeed could any such arise; for the quarrels between the nobility and the cities continued without ceasing, and the two parties could not be brought to unite on the most trifling point.\* The monarchy was

\* For example, they proposed the introduction of uniform weights and measures, and the King desired them to draw up a plan on this subject for him. But they could not agree whether

far too strong for the nobility to offer any opposition to it in the general government; its action was limited to the sphere of its own peculiar rights.

But even under these circumstances it was necessary that the King's intention should be submitted to the nobility. The first announcement of it excited a universal apprehension that he wanted to destroy the ancient prerogatives of the nobles; for how, said they, could the dignity of families be maintained consistently with an uncontrolled power of disposing of property? All the rights of co-feudatories would be annihilated; it seemed that the government wanted to reduce the nobility to the condition of a tax-paying class—to put them on a level with citizens and peasants. In short, had the assembly of nobles been

they should take as their standard the Brandenburg or the Berlin measure. The nobles preferred the former, the burghers the latter: they left the matter to the King, who decided in favour of the towns. The earlier expressions of the King ran thus: "Was aber die allegirten Recesse und in specie den de anno 1653 anbelanget, da können S. K. Mt., welche nichts was sie nicht königl. und unverbrüchlich zu halten gedenken, jemahlen versprechen wollen, zu Confirmation solcher Recesse sich nicht so schlechterdings erklären, sie seien dann zuvörderst genau und gründlich informiret, ob und in wie weit solche Recesse auf die jetzige Zeit annoch applicable, und ob nicht ein und anderes so zu des Landes weiterem Flor und Anwachs dienen könnte darin zu verändern und zu verbessern sei."—"But what concerneth the alleged recess, and especially that de anno 1653, his Majesty, who will never promise any one anything other than he can royally and truly perform, cannot unconditionally declare himself ready to confirm such recesses, before he be accurately and thoroughly informed whether, and how far they be applicable to the present time, and whether certain matters therein might not be so altered and improved, as to tend to the greater increase and benefit of the country.")



called together immediately, and the proposition been laid before them in its crude state, they would infallibly have rejected it.

The government, however, adopted the method most suited to the simple and familiar manners of the time, and brought forward the negotiations at the diets of the circles, where the nobles assembled in small numbers, and the discussions assumed rather the character of conversations than of formal debates. These unrestrained discussions showed the government what it might safely attempt, and enabled it to modify its plans.

Of all the diets of circles held at that time, that of Havelland is the most remarkable. Katsch, the original projector of the scheme, undertook to introduce it, and succeeded in convincing those present of the advantages which they would derive from the change. At the first meeting of the deputies of the circles in Berlin, the government, among whose own members many objections had been raised,\* made it its chief care to dissipate those apprehensions of the estates which presented the greatest obstacle to its designs. The King recognised the claims of the co-feudatories; limited the right of inheritance of daughters to the case of extinction of the male line; sanctioned the restrictions on the right of alienating, or of charging the land with debts, and relinquished generally whatever could be prejudicial to the estate of the nobles, as such. What he gave up was chiefly his

\* The commission consisted of Ilgen, Grumbkow, Kraut, Creuz, and Katsch. The Obermarshal Prinzen made the chief objections.

own rights; *consensus* ducs, and escheats. In return for these, and as an indemnity for the war-horses, which the nobility was legally bound to provide at any moment on the armament of a neighbouring power, he demanded an annual payment, which he fixed first at fifty and afterwards at forty dollars for each war-horse. At the outset, Katsch, in his zeal, had thought it possible to get sixty.

Hereupon the deputies went home to advise with their respective estates in the circles, and met again in Berlin twice—in April and June, 1717.

At the first of these meetings, a decided majority showed a disposition to accede to the proposed plan. The first who met the views of the government were the men of the Mittelmark, who were soon joined by those of the Ukermark, and by the nobles of Priegnitz, who, on this occasion, separated themselves from those of the Altmark, with whom they generally voted.

There was still a difficulty as to the proposed amount of the commutation for the horses; but, on the 24th June, it was accepted by the deputies of the three bodies of nobles above named.\* The Neumark joined them, on the King's promising to make due provision for the poor. On the other hand, he signed a counter obligation, confirming anew the general prerogatives of the nobles; but he conceded nothing at variance with the character and constitution of his government, and listened to no new and unprecedented demands. He said that "what he had relinquished

\* From the Priegnitz, the provincial counsellors Platen and Stille; from the Ukermark, the Director Wedel; from the Mittelmark, Bredow, Rohr, Platen, Wilmersdorf, Wulffen.

consisted of nothings, what he had gained, of realities : he wished he could make such a bargain every day."

He reckoned that the yearly quit-rent, even if partially reduced (as, for example, in Pomerania) to forty florins, would still bring him in from sixty to eighty thousand dollars a-year from his imperial territories alone,\* and that with this sum he should be able to maintain two new regiments : he formed the design of introducing a general allodification throughout his dominions under this peculiar form.

At first he found great difficulty in the Altmark, which did not deem itself bound by the acts or decisions of the majority of the estates of the electoral dominions ; the objections of this province were often expressed with great bitterness. The King did not answer them, but adhered inflexibly to his design. Certain devoted councillors travelled from one knight's fee to another, to bring over the recalcitrant by oral arguments. When once the affair had been carried in the Marches, the other provinces gradually followed.

It is a remarkable fact, that the councillor of the Empire at one time took the side of the opposition ; he maintained that the innovation ran counter to the ancient constitution of the Germanic Empire. The King replied, that what he had done was for the improvement of the condition of his nobles, and had been done with their consent ; that he hoped nobody would attempt to prevent him from altering old institutions, no longer suitable to the times, if it could be done without injury or oppression.

\* Compare Riedel's Magazine, III. 1. 33. From Prussia 15,000 thalers were expected to be raised from these measures.

It is certain that he had succeeded in a work of the greatest importance; he had brought the force and resources of the nobles to bear on the general object of the military organization of the country, yet without destroying them.

The rights of the representative bodies, unimportant as they generally appeared, proved not inoperative here; inasmuch as they compelled the government, which originally carried its views much further, to confine them to schemes more practicable at the moment.

The cities showed much less disposition to oppose the King's will; yet it could not be said that their submission was injurious to them: indeed, the nobles complained that the burghers were favoured far beyond themselves; and certainly it was one of the chief objects of the King's solicitude to improve the condition of the towns, especially as to manufactures.

It was the universal conviction in Germany, towards the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, that the very depressed manufacturing industry of Germany must be utterly destroyed unless some active and rigorous measures were adopted. The most popular writers complained that the preponderance of French manufactures sapped the main strength of the German nation—that of production—and sucked the blood from its veins. The government was advised to resort to the heroic remedy; and, as competition with the foreigner was impossible, to begin at once by prohibition, and to take measures for the establishment of native industry

afterwards; for that "where there was no rigour, there was no vigour."\*

The March of Brandenburg exhibited the most melancholy proofs of the decay of German industry, owing to the superiority of the French, but far more of the English. The cloths of Priegnitz and the Altmark, which had formerly been dyed in Hamburg and then exported to the North, and had been a profitable branch of trade to Brandenburg, no longer found a market, because they did not satisfy the improved taste of the consumers.† It was manifestly impossible that they should resist English competition in foreign markets, when they fell before it at home.

Frederick I. had done much for trade, chiefly for those branches which furnished the articles necessary for the court; but the insecure condition of the court itself, and the vacillation of the government between the opposite principles of administering its own affairs or committing them to farmers, had suffered nothing to flourish: a number of manufacturers, who had been

\* *Ubi non est rigor, non est vigor.* Hornekgk: Austria above all, if it only chooses: first in 1684, then in 1712 (p. 95). "Andere wollen die inländischen Manufacturen einführen, um die ausländische hernach zu verbieten, ich aber rathe die ausländischen zu verbieten und hernach die inländische einzuführen."—"Others," says he, "wish to introduce home manufactures, in order subsequently to prevent the entrance of foreign articles; but I would advise the immediate exclusion of the foreign articles, and then the introduction of domestic manufactures."

† Königs Berlin, III. 357. In 1707, Queen Anne, by an act to encourage the manufacture and dyeing of woollen cloths in England, laid a heavy duty upon the export of white woollen goods.

induced to settle in the country, were driven away again.

The country had, for the present, necessities more urgent than the introduction of new manufactures. Frederick William once said he must provide the clothmakers (the number of whom was considerable) with their necessary subsistence; and another time, that he would find employment for the destitute inhabitants of the country. It is very true that the theory he adopted was founded on an over-estimate of the value of money; but setting this aside, it was of the most urgent necessity to save the manufacturing part of the population from ruin, and not to be dependent on foreign countries for the primary necessities of life. The endeavour to oppose native industry to foreign, and to produce at home the most indispensable articles of consumption, is surely not to be blamed. The German nation could not relinquish that manufacturing activity which had formed so important an element of the existence of its towns in former ages, without perpetuating the consequences of the thirty years' war, by which mainly it had been destroyed.

To restore this, King Frederick William now found, in the wants of his army, a means of giving immediate employment to the manufactures which he had re-established, and of securing to them a constant market; he insisted that the soldiers should be always cleanly dressed and provided with two suits of clothes. He soon compelled the nobles and the other classes of his subjects to follow his own example and that of his army in this respect, and to use nothing,

either for their clothing or any other purpose, but woollens of home manufacture.\* And he prohibited, not only all foreign articles of that material, but likewise all cotton fabrics, to which the country produced nothing similar. In November, 1721, he ordered, that in eight months from that date, no one of either sex or of any class, whether in town or country (for such are the categories under which the several divisions of his subjects are arranged in his edicts), should wear cottons either fine or coarse, under penalty of a fine of a hundred reichsthalers.† He understood the art of enforcing obedience; and in seven years from that time, we are assured that nobody even thought of foreign wares, which were completely superseded by the woollen and linen goods of the country. This would however have been impossible, if the exportation of the finer sorts of wool had continued, leaving only the inferior sorts for home manufacture; the King's so-called *wool pragmatica*, and the many explanatory edicts, prohibited this in the strongest terms, and were calculated to render it impossible. Measures were taken to regulate the sale of the wool by an excise. There were of course many and loud complaints: the King replied, that in affairs of state the welfare of the whole must always take precedence of the convenience of individuals.‡

\* Edict, that from and after 1st Jan., 1720, no foreign cloths, nor any woollen wares of foreign manufacture, should be worn or used. Mylius, V. II. p. 318.

† Mylius, V. II. p. 198.

‡ It is singular that Frederick William should have closed a course of legislation based entirely on individual, as opposed to general, interests, by a maxim condemnatory of all protection of

In order that all these restrictions might not expose the country to be overrun with bad manufactures, he subjected them to a vigilant inspection. The cloth-makers were instructed how to clean their wool, to sort it, make it soft and supple, to comb it, and how many stone weight to use for each quality of cloth; in the same manner as Colbert gave the French workmen the most elaborate technical rules. The Prussian inspectors likewise swore accurately to examine the cloths when they came out of the loom, the fulling-mill, and the dyers' vats; and to denounce any defects to condign punishment.\*

A table was attached to the charter of the guild of linen-weavers, in which every one could see to how many ells of linen he was entitled from his thread.† In the years 1734 to 1736, sixty-three trades received charters of guild intended to remedy all abuses that had crept in, and to assign to each its peculiar province.‡ The five trades which were allowed in the country, were connected with the incorporated trades of the cities by restrictive laws. In the towns, an inquiry was set on foot to ascertain, from the number class interests. But in this he only shared the ignorance of his time.—*Transl.*

\* Edict for the inspection of cloths and stuff manufactories, 30th Jan., 1723, in Mylius, V. II. 335.

† The thread was, and, in many places, still is, spun in families, and given to the weaver, to be woven.—*Transl.*

‡ Beckmann Beschreibung der Mark Brandenburg, I. 1158. Moreover, he asserts that Brandenburg was famous in southern Germany, in Lorraine, Italy, Spain, and Brabant, for its camlets, tammies, and other manufactures.—The woollen manufactures of the March were not inferior to those of the rest of Europe either in goodness or in variety.



of inhabitants, and the amount of consumption, how many artisans were wanting, or could find subsistence, in each branch of trade. Foreign workmen were to receive every encouragement; natives were to be permitted to settle in a town only on showing that they were unable to subsist in their last place of abode. Labour was organized, if we may so express ourselves, on a monarchical system.

There is no doubt that these measures produced, on the whole, favourable results. The home manufactures were soon able to support the competition of neighbouring nations; the blue cloths of Berlin acquired a certain celebrity in Europe.\* A more important advantage to the country was, that the town population of the March recovered itself. According to the returns (which are indeed imperfect), this population could not, in 1713 and 1714, be rated higher than 100,000, nearly the half of which belonged to Berlin; in the year 1723, concerning which we have accurate information, there were 137,945 inhabitants; and in the year 1739, 206,520. In these later years the population had increased a third, and in the course of the whole reign, probably a half. In the capital the number of inhabitants rose to 80,000, exclusive of the garrison, which consisted of 16,000 men. It is clear that the manufacturing classes had thus risen into new life.

The complaints made by the nobility of the restraints imposed on them were unjust. The increase

\* Description in Borgsted's *statistisch-topographischer Beschreibung der Kurmark*, p. 381. What Bratring adds, gathered from former years, is fragmentary.

of consumption, which would have otherwise been impossible, reacted advantageously on agriculture. It has been said that there is not an acre of land in England of which the value is not increased by the growth of London. This, in diminished proportions, might be applied to Prussia. The Mittel and Uckermark profited by the vicinity of Berlin; the latter was called the granary of the capital. The provinces on the other side the Oder and the Elbe also began to send their superfluous corn thither. What was lost by the prohibition to export wool, was gained by the increased sale of corn. The King would never have suffered that to sink to too low a price.

I hope that some one more conversant with the economical measures of Frederick William will devote himself to the circumstantial statement of them; meanwhile, I may be permitted to cite one other example. Corn was never allowed to fall below a certain price. Had free importation from Poland been permitted, grain might very often have been sold at half or two-thirds of the price it actually bore. The immediate cause of this prohibition was, that the King would not let his own farmers run the risk of being unable to pay their rents; but it was, in fact, advantageous to all landed proprietors. On the other hand, care was taken that the price should not rise too high for the towns and the soldiery. In times of dearth and dearness the royal magazines, which were filled in plentiful years, were thrown open, and these precautions were not unfrequently most beneficial to the country. In the year 1736, for example, when all the miseries of famine were endured

in the neighbouring countries, Poland and Silesia, Brandenburg suffered but little. The peasants received advances of seed-corn, which they returned the next harvest.

It is the part of a well-ordered state to preside over the application of human labour, and the vicissitudes of nature.

It has been thought that the principal reason why the ancients occupied themselves so little with the science of finance was, that it constantly presents the problem, how to defray variable expenses out of variable revenues: the endeavour of Frederick William was to keep both on a permanent equality; to develop each in exact proportion to the other.

Frederick William established a department in the general government, whose express business it was to endeavour to accomplish that end.

It is well known that the immediate cause of its establishment was, the disputes that broke out between the war commissariat (which administered the war taxes in town and country, the excise duties, and contributions) and the finance department, which managed the royal domains. Their powers, which had a different origin, frequently came into collision. In the one, the prince appeared in the character of a great landed proprietor, belonging to the same class as his nobles; in the other, as the chief of the whole war department. It sometimes happened that the administration of the domains granted concessions to the farmers in direct opposition to the orders of the commissariat, and even formally subscribed the complaints and petitions of the estates against that depart-

ment. The evil was rendered glaring by that emulation in the public service which the earnestness and vigilance of the King called forth.

Frederick William consequently determined to combine the two departments. It seems that this idea was first suggested in the course of conversation by Leopold of Dessau. The King instantly adopted it, and set himself with all the energy of his character to work it out and put it in execution. It is worth while to observe the manner in which he proceeded.

During a solitary residence at Schönebeck, in December, 1722, Frederick William drew up, with his own hand, the draft of very detailed instructions.\* He was ambitious that nobody might be able to find any material fault in it. The manuscript is, as may be imagined, carefully preserved; it contains the whole groundwork of those instructions of the general government which afterwards became so important.

In order to put these into a form in which they could be shown, the King, as soon as he was returned to Potsdam, sent for Thulemeier, his private secretary. He invited him to come the next day—it was a Sunday—at two o'clock in the afternoon, provided with writing implements, good stout paper, and “black

\* The title runs thus: *Dieses sind diejenige Concept, die ich selber geschrieben und hernacher Tulemeier in die Feder dictirt und in Dictiren alles schreiben lassen positiver und weitläufiger, dass es besser zu verstehen ist; soll dieses beim geheimden Archiv verwahret werden.*—(These are the ideas which I myself have writ down, and which afterwards I dictated to Tulemeier, and in the dictation caused them to be more correctly and fully written out, in order that they might be better understood. These are to be preserved in the secret Archives.)

and silver cord" to tie the sheets together; and to make his arrangements so that he could stay a few days. The contents were now weighed again, and the utmost care was taken to put everything into the clearest and most precise language, so as to leave no room for misconception. In consequence of the various interruptions inevitable at Potsdam, the work was not completed till the 14th January. Some copies were still to be made, after which the King immediately proceeded to put his plan into execution.

On the 19th of January, 1723, the members of the two colleges, the commissariat-general, and the finance department, who had not the slightest suspicion of the intended change, were summoned to attend in a room of the palace. Ilgen, who, as we have seen, was no less active in internal than in foreign affairs, read a letter to the assembled functionaries, in which the King announced his intention, and blended many personal rebukes with his general censures. The provincial commissariat of the Churmark, which had hitherto been united with the general, was now separated from it, and the members appointed to that particular service were immediately sent to their destination. Ilgen conducted those who remained into the new building arranged for the members of government, showed each man his appointed place, read the instructions aloud, standing under the King's picture, delivered a copy of them to each of the ministers appointed to carry them into effect, and laid another copy on the table. Upon this the ministers first, and then the councillors repaired to the audience-chamber, where the King was

waiting for them, and were sworn in afresh. They took an oath to promote the interests and welfare of his Majesty, and especially the increase of his revenues and the protection of his subjects, by every means in their power.\*

This was no empty phrase; it was the meaning and the aim of the whole administration.

The ministers were made responsible for the actual payment into the treasury of all the revenues entered in the estimates; the farmers might be allowed ten days' grace from the expiration of the quarter, but not an hour more; contributions and excise dues must be levied with the utmost exactness, in order that the regiments might receive their pay punctually every month. But, on the other hand, no tax should be imposed beyond the means of the subject; the most exact equality must be observed in levying the

\* (Sr. K. Mt.) *treu hold und gewärtig zu sein, Sr. Kgl. Mt. Nutzen und Bestes, insonderheit aber die wahre Verbesserung und Vermehrung der sämtlichen Revenüen und Einkünfte, imgleichen die Conservation Dero Unterthanen, sowohl auf dem Lande als in den Städten, so viel mir nur mensch und möglich suchen und befördern, hingegen alles was dem zuwider und gedachter Sr. K. Mt. und dem königl. Hause auch sämtlichen Landen und getreuen Unterthanen schädlich und nachtheilig sein möchte abwenden und verhüten.*—(To be faithful, loving, and obedient to your Majesty, in as far as is humanly possible to endeavour to promote everything that tends to his Majesty's profit and service; but more especially to the increase of all the revenues and incomes of this country, as well as to the preservation of his Majesty's subjects, in the country as well as in towns. On the other hand to avoid and eschew all that may be opposed to this, and injurious and disadvantageous to his Majesty, the royal family and the several provinces, as well as to his Majesty's faithful subjects.)

contributions; the custom-house officers were ordered to search the King's waggons as well as all others; every endeavour was to be used to encourage the husbandman and to promote the prosperity of the towns.

The instructions for "the general directory-in-chief for the finance, war, and crown-domains departments" (for such was the title borne by this combined body of functionaries) consisted of twenty-four articles, of which many contain twenty or thirty paragraphs;\* no extract can give any idea of the contents of this document; indeed, detached passages would be only likely to produce a false impression. It is sufficient here to indicate its general tendency.

Its main purpose was, as we have said, to establish greater unity in the government.

In the provinces also, the chambers (treasuries, or finance departments) were united to the commissariat. The King granted permission that one man should devote himself more to the one, another to the other branch, but from all he required the most accurate knowledge of both. The council, for example, upon which the care and supervision of the towns were imposed, was bound to have as accurate a knowledge of their condition as to trade and manufactures, means of subsistence, number of citizens and other inhabitants, &c., as a captain has of the state of his company. On the other hand, the higher authorities were to be intimately acquainted with both branches; with

\* Printed in Förster's Frederick William, II. 173. Among the various useful documents given in that work, this is perhaps the most worthy of notice. Compare Rördenbeck, I.

the condition of the rural as well as of that of the town population. Several provinces were united in a single division under one minister; Grumbkow undertook the eastern, Kraut the central, Kreuz and Görne the western; but each division had a particular day assigned to it for submitting its reports and accounts, when the ministers of the other divisions were bound to be present: the whole body was responsible for the resolutions then passed. The King reserved to himself the supreme and general presidency. He was indefatigable in his endeavours to make the idea, which had first assumed a shape in his own mind, bear fruit; persuaded that he would thus establish the prosperity of his country and the power of his crown, on a solid basis.\*

It is possible that in a more advanced state of society measures of this kind would no longer answer their intended purpose; but at the time we are treating of, they gave a great stimulus to progress. The pursuit of particular interests gave way to a regard for the general wants, and the means of providing for them. The idea of a community was, as it were, sensibly represented. Among all the experiments in political economy, the most important since the time of Colbert was perhaps the attempt to establish the

\* Written in his own hand. He only sought das "Beste der Lande und Leute, Befestigung der Armee und Krone, denn ich persuadirt wäre, dass durch diese Combination es festgesetzt wäre wofern sie wollten treu und unverdrossen der Strang zugleich ziehen."—"The good of my country and of my people, the strengthening of the army and of the crown, for I am persuaded that by this combination it would be firmly established, if only they would truly and indefatigably pull together.")



direct connexion of taxation (which is even now generally regarded merely as a burthen imposed by one part of the community and borne by another) with the political system of the state, and the general improvement of the people.

Prussia was the first country in which it was possible to construct a regular system of public economy.

An attempt had already been made to establish a chamber of accounts, consisting of two colleges, the one for the crown domains, the other for the war taxes: these, also, were now united, and incorporated the government. Whenever the general accounts of a province were given in, a member of the particular department to which the province belonged was bound to be present in the supreme chamber of accounts, where he had to preside, and to communicate to the government whatever remarks had been made. The chamber was empowered to examine the accounts of the general treasury, but the ministers alone could confirm them.

A statement of the accounts of the general treasury in a clear and satisfactory form, was a matter of no little difficulty. The first of this kind was completed in September, 1724; "an important work," as the report expresses it, "for which some thousands of receipts and vouchers have been collected with indescribable trouble from all the provinces of the kingdom, and in which a whole ream of paper has been used."

The accounts ran from the 1st of June to the 31st of May, and, at all events, the total of the various sums (the two funds being kept distinct) has been entered in the government books from that time.

At first sight it would seem as if the whole revenue had been raised far beyond any estimates which had previously (no doubt on very defective data) been adopted.

In the year 1724, the revenue arising from the crown lands amounted to nearly three millions; in the year 1726, to above three and a half; and in 1727, to more than four millions. The income of the general war department in the first year above named was 3,800,000; in the second year 4,200,000; and in the third 4,600,000 thalers; so that it might be inferred that the whole revenue was more than eight millions and a half; but that is not the case. The treasury of the crown lands had, besides its fixed income of 150,000 thalers, a fluctuating revenue, composed of sums outstanding from previous years, and of repayments of monies advanced for various purposes, and reckoned into the income: in the year 1726 this amounted to more than 800,000 thalers, in others to less; but it was always enough to form a considerable deduction from the gross revenue. The military chest, likewise, had a fixed income, although much smaller; in the year 1726, it amounted to something above 60,000; in 1727, to about 140,000 thalers, and so on, gradually increasing. The chief and very considerable contribution to the military chest, however, was paid by the office of the crown lands, and deducted from its income; in the years 1726-27, it reached a sum of 750,000 thalers. Deducting these sums, the total amount of the two revenues does not exceed seven millions of thalers.

Had the economical basis on which these revenues

rested been inadequate, it would soon have been impossible to collect them; but on the contrary, we find them constantly on the increase.

In the Churmark, for example, the war taxes, which, in 1728, amounted to 669,544 thalers, rose, in 1737, to 771,545; an increase of somewhat more than 100,000 thalers. This increase did not arise from the contributions which were permanently fixed, nor from the *kriegs metze*, or war tax on grain, which latter hardly rose above a thousand thalers: the whole increase was caused by the Berlin excise, which produced 15,000 thalers, and especially by the customs dues, which rose from 365,000 to 450,000 thalers. The increase in the taxes on consumption arose from the increased population and activity of the towns.

The same was the case throughout Prussia. The product of the excise and the tax on liquors varied according to the quality and amount of the harvest; but, on the whole, it was on the increase. In the year 1727 the excise of the smaller towns produced 78,000, and the tax on liquors 22,000 thalers; in the year 1733, the former 105,000, the latter 42,000. In Königsberg the excise produced, in 1728, little more than 100,000 thalers; in the year 1736, which was, it is true, rendered particularly productive by the presence of King Stanislaus and his Polish retinue, 140,000, but in other years it was never much less than 130,000 thalers.\*

The same tokens of increasing prosperity were ex-

\* 1728, 104,000; 1732, 119,500; 1733, 125,296; 1736, 141,089; 1737, 132,928; 1738, 128,955.

hibited by other cities; the surplus of the excise rose in Halberstadt from 8400 to 18,000, and in Cleves from 28,000 to 40,000 thalers.

This rendered it possible, as early as the year 1726, to increase the war expenditure by half a million, and not only to maintain it on that footing, but in the course of the reign to add another half million—about the whole increase in the general revenue—thus raising it to 4,700,000 thalers.

The whole of this sum was not, however, applied to the maintenance of the regiments; a considerable part of it was required for the construction of fortifications, especially in Magdeburg and Stettin. There is an account extant, according to which the building of fortresses cost, from the 1st of June, 1733, to the 1st of September, 1734, in ordinary and extraordinary expenses, 2,518,918 thalers.

Moreover, the whole economy of the public money was so conducted, that there were always resources for any extraordinary outlay.

In the beginning of the reign there were the debts of Frederick I. to pay off, and the Pomeranian war to carry on; moreover, large estates were bought, to the amount of 600,000 thalers, in the two years of 1717, 1718, alone. From the June of 1720 to January, 1721, the government was able to pay off the two millions required for taking possession of Pomerania, and in the mean time the great work of the restoration of Prussia was begun. Here the plague had swept away more than a third of the inhabitants; it had raged with peculiar fury in Lithuania, where full three-fourths of the scanty population fell

victims to it;\* the whole country was overgrown with weeds and briars. The King regarded it as one of his most urgent duties to find a remedy for these evils: in the years 1721, 24, 26, 28, 31, and 36, he went himself into Prussia; he laid the plans and watched over their execution; it was necessary to colonize Lithuania afresh. In the year 1722 a considerable number of Swabians, Franconians, and Nether Saxons emigrated to that province, as in the 13th century. The King had them conveyed at his own cost from Halberstadt to Stettin, and from thence by sea to Königsberg; houses were already built for their reception, and they received agricultural implements, among which the Halberstadt plough superseded that of the country. About the year 1730 the number of these colonists amounted to 17,000. The Salzburgers, who here found an asylum from religious persecution, were about as many more, and gave to the whole colony its peculiar character. In the year 1736 there were already 332 villages newly inhabited by peasant householders.† The soil turned out more fertile than had been expected. At the same time, Frederick William had granted civic rights and magistrates to ten well-situated market towns and villages, in which the corn was to be sold, or the cattle exchanged with the neighbouring Poles,

\* According to Schubert, 154,445 men died in Lithuania, deducting the births.

† Lucanus wrote his *Staat von Preussen* MS. about this period. From this work Baczko takes his numbers, whence they have been copied into other books. The undertaking deserves a totally different manner of treatment than it has hitherto received.

and in which woollens were manufactured like those of the Churmark. These towns were made the seats of justice and of administration, and were garrisoned with small bodies of troops. In this also Leopold of Dessau rendered great assistance to the King. At the request of the latter, he bought a large tract of waste land and peopled it with colonists from the middle Elbe; he also sent artisans from his own hereditary domains to build the magnificent castle he erected in Bubainen. A new creation thus arose on the very borders of the Germanic world. "The land is cultivated again," says the Crown-Prince, in a letter of 1739; "the country peopled; we have more towns than ever we had, and trade is thriving; the King has grudged neither his own trouble, nor the labour which he could obtain from others; he has spared no expense: hundreds of thousands of thinking beings owe their existence or their happiness to him."\*

The King also set on foot other agricultural undertakings in East Prussia; often indeed with greater cost than profit. It sometimes made him unhappy when he reflected that, in the three years from 1722 to 1727, three millions had found their way into Prussia; what he could have accomplished with this money elsewhere, and how little it had effected there!

Yet the other provinces were by no means neglected. In the year 1724 buildings were erected in

\* Pour assurer la vie et le bonheur a un demi million d'êtres pensants (to Voltaire: Insterbourg, 27 Juillet, Œuvres de Voltaire, LIII. 631); it is purely justifiable to bring this expression somewhat nearer the truth.

the ten cities of Pomerania, with the help of funds from the royal treasury; houses and gates were built in Stettin, the harbour of Colberg and the ferry of Anclam were repaired: Cleves and the March received assistance for the enlargement of the towns of Crefeld, Sonsbeck, Iserlohn, and for the improvement of their water and salt-works. The circle of Magdeburg was remarkable for the quantity of new buildings, both in the city itself and in Genthin, Schönebeck, and Salze, in which latter town a colony from the Palatinate was established. In the years preceding 1732 above two millions were expended in civil constructions, in the several provinces according to their peculiar wants. Many towns of the Churmark were rebuilt in an improved manner by the aid of the government, especially after the fires which were then so frequent.\* In other places the dams were repaired, as for instance, at Spandau and Fehrbellin; an admirable work of this sort was, the draining of the Havelland marsh, where the waste waters covering the land for five and twenty miles were drawn off by two or three large canals, connected by numerous ditches, and bounded by more than thirty dams; the land thus reclaimed from the elements, was so good, that it might have served for a Dutch model farm.†

\* Buchholz (*Geschichte der Churmark*, V. 146) asserts, that in 1732 Lichen had received 26,000, and in 1735 Templin 30,000 thalers: these were almost the smallest towns in the country.

† Büsching's *Reise nach Kyritz*—379. Description of the dykes and ditches, as given by one of the chief inspectors of dykes. *Borgstede*, p. 433.

Infinite care and attention were bestowed on the capital. The Friedrichstadt, which had attained to a considerable size under Frederick I., was enlarged by one-half. The large squares in the centre of the town and at the three gates, the handsome mansions in the Wilhelmstrasse, with their large umbrageous gardens, their spacious rooms and fine saloons, yet all in due proportion, and indicative of substantial affluence rather than hollow ostentation, are the work of this period. As men generally retain a lively recollection of annoyances or sufferings, the compulsory measures resorted to for building the streets are not yet forgotten. And doubtless these fell hard enough upon the mass, whose lives are sufficiently full of toil without such arbitrary additions. It is, however, no less true, that the King lent his own efforts to the work. Many millions of hewn stones, and sometimes lime and timber, were given to the builders from the government stores.\*

At the same time Potsdam was enlarged by three-fourths of its former extent: whole forests of piles were driven into the deep morass, upon which to build the squares for the residence of the tall regiment: the houses were all of the same height, form, and colour; any variety would have seemed like caprice, since the King was the sole builder, and the wants were in every instance the same. In the church which he built there for the garrison, he caused a

\* The Library at Berlin contains "des *gewesenen Bauadjutanten Herrn Thosen handschriftliche Nachrichten*,"—(MS. reports of the late architect Those,) which give much particular information on this subject.



vanit to be constructed of marble, in which he desired to be buried. He wished to lie in the midst of the military world he had created, rather than among his ancestors in the cathedral of Berlin.

In the year 1736 the money spent in building amounted to nearly 350,000 thalers.

With an immediate view to external splendour, though not without a thought in reserve that, in case of need, it might be put to other uses, the King employed a great deal of solid silver about the furniture of the palace; tables, looking-glass frames, sconces, &c.; some of these, as in the earliest times, were the work of Augsburg silversmiths. Six hundred thousand dollars were expended in this way between the years 1729 and 1732.

There was also an extraordinary fund for unforeseen exigencies, in order to avoid any confusion in the regular accounts; out of this, advances were made to new colonists for the cultivation of the land, or to undertakers of public works; it was called, from the person under whose management it was placed, the Albert fund. We generally find it exhausted in the first months of the revenue year; after some hesitation, the King, who delighted in such self-imposed limitations to his expenditure, raised the annual sum; he likewise frequently devised fresh means for increasing the fund.

These royal chests were like great reservoirs, in which the waters are collected before they are sent forth again in various streams to irrigate and fertilize the soil.

A considerable portion, however, was always kept

back. The surplus revenues flowed into the treasure, which, on great occasions, like that of the conclusion of the Pomeranian peace, was charged with the payment of extraordinary expenses, but the deficit was then immediately filled up again, to prepare against future exigencies of the like kind. The most exaggerated notions were at that time entertained concerning its amount; foreign ambassadors, who had resided in Berlin, estimated it at twenty millions (thalers) a few years before the King's death; it did, in fact, amount to about seven millions—equal to one year's income.

This reserve was highly necessary; as the formation of an army, however large, would have been entirely useless without the means to enable it at any moment to take the field, and maintain itself there for a year or two.

At no previous time would it have been possible to meet the expenses of the country, including a considerable military force, without foreign subsidies; the most remarkable result of Frederick William's administration was, that an army incomparably larger than any that had hitherto been raised, was supported entirely out of the resources of the country. The very essence of a power is that it should be free to follow its own impulses and determinations. This was the aim and the result of the whole system.

Everything worked together and connectedly; never, in the whole Romano-Germanic world, were all the powers and resources of a country so vigorously condensed. The Emperor Frederick II., who might be cited, pursued an object foreign to his country;

the administration of Naples. Under Louis XIV., Louvois frequently opposed the views of Colbert. But in Prussia means and ends were completely in unison; and the same comprehensive mind which embraced the whole presided over every detail.

If we wish to form an idea of the administrative activity of Frederick William, we must look over the documents in which he comments on the memorials sent in by his functionaries, or the petitions of private persons. Occasionally, though rarely, they are tolerably full: they are scrawled on folio sheets of uncommonly stout bluish-grey paper, not unpleasant, however, for the pen; the lines uneven, the letters huge and hardly legible, the orthography completely run wild, the sentences without form or order: but they hit the nail on the head; they are full of sound sense; and even two or three hasty words express his thoughts and his character. He might well recommend the Crown-Prince to study the administration of the country in his "*marginalia*." Each individual case suggested the mode of dealing with it, which was guided rather by actual circumstances than by any preconceived principles.

His ordinances frequently have an appearance of petty tyranny; such, for example, as those he issued to the authorities under whose care the depôts of fire-engines were placed. Dangerous fireplaces were to be removed, and where stone was wanting, the chimneys were to be surrounded by a mud wall up to a certain height, and all woodwork within them to be cleared away. The neglect of these regulations was to be punished by a fine amounting to compensation for

whatever mischief might accrue ; any one who caused a fire by negligence was to be flogged. The orders for stripping off the thatched or shingle roofs in towns, the providing of all the necessary implements in case of fire, the appointment of watchmen, &c., are expressed in the same inexorable style: the most minute directions enforced by the severest threats. But it cannot be denied that the matter was one of great importance. The preservation of the dwellings of man, the hard-won product of human labour and skill, from the power of the elements, is surely worthy the attention of the state. And should all these precautions prove vain, it is at least possible to secure individuals against utter ruin. Frederick William's ordinances for mutual insurance are among the earliest of the kind, and contain all the most essential provisions.\*

He extended this provident care in every direction. To his sanitary measures is ascribed the exemption of the country from contagious diseases ; his regulations for the maintenance of the poor consolidated the willing or the reluctant contributions of private individuals.

His opinions with regard to science may easily be inferred from what has been said of his character and views. It must not be imagined that there was any positively retrograde movement under his govern-

\* Directions with regard to fires in the royal residences, 1727, 31st March. Mylius, V. i. 267, with an appendix containing the orders therewith connected. Regulation as to the measures to be adopted by the society for collecting the contribution from the owners of houses which are insured against fire.

ment; the universities contained a number of eminent professors, such as Heineccius, Böhmer, and Ludwig; the Scientific Society possessed in Pott one of the greatest chemists of the century, and in Frisch a philologist of a rare extent of learning. But no favour or encouragement was bestowed on any pursuit that did not directly conduce to public utility as it was understood by the King. In addition to the Scientific Society, he created a new institute for medical and surgical studies, which rendered very valuable services to the army. At the University of Halle he established (thus fulfilling a wish frequently expressed in our own times) a special professorship of economical and administrative science, for the training of his public functionaries, and bestowed it on a man of science, who was also a man of action. The members of the faculties were to make themselves masters of the most important questions relating to the public wants and interests. He commissioned the jurists of Halle to draw out a project of a body of law for the collective Prussian states, and the views which he suggested to them were very remarkable.\* According to these, the Roman law was to be maintained, but divested of everything originating in the peculiar constitution of the ancient state of Rome, and brought into accordance with common sense, natural equity, and the circumstances of the time: his great desire was, to put an end to tedious and tortuous procedure, and

\* Order to the faculty of Jurists at Halle, 18th June, 1714. Published with explanations by Laspeyres in *Reyschers and Wilda's Zeitschrift für deutsches Recht*, VI. 88.

to render the laws intelligible to the mass of the people.

He endeavoured to rouse a kindred spirit in the Church; the preachers and ministers of all confessions were to instruct those confided to their care, simply "in the fear of the Lord and in true active Christianity," and never to allow them to hear anything of controversial doctrines, which in no respect conduce to that end. He regarded it as his duty to set them an example of complete toleration. At the opening of Trinity Church (which he built in a new quarter of Berlin), on the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, 1739, he brought with him the silver Communion vessels for the use of both the Protestant confessions; he attended both the ceremonies of consecration, in the morning the Reformed (Calvinist), in the afternoon the Lutheran.\* He not only allowed, but encouraged the ministry of some Dominican missionaries among his Catholic soldiers, and ordered the names of those who did not confess at the times ordained by the Church to be reported to him: he well knew that without that sense of religious obligation common to all confessions, which recognises the sanctity of an oath, neither his army nor his state could subsist.† He afforded the most zealous encou-

\* *Kurzgefasste Geschichte der Dreifaltigkeitskirche*, 1801, p. 8, 9.

† A manuscript in the Library of the Corsini palace at Rome contains a *Relatione delle missioni negli stati del marchese di Brandenburg*, most probably of the year 1730, as the rebuilding of the Catholic Church at Potsdam, which had been erected about eight years, is there mentioned; the information is chiefly derived from reports made by the nuncio in Cologne, and the

agement to the Lutheran clergy, to whose doctrines on the whole he leaned. Among the claims revived by the nobility in 1713, was that to the power of dismissing the preachers from their villages, in case they were guilty of any offence. Frederick William answered, that as the power of examining and confirming the preachers was vested in the consistory, representing the King in his character of supreme bishop, they could be judged and dismissed by no other authority; otherwise the power of the patron would be greater than that of the consistory. As, however, he protected the clergy from lay domination in virtue of his episcopal authority, he also claimed the right of interfering in the external ordinances of the Church. The forms, holidays, and ceremonies still appeared to him excessive, and his endeavours to reduce the number of the latter were not unaccompanied with violence. His ordinances breathe the peculiar spirit of the century as to doctrine. The sermon was more than ever made the most important part of the divine service, and catechising was zealously en-

liberty of conscience then existing in Brandenburg is highly praised. The Cistercian nuns in Magdeburg were allowed to build themselves a church; and Frederick William was on excellent terms with the Abbot of Neuzelle, and with the Suffragan of Hildesheim. *Ne son seguite et ne seguono molte conversioni. Lo stesso Marchese sostiene a proprie spese i missionari che sino a Berlin, Postdam et Spandau. They did not venture, however, to infer in Frederick William a preference for Catholicism. Dichiarano non potersi azardar a presumer che il M<sup>chese</sup> di Brandenburg conservi dentro il suo core sentimenti propensi alla nostra santa religione stante, che potrebbero ancora tutte le cose essere effetti di mera politica. They still continued to call him only "il marchese."*

forced, in the spirit of the Spener school. In some sermons Luther's catechism was to be taken as a running text; in others, it was to be illustrated by passages from the Bible, arranged under its principal heads; the sermons were ordered to be publicly repeated in the churches, in the form of question and answer: baptism and the Lord's Supper were to be preceded by religious instruction to all persons of whatever age who participated in those ceremonies. The King desired that the Christian doctrines should be understood by each and all—should become the common property of the whole people.

The same spirit presided over the education of the people. Whatever conduced to the mere display or exercise of the talents and of learning, found as little favour with Frederick William as rhetoric with the Spartans. His whole care was directed to the wants of the common people. Above a thousand new schools were established under his reign in the province of Prussia alone: attendance at school was made compulsory. He rendered imperative the course of instruction preparatory to confirmation, and suffered no one to participate in it who could not read; a regulation which had the greatest influence on the moral state of the country. Spener's adherents, who preached active Christianity, were, like the King, strongly opposed to abstract and barren doctrines; they had the merit of first insisting mainly on the practical side of the Christian religion. In the Military Orphan School, where the tongues of many hundred children were taught to pray for the King, an example was set which was afterwards universally



followed. If the citizen and the peasant of Brandenburg were called to an earlier and a larger participation in the advantages of education than the inhabitants of other countries, it is to Frederick William, in the first place, that they owe it.

It is superfluous to remark that we are not here dealing with a commonwealth, in which the human faculties freely unfold themselves as nature and inclination prompt. Everything emanated from the supreme power, which had first determined the end, and then prescribed the means, according to its own undisputed judgment and will.

X It is notorious that, in spite of a certain grandeur in the tendencies of the government, its character was, on the whole, one of violence and oppressiveness.

The enormous value set upon the profession of a soldier necessarily produced an intolerable encroachment on the independence and dignity of civil life. In the towns the fiscal councillors exercised an authority which threw that of the magistrates into the shade; it often happened that they were no longer elected by the people, but appointed by the crown. The provincial councillors, who were at the same time deputies for their district, thus became unduly dependent on the treasury. The nobles complained, and not without reason, that they were forced to submit to the decisions of the war and domain departments even in matters in which the latter had strong interests hostile to their own. The General Directory was the central point of the state, and enjoyed predominant consideration: we find that the ministers of

other departments complain, though in a very subdued tone, that after that body had raised itself to such a pre-eminence, it carried the whole power of government along with it. Occasionally, however, some upstart acquired power and distinction through the especial favour of the King. Such, for example, as the notorious Eckart, who, after gaining the King's confidence by some proof of ability, proposed, and offered to carry out, schemes for raising the revenue, which roused the farmers of the domains, the stewards of the city lands, and even the presidents of the war and domain departments, to a state of violent exasperation.\*

Frederick William did not, however, encounter any serious opposition to his measures. It is true that the nobility of Magdeburg never consented to those alterations in the fiefs which were adopted in all the other provinces; a list of the non-contents is extant, in which we find the names of the most illustrious families: they suffered distraint every time for their commutation-rent to the crown; but without any bitter or hostile demonstrations.† The only body in the nation that could have offered any resistance was that of the nobles. But they composed the army, which afforded them a career suited to their natural tastes; and they could not seriously rebel against a constitution of the country, by which the military force to which it was their pride to belong could alone be maintained.

\* Letter from Blumenthal in Königs Berlin, IV. 1. 302, 4.

† Bucholtz relates that they received the officer who appeared to carry the act into execution, as if he were a friend come on a visit.

If it be asked whether the state, such as we have now described it, was the simple realization of what appeared necessary—the only possible fulfilment of the original idea—I should find it difficult to reply by an unqualified affirmative. It cannot be denied that the taxes on consumption, the administration of the crown domains, and even the military organization of the country, might have been variously modified. But every attempt of that kind hitherto made had failed, when, in the midst of the strife of contending elements, this energetic spirit appeared; distinctly conceived the end to aim at;—to oppose a self-supported and impregnable political structure to his mighty neighbours;—discerned with the unerring eye of genius the means of attaining that end, and suffered no considerations to interfere with its attainment.

In judging of the personal qualities and opinions of the King, it would be unfair to lay to his charge all the harshness that distinguished his reign. In no respect have opinions undergone so total a change, and made so striking a progress, as in the recognition of the respect due to the innate dignity of man. It would be unjust to ascribe to individuals every offence against this which occurred in former times; these belonged to the spirit of another century, or to a view of human society received in a particular country. Whatever were the acts of violence into which Frederick William was betrayed by his irascible temper (though they were not altogether what has been related), it is clear that those about him were little shocked at them.\*

\* How much the despatches written home week after week

The men for whom he felt, from his youth up, the greatest respect, such as the Prince of Dessau and General Grumbkow, scorned upon principle the cultivation of the mind or of the more refined sentiments. Prince Leopold concealed boundless talent under the grotesque manners and habits he chose to assume. In military, as well as in administrative affairs, he exercised that incalculable influence over the minds of others which is acquired by means of conversation and of habitual correspondence, and what he proposed generally succeeded; but he was self-seeking, calculating, peremptory, and contemptuous: his character was far from being so largely developed as that of the King, and he was far more fitted to take example from him than to give it. Grumbkow did not possess the original vein, or the inventive genius of the Prince, but more general information, and very useful applicable talents. He passed for the only man in the country whose objections the King would tolerate, and who sometimes brought him to alter his opinion. For example, it was he who broke down the exclusive influence of the theologians of Halle, towards the end of the reign. But he had no scruple, as is well known, in taking a pension from Austria; and in order to maintain his credit at court,

by the foreign ministers on this subject need criticism, is shown by Valori's statement, 6th May, 1740. *On est sujet d'augmenter ses torts, et on se tait sur ce, qu'il fait du bien ou on en affoiblit le merite de manière qu'il n'en reste rien. La plupart de ceux, qui approchent ce prince l'irritent contre tout le monde et sont les premiers a charger le recit de ce, qui se passe dans l'interieur des circonstances les plus desavantageuses.*

of which he never felt very secure, he disdained no means, not even the basest—the bribery of subaltern persons of the household. Grumbkow had neither the circuitous cunning nor the rapacity of his former ally, Seckendorf. He was rather prodigal, luxurious, energetic, concise; he was cold-blooded and yet violent—but violent on premeditation: he chose to make others feel the predominance that his position gave him. He judged the King without partiality or favour, and he occasionally expresses himself as if he would rather have been excused such or such a difficult commission; yet he did not the less execute it with all the zeal that ambition inspires.

The King himself had never done anything in his life but what pleased him. His good-natured father, and his mother, absorbed in literature and music, had fulfilled every wish, and tolerated every caprice, of his youth. There were no imminent political dangers abroad which might have compelled him to observe external caution and forbearance, and at home contradiction was mute. His mind had been early turned to the project of a complete transformation of the state over which he was born to preside; he engaged in this with as much passion as his great contemporaries Charles XII. and Peter I. rushed, the one into war, the other into schemes for the civilization of his country. Frederick William occupied the place beside them, equally original in his measures for the organization of his military administrative and rigorously independent state. The whole mind of his court was directed to the developement of its power,

and the performance of its service. He himself lived and moved in no other element. The condition of his fiscal offices, and that of his regiments, was always uppermost in his mind; he would see with his own eyes the state of the crops, the food of the husbandman; whether a battalion had finer men, or a squadron was better mounted; whether a branch of the administration really executed what he had ordered for the good of his people. He traversed the 76 miles (about 350 miles English), from Berlin to Königsberg, in four days, in a large open caleche, and over wretched roads. At the great reviews of his army his activity became restless and vehement; he rose at three in the morning. His recreations partook of the same character. At dinner with his generals there was no stint of strong wines, such as old Rhenish, Hungarian, and Pontac; after which English beer, or water, was taken in great quantities as cooling draughts. While others looked about for a warm stove, near which to pass the night (for it was often late in the autumn), the King slept with perfect indifference in a barn, where everybody else was shuddering with cold. On his lesser tours of inspection, one of the punishments he inflicted on negligent commandants was, to refuse to eat the dinner provided for him according to custom; he would hurry on to the next village, and there get some country pottage cooked for him in the humble inn, or eat, under the shade of a tree, the cold meat brought by the Prince of Anhalt. Woe to him who had been guilty of any act of fraud or

falsehood! Neither birth nor rank protected him from the severest and most ignominious punishment. Everywhere do we discern the imperious leader in conflict with the diverging tendencies of all the various characters with which he had to deal, and everywhere holding them all in his stringent grasp. The supervision that he exercised secured spotless integrity in offices where the temptation to indirect gain is the strongest; and while the discipline he enforced was rigid, the zeal he excited for the successful working of so grand a monarchical commonwealth, in both his civil and military servants, was ardent and sincere.

The various qualities which make up the character of Frederick William remind us of a northern story, in which Odin and Thor decide the destiny of a youthful hero:—"I will grant him thrice the appointed life of man," says the one. "His race," says the other, "shall perish with him." The one promises him beautiful arms, money, and goods; the other threatens him with grievous wounds and lack of land. "I will cause him to be esteemed by the best among men," says Odin; "and I," adds Thor, "to be hated of the people."

For the destiny of man vibrates between a blessing and a curse—between good and bad fortune: virtue and success are mated with defect and failure; and this compound, in its origin and in its effects, makes up the sum of human life.

To King Frederick William were denied the qualities which ought most easily to grace the topmost

regions of society; the gift of passing existence in cheerful and refined contentment, and of imparting pleasure to others. We will not revert to the scenes which took place in his family; but we cannot omit some mention of the Queen. Some one was once speaking to her with admiration of the excellent qualities of heart and mind displayed by her cousin the Empress of Austria; she readily admitted her own inferiority; but, she added, that it had been much easier for the Empress to improve the gifts she had received from nature, than for her: on her cousin the world had smiled, whereas she had passed her life in never-ceasing disquiet.

The gentler virtues, which adorn and bless domestic life, were denied to the King. On the other hand, a brilliant scene of action, and one suited to his natural talents, was allotted him: the organization of a state containing in itself a principle of vitality and of progress, stamped with a strong and peculiar character, capable of developement within, powerful without, and big with a mighty future.

The accomplishment of these high promises was no longer expected from Frederick William. The uneasy position into which he had fallen with regard to the several powers of Europe, only one of the greater of which was on friendly terms with him, was partly owing to the general persuasion that he would never put his threats into execution—never really declare war.

The eyes of all were already turned upon his successor, whose faculties, so far from being crushed



by the domestic storms he had endured, had rather been multiplied and strengthened by them; who, though studiously prevented from taking any part in affairs, had attained in silence and obscurity the maturity needful for their sole guidance. The old King told those who enjoyed his confidence, that "no one knew how much there was in Frederick."

END OF VOL. I.