

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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MEMOIRS
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HOUSE OF BRANDENBURG
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FOURTH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

THE ACCESSION OF FREDERICK II., AND THE BEGINNING
OF HIS CAMPAIGNS.

AFTER things had advanced so far as we have already seen, it was impossible that the death of one ruler and the accession of another should again produce a change so complete and fundamental in the government of Prussia as those which had taken place on the accession of the great Elector, or of King Frederick William I. The name of Prussia had not now a merely geographical meaning: it signified a nation and government of a peculiar stamp and character. It was impossible for any successor to the throne to call in question, or to attempt any arbitrary change in the established organization of the State by which his own power was conferred. But an energetic spirit was required to wield and develop the vast authority which accrued to the sovereign; great

gifts of genius were needed to compass that independent position which the whole State strove to attain.

We already know the intellectual and moral power of the man who was next destined to this office ; but in order fully to understand what Frederick was when he came into possession of the regal power, we must take into consideration the studies and occupations with which he employed the years of leisure that were still granted to him.

We may look upon it as one of the main consequences of the domestic storms which we have mentioned, that Frederick latterly devoted a regular and strict attention to political and military affairs, a duty to which he had formerly been greatly averse. This he did, not only out of consideration for his father, but from a perception of its necessity. His mind, which now opened itself to manly impulses, took this direction of its own accord.

He was not permitted to neglect his economical studies at Ruppín, whither, after the reconciliation, he retired, in the year 1732, as colonel of an infantry regiment. At the very beginning Frederick was charged to draw up a new scheme for the management of the office of crown lands at Ruppín, which he did with great labour and difficulty ; but he was fortunately able to suggest some reforms which did not entail the imposition of any fresh taxes. Personal interest fixed his attention upon these pursuits since Rheinsberg had been purchased for him. He carefully inspected the estate beforehand, and the statement that he sent in was well received by the

King.* He not only rebuilt the castle, but also increased his possessions by further purchases, and endeavoured to improve his property. He devoted especial attention to the gardens; we also find that he made new experiments in farming, which he thought very imperfect on his estate.

But his attention was chiefly devoted to military affairs, and so it always continued.

The monotonous repetition of daily routine business is apt to engender an inward irony, which arises less from bitterness of spirit than from a sensation of weariness. Frederick was not so completely absorbed in the exercise of his military duties, but that this feeling sometimes came over him. "I drill," said he one day, "I have drilled, and I shall drill." Nevertheless, he devoted himself to it with the utmost zeal. He endeavoured immediately to introduce into his own regiment every new improvement in the minutiae of drill that was adopted at Potsdam. He

* 15th Nov., 1733. Frederick William's answer 21st Nov.: "Und ist mir diese eure Application angenehm."—(And this your application is agreeable to me.) In March, 1734, the 75,000 thalers, the price agreed upon, were paid. On 3rd April, "Wegen des Baues müsst ihr euch einen guten Baumeister oder Ingenieur suchen, der euch was Artiges bauet und commodé anleget."—(On account of the building, you must seek out some good architect or engineer, who will build you something handsome and convenient.) The Prince writes on 14th Feb., 1735, that as his father had given him Rheinsberg, he would send him the first fruits of any thing grown there. On 28th Sept., 1738, he intends himself to attend to Zernikow, which had been bought a year before, "umb einige Sachen in der Wirthschaft zu probiren und selbiges in recht guten Stand zu bringen,"—(in order to try some points of farming, and to bring the same into a right good condition.)

eagerly sought for tall recruits in the distant countries: we constantly find Lorraine, Hungary, and Sweden mentioned with a view to this object. He took the greatest care of the health and discipline of his regiment; he kept with his own hand a register of the conduct of his officers,* specifying their morals and capabilities: and the gravity with which he judged others must have had its effect upon his own conduct. He felt the satisfaction of a diligent workman, when at length the King showed himself pleased with him and with his regiment at a review.

In this province, too, the Prince found suggestion and impulse to further studies.

About this time appeared the military memoirs of the Marquis de Feuquieres, a work which, although incomplete and not free from errors in the first edition, was on the whole genuine and instructive. This book, founded on the personal experience of the author, contains information of great value to officers of all ranks, and was extremely useful as an exponent of the system upon which the new method of warfare was based. In it the campaigns of Louis XIV. are treated according to their importance in a military point of view; and the characters of the several great generals of the time, of Condé, Turenne, and more especially Luxembourg, stand out in bold relief, each one with his peculiar merits as a

* E. G. 1735. Major v. Kahlbutz is a good manager, has sense and application: 1735, v. Born—a quiet officer, by no means stupid: the same in 1739 is a very good officer, a good manager, comports himself well, is accurate in service, has a good understanding.

tactician or a leader strongly defined. This was a far different study for a future commander from the information contained in the *Theatrum Europæum*. Frederick read the book with the greatest avidity; he had a keen perception of the difference between a description, such as that which Ramsay had drawn up of Turenne—although he read this also with pleasure—and a narrative like that by Feuquieres, who seized upon the decisive events with a keen glance and transports his reader into the midst of the actions which he describes. The book had a marked and permanent effect upon Frederick.

Moved by a wish to give some instruction in one of the chief branches of the art of war, the Prince of Anhalt took the trouble to compose "a detailed description of the manner in which a town should be besieged," illustrated with large plans. Leopold appears to have feared that many of his readers would disapprove the form in which his book was drawn up.* But Frederick thought that nothing so clear and so instructive had as yet been published, and often proved his own judgment by reference to it.

The Prince of Anhalt also allowed one of the

* "Wozu sich kein anderer Stylus geschicket, als wie es nach altem Kriegsgebrauch denen Oberstwachmeisters in deren Schreibtafeln dictiret wird."—(Whereunto none other style suiteth, save such as is dictated according to old military custom to serjeants to be written in their tablets.) Compare Hahnke Friedrich des Grossen Briefe an seinen Vater, p. 125. The King likewise took an interest in it. "Wenn ihr wieder hieher kommet, habet ihr solche (Plane) mitzubringen."—"When you come here again, you are to bring them (the plans) with you.")

ablest officers of his regiment, of the name of Henry Augustus von Fouquet, who had formerly served as his page, and who possessed his entire confidence, to spend two-thirds of the year with the Crown-Prince at his castle of Rheinsberg or at Ruppin. The most intimate friendship grew up between Frederick and Fouquet. They founded an order, with the name of the knight "sans peur et sans reproche," the object of which was to promote purity of life as well as the study of military history, and to direct attention to the statement and solution of military problems.*

These studies were interrupted by the prospect of war; if indeed the campaign of 1734 can be considered as a real war. Much as Frederick wished and expected to see Eugene storm the works thrown up by the French, still, in spite of his youth, he fully understood the reasons why no real attack was ever made. He watched the proceedings of friend and foe, for he wanted only, as he expressed it in one of his letters, to learn the trade of a soldier, the sure road to glory, and he impartially admired the conduct of the leaders of both sides. He thought the very inactivity of the imperialist general honourable, for by it he succeeded in maintaining a position from which the enemy endeavoured to drive him. Frederick himself gave a proof of his courage, which raised him in the estimation of the whole army. While passing through a wood near Philippsburg on his return from a reconnoitring expedition, he for the first time heard the shot plunging about him, and shattering

* Unfortunately the only information on this subject is to be found in Buttner, *Mémoires de Fouqué*, II. 262.

the trees which bordered his path : those who were near him remarked that his hand which held the reins never shook.

He would have given anything to have been present at the campaign of 1735. But Frederick William did not think it right that the Crown-Prince of Prussia should witness the forced inactivity of the imperial army.* One of the acts of indiscretion on the part of the King, which were so unfavourably interpreted in Vienna, was, that he allowed the Crown-Prince to visit the province of Prussia, where Stanislaus was then residing, after refusing him permission to join the imperial army. It is, however, an error to suppose that this visit covered any political intrigue. It would be absurd to imagine that Frederick Wil-

* Letter of 6th Sept. 'Es ist auch noch sehr ungewiss, ob was Rechtes am Rheine vorfallen wird, weil es dem Kaiser an der Hauptsache fehlet, dahero man sich an die Ausstreung vorhabender Bataillen nicht zu kehren hat; also würde bei so spät avancirter Jahreszeit zu nichts anderem dienen, als die Gelder unnütz zu verschwenden und wie voriges Jahr ein Zeuge der gezwungenen kaiserlichen Inaction zu sein, welches eben nicht glorieux für den Kronprinzen von Preussen sein kann. Ihr werdet euch also beruhigen, zumal ich euch als treuer Vater verspreche, dass ihr gewiss künftiges Jahr sogleich nach der Revue von hier in die Campagne gehen sollt.'—(It is moreover very uncertain whether any thing serious will happen on the Rhine, as the Emperor lacks the main thing. Wherefore we need pay no attention to any reports of future battles. It would, moreover, at this advanced period of the year, serve no purpose than that of spending money in vain, and being as in former years a witness to the forced inactivity of the imperialists, which is by no means glorious for a Crown-Prince of Prussia. You will therefore stay quiet, especially as I promise you as a loving father, that next year directly after the review you shall join the campaign.)

liam would entrust his son, whom he jealously kept in ignorance of politics, with an affair of so delicate a nature: on the contrary, he expressly ordered the Crown-Prince to see Stanislaus only in the presence of a third person. In the dethroned monarch, to whom the Crown-Prince paid every respect due to his rank, Frederick became acquainted with a man who possessed some of that European culture which he himself was striving to acquire; and this was all. The real object of his journey was to inspect the army and the various officers connected with the government of the province.

Unfortunately there is only one report extant out of all that he wrote; in it he describes several brigades of cavalry which he had seen at Marienwerder, as "a fine breed of compact horses, upon which the men sat like dolls:" he then speaks of the devastation of Poland, where only women and children were to be seen:—we learn from other sources, that he here and there pointed out to the officers their various deficiencies, and admonished the presidents and councillors of the provincial exchequer to attend to their duties; he likewise advised with the ablest among them concerning the introduction of new regulations. Frederick seldom failed to detect the absence of any portion of a private soldier's equipment; he recommended poor official men to indulgence, and found fault with the manner in which the village schools were neglected. The King acted in accordance with Frederick's recommendations, and was well pleased that his son entered into details, and sought to go to the bottom

of things, as this was the only manner to arrive at just conclusions.* The satisfaction of the King was like that of a gardener who has forced a vigorous tree to resume its original position, from which it had been diverted by some peculiar twist, and who now sees it grow up according to his wishes.

Meanwhile, spite of Frederick's application and docility, much was going on in his mind that his father never suspected, and that was completely at variance with the ideas which Frederick William had always entertained. The question was no longer one of trifling literary fancies : it turned upon those great convictions which make up the moral and intellectual life of man. We may add that these opinions did not concern things merely personal to the Crown-Prince, but were involved in the great revolution which had taken place in the views of that century.

The time had now come when the mind of man shook off on every side the dominion of ecclesiastical ideas.

It is not within our province to trace out the origin of the tendencies which now pervaded all minds ; we will only remark the striking fact that the large religious sects were no longer able to influence individual opinion among their members. It was while studying the sermons of the most

* Königs-Wusterhausen, 27th Oct. Könnet ihr versichert sein, dass eure Application und Einsicht ein besonderes Vergnügen bei mir verursacht hat, und ich davon vollkommen zufrieden bin.—(You may rest assured that your application and insight have caused me especial pleasure, and that I am fully content therewith.)

zealous puritans that Lord Bolingbroke formed his own unbelief. Voltaire and Helvetius came out of the schools of the Jesuits. The first profound French work on rational religion was written in the orthodox town of Geneva, and by a woman, too, whose sex generally adheres so strongly and so fully to religious forms and dogmas.* The fathers of infidelity in Northern Germany fell off from all religion whatever in Berleburg and Herrnhuth. Occasionally these secessions illustrated the great antitheses of the world, as in the case of Count Boulainvilliers, a zealous champion of the feudal nobility,—which had been mainly formed during the contest against Islam,—who became an enthusiastic defender of Mahomet; at other times they related merely to abstruse scholastic doctrines; but even this made a great stir among those whom it nearly concerned. When John George Lori, who was studying at Ingoldstadt, renounced the *Philosophia universa* which was taught at that university, his old mother walked down from the mountains leaning upon her staff, in order to warn her son not to become an apostate.† There were similar movements in various parts of Europe and of America. At this very time at Boston young

* Marie Huber, *Lettres sur la religion essentielle à l'homme*. In the same manner the first remarkable novel (*Manon Lescaut*), in which the interest of the reader is awakened for persons of the most reprehensible and dangerous morals, is the work of Dom Prevost, an old Benedictine, who but a short time before had edited a volume of the *Gallia Christiana*.

† *Westenrieder Beiträge zur vaterländischen Historie*, I. 349.

Benjamin Franklin fell away from the strictly orthodox opinions held by all about him ; while, shortly afterwards, in the Altmark, John Winckelmann, impatient of the narrow views and forms prevailing in the churches and schools of his native country, took refuge in Rome, where, at any rate, he found liberty to pursue his studies, and freedom from persecution as to the form of his belief.

The chief cause of this movement was, that during the religious struggles which prevailed in the seventeenth century, not only between Catholics and Protestants, but between the various denominations of Protestants, theological doctrines had assumed the form of strict and exclusive systems, and in this shape had been brought into undoubtedly too close a connexion with the governments and constitutions of the several states. The Christian religion is eternally striving to become universal, and it could not suffer these mutual exclusions and antipathies to continue ; moreover, the clear and simple views of life inherent in it must always in the end destroy all artificial dogmatic systems. No one, surely, could now wish to return to the former state of bondage. Hitherto the dangers incurred and the hope and pride of subduing the hostile party had afforded occupation enough to men's minds ; but now, that orthodoxy which cleaves to the letter, but forsakes the spirit, and the civil privileges conceded to those who professed it, excited only disgust and indignation.

On ascending to that point whence we can take a survey of the tendencies of whole centuries, we see

two great currents setting in different directions, but both taking their rise in this great crisis in the world's history.

During the eighteenth century the majority of mankind followed a course directly opposed to the positive, and properly Christian, tendency—until irreligion mastered the civil power and a great nation worshipped in the temple of reason.

But the world could not endure to be for ever deprived of the religious element, and in the nineteenth century it returned to the well of life at which former generations had drunk; it even went back to those confessional formulæ which had come to be the shape in which positive religion showed itself. With the forms, however, men have unhappily and unwisely renewed the ancient sectarian hostilities which their fathers had but just endeavoured to shake off, together with their several pretensions to exclusive hierarchical power. That which is imperatively called for by the actual state of things is the development of the positive forms and doctrines into a system which should include all parties—and in the mean time a mutual recognition, on the part of all, of the truth contained in each.

At the period of Frederick's youth there arose that tendency to view things by the light of nature alone, which gave to the eighteenth century its peculiar character; and we may add that everything conspired to incline Frederick to join it. During the earliest years of his life he had been wearied with constant religious exercises, enforced with all the rigour and stiffness of military drill. The pro-

found thought, the spiritual freedom of the great doctrines upon which the history of mankind is built, were presented to him under the most repulsive form. We have already seen that he took a deep interest in some theological controversy, but this was, on no account, to be touched upon during the hours devoted to his instruction, which was directed entirely to superficial objects. When he had found means to acquire information from other sources, and had adopted those views which were then condemned in Prussia, but which attracted him, by their mysterious and thoughtful character, he was compelled by blind force to renounce them. The daily controversies at Cüstrin upon the universal and particular decrees of Providence did, indeed, produce an effect upon his convictions; but we know what it was—he abandoned the opinions he had held, without taking up those which his father wished to force upon him.

Other doubts next arose in his mind. A few years later we find Frederick no longer occupied with controversies as to this or that confession of faith, but with one of the fundamental doctrines upon which the efficacy and spread of the Christian religion mainly depends—the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. He carried on the contest in his own mind, arguing the question on both sides, and finally the opinions of the Materialists seemed to have gained the upper hand with him. He was persuaded that the doctrine was founded upon a delusion arising from the innate pride of man.

Such was his frame of mind when, for the first time, he came into actual contact with philosophy.

Count Manteuffel, a former Saxon minister, who devoted himself to the pursuit of science with the zeal of a tyro dilettante, and with whom the Prince liked to converse and to correspond, told Frederick that he himself had once been visited by the same doubts, which had been dispelled by Wolf's metaphysics, a book which he said contained everything upon this subject that was convincing in philosophy, in a compendious and simple line of argument.

Another Saxon, the same Suhm who, during the quarrels in the royal family, had won the confidence of the Prince—a man of a still more acute and reflecting mind—took the trouble to translate into French 'Wolf's rational Thoughts concerning the Creator of the World and the Soul of Man,' for such is the title of the book which goes by the name of Wolf's metaphysics. He sent his translation chapter by chapter to the Prince, who invariably used the French language in serious conversation, and probably in his thoughts.

Frederick's letters to Suhm, which are among the most frank and simple now extant of his writing, show the sincere thirst for knowledge with which he perused these sheets, comparing them with the German original as he proceeded, because Suhm had told him that the German language was better suited to the expression of abstract ideas than the French. Frederick eagerly made himself master of the contents of this book.

The dogma of contradictions, and the doctrine of the Ratio Sufficiens, which play so great a part in the philosophy of Leibnitz and Wolf, were especially agreeable to Frederick, who applied them to his own every-day life.

But that which made the greatest impression upon him was Wolf's theory of the simple atom, which, once created by God, could only be destroyed by his will, and the conclusion drawn thence of the incomposite nature and immortality of the soul of man. Frederick thought the philosopher's deductions conclusive and profound.

What Frederick's friends above all praised in him was, that he defended his own opinions manfully so long as he was able to do so, but when the truth of the adverse views flashed upon him, he adopted the latter with sincerity and decision. He certainly did so in this instance; he abandoned his negative opinions, and formed for himself a mixture of philosophy and religion, in which his youthful soul found consolation.

"It is enough that I am convinced," thus he writes in April, 1736, to Manteuffel, "of the immortality of my soul; that I believe in God and in him who was sent to enlighten and to save the world; I will endeavour to become virtuous, in so far as I am able to effect it by my own strength; I will address to the Creator that worship which his creatures owe him, and I will fulfil the duties of a good citizen towards my fellow-men and equals, not as if I could gain heaven by my works, but in the conviction that God cannot render miserable a being that is

eternally grateful to Him for the existence He has given.”*

He thanked Suhm for aiding him to gain the consciousness that he had a soul, and ranks this benefit next to that bestowed by God, through whose mercy he existed.

He cherished a lively feeling of gratitude that he had been called into life out of nothing, and his eyelids opened to receive the light, in the midst of a beautiful and civilized world. In one of his earliest and best poems he turns from the doubts which still disturbed him, to the hope that the purified substance of the soul will survive the horrors of the grave and behold its eternal benefactor. It is impossible to call a man irreligious whose heart is filled with such ardent feelings of reverence to God the creator.

The serious and reflective energy of Frederick's character showed itself morally as well as intellectually. He set up for himself an ideal standard of perfection, and when told that he could not attain to it, he expressed himself satisfied with that which he should be able to reach on the way to it. Indeed, his friends now found him more gentle, frank, and generous, less harsh and contradictory than before. Besides Wolf's works, he read Rollin's ancient history, which had just appeared. He shared the feeling

* 18th April. Il me suffit, que je suis convaincu de l'immortalité de mon ame, que je croie en dieu et a celui, qu'il a envoyé pour éclairer et sauver le monde, que je m'applique a me rendre vertueux autant que je puis l'effectuer par mes forces, que je pratique les actes d'adoration que la creature doit a son createur et les devoirs d'un bon citoyen envers les hommes mes egaux. (Dresden Archives.)

which caused this work to be so much admired in France—a sort of satisfied conviction that he was reading the words of a conscientious man who felt kindly towards all the world and warmly about everything that is good;—as Montesquieu said, that virtue herself was speaking. Frederick did not delay to express this to the author, who, in return, urged him in the most earnest and impressive manner to consider the most important points of religion. At this time Frederick occasionally heard the sermons of Beausobre, whom he pronounced to be the greatest man in the Prussian dominions. Beausobre's calm and fearless manner of expressing himself, breathing conviction and intelligence in every word, fulfilled Frederick's idea of pulpit eloquence. He once more took part in the contests between Protestantism and Catholicism, which were continually carried on between the French ecclesiastics. He encouraged Beausobre in his labours, on the ground that it was as necessary to expose falsehood as to promulgate truth.

Thus Frederick once more inclined towards the faith and views of the Protestant church, to which the doctrines of Wolf and Leibnitz were at any rate not opposed; not, indeed, that he embraced the whole creed—for he still jested about his own want of faith. Just at this time, however, he became acquainted with the speculations of another philosophical school, directly opposed to the doctrines of Leibnitz and Wolf, and still further removed from the positive element in religion, and which were now making their way into the province of general literature.

Amid those religious dissensions which produced such various and abundant results in England during the second half of the seventeenth century, a system of philosophy was developed totally without reference either to a revelation by Divine interference, or even to innate ideas in the human mind. All human ideas were by this system deduced from the senses and from experience, either immediately or by reflection. Thus, too, in India, spite of the tendency of the Indian mind towards spiritualism, another theory arose in opposition to the doctrine of the Vedas, which, without exactly denying the existence of God, endeavoured to explain the existence of the world without recurring to the idea of a God. John Locke, who developed those thoughts with the most logical acuteness and untiring perseverance, was met by powerful opposition from several of his own countrymen, who were able to cope with him in argument. Other no less powerful convictions placed limits to the ascendancy of his opinions, which indeed were not in themselves calculated to exercise a general and active influence upon mankind.

It so happened that one of the greatest writers that ever appeared in France, Voltaire, was deeply imbued, during a residence in England, with these views, and determined to spread them to the utmost of his power over the whole world.

And, truly, the most popular French author of his day was a powerful auxiliary.

French was then the language of polite society throughout Europe: French literature was everywhere studied. Without attempting to trace the causes

which, during a long series of years, had brought about this supremacy of the French tongue, we may observe, that at that time it was greatly increased by the struggle between the conflicting tendencies of the French nation—between the elevation of the monarchy of Louis XIV., his intimate connexion with all those Courts, to which his served as a model; and the opposition which he called forth, and the dispersion of the hundreds of thousands who fled to all parts of Europe from his religious persecution. The authorized literature, which made immense progress in Paris, as well as that opposition-school of writing with which the press in Holland inundated Europe—combined in producing this effect. The artistic and religious severity of the one school, and the freedom of the other, supplied each other's deficiencies. The French language acquired, so to speak, a grammatical supremacy, as the principal means of intellectual culture were to be found in the study of its productions.

Thus, an author, who handled like an artist the language which all men learned and endeavoured to write, gained immense importance. Voltaire possessed in full perfection all that is captivating, inviting, and seductive in the French style; no one is comparable to him in wit and grace, in logical closeness disguised under an appearance of unconscious trifling, or for variety of form and expression. He may be said to have belonged to both parties in French literature; first to the one, and then to the other. He was the successor of Racine and Corneille, as well as of St. Evremond and Bayle. To the French he no longer seemed quite one of themselves,

but the rest of Europe looked upon him as the most perfect of all Frenchmen.

It was something that such an author, impelled by the natural bent of his genius, and excited by odious acts of violence, should make it the object of his life to oppose all false religious zeal—the Inquisition in Spain, and the furious bigotry which brought Charles I. to the scaffold; the Bull ‘*In Cœna Domini*,’ and the violence of the Ligue.* Mere opposition, however, would not have been effectual enough to content him, nor would it have satisfied his readers; but by embracing Locke’s theory, which had a natural affinity with the tendency of his own mind, and which he looked upon as the only one that could bear the light of reason, he made himself master of a well-arranged, consistent, and tenable doctrine.

Voltaire, who assumed to measure everything by his own standard, placed Locke above Plato.

The very defect in Voltaire’s mind, which shrank from the abstract and incomprehensible, increased his influence. He did nothing towards the developement of the doctrines of Locke, he invented no one new argument to support them, but he made them popular. Nothing is more attractive than new doctrines, which promise at last to enlighten the world; and they are doubly captivating when they coincide with the natural disposition of the mind of man. The world now heard and read what it wished to hear, and what every one had already partly thought of his own accord. Voltaire adopted the idea, which had

* *Siècle de Louis XIV. Questions sur l’Encyclopédie. Art. Philosophie, sect. IV.*

just arisen, of a state freed from all ecclesiastical influences, and resting solely upon itself. He constantly repeated that the thoughts of the theologian were always directed towards the acquisition of power, while it was the object of the philosopher to live peaceably under the existing government. He took good care not to carry out his theory to the consequences dangerous to the existence of the state, which are to be found in Locke.

The Crown-Prince of Prussia now placed himself in communication with Voltaire. It is said that this was brought about by the representative of France at the court of Berlin, the Marquis de la Chetardie, an epicure, constantly involved in amorous intrigues, and perpetually in pursuit of easy enjoyments. But the chief inducement to Frederick, who himself wrote French, and who had a just appreciation of a pure and easy style, was, no doubt, his admiration of Voltaire's marvellous mastery of the art of writing. In August, 1736, Frederick entered into correspondence with Voltaire.

We will spare our readers a repetition of the exaggerated compliments which they heaped upon each other. Frederick, at any rate, meant what he said; though Voltaire subsequently ridiculed the phrases which he had then made use of towards the Prince.

It would, however, be an error to suppose that Voltaire immediately won the Prince over to his own views: it was far otherwise; and it is worth while to consider how their intercourse was first established by the difference of the views they respectively held.

In the very first letters that the Prince wrote to Voltaire he mentioned the controversy between Wolf and the theologians of Halle, and sent him some of the documents relating to it. Moreover, filled with simple eagerness to make the works of a great philosopher known to one capable of comprehending abstractions—and such, he said, Voltaire had proved himself to be by the philosophical passages in the *Henriade*—the Prince subsequently sent him the translation of Wolf's logic and metaphysics.*

Voltaire replied, that he beheld in these works a golden chain intended to connect heaven and earth; that he admired it, although many of its links seemed to him very fragile. He perceived that this was a system essentially different from that which he had adopted, and he did not hesitate long before he attacked it.

The first point that he assailed was the corner-stone of the whole system, the idea of simple atoms. He did not touch upon the spiritual significance of the theory of monads; he stuck to the physical view, to the doctrine that all combinations can be infinitely subdivided, to a degree infinitely beyond the reach of our own imperfect instruments, and that the final atom was still a body; as otherwise no bodies could be created from it.

The Prince, however—for we must follow the current of his thoughts further—was not convinced by arguments of this nature. He objected that the conception of space, length, or breadth, was excluded

* Dec., 1736. In Beuchot's edition of Voltaire's Works, T. XLII. No. 521.

by Wolf's definition, and that everything could not be infinitely subdivided; for instance, man could not as man.

Voltaire replied, that that which was undivided was not, therefore, necessarily indivisible and simple; and that he could not ascend to Wolf's idea of a simple being. The Prince besought him to devote a little attention to the subject: he was sure that a man of such high intelligence could not fail to perceive the truth. But Voltaire was not to be brought a step further: he said that he came upon a soil where he could not set his foot, to a people whose language he did not understand, and to a climate in which he could not breathe; that Wolf was probably of a different religion from himself, and that every one must keep to his own. This was perfectly true; the two systems of philosophy which now stood opposed to each other took their origin—the one in positive religion, the other in the directly contrary tendency.

Just at this time Voltaire attacked the other doctrine of a *Ratio Sufficiens*, not so much on its own account as on that of the views of free-will and necessity connected with it. In October, 1737, he sent the Prince a paper on the perfect freedom of the will of man, which he maintained by the plausible argument of the human understanding. He zealously combated the objections raised against this scheme, especially such as are founded upon the omniscience of God. On this point he found it still more impossible to shake the Prince's convictions. Frederick replied that he should be of Voltaire's opinion, supposing there were no God: but the fact was, that,

owing to causes beyond their control, every man had a certain character and a certain temperament, according to which he acted: moreover, that each action was influenced by opportunity arising from circumstances; and by whom were these brought about? Assuredly not by chance, but by God, who guided men and circumstances. That upon this rested the idea of Divine Providence—the most glorious, noble, and magnificent conception that the creature can form of its creator. It was possible, he said, that man might seem the smaller for it, but God appeared all the greater. In this discussion Frederick again displayed the opinions which his father had formerly forced him to retract;—the question of predestination to a state of felicity or of damnation, is closely connected with the question of necessity and free-will, only that the latter belongs rather to the province of philosophical inquiry. No one could feel a more lively conviction of the dependance of the human being upon the unapproachable perfection of the Divine than Frederick then entertained. Voltaire was astonished. He replied, that it seemed to him as if a Leibnitz or a Wolf had written to him; and that he must choose whether they, or whether Locke and Clarke, were to be his guides. But was not man, he asked, conscious of the freedom of his will; and was it possible to imagine that God was only deceiving him by this consciousness? And if God could foresee the actions of man, was it not true, as was observed by Clarke, that even an acute man was able to predict what other men would do? It may easily be conceived that Voltaire made small

impression upon Frederick by such trite arguments. The Prince replied, that Clarke's God made him laugh: that such a God as that might be imagined discussing the events of the day with wretched newspaper scribblers in a coffeehouse, or waiting for the news from Hungary, to judge whether he were right or no in his conjectures. But that he, for his part, knew but one God, who cared for the universe at large, and likewise governed the actions of mankind; and that as there was one God who was the beginning of all things, so was there also an absolute necessity, to which all men were subject. But while he expressed himself so positively almost in the tone of a fatalist, he nevertheless remarked that much might be objected to his system, and that it was a dispute that might last for centuries: that it was not given to man to come to a final conclusion with respect to abstract ideas; that it was enough for him to know how he ought to live, for that he was born for action and not for contemplation.*

There can be no doubt that Frederick was far superior to his correspondent in depth of thought and in scientific attainments; nevertheless it made a great impression upon him when he found that the friend he so much admired stuck to opinions opposed to his

* In Beuchot, LII., especially the letters of 16th Aug., No. 573, 280, 578; 26th Dec., No. 607; 19th April, 17th June, 1738 (641, 633, LIII.); but it is impossible not to read the whole of them. I need scarcely remark, that Frederick's opinions, e. g. on free-will, necessity, &c., changed during the course of a long active life. In the *Examen du Système de la Nature*, they appear to be somewhat analogous to those entertained by his father.

own. Frederick thought his own ideas more sure to be right when they agreed with those of Voltaire. Thus we not unfrequently find some of his expressions which lean towards the adverse side, and thus destroy that harmony among his thoughts which we seem to have discovered. "For he who attempts to avoid Scylla falls into the whirlpool of Charybdis. The metaphysics are a sea notorious for shipwrecks." Of the ancient philosophers Frederick preferred those of the new academy, as they decided with the most circumspection.

It is sufficient to point out the fact, that at that time, at any rate, Voltaire by no means obtained the mastery over Frederick. There was an immense distance between the famous author, who had determined upon the party he was to take up, and who intended to maintain it with all his power, and to render it triumphant, and the Prince, who was still seeking truth with all the ardour of a youthful spirit of inquiry, and who had a natural predilection for those doctrines which have their root in the spiritualism of ancient times and of the German nation.

They differed no less widely in their historical and political views, as was shown in an essay which Frederick composed.

The first great public event of those times that Frederick was old enough to be able to estimate, was the change in European politics, caused by the part taken by France in the disturbances in Poland, which began with the preliminaries of peace in October, 1735. Frederick, like his father, at first believed that France had really taken up arms, in

order to support the election of Stanislaus as king of Poland; and, like him, he was astonished when France deserted that monarch, and took possession of Lorraine. His first feeling was, that the Emperor was altogether blameless, and that Cardinal Fleury, on the contrary, was a political Tartuffe.* After watching the further developement of affairs, and obtaining more authentic information, he subsequently, however, altered his opinion. He came to the conclusion that the Emperor's losses were to be traced to the causes which had invariably caused the decay of all great kingdoms—weakness of the internal constitution of the state, and neglect of the military defences of the country. He attributed the advantages gained by France to the superior prudence of the French ministers, and to the able and continuous application of a consistent line of policy. He was greatly struck by the consideration that it was entirely owing to the pacific conduct by which Cardinal Fleury had succeeded in allaying the fears of Europe lest France should establish an universal monarchy, that he could now avail himself of the favourable opportunity for seizing his prey. But while Frederick appreciated the talent displayed, he at the same time drew the conclusion that a great power, which systematically acted with a hypocritical appearance of friendship, was exceedingly dangerous to its neighbours. These, and other considerations of a like nature, he put together in a small essay, which he communicated to

* Un tartuffe qui n'a ni foi ni loi,—la politique de la cour de France n'est qu'un tissu de duplicité et de fourberie.

Voltaire.* This paper is a convincing proof of the maturity of his intellect and the acuteness of his political observation. Wassaer and Prince Eugene had always taken precisely similar views of the affairs in which they were actively engaged.

Whether it was that Voltaire would not allow the reproach of double dealing in politics to attach to France, or that a mind like his, which employed itself with individual details, lacked the acuteness of Frederick's, he maintained that France had won at a game in which, but a minute before the cards were dealt, she had not known whether she should take part, and that it was solely by the pride of the imperial ministers that France had been driven to take up arms. As usual, Voltaire enumerated a long list of old anecdotes to prove how slight accidents determine great events, such as Queen Anne's glass of water, and the like. He was too good a Frenchman to admit that Lorraine had always belonged to the German empire. The Prince was obliged to explain this to him more fully.

Spite of all these differences of opinion, Frederick, nevertheless, rejoiced in his connexion with Voltaire, who was then at the height of his glory, and whose manner of putting things, and of expressing himself, exercised an irresistible charm upon the Prince. The first work which Frederick prepared for the public in the year 1739—a confutation

* *Considérations sur l'état présent du corps politique de l'Europe*, 1738. *Cœuv. posth.* VI. Letter from Voltaire criticizing it, dated 5th Aug., 1738, and Frederick's answer of 11th Sept., 1738. (LIII. 689, 699.)

of Machiavel's Prince—he intrusted to Voltaire, for publication.

It would perhaps have been better, if Frederick chose to write, that he should have submitted to the publication of his book himself. Talent cannot possibly be perfected by solitary production. Regard for the public, and its sympathy; the struggle against prevailing opinions, and rivalry with cotemporaries, are necessary to the full developement of literary talent. At all events, the mediator employed by the Prince on this occasion was singularly unfit for his office. Voltaire dressed up the work for the book-market according to the prevailing taste of the public. In order to understand Frederick's peculiar views, it is almost more necessary to study what Voltaire left out, than what he thought fit to leave standing.

Fortunately, the original composition in Frederick's own hand-writing has been preserved, with the exception of a small part which is missing. In this form the work is very remarkable.*

It would have been manifestly quite beyond the horizon, and beside the purpose of a German Prince, to examine Machiavel's book with reference to the state of affairs in Italy which gave rise to it, or to the peculiar position of an usurping dynasty ruling over what had formerly been a republic, for which the maxims of cunning and cruelty, given in this book,

* The Antimachiavel of Frederick II., by Friedlander, 1824, gives the table of contents: the collections in the royal archives contain the greater portion of what is there omitted. The new edition of Frederick's Works will contain the original as far as possible; the second chapter only is missing.

were intended. Frederick simply looked upon the work as a scheme of general directions, by which a villainous counsellor endeavoured to mislead young rulers. Machiavel seemed to him to be in politics what Spinoza was in speculative science: he thought them both equally dangerous to those who followed their guidance, and equally to be abhorred.

It is immaterial to us what were the arguments by which he endeavoured to refute Machiavel; in fact, that which is historically important is, that the work contains less of refutation than of direct contradiction. The views taken by the German hereditary Prince stand face to face with the doctrines of the Florentine founded upon the practice of Italian usurpers. Frederick, in fact, merely enounces the ideas floating in his mind with respect to the princely calling.

This Frederick makes to consist in two things—
an earnest care of the common weal, and the defence of his kingdom by arms.

As regards the first point, he looks upon the possession of supreme power less in the light of a privilege than of an office. His conception of the relations subsisting between a Prince and his people is very peculiar, and displays a truly royal ambition. A Prince, he says, ought to be the instrument of his subjects' happiness, as his people are that of his glory.* Machiavel's advice, to keep possession of a conquered country by devastating it, he condemns as absurd; seeing that the power and influence of a

* The following is one of the passages left out in the first chapter: il doit être l'instrument de leur félicité, comme ses peuples le sont de sa gloire.

Prince consist solely in the number and wealth of his subjects. The happiness of the one causes the happiness of the other, whether a state be acquired by conquest or inherited.

He looks upon the Prince, as it were, as the guardian of his subjects; he is to administer the public revenues, and is answerable to the people for his management of them. A great prince should be generous and liberal in his expenditure; for a certain degree of luxury causes the blood to flow through the arteries of the state to its very extremities, whence it returns through the veins to the heart, thence to be again distributed. There are, however, says he, other princes, whose powers are limited, and whose possessions are small; such an one should be generous according to his means, and should confine his expenditure to particular objects; *e.g.* to the encouragement of trade and manufactures, the maintenance of the true splendour of his throne, and the reward of eminent services. In other respects he ought to be methodical and careful, and to provide himself sometimes with a secret reserve of treasure, sufficient to meet the possible contingency of war.

Above all things, Frederick insists upon the absolute necessity that a prince should cultivate his own mind. He must not, says the Crown-Prince, give himself up to the riotous pleasures of the chase, which tend to brutalize him: he should acquire learning, less for the sake of knowing much, than in order to be able to exercise his mind in the society of wise and learned men; so that he may learn to think justly and to combine his ideas aright.

His duty requires that he should strengthen his intellectual faculties, in order that he may be able in difficult cases to adopt right resolutions, and to turn good or even bad fortune to the best account.

While on this subject scruples arose in his mind with respect to his religious opinions, and he does not shrink from alluding to them. He felt it to be a great misfortune for a Prince—and expressly mentions it as such—not to have the same firm belief as his subjects; * but he says that he should be ashamed to affect religion in order to please the people. He thinks that a nation will end by loving a prince who does not believe, but who is an honest man, more than an orthodox prince who does them injury; for it is not by opinions, but by actions, that men are made happy.

He takes a view of the military part of the book with a similar reference to his own especial position. The system of recruiting, condemned by Machiavel, Frederick defends by arguments drawn from the peculiar constitution of the Prussian state. But he fully agrees with Machiavel that a prince should lead his troops into the field in person, and should set them the example of contempt of death. "How great is the fame," says Frederick, "which awaits him who delivers his country from the invasion of an enemy, or who recovers rights and privileges which have been usurped by others." As though some secret presentiment foretold to him that

* c. 18. Il ne luy suffit pas (a Machiavel) qu'un prince ait le malheur d'être incrédule, il veut encore couronner son incréduité de l'hypocrisie.

such a fate would be his, he dwells upon this case with peculiar emphasis. He pronounces a war, carried on for the maintenance of rights unjustly withheld, to be as righteous as a war of defence; for there are no tribunals to which kings can appeal; their quarrels can only be decided by arms. Sovereigns, he says, must plead sword in hand, until their enemies are compelled to allow justice to have its course. Thus we see that Frederick's refutation of Machiavel's book was turned, as he wrote, into reflections upon his own future life.

Contemporary and subsequent writers have described how the Prince contrived to render the life at Rheinsberg agreeable: little dramas were acted, and a great deal of music performed. Every one exerted to the utmost whatever social talents he happened to possess. Frederick was quite in the proper frame of mind for enjoying these tranquil moments. The then Crown-Princess, in after life, remembered this period with pleasurable regret. But it is easy to perceive that Frederick's time was not spent in mere dilettante enjoyment of the productions of literature and art: he himself describes how he sat whole months poring over his books, and then took up the pen to write. As he had been refused permission to take a great journey, in order to break the trammels of his provincial education and to associate himself with the general tendencies and efforts of Europe, he was now determined to effect this by study. He strove to master the most difficult problems that occupy the human mind, and to get a distinct view of that which was most im-

portant, and, at the same time, most simple in the entangled relations between the European states; he examined every question likely to come before a ruler. The original anti-Machiavel is a kind of preparation for government. The maxims laid down in this book, all expressive of a detestation of vice and of a strong moral feeling, contain the germ of future actions. The ideal kingdom set forth in it, which could be realized by none but a highly gifted and indefatigable mind, gives promise of the active and eventful reign of a monarch actuated rather by a strict sense of duty than by religion, attentive to his worldly interests, and resolved to unsheath the sword in defence of his rights.

Those who judged at the first glance, expected that Frederick's court would be one at which men of wit and science would play a very prominent part. Many thought that the Prince was too ambitious of passing for a man of letters, and too anxious to display his proficiency in all branches of learning—in history, politics, and even theology. Others, again, concluded, from a certain love of splendour and luxury which he displayed even under the restrictions imposed on him, that he would cultivate the arts and manufactures, and bestow upon his people the blessings of peace. There were, however, a few who saw something more than this in him. "Frederick will unite in his person," writes De la Houx, the French resident, "the hero and the father of his country: the true object of his wishes is glory—military glory. He is burning with desire to follow

in the footsteps of his ancestor, the elector Frederick William.*

As far as the turn of his fate, and the restraints imposed upon him, would permit, he was happy and contented while living at Rheinsberg after his own fashion : but his residence at Berlin was far from easy.

Frequently, when he flattered himself that he should find everything going on smoothly, he was assailed by some public mark of his father's dislike. He says that he was forced to subdue not only his pride, but likewise his love of truth, in order to endure in silence the malignant calumnies by which he was pursued on such occasions.

Pöllnitz once offered to become Frederick's regular correspondent. The Prince accepted, under two conditions : first, that Pöllnitz should only write about the King's health, and perhaps about that which was said of the Prince himself ; and secondly, that these letters should always pass through the hands of Captain Wartensleben, who possessed the entire confidence of the King. Once, when Pöllnitz transgressed the latter condition, the Prince sent him back his letter unopened.

* *Reflexions sur la cour de Prusse, October, 1739. Différentes pièces fugitives, qu'il a écrit sur ces matières prouvent assez, qu'elles lui sont plus familières qu'il ne convient peut-être à un prince de sa naissance. Il en parle souvent et son amour propre est flatté, quand il peut faire sentir aux autres sa supériorité . . . il favorisera les arts les sciences le commerce et l'agriculture, il aura une cour nombreuse et brillante. Des gens qui sont attachés à son service m'ont assuré que quand il reuniroit en lui le héros le scavant le roi père de son peuple, il ne serait pas un maître facile à servir.*

He would hear nothing of the personal intrigues of the court, nor of the affairs of state; he chose to be merely a private man and a subject. Every succeeding day exercised him afresh in self-command and reserve. Even at table he never alluded to politics while the King was present. In his intercourse with the ambassadors of foreign powers he avoided every opportunity of touching upon the subject. The Prussian ministers were by no means sure of their fact, with respect to the negotiations which they were carrying on with France: in order to avoid being held responsible hereafter by their future King, they laid the papers before him. Frederick returned them without one word of opinion on the subject.

Meanwhile the time drew near when his position was to alter. In the spring of 1740, the King, who had gone to Potsdam for a change of air, felt so sudden a decline of his strength, that he deemed it necessary to initiate his son into the state of public affairs as they then stood.

First, Boden, one of the ministers of the interior, was sent to Ruppin,* where the Prince then was staying, in order to inform him of the state of the internal administration of the country. The accounts and the system of finance were to be examined first; thence he was to proceed to that of excise. Subsequently the two cabinet ministers, Podewils and Thulemeier, were likewise ordered to proceed to Ruppin, and to explain to the Prince "the situation of foreign affairs," more especially the turn they had taken of late.

* A short letter of Frederick's to Boden, dated 24th May, gives some information on this point.

Meanwhile the illness of the King increased to such a degree that the worst was feared. The Prince, alarmed by the bulletins which were sent to him by express, hastened to Potsdam, in order once more to see his father alive. He found him better than he had expected, seated on his cane chair in the sunny court-yard, giving directions for the building of a new wing of the palace. Frederick William, pleased at the tender interest in his health shown by his son, and at the good resolutions which Frederick had expressed in all his letters,* received him with warm

* The last letter written by Frederick William to the Crown-Prince, dated 26th May, may find a place here; it runs thus: *Mein geliebter Sohn, ich habe Euer Schreiben vom 24 dieses wohl erhalten, daraus euer herzliches Mitleid mit meinem elenden Umstande, auch eure löbliche Entschliessung in allen Stücken meinem väterlichen Rathe zu folgen ersehen; ich bin davon sehr attendriret und habe nicht den geringsten Zweifel an dem Effect eures Versprechens und eurer guten Sentiments, wenn Gott über mein Leben gebieten sollte, wie es das Ansehen hat. Dass ihr gegen Pfingsten anhero kommen wollt, solches ist mir sehr lieb, und wird mir ein rechtes Vergnügen sein, euch noch zu embrassiren. Euer sehr wohl affectionirter und getreuer Vater Friedrich Wilhelm.—(My dear son, I have safely received your letter of the 24th, wherein you discover a sincere compassion for my wretched state, and a praiseworthy determination to follow my fatherly advice in all points: I am exceedingly touched thereat, and have not the slightest doubt as to the effect of your promise and of your good sentiments, should God dispose of my life in the way that seems likely. It gives me great pleasure to learn that you are coming here at Whitsuntide, and it will be a real gratification to me to embrace you once more. Your very affectionate and faithful father, Frederick William.)* Some confusion is created by the statement of Frederick that he arrived at Potsdam on the 27th, whereas the minute of the cabinet council, for Thulemeier and Podewils, is dated the 28th. Doubtless the order was given before, and

demonstrations of paternal regard, and took upon himself the task of explaining to his son all that his ministers had left unsaid.

On the afternoon of the 28th of May he was permitted to enjoy a few hours free from pain, which he devoted to this purpose.

In the presence of Podewils, who has left an account of this interview, the King described to his successor, in plain and concise terms, his actual relations with the different European powers. Podewils admired the clearness of intellect shown by the King, spite of his bodily ailments. We will enter into the particulars of his discourse when we return to the subject of foreign policy. The sum of Frederick William's doctrine was, that a King of Prussia should keep his attention fixed on two things—the elevation of his house, and the welfare of his subjects, that these two points should occupy his attention equally and exclusively, and that he should keep aloof from all alliances destined to serve the interests of foreign states.* Podewils has not recorded the answers of the Prince; probably he only listened,

was subsequently executed by the secretary after the circumstances were changed.

* Kürzlicher Inhalt des Discurses, welchen S. K. Maj. an des Cronprinzen Königl. Hoheit 28 Mai 1740, des Nachmittags umb 4 Uhr in meiner Gegenwart gehalten, so viel ich mich dessen erinnere.—(Short statement of the discourse which his Majesty held to his Highness the Crown-Prince in my presence, on 28th May, 1740, at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, in so far as I can remember me thereof.) Potsdam, 30th May, 1741. From Podewils' papers in the possession of Countess Voss.

and showed that he understood and approved what he heard. His behaviour gave the King the most perfect satisfaction. He had formerly expressed a fear that his son, when king, would put on a purple mantle, blazing with gold and jewels, and that he would only feel happy while strutting about with the crown upon his head and the sceptre in his hand. But he now perceived that the Prince not alone comprehended his own ideas of the nature of true power, but that he also shared them, and showed equal ability and good will to carry them out. When the interview was at an end, and the attendants came back into the room, they heard him praise God who had given him so excellent a son. At these words the Crown-Prince rose, and kissed his father's hand, which he moistened with his tears. The King threw his arms round his son's neck: "My God," he exclaimed, "I die content, as I leave so worthy a son and successor!"

Not only had every trace of unkindness between them disappeared, but Frederick William had the satisfaction of feeling that he had not laboured in vain, but had founded a work which should endure—a feeling which may be looked upon as the last connexion of the immortal soul with earthly things.

Now that his heart was at rest on this point, he prepared to take leave of life. He recommended the Queen to the care of his successor, whose answer proved that he would do more for her than his father required. Frederick William then exhorted his younger sons to be brave soldiers; to be faithful and dutiful to their elder brother as their sovereign lord,

and never to do anything which should not redound to his honour and welfare, and to that of the state. Once before, in the midst of the turmoil of business, he had felt an impulse to take leave of active life and to live for himself alone, in solitude and retirement: he now again resolved, in case he should survive this attack, which he did not desire, to bid farewell to the world. "I am tired of life," said he to the minister of the gospel, with whom he once more repeated the truths of salvation; "I have now torn away my heart from my family, my army, and my kingdom." Early in the morning of the 31st of May he summoned the whole court into his presence, and declared, but in so low an accent that the officer standing next to him had to repeat his words to those assembled, that he delivered over to the Crown-Prince his state, his country, and his people, together with full power and sovereignty over them. He would not rest content until the Crown-Prince, accompanied by Boden, retired to the cabinet in which the King was wont to work with his ministers. Podewils was commissioned to make it known in Berlin that the Crown-Prince was now invested with the powers of government. It seemed essential to Frederick William's perfect peace in death, that he should himself witness the commencement of the new order of things.

Now that his task was finished, this remarkable man drew near his earthly end.

A few days before, Frederick William had shown to those assembled about him the coffin "of oak with copper handles," which he had caused to be made

for himself, and in which he “designed to sleep.” He now requested his physician to tell him how long he still had to live—whether it was an hour, then half an hour, and at last a quarter. “God be praised!” said he, “now all is over.” He died on the 31st of May, between three and four o’clock in the afternoon.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST MEASURES OF GOVERNMENT TAKEN BY
FREDERICK II.

FREDERICK was still overcome by the first bitterness of grief, when Leopold of Dessau requested an audience of him. The old Prince could not be refused admittance, as he was on the eve of a journey: he now came in, bathed in tears, embraced the knees of his new master, and remained for some minutes without saying a word. When, however, he began to speak, it was not only to condole with the young monarch on his loss, or thence, by a neat turn, to congratulate him on his accession, but he proceeded at once to express a hope that both he and his sons would be permitted to continue in the places they then held; more especially, that he might still retain all the authority with which the late King had invested him. Frederick had wiped away his tears, and repressed his feelings, as the Prince entered the room. The words of the Prince of Anhalt awakened in him the consciousness which at first he had scarcely felt, of the change that had taken place in his position; he remembered that he was now the King. He replied, that he would undoubtedly confirm the Prince and his sons in all their offices, but that as to the authority which the Prince wished to retain, of that he had no

knowledge. "Since I am King," said he, "I intend to administer the functions of my office, and to be the only person possessing authority." He was very well satisfied with himself when the Prince had taken leave in some embarrassment.*

On the same evening Frederick went to Berlin; his entrance was greeted by the acclamations of the people who had ever taken the liveliest interest in all that befel him, and who expected great things from him.

We may conceive what he felt—for the night is apt to dim the consciousness of the events of the day—when, on the following morning, he awoke at the sound of the voices of the Glasenapp regiment swearing allegiance to himself, under his windows. He sprang out of bed; and Pöllnitz, who shortly after went into the ante-chamber, found Frederick there half-dressed, with his hair in disorder, in the greatest agitation, and dissolved in tears. He said that the cheers which had greeted his name only reminded him of the loss which he had sustained. Pöllnitz tried to comfort him, by representing that the deceased Monarch was now happy in being released

* Pöllnitz, who was present during this scene, relates this in the unpublished portion of his Memoirs. Prince Leopold says, qu'il espéroit que lui et ses fils seroient maintenus dans tous ses emplois, qu'il conserveroit personnellement toute l'autorité, qu'il avoit eu sous le feu roi. Frederick answered: Qu'il tâcheroit de lui faire plaisir en tout ce, qu'il pouvoit, qu'il ne toucheroit point a ses emplois ni a ceux des princes ses fils, que pour l'autorité dans la quelle il souhaitoit d'être maintenu, elle lui étoit inconnue et que son intention étoit, devenu roi, d'en faire les fonctions et d'être le seul qui eut autorité.

from his inexpressible torments. "It is true," said Frederick, "that he suffered, but he lived—and now he is no more."

This was the last moment in which he could still feel as a Prince. While he was yet talking with Pöllnitz, the Generals then present in Berlin entered the room.

He received them, not only with the full consciousness of the royal power which had fallen to his lot, but he likewise manifested a determination somewhat at variance with the custom of former sovereigns.

"We have," said he, "lost our common sovereign master, and must now endeavour to console ourselves. I hope that you will assist me in maintaining the fine army which you helped my father to form. You will find in me one who will not love you less than your late master did, and who will have as much care of you. But there are two things of which I must remind you. First, the troops must be as good and as efficient as they are handsome; secondly, they must not ruin the country which they were intended to protect. Complaints have been laid against some among you of harshness, avarice, and insolence: see that they are silenced. A good soldier," he added, with youthful warmth, "ought to be humane and prudent, as well as brave and honourable."

He enounced views of a similar nature when he received his assembled ministers on the following day at Charlottenburg. He told them, that he well knew that they would serve him as well as they had served his father, even without an oath; which, indeed, was needless from an honest man. But he had a word to

say to them with respect to the system of government : hitherto a distinction had been drawn between the interests of the King and those of the country ; his father had had his reasons for allowing it ; (it was true that, although this had not been his father's principle of action, the administration had nevertheless taken such a course ;) but that he, the King, entertained totally different ideas. "I look upon the interests of the state as my own : I can have no interests which are not equally those of my people. If the two are incompatible, the preference is always to be given to the welfare and advantage of the country."*

* Besides an account in the newspaper, there are three reports of these speeches : the first and least accurate is taken from the statement of the Danish minister, in the *Berlin Monatschrift* or *Monthly Magazine* of Feb., 1804, p. 91 ; the second from the fragments of Pöllnitz's *Memoirs* ; and the third from Manteuffel's report of 3rd June. These two are doubtless correct in stating that the audience with the generals took place on the 1st, and with the ministers on the 2nd. Manteuffel goes the most into detail : he had good sources of information, and wrote on the spot. He says, *Quand les ministres furent assemblés, S. M. sortit et leur dit en termes fort arrangés qu'elle les avoit fait venir pour recevoir leurs sermens : qu'elle croioit a la verité cette cérémonie superflue, parce qu'un homme de bien fait toujours son devoir sans avoir jamais juré de le faire et que dix sermens n'empêcheroient pas un scelerat d'y manquer, mais qu'elle vouloit néanmoins passer par cette formalité avec eux non parce qu'elle me méfieroit, mais pour s'accommoder à un usage généralement reçu en pareilles occasions, qu'elle étoit persuadée qu'ils avoient fidèlement servi le roi son père et qu'ils agiroient de même avec elle ; mais qu'elle avoit à les avertir d'une chose. Vous avez mis, dit ce prince, jusqu'ici de la différence entre les intérêts du maître et ceux de son pais, vous avez cru faire votre devoir en ne vous appliquant qu'à bien veiller aux premiers sans songer des autres. Je ne vous en blâme point, sachant que le roi defunt avoit ses raisons pour ne pas le desapprouver. Mais*

In Prussia these two audiences amounted to a formal investiture of the royal office: thus the son immediately succeeded to his father's active rule.

One of the first measures which Frederick introduced, to the joy of all parties, properly belonged to the late King. In spite of an evidently deficient harvest Frederick William had long refused to open the magazines. He had calculated, according to data given him, how much there ought still to be in store, and he would not believe that all had been used, but imagined that there was an attempt to deceive him. At length, however, in his last moments he gave way, and consented that 9600 bushels of corn a-month should be issued to the bakers of Berlin out of the public stores: this was the last order in council that he signed. The new King enjoyed the satisfaction of beginning his reign by carrying this measure into effect; and as, during the deceased monarch's last hours, Frederick had doubtless exercised a decisive influence in the adoption of this measure, it was perfectly just that the popularity which it called forth should fall to his share.

A strange impression is produced when, on turning over the large book in which, day by day, Frederick William's orders in council were entered, we come upon the earliest of Frederick II.: the form and

j'ai les miennes pour penser autrement là dessus je crois que l'intérêt de mes états est aussi le mien et que je n'en peux avoir qui soit contraire au leur. C'est pourquoi ne faites plus cette separation et soiez avertis une fois pour toutes que je ne crois de mon intérêt, que ce qui peut contribuer au soulagement et au bonheur de mes peuples. Hereupon Schumacher read aloud the oath.

composition, and even the handwriting, are the same, and the subject matter nearly allied. But a totally different spirit breathes in every word; strong individual tendencies manifest themselves at once.

Let us pause and become acquainted with these peculiarities step by step, by an examination of the first orders issued by the new King.*

These orders in council are a further development of that disposition which the Prince had shown in his address to the ministers and generals.

One of the very first that he issued, dated the 2nd of June, is directed to Margrave Frederick von Schwedt, notorious for his overbearing insolence. The Margrave had demanded the dismissal of a certain Rittmeister of his regiment, although there was no foundation for any charge against him. "Your Grace," writes the King, "must not for a moment imagine that I shall do injustice to the officers for your sake, or that I shall dismiss them without a cause. On the contrary, it would be well that your Grace should adopt another line of conduct, and act towards the officers as is just and right." Soon after he had occasion to remind the Prince of Anhalt that harsh treatment of the common soldiers only made them the more inclined to desert; and he desired him to grant certain indulgences to the best conducted among them, which would be an inducement to those of doubtful character to behave well. It was extremely agreeable to him to hear that some things, of which the infantry had hitherto been in want,

* On the 1st of June, it is written in the book, Here his Majesty, Frederick II., the King of Prussia, began to sign.

could be supplied to them without entailing disorder upon the military chest.

Frederick provided with equal care for those whose turn for entering the service was still to come.

On the 4th of June he ordered the regiments, under pain of the loss of honour and reputation, to desist from harassing those who were enrolled, but had not yet joined. We soon find that officers who had transgressed this order were put under arrest, and that the King threatened the superior officers with his most severe displeasure on this account. He caused some brutal acts of violence which had occurred at the conscriptions to be severely punished, and was well pleased that it should be generally made known, "so that every one might see," said he, "that I will tolerate no such excesses." Whilst he exhorted the generals to keep their regiments at their full complement, he likewise expressed his desire that in future "the usual brutalities" should be avoided.

There could be no doubt that the sovereign who took these measures to repress among all ranks the coarse violence which still disgraced the army, would, in like manner, endeavour to efface the stain of an unjust and arbitrary exercise of power which attached to the civil authority.

Frederick shared the indignation roused by the presumptuous and oppressive interference of one Eckart, who, while employed on a special mission in Prussia, wanted to enrich the royal coffers at the expense of the province. Frederick immediately deprived him of his office, and even of his Cross of

Honour.* The King impressed upon the council what he had already said to his ministers, that they were not to labour for the interests of the King alone, but likewise for the good of their country. He desired the presidents to allow the several members of their council a consistent degree of liberty, and to live with them in perfect harmony, while he exhorted the members of the council not to allow themselves to be influenced by undue motives, and to avoid all collisions. He availed himself of the opportunity afforded by their congratulatory addresses, to set before them in his replies the noblest incentives to the performance of their duties; they were to devote their lives not painfully, but exclusively to these objects.

It had been generally thought that the distribution of so many rights of survivorship to feudal properties, canonicates, shrievalties, and the like, as had taken place under the last government, trenched upon the privileges of the nobility and of the ecclesiastical establishments. Frederick II., who was himself alarmed at the embarrassments which these might cause him, not only declared that he would grant no more, but even revoked all that had already been bestowed.

The rapid and compulsory building of new houses in Berlin had entailed considerable difficulties upon several people. These Frederick now endeavoured to compensate.

He put an immediate stop to the oppressive preser-

* Manteuffel a Brühl, 3rd June. Il y en avoit, qui opinoint à un traitement bien plus rude, voulant, qu' Eccard fut pour le moins pendu.

vation of game. He disparked four districts which had been turned into game preserves, and reconverted them into pasture and ploughed land. He caused a large number of deer and wild boars to be shot, partly with the object of lowering the price of meat, the market value of which had lately risen with that of all other produce. When he confirmed any of the privileges of hunting or shooting granted by his father, he reserved to himself the right of destroying the game if it should become injurious to agriculture.

In granting a fresh lease of the large farm of Egelu, he gave the preference, above all the other competitors, to one of the former co-tenants, chiefly because he promised to exact no service from the peasants in Atzendorf, but to content himself with a payment in money instead.*

He did not hesitate to restore to the French colonists certain old rights and privileges which nowise interfered with the interests of the community; and he allowed the Lutheran congregations to resume the practice of sundry ceremonies which had been rigorously suppressed by his father. He felt quite ashamed, on inspecting the accounts of the expenditure for the Academy of Science, at discovering that certain small pensions and allowances had been suppressed and perverted to purposes of an odious nature. The King instantly caused them to be restored. Science is proverbially grateful, and it has ever been accounted the greatest honour to the young monarch that, during the first days of his reign, he remembered the philosopher Wolf, who had

* Orders in Council of 5th, 10th, 11th, 13th, 16th, 27th June.

been expelled from the University of Halle, and would not rest until he had restored to him his chair.

These events excited general surprise, and gave rise to the idea that the young King would go still further in the same spirit, and perhaps overthrow the whole system of government established by his late father; and this prospect was hailed with joy by many who were incapable of appreciating its merits, and who only felt its vexations. But these men soon learnt to know Frederick better. While he dismissed Eckart, who had outraged morality, Frederick knew how to honour a man of merit like Boden, whom, however, the vulgar could not distinguish from Eckart. A story is current, that at the beginning of Frederick's reign some of the courtiers had endeavoured to overthrow Boden, who, however, by the prudence and eloquence of his representations, raised himself immensely in the King's estimation.* Such an opportunity, however, can scarcely have been needed, for during the latter days of the late King's reign and the first of that of Frederick, Boden had initiated the young monarch into the internal working of the system of finance, with which no one was so well acquainted as he, and while thus employed he gained Frederick's esteem. Boden received one of the very first marks of favour bestowed by Frederick on his accession, as a reward for the various services which he had performed. The King gave him the house which had been intended as a gift

* This is to be found in König's book, which is generally so worthy of credit. It cannot, however, be reconciled as to date with Pöllnitz's statement.

for Eckart. From the very first Boden was, and still continued to be, the man on whom the King implicitly relied in all financial matters. The mere report of a contemplated change of system was looked upon as so mischievous, that it was thought necessary expressly to contradict it. The King caused the different chambers to be informed that he intended to adhere closely to the system introduced by his father, both as regarded the excise and other duties, and the contribution and collection of the rents from the royal domains. When his first year's rents became due at Trinity term, 1740, there proved to be considerable arrears. The King ordered them to be paid up without fail, by a certain period which he himself fixed.

It was, indeed, most premature to conclude from a few scattered departures from the old customs, that the system was to be changed. Far from infringing upon its essential principle, the new government merely purified and strengthened it by the abolition of anomalies by which it had been deformed.

It is, nevertheless, true that the young King introduced several innovations which were greatly in advance of the system established by his father.

On the third day of his reign he issued a Cabinet Order abolishing torture in all, save some few special cases, in which, moreover, it was never applied.*

As early as at the period of the Reformation, the use of torture had been attacked; and in the seventeenth century it had been condemned in several solid works,

* Charlottenburg, 3rd June, 1740, in Behmer: *novum jus controversum Catharinæ II. dicatum obs.* 74, II. 478. Compare *Beiträge zur juristischen Literatur*, IV. 202.

first of all by an Arminian doctor.* At length, in the commencement of the eighteenth century, Thomasius directed against the use of torture one of those vehement, learned, and comprehensive treatises, by which he gave a great impulse to public opinion on all legal subjects. Notwithstanding all this, torture was far from being abolished; Thomasius himself did not venture positively to advise its abolition, for fear of other evil consequences.† But Frederick, deeply impressed with the conviction that it was disgraceful to Christendom and to civilization to sanction practices by which humanity was outraged, made use of his absolute power as King, and at once commanded the abolition of torture without taking long counsel upon the consequent difficulties. This mode of extorting confession was the point upon which turned the whole German criminal procedure, as it had been conducted since the introduction of the Carolina code, and its abolition caused the greatest perplexity to the judges. But Frederick would pay no regard to this objection. The abolition of torture, which so often failed in its object and destroyed the innocent, was imperatively demanded by the feeling of the age, even though the whole criminal procedure were to be changed in consequence, as, indeed, it materially was from that time forward: and as in Prussia the torture had never been applied to the higher classes, the spirit of the times hailed in its abolition another principle

* Passages from Lersener: *Geschichte des Zeitalters der Reformation*, V. 473. Johann Grave: *Tribunal reformatum*, 1624.

† Thomasius: *de tortura e foris christianorum proscribenda*, *Christiani Thomasi Dissertationum*, Tom. II. p. 1049.

which was then at work—namely, that of equality before the law.*

It was the same spirit which led Frederick soon after to abolish dispensations for marriages. It is well known how much more numerous are the canonical prohibitions than those of the Mosaic or even the Roman law; and how much they narrowed the circle of marriages capable of receiving the sanction of the church, by extending the limits of relationship and connexion by marriage. The Protestants had discarded many of these prohibitions, but had retained others, partly with a view to keeping up some connexion with the Catholics in southern Germany, to whom they did not wish to exhibit the spectacle of scandalous marriages. This, however, was not a motive which had any weight with Frederick II.; he declared every marriage legal and valid without dispensation, which was not clearly forbidden by the word of God. The Chancellor of the University of Halle † praises Frederick for completely restoring the liberty of the Gospel, and for no longer allowing the clearness of the Mosaic dispensation to be obscured by arbitrary additions. The King himself gave another reason for this measure—one which at that time began to be a matter of general conviction. The common opinion then was, that throughout the greater portion of Europe population was diminishing

* As Beccaria says on this occasion: *la sola uguaglianza e libertà che possono gli uomini ragionevoli exigere nelle presenti combinazioni di cose.*

† In the weekly notices extracted in Fassmann's *Regierungsantritt*, I. 74, where is also to be found the Rescript of July 3rd.

rather than increasing. Every one knows the strange measures which another soldier, Marshal Saxe, proposed as a remedy for this evil.* Most men sought the cause of the evil in the prohibitions of the Church, and subsequent times have shown the effect which the mitigation of these laws produced over the whole of Europe. In Protestant countries the greater part of these prohibitions had long been abolished, but there was now a general desire to get rid of the few that still remained. Frederick expressly said that he abolished dispensations in order to promote marriage and to increase population. The convictions of mankind were with him when he broke through ecclesiastical usages and the practice of the consistories, and returned to the primitive laws of the world, which, in this case, agreed with those of morality.

These were legislative enactments of great significance, though still incomplete and imperfectly worked out; and, indeed, fitted rather to serve as the materials for some future code. They were general principles which the young King embraced and endeavoured to promote; and which arose more out of a feeling of the necessities of social life throughout Europe, than from any conviction that the evil which they were intended to remedy was especially rife in the Prussian dominions.

This was equally the case with respect to the demand for universal toleration which Frederick so strongly urged: but this likewise had a higher political significance.

* *Reflexions sur la propagation de l'espèce humaine. Révéries de Maurice Comte de Saxe, 345.*

In all countries a participation in the benefits conferred by the State was still exclusively connected with some particular confession: the sovereigns themselves were bound by strict laws to the religion of the country.

This was a matter of course with the numerous spiritual Princes in Germany, who had to uphold the hierarchical ideas upon which their authority rested. The Emperor, likewise—who still received his crown with all the ecclesiastical pomp of former centuries, and whose power in the Empire was intimately connected with the maintenance of hierarchical institutions—was in the same predicament: the power of the court of Vienna would have been a mere nullity without this spiritual and Catholic element. Thus, too, ever since the religious civil wars of France in which the Huguenots were defeated, and more especially since the last persecution and banishment of that party, the royal power in France was thoroughly imbued with the idea of the absolute supremacy of Catholicism. It is true that in England an act of toleration had recently been passed, but only for the benefit of the Protestant Dissenters, not of the Catholics, who, by the violent attack they had made on the liberties of the country during the reign of James II., had brought upon themselves exclusion from all public offices of trust. A country bordering upon Prussia presented the anomalous spectacle of an old Protestant state, in which a tendency to Catholicism was almost a claim to promotion. The Elector of Saxony, who was then King of Poland, was surrounded by directors of his conscience, among them a zealous

confessor, who used the administration and political conduct of the country as means of conversion: to forsake the religion of the country and to adopt that of the court was a recommendation to office.

It is evident, at the first glance, that the Prussian government differed very materially in this respect from all others.

Without doubt every thing in Prussia depended upon Protestantism, but no one believed that the reformed faith would ever again be endangered, or stand in need of any forcible means of defence. It had been the endeavour of the dynasty for many years, to allay the discord between the two great Protestant parties, and now the government had begun to extend toleration even to the Catholics. The possession of the western provinces, where all three confessions existed at the same time, was in this respect of great importance to the spirit and views of the government: we may almost say it was providential. So early as during the sixteenth century the government had cancelled the acts by which the members of one or the other of these religious denominations were excluded from civil rights or public offices, and had granted to them all "like rights, protection, and equality."* Even the great Elector contributed towards the building of new Catholic churches. The Catholic subjects of Frederick I. said in his praise, that under the rule of a Prince of their own faith they could desire nothing more than he had already granted to them. We

* Laspeyres, *Geschichte und heutige Verfassung der katholischen Kirche Preussens*, 219, 265.

have mentioned the respect which Frederick William I., in the midst of his state, paid to Catholicism out of regard to his Catholic soldiers: he only thought it necessary to forbid proselytizing.

The further development of this tendency was quite according to Frederick's way of thinking, and he took the first opportunity of setting forth the doctrine of toleration in the strongest possible terms. In the very first month of his reign he wrote that marginal resolution which has been so much commented upon—that all religions were to be tolerated, and none among them was to be favoured to the prejudice of the others: in the Prussian dominions each individual might go to heaven "*à sa façon*"—an expression which simply meant that Frederick was opposed to the claims set up by each of the various religious bodies to the exclusive possession of the true and saving faith. But we can scarcely conclude from it that Frederick intended to confirm the proselyting spirit of the Catholic priesthood;* nor yet that he thought it desirable that the spiritual community should be dissolved, and each man should be left to his own judgement. This idea had been expressly repudiated by the founder of the maxim upon which Frederick acted, by John Locke

* Thus it is understood by Busching, who in his book, called *Charakter Friederichs II.*, has published these marginal resolutions of 22nd June, 1740, which are no longer to be found in original in the Archives. Frederick doubtless did not wish to see the Catholic schools abolished, whose proselytizing spirit had been complained of; but he had no desire that their encroachments should be allowed. Moreover, he wrote for the Fiscal, and not for the public.

himself. We find orders in council of an early date, in which Frederick praises the hard-working ministers of the Gospel, declares his desire to reward them for their zeal, and warns others not to neglect the especial duties of their office for the pursuit of literary occupations.* One of Frederick's fundamental principles was not to meddle with the faith of his people, and to avoid giving them any offence. But he was determined to suffer no violence with respect to matters of doctrine, nor to give to one confession any superiority over the others. Indeed a time came when he even desired to have Catholics at his court.

No one can deny that these views were of incalculable importance to Germany, and to the whole world.

We have seen that even in the year 1740, each of two hostile religious parties followed a separate line of foreign policy; that Düsseldorf was looked upon as a strong frontier fortress of Catholicism, and that the bailiwicks on the Agger were held to be essential to the permanence of that party.

It was evident that it was time that this political hostility between the religious sects should cease, and if the legitimate centre of the Empire—the Imperial court—could not rise to this view of the subject,

* To young Beausobre, 15th Nov., 1742. *Le devoir de votre charge d'ame doit être preferé aux travaux que l'edition etc. demande.* To the preacher Höpner, 28th June, 1741. In the *Anti-Machiavel* it is said, cap. 25, 169: *La politique veut, que le prince ne touche point a la foi de ses peuples.* *Testam. politique de 1752.* *Il faut savoir assez respecter le public, pour ne le pas scandaliser dans son culte, de quelque religion qu'il soit.*

some other power must of necessity take upon itself to put an end to such a state of things.

This course, moreover, coincided with one of the great tendencies of the age. We have already shown that on every side there arose out of a profound historical necessity a tendency to burst the bonds imposed by too close a connexion between religious ideas and political rights: the spirit of mankind rebelled against it. That which in so many places was so ardently desired and so vehemently demanded, was in Prussia granted by the state itself, without fear of causing any disorder.

Even with respect to material interests, the requirements of the political economy of that century were in accordance with the established maxims of the Prussian government—*e. g.*, as to the promotion of manufactures. We have seen how Frederick William I. founded them: the general government was ordered to devote the greatest attention to the various branches of manufactures in the several divisions of the kingdom. Frederick II., however, was convinced that much more still remained to be done. Already Prussia had shaken off her dependence upon the foreigner, but this was not enough for the King; he conceived the idea of causing his subjects to manufacture for other countries, and to enjoy the advantage of supplying the wants of the whole world. Thus, he said, a kind of voluntary tax would be levied upon the neighbouring countries, which would contribute to the support of the indigenous subjects of Prussia: these would increase, and the towns would be peopled; and the number of his subjects was the

real wealth of a king. In order to give a fresh impulse to the matter, he found it advisable to centralize this department of business rather more, as had already been done with respect to others by the highest authorities. He established a special Board of Trade under one of the most active of his old official men, Marschall, whom he appointed minister, and with whom was associated his friend and teacher of Custrin, Hille. This office was to exercise a supervision not alone over particular provinces, but over the state as a whole. Marschall began by desiring the provincial exchequers to report to him which of the provinces had manufactures, and which had not; how in the one case they could be improved, and in the other introduced; how the consumption of foreign goods was to be prevented, while the exportation of Prussian articles to foreign countries was to be promoted; what alterations were to be made in the excise, and other duties, in order to increase trade.

The King took a lively interest in all this. Like Colbert he sent to Italy to invite weavers of velvets, rich silks, and silk damasks, into his dominions. His ambassador in Paris was instructed to find makers of cloth of gold, and other rich stuffs. Every year of his reign was marked by more or less successful attempts of this kind.

If we consider the whole interior of the state, we shall perceive three mighty influences at work: the established order of things, the ideas of the century, and the independent mind of the sovereign which combined the two, so as to strengthen the one and to open the way for the other.

Much was prepared at this time that we shall have to examine hereafter. In this place we will mention only personal matters, such as the organization of the royal household; wherein Frederick thought fit to deviate somewhat from the restrictions imposed upon the royal family by his father.

Frederick II. first enlarged his mother's residence of Monbijou, and gave her a more brilliant court. When he begged her not to address him with the title of "Majesty," but to call him "son" as heretofore, a name dearer to him than any other, this was no empty form, but the expression of a sincere feeling of reverence and gratitude. He wished to remove all the petty inconveniences which she had hitherto endured.

He stood in a very peculiar relation towards the Queen, his wife. He felt constantly that he had been forced into the marriage, and he was not disposed to submit to this constraint all his life. Every one in Berlin expected that he would divorce her; but Elizabeth Christine had, in her very difficult position, preserved so much womanly dignity, and had shown such excellent moral qualities, that the King could never have brought himself to so harsh an act. He gave her an honourable and, considering the circumstances of the case, a splendid household,* together with the means of receiving a numerous and bril-

* She had four ladies in waiting, with a high salary and the title of Madame, four maids of honour, with a smaller salary and the title of Mademoiselle, one mistress of the robes, a master of the ceremonies, one marshal of the court and chamberlain, 12 pages, and whatever else belonged to such a ceremonial. None of the ladies in waiting were to be foreigners.

liant society. He himself never appeared at her assemblies, not even at the very beginning ; he learnt from others how she played her part. Altogether he saw her very seldom ; much less was she the companion of his daily life. Such was the fate imposed upon them through each other.

Frederick himself continued, only without his wife, the same sort of life at Charlottenburg that he had led at Rheinsberg. Several of his old friends of former years appeared there ; among them, Duhan de Jandun and the same Kait who, in the catastrophe of the year 1730, had escaped from Wesel ; but they no longer suited the King's society or his frame of mind. Duhan was seriously devoted to religion, and it was evident that he lived and moved in the strictest ideas of Calvinism, in the faith of his fathers. Kait, who meanwhile had lived in England, had adopted the manners and views of an Englishman, and hoped to make a brilliant marriage. On the other hand, Keyserlingk was in the beginning looked upon as a favourite. Keyserlingk was a young officer of good general information, and devoted to the same pursuits as the King : he knew Latin and Italian, and pointed his conversation with happy poetical quotations. His manners, especially when he wished to make an impression, were somewhat overpowering to other people ; but not so to the King, who was used to him, and liked him. Frederick wrote with his own hand the name of Cæsarion, as he called Keyserlingk, on the door of the room destined to him, in the palace of Charlottenburg : it was near Frederick's apartment, and the King occasionally visited Keyserlingk

in his own room. But Keyserlingk was not a favourite likely to exercise any undue influence. His recommendations, which were incessant, were but little heeded. One day, when he seemed inclined to make some unusually ambitious request, the King said to him, "Hark ye, Keyserlingk, you are a worthy fellow, and I love to hear you sing and jest, but your councils are those of a fool." Jordan, one of the French colony, was a man of a much more solid worth: he had quitted the pulpit, which no longer suited his inclinations, and brought to the assistance of the King's thirst after knowledge an extensive acquaintance with literature, for which he had the zeal of a declared bibliophile. To Jordan himself his intercourse with the King was a great mental enjoyment, and afforded him the incitement to thought, of which he stood in need. Jordan shared the King's sceptical opinions as opposed to the theological system, taking care, however, not to attack the fundamental maxims of religion, and he competed with him in love of truth supported by satire. Their letters were written in the same style of easy and fluent prose interspersed with verses not always of the most faultless construction, but betokening hearty friendship and perfect mutual confidence and understanding. Frederick often directed his sarcasms against Jordan, who returned the attack with the same weapons, and laughed at those who bade him beware of the consequences of his boldness; he looked upon it as his duty towards the King, always to tell the naked truth.*

* Compare his last letter, dated April, 1745: V.M. voudra bien après ma mort me rendre la justice, que si j'ai combattu la

The number of Frederick's companions was increased by a newly arrived foreigner, a man of still more varied information than the other two. This was Algarotti, whose literary remains contain treatises upon physics and antiquities, architecture and strategics, language and history, expressed with care and elegance in an almost epigrammatic style. The powers of observation, and the keen and accurate judgment which are shown in his writings, rendered his society uncommonly agreeable to Frederick, who seemed to think all company tedious in which he did not meet Algarotti. The latter, however, who possessed an independent fortune, was not tempted by a position which Jordan looked upon as so enviable. But Algarotti mistook his own abilities when he desired a high employment in the service of the state; the ready gifts which he had at command in literature, forsook him in practical life. The members of the court of Charlottenburg thought him intolerably assuming.

There was this great difference between Frederick's life at Charlottenburg and that which he had formerly led at Rheinsberg, that the affairs of state now occupied that prominent share of his time and attention which had formerly been filled by study. The King reserved the early morning to himself alone, whether he took his coffee in the garden or sat at work in his own room. Then the members of the privy council made their report, and the ministers had an audience: the number and importance of the

superstition avec acharnement, j'ai toujours soutenu les intérêts de la religion chrétienne, quoique fort éloigné des idées des théologiens.—V.M. m'a toujours soupçonné de socinianisme.

orders in council, embracing the whole administration of the country, civil and military, foreign and domestic, show the zeal and industry with which Frederick laboured from the first moment of his accession. Towards noon the King, accompanied by his adjutant-general, rode into the town to be present at some military exercise or parade, and soon after the whole party returned to Charlottenburg at full gallop. The King then dined, in company with the whole court; he talked a great deal at table, and often indulged in caustic wit; he was pleased with any reply to his jests, if it was but sharp and well turned. In the evening he took part in a little concert; he played the flute, as some Saxon musicians have told us, almost too well,—better than became a king.* Leave to be present at these concerts was granted as a great favour. This simple way of life did not please every one, several of the courtiers called Frederick “the abbot,” and themselves “his monks.”

The obsequies of Frederick William I. were held at Potsdam on the 22nd of June. Frederick II. caused them to be celebrated with all possible pomp and splendour, in order that none might say that his father's memory had been rendered less dear to him by that which had formerly taken place between them. There were, however, others who respected it less. On hearing a report that a bookseller of Amsterdam was printing a life of Frederick William, Frederick directed his envoy to make himself acquainted with the contents of the book; and if he

* Que ce monarque non seulement s'y connaissait à fond, mais qu'il jouait divinement bien.

found it to contain anything derogatory to the fame of the late King, to prevent its publication.*

The ceremony of interment was altogether military, in harmony with the character of the deceased sovereign. Frederick rejected the services of Pöllnitz, who offered himself as master of the ceremonies, and chose to be attended solely by generals, such as Prince Leopold and the Duke of Holstein-Beck. A number of other officers followed, not in any accurate order of precedence. The three battalions of the tall regiment once more went through all the evolutions with their accustomed precision—for even the new recruits had been drilled with the utmost care—and paid the last honours to the sovereign who had raised them, in the manner most congenial to his spirit. They attracted all the more attention as every one knew that this was the last time they were to be seen.

Frederick thought that the cost of maintaining this regiment, which was estimated at 202,518 thalers a-year, was out of all proportion to the advantage to be derived from it, and determined to disband it. He incorporated the best and most finely grown, but not the tallest men, with the regiment which he himself had commanded when he was Crown-Prince, and thus formed three battalions of foot-guards. The rejected giants, mostly Rascians and Hungarians, were sent to the Sternschanze, at Magdeburg, where they

* He wrote to him on 21st June, the day before the ceremony. *Taisez vous*, said he to Pöllnitz, who had allowed himself a few pleasantries on the subject: *je respecte la mémoire de mon père et je veux que mes gens la respectent pareillement.*

were to be allowed to die off, and if any of them ran away they were not to be pursued.* Sixteen new

* Military Report in Manteuffel. Aus des hochsel. Königs Leibregiment sind de schönsten, so von guter Grösse, ausgesucht worden, wovon das 1 Bataillon Fussgarde formirt worden und sind bis dato noch die grössesten; welches Ihro Hoheit Prinz Ferdinand bekommt; die übrigen sind theils an die Feld Regimenter verschenkt, theils ausgetauscht worden für gute 9 und 10 zöllige Kerls. Unter andern sind viele verabschiedet, auch einige avancirt worden. Die 25 M. grösten an der Leib Comp. sind als Heyducken ausgekleidet worden und halten sich in Berlin auf, sollen aber keine Dienste thun. Unter dem Bataillon welches Gen. Maj. von Weyer bekommt und in Magdeburg in der Sternschanze steht, sind 600 Mann auch hievon und werden dort Rebellen genannt, sind lauter Ausländer, Italiener, Slavonier, Raitzen und Ungern. Sie sollen nicht recrutirt werden, sondern so absterben mit den Offizieren, so dabei zu stehen kommen, und so einer wegläuft, soll ihm nicht nachgeschickt werden, sondern laufen lassen.

Unter das 2te und 3te Bataillon Fussgarde werden die schönsten und grösten von Ihrer Majestät gewesenem Regiment als Kronprinz genommen; der Rest davon an die Feld Regimenter verwechselt, wovon die schönste Leute ausgesucht von 9 und 10 Zoll, und die beiden Bataillone formirt werden.

(The handsomest and best grown men of the late King's body-guard were selected, out of whom the 1st battalion of the foot-guards was formed: these men are the tallest now in the foot-guards, and are to be given to his Highness Prince Ferdinand. The rest were distributed among the regiments of the line, or were exchanged for serviceable middle-sized men. Many were discharged, and some few promoted. The 25 biggest men of the body-guard were dressed as Heyducks, and were to be quartered in Berlin, but without doing any duty. The battalion commanded by Major-General von Weyer, quartered in the Sternschanze at Magdeburg, contained 600 of these men, who there went by the nickname of the rebels: these were chiefly foreigners, Italians, Slavonians, Rascians, and Hungarians. They were not to be increased, but were to die out with their officers; if any deserted, they were not to be pursued, but were to be allowed to escape.

battalions were formed with the money thus saved, and a small addition out of the military chest. Frederick, like his father, was able to begin his reign with a notable increase to his army; and while he abolished that which was a mere matter of personal fancy, he applied himself zealously to the improvement of all essential points.

On the 7th of July, 1740, Frederick set out on his journey into the duchy of Prussia to receive the oaths of allegiance. He was as little disposed as his father had been to go through the ceremony of a coronation; he even forbade all pageants, processions, and ceremonies of reception. Nothing was to take place but a bare repetition of the ceremonial which had accompanied the last monarch's accession to the throne, for the expenses of which a like sum of money was to be allowed, payable out of the same fund. It certainly was impossible for a sovereign, on his way to take possession of his kingdom, to make a plainer appearance. Frederick travelled with only three carriages; he was accompanied by a part of his little court of Charlottenburg, including the men of learning who belonged to it: his own carriage he shared with Hack, Keyserlingk, and Algarotti.

As they journeyed along in a north-easterly direction, the King and his Italian friend fell into a discussion upon the relative merits of northern and

The finest and tallest men of his Majesty's regiment, when Crown-Prince, were placed in the 2nd and 3rd battalions of foot-guards; the rest were exchanged into the regiments of the line, from which the finest men of middle height were selected in return, and the two battalions formed.)

southern countries ; the King maintained stoutly, and afterwards expressed in poetry his conviction, that the inhabitants of the north were not without some enjoyment of nature.

During the course of his journey, Frederick reviewed and inspected troops, granted a few pardons and favours, and likewise inflicted a few punishments : the current business of government was carried on without interruption at the places where the court halted. The taking of the oaths of allegiance placed some unusual difficulties in the way of a government so exclusively monarchical as that of Prussia had now become.

It had been the invariable custom in the duchy, before the oaths of allegiance were taken, to summon a diet, at which, according to the regulations of the great Elector, the prince on his first accession was to redress grievances, to reform abuses, and to confirm the privileges of the country.

King Frederick William I. immediately on succeeding to the crown gave a provisional assurance, and let the matter rest there : after the meeting of the diet summoned to take the oaths of allegiance, he never called together another. As all the rights appertaining to the estates were chiefly connected with granting the supplies, and as Frederick William not only never received anything from Prussia, but was also compelled, by the application of means arising from other sources, to ward off the ruin which threatened that province, he was never called upon to summon a diet : he declared the heads of circles (Landrath),—who were indispensable to the action

of government by estates,—to be unnecessary, and allowed the institution gradually to fall into disuse.

Frederick II., after some consideration, determined to re-appoint these officers. Hereupon the three estates met on the 12th of July: the higher nobility and the heads of circles, the lesser nobility with the deputies of the peasant freeholders, and the delegates of the towns. No sooner were they assembled, than, as a matter of course, they remembered their ancient privileges; and demanded assurances similar to those which Frederick I. had twice given; on succeeding to his father in 1690, and on obtaining the title of King in 1701.

In the meantime, however, the administrative and military constitution of the kingdom had been established. The minister, Podewils, who preceded the King in this journey, remarked that it would be impossible to reconcile the ancient privileges with the new order of things.

The King, who in all things followed the example of his father, had no wish to abolish institutions upon which the power and credit of the country depended: moreover, the estates did not seriously urge the point. Podewils represented to them that the personal character of such a prince as Frederick, whose mind was wholly bent upon forwarding the happiness of his people, offered to them a far greater security than all the guarantees in the world.

It is probably to be regretted, especially with a view to subsequent times, that some attempt was not then made to reconcile these divers claims. But, not to mention that any such attempt might have led

to endless discussions of legal claims admitting of no solution, the tendency of the epoch did not lie in that direction. Circumstances of a totally different kind, among which we may mention the great events of the year 1812, were needed to restore animation to a Prussian Diet. The estates summoned by Frederick declared themselves ready to take the oaths of allegiance, without a previous recognition of their liberties. The general spirit of the times was altogether favourable to the forms of monarchy, while, on the other hand, the principle of monarchy was maintained in its utmost purity. Frederick refused to receive the donative which the estates, according to ancient custom, offered to pay in instalments, at periods to be fixed by themselves. Neither a demand for, nor a grant of supplies, nor yet a voluntary donative, was applicable in a case, in which the absolute necessities of the whole state, and the ability of the province to meet its share of these demands, formed the only rule, and where views obtained which were altogether foreign to all the received ideas of private rights or claims.

The Burgraves of Dohna who claimed the privilege of taking the oath of allegiance in writing, instead of personally, desisted from their claim when the King represented to them that they would only bring upon themselves hatred by the assumption of this advantage over so many other illustrious families of the province.

The estates took the oaths on the 20th of July. The King declared that the compliance of the Prus-

sians in doing homage without exacting any assurance from him, should never be used to their disadvantage. Only a general allusion was made, as in the year 1701, to those who by the convention of Welau possessed certain rights of escheat. The recollections of the ancient supremacy of Poland, and of the privileges appertaining to the estates, fell, as they had arisen, together. On the coins struck to commemorate this ceremony, Frederick styled himself, for the first time, *Rex Borussiae*. His kingdom and his position in the world were founded upon his dominion over all who bore the name of Prussians, and not only upon the possession of the province.

Similar tendencies, only not so strong, displayed themselves in the homage rendered by the March of Brandenburg; not in the form of demands made by the diet, but of wishes expressed by particular estates.* The nobles complained of the predominance of the military order, and also of the excise, which pressed heavily upon their peasants: they likewise protested against the right of the burghers to hold fiefs. On the other hand, the burgomaster of Berlin called upon the King to protect the rights and privileges of the city, which had hitherto been so much abused. But when among these rights we find such things, as for instance, that the people of Rathenau claimed to be allowed, as in former times, to take from the royal forests the wood re-

* Podewils to the King, 12th July, 1740: *je puis dire aussi et je dois cette justice à ces gens cy, que je trouve leur beaucoup de soumission et de docilité.*

quired to build their bridges and dams, we are struck with the narrow and local nature of their views. The minister, Arnim, in his answer, promised a kind and gentle rule ; he expressly alluded to the first Frederick, whose spirit, he said, rested upon the second of that name. We may doubt, however, whether the King, who placed his father far above his grandfather, agreed in this view of the matter. He discovered no great reverence for ancient precedent. When the ceremony of doing homage took place, on the 2nd of August, neither the Electoral hat nor the sceptre of the imperial arch-treasurer was displayed : and on the coins struck on the occasion, the words " By the grace of God " were left out. Frederick stayed half an hour on the balcony, gazing, perfectly silent and lost in thought, upon the crowds which filled the castle square. Thence he hastened to inspect the troops drawn up on parade.

In other places the homage was paid to commissioners ; but Frederick visited the western provinces in person in August and September, when he reviewed the troops and inspected the fortresses.

The inheritance to which he had succeeded was rare indeed. He was called to rule over provinces, which, under a well devised and firmly established system of government, were rapidly and securely recovering from former devastation ; and over a naturally vigorous and energetic people, possessed of the chief elements of culture, needing only developement, and not divided by faction. There was no longer any question of the old quarrels between the religious confessions : all recollection of individual privileges

was lost in the necessity of uniting the best efforts of the whole country in the common cause of political independence. The strict discipline and subjection in which the people was held cannot be considered as oppressive, for all were fully aware of its purpose. 'We cannot call that man a slave, who loves the power which he renders possible only by yielding the strictest obedience, and which affords him a position utterly independent of foreign influences.' Some of the ministers, among other changes, wished to re-establish the regular meetings of the secret council. But Frederick declared to them that he would observe all the forms of his father's government: he disliked long consultations and tedious dissertations even more than his father had done: his decisions were vigorous, immediate, and irrevocable. His object was to give an impulse to several things which had not yet been dreamed of in the internal administration of the country, and still more, to win for Prussia that respect and consideration which had hitherto been refused her by other states. The Prussian army, which Frederick increased at the very beginning of his reign, was the sum of the resources of his people. The King's task now was to make the most efficient and advantageous use of the instrument placed in his hands. He did not long hesitate how this was to be done.

CHAPTER III.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS DURING THE FIRST MONTHS OF
FREDERICK'S REIGN.

IN his last "discourse," to which we must now revert, Frederick William could not boast of a friendly or intimate alliance with any foreign power. He pointed out Denmark as that which had for a long time been the best disposed towards Prussia, and he had advised his successor to keep upon good terms with the neighbouring courts of northern Germany—Cassel, Wolfenbüttel, and Dresden. On the other hand, though so long a time had elapsed since the northern war, the Swedish sovereign still appeared to him to be dangerous to Prussia, the more so as his own former close connexion with Russia had of late years been considerably loosened. The King advised a cautious and rather neutral line of conduct towards the latter power, from whose assistance there was not much to be hoped, though it was obvious that more was to be lost than gained by a war with her. The most pressing questions, however, lay in another quarter; the King declared his opinions in great detail as to the four powers who had taken part in the affair of Juliers and Berg, which was the main object he had in view. "Render unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's,"

said he—that is, let the Emperor be treated with all the respect and consideration which the head of the Empire has a right to expect from one of its estates, taking care, however, always to bear in mind that he belongs to the house of Austria, which ever seeks its own advantage, and invariably acts on the principle of depressing rather than of raising the power of the house of Brandenburg. Thus, too, Prussia had been since time immemorial in alliance and neighbourly friendship with Holland; notwithstanding which, every increase to Prussia, especially near the frontiers of Holland, was looked upon with an evil eye by that power. With reference to the court of London, he drew a distinction between the views of the crown of England and those of the house of Hanover. With the former, Prussia had no important difference; nay, their interests in many respects, as well as in the matter of religion, were identical; whereas Hanover, on the contrary, advanced several territorial claims adverse to Prussia, and was determined to prevent to the utmost of her power the further rise of the latter. As a Christian, he said, he had forgiven George II. all the injuries he had done him; but he had always found it more to his own advantage to avoid any nearer alliance with the English monarch. This sovereign now foresaw a speedy change of rulers in the house of Brandenburg; and it was, doubtless, on this account alone that he had come over from England, in order to gain over the Prince to his side immediately upon his accession. It seemed as if he wanted to bring about a great alliance against France. The old King, therefore, advised the Prince to weigh

matters well, and not to decide too hastily,* to obtain good terms for himself, and, above all, never to enter into an alliance, of which the ultimate object was concealed from him, or in which he was not to stand upon a footing of perfect equality. The royal electoral house had from time immemorial reserved to itself the right to ally itself with or to oppose France, as circumstances might dictate. Quite recently he, the King, had concluded a treaty with that power, through which Prussia might hope shortly to obtain a firm footing in the duchy of Berg: he had been driven to take this step by the opposition he encountered from the other powers; and he now received from that quarter assurances of the desire for a still closer alliance; but he thought that the Prince should not meet these advances, unless France would agree to concede the remaining portion of the duchy of Berg, which she still withheld. As a general rule Frederick William counselled his son rather to avoid alliances, and not to hold much personal communication with foreign ambassadors, whose aim it invariably was to penetrate his secrets. Before going to war, he should well consider that it was not always possible to make peace when it might suit him. But if war was inevitable, and absolutely needful, he was to keep

* Allianzen wären zwar guth vor die Ministres, so dazu gebraucht würden wegen der Presenten so es dabei setzte, aber selten convenabel vor ihre Principalen, weil de wenigsten Tractate und Bündnisse gehalten würden.—(Alliances were indeed good for the ministers, by whom they were concluded, because of the presents they got on the occasion, but were seldom to the advantage of their principals, seeing that but few treaties and alliances were kept.)

his army well together, and execute his resolve with vigour and determination.

Thus spoke the dying King. He not only gave a last expression to his opinions, but fully described the state in which he left the affairs of the kingdom to his successor.

That which he had predicted as the first probable event, came to pass immediately after his death. Even before the official notice of the King's decease had been published, one of the German ministers of the King of England appeared at Berlin with credentials prepared in anticipation of the event. He was not only authorized to propose a renewal of the hereditary alliance between the two houses, which took place at the beginning of every reign; but also to obtain an interview for the purpose of discussing confidentially the state of public affairs, and to concert measures to be taken in common accordingly.*

The Prince who now ascended the throne, had shown in his younger days such an evident preference for England, and had endured so much persecution on that account, that George II. was fully justified in entertaining the hope of gaining him completely over to his side. Moreover, he belonged by birth, both

* "Ueber die jetzige beschwerliche Situation der publicquen Affairen, mithin über die Gefahr, worin das gesammte Reich dermalen befangen ist, vertraulich zu communiciren und sowohl zu dem allgemeinen, als beiderseitiger Häuser Besten zusammengesetzte Consilia zu fassen."—"To communicate confidentially touching the present difficult position of public affairs, as well as concerning the danger which threatens the whole empire; and to take the best counsel for the general welfare, as well as for that of both houses.)

through his mother and grandmother, to the house of Hanover. His mother, who was strongly attached to her own family, and for whom Frederick cherished the most devoted respect, might naturally be expected to exercise a certain influence over her son in favour of an alliance with England: ministers still lived at Berlin, whom the public voice pronounced to be Hanoverians at heart. Indeed, those whose counsel Frederick asked in this matter, were of opinion that it was not advisable to repel such friendly advances.

The young monarch, however, by no means shared these views. One of the effects produced by those stormy years of his youth was to render ineffectual, if not altogether to dissolve, those strict bonds of relationship which preclude the possibility of independent political action. Frederick had lately been cured of his predilection for England. It was contrary to the natural turn of his mind and to the developement of his thoughts, to look upon ties of blood as a motive for political alliance. Moreover, the haste with which the offer was pressed was distasteful to him. He refused the envoy, Münchhausen,* the special audience which he requested, and saw him but once in the presence of several other diplomatists. When Münchhausen declared that the hereditary treaty would still be binding, whether it were renewed or not, Frederick replied, that, if so, that must

* Frederick to Thulemeier, 5th July: croyant en effet, qu'il ne faudra rien précipiter tant plus, que le mentionné traité étant regardé comme perpétuel et obligatoire il suffira, jusqu'à ce, que le tems nous éclaircira sur les vues et les véritables dispositions des Français et des Anglais.

suffice for the present: for that he could not possibly enter into fresh alliances before the last honours had been paid to his father's memory. It must be confessed that the urgency of the late King's final admonition gave especial weight to this argument as applied against the proposed alliance. Münchhausen complained that the zealous friendship of his court was not responded to, and returned home almost offended.

If Frederick entertained any predilection on first coming to the throne, it certainly was for the French rather than for the English alliance.

He determined to send Count von Truchsess-Waldburg to the English, and Colonel Camas to the French court, to announce his accession; but while he empowered both these ministers to enter into more particular negotiations, he made this difference between them: Colonel Camas was instructed to propose definite terms, while Count von Truchsess-Walburg was only to collect information, and to report what he heard. The French were greatly mistaken when they thought that a preference was shown to England in sending to that court a man with an old feudal name. When this was made known to him, Frederick replied, that in Prussia everything depended upon military rank; and in truth the advantage was given to France over England. Camas had long been on the most intimate terms with Frederick, who placed unlimited confidence in his skill and integrity. In the instructions drawn up for him, the King expressly said that the mission confided to him was at that moment

the most important that he could entrust to any one.*

The commission with which Frederick charged Camas was perfectly in accordance with his father's advice, to extend the connexion which had been prepared with France, provided that power would consent to annul the oppressive conditions with which, during the late negotiations, the succession to the Duchy of Berg had been hampered. Frederick calculated upon the effect which would be produced upon France by the consideration of the advantage she would derive from an alliance with Prussia, more especially as the disagreements with England increased, — and on the other hand, of the danger which she would incur by the union of Prussia with England. He remarked, that the present favourable circumstances would enable him to demand Juliers likewise, but that he would be content with Berg; he would pledge himself never to fortify Düsseldorf, or to levy any fresh tolls on the Rhine, but he must have unlimited possession of the whole country. If France would guarantee to him these terms, she might reckon upon his assistance.

In the same manner Thulemeier, who was then dying, and Podewils, informed the French ambassador in Berlin, that these conditions would not suffice if France wished for a still closer union with Prussia.

* Je n'aurois pû choisir ni un plus honnête ni un plus digne homme pour la commission la plus importante qu'on a pû donner dans les conjonctures présentes. The secret instruction is written with his own hand; it contains the general direction: Vous payerez paroles veloutées de paroles veloutées et les réalités d'autres réalités.

“Formerly,” said they to the French ambassador, “you took advantage of the views of the late King, who you well knew would never go to war; but now we have a young monarch who will use his troops, and lead them into the field.”

If we put together these expressions, and at the same time learn from an injunction of the King's, that he quotes the example of Gustavus Adolphus, and seems inclined to act a similar part; furthermore, when we read in his letters, that he once thought of studying politics under Cardinal Fleury, and talked of making an expedition into France, in order to become personally acquainted with him, and to profit by his conversation;* we can easily believe that Frederick might have been induced to make common cause with France in all respects.

During the journey which he made to his western provinces,—passing through the Franconian principalities, in order to visit his sisters,—he was actually seized with the fancy of visiting the French within their own territories.

Not far from the frontier he quitted his brother Augustus William and Algarotti, who had accompanied him thus far, and who now went straight to the Lower Rhine. Frederick himself, under the name of Dufour, accompanied only by Wartensleben, took the road to Strasburg. It seemed as if now

* To Camas, 11th Aug., que si mes affaires vont là bas selon mes souhaits connus, je pourrais faire un petit tour en France, pendant l'espace de 15 jours pour avoir la satisfaction de connaître personnellement le cardinal et pour profiter de ses entretiens.

that he was his own master, he had determined to indulge the fancy of his youth. He still felt an uncontrollable desire to see the French, to make himself acquainted with their institutions and way of life, and more especially with their troops.

Preconceived notions of a foreign country are, however, apt to be fallacious. Frederick did not meet with the politeness and hospitality which he expected to find, together with many other good qualities, in the better society of France.

His incognito was easily seen through. He had himself written out the passport which he wanted, in the presence of the postmaster at Kehl,* and had sealed it with the small royal signet which he carried with him. He might have been treated with the respect due to his real rank, and with a freedom of intercourse suited to his assumed name. But all those with whom he came in contact endeavoured with intrusive curiosity to wring from him an express admission of his real rank. We may say of Marshal Broglie, the governor of the fortress, that he did the very reverse of that which he ought to have done under the circumstances: he allowed his visitor to wait some time in the ante-room, and then addressed him as "your Majesty;" but instead of expressing pleasure at thus unexpectedly receiving the King of Prussia in his house, he entered into a narrative of his own campaign in Italy and the successes of his own

* I have here made use of a paper which Manteuffel composed out of the narratives of Frederick and his companions, under the title of *Anecdotes de Strasbourg*. (Dresden Archives.)

generalship. Then Madame de Broglie made her appearance, and received the King as a princess might receive a common traveller. The Marshal himself even seems to have called to mind his duty as a governor, and to have seriously thought of subjecting the King to some annoyance on account of the insufficiency of his passport.* The King hastened to quit the frontiers of France, where he at least had not found the social culture which he had expected.

Meanwhile the negotiations at Versailles, or rather at Compiègne, where the French court was then staying, did not lead to the results which he had expected.

Cardinal Fleury, who had received with self-satisfied pleasure the flattering expressions contained in the King's letter,† and had met the first proposals made by Camas, with only a few trifling objections, which seemed easy enough to get over, soon began to give less favourable answers. The Cardinal possessed a singular talent for carrying out some particular line of policy in his own way; but his faculty did not so much lie in taking account of any new circumstances which might cross his path. He expressed some astonishment at finding that the young monarch was not better satisfied with conditions which had contented his father. The official men, who everywhere exercise considerable influence

* It is said in a later notice, in the despatches of Belleisle in the Paris Archives: M^r de Broglie avoit marqué quelque disposition à le faire arrêter, croyant que ce prince auroit dû s'annoncer publiquement ou simplement se mûnir d'un passeport.

† Camas: Il pesoit les mots et répétoit a voix basse les expressions qui le touchoient le plus.

upon the general course of affairs, were strongly opposed to the terms offered by Prussia. They would not hear a word as to circumstances having changed, asserting that it was only with reference to future times and to the present King that France had made those concessions to the deceased monarch, and had, by so doing, not a little offended its old allies, the Palatine and Bavarian houses. If France went a step further, she would entirely lose the confidence of the Catholic princes.

But Camas and Chambrier, the regular ambassador at the court of France, thought they could discover another motive besides this regard for ancient friendship, for the refusal of the French to grant the terms demanded by Prussia, and one too not easily got over. They thought that the French saw the great advantage they would derive from Düsseldorf and the banks of the Lower Rhine, as a means of crossing the Rhine, in the event of any future war; but in order to serve this purpose, it was clear that it must be kept in the hands of one of the weaker powers, and by no means suffered to fall into those of a strong one.*

The negotiations were not, however, immediately broken off. The Cardinal held out a prospect of some further concessions hereafter: he would endeavour, he said, even to the last drop of his blood, to give the King of Prussia satisfaction; but at the same

* Dans la vue de conserver pour la France sous le nom de l'Electeur palatin ce passage sur le bas Rhin par où il peut aller (le roi) où il voudra sans s'embarrasser de Wesel (Camas, 26th July).

time he repeated that he could not offend a Prince who placed his whole confidence in France, and was guaranteed by her. Camas was convinced that the Cardinal meant nothing by all this, but merely to amuse Prussia with vague promises.

This conduct on the part of France made a deep impression upon Frederick, who at once understood that the policy of the French court was naturally opposed to any increase of the Prussian power on the Rhine, and that he accordingly had nothing to hope from France in that quarter.

A prouder part was reserved to him in the history of the world than could have fallen to his lot by so early and decisive an alliance with France.

He now endeavoured to withdraw from the French alliance without disturbance and without offence, and made serious advances to the English court.

Here Frederick was met by the most eager cordiality. George II. warned him, "as a friend, kinsman, and good neighbour," to enter into no alliance with the French court, which was too deeply engaged with the Rhenish Electors to do anything for him: and indeed under no circumstances could a Protestant hope for any advantage from that quarter. He spoke with a degree of warmth and emotion such as the ambassador had never yet seen in him: and expressed himself as favourably as possible with respect to the Prussian claims upon Berg. Both the German and English ministers designated the English court as that to which the increase of the power of Prussia was least distasteful. These two countries united, might bring about any alliance they could

desire, and would have the determining voice in European affairs.*

During his journey to the Rhine, Frederick II. had avoided going to the Göhrde, where the King of England would have been glad to arrange a meeting. Neither could he be prevailed upon to pass through Hanover on his return from Cleves; a fever which attacked him on his way from Strasburg to Wesel, afforded him a natural excuse; but his communications became more friendly than before.

He expressed the wish that some minister of weight and trust should be sent to Prussia, to treat with him as to the conclusion of a closer alliance. But he insisted upon two conditions beforehand: first, that England should guarantee him advantages commensurate to his services; and secondly, that she should obtain other allies. He likewise reproached the English ministers with following no settled plan in the conduct of their own affairs.

George II. assured him that Denmark, Holland, and the Emperor would side with England, and that if Prussia joined them, other powers would follow her example. He promised that in a short time an English ambassador, such as the King desired, should proceed to Berlin.

Moreover, Frederick, immediately after his accession, entered into negotiations with Russia.

* Truchsess, 2nd July. Harrington says to him: qu'il n'étoit pas raisonnable de croire, que l'agrandissement des états de V. M. puisse causer de la jalousie à l'Angleterre, que ces deux puissances réunies pourroient être sûres de leur fait à l'égard d'autres alliances qu'ils pourroient trouver convenables; qu'ils joueroient sûrement alors le plus grand rôle dans l'Europe.

Each government was reluctant to make the first proposals to the other. At length both were struck with the thought of reverting to the scheme of a treaty which had been drawn up during the reign of Frederick William, but never carried into effect, owing to the excitement.

The greatest difficulty lay in the claim made by Prussia upon Juliers and Berg.

Frederick II. now wished, as his father had done before, to have the guarantee of Russia to this succession. The Russian ministers answered, that to give this was beyond their power, seeing that the matter concerned the German Empire, and they were afraid of drawing upon themselves the displeasure of the Saxon court, or that of the Emperor, to whom Russia had always refused a similar guarantee: but they professed their readiness to declare that they had never yet entered into any obligations unfavourable to Prussia, nor would they enter into any such.

This declaration satisfied the King. His confidence in the Russian government was increased by their refusal to enter into guarantees, which they possibly would not be able to keep concerning lands so distant and so completely belonging to the German Empire; but he had yet another wish.

Resolved, if necessary, to make good his claim upon Berg by force of arms, Frederick's only fear was, that in the event of a war eastern Prussia would be attacked by Sweden, and perhaps by Poland, the old allies of France; he required that Russia should pledge herself to defend that province.*

* The first proposal was, that Russia should either guarantee

Russia had an objection to urge against this scheme. She was unwilling to name the powers against which she was to defend the province of eastern Prussia;* but at last she consented to give a promise by which this objection was obviated. She pledged herself in general terms to assist Prussia with a subsidiary force of 12,000 men, and Prussia promised a like number of troops in her turn.

The distance between the two countries, and the slowness of communication, caused some delay in concluding this treaty; but all the terms were settled by the month of October, 1740, just at the time when Frederick II. withdrew from the French alliance and entered into closer correspondence with England.

And as Russia had now closely allied herself with England,—chiefly in order to prevent Sweden from attempting, with the aid of France, to seize the old ~~Russian~~^{Swedish} possessions of Livonia on the one side, and Bremen and Verden on the other,—circumstances

him, or that, in the event of a march of troops, or a war about this succession, she should bind herself to defend Prussia in the rear against Saxon-Poland and Sweden;—(31st July) the King finally agreed to the latter: Resolution for Mardefeld in St. Petersburg: Wesel, 7th Sept., “soll blos suchen zu erhalten, dass sie im Fall eines Krieges Preussen den Rücken sicher halten wollen.”—(You are only to endeavour to obtain that in the event of a war she should protect Prussia in the rear.) He moreover wished to take some light cavalry, e. g. Cossacks, into his pay.

* The Duke of Curland agreed to this on the 1st Oct.: qu'er cas de guerre et quand après la mort de l'El' Palatin on voudrait faire des diversions à V. M. dans ses états, la Russie lui tiendre le dos libre contre tous ceux, qui voudroient l'attaquer, mais principalement contre la Saxe, la Suede et la Pologne etc. Ostermann wished to see the three names avoided.

appeared favourable to the conclusion of a grand alliance with England rather than with France.*

The King likewise entered into negotiations with Austria, and was met by a great show of cordiality. The ambassador extraordinary, Count Münchow, who had been sent to Vienna to announce Frederick's accession, had been received with the greatest distinction, especially by the Empress, who saw in Frederick II. a member of the family of Brunswick, as well as by the Duke of Lorraine, who had not forgotten his first meeting with the Prussian monarch in Berlin, where a friendship had been formed between them. Every one praised the manner in which the young King had commenced his reign.

There was one great political maxim on which both courts seemed to be agreed. Frederick gave the Austrian ministers credit for enough penetration to perceive that no alliance was more necessary to the Emperor than that of Prussia. He instructed his envoy to say all that could be said on the advantages of a good understanding between Austria and Prussia. The imperial ministers confessed, that of all the means that could be devised to restore the imperial court to its pristine splendour, the most important of all was the friendship and alliance of the King of Prussia.†

* The King, who was exceedingly averse to a French alliance, writes thus to Podewils on 22nd Sept.: *Je crois de mes intérêts d'éviter avec soin une nouvelle alliance avec la France qui en retireroit tous les fruits.*

† Frederick to Borcke, 12th July. *Vous ne manquerez pas de cultiver au dernier possible les bonnes intentions, où ces deux ministres (according to Borcke's account, Bartenstein and Sinzendorf) se trouvent envers moi : la succession de Juliers et de*

But when the current business came to be discussed, much misunderstanding arose between the two powers.

The court of Vienna threw obstacles in the way of the King of Prussia, when he attempted to enlist soldiers in the free imperial cities. Frederick insisted upon his right as Elector, and demanded that the orders given against the exercise of this privilege should be rescinded. Besides this, Prussia had old outstanding pecuniary claims against the Emperor and against Holland, formerly paid by tolls on the Meuse. Frederick complained that whenever he urged his claim for payment, he was referred from one power to the other; meanwhile the sum due to him increased like a snowball. He now demanded in explicit terms the settlement of this question.

But the real touchstone of the possibility of a better understanding, was the great question of the succession of Berg and Juliers, and this the King lost no time in raising. He inquired what assistance he might expect from the Emperor in the assertion of his just rights. The answer he received was a mere string of evasive and unmeaning formulas, and Frederick was soon as fully convinced as his father had once been, that he should never obtain anything from Austria by gentle means. One reason for this he beheld in the connexion between the Emperor and France, which latter power gave the tone in this affair—the other, in old political jealousy. Frederick was not a man likely to imagine that more

Bergue sera la pierre de touchie, où je pourrai connaitre la sincerité de leurs sentimens envers moi.

would be done to exalt his house for his sake than for that of his ancestors.*

On the other hand, it was not long before he showed, on occasion of the disturbances at Heristal, that he was quite capable of helping himself.

This was the first affair in which Frederick showed what he was, and displayed the difference between his views and actions, and those of his father. We must be allowed to devote particular attention to this point.

Heristal,—so renowned as the spot where Charlemagne, as well as his ancestors and his successors had oftentimes assembled that army which gave the law to western Europe,—after having frequently changed hands during the course of ages, at length, in the eighteenth century, passed from the house of Orange to that of Brandenburg, which nowhere encountered greater difficulties than in making good its claim to this succession.

This arose from the following cause: the immediate holding from the Empire, claimed by the possessors of this property, was not recognised, or at any rate was greatly infringed by their neighbours, the Duke of Brabant and the Bishop of Liege, who indeed had once divided this district between them.

When Frederick William, in virtue of his compact with the house of Orange, succeeded to this inheritance in the year 1732, his first endeavour was to obtain possession of the administration of justice;

* 22nd Aug.: que la maison d'Autriche dut avoir changé de principe—et qu'elle voulut plus facilement se prêter à mon agrandissement, qu'elle n'a fait à l'égard de mes ancêtres.

and he appointed justices who were to pay him a certain sum in recognition of his rights. But neither the court of Liege nor of Brussels, nor yet the inhabitants of Heristal themselves, chose to admit a power which they looked upon as usurping and tyrannical. The courts of law, urged by the inhabitants of Heristal, prosecuted the justices "in their lives, their bodies, their substance, and their blood," until the latter gave way, and ceased to pay the promised recognition to their lawful master, the King of Prussia. Hereupon the bishop exercised all the functions of government; for instance, he remitted the fines imposed by the Prussian high-bailiff (drost) for neglect in repairing the high roads. He expressly declared that this district was as completely subject to his jurisdiction as any other part of his see. Some excesses committed by a Prussian recruiting-party brought all the mining population of the coal district on the bishop's side, and in a short time no Prussian soldier dared show himself in the country. The collectors of the royal rents ceased to render any account to the war-office, and to the office of royal domains at Cleves, to which they had been referred. An advocate of Liege, named Defawes, had far greater influence throughout the district than all the officers of the lord of the soil put together.*

* The Acts of Heristal in the Royal State Archives, comprehend 20 vols., and deserve to be carefully studied. The event is so far interesting in that it represents the conflict between a lord of the soil holding directly from the Empire, and the nobility of the province, under very peculiar circumstances. The imperial court recognised as such the *jura eminentiora* of the sovereign lord; these are, the control over the courts of law, and over the regalia

With all his energy, Frederick William was totally unable to put an end to these disorders, or to establish his authority in the province. He much wished to exchange this district for some other portion of the territory of Liege, which lay nearer to his possessions in Cleves; but in this he was opposed by the bishop and by the provincial estates of Liege, who had greater power on the spot than the King of Prussia. Contrary as it was to his fundamental maxims, he at last felt inclined to offer this territory for sale. But even in this case the Estates insisted upon a condition to which he could not possibly agree. Instead of paying him the purchase money which he had consented to take, a sum of 100,000 pattacons, or 18,750*l.*; they wanted to fund it, and only to pay him the interest, on the plea that there were other claimants who might hereafter make good their claims to the succession. This was, in fact, an insinuation that the right of Prussia to this property—a right which had been settled by treaties after so much labour and trouble,—was essentially defective. The King refused these terms with indignation, but it is evident that the negotiation and the projected sale of his rights, could not tend to increase his consideration. It is true he was told that

in minerals and rights of water. But Liege claimed the appellations in civilibus, the control of the police and the revenue from taxation, but more especially the sovereignty: the Emperor, as Duke of Brabant, guaranteed these to the Bishop of Liege. According to the expressions of his minister at the diet of Nov., 1737, the Bishop of Liege recognised the weight of the Prussian claims, but demanded of the Emperor the promised eviction.—The authority of the Emperor as such appears to have been limited and restrained by his quality of Duke of Brabant.

he might make his rebellious subjects feel the effects of his power in this matter; that a few hundred men would suffice to bring them to their senses, and that it would be easy to force the Bishop of Liege to a compromise by reprisals in the countships of Hoorn and Looz. But Frederick William and his ministers could not be induced to follow this advice; he dreaded the opposition he should have to encounter from the warlike provincial militia, and still more the annoyances which a breach of the public peace might entail upon him at the imperial court.

Thus then everything relating to this question was in the utmost disorder and confusion when Frederick II. ascended the throne. Of all the affairs laid before him for decision, it was, in fact, the first requiring immediate and decisive settlement.

Thulemeier, one of his father's oldest ministers, advised Frederick to submit to what was inevitable, to receive the province in fief from the courts of Brussels and Liege, to confirm the privileges of the subjects, and to recal the high bailiff, of whose conduct they complained.

But this was opposed by the officers who had been employed in the disurbed district—by von Kreyzen, the high bailiff, and the privy councillor Rambonnet. They brought precedents to prove that former lords of the soil had never tolerated such invasions of their rights as those which had now taken place. They declared that the right of holding in fief immediately from the Empire was made perfectly clear by the documents in which it was vindicated; and, moreover, that a King of Prussia could not, under any circum-

stances, submit to resign rights which had been asserted by a Prince of Orange.

Frederick said that he would try gentle means first. If these failed, he should know how to do himself justice.* He could not endure the mixture of interminable legal proceedings, with the varying questions of political expediency, nor the total absence of justice which arose from this state of things, and for which there was no remedy. He was determined to take no heed of the Emperor, who as Duke of Brabant had interests hostile to his own in this matter. The Emperor, he said, might once have been formidable; but he was now humbled by France, and was a mere phantom—a powerless idol.

But the impossibility of obtaining anything in Heristal or Liege by fair means, soon became apparent. The inhabitants refused to take the oath of allegiance, unless the King first received the province in fief from the two feudal courts, thus abandoning his right of immediate holding from the Empire. They even demanded that the privileges of the province should be secured by the alleged feudal lords against their lawful sovereign.

The King did not take this so much amiss in his misguided subjects, as in the bishop who led them as he chose.

* In the manifesto drawn up at Wesel by the King himself, but the terms of which were softened down in the copy made by the Secretary of State, he says: *n'ayant donc aucun autre moyen d'avoir justice, qu'en se la faisant soi meme, et le roi étant assez grand prince pour pouvoir se l'administrer, il fera sentir au prince de Liège tout le tort qu'il a eu d'abuser si indignement de sa moderation.*

The bishopric of Liege was at that time held by Louis, a younger son of the house of Berghe. In former days at Brussels, he had filled a very humble station; but since he had attained to the high dignity of Bishop of Liege and Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, he had displayed so much the more pride. He delighted in making his neighbours of ancient princely descent feel the importance and power of a Bishop of Liege, by raising the tolls on the Meuse, and the import duties: for example, those on iron from Luxemburg, and the like. He is reported to have said, that he would take care to protect "his subjects" in Heristal against any aggression on the part of Prussia. According to Frederick, the Bishop had not only purposely fomented the rebellion, but had wrongfully imprisoned Prussian officers, refused to give audience to a royal ambassador, and, in short, insulted the Prussian name.* It was not, said he, so much a question of law between them, as a personal quarrel to be settled, prince against prince.

On the 7th of September, 1740, the Prussian privy councillor Rambonnet appeared in Liege to ask the Prince-bishop, whether it was his intention to persist in the claims to the sovereignty of Heristal which he had hitherto asserted, without a shadow of right, and whether he designed to assist the King's rebellious subjects in that province: Rambonnet required a categorical answer within two days. The

* The minister claimed the *lex talionis*: "on seroit bien a plaindre, si on devoit se laisser insulter impunement par chaque voisin sans oser réprimer la violence par la violence." (30th Sept.)

Prince-bishop answered, that in so short a space of time he could not even summon his council; moreover, that as a prince of the Empire he was not used to be treated in this manner.

Hereupon the King no longer hesitated to take the step which his father had never been able to resolve upon. He at once ordered Major-general Bork to advance into the territory of Hoorn, subject to the see of Liege, with twelve companies of grenadiers, a squadron of dragoons, and the necessary complement of artillery. Frederick disdained—as some had advised him—to seize a certain number of the magnates of the land as hostages for the conduct of the rebels: he was simply determined to make the Prince-bishop feel that he had to deal with a powerful monarch. In the manifesto which he then published, he declared that no other means were left to him of regaining his just rights: as a mighty Prince of the Empire and a King, he could not allow himself to be insulted with impunity. When his troops took possession of Maseyk, they levied a contribution of 20,000 thalers, or 3000*l.*, on the estates of the Prince-bishop, and demanded to be supplied with rations and quarters. The general fixed a term of eight and forty hours for the answer to this demand, especially as to the latter part.

The city of Liege was thrown into the greatest commotion when Baron Horion, the Land-drost or governor of the territory of Hoorn, arrived bearing this intelligence. Within an hour estafettes galloped off in all directions: the provincial diets were immediately summoned, and sat by night to discuss the

situation of affairs. It was at first proposed to call out the provincial militia, and to oppose force by force. But the assembly reflected how dangerous it would be to place arms in the hands of a people so turbulent, and so disaffected to the government of the Prince-bishop of Liege. They therefore thought it better to undertake the maintenance of the Prussian troops as demanded, and to endeavour to effect a speedy compromise with the powerful monarch.*

By the 31st of October several delegates from Liege had reached Berlin, to renew the former negotiation touching the sale of the territory in question.

The King said that he had no intention of making use of his power for any purpose beyond the vindication of his just rights: that as soon as the honour of Prussia had been vindicated, he was perfectly ready to make peace;—the purchase in question was then concluded without further difficulty.

Liege agreed to pay 200,000 thalers, or 30,000*l.*, for the territory of Heristal, a sum somewhat larger than had formerly been fixed. From this was, however, deducted the sum of 20,000 thalers, or 3000*l.*, which had already been paid in the shape of a contribution. Sundry old outstanding claims of Prussia against the bishopric of Liege, which were reckoned to amount to 80,000 thalers, or 12,000*l.*, were likewise included in this payment.

* Report to the King: *Crainte des consequences, entre autres pour le gouvernement Liégeois de la part des sujets mêmes cette opinion pour une guerre a dû céder à l'opinion pour une guerre de plume.*

The delegates of the Prince-bishop were not dissatisfied with this arrangement. One of them, Baron Horion, said to the French ambassador, that sooner or later the purchase must have taken place. They expressed their joy that the matter was thus brought to a conclusion.

No little satisfaction was felt at Berlin that Prussia had at length shown that she would not tamely submit to injury, and had given a convincing proof of firmness and decision.

Meanwhile, the imperial privy-councillor had received the complaint, which had in the very beginning been urged by the Prince-bishop of Liege against the breach of the public peace on the part of Prussia; the manifesto which the King had drawn up with his own hand, was denounced in an imperial decree as proceeding from "hot-headed, ignorant, and self-seeking counsellors:" and the affair had been brought before the imperial diet. But now that Liege had concluded a peace, this proceeding on the part of the imperial privy-councillor could have no other effect than to irritate the King of Prussia.*

Frederick had imagined that the imperial court would not be displeased at seeing the Prince-bishop of Liege, who was troublesome to the Emperor as well, receive a check. He was astonished to find the matter regarded in so serious a light, and he hinted to the Austrian ambassador that this occurrence

* Podewils, 25th Oct. La mauvaise intention de malveillants est allée principalement à inspirer de la défiance à tous les états de l'empire contre V Mé et les desseins secrets, qu'on lui attribue.

showed him what he might expect from the friendship of the court of Vienna in any more important affair.

Accordingly he determined, whenever the succession to the duchy of Berg should fall in, to obtain justice for himself in a similar manner, without reference to the courts of Vienna or Paris. In October he caused entrenchments to be thrown up at Bürich, within which a certain number of regiments of foot and some squadrons of horse would be able to maintain themselves for some time, and to await the arrival of the whole army.

But at this very moment an event occurred which opened a new field, and gave a new direction to his energy and talents. It was not the Palatine, but the Austrian succession which now became vacant.

CHAPTER IV.

ORIGIN OF THE ATTACK UPON SILESIA.

ON the 1st of October, 1740, Charles VI. completed his fifty-sixth year, apparently in perfect health. To celebrate the Emperor's birthday, a little opera was sung, in which the young Archduchess Maria Theresa bore a part, and was much admired. No one then thought in how short a time she would have to appear in a very different character, and to display far different talents.

The Emperor's vital powers were, however, broken; his mind was even more impaired than his body. He had never complained aloud of the misfortunes which had visited him during the latter years of his reign, but they had shaken him to the core; all the more deeply, because they had been brought upon him by enterprises which were entirely his own work.* The schemes of reform proposed by his ministers came too late, and threatened him with fresh fatigue and embarrassment; he was overpowered by weariness and disgust, and felt that he could effect nothing more. A slight illness which attacked him during hunting, apparently without cause, ended in death

* Borcke : il avait avalé tous les chagrins de ses dernières années, sans jamais s'en plaindre,—mais ils lui avaient rongé le cœur.

within a few days. Charles VI. died early in the morning of the 20th of October, 1740.

He was the last male descendant of that German princely house which had raised itself above all the rest to the highest power in the world, and which produced many energetic and ambitious, some thoughtful and proud, and some refined and noble natures. These characteristics appeared most strongly marked in the two emperors who stood on the confines of the middle ages and of modern times—in Maximilian and Charles V. The former, untiring in enterprise, chivalrous, and mysterious in his proceedings, prepared the way for his successor, who, by the union of Italy and Spain with Germany, and of another continent with Spain, carried out his grandfather's plans to an extent which the latter had never even conceived possible, although not nearly so far as he himself desired. Round these two figures all the earlier and later princes may be grouped, according to their several natures and ideas: a common vein runs through all great races. The likeness of their members to each other, altogether different from that which prevails among contemporaries, forms a remarkable chapter in history. For five centuries these Habsburgers acquired, conquered, and maintained these possessions; set the world in motion by means of a peculiar combination of power and of religion, which they formed out of the imperial dignity during the epoch of the religious wars; their stubborn tenacity, varied by slight occasional yielding, their voluntary endurance and violent subversions, had enabled them to exercise decisive influence. But now that these times

were at an end, and that totally different tendencies had begun to govern the world, the epoch of the house of Habsburg was over. The last male descendant of both lines was gathered to his fathers.

Once before, during the reign of the Emperor Charles V., the German princes had contemplated the possibility of this great succession falling vacant. Their choice had raised the Archducal house of Austria to the imperial dignity. At the discussion as to whether this dignity should be made hereditary in that family—in the Spanish as well as in the German branch—the expectation was cherished and expressed, that in the event of the extinction of the male line, all the territories held by the house of Austria, including Spain and the Indies, would be united with the Empire, which still bore the name Roman, and would be given in fief to the German princes and electors.*

The old German princes and their counsellors at times conceived the most daring projects. Most of the other European thrones had fallen to the share of German princely houses, and they expected the

* In a paper called *gütliche Mittel von 1546*—(pacific measures of 1546): *das so sich der Fall zutrüge, das das Haus Oestreich an manlich Leibeserben gar absterb, das alsdann alle ihre Kunigreich und Furstentumb auch dem hayligen Remischen Reych und Keyserthumb heimfallen—und den teutschen Churfürsten und Fürsten verliehen werden sollt.*—(Should the event occur that the male heirs of the house of Austria become extinct, all their kingdoms and principalities should fall to the Holy Roman Empire—and be given in fief to the German electors and princes.) Compare *Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, vol. VI. p. 396.

same thing to happen with regard to Spain, the two Sicilies, and South America; meanwhile the confederative power of the Empire, which arose out of the intimate connexion between the most powerful families and their supreme head, and with which perfect freedom of individual developement was quite consistent, would gain an enormous accession of strength.

But the course pursued by the Council of Trent, under the guidance of Philip II., put an end to these projects, even in Germany. The Spanish line was induced, by the position it held in Europe, to enter into family alliances with Portugal, Savoy, its cousins of the German branch, but more especially with France. Affairs in the end took a totally different turn. Spain and the Indies fell to the share of the Bourbons, who then conceived the idea of getting possession, either by war or marriage, of the Italian provinces; the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, at any rate, fell under their sway.

Now, however, the German line was likewise extinct. The event, so long foreseen and expected, upon which the politics of Europe had of late turned, now took place.

The German branch of the house of Austria had formed alliances from time to time with some of the princely houses of Germany. We have already alluded to the plans to which the marriages of the daughters of the elder brother of the Emperor Joseph I. into the houses of Bavaria and Saxony, had given rise in Europe. Negotiations had for some time been going on, especially on the part of France, as to the scheme of setting up their rights of succes-

sion against those of Maria Theresa. A project was entertained of satisfying her claims by part of Italy, and of dividing Hungary, Bohemia, and the German territories between Saxony and Bavaria.

Moreover, the house of Bavaria had an old hereditary claim to compensation for important services rendered in former times.

During the religious wars of the sixteenth century it appeared likely at one moment that the Protestants would have a majority of voices in the electoral college; and the position of the Emperor Charles V., and of the house of Austria generally, was seriously threatened. In this peril, out of which arose the Smalcaldic war, it was of the greatest advantage to the Archducal house of Austria to gain over Bavaria to its side. The war would have had a very different termination had not the house of Austria succeeded in this attempt so quickly and secretly as it actually did.

As a reward for this service, the succession to the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria—namely, Bohemia and its dependencies, together with Hungary—was made over to the house of Bavaria, in the event of a failure of male heirs in the Austrian family. The renunciation signed by the Archduchess Anne on her marriage into the Bavarian family, was to be cancelled, if the heirs male of her father and her uncle died leaving no sons.* It is another ques-

* Treaty of the 19th June, 1546, founded on a previous treaty of the 22nd April, 1535, by which the right of primogeniture was established in Bavaria. Compare Stumpf, *Baierns politische Geschichte*, 146.

tion whether the claims of all subsequent female heirs were thereby excluded. The will of the Emperor Ferdinand I., who signed the agreement, does not refer in nearly such express terms to the failure of heirs male, and the court of Munich was wrong in giving it that interpretation. Fortunately, however, the historian is not bound to determine doubtful points of law; the assumption of a right to decide in such cases would only interfere with his impartiality. It is enough for him, if he perceives that some foundation exists for the claim advanced, and that he who raises it is convinced of the justice of his own cause; and this was, undoubtedly, the case with Charles Albert, Elector of Bavaria. During the last few months which preceded the Emperor's death, Charles Albert earnestly reminded him of the claims he had upon the succession. He expressed his opinion that Ferdinand I., who must be considered as the first founder, had substituted the heirs of his daughter Anne, in the event of the failure of his own heirs male, and he demanded to see the testament which contained this substitution; he asserted that Charles VI. had no right to dispose of a succession which had been burthened for two hundred years with a settlement, and denied the legality of the Pragmatic Sanction.

We have seen how this family statute originated, and how it was recognised in the different districts, and subsequently by the European powers; not indeed because Maria Theresa's claim was generally
x looked upon as the most just, but from political
x motives, arising either out of the negotiations which

had taken place, or from the conviction that a monarchy like that of Austria was essential to the preservation of the balance of power in Europe.

Spite of all that had been concluded, there were many who still believed that the question was not definitively settled. It was remarked with astonishment, that in the last treaties the claims of Bavaria were not expressly mentioned. No one believed that Charles Albert would have brought his claim so prominently forward, were he not assured of assistance from France; and, in fact, the chief reason for maintaining the Austrian monarchy in its integrity was, that it should continue to exercise its old calling as the steady opponent to French domination. France could have no stronger interest than to get rid of such a rival. The conviction was naturally very general that an European war would be the consequence. The Venetian ambassador Niccolo Erizzo ends his report of the negotiations for the settlement of the succession with the remark, that it was but too certain that, spite of all the measures which had been taken, a grievous tragedy would be played after the Emperor's death.* Another said that the rise of the house of Austria had cost much blood to Christendom; its fall might cost still more.

It often happens that interested parties judge events most correctly at the moment in which a vague perception of the general posture of affairs first presents itself to the mind; thus, immediately after

* In qualunque maniera succedendo la morte dell' imperatore senza maschi può pur troppo tenersi con fondamento che grande sarà la tragedia che si aprirà in tal caso.

the Emperor's death, the Austrian ministers were deeply impressed with the conviction that they were about to encounter a violent and formidable aggression. They saw in their mind's eye, says the English ambassador, Hungary attacked by the Turks, Austria by the Bavarians, Bohemia by the Saxons, the Hungarians up in arms, and France at the bottom of all.

There can be no doubt that Charles Albert had friends and adherents in Austria. The higher nobility wished to satisfy his claims, either by a marriage between his son and the younger Archduchess, or perhaps by a cession of territory; but the common people, who, owing to the high price of provisions and the oppressions they suffered from the game-laws, were in a state of violent excitement, wished for the Elector of Bavaria to put an end to the present government altogether, and to found a new dynasty.

The Elector assumed the air of one who had an undoubted right to the inheritance. He caused funeral obsequies to be performed for the deceased Emperor, as to "a brother in the Empire;" and desired the Lord Marshal of Lower Austria to suffer no act of allegiance to be performed that should run counter to the rights of the Bavarian house.

But the daughter of the Emperor was threatened by another danger which had not been considered. This did not arise out of any claim to the inheritance of the house of Austria, but was, nevertheless, destined to prove the most pressing of all. It arose from the estrangement, almost amounting to

hostility, that had subsisted for several years between the courts of Vienna and of Berlin.

No one will maintain that one power is bound to abide by a treaty which the other contracting party has infringed, no matter from what cause.

Frederick William of Prussia had acknowledged the Pragmatic Sanction, and had done more than any other prince towards effecting its recognition. But he had not done this without exacting advantageous terms for himself in return, and, as we know, had secured the promise of the duchy of Berg and its provisional possession, guaranteed according to the forms of the Empire: the moderation of his demands, when compared with the weight of the engagements he took upon himself, seemed to him to ensure their fulfilment. No one in Vienna could doubt the effect that would be produced if he were not satisfied. At the very beginning of the negotiation, in October, 1726, General Seckendorf warned his court that if it succeeded in its object, but subsequently neglected to fulfil its engagements with Prussia in regard to Berg, the present friendship would be turned into deadly hate. This very thing now happened. It were needless to enumerate the motives which urged the court of Vienna to this step; for no one forfeits his word without a cause. It is sufficient that Austria considered the treaty as no longer binding, and proceeded to bestow the provisional possession of the duchy of Berg in a manner different from that which she had promised. The consequences predicted by Seckendorf immediately followed. In the whole correspondence between Frederick William and his son, there is but

one letter containing any allusion to politics, and this refers to the subject of Berg. The King says, that he now sees how the house of Austria rewards services already rendered: there was no use in sacrificing himself for Austria: "As long as they want us, so long do they flatter us; but when they think that they have no further need of us, they know no gratitude." He exhorts his son to take better care of himself under similar circumstances. Frederick was all the more deeply impressed by this confirmation of the distrust he had always felt towards Austria, as it came from his father, whose convictions had hitherto been so opposed to his own. There was no question of hatred or personal vengeance, but both father and son were by nature in the highest degree ambitious, and unwilling to subject themselves to neglect and scorn. As the former friendship was at an end, there was now, at any rate, nothing to hinder the revival of the claims which Brandenburg had of old against Austria. These claims were far more important than those upon the duchy of Berg, and concerned no small portion of Silesia.

Although we already have a general knowledge of these claims, we must at this point give some further account of them.

An important part had once been played in Silesia by a Margrave of Brandenburg of the electoral line, who after some hesitation had been formally recognised as Duke of Jägerndorf by the kings of Bohemia of the Habsburg race, and had taken his place and voted at the Silesian assembly of princes.

In the year 1611, the Margrave, as one of the four princes of the land, received the oath from King Matthias, to whom he in turn swore allegiance at the royal castle of Breslau. As, during the disturbances which subsequently broke out, the Margrave took part with Frederick, Elector Palatine, who had been called to the throne of Bohemia by the estates, he was involved in that Prince's misfortunes. But the whole electoral branch of the house of Brandenburg did not on that account forfeit its right to a succession which, as we have seen, it had already inherited; and although it was deprived of these possessions during the subsequent wars, Austria, in the year 1636, and many times since, acknowledged that she owed compensation to the house of Brandenburg for territories, which meanwhile had been bestowed on others, from whom they could not be taken away. But Brandenburg was not disposed to remit its claims for money. It had lost territory and subjects, besides a legitimate influence over a neighbouring province; losses which no payment in money could compensate: its authority and position in the world were likewise diminished.

The power of the house of Brandenburg would indeed have been prodigiously increased, if, on the extinction of the family of Piast, it had inherited the duchies of Liegnitz, Brieg, and Wohlau, according to the treaty of succession between the houses of Brandenburg and Piast. The Jagellonian Kings and Dukes had conceded to these Princes the express privilege of disposing by will and upon their death-bed, as they and their heirs should see fit, of their towns, lands,

and subjects, together with all their revenues, over which certain ancient rights gave them absolute control during their lifetime. The treaty in question had been made on the strength of this privilege, which had been confirmed and rendered valid by seal and sign manual, long before the house of Austria obtained possession of the Bohemian throne, and of the supreme dukedom of Silesia. This treaty King Ferdinand refused to recognise.

The real question was, whether this monarch had a right to refuse his sanction in this matter or not. His position must not be judged according to the practice of later times, or the ordinary precedents of German duchies; but with reference to the relations subsisting between the possessors of Silesia, belonging to the old family of Piast, and the Duke, whom they had chosen as their head.

As we have before observed, the historian is not called upon to set himself up as a judge in disputed points of law. But no one can deny that the house of Brandenburg acted in good faith, and had a well-founded claim.

Moreover, it was not by legal decisions, but by events influencing the fate of Europe—by great battles, that the cause of Brandenburg had been lost. In consequence of the battle of Mühlberg, the Dukes of Liegnitz had been forced to renounce the treaty of succession with Brandenburg: the battle of the Weisser Berg (white mountain) enabled the Emperor to confiscate Jägerndorf.

Brandenburg had not, however, definitively submitted to this decision by the force of arms.

We have already described the compromise into which, during a great political crisis, the Elector Frederick William entered, against the advice of his ministers, who desired better terms. We likewise know that the acceptance of the compromise by Austria was a mere feint, and that the compensation then granted was afterwards withdrawn, whereby all the old claims of Prussia were revived, and the whole question was again left open.

Since then, though the subject was seldom mentioned, it was never forgotten by Prussia.

In the year 1713, immediately after the accession of Frederick William I., Cardinal Schönborn went to Berlin to treat concerning the contingent to be furnished by Prussia. The Cardinal gave the King to understand, that if he would send more troops than he was bound to furnish, the imperial court was prepared to grant a reasonable compensation. Hereupon Ilgen asked whether it was to consist in territory. At court every one was fully persuaded that he meditated the recovery of Schwiebus at least, and the ambassadors sought to inform themselves on these questions.*

We likewise learn from a letter written by Prince Eugene, in the year 1719, that the court of Vienna,—whether informed by letter or by word of mouth,—took for granted, that in the event of the extinction of the male branch of the Austrian family, Prussia intended to renew her old claims.

* *L'histoire secrète dit, que celui-ci (Ilgen) doit avoir insinué au roi de Prusse, qu'il falloit tâcher a cette occasion rattraper le pais Schwiebus que Mr. Dankelmann selon Mr. Ilgen avoit aliéné par des vues particulières. (Lettre de Manteuffel, 19 Avril 1713, in the Dresden archives.)*

At all events, Ilgen let slip no opportunity of recalling them to the mind of Frederick William I. At times, when the two courts were on bad terms, and when all the old grievances of Prussia were recapitulated, he would enter into a detailed and angry discussion on the matter. Or again, he would mention it incidentally, while standing with the King over the fire discoursing of the future prospects of the house of Brandenburg. Ilgen mentions a conversation of this kind in a memorial of the year 1725. But neither the minister nor the King ever thought of attempting to wrest Silesia from the house of Austria by force; this they looked upon as impossible. It appeared to them more easy and expedient to induce Austria to recognise their claims to compensation, by rendering services to her, whenever the contest with regard to the Austrian succession might break out.

Recent experience, however, had taught Prussia that nothing was to be obtained from Austria by fair means or by treaties, even in a matter of no importance whatever to its own individual power; still less then could it be hoped in a case which involved very considerable loss.

Strangely enough, Frederick was again reminded of his claims upon Silesia in another way. Shortly before the Emperor's death, an Austrian agent applied to Frederick for a loan, offering the part of Silesia nearest to Prussia as security. The ministers mentioned on this occasion, that this was the identical district out of which Frederick's ancestors had formerly been driven.

The House of Brandenburg continued to entertain a strong conviction that a great portion of Silesia rightfully belonged to it. This had become an axiom with the statesmen who served these princes, the truth of which they never for a moment doubted.

An angry recollection of recent disputes was mixed in Frederick's mind with a vague, but strong sense of the ancient rights which had been snatched from his house, and with the conviction that it was only by the recovery of these rights that he could become a truly powerful King. And when the death, which had given rise to so many discussions beforehand, really occurred, and altered all the political relations of the Empire and even of Europe, Frederick was young, eager for action, ambitious of a great name, and at the head of an almost irresistible army. On the 28th of October, the news of the Emperor's death reached Rheinsberg. It is said that Frederick turned pale when he heard it; he felt that this was the call of destiny.

On all other accounts, especially as every thing connected with Berg remained as before, Frederick really wished for peace. He had projected the revival of his Anti-Machiavel, during the long quiet winter evenings; he likewise intended to establish a good French theatre for the performance of tragedy and comedy, and wished, by the addition of a few more eminent men, to increase the society which surrounded him, and which had been joined by Maupertuis during the journey to Cleves. Frederick's personal inclinations are expressed in a letter to Gresset, inviting him to Prussia, and

telling him that there, too, were quiet country dwellings, and men who felt the value of a tranquil and studious life—perhaps the only happy one in the world.* It seems like the irony of fate that Frederick should have thus discoursed in glowing terms on the pleasures of a peaceful retreat, far removed from the pomp of courts and the bustle of cities; where men's minds were solely occupied with the desire of giving and receiving pleasure, and where no ambitious desires could enter;—and that he should immediately afterwards conceive a project fraught with boundless ambition, and destined to fill his whole life with storms and agitation.

Many believed that on the extinction of the Habsburg race, he would attempt to win the imperial dignity for the house of Brandenburg. On receiving the news of the Emperor's death, Prince Leopold of Dessau wrote without circumlocution to Frederick, that "from his whole heart he wished him this elevation, inasmuch as there was no one in Europe who deserved the honour more, or who was better able to support it." This scheme was talked of here and there, even in Berlin. In reply to one of the King's sisters, who represented that the Protestant belief was a complete barrier to any such project, Manteuffel said that this was no objection; that there was no law of the Empire excluding Protestants from the imperial throne. No one can tell whether such a plan could have been attempted and achieved,

* Et l'on connaît, malgré l'embarras des affaires, tout le prix d'une vie tranquille et appliqué peut-être la seule heureuse en ce monde. Remusberg, 24th Oct. (Still unprinted.)

and with what results. Frederick's answer to Prince Leopold of Dessau contained a few words of thanks for his devotion to him, without any allusion to the subject of his letter. With his views and feelings Frederick never could have been Emperor of Germany as then constituted. In the actual state of affairs he only saw a great opportunity for enforcing the claims and rights of his house, and of enlarging and completing his kingdom.

This was what he was called upon to fulfil in the world, and he fully understood his mission. No sooner had he received the news of the Emperor's death, than Frederick formed the firm resolution of seizing upon Silesia. This was a far different object of ambition from the possession of Berg, which, even if acquired undiminished, would not have materially increased his power. We are not aware that he hesitated one moment in the adoption of his plan, or that he took counsel of any one.

But the measures to be taken for the attainment of his ends had to be well considered. For this purpose Frederick summoned to Rheinsberg his two most confidential servants in peace and in war, the minister Podewils and Field-Marshal Schwerin, both men of tried ability, and whose views were most nearly in accordance with his own.

By the 29th October, after hearing the King's confidential statement, they laid before Frederick an opinion on the case, which they had jointly drawn up.*

* This exists in Podewils' handwriting. The docquet runs thus: Dressé et conclité avec son Exc^e le Feld-marechal G^l, Comte de Schwerin a Rheinsberg le 29 Octobre 1740, par ordre du roi.

They had no doubt that Europe would be convulsed in consequence of the Austrian succession; and it appeared to them that two different, or rather, opposite courses were open to Prussia, one of which must of necessity be followed. The King might either join in the attack upon Austria, or, better still, he might undertake her defence. Strange as it may appear to this generation, they were perfectly serious in their second proposal.

Their idea was, that the court of Vienna, seeing itself threatened with complete destruction, would eagerly seize the opportunity of making a compromise with Prussia, as the only means of saving itself. The King might propose to do four things—I. To defend the Austrian hereditary dominions, especially the German possessions and the Low Countries, against all and any aggressors. II. To assist the Duke of Lorraine in gaining the imperial throne. III. To resign the Prussian claims—considerable as they were—upon Juliers and Berg. IV. To advance a subsidy of some millions.—In return for all this he might demand the cession of Silesia as a certain pledge of the gratitude of Austria, and as the price of the assistance afforded and the danger incurred.* This was the old line of policy—to obtain the recognition of his claims by offers of assistance. The young King doubted from the first that the court of Vienna would accede to the scheme; but his two advisers thought it possible, and even likely. The court of

* *Gage assurée de sa reconnaissance et un équivalent proportionné des peines des dépenses et du hazard dont elle veut bien se charger.*

Vienna, they said, must be made fully to understand that the maintenance of its power and supremacy depended upon yielding this point; and it must be convinced that Prussia would combine with the maritime powers and with Russia to reorganise the old system, and to draw the Empire into it. They already began to discuss the means of appeasing the enmity of the Swedes, who were inclined towards France, and with whom Denmark and Saxon-Poland were likely to coalesce. It was essential to form an offensive and defensive alliance, and to make Berlin the centre of its operations.*

This was one series of suggestions. But should the King find this line of conduct unsuccessful, he must, said they, follow a directly opposite course: he must, in that case, ally himself with Bavaria and Saxony, recognise their claims to the Austrian succession, and promise them his assistance, on condition that they should cede to him the possession of Silesia. He must then adopt the views of the French court, which wished to raise the Elector of Bavaria to the imperial dignity: this might be accomplished without much difficulty, as they could secure the majority of votes. France must throw her whole strength into this alliance, and guarantee to Prussia the possession of Silesia. On the other hand, to put an end to all uneasiness on the French frontier, Prussia would resign all her pretensions to Berg in favour of the

* Il faudra faire comprendre à la cour de Vienne et celle de Russie et aux puissances maritimes la nécessité d'une étroite alliance offensive et défensive pour continuer et perfectionner ce système.

Palatine house, which was protected by France. In order to guard against the danger of an attack from Russia, an alliance was to be formed with Denmark and Sweden; and even an understanding with the Ottoman power, through the mediation of France, was not to be rejected.

We now see the drift of Frederick William's former policy in insisting upon nothing so much as perfect liberty of action: it was for the purpose of enabling Prussia to decide according to circumstances, and in conformity with her own interests, in the two great questions then pending; namely, the maritime rivalry between the Bourbons and England, and the continental one between Maria Theresa and her competitors. It seemed as if these two questions would eventually blend into one, and lead to two great European alliances.

There can be no doubt that of the two systems, the ministers very much preferred the first. They said, in the paper they drew up, that the first of the two courses was the most natural, safe, and easy; the second was rugged, difficult, and subject to many great dangers and inconveniences, owing to the wide separation by which the principal allies were divided.*

But whichever of these two courses the King might resolve to pursue, the ministers were all agreed that, first of all, he must take possession of Silesia. A

* Nous avouons franchement, que si la première route nous paroît la plus naturelle la plus solide et la moins dangereuse pour les suites, la seconde ne laisse pas que d'être autant plus rabotteuse sujette à des grandes inconvenients et revers de fortune.

maxim which Frederick William, and, indeed, most of the princes of the Empire, had learned from recent events — was, that the only advantageous manner of carrying on any negotiation, was to begin by exercising the rights to which they laid claim; that only those claims were listened to, which they took measures to carry into effect themselves.

The death of the Emperor put an end to all those obligations by which a prince of the Empire was bound to his supreme head. The union of states belonging to the house of Brandenburg had equal rights and equal power with the union of the hereditary dominions of the house of Austria, bequeathed by the late Emperor to his daughter. There was no reason why they should not appeal to arms to decide the question, which was still unanswered in law, though not in fact; namely, to which of the two a great portion of Silesia belonged, and should henceforth belong. *It*

The chief argument for taking immediate possession of Silesia was that this province might otherwise prove an apple of discord, or be used to compromise the disputes between Maria Theresa and her relations, who were competitors for the Austrian succession. There is no doubt that Saxony entertained schemes of this nature. Long ere this, when the above-mentioned project of a loan was discussed, Saxony wished to take part in it, in the hope of gaining possession of Glogau at all events by mortgage, as a means of strengthening her own connexion with Poland. Immediately after the

death of the Emperor, Saxony endeavoured to enter into negotiation with Vienna, in order to obtain compensation for her claims.* But the Saxon chargé-d'affaires, Siepmann, said, at the very beginning of November, that his court would remain quiet as long as Bavaria did the same: but that if the court of Bavaria took any steps to enforce its rights, Saxony would bestir herself too.†

The court of Berlin could not endure the thought that, in the general confusion which was to be expected, Saxony might take possession of a province upon which Prussia had such strong and undeniable claims. By this means, perhaps, Saxony and Poland would be really united, and the further rise and progress of Prussia completely prevented.

And was Prussia to allow this, we will not say, to happen, but to become possible, when she manifestly wielded the most formidable power? What would succeeding generations have said of Frederick, had he suffered things to take their course without intervention on his part? He felt bound in honour to enforce his claims.

“ I give you,” said he, in one of his letters written at that time to Podewils, “ a problem to solve: when

* 2nd Nov., 1740. Dans le commencement, (i. e. in October, when this alternative was decided upon,) on auroit preferé, de s'accommoder pour quelque petite portion de la Bohème ou de la Silésie.

† Podewils to the King on the 2nd Nov.; so that Siepmann's declaration must have been made on the same or the previous day: “ que dès que la cour de Bavière se remueroit pour faire valoir ses droits, le roi de Pologne ne sauroit s'empêcher d'en faire autant.” Bavaria, as we know, began to move immediately.

a man has an advantage, should he make use of it or not? I have my troops, and everything needful for war, in readiness. If I neglect to use them, I hold in my hands a possession which I know not how to employ. Whereas, on the contrary, if I do make use of my advantage, people will be forced to admit that I know how to profit by my superiority over my neighbours." *

It is worth while, at this stage of the affair, to follow, step by step, the consultations—if such a word can be applied to writings—which were carried on between the King and Podewils upon this subject.

In one of the papers which Frederick sent to Podewils on the 6th of November, he starts with the assumption that he ought not to wait until Saxony or Bavaria should commence hostilities; that the views of the former power especially were directly opposed to his own interests. The house of Brandenburg, he said, had the strongest claims upon Silesia, and he was justified in asserting his own rights: moreover, the rapidity with which he could bring his troops into the field, offered him an immense advantage. Frederick then went on to explain how favourable to himself the

* In Frederick's own words: "Je vous donne un problème à résoudre. Quand on est dans l'avantage, faut il s'en prevaloir ou non? Je suis prêt avec mes troupes et tout. Si je ne m'en prevaux pas, je tiens entre mes mains un bien, dont je méconnois l'usage. Si je m'en prevaux, on dira, que j'ai l'habileté de me servir de la superiorité que j'ai sur mes voisins." There is a postscript in his own handwriting to an order in council of the 1st Nov., containing a direction to wear mourning as long for the Emperor in Berlin as it had been worn in Vienna for the King of Prussia.

state of affairs in Europe then was. The hostility between France and England would enable him to gain over to his side one or other of those two powers. England could have no reason to be jealous of his acquisition of Silesia, seeing that she was in no respect injured by it. But supposing he could not come to any understanding with England, he would, at any rate, be joined by France, who desired nothing more eagerly than the diminution of the power of Austria; Russia was the only country from which Frederick apprehended any opposition to his enterprise. But the fear of being attacked by Sweden, as well as her own internal condition, were sufficient to prevent Russia from attacking him: that country would be fully occupied with her own affairs, whenever the Empress might die. The King finally exhorts Podewils to reply to these assumptions with all the frankness of an honest man.

Podewils, who elsewhere asserts that he had already represented to the King, by word of mouth, all that could be said against the project—though without effect, as the King's ardour for his own views daily increased,—hastened to enumerate several political events and combinations which were possible, and which would throw great difficulties in the way of the execution of the King's schemes. He wrote this letter on the 7th of November, and the King answered him on the same day: their correspondence is very remarkable, although the discussion turns upon merely hypothetical cases.

Podewils asked, in the first place, whether, if the succession to Berg should fall in at that moment,

the King thought he could make good both claims; or whether he would relinquish the succession which he might now look upon as tolerably secure, in order to pursue the more doubtful claim. Frederick answered, that whenever the case occurred, he should order his regiments of Cleves and Westphalia to advance into Berg, and should adhere to the engagements entered into with France.

But what, Podewils then asked, would he do, supposing France were induced by a cession of territory, in the Netherlands, for instance, to take the side of Austria? The King replied, that neither England nor Holland would ever permit any addition to be made to the French territory in that quarter; and that he need not be afraid of France, if the maritime powers were with him.

Podewils did not think it unlikely that Bavaria might be satisfied with the cession, by Austria, of some small territory; the court of Vienna could then easily gain over that of Hanover, and thus the king would be placed between two fires. Frederick remarked that neither was the first to be expected, since Bavaria was really in earnest with her claims; nor yet the second, since Hanover would not stir in the matter, seeing that she needed the assistance of Prussia on other occasions; in case of necessity, however, other neighbours might be employed to hold Hanover in check.

The chief objection which this minister raised, both at that time and previously, was founded upon the peculiar position of the territories of which Prussia was composed, which did not form a single compact state,

like France or Spain, but being separated from each other, were exposed to attack on every side, in the rear, on the flank, nay, even in the very heart of the kingdom.* He considered an attack possible either from Hanover and Saxony, or from Russia and Poland. Frederick displayed a very high estimate of his own power and military force. Should Saxony venture to attack him, she might easily be overpowered. He would leave in Prussia fifty-five squadrons and a sufficient body of infantry to meet any possible contingency; and he could everywhere replace by fresh troops those which he might draw out of the country. He thought that even while he was marching into Silesia, he should still have troops enough left, if necessary, to take possession of Berg, as well as to defend every part of his dominions.

Neither must we think that Podewils was opposed to the King's project. All his words show that he was not only struck, but carried away by the greatness of Frederick's views. In bringing forward his objections, he always says that he purposely looks at the worst side of the whole affair; adding that, under favourable circumstances, a bold and enterprising Prince might disregard considerations by which other men were restrained.

The news which reached the King at this moment made a great impression upon him.

* *La France et l'Espagne, dont l'interieur n'a pas besoin d'être gardé, peut plus facilement entreprendre une grande affaire, qu'une puissance, dont la defense en cas d'attaque affoiblit ses forces, et dont le dos, le flanc, et même le cœur du pays sont exposés en plus d'un endroit.*

The King learnt that Count von Perusa, the Bavarian ambassador, had officially advanced the Elector's claim to the whole of the Emperor's hereditary dominions; and, moreover, that the feeling of the common people was favourable to his pretensions. There were reports that the King of Sardinia was making warlike preparations, though with what precise object was not known: in short, there was a strong impression that a general disturbance was at hand. But the intelligence from Russia was the most important of all.

Frederick's assertion, that the news of the Empress of Russia's death finally confirmed his decision, must not be taken to the letter. Orders had already been issued to the army before this intelligence reached him. The event was known at Berlin on the 9th of November, and on the 8th Frederick had informed his ministers that he had directed the regiments appointed for the enterprise to provide themselves with what horses they wanted, and to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice. No doubt, however, Frederick was greatly encouraged and confirmed in his project by an event which gave him reason to expect that Russia would be too much taken up with her own domestic affairs to interfere with him, or perhaps even that the newly-formed government might be disposed to listen to proposals from Prussia. Everything seemed to coincide in favour of his views. "God is with us," he once exclaimed.

The joy with which his commands were received, and the rapid progress made in the preparations for war, increased his courage and confidence day by day. If,

however, anything was to be done, not a moment must be lost. Frederick thought it essential to occupy Silesia before the winter set in. If he opened any negotiations without having first made himself master of Silesia, he was likely to have heavy conditions imposed upon him in return for very unimportant concessions.

He wrote on the 15th of November, "We are very seriously at work here. I intend to undertake the boldest, greatest, and most unexpected enterprise that ever a Prince of my house dared attempt. The condition of my troops makes me hope for a successful issue, and my soul is filled with joyful presentiments."

Thus then it was resolved that the line of policy suggested in the conference with the ministers, should be followed. No notification of the King's intentions was made to France, either by communication with Paris or with the French diplomatic agents at Berlin.

The Marquis de Beauvau, who had been sent as ambassador extraordinary to congratulate Frederick on his accession, amazed at not being invited to Rheinsberg, exhausted his imagination in surmises as to the true purpose of the warlike preparations which he, like every one else, saw going on. He sometimes guessed aright, but did not adhere to that opinion, and at length conceived that Frederick must be hostile to France, and desirous of weakening that country. The regular ambassador, Valori, took the same view. He thought that a masonic connexion subsisted between the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the King of Prussia, who were both members

of that order. Meanwhile Voltaire, who had already paid the King a visit at Wesel, arrived in Berlin. He showed himself to be one of those merely literary men, who look upon the whole world as a subject for the exercise of their talent: the brilliancy of his conversation excited the greatest admiration. People wept while he read his tragedies aloud; Voltaire himself felt no sympathy in return. This he had shown in Wesel. Frederick was suffering under an ague fit when he received Voltaire, who ridiculed the poverty of the retinue by which the King was surrounded. He seemed mainly anxious to turn his presence at Berlin to account in renewing the former relations between Prussia and the French court. He instantly laid before Frederick a letter which he had received from the Cardinal, filled with the most fulsome flattery of the King. But the whole Prussian state appeared to him mean and poor; he nicknamed Frederick "Le Roi des Lisières," and the French were amazed that such a Prince should fancy himself able to undertake any enterprise alone.* The effect of these reports was soon felt at Versailles. Louis XV., who generally took but little part in public affairs, talked one day,

* Valori, 8rd Dec.: Mr. de Voltaire, qui se fait une affaire de marquer son véritable attachement et son profond respect pour son Eminence et son zèle pour la France, a reçu hier une lettre du roi de Prusse, qu'il dit être extrêmement bien tournée et qu'il n'a pas osé me confier. Il m'a dit seulement, que ce prince badinoit sur ce, que le démon de la guerre étoit venu le saisir. Compare Voltaire's Letters, No. 1050. Il croit aussi que le roi de Prusse et le grand duc seroient d'accord. C'est beaucoup pour le roi des lisières, comme dit Voltaire, de se croire en état d'opérer seul.

e/ both while going to and returning from the chase, of nothing but the preparations and movements of the King of Prussia. It seemed as if the French were jealous of another nation that was about to act an independent part on the stage of history, where hitherto the French name had shone above all others.

x X On the other hand, the Prussian government entered into closer correspondence with the court of Vienna; taking care, however, to open only such questions as might prepare the way for the extraordinary demands which it was resolved to make.

On the 31st October Frederick answered a friendly letter, written to him by the Grand Duke of Tuscany on occasion of the Emperor's death, by saying that the court of Vienna might assuredly reckon upon his support, but only on conditions proportionate to the danger to which he should expose himself, as nothing short of a general war could be expected. Upon this occasion, he added, the usual delay would not be borne; if they wished to gain him they must take time by the forelock.

At the first glance it might seem as if he said too much, when he talked of a general war; for it was possible that Austria might ally herself with France. Even so, however, it would have been exceedingly difficult to avert, since hostilities had already broken out between Spain and England; and France was bound by treaties, as well as by her own interests, to take the side of Spain. The contending powers might change sides, but hostilities were inevitable between them, and, under the circumstances, would in all probability extend to Germany.

On the 12th November the King observed to his ambassador in Vienna, that that court had no other choice than to throw itself into the arms either of France or of Prussia. Neither could be done without sacrifice. If the court of Vienna preferred forming an alliance with France, and giving up to that country a portion of the Netherlands, this would infallibly cause a rupture between Austria and the maritime powers. Moreover, this alliance would threaten the liberty of Europe to such a degree as to raise a general opposition to it.

The Prussian ambassador at the court of Vienna, Borcke, expressed very nearly the same opinions. According to him, the Grand Duke and his wife, Maria Theresa, must look to Prussia as the only power that could rescue them from the dangers with which they were threatened. He exhorted the ministers to do quickly that which must be done, to make fresh proposals to his master, and to tell him what advantages he might expect.*

The suggestions of Prussia were not without effect in Vienna; but they were better received by the ambassadors of the old northern alliance than by the court itself. The English ambassador, Robinson, repeated that Austria would never find a more prompt and effective ally than the King of Prussia; and that in this world nothing was to be got without an equiva-

* Je leur conseille de faire vite, pour ne par venir trop tard. Je leur recommande surtout d'y aller rondement, sans détour et sans finesse, par demander ce qu'ils ont besoin et par offrir des avantages proportionnés à pouvoir balancer les risques, mais des avantages reels et non pas en perspective. Ils me repondent, qu'ils vont le faire bonnement.

lent. Among the diplomatists then in Berlin, the Russian minister was the first who expressed himself favourably towards Prussia. He conjectured what no one could as yet say positively, that the King of Prussia had views upon Silesia, and declared that he wished him success for the sake of the Silesian Protestants.* Frederick II. hoped to gain over those ancient allies of the house of Austria to his side. In the dispatch, by which the attack on Silesia was to be announced to the powers of the old alliance, he declared that Prussia wished to save the house of Austria from utter ruin, to hinder it from throwing itself, as it seemed inclined to do, into the arms of France; and that her sole design was to restore the old German and European system. As a price for these services Prussia demanded that the rights of the house of Brandenburg should be recognised, and that the Silesian territory, of which she had been deprived, should be given back. In the missive addressed to the States-General, an expression occurs which sounds strangely, but which fully indicates the position which Frederick had taken up. It was to the effect, that the Elector Frederick William had served the Emperor Leopold, and had been rewarded with ingratitude: but that King Frederick II. was determined first to take possession of the country which was to be his compensation, and then to render his services. Such were his dispositions towards Austria: he was prepared to enter into alliance with her, but he pre-

* Pour moi, dit il, j'en serois charmé pour l'amour de tous Silesiens et de pauvres protestans qui auroient par là un maître de leur religion.—11th Nov.

served a lasting recollection of old and recent wrongs, which must first be redressed. He saw that a general storm was brewing, and he was determined not to suffer Austria to perish, or France to enjoy a dangerous superiority, but he was also resolved at the same time to assert his own rights, and to take up a position that would enable him to defend them.

He wished to keep the French in good humour until the spring; not that he intended to ally himself with them, but that he might not be exposed to any acts of hostility from them in the mean time. Before the spring he hoped to come to an understanding with the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the court of Vienna, and then to gain England over to his side, whereupon he should no longer stand in need of French assistance.*

The King and his counsellors were convinced that nothing could be obtained save by a mixture of force with their negotiations: but they were as yet resolved to act with as much moderation as possible. The ministers—who still hoped to arrange everything amicably with the court of Vienna, and to bring about a treaty, to which the other powers might subscribe—ordered the chancellor, Ludewig, not to hasten his labours. He was busied in drawing up a statement of the claims of Prussia, which could not fail to be written with great warmth and earnestness. It was proposed, by some of those who were admitted to the secret councils, to take possession of Silesia,

* 22nd Nov. Je ne suis engagé à rien avec le cardinal.—Il faut que je suis d'accord avec le Lorrain avant le printemps;—alors ils n'ont aucun prétexte de rompre avec moi.

without committing actual hostilities; and the question was raised whether it would not be better not to take the fortresses, an idea highly distasteful to the members of the military profession. Probably it was Schwerin—for among his papers was found a written opinion against this scheme—who reminded the counsellors of peace, that by such means little or nothing would be obtained; that those only were masters of the country who held the fortresses. In negotiation, he said, they might be as gentle as they pleased; but warlike operations must be carried on with spirit and decision, and as if those who directed them never expected to come to any arrangement.

Never, perhaps, did an ambassador find himself more strangely placed than the Marquis Botta d'Adorno, who arrived in Berlin at the beginning of December, with proposals from the court of Vienna. His instructions were of a friendly character; he was authorized to make offers, which, however, did not include the cession of any portion of the imperial dominions. On his journey, which lay through Silesia, the Austrian ambassador everywhere saw preparations for attacking that province. When he arrived in Berlin the city looked like a camp on the point of breaking up. On the 4th December, early in the morning, the artillery, which had been drawn up in the street called *Unter den Linden*, joined the Frankfort militia: the King stood in front of the palace to see it pass by. On the 5th, the mules which carried the King's baggage took the same road; and on the 6th, the Sydow regiment, joined by that of Kleist and Grävenitz, marched to Müncheberg. The troops, which had

just laid aside their mourning, looked splendidly, as if on parade. Botta, in utter astonishment at all he saw and conjectured, endeavoured to elicit something more during the audience he had of the King; to whom he likewise addressed a warning. He said that he had found the roads in Silesia almost impassable: to which the King replied, that those who had to make the journey would soon find means to pass; the only danger was, lest they should arrive somewhat dirty.* Botta went on to say that the Prussian army was a very fine one, but that the Austrians had seen the enemy: the King answered rather angrily, that the world should learn that his troops were as good as they were handsome. Botta besought the King and his ministers, for God's sake, not to precipitate matters, but to wait, at all events, a few days, until he should have received the answer to a question he had just forwarded to the court of Vienna. It was, however, now too late to alter anything, as operations had already begun.

The enterprise was looked upon with some disapprobation in Berlin, where few believed that the young King could succeed in so great an undertaking. They said he would supply the enemy with recruits from the deserters of his own army, and would soon dissipate the treasure accumulated by his father. This was mainly owing to the tone taken by the Prince of Dessau, who had neither been consulted in the matter, nor was to serve in the campaign. His en-

* According to the first edition of the *Memoirs*: que ceux qui auraient à faire ce chemin aviseront aux moyens d'y passer; . . . elles ont vu l'ennemi.

vicious spirit prompted him to declare himself against the expedition, and to point out only the dark and dangerous side of it. "He might have alarmed even me," said Frederick, "if I had not already taken my resolution once for all."*

On the night of the 13th December the King was present at a court ball, and wore a perfectly unconcerned air. Voltaire relates that Frederick said to the French minister Beauvau, that France would gain most at the game he was about to play: an expression so remote from Frederick's true ideas, that without better proof we can scarcely believe him to have uttered it. Beauvau, whose dispatches are before us, says nothing of the sort; he only asserts that the King showed him all manner of civility, and talked to him even while getting into the carriage to go away.†

The army, at the head of which Frederick placed himself, was nearly 30,000 strong, and consisted of the regiments of Brandenburg, Pomerania, Magdeburg, and Halberstadt, both horse and foot; the men had been raised principally in those provinces. ‡ He

* First edition: Il m'auroit intimidé moi même, si mon parti n'avoit pas été pris avec la dernière resolution.

† Beauvau, 17th Dec. Je l'ai vu monter en voiture: j'y étois seul de tous les ministres étrangers: il quitta les princes et tout le monde pour venir à moi, et me fit l'honneur de me dire les choses du monde les plus obligeantes.—But he adds: Je dois ajouter, qu'il déteste la France dans le fonds de son cœur et que le véritable objet de son ambition et de sa gloire, ce seroit de nous humilier.

‡ The oldest regiments of foot soldiers were: Bredow, 1677; Margrave Henry's, 1685; La Motte, 1694; Derschau, 1698; Margrave Charles, 1702; Grävenitz, 1706; they were then quartered thus. The Bredow regiment in Vorpommern, Margrave

repeated to the generals and officers who, on the 15th December, assembled round him at Crossen, to receive his orders—what he had already said to them at Berlin, of the glory which the Brandenburgers had won in former days, on the plains of Warsaw and of Fehrbellin: * he regarded them, he said, less as his subjects than as his friends: they were to fight under his own eyes, and he would reward them like the head of a family, not like a mere ruler. It was no form of speech, but the naked truth, when he added, that he had no other allies than they.

On the 16th December he crossed the frontier. He wrote on the same day, "I have passed the Rubicon, with colours flying, and drums beating. My troops are in good spirits, the officers full of ambition, and

Henry's in the Uckermark, the Derschau in the Altmark, Margrave Charles' in 'the Neumark, the Grävenitz in the woody district of Magdeburg. The following were the regiments raised by Frederick William I. in 1713:—the Schwerin, quartered in Crossen, Zulichau, and Frankfurt; the Marwitz, quartered in Halberstadt; the Sydow, quartered in Ober and Niederbarnim; the Borck, quartered in Hinter-pommern. The regiment raised in the year 1714 was that of Kleist, and in 1728 that of Jeetz; the former was quartered in Beeskow Lebus, the latter in Anclam, in the island of Usedom.

* The King spoke both at Berlin and at Crossen: his own accounts differ somewhat from each other. In the earlier account the first speech was as follows:—*Messieurs, j'entreprends une guerre où je n'ai d'autre allié que v^{re} valeur ni d'autre ressource pour ma fortune. Souvenez vous sans cesse de la gloire immortelle que vos ancêtres se sont acquis dans les plaines de Varsovie et de Fehrberlin et ne démentez jamais la reputation des troupes brandenbourgeoises. Adieu! partez pour le rendezvous de la gloire où je ne tarderai pas de vous suivre.* In the later and printed edition, words are inserted which were first spoken at Crossen.

the generals thirsting for fame; I will perish or gain glory from this enterprise. My heart promises me success; a certain feeling, the cause of which I cannot explain, assures me of good fortune: I shall not return to Berlin without having shown myself worthy of the race from which I sprung, and of the brave soldiers whom I lead."

CHAPTER V.

THE OCCUPATION OF SILESIA.

IF we wished to describe in general terms the difference between the attacking and the attacked powers, we would say that in the former the unity of the monarchical authority had overcome the opposition of the provincial interests, whereas in the latter the two elements were still at war with one another. The demands of the Austrian government were far from small, the contributions and services which it required were the utmost that could be paid; and as it maintained the idea of a dominant religion, the views of the court were felt even in the remotest circles. At the same time, however, the different districts severally possessed a recognised system of government by estates, and a separate revenue and expenditure which included even the taxes imposed upon them by the State, and these powerful corporations were constantly engaged in contention with one another as well as with the imperial court.

But this was more especially the case with Silesia.

In the summer of 1740, when some Hungarian regiments were sent to take up their quarters in Silesia, they were forced to perform a regular quarantine on the frontier. The *Conventus Publicus*, or committee of estates, which was charged with a

great share of the government of the province, and was then sitting at Breslau, would not allow the regiments to enter Silesia, until a medical commission had been sent to examine into the health of the troops. Then followed a long correspondence upon the subject of the transfer, the march and the care and maintenance of the troops in question. The province complained of nothing so much as of the continual marching and countermarching of the troops within its frontiers, the "indescribable excesses" committed by the common soldiers, when they were with their regiments, and the equally great outrages of which they were guilty when, after being declared unfit for service and discharged, they wandered without control about the country. The province demanded, but without effect, that a military chest should be established by the State to meet the wants of the army.

A kind of compromise had been effected between the court and the provincial estates, according to which the latter retained very extensive administrative powers, but no sort of claim to independence. The provincial estates for awhile opposed the requisitions made of them, but invariably ended by giving way, and then venting their discontent in loud complaints. The provincial government of Silesia frequently weighed and discussed the relations subsisting between the Bohemian hereditary dominions, to which Silesia belonged, and the other Austrian provinces, as well as that between themselves; they asserted that in the same ratio in which the Bohemian hereditary dominions stood at a disadvantage, as compared with the other Austrian provinces, Silesia

was worse off than Bohemia or Moravia. If we are to believe the repeated assertions made by this body, the condition of Silesia, not long before the death of the Emperor Charles, was by no means flourishing with respect to finance. The memorials drawn up by the Conventus, and forwarded to the oberamt, or supreme government of the province, relate how misfortune followed misfortune, and one grievance was linked to another. The taxes imposed to enable government to pay the interest on foreign loans could no longer be raised; trade was ruined by the high duties levied on it at home and abroad. The provincial government asserted that "innumerable" lands and tenements were sequestered, but that the interest on the sequestrations scarcely sufficed to defray the taxes, as no one had any money left; and as there were no buyers, it was impossible to help the creditors to their most just and manifest rights: * the peasant landowner had no hope of extricating himself from his heavy difficulties.

As Frederick advanced into Silesia, he was nowise unwelcome to the population, were it only that he

* Memorial *ratione proportionis in contribuendo respectu* to the other imperial hereditary dominions. 2nd May, 1740. "Wo bei am meisten zu bewundern, dass others die Creditores die ihnen verhypothecirten und sub crida stehenden Güter auch für zwei Drittheil der gerichtlichen Taxe anzunehmen verweigern, andere aber das *ultra dimidium veri pretii* gethane *mutuum una cum eo*, quod interest völlig zu verlieren Gefahr laufen."— (It is most extraordinary that frequently the creditors refuse to receive the property which is mortgaged to them, or which is sub crida, even for two-thirds of the lawful taxes; while others run a danger of losing that which is made *ultra dimidium veri pretii mutuum una cum eo, quod interest.*)

brought with him a well-filled military chest, and thus created a market for the produce of the country, which before was almost unsaleable. The supreme government of the province, the oberamt, issued an order, to the effect that no one should furnish provisions or assistance to the advancing enemy. It could not, however, be expected that the inhabitants should, by obeying such an order, deprive themselves of a most welcome profit, or expose themselves to violence. The *Conventus Publicus* represented to the supreme government in the most urgent manner the necessity of sending the elders of the province to the Prussian army, in order to come to some arrangement with the Generals as to the supplies which they demanded, as otherwise the extortions would light upon particular spots, which would be utterly ruined, to the complete destruction of the owners of the soil, who were poor enough as it was.

On the 22nd December, after several forced marches, rendered still more difficult by the badness of the weather, Frederick came to Glogau, the ancient bulwark of Silesia, the first fortress which offered him any resistance, and encamped in Herrendorf. The elders of the principalities of Glogau, Liegnitz, and Wohlau, now made their appearance—with the full knowledge and consent of the *Conventus*—and advised with the Prussian commissariat as to the manner of supplying provisions, not only to those divisions of the army which were before Glogau, but likewise to those which were expected to advance further into the province ;* for Schwerin marched on

* Protocol of the 27th Dec., 1740. *Gesammelte nachrichten*

without delay along the great road which runs at the foot of the mountains and leads to Glatz. The elders helped Schwerin to draw up his route, and sent commissaries with him to show him the way from town to town, and from district to district.

We are not, however, to imagine that Silesia had been left utterly without defence. The Austrian troops, though far too weak to keep the field, were still sufficient to hold the fortresses, some of which were very strong, and others, at any rate, appeared defensible. Since the second half of the seventeenth century some attention had always been paid to the fortifications of the country. Frederick was wrong in his estimate when he imagined that in ten days he could take Glogau, which had been rebuilt since 1654.* Since the year 1664 Brieg had been surrounded with bastions and turned into a modern fortress: this had been done by command of the Emperor, under the inspection of one of his own engineers, though chiefly at the expense of the old dukes of Brieg. Neisse was surrounded with strong walls and ditches which could always be filled with water. Besides these three important places,

und Documente, II. 60. "Der Armee sollte das zur Subsistenz Benöthigte zugeführt auch dem ganzen Lande nach denen einzubringenden Liquidationen zu seiner Zeit wiederum vergütet und von denen Landesprästandis abgeschrieben werden."—(What was necessary for the subsistence of the army should be collected, and the whole country should be reimbursed in due time what it had expended, and this should be deducted from the præstandis of the province.)

* Fechner in Henelius, *Silesiographia*, T. I. c. VII. p. 154. Te quoque qui stravit (during the thirty years' war) Mavors exivit in auras denuo et eximii cinxit munimine valli.

great hopes were entertained of Ohlau, a strong place commanding a defile; of Ottmachau, with its old castle and donjon-keep; of Namslau, to which town fresh fortifications had been added since 1722, and the old walls provided with a breastwork;* and lastly, of the capital of Silesia itself. The Austrians did not doubt that they should be able to hold these places, at any rate until a regular army could be collected, which should be sufficient to drive the enemy out of the country quite as easily as he had entered it.

Spite of the embarrassed state of the country it is impossible to say how the matter might have ended, or what obstacles the King might have encountered, had not the enterprise upon Silesia been rendered infinitely more easy to him by the discontent which prevailed among the inhabitants.

Silesia was one of those countries in which Protestant views and inclinations had taken the earliest and deepest root in the minds of the people, and where they had been repressed by the most violent means.

In the year 1611 a Catholic bishop complained that there were many thousand towns and villages in Silesia where not a single Catholic was to be found. Shortly afterwards, the thirty years' war desolated the country, and Glatz and Upper Silesia fell under the influence of the Catholic reaction. Notwithstanding the ill success which afterwards attended that move-

* Chronicle of the city in Knie and Melcher's *geographischer Beschreibung von Schlesien*, II. 3, 597.

ment, the Catholic reaction was felt in Lower Silesia likewise. In consequence of the provisions of the Peace of Westphalia, the Emperor, who represented himself as the executor of the views of the clergy, was able to venture upon depriving most of the towns and villages in his hereditary principality of their churches, as well as of their pastors; not, however, without provoking a sort of civil war. It often happened that the peasants flocked together to defend the churches with their bodies, but the power of the government was too much for the daring of the peasantry and the resistance of the citizens.* Many of the boldest of their leaders were forced to submit to the closing of their private chapels. The extinction of the Piast Dukes of Liegnitz was a great misfortune for the Protestants: that family had hitherto afforded them a constant refuge, but the dukedom had now lapsed to the Empire. The same thing happened there which had occurred in other places, but the object was effected more by threats than by actual force; it was done by the application of well-contrived, lasting, and systematic oppression.† Within a period of forty years the Lutheran worship was put down in the lowlands of Silesia, and in most of the towns.

* H. Muttké: Friedrich des Grossen Besitzergreifung von Schlesien, vol. II. p. 165, a well arranged collection of various materials. The account of the taking of the churchyard of Krommendorf, extracted from Erhardt's Presbyterologie, p. 216, is singularly characteristic.

† Gravamina Specialia Ducatum Liegnitz, Brieg et Wohlau; in (Schutz's) Schlesische Kirchenhistorie, 1715, p. 321: other complaints were laid before the Emperor, p. 490.

A powerful mediation was formerly exercised by Charles XII. If it be true, as the Swedes assert, that the territory of Hadeln was offered to that monarch, on condition that he should desist from protecting the Silesian Protestants, it was a great moral effort on his part not to accede at once to the proposition; on the contrary, at the meeting of Altranstadt he procured tolerable conditions for those dukedoms which had been subordinate to that of Liegnitz, and for the town of Breslau.* The court of Vienna observed these conditions in essentials, but it could not be expected to alter its system; and the Catholic form of worship was considered now, as before, the only privileged one. Protestants were excluded from all civil and municipal offices, although not altogether from the army. They were forced to keep the Catholic holidays, and to conform to the Catholic restrictions upon marriages: their consistories were subject to the supervision of Catholic governors and elders, and could only act in accordance with their decrees.† Any conversion to Protestantism was treated as apostacy; whereas Protestants were often forcibly compelled to become converts to Catholicism. There were continually recalcitrant Lutherans in the custody of the gaolers.

The power of Catholicism was constantly on the

* Adlerfeldt, *Leben Carls XII.* Bd. III. p. 21. Others declared that if it was not his best action, it was his finest trophy. Compare Stenzel, *Pr. Geschichte*, III. 159.

† Hensel, *Schlesische Kirchengeschichte*, p. 650. Compare Menzel, who is a good authority on this point: *Deutsche Geschichte*, vol. X. p. 165.

increase. While the sacramental plate belonging to the Protestants was intrusted to the safe keeping of a commercial house, in the hope of better times, Catholic processions walked through the streets of Breslau with the utmost pomp. There was an especially solemn procession in the month of September, 1740, when the relics of Saint Theodore, which had just arrived from Rome, were borne to the cathedral. On the accession of Maria Theresa the more violent Catholics boasted that conventions with foreign powers would now be as little regarded in Silesia as in other provinces; nor would any appeal to such conventions be listened to: here, as elsewhere, the Catholic church should reign alone. After the march of the troops already mentioned, the Protestants expected a renewal of the persecutions exercised against the reformers. On the arrival of Harrach's grenadiers, who were marching to Glogau, the inhabitants of the province of Liegnitz imagined that they were destined for that purpose. They expected a fresh persecution to begin on the Third Sunday in Advent (11th December).

It could not fail to produce an extraordinary impression upon them that at this juncture the most powerful Protestant monarch in Germany, the young King of Prussia, appeared within their frontiers.

They quoted prophecies, which had predicted of old that such an event would take place at their utmost need. They told how the King of Prussia had once, in a dream, seen the whole province in flames; and how an audible voice had three successive times warned him to hasten to the rescue. They

beheld in him a guardian angel, sent to them from heaven.*

It is strange that a Prince, so averse to the positive belief of the Protestant Church, should have been met by its followers with such abundant confidence. They attributed to religious enthusiasm what was, in reality, policy and ambition. They inquired into his personal opinions only so far as they were advantageous to themselves: all they cared for was, that he was the King of a Protestant country, and that his success must of necessity benefit themselves.

Powerful as was the effect everywhere produced by his arrival, it was most deeply felt in the capital of Silesia, where, although the burghers still maintained their old religious liberty, they were kept in perpetual anxiety and excitement by the activity and progress of their opponents.

On the first news of the approach of the Prussians, the furious controversial Catholic preachers, struck with a sudden panic, were silenced and prepared for flight; the prisoners confined in the cathedral were released. On the other hand, the preachers in the Lutheran churches took as their text the Psalm where God, after having "cast off his people and showed them hard things, gave a banner to them that feared him, that it might be displayed because of the truth."†

The disposition of the town of Breslau was impor-

* Tagebuch des Feldprediger Seegebart. MS.

† Psalm lx. 3—7, was the text of the sermon of the Inspector Burg on the fast-day, 9th Dec. At Breslau they already had a list of the Prussian troops destined to march into Silesia.

tant in a political as well as in a military point of view.

It was no longer, indeed, the same Breslau whose history was written by Eschenlör, when it played a part among the powers of eastern Europe. Nevertheless, it still possessed many attributes of municipal independence; among others, the right to guard and to defend itself. Within the walls no soldiers were tolerated but such as swore allegiance to the town. When Austrian troops happened to march through Breslau, the sentinels were doubled, and the principal streets barricaded with chains, and the royal soldiers were allowed to march in and out only in small divisions, escorted by the municipal troops.

It was obviously of the utmost importance to the Austrian government, on the rapid approach of a powerful enemy, to keep possession of Breslau, and to shake off these restraints.

The cathedral of Breslau included a district entirely separate from the town, both in a municipal and military point of view. The supreme government called upon the town-council to allow the Colonel charged with the defence of the cathedral, who probably was a Protestant, to garrison the nearest gate of the town conjointly with the municipal troops. But in the event of his not being able to maintain his position, under the attack of an overwhelming number of the enemy, he was to have a right to be admitted with his troops into the town itself.

In spite of the tendency and inclination to oppose the government, and to have their own way, it gene-

rally happened, as we have already said, that both the estates and the towns in Silesia submitted in the end to the demands made upon them in earnest by the government. The town-council of Breslau for the time being had made it a rule to avoid all contention with the government, and accordingly it immediately conceded the point.

There was some difficulty in persuading the heads of corporations, without whose consent the town-council could carry no measure ; but these men were called into the council-chamber, one or two at a time, and thus talked over.

It was only when the matter was referred to the committee of the burghers, guilds, and corporations, and to the burghers themselves, that the real opposition began.* Once, again, arose that spirit of the municipal commonalty which, ever since the fourteenth century, had steadily resisted the encroachments of ecclesiastical power, and in the sixteenth had prepared the way for the great movement of the Reformation. The burghers would not listen to the proposal of admitting a royal garrison, whose presence would at once deprive them of their ecclesiastical and political freedom. They were not inclined, they said, to expose themselves to the insolence of the troops of the line, which as yet they knew only by hearsay ; moreover, the idea of standing a siege against Prussian troops was perfectly hopeless. Breslau was merely a walled commercial city, and not a fortress. The chief speaker was a shoemaker, of the

* Kundmann, *Heimsuchungen Gottes*, 445.

name of Döblin, a man full of religious zeal, but who loved the noise of the market-place or a jovial carouse far better than the labour of the workshop.* He might be compared to the cooper who incited the citizens of Lisbon to take up arms for King John of “excellent memory;” or with that greybeard, likewise a shoemaker, who seized the reins of Charles XII.’s horse, as that monarch was crossing the Oder at Steinau, and would not loose them until Charles had given his word no longer to allow the faithful in Silesia to be oppressed. As may be imagined, Döblin produced the greatest effect upon the younger citizens. The boldest among them went to the town-hall, “strove hard,” as an old diary expresses it, not alone against the town-council, but against their own heads of corporations, and obtained the reversal of the decree, and a promise that, in the event of an attack, the burghers alone should be intrusted with the defence of the town.

If the Lutheran citizens were eager and determined on this point, the Catholic ecclesiastics were not at all against it. The latter had no mind to see the suburbs, containing numerous Catholic convents and churches, fall a prey to the flames for the sake of standing a siege.

Hereupon the municipal authorities in Breslau began to arm the citizens. The young men were enrolled, provided with arms from the arsenal, and

* Breslau vor hundert Jahren, by Kahlert, 1840, contains extracts from Steinberg’s Journal; Professor Kahlert, the descendant of the author, has kindly allowed me to use the original journal.

subjected to military discipline. The burghers might be seen mounting guard in company with the soldiers of the town. Proclamations were issued, directing the townsfolk, on the approach of the enemy, to assemble at the houses of the captains of the burgher-guard, each with his musket and side-arms; the red flag would then be displayed and the guns fired. We need not examine whether this burgher-guard would have been capable of opposing any serious resistance to the advancing Prussians: the principle out of which it originated was rather an approach towards Prussia, than an expression of hostility.

The news which Frederick received from Breslau induced him to advance thither as speedily as possible. At this moment some of the regiments he had ordered to advance arrived, and he was able to leave the Prince of Anhalt, the son of the old duke, with sufficient forces to carry on the siege of Glogau. Frederick feared to delay lest, by fair means or foul, the Austrian troops should obtain possession of Breslau, and thus increase his difficulties.

General Schwerin, who had been as much concerned in the military conduct of the whole enterprise, as in the political consultations on the matter, and who in the beginning still assumed something of the tone of an instructor, wrote to Frederick that this was quite right. "The grand secret of the art of war," said he, "lies in surprising the enemy, and throwing him into confusion. A great captain goes boldly forwards."*

* 27th Dec. C'est le grand secret et art de la guerre de prévenir et étourdir son ennemi.

On the morning of the first day of the year 1741, which chanced to be a Sunday, the King arrived before the walls of Breslau with the left wing of his army, to which had been added the dragoons and grenadiers of the right wing; the latter regiments were, therefore, very numerous. His troops were so placed as to cut off all supplies from the densely populated town. In case of necessity he was resolved, at the head of his grenadiers, to storm the walls, which were never very strong, and were not at this moment protected by the ditch, which was frozen over.

The citizens of Breslau, however, had no thought of hostility. They sent supplies of food to the neighbouring villages for the advancing army. From their towers and walls they looked with pleasure upon the Brandenburg troops as they marched in full array across the field of Schweidnitz, and quartered themselves in the various suburbs under their respective leaders. The chronicler remarks, with especial interest, how his Majesty, Fredericus II., came riding along at about half-past eight on that very Sunday, and took up his abode in the Scultet garden. His military suite, with their neat uniforms and well burnished arms, excited the admiration of the multitude.

The town did not hesitate to accept the terms of neutrality offered by the King: the only stipulation he made was, that he should be allowed to erect a magazine in one of the suburbs, to be guarded by his own troops. He drove the Austrian garrison out of the cathedral and was himself the first to enter it.

He addressed a few words of kind encouragement to the trembling clergy, who met him in the transept and delivered up their keys.

It may be asked, whether he would not have done better to make use of his superiority, and to take military occupation of the town also. But he kept to his original intention of taking, if possible, peaceful possession. He refused to grant safeguards, as these were usual only in a hostile country. The perfect neutrality of the town, and his own reception within its walls, were an incalculable advantage to him. Uncertain as everything was, a feeling, nevertheless, prevailed that a great and permanent change was going on. The King himself was astonished at the sympathy with which he was received. The citizens gave him fully to understand that it was their wish to have him as their lord and master now and henceforth. The former head of the now-dissolved government, Count Schaffgotsch, said, as he descended the staircase of his official residence in the Salzring, "I shall never mount these steps again."

Instead of the news he had expected from Vienna, Frederick now received intelligence of a different but equally welcome nature; more especially as to the favourable impression produced by the statement drawn up by the Chancellor Ludewig, which had lately appeared, and had been well received by the ministers of the maritime powers. The King enjoyed a moment of satisfaction, and a confidence of success such as was seldom vouchsafed him during the whole course of his life.

On the 4th January he wrote to his cabinet

ministers—"I have got possession of Breslau, and will now advance further against the enemy. I hope before the spring completely to overthrow him." He expected at the first attempt to make himself master of the whole province, including the fortresses.

And, indeed, Ohlau, which he attacked next, fell into his hands without offering any opposition. Before a shot was fired, the commandant, Formentini, capitulated; probably he feared to sacrifice his men in vain. Formentini stipulated that his garrison, consisting of three thousand five hundred men, should march out with the honours of war: the King, on his part, added the condition that the troops should neither remain in Neisse nor in Brieg, but should immediately quit Silesia by way of Zuckmantel. The capture of a tolerably strong place so high up the Oder, where he might form magazines, and collect the materials of war with perfect security, was an immense step in advance for Frederick.

Meanwhile Schwerin, at the head of the right wing, had encountered no impediment, and had taken the busy manufacturing towns at the foot of the Riesengebirge and the Eulengebirge. On the 7th of January he reached Frankenstein.

But the further the Prussians advanced into the upper country, where the population had already become Catholic, the greater was the opposition they encountered.

An attempt upon Glatz, from which Frederick expected great things, as the country was still open, had to be given up. The bridges were found to be de-

stroyed, the narrow passes protected by abatis and occupied by sharpshooters, against whom nothing could be effected at that time of year; and information was received that Glatz itself had been put in a good state of defence.

At length, too, the Queen's troops showed themselves in the open field. By the second week of January, Browne had got together a small corps of horse and foot, together with several companies of grenadiers, and seemed about to offer some sort of opposition.

The first hostile encounter between the Austrians and the Prussians took place not far from the Neisse; we will not pass over in silence the first of so long a series of battles.

While Schwerin was on his way from Frankenstein and Camenz to Ottmachau, the officer in command of the advanced guard, Lieutenant Milowitz, informed him that he had seen the Lichtenstein dragoons drawn up on the further side of a village called Ellgut. Schwerin told this officer that he ought immediately to have engaged the Austrians, so as to keep them on the spot, as he himself wished nothing so much as to find the enemy in the open field; he added, that this was still possible and necessary. Milowitz had with him only six and twenty huzzars, but to show that he was not afraid, he instantly rushed upon the enemy with that small body of men, and cut his way into the midst of the dragoons. He himself wielded his sabre with tremendous force, but he had dealt only two or three blows before he was struck down by a bullet. Meanwhile, when the Austrian dragoons saw the

Prussian troops deploying in the surrounding country, they fled in haste, fearing to be cut off from their retreat across a bridge.*

Immediately after this, at Ottmachau, Schwerin again demanded as a duty a like hopeless and useless display of personal courage. The gates were easily forced and the town taken; but the old castle, built on a height rising in successive terraces, and surrounded by thick walls, was not so easily carried by assault. Browne had added several hundred of his grenadiers to the garrison, and these men defended themselves after the fashion of Götz von Berlichingen, answering every summons to surrender by a shower of bullets. Tired of this delay, Fieldmarshal Schwerin ordered Von Happe, a lieutenant in the battalion of Margrave Frederick, to march with the pioneers of the regiment to the castle, and to break open the gate. This proved of no avail, as other works were found behind it. Happe not only performed this service while the enemy fired at him from the windows; but he remained quietly at his post when nothing more was to be done, until Fieldmarshal Schwerin thought fit to recal him: meanwhile, the pioneers were killed or wounded around him on all sides.

The castle held out until the King himself reached Ottmachau, and the grenadiers caught sight of his mortars. Hereupon, on the 12th of January, they surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Better terms

* Official Report of 22nd Jan., in the Journal de Berlin, No. 42. I have likewise made use of some remarks written by eye-witnesses and inserted in a MS. history of the Silesian war, preserved in the War-office.

had previously been offered to them, but these the King now refused to give.

Frederick and Schwerin were but a short time together before Neisse, and they separated again immediately.

The King determined to attack Neisse, where the first real and energetic resistance was offered to the Prussian arms. Colonel Roth, who was to have been intrusted with the defence of the cathedral of Breslau, and who was at this time commandant of the garrison at Neisse, had exacted from the citizens a fresh oath of allegiance, and had not hesitated to destroy the suburbs by fire. By this means the place was rendered tenable, and the trumpeter bearing the summons to surrender was driven back with musket-balls. The King hoped to subdue this high spirit by bombarding the town, and for several days it was exposed to a very heavy fire. Nor was this without effect; but it failed to force it to surrender. As the winter, which had hitherto been exceedingly mild, began to be so severe as to prevent the operations of a regular siege, the King determined to content himself with a blockade, such as he had shortly before employed against Glogau, and had now directed against Brieg.

Meanwhile, Schwerin marched into Upper Silesia, in order to drive General Browne completely out of the Silesian frontiers.

The right wing, which had been intrusted to Schwerin for this purpose, was not very strong; but Browne's forces were weaker still, owing to the troops he had detached from his main body as garrisons. He quitted Neustadt for Jägerndorf, this

again for Troppau, thence by Grätz—where the two armies once more came into collision—into Moravia.* He was satisfied with being able to hold a few posts in the highlands. From every place he carried off the money raised by taxes, and all else that was of value: but his magazines for the most part fell into the hands of the Prussians, who were by this time completely masters of Upper Silesia. In a few days they took the difficult pass of Jablunka over the White mountains, which opened to them an entrance into Hungary. Frederick asserted, and his opinion was shared by many, that there was nothing to prevent him, had he wished to push on to Vienna. But he added, that his sole object was to take possession of the province, of which the greater part was his by right.

What he wanted was, if such a distinction can be admitted, not to attack the Austrian monarchy, but only to take possession of that particular province. In a few weeks he had taken it all, with the exception of the three principal fortresses; and, in the beginning of February, Namslau fell into his hands: the resistance of the garrison of the castle was only overcome by bombarding with red-hot shot and shells.

A new state of things at once arose in Silesia. By the Austrian system, absolute power over the country had been delegated to a few members of the great

* Relation de l'action de Grätz où le M^r C^{te} de Schwerin attaqua le Ltntg^r Braun le 25 Janr. 1741. On 15th Jan. Schwerin was detached "pour tâcher de joindre le G^r Braun qui se tenoit pour lors a Neustadt et ses environs avec le reste de 18 bataillons que la reine de Hongrie a eu en Silesie."

families, of tried devotion to the court, and in the towns it had been bestowed exclusively upon the Catholic magistrates; this system now fell to the ground. The carriages of the grandees, as the nobles were called, were no longer seen in the streets of Breslau, and the great lords everywhere quitted office. In one town after another, Protestant councillors resumed the offices out of which they had been driven. The images of saints, which had been set up in defiance of Protestantism, disappeared: the army chaplains proclaimed that their King was come to restore religious freedom; the Protestant ritual was everywhere renewed; the sacred vessels, which had hitherto been concealed, were again used on altars devoted to the Protestant service; young pastors were sent from Berlin to such Lutheran parishes as most needed their services; in the churches, the prayer for "our Sovereign Lady, the Queen of Hungary," ceased to be read. The newspapers no longer appeared headed with the double eagle, but with the single eagle of Silesia.

Frederick gained possession of Silesia, not by conquest alone, but by the falling away of the country from its allegiance to the house of Austria. The restoration of the Lutheran element in its full, religious, and political importance, was intimately connected with the ancient rights inherited from the Piasts by the house of Brandenburg.

When Brandenburg had become strong enough to demand its rights, and at length took courage to do so, the greater portion of Silesia went over to its side. The manifestation of military power awakened the

confidence of the oppressed inhabitants, while the support which they gave opened the way to conquest.

But the belief that this state of things would continue, arose more from a vague presentiment than from any clear perception of its possibility.

The old adherents of the house of Brandenburg trembled when they considered the possible and, as they thought, probable consequences. Others, indifferent or hostile, had from the very first ridiculed the King's plans, and treated them as the wild schemes of a very young man. This served but to rouse Frederick's ambition, and to make him all the more eager to accomplish his work. He was determined to prove that his plans were dictated by true policy, and that he could carry them into effect with glory.

FIFTH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

POLICY AND EVENTS OF THE FIRST SILESIAN WAR, UP TO
THE COMPACT OF KLEINSCHNELLENDORF, 1741.

WE have seen how it happened that the enterprise of the King of Prussia was risked, and, at the first onset, succeeded; but there are other considerations attached to an event besides the motives in which it originates and the circumstances which render it possible. The occupation of Silesia, viewed in connexion with the political state of Europe, was calculated to inspire nothing but astonishment and alarm.

Frederick had attacked a power possessed of the proudest consciousness of her own pre-eminence; of exhaustless resources, if she but knew how to employ them; of most ancient dignity and weight in Europe, and placed in a situation which ensured to her the involuntary sympathies excited by great interests. In the midst of a settlement of the European powers, based on so many solemn treaties of peace, he had revived claims unthought of by any one, and had taken possession of a large province without any previous negotiation.

Modern history affords various examples of invasions

which were at first successful; but if we review the whole series of them, we shall find that, from the expedition of Charles VIII. against Naples, to the attack of Charles Gustavus upon Denmark, or of Louis XIV. upon Holland (or even still more recent examples of aggression), the sympathy of Europe has, in the end, always been roused to second the resistance of the invaded. Real and permanent extensions of territory have generally been brought about in a totally different manner; either by a general consent of all the powers, or a complete predominance of one.

Had Frederick known all the forces which he was about to set in motion against himself; had he been older and more experienced, it may be doubted whether he would not have hesitated, as his ancestors had done, ere he took this important step.

But it was now taken; the die was cast; the old legal claim was, for the moment, triumphantly established: he must enforce it, or he could not flatter himself that he would be able to maintain the position he had inherited from his father.

I am now about to relate the events of the war which broke out; to describe the conflict of the powers which it called into action. It is, however, not a war between two German States alone, for it was impossible that the whole of Europe should not be involved in the struggle caused by the efforts of a new country to force itself to a level with nations whose power and dignity were consecrated by ages.

Independently of this cause of dissension, another movement broke out, which sometimes appeared to

throw everything into disorder and uncertainty. Thus we find, that the strength of a country does not always depend on its own peculiar internal resources; there are other, and not inferior sources of power, which arise out of the great combination of affairs. In order to understand the particular position of each, we must ascend to the most general view of the whole.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, the conflicting tendencies of opinion were only perceptible in private life, or, in some rare cases, in provincial matters: in general, they were confined to the domain of literature, in which every word is not to be regarded as an event; States were set in motion only by the interests of practical policy.

The most important of these lay in the quarrel which, after nearly thirty years of a better understanding, now broke out between England and France; for these kingdoms were now the richest and the most influential, and the subject of their rekindled enmity can by no means be looked upon as insignificant.

Among the motives assigned by Louis XIV. in the latter half of the seventeenth century (after the sudden rise of the English navy under Cromwell), for the necessity of settling the Spanish succession by general agreement, is the consideration, that otherwise the Transatlantic colonies of Spain would become the spoil of the English.* The Catholic nations

* Instruction to Cremonville, 1667, in Mignet, *Negociations relatives à la succession d'Espagne*, II. 557, que les Indes seraient au pillage aux Anglais et aux Hollandais, et feraient peutêtre

of Roman descent still possessed the larger share of the dominion of the seas; Spain still laid claim to the exclusive possession of all the American territory formerly granted to her by the Pope, and had never recognised the English colonies.

The claims put forward by Louis, however, rendered it impossible to come to any accommodation; his resort to arms necessarily involved England and Holland in the disputes of the Catholic powers, to the great advantage of the former; * in the Spanish war of succession, the English acquired a geographical position and commercial privileges which ensured to them an ever-increasing superiority.

We have often had occasion to remark, how deeply the Bourbon dynasty of Spain felt this; how earnestly it desired to shake off the oppressive preponderance of the English naval power, and how important an influence this state of feeling exercised on the general movement of the century.

Meanwhile Spain was of herself far too feeble to effect anything against England; she could only annoy her powerful foe; nor was the latter in any danger till France—not merely the government, on behalf of the reigning family, but also the nation stimulated by the hope of gain—espoused the cause of Spain.

The first family compact was concluded in the

autant de roitelets qu'elles ont de vicerois. It was scarcely to be expected of Louis XIV. that he would foresee the existence of republics.

* In a treaty of 18th July, 1670, at Madrid, Spain recognised the English possessions in their fullest extent.

Escorial, on the 7th of November, 1733, in virtue of which the Spanish court united with that of France for the purpose of destroying the naval supremacy of England.

Herein the King of Spain declares his determination to extirpate the abuses which have crept into the trade with England, and immediately to act according to the letter of the treaty; he expresses his intention of depriving the English of the commercial privileges generally, which they enjoyed: * should England, in consequence, proceed to hostilities, France engages to make common cause with Spain; and for that purpose to fit out a fleet at Brest, and as many privateers as possible. Terms were agreed upon, according to which, the profits of the Transatlantic trade were mainly to accrue to the French. The King of France promised to prevail upon the English, by fair means if possible, to cede Gibraltar; but, if needful, to compel them to do so by arms.

Hence it happened that, as soon as the continental war was terminated, in 1735, the French devoted themselves with uncommon vigour and earnestness to the improvement of their navy. The same man who, forty years later, made the most effective attack on the English naval force that has ever been executed—the Count de Maurepas,—had already conceived this project, and was preparing to carry it into effect.

* Primer pacto de familia, in Cantillo 277, Artículo IV. : Si Su M^a católica juzgare conveniente, suspender a la Inglaterra del goce del comercio y de las ventajas de que goza—S. M. cr^{ma} hará causa comun con S. M. católica. Compare Art. VI. XII. XIII.

He set on foot works, at the same moment, in the Arsenals of Brest and Toulon, and urged them on with the greatest eagerness: his design was, to put to sea with twenty-six line-of-battle ships of the first class, and thirty of the second. The Spaniards, too, fitted out large and small vessels in the ports of Ferrol and Cadiz.

The British nation, and more particularly the trading part of it, which had immediate cause to feel the difference between these measures and any former ones, had a clearer and more accurate perception of the danger [impending over it, than the ministry, whose vigilance was lulled by fair words, and whose attention was diverted by the particular incidents of the long protracted negotiations.

Of all the faults committed by Sir Robert Walpole in the latter years of his ministry, this was the greatest. The nation almost forced him to begin the war with which it saw itself threatened; and, as is well known, hailed the declaration of it with public demonstrations of joy.*

Whatever were the immediate cause or pretext for the breaking out of the war between England and Spain, in 1739; whether a subaltern affray with smugglers, or, as some alleged, an outrage offered to an English sailor, the real motive for it was one affecting the whole world: it was to determine the question, whether the Germanic or the Romance na- *was/*

* I think that after becoming aware of the above-mentioned family compact, Lord Mahon (History of England, cap. XX.) and Mr. Bancroft (History of America, cap. XXII.) will modify their judgment on this war.

tions should have the superiority in commercial and colonial greatness: it arose out of the same interests which again in the seven years' war were identified with those of Germany, and had a great influence on the struggles of the Revolution; the same, which led the Bourbon powers formerly to favour the emancipation of North America from England, and the English, recently, that of South America from Spain.

The trade of England suffered, it is true, considerable damage from the privateers which had been previously fitted out, and were now suddenly sent to sea under the Spanish flag; but the advantage was still on her side. Admiral Vernon, in whose family hostility to the Bourbon powers was hereditary, as that to Austria was in many French families, took Porto Bello in November, 1739; with an inconsiderable loss. Expectations, exaggerated by party spirit, were conceived in England; and preparations made to furnish him with the means of an attack on the continent of South America.

But this act called forth the interference of France. She declared that she could not suffer England to establish herself on the continent of South America; if for no other reason, because it would destroy the regular traffic of the galleons, in which France had a share: she would show the English that they were not yet absolute masters of the seas. This declaration was universally regarded as a certain prelude to war.* The English thought it necessary to look for allies on the continent.

* According to the accounts from London, this is a "prelude d'un commencement de rupture infallible."—Le parlement a

Their favourite idea was, to renew the great alliance which had thwarted the enterprises and repelled the aggressions of Louis XIV. They filled every court with complaints of the policy of France, who, said they, still cherished the project of a universal predominance, if not of a universal monarchy. They represented that in every contested question, where-soever it arose, Cardinal Fleury thought he must have a hand : he wanted to divide the duchy of Berg, so as to gain over Prussia, and, at the same time, not to lose the Palatinate : he interfered in the disputes between Corsica and Genoa : the last peace between Austria and Turkey was, like most other treaties of peace, his sole work : in Turkey and in Sweden he was carrying on dark and dangerous negotiations, while he was himself violating the peace of Utrecht by fortifying Dunkirk. The other powers of Europe must oppose their united forces to him, if the balance of power was to be maintained.

On the other hand, Cardinal Fleury remarked, that there was a balance of power by sea as well as by land ; that the maritime usurpations of England increased from day to day ; a universal monopoly was the real object of her efforts, and the other powers must set bounds to her pretensions by their united determinations.

In September, 1740, two French squadrons put to

declaré qu'il ne pouvoit jamais donner les mains à un accommodement que par préliminaire l'Espagne ne se desiste de sa prétention de visiter les bâtimens Anglais en plein mer et d'un autre côté on sait que l'Espagne ne consentira jamais à cet article.

sea, the one from Toulon, the other from Brest ; both sailed for the West Indies, whither in the mean time a reinforcement of the English fleet had already gone : a battle appeared inevitable.

It was at this time that Frederick II. inclined, as we have mentioned, to the policy of England ; not from any partiality for that power, but because he saw that France would never concede his demands on the Lower Rhine—the only demands that he then made.

England now used every endeavour to win over the court of Vienna. But even the old ministers, who hailed with joy the thought of a renewal of the great alliance, objected, that in their present helpless condition a quarrel with France might have the most disastrous consequences ; that Austria was unprepared on every side ; she could not defend either Italy or the Netherlands against the French, and would even be forced to give up her whole Rhenish frontier. The English ambassador tried to allay these fears, and was not sparing of promises and exhortations. A curious scene took place during the last moments of Charles IV. The Emperor had received the sacraments, and his ministers were leaving the death-bed, with the Chancellor at their head, when the English ambassador came up to the latter, gave him a despatch with an air of mysterious eagerness, and, walking by his side along the gallery, told him the contents of it ; observing, that the house of Austria was not lost, nor the order of things in Europe either, provided they would but show themselves men.

Other dangers, however, now loomed above the horizon.

The imperial ministers were filled, as we have already mentioned, with the gloomiest forebodings as to the future destinies of their reigning house. The quarrel between France and England immediately concerned the questions of the greatest interest to the house of Austria. But on which side the decision might fall was rendered extremely doubtful by the complication of affairs, and the internal state of the court itself.

CHAPTER II.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS OF THE COURT OF
VIENNA.

THE assumption of a perfect unity of will, as essential to the idea of monarchy, is frequently erroneous. A remarkable exemplification of this is to be found in the court of Vienna, where contrary tendencies have generally existed, and even the most exalted sphere has sometimes been divided into factions.

How often had Prince Eugene to complain of the Jesuitical council-chamber, or of the misrepresentations with which the Emperor's ears were filled by servile courtiers! After the death of the Prince, Charles VI. paid not the slightest attention to those who regarded themselves as his successors. He declared war and concluded alliances contrary to the opinion of his old ministers. In the most important of the latter—that with France, which so powerfully influenced all the latter years of his life—he involved himself more and more deeply, seconded only by a young statesman who had just raised himself into power by assenting to his sovereign's opinions.

At the death of Charles VI. a change of system was expected with the greater confidence, since the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the husband of his suc-

cessor, had constantly adhered to the principles of the old ministers.

This expectation might have been realized had they been men of energy and talent.

The chief among them was the Grand Chancellor, Count Sinzendorf, formerly the friend of Prince Eugene, and one of the chief originators of the order of succession: he enjoyed some consideration in foreign affairs in consequence of certain embassies which he had conducted with tolerable success. Now, however, in his old age, having experienced frequent neglect, and often seen things determined by chance, he appeared to have lost all faith in the serious objects of life, and the necessity of earnest endeavours in great affairs. He treated things with a sort of superficial disdain, and gave himself up to an epicureanism, on which he valued himself as an accomplishment; his only real concern seemed to be for his health, which he cultivated with superstitious care.

His immediate colleague, Count Gundacker, of Stahremberg, treated business with much greater earnestness: in his quality of director of the bank, he strenuously resisted the demands of the court;* he did not seek to make a display of various kinds of knowledge, like Count Sinzendorf. The education he had formerly received in Rome had filled his memory less than it had sharpened his sagacity; and acuteness is the quality least liable to be blunted by age. But he had not the energy needed to maintain his opinions. He was satisfied with expressing

* Foscarini, *Storia arcana*: allegava, che tolto il credito del banco scioglievasi l'unico vincolo rimasto alla pubblica fede.

them ; after which he seemed to sink into a state of apathy, or vented his disgust in unavailing sarcasms.

The third minister of conference, Count Königsegg, passed for a well educated man of the world ; he spoke most of the languages of Europe with a certain perfection ; he was not deficient in talent any more than his colleagues, but equally wanting in ardour and energy : it was difficult to say whether he kept in the background from feebleness of character, or from fancied prudence and caution. The fruitless and scarce-avowed opposition to a higher will, which they dared not resist though they thought it ill directed, had produced in them all a lassitude and indifference, under the influence of which they allowed things to take their course.

At this juncture the place of the Emperor was filled by his daughter, now in her twenty-third year. Maria Theresa had already commanded admiration by the youthful, blooming, and feminine character of her beauty, and by her quiet and steady progress in intellectual culture, according to the measure of the instruction afforded her. She had learned Latin, and her teacher affirmed that she distinguished the peculiar merits of the authors he read with her ; * in all she did she showed method and refinement ; in her intercourse with men, a serenity and earnestness not devoid of grace. “ But what gives her her chief value,” says a Venetian, in 1738, “ is the elevation of her mind, united with a certain manliness of

* According to Kolinowics, she spoke at Presburg, in 1741, in the *idiomate latino polito illo nec vulgari cujus gnarissima est.*

temper;* one sees that she feels to what she is born, and it is easy to believe that her councillors will exercise no despotic power over her." After she had passed through the sad days of her father's illness and death—doubly trying to her in her situation—she received the homage of her ministers, who saluted her Queen of Hungary and Bohemia. Her words were interrupted by sobs; but she instantly began to exercise her sovereign functions and to take an active share in the conferences. The old ministers had flattered themselves that, with a new reign, they should recover the consideration which they looked upon as their due. We know, from Sinzendorf's own lips, that this was their chief reason for raising the Grand Duke, upon whom they could rely, to the dignity of Co-regent. But the good sense of the young Sovereign immediately showed her how little real support and assistance she could promise herself from these old men, who were not even in possession of the thread of affairs. She loved her husband with all her heart, and was the more anxious for his elevation, as she hoped through him to perpetuate the splendour of the imperial name in her house; but she was not inclined to share her hereditary power with him, nor to give him any material influence over the government. She is, perhaps, the sole example, in the whole history of queens, of one who had an equally lively sense of her womanly and domestic duties, and of her sovereign functions and

* *Elevatezza del suo Spirito congiunto ad una certa virilita d'animo, atto oggimai a trattare facende grandi, e gia mostra di sentire la sua fortuna, etc.*

attributes, yet kept them entirely distinct. The consciousness that she was born to rule, which had been nurtured in her from childhood, had received a certain colour and direction from her filial piety: it was her wish to reign herself as her father had done; and looking around for a servant who could aid her in the task, no other occurred to her than the same man on whom he had bestowed his confidence.

Amidst the descendants of the most illustrious families, this stranger and Protestant, John Christopher Bartenstein, the son of an obscure professor in Strasburg, had raised himself to a post of the greatest influence and importance. His talents were early developed, as appears from his dissertation for his doctor's degree, which he published in the year 1709,* being then only eighteen, and which his teacher, Bökler, eulogizes, not without reason, for the various knowledge, mature judgment, intelligence, and ardour which it displayed. He was even then master of the whole method of deduction applied to jurisprudence, politics, and history. By this he made his way at the court of Vienna, whither he had come by accident, and where he soon changed his religion. Nowhere was there a greater demand for this sort of talent than at a court constantly engaged in struggles to convert its innumerable contested claims into legal rights. Bartenstein combined a considerable know-

* *Dissertatio de bello imperatori Carolo a Mauritio electore illato.* The preface praises "maturum et nil juvenile spirans iudicium, igneam mentis vim,—præclaram non in humanioribus modo literis sed in prudentia quoque juris publici inprimis Germanici ut et naturæ et gentium eruditionem etc."

ledge of the rules and maxims of the Empire with the more recent science of the laws of nature and nations, and displayed no less dialectical acuteness than decision of views, or, if we may use the word, of sentiments. Nor was he a mere publicist; on one occasion, in the absence of Sinzendorf, having to make some statement to Charles VI. in person, he won his entire favour; and in the post of secretary of state, to which he was raised, though the only occupation which necessarily devolved on him was to write down the protocols of the conferences, he soon, by his own merit and the favourable opinion of the Emperor, acquired considerable influence over the conduct of affairs. He had almost in excess what the others wanted—energy and self-reliance. Somebody once said to him, “The Emperor, our master, will get the court into a terrible scrape;” “and I,” answered Bartenstein, “shall find means to get it out again.” Towards the end of Charles VI.’s life he had the entire management of affairs. In the evening, when he was visible at his billiard-table, everybody crowded around him, both the foreign ambassadors and the young nobility of the country.

On the Queen’s accession, Bartenstein, who had never been in favour at the court of the Grand Duke, feared that he should lose his power. At one of his first audiences of the new sovereign he sank on one knee before her, and tendered his resignation. But she had already perceived that he was the only man whom she could employ as an instrument, so as to avoid having the will of her old ministers forced upon her. She replied, that this was not a time at

which he could be permitted to resign ; he must continue to do all the good in his power ; she should know how to prevent him from doing anything bad—for that was the somewhat harsh word which, according to her own account of the matter, she used. She overlooked his want of breeding, and even the rough language he sometimes addressed to herself in the cabinet or the assembled council ; she remarked only, that he was admirably well informed, extremely industrious, and incorruptibly honest and faithful.*

Thus the same state of things continued under the young Queen : there were still two different parties, or rather directions of opinion, both at court and in the conference.

In Germany, parties are usually distinguished not only by their ultimate aims, but also by their views of the persons and things with whom or with which they come in contact ; their zeal is fostered by their stubborn attachment to theories. It was out of the question, that Bartenstein, hitherto the principal champion of the French alliance, should give up his partiality to it. He did not, moreover, possess that true penetration which leads a man to see things as they are, and not as he wishes them. He did not convert his old antagonists ; but the impression he made on the Queen was great, because his views were tranquillizing.

The protest of Bavaria was thought to be silenced

* “ C'étoit un robin : he spoke as he wrote ; he had offended her with his unsmooth discourses in the cabinet and in the council.” Thus Maria Theresa expressed herself about him, in July 1743, to the English ambassador.

for ever by the production of the will, in which the words alleged were not to be found ; the agitation of the lower classes, marked by tumultuous violence, was soon allayed ; the act of hereditary homage was performed without disorder or obstruction. It was impossible for the states which had accepted the Pragmatic Sanction to refuse to carry out what they themselves had settled. The method was adopted of establishing a communication with the principal authorities in all parts of the country, and the first demands were readily granted ; even where resistance was anticipated, it vanished as soon as the Queen appeared in person.* The anxiety which had at first prevailed, gradually gave way to a sense of security and confidence in the future : the government persuaded itself that it would be able not only to preserve the hereditary dominions in their integrity, but also, by the elevation of the Grand Duke, to secure to the imperial throne its former exalted position. The only opposition raised, that of Bavaria, was too feeble to make any impression, since France was supposed to have been secured. The confidence (which all the intimations to the contrary did not suffice to destroy) that Cardinal Fleury would adhere to the guarantee which had been purchased by such large concessions, and which he had so solemnly given, was the corner-

* The others reproached the first who had personally yielded in this matter, who was a prelate. "Entrez seulement vous autres chez la reine et allez voir, si vous lui pouvez rien refuser. En effet les autres ont fait la même chose : tant la reine leur a demandé cela de bonne grace." Letter from Vienna, 14th Dec., 1740.

stone of the whole policy of the Queen's ministers. They carefully avoided any interference in the disputes between England and France, and closed their ears to the complaints of England as to the aspirations of the French after universal monarchy, to which they had formerly been very susceptible.

The same causes led to the indifference they showed towards Prussia. Bartenstein had once seemed inclined to render services to that court, but the contrary disposition had long been evident; it was sufficiently proved by the violent tone of the decree in the affair of Heristal, which was attributed to the eager partiality of the Secretary of State. The old ministers were not, perhaps, wholly disinclined to the subsequent overtures of Prussia, since they kept their eyes steadily fixed on a renewal of the great alliance; and they suffered some expressions of assent to escape them; but these could not be listened to by the men who placed all their trust in France. The conviction upon which Frederick acted, that the French would revive their old designs against Austria, and seek to ruin her, was the very reverse of that which they entertained. They feared that the least advance towards another power would alienate France, and would rather create than remove a danger.

The news of the King of Prussia's irruption into Silesia fell upon them like a thunderbolt from a cloudless sky.

The first tidings of his intention were received in Vienna on the 5th December, yet the court could not be brought to believe them. On the 9th, an officer arrived, announcing the advance of the Prus-

sian troops upon Silesia. On the 12th, the intelligences received left no further doubt; they contained the lists of the regiments ordered to march and the places at which the King meant to halt each night.

Conference after conference was immediately held. Some were of opinion that Frederick's intention was only to compel them to change the system adopted in the affair of Berg; others, that a new Charles XII. was arising, and that there was nothing they might not expect from him. But whatever difference of opinion might exist as to the future, they were roused by this invasion, to an unanimous resolution that force must instantly be repelled by force. It was possible, they admitted, that the King might at first have the advantage in the field; but they could defend their strong places, and would then be able to drive him out of the country with a few hussar regiments; moreover, the Queen had friends who would espouse her cause: it was impossible that the Empire should allow an irruption made by one Elector into the territory of another during an interregnum, to pass unrevenged. They were persuaded that the King's attack would recoil upon himself.

On the 17th December, Borcke, the Prussian ambassador, made the communications, with which he was charged, in the first place to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. They were nearly a repetition of the proposals formerly made in Rheinsberg; namely, that in the general attack impending over the house of Austria, the King of Prussia would defend it with all his forces, and assist it with a considerable sum of money; that he would also endeavour to raise the

Grand Duke to the imperial throne, and to re-establish the ancient alliance ; provided, on the other hand, he should receive, in the province of Silesia, the security and compensation which he was entitled to demand. On the same day, arrived Chief-Marshal Gotter, whom Frederick had chosen for this difficult mission, on account of his long residence at the court of Vienna, and his consequent intimate acquaintance with it. Gotter connected with the old and never-abandoned claims the recent disputes, by which every obligation had been dissolved, and Prussia justified in what she had done.

It is, however, evident, that in the actual state of men's minds, neither the one nor the other could find a hearing. The court of Berlin had not disguised from itself that an armed invasion would excite a very natural resentment ; but had calculated that this feeling would be checked by the far greater danger which threatened Austria from another side, and that negotiations might be set on foot on the basis now proposed. The ruling party at the court of Vienna would not, however, acknowledge the danger in question, and even denied its existence ; the enterprise of Prussia was regarded as an unfair aggression, which must be repelled at any cost ; and might be repulsed without much difficulty. The Grand Duke replied to the ambassador, that the Queen could not cede an inch of her hereditary domains to any power without awakening the fancied claims of many others ; but that rather than give up Silesia, she would unite with anybody—she would let the Turk come to Vienna. As for himself, it should not be

said that he had ever, for a moment, thought of obtaining the imperial crown at the cost of a province: he must be the basest of mankind if such a thing had ever occurred to him; he would rather be buried under the ruins of the world.

Once only the Grand Duke made some advances to Prussia: on New Year's-day, 1741, Gotter told him that his sovereign did not insist on the whole of Silesia; on which he let fall the question, what offer might be made to him? Schwiebus he would think too little; and, on the other hand, the half of Silesia would be far too much for Austria to give: there were infinite difficulties in the way of an arrangement, though he would not affirm that it was wholly impossible. He could say no more, for at that instant the Queen knocked at the door, which was ajar, and the Grand Duke immediately retired into her apartments.

Encouraged by these expressions of the Grand Duke, and more distinctly instructed by the King, that he would be satisfied with a part of Silesia,* the Prussian ambassadors conceived a hope of still setting a negotiation on foot. Contrary to the original intention, they drew up a formal protocol of the mitigated demands of their King, together with his proposals: but their expectations were deceived. The only use which the cabinet of Vienna made of

* Frederick to Gotter and Borce, 26th Dec. *Vous pouvez même insinuer au duc, qu'encore que j'ai demandé l'entière cession de cette province, je saurais y apporter de la modération et me contente d'une bonne partie de ce pays, pourvu qu'il plait à la reine de Hongrie d'entrer avec moi dans un accommodement.*

the protocol was, to communicate it to the other European courts, especially to those against which the King's offers were directed. As to the business in question, they persisted in the answer already given—that no negotiation could take place until the King had evacuated Silesia: the Grand Duke said, that when the sword was drawn, all negotiation was at an end. The expression, that it was the duty of an Elector of Brandenburg to perform the services of chamberlain to a future Emperor, instead of invading him with hostile armies, I do not find in the reports; but it may have been used orally. The sense of an ancient traditional supremacy, roused by sudden aggression to a more vehement assertion of its claims, appears in every word and every allusion. The Queen expresses herself as if every right, human and divine, were outraged in her person. Bartenstein did not even condescend to give audience to the ambassadors.*

There are intellectual atmospheres which have nothing in common. The opinions which circulate in them originate in different perceptions, different views; they spring from a totally different soil.

No two things could be more unlike than the court of Vienna, conscious of nothing but its ancient supremacy, and the Prussian camp, the soul of which

* The ambassadors were blamed by Robinson for addressing themselves to Bartenstein, and, when he "affected not to deign to hear of their proposals," to Knorr, his son-in-law, who now disseminated a report that Prussia offered 6 million florins for a few duchies, if the court of Vienna would declare war against France.

was aspiring activity. The condemnation of the enterprise of the King of Prussia was so unanimous and so strong at Vienna, that it carried away not only the English, but even the two Prussian ambassadors. Borcke wrote plainly to his sovereign, that if he had been consulted upon the draft of the proposals, he should have opposed it. Gotter, who in a confidential conversation described his master as a man having some good qualities, but the vices of ambition and love of money, and who never took advice, praises the minister Podewils for not having contributed in any way to this enterprise; and congratulates himself that he had nothing to do with it. He actually repeated to the King the opinion of the court of Vienna, that the only thing for him to do was at once to quit Silesia. The confidence and pride of the court subjugated all minds.

On the arrival of the intelligence of the events in Breslau, all further communication was broken off. The Prussian ambassadors quitted Vienna; on the 18th January, Gotter reached Schwerin's outposts in Upper Silesia, and it was evident that a serious conflict between the two powers was at hand.

The immediate question, however, was not which of the two were the stronger, but rather which of the two had taken the right view of the situation, and what position the powers of Europe generally would assume—above all, France, on whose decision the turn of affairs on the continent generally might be said to depend.

CHAPTER III.

POLICY OF FRANCE.

THE court of Vienna placed an absolute confidence in the strict alliance which it had concluded with France, and in the man who directed the policy of that country. It afterwards expressed its opinion that it was solely by the influence of Prussia that he had been misled, and seduced into another track.

Events have already enabled us to judge of the character of Cardinal de Fleury. His ambition did not break out in words; he possessed the charm of agreeable conversation; the gift, which so well becomes old age, of light and graceful narrative; knowledge of literature, with which he seasoned his discourse; and the most amiable and polished manners. When discoursing on business, he had nothing but peace on his lips; and he was the more easily believed from the cautiousness of his manner, which many censured as timidity. But even in the common affairs of life, he was regarded by those who knew him more intimately, as "a cunning fox," "a great practitian" (*practicus*), to use their own expressions. In public affairs, the results proved how deeply his plans were laid; with what address and secrecy he followed them out, till his combinations were fulfilled, and the desired end was accepted as a

necessary expedient. He had no objection meanwhile to be the subject of people's censures. He did not wish, like most men, to make a brilliant appearance on the road to the goal he aimed at; all he cared for was, to reach it. But his ruling thought and passion, before which every consideration for men or things vanished, was, the general one of maintaining and increasing the preponderance of the French power in the world. He kept the opposition to Austria as steadily in view as Richelieu or Louis XIV. had done.

We have no need to examine Fleury's actions in order to discover his opinions as to the guarantee of the order of succession, since we know the expressions which he used to Frederick's ambassador extraordinary, at the moment of receiving the intelligence, not of the death, but of the hopeless state of the Emperor. He informed him of it in a subdued tone of voice, after a moment of hesitation and reflection, and then went through the list of German princes, who were likely to have the greatest weight. Hereupon the ambassador adverted to the Pragmatic Sanction. "We assented to it in our last treaty of peace," said Fleury, "but with the following clause—without prejudice to the rights of a third party." "A clause," rejoined the ambassador, "by which it is at once annihilated." "That," said the Cardinal, "is a matter of course in affairs of this kind." *

* Camas, 30th Oct. The Cardinal mentioned Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, and also the Grand Duke of Tuscany. "Je pris l'occasion de lui parler de la pragmatique sanction pour pénétrer son sentiment. Nous y avons accédé, me dit-il, par le

Immediately after this conversation the intelligence of the Emperor's death was received.

Such was the character of the policy of that time. Robinson lays it down as a positive rule of diplomacy, to study the official declarations of a court, not so much with a view to understand their positive contents, as to watch in what manner they intend to circumvent the other party, without falling into flagrant contradiction with themselves.

The real "third parties," however, whose rights Cardinal Fleury, in spite of his guarantee, thought himself bound to regard, were not only the court of Bavaria, which we have mentioned, but that of Spain.

At the last peace the Spanish court had hardly deigned to remark that it gained two magnificent kingdoms as an appanage for a second son; and only complained that it was obliged again to give up Tuscany, the garden of Italy, and Parma and Piacenza, the ancient inheritance of the Farnesi, on which it had reckoned with the utmost confidence. Its ambition, hardly yet laid asleep, was roused anew

dernier traité de paix, mais avec cette clause : *sauf le droit d'un tiers ; moyennent quoi, répliquai-je brusquement, la voilà par terre. Mais cela s'entend toujours en pareille occasion, réprit-il.*—In reference to Prussia, Fleury said first : *c'est le plus puissant : il peut lui seul subsister et agir par lui-même et jouer un beau rôle dans le changement de scène. Nevertheless, he wished it to happen with "noblesse et justice."* Subsequently he again used the word *justice* : *Cela est vrai, dis-je, mais V Em^{te} avouera aussi, que c'est de même le tems de faire valoir des droits justes et des prétentions légitimes, qu'on n'a que trop long tems et trop durement contesté au roi mon maître. Cela est juste, répondit le Cardinal en se levant.*

by the death of Charles VI. That court did not think itself bound by the guarantee, in what related to its own claims. It said that the order of succession settled by Austria, was in itself null and void, and therefore could never have been the subject of a valid guarantee.

The Bourbons generally laid it down as a principle, that the Spanish line of the house of Austria was continued in them: they maintained that all the rights which Charles V. reserved to his immediate posterity, when he made over his German hereditary dominions to his brother—rights which were renewed in 1617—had devolved to them. The court of Madrid was determined to maintain these claims, if not in the immense extent which might be given to them, yet, at least, in all that related to Italy.

Had they been as well prepared as the King of Prussia was, they would not have hesitated a moment to attempt an occupation like him; but the Spanish minister at war observed, that before they began hostilities they must have troops ready; and that the only expedition which it was possible to use, consisted in arming themselves without loss of time.*

We can find no trace of any preliminary agreement with France on this subject. Cardinal Fleury ex-

* Girolamo Corner: *Relatione di Spagna, 1742.* Il Duca di Montemar consigliava, di raccogliere et metter prima di tutto in buon ordine le forze così di terra come di mare, apprestando principalmente il denaro bisognevole a vestire le truppe somministrare al meno in buona parte le paghe agli ufficiali e soldati che n' erano di lungo tempo digiuni acconciare reunire et recar pronte le navi sparse per li porti del regno etc.: si estesero in ogni parte . . . commissioni pressanti per eseguirlo.

pressed himself with the greatest reserve towards the court of Spain, whose ambition he did not want to stimulate; but no doubt was entertained at Madrid that in this affair, as in that of America, they would have the power of France on their side. And, indeed, it was to be expected that the French would use every effort to establish and extend the domination of the Bourbon family, at which they had so long aimed. Not only Fleury, but many influential members of the government, both civil and military, were powerfully and constantly animated with this idea.

In the former class, the one who most distinguished himself was Pecquet, whose father had held a similar post and had followed a similar course. He had previously acted as his father's assistant, but for more than twenty years had been independent. This man, who was looked upon as the oracle of the foreign office, appealed in all great affairs to the traditions of the reign of Louis XIV.: he still cherished the haughty, violent, and enterprising spirit of that epoch, and occasionally spoke in the old tone.* It was he who mainly opposed the plans of a further extension of the Prussian dominion on the banks of the Rhine.

Among the men who were at once remarkable for military and administrative talents, the Count de Belleisle occupied the largest share of the public

* Camas, 21st July, 1740: C'est proprement l'oracle; et la longue expérience qu'il a dans les affaires étrangères dont il a suivi le fil depuis 22 ans, fait qu'on a toujours recours à lui, lorsqu'il s'agit de quelque affaire importante. Il a succédé à son père dans cet emploi, a travaillé sous lui dès sa jeunesse, et ainsi a hérité de ses lumières et de ses mémoires.

attention. It was said that he heeded no obstacle in the world where he could hope to gain renown for himself or for France; and that he was haughty and dissembling. The latter judgment I cannot confirm, after reading a great number of his letters; the former I can. He was dexterous, indefatigable, and ambitious. His view of political affairs was different from those we have been describing, especially in relation to Germany and the house of Bavaria.

He drew up a long report* to prove that at last the time was come when it was possible completely to crush the power of Austria, which had hitherto proved the great obstacle to that of France; and that it was not only possible, but necessary.

If France allowed the Grand Duke of Tuscany to be elected Emperor, he would soon attempt to reconquer his hereditary dominions of Lorraine, to expel the Spanish line of the house of Bourbon from Naples, and to revive the old alliance against France, one object of which was to destroy the trade of that country and of Spain. It must be remembered that the Grand Duke traced his descent from Charlemagne, and that as lately as the year 1711 the right to the crown of France, which he derived from that ancestry, had been mentioned in a printed book:† that he also laid claim to Provence and Bretagne; in

* *Mémoire sur l'état présent de l'Europe par un ministre attaché aux véritables intérêts de la France.* MSS. British Museum, Geo. III.'s Coll.

† He alluded to a book by Hugo, *Traité historique sur l'origine et la généalogie de la maison de Lorraine*, which appeared under the name of Baleicourt in 1711, and was condemned by the Parliament.

short, that self-preservation made it their duty not to allow him to be chosen Emperor. But if the accession of the house of Lorraine-Austria to the imperial throne was so dangerous, the mere present exclusion of it was a very insufficient security. The possession of so many important hereditary domains would always enable it to resume that dignity at some future period.

He concludes, therefore, that the security of France demands both the transfer of the imperial crown to another house, and the partition of the hereditary dominions of Austria.

For the former, no house appears to him so eligible as that of Bavaria, which had as yet reaped nothing from its alliance with France but losses and disasters. It ought to be rewarded for its long attachment by elevation to the imperial throne.

To carry into effect the work of partitioning the Austrian provinces, Belleisle held the formation of a grand alliance necessary, not only with Spain and Bavaria, but also with Sardinia and Prussia; Sweden, too, he hoped to gain over; of Saxony he speaks doubtingly. His projected division of this vast heritage was as follows: the Netherlands and Luxemburg to be given to France, the kingdom of Bohemia to Bavaria, Silesia to Prussia; Sardinia and Spain were to share the north of Italy. As to the Queen of Hungary and her consort, they might be left in possession of Hungary and Austria.

But even these, adds the Marshal, she would owe to the good will of France: for it would be impossible for her to oppose any resistance to such a coalition

of powerful states. Their union would, of itself, be decisive; it would scarcely be necessary to draw the sword; and if this point were once attained, what nation would ever again be strong enough to measure itself with France? "The maritime powers would be entirely disabled; the house of Austria would have ceased to exist; the royal house of France would be umpire and master of Europe as long as it endured." He is fully persuaded, and indeed bluntly declares, that Providence had brought about this situation of affairs, for the sole purpose of placing the destinies of the world in the hands of the house of Bourbon.*

The invitations of Spain coincided with the suggestions of Bourbon ambition, and everything was in a warlike vein, when Fleury, whom we may presume to have expected this, brought the affair under formal discussion in a council of ministers

The view of the matter, on which Belleisle's memoir is mainly founded—that France ought not to suffer the elevation of a Duke of Lorraine to the dignity of Romano-German Emperor, was first in-

* "Il semble que la providence a tout exprès formé la situation de l'Europe et les intérêts des puissances, pour faciliter à la maison de France les moyens naturels et indispensables de s'agrandir; et pour mettre dans ses mains pour toujours la destinée de l'Europe." He opposed the guarantee by adducing Spanish reasons,—“on peut avec la plus exacte équité attaquer et en renverser la pragmatique, parce qu'elle comprend dans ses dispositions plusieurs grands états et royaumes, qui appartiennent au roi (de Fr.) à juste titre.” He claimed the inheritance for the King of France, especially Bohemia and Hungary, by virtue of the decision “of 1617,” que les filles descendues de Philipp III. excluent la postérité féminine de Ferdinand II.”

sisted on. The French had formerly opposed the union of Lorraine with the hereditary possessions of the house of Austria; and it appeared to them intolerable, that the expelled Prince of that country (of whose hatred to France a great deal was said) should now exercise the rights and prerogatives of head of the Empire.* On this point all were of a mind: they determined to exert the influence of France against the Grand Duke, and in favour of the Elector of Bavaria.

In order to facilitate the Elector's promotion it was deemed necessary that France should recognise his claims to the heritage of Austria. The Cardinal examined the old treaties, which had been concluded with Max Emanuel (especially, no doubt, that of Versailles of 1701), together with the latest which had been concluded with Charles Albert, son of the former; he found them binding for ever. The ministers did not disguise from themselves that they were acting directly at variance with the terms of the guarantee they had given to the house of Austria; but they decided that, as one of these engagements ran counter to the other, they could not fulfil both; if they attempted to remain neutral, they would not win Bavaria, and would yet lose Austria.† And,

* In a later despatch of the Dutch ambassador Hony to Fagel (29th Jan., 1745), this was mentioned as the principal ground of the whole war. "Qu'il me soit permis, de faire ressouvenir à L. H. P. que la prévention, où on est ici sur une haine invétérée contre la France, qu'on attribue au Gr. Duc à été un des grands motifs qui ont déterminé cette cour à prendre des mesures pour empêcher ce prince à monter sur le trône impérial."

† Thus we are informed by a later mémoire of Belleisle, of

moreover, as we have said, they assumed the authenticity of the clause which absolved them from all weighty obligations.

The negotiations with Bavaria were already in full course. We are not acquainted with their details, but so far as we have been able to discover, it was on the very same day in which Frederick's overtures were made to the court of Vienna (17th December), that the French ambassador at Munich gave the Elector the assurance that the King of France would support his pretensions to the imperial throne, and recognise all his other rights. The court of Versailles admitted from the very beginning, in the first place, that Bavaria must be put in a state to take the field with forces of her own, and in the second, that she must be supported by French auxiliaries.

Had the court of Vienna entertained the least suspicion of these proceedings, it would have given a different reception to the Prussian proposals. But Bartenstein and his friends, blinded by obstinate conceit of their own judgment, and by old antipathies, persisted in their mistaken confidence.* They thought they had effected a great stroke of policy in communicating to Versailles, Munich, and Dresden the offer of Prussia to defend the Austrian right of succession against all other claimants, and to join in a grand alliance against France. They probably pre-

the 20th Jan., 1743, written in order to justify himself, but which in the main may be trusted.

* Robinson, 4th Jan., 1741, "Bartenstein says, that this court (Vienna) has nothing to rely upon but France. The man is run French mad."

sumed that Frederick had already contracted engagements with these powers, especially the first; and that, consequently, he would now appear double-tongued and utterly untrustworthy. But as that was not the case, as he had not even apprised the French of his intended expedition against Silesia, the only effect was, that the three powers, informed at the same time of the rejection of his proposals by Austria, conceived the hope that they might be able to win him over to their side. The court of Versailles determined to offer its alliance to a monarch already engaged in a career of victory. On the 14th January, 1741, the ambassador was instructed to declare to him that France would prefer his alliance to any other; that she had not the smallest jealousy of an extension of the power of Prussia in that direction, and wished that his enterprise might have a happy issue: if he would acknowledge the claims of the Elector of Bavaria, and promise to assist him in his views on the imperial crown, she was willing to enter into a league for mutual defence.* The project of such a league, and full powers to conclude it, were sent to the ambassador with these instructions.

* S. M. consent aussi à cimenter dès aujourd'hui son amitié avec le roi de Prusse pour une alliance défensive, desque ce prince entrant dans les mêmes vues de S. M. voudra bien s'engager à procurer la couronne impériale à l'électeur de Bavière ainsi que les justes prétensions de cette maison.

CHAPTER IV.

CONDUCT OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.

ON the 29th of January, Frederick II., after putting the Silesian frontier in something like a state of defence against an assault of the Austrian army, returned to Berlin* in vigorous health, rather improved than otherwise, by the fatigues of his short campaign. He appeared the following day at a court ball, though with a mind evidently less free from anxiety than it had been six weeks before; he spoke long and earnestly with the foreign ambassadors, for whom these balls served as audiences.

Two days after his return, Valori communicated to him the proposals of his court. Frederick, whose demands were rejected by Austria, and himself threatened with a conflict for life and death, could hardly do otherwise than accept these proposals with joy, quit the path he had at first chosen, and enter upon the one now opened to him.

Nevertheless, he thought it a matter for great deliberation.

“What advantage,” said he to Valori, “can I promise myself from this alliance? The other powers are ready to coalesce against France and her allies.

* Valori 30. S. M. Prussienne arriva hier avant midi, quoique ses précurseurs Mr. de Gotter et Mr. de Camas ayent assuré aux reines, qu'il ne pouvoit arriver qu'aujourd'hui au soir.

You must be aware that nothing injures the Elector of Bavaria so much in the opinion of Germans, as his connexion with the French court. I do not yet see on what assistance I can rely; whether France is seriously determined to put the Elector of Bavaria and the Palatine house on a war footing, to favour the claims of Spain, and to guarantee Silesia to me. If I have not beforehand the most perfect security on all these points, must I not prefer the other side? * He showed not the smallest desire to see the draught of the treaty, and when Valori presented it to him, he left it for a long time unanswered. The ambassador could not conceal his vexation at this.

The man by whom Frederick was fortified and maintained in this way of thinking was Heinrich von Podewils; the same who had been the first confidant of his resolutions, and had suggested the policy he had hitherto pursued. He opposed an alliance with France in every conversation, every memoir, every letter.

Podewils said of Frederick, that he was his own prime minister; and that he left his councillors no other glory than that of obedience. But if the decisive thoughts which gave the impulse, sprang from the head of the King, Podewils exercised a great influence over the mode and means of their execution, and sometimes even over their internal modification.

It was not necessary to warn the King against the predominance of France; he had a lively sense of the

* Valori, 31 Jan.: Sans toutes ces mesures bien prises et bien stipulées ne dois-je pas chercher à me tourner d'un autre côté et tâcher de trouver mes avantages?

danger to be apprehended from it. But Podewils represented to him under various aspects the disagreeable effects he would have to expect from this alliance. He would unquestionably arm Russia and the maritime powers against himself, and after all could he trust France? How treacherous had she proved in the late troubled affairs of Poland! But granted that France stood firm, the King would not be enabled by her aid to enter the field with Austria, Russia, England and Hanover, Denmark, and Holland combined. His resources in men and money were quite inadequate to such an attempt; a slight reverse might leave Brandenburg a prey to its enemies.

The advice which Podewils founded upon these observations was twofold — if possible to induce Russia and the maritime powers to use their mediation with Austria and incline her to give way; and, to that end, not to ask too much. Podewils advised the King to demand only the four duchies, Glogau, Wohlau, Liegnitz, and Jauer; and even not to insist positively on the last. He adduced the example of the Great Elector, who, as King Frederick William had so often called to mind, might have had the half of Lower Pomerania, if he had contented himself with that, but as he would not, lost the whole. If the King got nothing but those three duchies, his house would be eternally indebted to him for the acquisition; his claim to Berg opened to him other more immediate advantages.

Frederic II. unhesitatingly acknowledged the force of these arguments. He declared that an alliance with France appeared to him also the worst expedient,

only to be resorted to if no other remained; and repeated that he by no means thought of insisting on the demand for the whole of Silesia. He would confess in confidence, that he should be satisfied with Lower Silesia, and in the most unfavourable event, with even less. "If we can gain Breslau," said he, "I shall be perfectly content. I should be willing to pay a sum of money for it: but, if it is impossible, we must find some other means of protecting the town against the fury of the Catholic party." The thought passed through his mind that Breslau might, in that case, be declared a free city. He desired Podewils to act with the greatest possible caution, and not to allow this his ultimatum to be known, except at the last extremity.

Hereupon, Podewils stated the demands of Prussia in the formula so often afterwards repeated;—Lower Silesia and Breslau. The final determination was, with respect to France, only to take care not to break with her; and, on the other hand, to request the mediation of the maritime powers and Russia in favour of the claims as above stated.

But was it not very doubtful whether these claims would be admitted? Was it not rather to be feared that the urgent appeals of the court of Vienna would obtain from its ancient allies indirect, or even direct, assistance?

It is a signal proof of the perseverance and tenacity of will which were such prominent features of his character, that, in the face of these possibilities, Frederick adhered steadily to the system he had once laid down. It is indeed worthy of a great

power, to hesitate, in the moment of conflict and of danger, to grasp a proffered hand lest it should thus obtain a mischievous preponderance in Europe.

Yet we must not estimate too highly the moral value of this policy.

Frederick and Podewils inferred, from particular expressions of opinion, that it would be easier for them, and more difficult for the Austrian court, to gain over the powers who had been parties to the great alliance than it afterwards proved.

The expedition against Silesia had been carried on, thus far, with so much ease, that they formed no correct idea of the military force which Austria had at her disposal. New experiences, both in the field and in the cabinet, were necessary to bring things to an issue.

CHAPTER V.

SILESIAN CAMPAIGN IN THE SPRING OF 1741—BATTLE
OF MOLLWITZ.

FREDERICK had gained possession of Silesia by a coup-de-main, and his views were next directed to two points—the conquest of the three fortresses which the enemy, driven out everywhere else, still held, and the protection of the frontiers against fresh invasion on the part of Austria.

Schwerin, whom he invested with the supreme command during his absence, had orders to make no change in the divisions employed in besieging the strong places; and to direct his chief attention and care to a thorough and extensive defence of the mountain passes. For this purpose some of the most distinguished generals were appointed to act with him in the several circles; and, with such assistance, he had no doubt of entire success. He said, if the enemy had 20,000 men in Moravia and as many in Bohemia, he should fear nothing; so completely would he block up every passage. The confidence he expressed raised the highest expectations even in the King. Whilst Frederick was busied in providing guns and ammunition for a closer siege of the fortresses—which was shortly to place them in the hands of Prussia—he informed the field-marshal

that he intended to strike his tents in May, and to occupy the most advantageous post between Jägersdorf and Troppau, in order to be able to watch the enemy on the road from Moravia, and to attack them or not, according to circumstances.

These were the plans suggested by an ardent love of war and confidence of success; but, as the old Prince of Dessau when at Berlin had laboured to convince the King, they were not consistent with the actual state of things.

That Prince's situation had been a very painful one since Frederick's accession. Whereas Frederick William I. had never ordered a hundred men from one place to another without telling him beforehand, Frederick took measures for an immense reinforcement of his army without consulting him; evinced coldness and ill-humour whenever they met;* and lastly undertook a great campaign without saying a word to him about it. At the first rumour of the Silesian project the Prince implored him not to do him, his oldest general, the unkindness to leave him behind; when, notwithstanding his entreaties, this actually took place, he thought himself disgraced and deemed unworthy to serve in actual warfare; he wished himself dead a thousand times, rather than to pass the rest of his life in so intolerable a manner. I cannot find the smallest indication that, during these conflicts with the house of Austria, the King doubted his fidelity, nor indeed that he had any cause to doubt it. In the Prince's confidential letters to his eldest

* Leopold of Dessau himself speaks of the evident hatred that the King bore him.

son he speaks emphatically of the enterprise as "just"—"so just"—and congratulates him that he at least is permitted to take part in it. Frederick's motive was not political distrust, but what he plainly avowed in a letter to the Prince—"he would not have it said that the King of Prussia took the field with a tutor by his side;" and again, that he would make him feel that he was not indispensable; and that in the service, at least, he was only a subject. Prince Leopold understood this very well. He repelled the accusation of his enemies, that he wanted to exercise influence over the King, and then to appropriate the honour to himself, declared that he wished only to execute the King's orders as his faithful servant, and confirmed this assertion by his actions. No one laboured with greater zeal to recruit the army. He had not, it is true, at first sufficient self-command to refrain from speaking of the expedition against Silesia with severe disapprobation; but when once it was actually on foot, he took the liveliest interest in it. He studied the geography of the province on a very defective map, and gave strategical counsels founded upon it. He doubted the expediency of leaving Glogau unconquered in their rear: he thought that if the Austrians were still as good tacticians as they used to be, they would march through the open country of Poland, fall upon the rear of the besieging army and put it to rout: but a much more urgent danger, which nothing had been done to avert, appeared to him to threaten them from Bohemia. As he feared that the Prussian cavalry would be worsted by the Austrian light horse,

so as to injure the reputation of the army, he drew up instructions as to the mode of receiving the attack of the hussars. The King wished to send for foreign engineers, especially from the Netherlands. Prince Leopold pointed out officers in his own army who possessed all the requisite ability. In short, though absent, he exercised considerable influence over the conduct of the Silesian war. He was particularly severe on the manner in which the army was dispersed by Schwerin, whose proceedings he watched with the keen eye of an eclipsed rival: in every one of his letters he exhorted the King to concentrate his forces.

The characters of Frederick's two field-marschals presented a remarkable contrast in every respect. The old Prince, whose religious creed it would have been difficult to define, despised all external accomplishments, was a thorough soldier, frugal in his way of living, and ever mindful of his own advantage. Count Schwerin was a man of general cultivation and talents, and of an agreeable disposition, with a strong taste for cheerful and even sensual enjoyment, and the habit of gratifying it, living constantly in debt and disorder; but at the same time possessed of positive religious convictions, the most complete and profound forgetfulness of self, and a capacity for the noblest moral elevation. We can still become acquainted with both of them from their letters: those of Leopold, though hardly legible or intelligible, contain the most profound reflections; Schwerin does not always write correctly, but always with talent and address—he is full of his subject, cogent,

and even eloquent. The one looks at things according to their various practical possibilities; the other, according to the general impression which they make, sometimes with impatience and anxiety, but more frequently with far too lively hope.

The King had somewhat of the nature of each. His own character was destined to rise to all its elevation and maturity in contact with both, and under influences which were not the less advantageous for being in complete contrast.

Towards the end of February Frederick returned to Silesia, and his first care was to put his frontiers in a complete state of defence.* He ordered Lieutenant-general Kalkstein to establish posts from Reichenbach to Jauer and Liegnitz; and Colonel Lestwitz, with his dragoons, to patrol from Löwenberg to Crossen, along the Bober. He himself went to the quarters at Frankenstein to inspect the posts which had been formed in that neighbourhood at the entrance to the county of Glatz.

It was at this point that the consciousness burst upon him that a new mode of warfare attended with various dangers awaited him.

The Austrian general, Lentulus, who had learned

* In the *Histoire de mon temps*, ch. III. p. 67, he only says that he had proposed to himself "de faire le tour de ses quartiers pour se procurer la connaissance d'un pays qui lui étoit nouveau." In the earlier version: "Je me proposais en arrivant en Silésie de faire le tour de mes quartiers pour prendre connaissance du pays, faire des changemens où cela étoit nécessaire et examiner l'état des troupes." I quote this passage to show the relation which the two versions bear to each other, and why I occasionally turn to the unpublished one.

the profession of arms in the Turkish wars, heard at Glatz that the King was coming into those parts, and sent a small body of hussars to lie in wait for him. They had waited several days in vain, and were about to return when the King appeared. He came with a very small escort from Silberberg to Wartha, inspected the abattis and other preparations which had been made for the defence of this ancient pass, gave some fresh orders, and sat down quietly to dinner. Had the hussars known that he was there, and made an assault upon the place, Frederick must, according to all human calculation, have fallen into their hands. But, as good fortune would have it, their attention was diverted by a squadron of Schulenburg dragoons drawn up on the road through which he was to return. These were charged with complete success by the numerous troop of hussars, which forded the shallow river at Priesnitz. Whilst the dragoons were endeavouring to present a front to the enemy on every side, their ill-trained horses fell into disorder, and the hussars broke in among them and dispersed them.* A small party only appeared before Wartha, and were easily repulsed by the escort of the King, who immediately took horse. As he

* The King to Leopold of Dessau, 8th March. Der gute Obstl. v. Diersford ist wohl in so weit an diesem Unglück etwas mit Schuld, da er die feindlichen Husaren schon eine Zeitlang gesehen, und dennoch sich nicht an das ohnweit davon liegende Dorf (Baumgarten) gezogen, um den Rücken frei zu halten.— (The worthy Lieutenant von Diersford is somewhat to blame in this matter, as he had for some time seen the enemy's hussars, and nevertheless did not advance to the neighbouring village of Baumgarten, so as to protect his rear.)

retreated across the Neisse, and some hundreds of foot-soldiers immediately came up from Frankenstein, the victorious troop did not venture to advance further; satisfied with the capture of a standard and some prisoners, they rode off. "It is only a pity," says Lentulus coolly, speaking of the prisoners in his despatch, "that the King is not among them."*

This incident, which has been dressed out with various additions by rumour, and with still more by tradition, was however sufficiently serious and momentous in its naked truth to render the King more careful of his person. He accused himself of imprudence,† and paid more attention to the warnings of the old Prince of Dessau, who now reiterated them in the most earnest manner; he contemplated his position generally with less confidence.

All the reports that reached him agreed that the enemy was collecting considerable reinforcements, not only in Glatz, but at Braunau, nearer to the principal passes over the mountains. It seemed probable that he intended to descend into the plain and attempt

* The army chaplain, Seegebart, has left behind him a very interesting diary of the events of this campaign, for the use of which I have been indebted to Mr. Fickert of Breslau. There was a report that some Catholic students were among the Austrian hussars, and that the King, disguised by a grenadier's cap, had made his escape on another man's horse. This most likely was the origin of other tales which subsequently became very popular. It would afford a fresh example of the opposite versions in which traditions are reproduced.

† This he said not only in his *mémoires* in the first version, "J'avoue mon étourderie;" but in March, 1741, to the French ambassador, "Il m'ajoute que cette aventure le rendrait plus circonspect." (Desp. 15th March.)

the relief of Glogau. The King summoned all the forces that could possibly be spared from other places into Schweidnitz, over against the mountain passes, that they might be in readiness to meet that incursion; but he now looked upon the conquest of Glogau itself as the only means of ensuring his safety.

Hitherto he had not been very earnest about it, for two reasons: in the first place, not to ruin a city which he already regarded as his own; and, secondly, not to sacrifice too many of his troops. Very recently (in January) he had deprecated "hazardous enterprises;"* but now he could no longer delay. Towards the end of February, or the beginning of March, he daily wrote to the hereditary Prince of Dessau, in the most urgent manner, "to make an end of Glogau." The Prince had temporized, because he wished, according to his father's advice, to have the King's express authority, before proceeding to storm the town.

At length, on the evening of the 7th of March, Colonel Golz† brought him the order in the King's hand-writing; everything was already so well prepared, even to the minutest details, that on the very next evening the troops proceeded to the assault.

* "Hazardeuse entreprisen"—in the mongrel jargon used by the great monarch.—*Transl.*

† To him we owe one of the first and best accounts. *Journal de Berlin*, No. 38. The dispositions made by the Prince, with some of his letters, in the *Annalen des Krieges*, 1806, III. 28, and in *Bernhorst's Nachlass*, I. 33. I had rather be silent as to the state of the fortresses. The Austrians, naturally enough, represented them to be worse, the Prussians, on the contrary, to be better than they really were.

On the 8th of March, in the evening, after the tattoo had been beaten, Margrave Charles's and Prince Leopold's regiments, with eighteen grenadier companies, left the villages in which they were quartered; they gave their baggage to their hosts to take care of, and took nothing with them but their muskets, and each man thirty-six ball-cartridges.

They took up their position at about a gun-shot from the fortress, on a spot long before selected, behind old walls or other places of concealment, in profound silence, which had been most rigorously commanded. Exactly as the town clocks struck twelve they assembled on the glacis. They tore down the palisades and chevaux-de-frise, broke open the interior paling, and climbed the rampart, but slightly impeded by the ice with which it was covered, before the first shots were fired, which now fell far in their rear. The Austrians lost all presence of mind when they saw the enemy, whom they thought at a distance and quiet, on their ramparts and taking their cannon. Four grenadiers of Glasenapp charged more than fifty: even under these circumstances they were mindful of their orders, to call upon every man they encountered to throw down his arms; so, whether from native valour or thorough habits of discipline, they lowered their bayonets and kept more than twelve times their numbers from escaping till their comrades came up, and the whole of the enemy were taken prisoners. In the first moment they everywhere had the superiority: the only serious resistance they encountered was at the castle, where Colonel Reiski opposed them with great personal

valour; but he too was soon wounded and taken prisoner. But before the garrison had been able even to assemble, the Prussians marched through the streets, to their Grenadier's March, from three points. At the chief corps-de-garde they found the commandant, Count Wallis, with his flag, who surrendered. By one o'clock they were completely masters of the city.

Never did intrepid bravery, and careful, minute preparations, military precision, and good fortune, more admirably conspire to ensure success.

"His Majesty," says one writer, with great simplicity, "jumped for joy at the news."

He congratulated the old Prince on having a son capable of performing such an achievement—one of the most glorious that the century had witnessed—the capture of a fortress, without cannon or storming-ladders, sword in hand.* It gave him peculiar satisfaction that the loss was so small: only nine men were killed. He promised the hereditary Prince "double friendship;" and all the officers who had taken part in the affair "never in all his days to forget them, and always to care for them for the future."

The neighbouring circles hailed their deliverance from this garrison, from which they had expected a renewal of the old religious persecutions, with the

* In the letter of the 15th March, in Orlich, I. 316, the copy in the Royal Archives has "sonder Canons und Escalade," meaning not by means of escalade. The old Prince, before whom the plan was laid, expressly warned them against it. We see from this how utterly false is the report of Count von Wallis. (Miscell. der Oest. Mil. Zeitschrift, II. 1.)

utmost joy; a solemn *Te Deum* for the victory was sung even in the villages. It was a great advantage to the King to have the communication across the Oder, which Count Wallis had interrupted, entirely free; but a still greater, that he had now nothing more to apprehend in his rear, and could dispose of the troops which had been occupied in the siege. He did not allow them a moment's rest, much as the grenadiers stood in need of it; for he did not feel himself secure in Schweidnitz till these Glogau regiments had joined him. Now, however, "he would answer for everything"—as he wrote to one of his field-mmarshals; or, as he told the other, "now he felt no more uneasiness."

Already the state of Upper Silesia demanded all his attention.

A few hundred Austrian hussars had succeeded in forcing the pass of Zuckmantel, and reaching Neisse, where they were a most welcome reinforcement to Colonel Roth.

Displeased that a post whose defence he had expressly commanded should have been neglected, and mindful of the warnings he had received, the King desired Schwerin to rase the Jablunka, to abandon all the more distant posts, to fortify Zuckmantel more especially, and to post his whole corps in such a manner that it might rest upon Jägerndorf on the one side and on Neisse on the other, so that he might at any time be able to reach any threatened post in a few hours, and to keep off the enemy.

Schwerin had formed a totally different opinion.

He excused the disaster at Zuckmantel by the

example of other cases, in which even a Marlborough had not always been able to protect his posts. As the King's orders, given on different days, partly in writing, partly orally, did not precisely agree, he doubted whether he was also to give up Troppau and Ratibor, and destroy the magazines he had collected there, or abandon them to the enemy. But without them the troops would not even be able to maintain themselves even in Jägerndorf.* It appeared to him sufficient to abandon the Jablunka and the extreme posts nearest to Moravia, and to blow up Zuckmantel as a robber's nest, the inhabitants of which fired upon any Prussians who entered it (for he thought it impossible to put it in a tenable condition); on the other hand, he thought himself strong enough to hold Ratibor and Troppau. He drew up a plan, showing how the frontier might be defended in its whole extent; the sieges that were begun, carried on; and yet a sufficient body of troops be disposable to meet the enemy in the open field. He had always thought, and continued to think, it most probable that the Austrian army would endeavour to attack him in front; but that if he had only a small reinforcement of four or five battalions, and a few squadrons of dragoons, he should be able from his position to keep

* Schwerin, Jägerndorf, 25th March: "Si l'ennemi veut entreprendre quelque chose avec succès, il faut qu'il débouche par ici. Ainsi dès que je serai en état de l'arrêter dans ces environs, V. M. aura bien plus de commodité pour pousser son siège, elle aura plus de vivres et de fourage: au lieu, que si j'abandonnerois ces postes en me repliant sur la Neis, nous manquerions sûrement l'un et l'autre des vivres et fourages. . . . Ayant des troupes pour me renforcer pour quoi perdre ce trésor?"

the enemy on the other side the mountains.* What an advantage, he added, would it be, if the sieges were successful, at the same time that so large a tract of country were occupied! What confidence would it give the army!

Frederick was not entirely convinced, nevertheless he determined to take a nearer view of the state of things, for he was well inclined at all times to listen to Schwerin's opinions, and not a whit less ardent than he for action; accordingly he actually set out with horse and foot for Upper Silesia. On the 30th of March he came up with Schwerin in Neustadt. Here the latter repeated what he had said in a letter of the 8th; that he heard nothing of any movement of the enemy, and that a fall of snow rendered it highly improbable that he would now cross the mountains: the King was more disposed to believe the field-marshal in consequence of the intelligence he had received, and accompanied him up the mountains as far as Jägerndorf.

Here he immediately discovered that things were in a totally different state from that conjectured by Schwerin.

The court of Vienna had at length raised a consi-

* Schwerin had 13 battalions and 15 squadrons. The King also was to cross the Neiss with 13 battalions and 8 squadrons. Of the 26 battalions and 23 squadrons thus assembled, 10 battalions and 3 squadrons were to support the attack on Neisse, and again occupy Ziegenhals. This would still leave 16 battalions and 20 squadrons to cover the whole frontier from Ratibor to Jägerndorf. Of the remaining troops 8 battalions and 10 squadrons were to cover the Bohemian frontier, 4 or 5 battalions and 3 squadrons that of Glätz, 4 battalions and 6 squadrons were to be stationed at Brieg.

derable army, which had assembled at the foot of the Moravian mountains in the middle of March. The armament of Austria was aided in a most remarkable manner by a voluntary movement of the populations under her sway. The mountain passes were occupied by the Moravian Hannaks, admirable marksmen armed with double *Teschenken* and pistols; they were joined by the Gorals, tall strong Heyduks from the slope of the White Mountains. In Hungary a warlike movement had already been excited by an address of John Palfy's.* The Gespanschaft, or county of Pesth, at a full meeting determined to bring some thousand men into the field, and the most celebrated partisans were engaged to train them. The Croats, who had at length declared their willingness to fight under German leaders, who had learned their language, and now appeared at Vienna well armed and accoutred, were, in part at least, in array against Prussia. The Servian Pandours formed a sort of free corps under a number of Arambaschis—barbarian warriors, in whom a strange superstition was often mingled with natural valour.† The heart of the army consisted of twelve old infantry battalions, and eleven cavalry regiments, who had for the most part fought against the Turks in the last war. In Vienna, where the exploits of the hussars, who had hitherto come off victorious in most of their skirmishes with the Prussians, were

* 29th Jan., Kolinowic's nova Vngariæ periodus, p. 31, mentions this and other documents.

† In the market places of the villages through which they marched, they hung up large cauldrons to brew magic mixtures, which were to be fatal to the Prussians.

greatly admired, every thing was hoped from the superiority of the cavalry: when once they should have crossed the mountains the whole plain of Lower Silesia as far as Crossen would lie stretched before them, and they might pour over it like a torrent.

Count Neipperg, to whom the chief command was intrusted, had been the preceptor of the Grand Duke, and enjoyed the entire confidence of the court. He was remarkable for the singularity of his views, loved paradox, and made himself conspicuous for his wit and sarcasms. He had not the highest opinion of the invincible force of his army, though, on the other hand, he did not regard it as a miraculous feat to drive the young monarch, who had hitherto shone only in poetry, "back to Apollo and the Muses:" his chief care was, to make sure of the money which he wanted. He insisted on the personal security of the Chancellor of Bohemia for the contingent to be furnished by that kingdom.

Towards the end of March, the court, as well as the General, deemed it expedient to open the campaign. The conclusion of the conventions against Prussia, which were under negotiation, could not be more efficaciously hastened than by a serious warlike demonstration. They learned besides that the King of Prussia was preparing for the siege of Neisse, which they could not possibly suffer to fall into his hands, if they intended to enter Silesia.

Unfavourable as the time of year was, and in spite of the fall of snow in which Schwerin had trusted, Neipperg set out at the end of March from Sternberg. According to his own account, his army con-

sisted of about 15,000 men. On the 31st he reached Lichtenwerder, and on the 1st of April Hermsdorf: on the 3rd he prepared to traverse the passes of Zuckmantel. The transport of the baggage, the cannon, and pontoons, was attended with indescribable difficulty, besides which he did not know whether he should not encounter the Prussians at this very point; in order to be prepared to resist them, Neipperg ordered the march to be opened by all his grenadier companies. He found Zuckmantel not invested, but in ruins, and, on the 4th, he reached Kunzendorf, on the other side the pass, without obstruction.*

It is very remarkable, that Schwerin had no tidings of so extensive a movement in his immediate neighbourhood, and even held it to be impossible. The first intelligence of it was brought to Jägerndorf by some deserters from the Austrian dragoons. But on the other hand, the Austrian field-marshal had no suspicion that the King of Prussia was in this part of the country; or, as Frederick himself says, he might have placed him in a desperate position. How often indeed does it happen in warfare, that the leaders act without any distinct knowledge of the movement of their adversaries, and are left to grope their way in the dark.

On this occasion the advantage was all on the side of the Austrians.

* Compare the trustworthy reports from the Austrian camp in the *Nouvelles d'Amsterdam*, 25th April, and the *Elite de Nouvelles de Liege*, 18th April, which serve to complete the account in the *Oestr. Mil. Zeitschrift*, for the year 1827, Vol. I. p. 293.

The King, gradually discovering the real state of things, collected around him all the battalions and squadrons from the upper country, and even some that had just come from the lower, and now, though incessantly harassed by the enemy's hussars, advanced towards the fords of the Neiss. Meanwhile Neipperg reached the town of Neisse on the 5th at midday, amidst the shouts of the inhabitants. It was perhaps his intention, by a rapid occupation of the river, to cut off the King in Upper Silesia. Frederick was in fact obliged to relinquish an attempt to cross the river at Lassot near Neisse; the bank was already in the enemy's hands, so that the army could no longer have been drawn up in order of battle. At all events Neipperg was one or two marches in advance of him, towards Lower Silesia.

At the same time that Frederick crossed the river at Michelau and Löwen (when he ordered the greater part of the troops stationed at Brieg to join him), Neipperg united with Lentulus, who had come from Glatz, moved upon Grotkau, which he took without much difficulty from a small though brave party of Prussians.* The following day the King continued his march towards Brieg and Ohlau. Indeed, he could not be reproached with dilatoriness. Though the troops were wearied by their long march over the mountains, and in the worst possible weather—the snow

* In the *Histoire de mon temps*, cap. 3, a lieutenant of the name of Mützelfahl is not a little praised for his courage: others have doubted of his resistance. In a report of Neipperg's, of 8th April, he says, however, "Le commandant refusa d'abord de se rendre, mais voyant qu'il y avoit de l'artillerie il s'y résolut."

falling incessantly in heavy flakes, he did not allow them a day's rest till they had reached a most important position. He pitched his camp in the neighbourhood of Brieg, which was still in the hands of the Austrians, exactly on the road leading from the Neiss to Ohlau, in the villages Mollwitz, Grüningen, and Hünern. By this means he protected Brieg, at the same time that he menaced Ohlau, whither, the Oder being swollen, the King had caused part of his artillery and a good store of ammunition, which he had destined for his head-quarters, to be conveyed. On the whole, however, the King was placed in the worst possible position, strategically considered. As the Austrians were at this moment advancing upon Oppeln, and occupied Neisse, Brieg, Grotkau, and the high road into Lower Silesia, they came just upon the middle of the Prussians, who advanced in an unnatural direction with their front towards Berlin.*

It seems as if Neipperg did not estimate at their full value the superiority of his position and the danger in which he had placed the King. On the 8th he still complains that he did not know where Frederick or his field-marshal were, and even on the 9th he had received no intelligence from the hussars he had sent out as scouts.†

* The King was far juster than many subsequent authors: "J'étois plein d'estime pour Neipperg pour la belle marche qu'il avoit fait en entrant en Silésie." (Old copy of his Memoirs.)

† Extract from a letter of Neipperg's, dated Grotkau, 8th April: Le feldmaréchal ajoute que jusqu'au moment de sa dépêche il n'avoit aucun avis où le roi de Pr. étoit allé ni où se

On the other hand, the King had at least the advantage of being informed of the enemy's position, either accidentally or by design (most likely the latter, as would appear from his afterwards rewarding a peasant for his services), if not on the 9th, certainly most accurately on the 10th, when he marched from Pogarell along the high road to Ohlau.* He saw the whole extent of his danger; the battle he had desired was now offered him; but not in the Moravian mountains, where, even if beaten, he could have sustained no great loss, but in the heart of Silesia, where the whole territory he had conquered was at stake. He could have no doubt about accepting it. Now, if ever, a regular battle was necessary; any hesitation or retreat would be ruinous. In the expectation and the wish of an engagement, he moved forward in four columns, between which the artillery kept the high road; the ground was covered with snow, but the sky was bright and clear. On reaching the country about Pampitz, and being perfectly sure that the enemy was at hand, he ordered his troops to form for battle.

trouvoit son feldmaréchal Schwerin ni ce qu'étoit devenu le g^d Schulenburg avec les régiments qui s'étoient retiré de Trop-pau, Ratibor, &c. Most probably this induced him to take a day's rest.

* Wahrhaftige Beschreibung der Zeit, an welcher ganz Niederschlesien vom erzherzoglichen Hause Oesterreich ab, und zu dem churbrandenburgischen hat geschworen, &c. (True description of those times when all Lower Silesia fell away from the Archducal house of Austria, and swore allegiance to the Electoral house of Brandenburg, &c.) Extracted from the family Bible of the notary of Mollwitz, in Fuchs Jubelschrift der Schlacht bei Mollwitz, 1841.

Neipperg was apprised of the advance of the Prussians by repeated signals from the towers of Brieg, and immediately after they came in sight. They might have fallen upon him in his villages, and, in the disorder in which he then was, might have cut his army in pieces.

But the King's determination and consequent orders were, to form into regular battle array in the open field. The four columns deployed in their practised evolutions, to the right and to the left, and formed in two divisions in such a manner that the artillery was posted at the point where they met. The first division, under Marshal Schwerin, consisted of fifteen battalions of foot and twenty squadrons of horse; the second, under Lieutenant-General the Prince of Anhalt, of eleven battalions and nine squadrons. As the ground they intended to occupy was bounded on the right wing by a wood, Frederick thought it expedient to imitate the example of Gustavus Adolphus, which he remembered among his studies on the history of war, and to station some infantry among the cavalry. In the plan of the battle drawn up by his hand these battalions appear in the centre of the two divisions, on the right wing, between the cavalry.* Three squadrons of hussars covered the baggage. Altogether the army in order of battle might amount to about 19,000 men.

The pedantic method and the slowness of the Prussian evolutions gave the Austrians time to draw up their line of battle. The necessity of alter-

* Among the plans in Orlich's Schl. Kr. Vol. I. at the end.

ing the position of the wings caused some confusion. Römer, who had hitherto formed the right, had to take up the left, and Berliehingen, instead of the left, the right of the infantry, which drew up in rank and file in front of the village of Mollwitz. Neipperg had eighteen battalions, reckoned at 10,800 men, and eighty-six squadrons, at 8600. The total amount of the two armies was therefore about equal; the difference was, that the Prussian infantry was more numerous, while the Austrians had an immense superiority in cavalry.

When we cast our eyes over this plain, we are tempted to think that Frederick himself could have selected no better battle-field for his troops, who were to fight according to the system observed in their manœuvres on the plain of Tempelhof, than the one which now lay in an unbroken level before him. His left flank was protected from any sudden and dangerous attack by a brook, which rises there, and runs between broad meadows and marshy spots overgrown with trees. It is, however, not less obvious that the plain afforded a ground admirably adapted to the superior activity of the Austrian cavalry, especially since the King's right wing was by no means so well covered as his left.

The Austrians were only partially formed, when, at about one o'clock in the day, the Prussians advanced upon them in admirable order with colours flying and bands playing; the grenadiers kept up with the cavalry; the artillery, in the van, were already almost in contact with the enemy.

Neipperg had intended to charge the Prussians in

similar close order, his infantry with shouldered arms, his cavalry sword in hand, and thus to force them back ; but he was not sufficiently master of his troops and their leaders, for them to await his orders. Within range of the Prussian field-pieces, hurried along by the impetuosity of his troops, who would not stand to be shot down without resistance, and himself sharing their impatience, General Römer began the battle with a furious charge of cavalry on the right wing of the Prussian army. This was commanded by Count von Schulenburg, a nephew of the Venetian field-marshal, whom Frederick, when Crown-Prince, had honoured with his intimacy, and who would have been illustrious for the variety of his acquirements, had not his obstinate persistence in any opinion he had once taken up, detracted from his merit and his fame.* His reputation as a soldier was not so high ; his regiment of dragoons had long been in a very defective state, and on the day of the battle of Mollwitz he, as Frederick remarked, lost his presence of mind. Having lost his point d'appui in advancing, he tried to recover one in a neighbouring village, and extended his line, when the enemy, to whom his squadrons presented their flank in this movement, broke his line. In a moment they were thrown into confusion, and driven back upon their own infantry, where in desperate flight they sought safety, partly in front, partly between the two divisions, partly even in the rear, everywhere intermingled with the enemy.

* Valori : Il ne se borne point des connoissances en militaire, il les entend sur l'histoire la politique et le droit public ; il n'est pas facile de le faire revenir de ses opinions.

The young King rushed in, regardless of his own danger, among the fugitives and the pursuers, and shouting "Brothers," "Children," at length succeeded by his words, and still more by his example, in rallying his troops, and leading them on once more against the enemy's left wing; which, however, had meanwhile been reinforced by fresh squadrons, and again dispersed the troops already beaten. Schulenburg, overwhelmed with a shame proportioned to the favour he had enjoyed and the envy he had excited, wounded, but resolved not to survive his own disgrace and that of his regiment, sought and found death on the field.*

It was probably at this moment that the generals, who had seen with terror their King in the thickest of the fight, implored him to leave the field, which might very likely be lost, and to provide for his own safety, on which every thing depended. It may easily be imagined how distasteful this advice was to him, but after the many mortal perils he had encountered, the urgent warnings he had received, and the promises he had given, he yielded to their entreaties.†

* Valori: C'est par le désespoir de la mauvaise manœuvre de son regiment, que le général Schulenburg s'est fait tuer.

† According to a fragment of the *Mémoires Secrètes* of Schmettau (*Militärwochenblatt*, 1840, p. 12), Schwerin was at first adverse to the departure of the King. A quarter of an hour later the united representations of Prince Leopold, Golz, and Hacke, effected it. Schmettau, however, in this paper shows himself a strong partizan for Schwerin: he passes over in silence his blunders in Silesia, and shows his partiality so strongly that I cannot venture to follow him. Moreover, his statements run counter to that which we learn from the mouth of Schwerin himself.

The Prussian generals were above all things anxious to get rid of the fearful responsibility which the King's presence laid upon them, that they might tempt the fortune of the field with freer spirits, unoppressed by so tremendous a risk. The whole infantry still stood its ground unmoved on the field. The battalions posted between the cavalry, had not given way, and had joined the rest of the infantry. The two divisions instantly put a stop to any disorder that arose, and completely resisted the shock of the cavalry. They looked like a living fortification. Their bayonets proved very destructive to the enemy's horses, and their fire of musketry still more so to the Austrian infantry, as soon as it began to move. The Prussian battalions were divided into files of four deep: the two front ranks knelt down; they had been trained to load and fire with rapidity and precision in that posture; the two other ranks fired over their heads, inclining their muskets a little downwards, and keeping them well towards the enemy; the officers gave the command as on the drilling place, in the same words, with the same gestures, the same calmness; the troops obeyed in the same manner with perfect steadiness: they produced an effect never before seen in warfare; the Austrian regiments, who had no recollection of a similar fire in any previous campaign, soon refused to advance against it, and, in order to be less exposed, crowded together in such deep columns, that their flags were entangled with each other.

It was the triumph of the incessant drill practised with such obstinate perseverance by the old Prince of

Dessau; his son, resembling him in character and military talents, commanded the second division with great presence of mind and efficiency; the old regiments could not stand before these novices; especially since the former were incomplete.

But it was not enough merely to defend themselves and repulse the enemy. Schwerin's ardour for war and thirst for victory were no less necessary to decide the victory than the steadiness of the Duke of Anhalt. Feeling that no small portion of the blame of the unfortunate turn the campaign had hitherto taken rested on him, and determined, if all was lost, to seek death like Schulenburg, Schwerin now brought up the left division,* which had hitherto fought almost alone, and united the whole strength of the army for an attack. The Austrians once more saw the whole front in motion, the battalions closed, in unbroken line, as fresh as in the first hour of the battle, once more the roll of their fire resounded like a continuous thunder (says an Austrian despatch), while their bayonets glittered fearfully in the rays of the setting sun. At this sight it became impossible to keep the Austrian infantry together even in their deep columns, and equally so to charge again with the cavalry, which had suffered extremely; to save the army from total defeat, Neipperg was obliged to determine on retreating.

In this manner did the two great military powers of Germany measure their strength for the first time

* For the faults committed during the advance by the left wing, see the extract in the *Militärwochenblatt* for 1825, p. 3255, 3262.

in the open field. It was the conflict of the discipline and practice of a rigorous and systematic school, with the natural armament of warlike tribes and the traditional maxims of war. In the east of Europe the numerical superiority and the impetuous charge of cavalry had always decided the day; on this occasion, the unshaken steadiness and the military skill of the infantry, rendered them masters of the field. Prussian tactics despoiled Austrian strategy of the advantage it had already gained.*

The Prussians were satisfied with having kept possession of the field of battle, on which they kindled their watch-fires and passed the night. Even those who had just come up from Ohlau were not sent in pursuit of the enemy.† The general feeling was, that enough had been done for the present.

It was a strange chance that the young monarch, who from the day of Neipperg's entrance into Upper Silesia, had contributed not a little by the energy of his orders and resolutions to rescue the army from the untoward position into which it had been brought

* On the subject of this battle we have a remarkable letter of the King's, his narrative in his works, official reports in the newspapers, statements and letters of Prussian and Austrian officers. (Bulow, *Annalen des Krieges*, Vol. III., and the *Nachlass* of Berenhorst.) Besides these I have used the first draft of the King's Memoirs, Seegebart's Narrative, Valori, and especially the *Extract Relationis d. d. Neisse*, 12th April, i. e. the account of the battle by Neipperg, so far as it was communicable.

† The epitaph on Gessler's tomb in the church of St. Nicholas in Brieg, doubtless contains an exaggeration, when it ascribes to him that he it was who caused the enemy to fly. Gessler won for himself a different sort of glory.

by his own mistakes and those of others, did not now share in its triumph. At the very time when all was decided, he was riding with a few followers across the open country, and going to meet the very danger which his anxious servants, rather than his own fears, had suggested the necessity of his avoiding.

It had been Schwerin's opinion that, in case they were compelled to retreat, the place to make for must be Oppeln, whither a part of the baggage and ammunition had been conveyed. He had therefore advised the King to go there, and accordingly Frederick with his small escort reached the gates of that town before midnight. But in the interval it had been surprised and taken by a squadron of Baranyai. When the Prussians presented themselves at the gate and demanded admittance, the hussars on guard deliberated, while the keys were being fetched, whether they should grant the request or take horse, and every man seize what he could of the welcome spoil which fortune threw into their hands. Fortunately for the King, they preferred the latter course, galloped out of the town and saluted the advancing Prussians with a few shots. "Good bye, my friends," said Frederick, "I am better mounted than any of you," and galloped off. Some of the officers who accompanied him, one of his councillors, and Maupertuis, who had followed him, having tired horses, were taken prisoners. Towards morning, when the King reached Löwen, he sent people forward to see whether that town also had not fallen into the hands of a hussar regiment. Not only did he find it free from enemies, but he was met by an

aide-de-camp of the Prince of Dessau, who came to announce the victory gained at Mollwitz. His joy at these tidings was indeed alloyed by the personal mortification of having been absent at the decisive moment. Frederick did not speak of it again; and his suite, seeing this, likewise avoided the subject.* Without any relaxation of his unequalled bodily exertions, he hastened on to Ohlau, there to enjoy and to consolidate his victory. The Austrian army had not in fact sustained a defeat, it had only showed itself unable to beat the Prussians and to keep the field of battle. But even this was in effect a decisive change. It was felt to be so by the common soldiers, who had boasted the day before that they would thrash the conceited Snow king and his coxcombical soldiers, and cut straps out of their skins, and who now found themselves completely beaten. They even confessed to the Protestants, in whose houses they were quartered, that their idol had conquered. Neipperg was forced to fall back upon Neisse, at the foot of the mountains; the King's communication with the country

* For this reason the event was reproduced in a legendary form. I have drawn my materials from a letter of Robinson's (22nd April), which was taken from a report of Baranyai, and from a statement made by Maupertuis. He agrees in the main with the narrative of Nicolai, whose father-in-law had been with the King in this riding expedition, as well as with Seegebart. It was reckoned in Vienna that the King had ridden from first to last on this occasion from forty to fifty miles. In a letter of Frederick's writing, dated Ohlau, 22nd April, there is this post-script, "in zwei Tagen habe weder gegessen noch getrunken noch geschlafen"—(for two days I have neither eaten, nor drunk, nor slept).

behind him was no longer interrupted; he was once more master of the plain, his stores and munitions at Ohlau were covered, and he immediately prepared to employ them against Brieg. But he distinctly perceived that he had a warlike, powerful, and able enemy to contend with, who would continue to give him ample occupation.

CHAPTER VI.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE, UP TO THEIR
CONCLUSION.

NOT only the war, but the progress of the negotiations with the courts of the first and second rank, in the spring of 1741, had turned out far more difficult, and even dangerous, than had been anticipated in Berlin.

The overtures of Prussia were indeed everywhere received, but everywhere they were encountered by the ancient and preponderant authority of the court of Vienna.

The English understood perfectly well why Frederick would not admit that the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction could induce any power to declare against him; for, as he alleged, that domestic law exclusively affected the relations of blood and inheritance: he, however, had no claims or projects of inheriting from Austria, he only wanted to establish and prosecute the ancient rights of the house of Brandenburg, as against that of Austria, in the manner consecrated by usage between princes subject to no common tribunal. If the Prussian ambassador was not falsely informed, the question was laid before the Lord Chancellor—Philip Yorke, Earl of Hardwicke—who decided that no legal objection could be taken to

the projects of the King of Prussia.* Nor could England be said to lie under any obligation to oppose them. She had remained passive when the Bourbons took possession of Naples and Sicily, though they formed part of the countries actually guaranteed. George II. was also swayed by considerations regarding his German territories; after some hesitation he declared himself well inclined to listen to the Prussian overtures; "though the demands of Prussia appeared to him much too large, he would, nevertheless, use his good offices in Vienna to obtain the satisfaction of them."† On the 28th of February, 1741, the Prussian ambassador sent his master the most encouraging assurances.

But he fell into an enormous error in imagining that the prevailing policy of England was favourable

* Andrié to Frederick, dated London, 5th Jan., 1741. *Le grand chancelier d'Angleterre homme d'une profonde érudition et de grand poids a démontré au conseil du roi avec sa sagacité ordinaire, que l'on ne sauroit accuser légitimement V. M. d'avoir rompu ses engagements, en faisant valoir les droits de sa maison sur la Silesie.*

† George II. promised, through M. von Steinberg, "zu Erhaltung eines gütlichen Vergleiches wegen des Anspruches an die in Schlesien gelegenen Fürstenthümer die besten Officia zu leisten, jedoch dergestalt dass das Haus Oestreich nach geschehener Befriedigung Sr Kon Mt in Preussen und allenfalls mit Vorbehalt einer mässigen Convenienz für Chursachsen bei dem Besitz seiner übrigen Lande zu erhalten geholfen werde"—(to use his best offices to obtain an amicable compromise in the matter of the claims on the principalities in Silesia; in consideration whereof the house of Austria, after the arrangement of the difficulties, should help to maintain his royal Majesty the King of Prussia in the possession of his other territories in Prussia and elsewhere, retaining a moderate satisfaction for the Elector of Saxony).

to Frederick's views. It would be false to insist on the argument maintained with so much noise by the polemical writers of the day—that the one side merely defended its right, invaded by the other: the real truth is, that the English nation was thrown on the side of Austria by its own most important interests. The old conviction, that it must have an ally on the Continent, now acquired redoubled strength from the near prospect of a war with France; with whom England would on no account suffer Austria to make common cause, as appeared not impossible. Russia felt that the power and alliance of Austria were indispensable to her against the Turks; and England deemed it no less so against the French.

Hence it happened, that the Parliament, even before the Prussian invasion of Silesia, declared itself strongly in favour of the maintenance of the Pragmatic Sanction.

In the same days of February in which the Prussian ambassador received assurances which appeared to him satisfactory, far more precise declarations were sent to the Court of Vienna, to the effect that England recognised obligations towards Austria which she intended conscientiously to fulfil. If the King of Prussia could not be induced by fair means to evacuate Silesia, England would put herself into a state of preparation to compel him, in combination with the Queen, to do so.

At the moment when dangers gathered most thickly around Frederick's head in Silesia, on the 8th of April, when the session was already drawing to its close, George II. appeared in person in

Parliament, in order to express with the greater solemnity his readiness to afford the assistance which Austria demanded ; and to that end, as a bloody war was the inevitable consequence, he laid especial claim to the co-operation of his subjects. He found both Houses fully disposed to second his views. Never was the necessity of sustaining the house of Austria proclaimed with greater enthusiasm : for, it was urged, as France aimed at the subjugation of the world, the cause of a power that could keep her in check was in fact the cause of humanity ; future generations would never forgive those now living should they prove negligent and lukewarm in this cause. The opposition rivalled the ministerial party in their expressions of zeal. They granted the King money, not only for paying the stipulated auxiliaries, but also for a subsidy of 300,000*l.* to the Queen of Hungary. The leaders of the opposition represented the public feeling to the Austrian ambassador as still more favourable than it really was, and led him to hope still greater succours in future.

In the course of the debate allusion was several times made to the claims and the designs of Prussia. Some were of opinion that the King's pretensions must be set aside before any attack were made on him ; but most of them condemned his undertaking, as tending only to pave the way for the encroachments of the French. The common interest of Protestants, usually a favourite subject of declamation, was not alluded to. The antipathy to France outweighed every consideration of community of blood or of religion.

A similar state of public opinion prevailed in the Netherlands. Vague rumours had long been current there that France meant to make use of her alliance with Austria for the extension of her territories in the direction of the Netherlands: the support of the latter country by the maritime powers was regarded as the most efficacious means of deterring the court of Vienna from any concessions of that sort. It is true that opinions were not unanimous. The provinces of Seeland, Gröningen, and Utrecht were of opinion that, before coming to any conclusion, negotiations should be opened with France, whose intentions should be officially asked; but Holland, which gave the tone to the other provinces, would not hear of this. In that country the invasion of Silesia had made a peculiarly bad impression from another cause. The wealthiest merchants, patricians of Amsterdam, men of influence in the government of the province and the nation, had contributed to a loan which the Austrian court had raised by mortgage on Silesia; it was regarded as an injustice committed against the city and the country when the 1st of April passed over without the payment of the interest on the Silesian bonds, which fell fifteen per cent. To this was added the example of England. It is affirmed that George II. communicated his speech from the throne to the most influential men in the government of the United Provinces beforehand; and not only that, but also the draft of the address which was to be moved in answer by an adherent of the court. It is added, that the English envoy kept the battle of Mollwitz, of which he received the first news, secret for a day, that

it might not affect the resolutions. Be that as it may, on the 24th of April, on the report of the commission nominated to confer with the English envoy, the resolution was taken at the Hague, on the one side, in concurrence with England, to request the King of Prussia to withdraw his troops from Silesia; and, on the other, to promise succours to the Queen of Hungary.* The King of Prussia was indeed told that this promise assumed a very different character owing to the subjoined clause,—“as far as their power would permit:” but he replied, that the court of Vienna would not heed that, and would find means to take the Republic at its word. He was not a little embittered by the behaviour of the ancient allies of his house.

We should mistake the dispositions of the maritime powers, did we conclude that they were determined on war. They adhered to the resolution of endeavouring to bring about a reconciliation between Austria and Prussia: but what could be expected from the time they gave the Queen of Hungary cause to hope that, should this fail, they would make common cause with her? Frederick remarked that there was a contradiction in exhorting a court to make concessions, and at the same time offering it support.

The attitude assumed by the maritime powers had a great influence on Russia; but in that country the incessant change of persons in power, which took

* *Quemadmodum post gloriosissimi imperatoris triste fatum testatum fecimus, sic eadem stat voluntas, promissa exequendi, quoad quidem vires ferent.*

place at that time, naturally affected the relations with Prussia.

After the death of Empress Anne and the accession of Iwan III., whom she had recognised as her successor, but who was only a few months old, the high chamberlain Biron assumed the office of Regent, in virtue of a will, but he could only maintain himself in power a few weeks. In November, 1740, he was obliged to give way to the mother of the infant Emperor, the Grand-duchess Anne, who, with the aid of Field-marshal Münnich, caused herself to be proclaimed Regent in his stead. Münnich, who was her prime minister, had not retained any very amicable or respectful impressions of Austria since the late Turkish war, and was easily won over by a few marks of favour from the King of Prussia. He talked as if the letters he had received in the monarch's own handwriting were of more value to him than millions; and said, that if he were not prime minister of Russia, he would come to make a campaign under the King of Prussia. He warned Frederick against making any concession to Austria, to whom it was never safe to yield a single point; and only lamented that he had not pressed on without delay to Vienna, instead of stopping on the frontiers of Silesia. The invitation to Russia to take any measures hostile to Prussia, he rejected with unaffected earnestness. But he too remained in power only a few months. It is not necessary here to go into the causes of these changes, which in fact only touched the surface of things; they were nothing more than the struggles of the foreigners who successively

rose to power under the Empress Anne. In the beginning of March, 1741, Münnich, irritated that his will did not always prevail either in internal or external affairs, tendered his resignation, in the haughty persuasion that he was indispensable; but he had the mortification to find that the Regent, whom he had elevated, and her husband, Antony Ulrich of Brunswick, seized the opportunity of getting rid of a counsellor who had become irksome to them. Ostermann, who had always been his antagonist, and who now played the most important part, did not indeed flatly refuse the mediation which Prussia requested of him, but declared aloud, just as the English court had done, that Russia fully intended to fulfil her engagements towards Austria. The matrimonial alliance with Brunswick, which had formerly been concluded with a view to unite the three northern courts more closely, proved wholly ineffectual as far as Prussia was concerned. Antony Ulrich was completely under the influence of the Empress Dowager and her sister, his grandmother, at Blankenburg: he was heard in conversation to call the Austrian troops "our troops." His sister, the Queen of Prussia, once wrote to entreat him to moderate his opinions—the only occasion perhaps in her life on which she took any part in political affairs—but without effect.

The court of Saxony, encouraged by these circumstances, assumed a still more hostile attitude.

At first, as we have mentioned, it was not a little tempted to put forward its claims to the succession; and Frederick thought to find an ally in it. He sent Count Finkenstein to Dresden, charged to explain in

the fullest manner that he had no thought of injuring the house of Austria, but only of obtaining his own rights; and that, if Saxony would co-operate with him, he should be able to effect much for the benefit of both their houses,* of the German empire, and even of Austria herself.

The court of Dresden seemed well inclined to give its assent. The prime minister, Count Brühl, frequently declared that his master desired nothing more than an alliance with Prussia. That, however, did not hinder him from carrying on negotiations of a totally opposite tendency, according to the custom of the courts of that day.

The representations of Counts Wratislaw and Khevenhüller, who had an audience on the 5th of January, 1741, the near relationship of the houses, and the fear of the encroachments that might be made upon Catholicism in so considerable a province, produced the more impression, because some hopes were also held out by Austria to the Saxon court of the attainment of one of its most ardent wishes.

The object of this was direct union between Poland and Saxony. This Austria thought she could now grant without prejudice to herself. We know, from the mouth of an Austrian minister, that Crossen, a principality of Old Brandenburg, which however had once belonged to Silesia, was promised to the court of Dresden.

For Austria did not mean to content herself with merely repelling the attack made upon her; her plan was (as is shown by a draft of a treaty drawn up with

* Much as George II. suggested: see the note 2, p. 234.

all the necessary forms to that effect) that the Hanoverians, with the Danes and Hessians in the pay of England, should fall on the Prussian territory from the one side, the Saxons from another, and the Russians from a third, whilst the Austrian army advanced into Silesia.*

It was reported at the time that the reconquest of Stettin was promised to Sweden, and an invitation to advance against Cleves sent to the French, concerning whom people still deceived themselves. The Polish nobles set themselves in motion, persuaded by the primate, the nuntio, and the whole clergy, that the war was one of religion, and that they must not allow Silesia to fall into the hands of the Lutherans. A Prussian officer, who was travelling in the country, asserts that a few hundred thousand guilders would have sufficed to incite the nobility of Cracow, Masovia, and Lithuania to attack the Prussian frontiers.

It is difficult to conjecture what would have happened had Frederick been beaten at Mollwitz. All

* Translation of the project of a convention against the King of Prussia. Februar 1741, in Adelung, Staatsgeschichte Europa's von dem Ableben Carls VI. an, 3 Vol. 2nd Part, Appendix, p. 10. According to diplomatic reports, the idea was started at Dresden in a conference between Guarini, Brühl, Wratislav and Kaiserling: Ce detestable projet a été pourtant goûté contre toute attente du duc de Bronsvic et d'un certain ministre (Ostermann?) de façon que la cour étoit presque déterminée d'envoyer une stafette au S^r de Kayserlink avec ordre de concerter le dit plan d'operation, mais le premier ministre (Münich) s'y opposa en declarant, qu'il aimeroit mieux mettre bas tous ses emplois, que de donner les mains a une affaire préjudiciable aux vrais intérêts de Russie.

these enemies would have fallen upon him at once. Even after his victory the danger seemed very threatening; for it was not till then that the resolutions of the English were known, or those of the Dutch taken.

In order to resist any attack from Hanover or Saxony, a camp was formed in Brandenburg, in the beginning of April, under the command of the Prince of Dessau; and so unequivocal did the hostile intentions of the enemy appear to him after the battle of Mollwitz, that he deemed it indispensable to open the war upon them without further delay.

At a moment when Frederick was menaced on all sides with hostility and destruction, the temptation was certainly great to accept the offers of alliance which the French now renewed in the most pressing manner. Towards the end of April, Marshal Belleisle, one of the principal advocates of the alliance, arrived at the King's camp at Mollwitz, for the purpose of bringing the long-projected treaty to a conclusion.

It would be loss of time to go into the details of his proposals. Frederick knew beforehand to what they tended, and had reflected how he should receive them. However dangerous was the posture of affairs around him, he still determined to decline a connexion with France. He listened with great serenity to all that the Marshal had to say about the negotiations of Prussia with other powers. In return, he represented to him the difficulty and danger of his situation; how Neipperg daily received reinforcements in Silesia, while at the same time other powers

were endeavouring to bring three more armies into the field against him—a Russian force in Livonia and Courland; a Hanoverian, with Danish and Hessian auxiliaries, in Eichsfeld; and a Saxon on the Elbe. He, on the other hand, had only been able to raise one other army, under the Prince of Anhalt; and while this consisted of 30,000 men, his enemies numbered 80,000. Were he to declare for France, all these forces would instantly rush upon him, and would annihilate him before he could receive the smallest assistance. If France was anxious for his alliance, she must enable Sweden to make a diversion against Russia, the Elector of Bavaria to take an active part in the war, and must herself send several armies into the field.*

Belleisle perfectly understood this; it had always been his own opinion that France should act with all possible energy and promptitude. He left Frederick with the persuasion that the sole means of gaining him was the immediate display of a strong military force.

There can be no doubt that the want of decision still betrayed in the political and military measures of the French deterred the King from connecting himself with them: he had, however, other motives, which he could not confide to a marshal of France, but which he continually set forth in conversation and letters to his confidant Podewils.

It is worth while to make more particular mention of this man, who had so great an influence on

* Belleisle à M^r Amelot au Camp de Molwitz, 27 Avril.

the policy of his sovereign. Podewils belonged to a Pomeranian family, which had attached itself to the house of Brandenburg even before the conquest of the province: his father went with the Great Elector in his own sledge during his winter campaign against Prussia.

Henry von Podewils himself was educated in a little school of young nobles whom his father had collected around him in Suckow, and completed his studies in Halle and Leyden. He early formed an intimate acquaintance with Frederick William I. in the following manner:—That monarch had not only given him permission, according to the custom of the time, to make a tour in England, France, and the smaller states of Germany, but had accurately marked out the route he was to take. On his return the young cavalier was presented to the King, who subjected him to a sort of examination.

In compliance with his own natural propensities, Podewils had devoted his attention not so much to sights and curiosities as to the constitution and the political condition of the several countries and courts he had visited; to these points the King's inquiries were directed, and he was so well satisfied with the young traveller's answers, that he said, "Podewils was the man for him, and that he would continue his education himself."

Besides the favour of the King, who made him work in the government, and intrusted small missions to him, his intimate connexion with Grumbkow, one of whose daughters he married, contributed to his advancement. By him he was initiated into the

business of the privy council of that time. Podewils thus rose to a station in the centre of affairs which facilitated his acquaintance with all other branches.

When, during the storms of the year 1730, Frederick William placed him in the cabinet, instead of Knyphausen, who appeared too much inclined to the interests of Hanover, he proved himself fully equal to the charge; and from that time laboured, in concert with his Prince, to reduce to practice the theory of an independent policy.

He thoroughly understood his business. If he found it impossible to escape from a conversation with an importunate interrogator, he held out for hours, without betraying the secret which was continually touched in the questions put to him. His instructions are worked out in the minutest details; acute, penetrating, and often felicitous in expression. He belonged to the class of true Prussian statesmen, in whom blameless conduct and unwearied diligence were combined with boundless devotedness. These men were actuated by no other ambition than that of serving the state with fidelity and honour. Podewils knew, as has already been mentioned, that the Prince whom he served kept in his own hands the supreme direction of affairs: he had no objection to this, so that they did but prosper; and his only endeavour was to contribute as much as possible to this result by his counsels. He kept the main object steadily in view, both as to the relations of the European states in general and the position of Prussia in their centre.*

* *Mémoires sur les principales circonstances de ma vie*, written by Podewils: furnished by the Countess von Voss.

The point upon which so much stress was laid in the English Parliament—that by the overthrow of Austria France would acquire a preponderance dangerous to all Europe—was by no means forgotten in the cabinet of the King of Prussia, as the English suspected. Podewils continually insisted upon it as the main point. How would it be if France were to get entire possession of Germany as far as the Rhine? Would she not regard all German princes as her subalterns? Would she not try to impose the same restraints even on the more remote and powerful—even on the King of Prussia himself—as on the Rhenish Electors, or as she had formerly done on the Duke of Lorraine?

But even if it did not come to this, an alliance with France, in the immediate prospect of a general war, involved so great a departure from the traditional policy of the house of Brandenburg and kingdom of Prussia, that the King had a natural reluctance to resolve upon it unless forced by the most imperious necessity. Brandenburg had almost always adhered to Austria, not only in former times, but in the last century. It was only occasionally, in the times of the peace of Westphalia, and after the treaty of St. Germain, that she had followed a different policy, which, however, she had soon relinquished. To enter into the proposed alliance now, with such increased force on her own side, and such extended power on that of France, would be a step, the consequences of which, whether fortunate or disastrous, could not be estimated or foreseen.

This was the chief reason for the reserve which

Frederick still maintained; he again determined rather to carry on the negotiations with his old allies; to exhaust every possibility of an amicable settlement with Austria.

It appeared, too, after the battle, as if the Russian and still more the English court were in earnest in their offers of mediation.

At the beginning of May an English envoy, such as the King had wished for, made his appearance in the Prussian camp—Lord Hyndford was not only a man of name and consideration, but was distinguished for his frankness and veracity, and admirably fitted for a mission of this kind by the sentiments he had uttered in parliament.*

His first endeavour was to efface the evil impression which George II.'s last speech, and the consequent address of the parliament, had made on Frederick; he set forth that the declarations therein contained were intended and directed solely against France; that the nation and government wished nothing more than the reconciliation of the two German powers; that he was charged, in connexion with Robinson, the English minister at Vienna, to use every effort for the accomplishment of that end.

With regard to the conditions under which an

* "Homme distingué par sa droiture candeur et intégrité." This was John Carmichael, Earl of Hyndford. Among other subjects he spoke on 18th Nov., 1740, in favour of an alliance to be formed on the continent against France, in order to defend the general freedom of English commerce. Nothing, he said, was more important than "to prevent, if it is possible, a war in the north, or a civil war in Germany."

agreement might be possible, Hyndford did not conceal that the demand for Lower Silesia and Breslau would never be complied with; it was said at Vienna, that this was equivalent to the whole of Silesia, since what remained consisted almost entirely of mountain and waste land. He requested another ultimatum, since it appeared that, in that case, Russia would second the mediation.

Frederick was deeply penetrated with the feeling of superiority resulting from victorious arms; and France had offered him what he desired: yet he showed himself not disinclined to set a step backwards. He declared indeed, in writing, that he could not draw up a new ultimatum until he had intelligence of the altered sentiments of the court of Vienna: but, orally, in an audience on the 7th of May, he gave an assurance that he would revert to the general propositions which he had recently empowered Gotter to make in Vienna; that is to say, to content himself with a part of Silesia, without insisting on the assigned boundary. He announced his readiness at the same time to pay a still larger sum of money than he had then promised—viz. three million thalers.

Hyndford's idea was, that the King should be satisfied with the cession of the duchies of Sagan, Glogau, Wohlau, and Liegnitz. He wrote to Robinson as follows:—"The King persists, in appearance, on having Lower Silesia with the town of Breslau, but I have reason to believe that if there were any proposal insinuated of the Queen of Hungary, he would abate a good deal of his demands. I beg therefore

to know what the court of Vienna would be willing to give.”*

A preliminary question of no small importance to the existing system here presented itself; namely, whether, and how, the continued validity of the Pragmatic Sanction could be reconciled with any cession of territory. Van Neck, the Pensioner of Rotterdam, a Dutchman of great experience in mercantile affairs, constructed, on a former proposal, a fiction, according to which a part of Silesia was to be ceded to the King in the form of a mortgage, for which he was to pay a sum of money; this the Queen was to bind herself by an agreement, guaranteed by the powers, never to repay, nor to reclaim the mortgaged property. This device was accepted by the King of England: nor did Frederick II. raise any objection to it.† Robinson accordingly negotiated rather with a view to a mortgage than a cession: it would have been the latter in fact, but the former name was preferred.

No one will dispute that the court of Vienna would have done wisely, at least, to take this proposal into consideration, for it was still possible completely to conciliate the King of Prussia: we may add, that the court of Vienna would have done so, had it understood its own situation.

Bartenstein, obstinately adhering to his prejudice even as late as the beginning of May, persisted

* Hyndford to Robinson, 13th May.

† Note to the report of 20th March. Bon, il faut entretenir la république dans ces idées, qui ne répugnent pas à mes intérêts.

in his assertion that the French would not make war upon Austria so long as the Cardinal lived. Maria Teresa wrote to Fleury, in the course of the same month, expressing her confidence that if he were not for her, he would certainly not be against her.

Without being positively informed of these expressions, Frederick II. thought the Austrian court far too pertinacious to deign to make any material concessions. The English court, from which two envoys, a Scotchman and a Hanoverian, had arrived (whose declarations were not always consistent), he held to be untrustworthy, and too undecided to afford promise of any efficient influence.

Meanwhile the French were more and more urgent and conciliating.

In the middle of May, 1741, Valori announced that the French court had now determined to try to incite Sweden to renew the war with Russia, especially if Prussia would enter into an alliance with the former; and took that occasion to insist with renewed earnestness on the conclusion of the treaty. "Valori is right," says Frederick, in a letter to Podewils dated the 18th of May. "Oh! my friend, how long shall we hesitate, and suffer ourselves to be deceived by London and Vienna?"

Podewils entreated him only to wait a few days, till the King's messenger sent by Hyndford should have returned with an official answer: he urged that, during the negotiation, England, restrained by a sense of her own interest, would certainly undertake nothing hostile to Prussia; he reminded the King of

the expediency of drawing up more precise terms—in short, a new ultimatum.

The King replied, with a kind of pride, which he exhibited on hardly any other occasion, that it was for the conquered to make proposals, and the conqueror to accede to them; but that he clearly saw that the design of the English was only to prevent his concluding any alliance with the French, so long as it was yet time, or any immediate interference was to be expected from them. He should be ashamed to be duped by an Italian, and still more by a Hanoverian, who was trying in the most barefaced manner to overreach him. “But we must anticipate their designs,” he adds, “and secure allies: if we have allies, they will respect us; if we have none, everybody will laugh at us.”

Among other objections to the French alliance, Podewils urged, that it would lead to a war, of which it was impossible to see the end, and in which France would be the greatest gainer. The King replied, that the former of these conclusions was wrong; for that they would become so superior to the enemy by the alliance, that the war could last only a short time: and then added, “Why should we grudge an advantage to those who concede ours to us with pleasure?”

Frederick repeats, that if he continued to act alone he should ruin himself: the true way to maintain himself was to find a powerful ally by whom he would be supported. He promised to do nothing till the courier returned with the answer: “but I will not conceal,” he added, “that after his arrival I shall not delay an hour to take a determination.”

Whilst in Silesia King Frederick and his minister interchanged these views (which evidently coincided at bottom), and made the decision depend on the answer of the court of Vienna, the nature of the answer was very earnestly discussed at that court: on the 24th of May affairs had advanced so far that it was given to Robinson, the English ambassador.

“The Queen,” it was said, “was not indisposed to conclude such a treaty with the King of Prussia as might be deemed just and reasonable; but to deserve those epithets it must be in conformity not only with existing treaties, but with the matter in hand. As to the latter, the Prussian claims were null in themselves;* as to the former, the Pragmatic Sanction must be maintained. She would make no proposals, but would await them.”

The answer was, as we perceive, completely in the negative. Yet, in order to make one step in advance, the Chancellor of Bohemia declared that he did not regard a mortgage as impossible. Perhaps the Queen might be prevailed on to cede Glogau, with Grüneberg and Schwiebus, to Prussia, for a time, as a pledge; only the time must be determined beforehand.† He, however, proceeded very cautiously; he

* Note of 24th May. “La reine n'est pas éloignée d'un accommodement avec le roi de Prusse, qui vû le néant de ses prétentions puisse être qualifiée de véritablement raisonnable.—Mais elle croit en même tems, que pour qu'un accommodement puisse être juste et raisonnable il doit être conforme à la justice de la cause à la disposition des traités et aux stipulations avec la cour de Saxe auxquelles la reine a été engagée par les vives instances et exhortations—de S. M. Br^{que},” etc.

† Robinson, 25th May. “The manner and the term of the

would not have it made known as his suggestion, and declared that he would deny it if it were imputed him.

What a proposal! Not what Frederick had just declared to be absolutely indispensable—the cession of two duchies—but the mortgage of one, with two or three villages, for a limited term of years; and moreover with an uncertain result. What then was to become of Breslau and the Protestants, to whom Frederick attached so much importance?

The English ambassador had proposed a truce for at least a year, but this was rejected by the court of Vienna, because Silesia would then remain for a year longer in the hands of Prussia. Neipperg still retained his position in Silesia; he kept up communications, especially in the capital, and reckoned on its defection from Prussia. The only thing required of the English ambassador at Frederick's camp was, that he should fulfil the instructions of his own court, and demand of the King the evacuation of Silesia. This Hyndford could not refuse. The demand which he laid before the Prussian ministers, before he delivered it to the King, was couched in the most moderate language, but its meaning and contents were not the less of an offensive nature. A similar one was presented by the Dutch ambassador. This was the sole result of the mediation they had undertaken.

years of mortgage must be specifically regulated and the actual sum to be advanced upon the said mortgage fixed." Frederick relates, as we know, that he would at one time have contented himself with the cession of Glogau, but this was before the battle: I find no trace of this in the documents.

“Which of us two, now, has been mistaken?” writes Frederick to Podewils. “Was I not right in thinking that the English intend to deceive us?”

This opinion was now shared by the minister; only, he adds, it was still a question with him whether it was Austria or Prussia that was to be the dupe. Both ascribe all the confusion to the dark policy of the English.

From the correspondence of the two English ministers with each other, and with their government, it does not however appear that there was any intention of treachery or deceit. Their design was, to keep Austria aloof from France, and to incline Frederick II. to make concessions, by showing him, according to the phrase of the time, both the law and the Gospel; but the means they adopted for the former end, rendered the attainment of the latter impossible.

The time had come when all these vacillations must have an end, and another line of policy must be embraced with decision.

Never did a prince struggle longer against an alliance which promised him great and proximate advantages than Frederick. By allowing the other powers to remain under the impression that an understanding between France and Austria was possible, he had involved himself in countless perplexities, and exposed himself to the greatest dangers; at length, however, after his claims were once more rejected, and every other means exhausted, he resolved to accept the alliance of France.

At that time no one thought it possible that an

affair like this could be concluded by Germans alone ; all Europe must take part in it.

It was indeed true that every European interest extended into Germany and played a part there ; the Danish in Holstein, the Swedish through the connexion with Hesse, the English through Hanover, the French through Bavaria. Russia exercised an influence over her, in most concerns, through Saxony ; Count Brühl acknowledged that he did not dare to renew an ancient treaty with Hanover without consulting Russia. The court of Vienna paid so much attention to the Catholic world in general, as often to lose sight of the German view of affairs. We have shown how it would have given up the eastern and western provinces of Prussia as a prey to half the world, without a scruple. Austria told the Russians that the transfer of Silesia into the possession of Prussia could not be favourable to their relations with Germany.* It was impossible for King Frederick alone to form his alliances according to ideas which no longer existed in the minds of the living generation. It was a great European struggle, and as such he must carry it on. He thought he had now obtained an absolute certainty that England sought to embarrass him in interminable negotiations till every thing should be ready for his destruction. In order

* In the English parliament the same opinion was often expressed. " They (the English preparations) confirmed the Queen of Hungary in her obstinacy towards Prussia, forced that prince into an alliance with France and Bavaria, and thereby produced the war now carrying on in Germany." Lord Quarendon in the House of Commons. Hansard, XII. 997.

to prevent this, he ordered Podewils to conclude the projected treaty with France, without longer delay, and in the most profound secrecy. He cautioned his minister not to let it appear that he saw through the English, nor to betray the least displeasure at the answer he had received from them. "In secrecy," said he, "lies our safety." Above all, he strongly urged that Podewils should meet Valori at some third place, and should write the whole treaty with his own hand, so that not even the private secretary might know anything of it; he told the minister that his life must answer for his secrecy. This it was possible to preserve; the more, because the treaty was already so far prepared in all its articles, that it could, as Podewils said, be concluded within twenty-four hours.

There was only one formal difficulty attending it. The Prussian crown had not yet established its complete equality with that of France, so that the French gave the name of their king the precedence in all the documents, constantly instead of alternately. Valori declared that he had the most positive orders not to give way on this point. The King of Prussia directed that the signature of the treaty should not be withheld on this account, but that the evil should be remedied, as far as might be, by a protest.

Hereupon, at a dinner at Valori's house in Breslau, on the 4th of June, Podewils conceded this point, by a jest addressed to his host. I do not find that a protest was actually made, but in the ratification the French responded to the courtesy of the Prussians by using the alternative.*

* This is the explanation of Flassan's statement, that the alter-

The treaty bears the date of the 5th of June, it was signed on the same day, at four of the afternoon, by both ministers. Podewils had really written his copy from beginning to end with his own hand. The execution of the King's will was as prompt as it was secret.

We have frequently had occasion to remark inclinations to a similar policy in the history of Brandenburg and Prussia.

Fifty years anterior to the time of which we are now treating, then, as now, on account of Silesian affairs, the Elector Frederick William had inclined to an alliance with the court of France, but the hostilities against the Protestants, and the danger that the domination of Louis XIV. might extend over England, restrained him; and he had contented himself with the arrangement we have spoken of about Schwiebus.

In the treaty of Hanover, concluded sixteen years before, there was a somewhat similar element; only that at that time England was on the side of France: but the fear lest these two powers should overthrow the house of Austria, and then act and order as they pleased in the Empire, induced Frederick William I., after a short time, to withdraw from it. We have noticed in detail all the promises which were then made and afterwards not fulfilled.

Frederick II. had begun by taking possession of

native was first observed in this negotiation. This did not happen when the signatures were attached, but when the treaty was ratified. Amelot says in his letter of 18th June: "Vous pouvez la (ratification) recevoir telle, quelle vous sera présentée."

the country to which he laid claim; but he found it impossible to get this possession acknowledged so long as he adhered to his old political connexions. With full determination, he at length took the step from which his predecessors had always recoiled, and which would necessarily change his whole political situation; he tore himself from the alliance to which his house had hitherto adhered, and engaged in the contrary one. No one could have calculated all the consequences that would arise from this. We have seen that he did not underrate the danger to which he exposed himself; but he was induced to disregard it by the repulsive appearance of things on the other side, by the ambition of carrying through his affairs in spite of it; by the contempt with which he had been treated, and by the pressure of the moment.

The treaty of Breslau has a certain resemblance with that of Hanover. In both, the contracting powers mutually guaranteed their European possessions, promised each other services, and in case of need, if they were attacked, military aid, until the offended party obtained satisfaction: in many other articles the same words recur; and both are concluded for fifteen years. The treaty of Breslau appears still more pacific than that of Hanover, in so far as it is expressly described as a defensive alliance, and the warlike succours to be mutually afforded are left undetermined.

The great difference lies in the secret articles, on which in both cases the principal stress was laid.

In the year 1725, the King of France promised to support the claims of Prussia on Berg. This engage-

ment was now not only entirely disregarded, but the very contrary was established. Frederick still felt himself far removed from a position such as that which Prussia has since taken up, as protector of the western Marches of Germany. In conformity with the position he then took up, he sought most anxiously to avoid exciting the jealousy of France. In order not to have the appearance of wishing to aggrandize himself on the banks of the Rhine, he declared himself ready to renounce his rights to Berg for ever, in favour of the young Count Palatine of the Sulzbach branch. For when once he had determined to support the Bavarian Palatine house, which was protected by France, he did not choose to leave this fuel for future quarrels. This compliance was not expected at Versailles, any more than at Mannheim; it arose spontaneously in the mind and the calculations of Frederick, who thus voluntarily raised an impassable barrier to his own ambition. In this treaty, Louis XV., in his own name and that of his successors, promises to guarantee to the King of Prussia and his heirs the possession of Lower Silesia, including the city of Breslau; with all his might, against everybody, be it who it may. The one engagement is regarded as a condition of the other. The cession of the rights to the Duchy of Berg was to be valid only in case the tranquil possession of Lower Silesia and Breslau were secured to the King of Prussia by the house of Austria. The attainment of this cession was now the common aim of both parties, the main point in the whole treaty.

The remaining secret articles are, however, of re-

markable import; not so much the second, which concerns the renewal of the war between Sweden and Russia (which did not take place), as those which follow. In the third, the King of Prussia promises to give his vote at the approaching election of an Emperor, to the Elector of Bavaria: in the fourth, France pledges herself to send auxiliary troops to that Prince without delay, not, as the draft of the treaty expressed it, to secure him from the danger which threatened him; but, according to the words inserted at the desire of Prussia, to put him in a condition to act with vigour.*

Had the King demanded it, he might have caused another clause, very desirable in his position, to be inserted into the treaty. In a letter from Belleisle, Valori was authorized, if necessary, to accept a clause in which the King should promise nothing further than that, from the day in which he succeeded in effecting an arrangement with the Queen of Hungary, he would remain neutral, and would interfere as little with the pretensions of the other Princes to the succession of Austria, as they interfered with his. Probably the French minister feared that the

* The rough draft was: "ne voulant rien omettre de ce qui peut être nécessaire pour le secourir dans un danger aussi pressant." . . . At the request of Prussia this was added: "et le mettre sans délai dans l'état d'agir vigoureusement,— promet de lui fournir tous les moyens nécessaires pour cela." The rough draft had only: "d'envoyer à son secours toutes les troupes auxiliaires qui lui seront nécessaires pour assurer son pays contre toute attaque et le mettre en état de n'avoir à craindre de ses ennemis et à soutenir la justice de ses prétentions." After "le mettre" the words "en tout cas par une puissante diversion" had been added.

King might, in the course of events, be tempted to turn his arms against France, and wished to anticipate this danger; the sequel will prove how much more important such a stipulation would have been for Prussia.

But, at that time, this was not thought of. It was deemed sufficient that the King did not bind himself to defend the claims of his German neighbours to the great inheritance by arms.

Nor indeed are all things within the calculations of policy; some confidence must also be placed in the means which may be expedient and accessible in future, and in the directing mind which keeps pace with the current of events, and whose views are not bounded by the actual moment.

CHAPTER VII.

MOVEMENTS OF THE ARMY DURING THE SUMMER OF
1741.

WHILE the great combinations which now became possible were being prepared, the attention of the world was mainly fixed upon the position and movements of the two Prussian armies.

We have already stated that Prince Leopold of Dessau had been rewarded for the services he had continued to render, despite of having been passed over, by being intrusted with the command and formation of a camp for the protection of the Marches. Prince Leopold selected for this purpose the neighbourhood of Brandenburg, whence, by a few days' march, he could reach the lower Elbe, and thus threaten Hanover—or the upper, and command Saxony, while at the same time he remained near enough to the capital to protect it. He then took up his position near the village of Götting, on a plain which lay high and dry, but where nevertheless the villages on the flanks and in the front were well supplied with good wells, and not too far from the plain for the cavalry to water their horses. The King did him the honour formally to enjoin “both superior officers and subalterns to show all due obedience and respect to his Highness the Prince, as to the field-marshal appointed to command them.”

The Prince was directed, under no circumstances to allow the Hanoverian and Saxon troops to form a junction: in case of urgent necessity he was authorised to commence hostilities.

At the very beginning, he believed, as we have already mentioned, that the time had come, and the ministers whom he summoned in haste to Potsdam had great difficulty in restraining his quickly-kindled ardour. In the month of June there were fresh rumours not only that the Hanoverians and the Saxons had effected a junction, but likewise that some Hessian and Danish subsidiary troops were with them. Even the King at one time thought that matters were becoming serious. However, the danger passed over once more. More peaceful news arrived, and the court of Berlin adhered to its resolution of waiting quietly until the views of the neighbouring courts should be developed.* While Prussia made preparations which would enable her to resist her opponents, she determined to afford them no pretext for beginning the attack.

But Frederick showed himself far more active and enterprising in Silesia.

Immediately after the battle of Mollwitz he laid siege to Brieg, defended by a camp, which had been fortified with great care against the tumultuous attacks of the enemies' irregular cavalry. The fire of his batteries did not altogether satisfy either his expectations or his impatience; nevertheless they effected all that was wanted—they silenced the can-

* Frederick to Leopold von Anhalt, 6, 23rd April. Orlich I. 325—340.

non on the walls. Hereupon the governor of the fortress, Octavian Piccolomini, the nephew of the celebrated Ottavio, was no longer able to reply to the Prussian fire, nor were his troops sufficiently numerous or trustworthy. Requested by the citizens not to sacrifice the city to no purpose, Piccolomini proposed a few days' truce. The King replied, that he would still grant him honourable terms if he would capitulate at once, but he must not expect them if he delayed until the King's new batteries were ready: Frederick warned him at the same time that the second parallel, close to the town-ditch, was nearly finished. Hereupon, on the same day, the 4th of May, at three o'clock, Piccolomini displayed the white flag.* The King exacted from the officers a promise never to serve against him in Silesia any more, nor anywhere else for a period of two years: he then let them go. Thus then the favourite seat

* The newspapers contain a sort of diary (9th May—16th May); the documents, however, give a far better "Journal von den Fürsten von Anhalt Durchlaucht," by which we are enabled to correct the military accounts given hitherto. The batteries came late into the field, because the heavy rain had soddened the clayey soil. On the 12th of May a bomb, thrown from a mortar on the other side of the Oder, fell into the castle, which was burnt to the ground in 24 hours: the Prussian artillerymen maintained that this was by accident. As the batteries were too distant to make regular breaches, the second parallel was begun on the third evening, from 80 to 10 paces from the ditch; this was finished by the next morning. On the fourth the fire was redoubled from all the batteries and mortars. About midday the commandant requested a truce of 4 days; not 14, as stated in the army chaplain's diary. When this request was refused, he demanded a parley at 3 o'clock.

of the old Dukes, from whom the claims of the house of Brandenburg were inherited, fell into his hands: but the castle, a beautiful monument of their love for the arts, was destroyed by his artillery. On the 6th of May the citizens took the oaths of allegiance, and were told that henceforth one half of the town council was to consist of citizens professing the Protestant faith.

In a military point of view the most remarkable fact is, that the town was taken without the least attempt at opposition on the part of the hostile army which was close by.

Neipperg was only too glad that the King did not immediately attack him. He employed the time in introducing some order among his own troops, in sending for reinforcements, and, above all, in strengthening his position. Not far from Neisse he entrenched himself in a camp protected by mountain torrents, ponds, and ditches, in such a manner that he had no cause to dread the attack even of the bravest army.

The King at one time determined to advance into the territory of Glatz, in order to carry the war into the highlands, where the superior force of his infantry would give him the advantage. But the Prince of Dessau reminded him that a mountain war had its own peculiar rules, and that it was by no means easy for infantry, not specially trained to that species of warfare, to act well in broken and woody ground.*

The Prince advised the King to cross the Neiss

* Letter of the King, dated 10th May, in Orlich, I. 332; the Prince's answer, dated 14th May, in the Royal Archives.

somewhere near Löwen, and to threaten Upper Silesia and Moravia, which would inevitably force Neipperg to retreat upon Zuckmantel, whence he had advanced. But the Prince of Dessau was wrong too. Neipperg was so strong in those districts, that a movement of this kind could not have been made without great danger.

Accordingly, Frederick began by constructing a camp near Grottkau, opposite to that of Neipperg, with the hope of forcing him to battle in the open field. But Neipperg would not move; and an attack upon him in his strong entrenchments seemed perfectly hopeless.

No other resource was left to the King than to choose some favourable spot for a strong camp. He selected the district of Strehlen, which offered everything in abundance, and which on one side afforded easy communication with Schweidnitz, and on the other with Brieg and Breslau, while it protected the whole extent of the plains of Lower Silesia.

In accordance with the system borrowed from the Ottomans, and improved by Vauban, of forming camps in the vicinity of strong places, Neipperg's position was selected with a view not alone to defence, but likewise to attack.* His irregular cavalry constantly swept the whole country.

However, the war was no longer carried on with full vigour, and the King made use of the time thus

* Feuquiere, IV. 37, concerning entrenched camps provided with cavalry: "où l'on veut dans les guerres offensives et defensives faire de frequentes courses dans le pays ennemi, etc."

afforded him to remedy certain evils from which he suffered, and to obviate sundry dangers.

It was in this camp that Frederick turned his most earnest endeavours towards the improvement of that kind of soldiery in which the enemy was superior to him.

Frederick's father had been far less successful with his horse than with his foot; and the inefficiency of the former in the field drew attention to their defects. Frederick thought that the horses were too heavy, the men too big, and the exercise ill-contrived.* The men were almost afraid of their horses, and seldom got upon their backs. Scattered about in small garrison towns, and occupied with the economical administration of their companies, the officers were inspired with no ambition or desire for improvement or instruction. After long consideration of what was necessary for war, Frederick laid down those rules for this branch of the service which he followed throughout his whole life. He determined in the first place to content himself with men of a size below the former standard, provided only they were healthy and strong. He also chose less showy looking horses, and preferred the Polish or Tartar breed for his hussars and dragoons. No labour was spared in exercising each soldier separately until he acquired complete mastery of his horse, and went through

* Maxims of the King: "Le cavalier devient plus brave à mesure qu'il se sent bien monté.—Il faut, qu'un escadron soit dressé homme par homme, cheval par cheval.—Dans les chocs de cavallerie ce ne sont pas les grands chevaux qui en decident, mais l'impetuosit  de ceux qui attaquent." Test. pol. de 1768.

all the manœuvres with perfect ease: hereupon they were exercised together in bodies with equal care. It is notorious that Frederick set less store upon the fire-arms of his cavalry than had hitherto been done: he was the first who restored to that force its real character. They were to be taught to move rapidly and expertly together; above all, to charge sword in hand, without wavering or breaking their ranks, in any given direction, upon the object to be attacked. Upon these principles a complete reform was begun. On a few points Frederick consulted the Prince of Dessau and some other officers, and the affair was the daily subject of conversation with all men learned in the art of war. Even the French ambassador asserts that he gave his opinion; which, however, did not agree with that of the King. But, above all, Frederick had to restore and reorganize, were it but superficially, these troops which had suffered such heavy losses. Towards the end of July the King had succeeded so far that he could venture publicly to exhibit his newly-formed cavalry: he invited the ambassadors to be present at their exercise. It was not without satisfaction that he reviewed the sixty-two squadrons of horse which were with him, of which not a man was missing, and whose horses looked as if they had just come out of garrison. From the neighbouring heights the Austrian hussars watched the manœuvres of their future rivals.

Yet another care occupied the King's mind in Strehlen: the state of Breslau, which threatened him with continual danger.

Although the Protestants, by whose favourable in-

clination the neutrality of the city had been secured and the King himself admitted within its walls, formed the great majority of the citizens, there was nevertheless a considerable number of Catholics who wished to see the former state of things restored: among these some rich Italians were especially prominent. We can conceive the excitement created in Breslau by the ever varying fortune of war, and the reappearance of the Austrians in the province. The adherents of Austria announced to the Protestant citizens the near approach of a day of retribution; they would massacre the Prussians in the cathedral, and trample upon the necks of the Lutherans. One of the loudest of these Catholics, of the lower class, a horse-dealer by profession, who had prepared a banquet for Count Palfy on the 10th of April, was supposed to have by him a store of curved knives manufactured on purpose to massacre the Protestants. In Breslau the whole significance of the battle of Mollwitz was felt. During the contest the children in the streets fell upon their knees, praying for success to the King of Prussia's arms, as, if he were defeated, the poor people of Breslau would be the next to suffer. Even after the battle the excitement by no means ceased; an insulting word uttered against the King of Prussia created a riot in the market-place between the two hostile parties. Every report favourable to the Prussians was received with rejoicing by the Protestants, while unfavourable news filled the Catholics with delight. From week to week the Catholics were expecting the arrival of Neipperg's army; every straggling body of hussars

seen in the neighbourhood, raised the hopes of the one and the fears of the other party. The citizens maintained that there was a conspiracy on foot to admit the enemy into the town on the first opportunity. They insisted with great eagerness upon the removal of the prisoners from the cathedral, as they would instantly join the enemy's forces.*

The King, on his part, was dissatisfied with the magistrate, who refused him the subsidies which had been paid in all other parts of the province, and who complained to the foreign ambassadors of the King's conduct. Moreover, certain letters now fell into his hands, which, although they did not prove a regular conspiracy, were strongly in favour of Austria; and as he likewise received information of several hostile schemes that were being plotted against him in some of the first houses in Breslau, Frederick was seized with the suspicion and fear of an adverse movement. This was also expected in Vienna and in the Austrian

* Steinberger, from whose diary these notices are chiefly extracted, adds, that women were caught who said that their baskets contained provisions, which however turned out to be powder and balls. Gutzmar wrote a letter to Neipperg, begging him to send Austrian troops during the night. The King asked him whether he recognised the letter: Gutzmar begged for mercy, and threw the blame upon "certain zealous persons" (einige eufferige personen).

Seegebart says: Sie hofften einige tausend Mann feindlicher Truppen zur Besatzung zu nehmen; der Theil der Bürgerschaft, so preussisch gewesen, habe dem König es eröffnet und gebeten das Prävenire zu spielen.—(They had hoped to take in some thousand men of the enemy's troops as a garrison; but that portion of the citizens which was loyal to the Prussians, disclosed this to the King, and prayed him to be beforehand with them.)

camp. The King therefore considered it absolutely necessary to be beforehand with the enemy and to take more complete possession of Breslau.*

He charged Schwerin with this enterprise; this general, who entertained precisely the same views, most successfully, and as it were in sport, executed the King's scheme in conjunction with the Crown-Prince of Dessau.

* The King says in a letter to Schwerin: "Und bin ich versichert dass nicht nur falls es mit der Action zu Mollwitz anders ausgeschlagen wäre, der dortige Magistrat nebst den Catholischen den Oestreichern Thür und Thor eröffnet und alles was von mir in und vor der Stadt gewesen, sacrificirt haben würden, sondern dass auch noch beständig intrigürt wird, die ihnen so lieben Oestreicher dahin zu ziehen, um vielleicht durch eine Surprise dieselben in die Stadt zu bringen oder wenigstens meine dasigen Magazine zu ruiniren. Es ist auch ausser allem Zweifel, dass die Occupation von Breslau noch beständig das but der Oestreicher ist, dass dieselben mich bei allen Gelegenheiten zu allarmiren, auch mich in allen Entreprisen damit zu behindern suchen. . . . Ich bin also dieses beständigen Cabalirens müde, und daher determinirt solchem ein Ende zu machen, meinen Feinden das Prävenire zu spielen, und durch eine Surprise und coup de main mich der Stadt Breslau zu bemächtigen."—(I am persuaded that had the battle of Mollwitz turned out differently, not only would the magistrates and the Catholics of the place have opened the gates to the Austrians, and have sacrificed all belonging to me within and without the town, but they will perpetually be intriguing to entice thither their beloved Austrians, in order perchance to introduce them by a surprise into the town, or at any rate to destroy my magazines there. It is beyond a doubt that the occupation of Breslau is the constant aim of the Austrians, and that they take every opportunity to alarm me and to hinder me thereby in all my enterprises. . . . I for my part am heartily tired of this constant caballing, and am determined to put an end to it, to be beforehand with my enemies, and to make myself master of the town of Breslau by a surprise and coup de main.)

Early in the morning of the 10th of August, 1741, a few companies of the Breslau burgher guard were drawn up in the street leading from the gate of St. Nicholas to the Sandthor. The city major with his body-guard was conducting a troop of Prussian grenadiers who had requested leave to march through the town. Suddenly, however, he perceived that, instead of following him towards the opposite gate, the Prussians took the road leading to the market-place. He hastened after the grenadiers, and observed to their leader, the Crown Prince of Dessau, that his Highness had mistaken the way. The Prince replied, that for the present the Major might put up his sword, for the King's commands were that the Prussians should stay in the town. Meanwhile baggage-waggons had been driven into all the gateways of the town, so that the gates could not be closed, nor the drawbridges raised, and every gate was in the possession of the Prussian troops. The burgher watch was everywhere disarmed, not only without opposition, but amid jesting and laughter.

In order to complete the business, Field-marshal Schwerin immediately summoned the magistrate to the palace, and reminded him of the numerous mutinies and secret correspondences which had lately been discovered. All this the King was ready to forgive, but he required that the inhabitants should swear allegiance to him for the future. No one dared to refuse; and on the following day the citizens, guilds, and corporations took the oaths. Hereupon Schwerin, standing on the steps of the town-hall, waved his hat, and raised a cheer for the King of Prussia and Duke

of Silesia, which was repeated seven times by the inhabitants, who, though now taken by surprise, were at heart well inclined towards Frederick. They were glad to be relieved from the imminent danger with which they had been expressly threatened. Their new position was one which offered security for their lives, their property, and their religion. The Protestant churches were never more full than on the day when the sermon on occasion of the taking the oaths of allegiance was preached. The Prussian soldiers were feasted by the citizens.*

It was also a great advantage to the King that he no longer had anything to fear from that quarter.

At this very moment, early in August, Neipperg, urged on by the court of Vienna, which saw nothing but dilatoriness in the proceedings of his army, broke up his camp, and moved first on the other side of the Neiss, towards the district of Glatz: he then recrossed the river, and marched to Frankenstein. He used the greatest precaution in passing from one strong position to another, but his movements had a more decidedly offensive tendency than before. The King, whose rear was secured, quietly allowed this to take place; but when Neipperg threatened the magazines at Schweidnitz, Frederick thought fit to change his position so as to protect them. He se-

* Schwerin's report is wanting, nevertheless he in reality agreed in this. "Le droit de convenience," so he writes on the 2nd of August, "est un titre legitime en pareil cas." Steinberger says, "Man konnte wieder ruhig schlafen; die tapferen Preussen waren auf guter Hut."—(People could again sleep quietly under the charge of the brave Prussians.)

lected a camp near Reichenbach, while Neipperg fortified his position near Frankenstein. From these two camps the armies again watched one another for some time.

In the beginning of September the King resolved to attack the enemy with vigour. He speaks in his letters of a deadly stroke that he meditated against him. The old Prince of Dessau approved the King's plan. The position of the Austrian camp was however so well chosen, and so strongly fortified, that here too Frederick could not venture to attack it.*

One scheme only seemed feasible—to get the start of the enemy by a rapid march upon Neisse, and to cut him off from that fortress. Hereupon, on the 5th of September, the army, provided with a few days' rations, began its march by way of Münsterberg, but with very indifferent success. The troops made their way with extreme difficulty through heavy mists and narrow defiles, surrounded by swarms of Austrian hussars.† The King complained, I know not with how much justice, of the dilatoriness and want of skill of some of his generals.

Meanwhile Neipperg, who saw through the King's object, had likewise raised his camp. He took a nearer way, which, though by no means easy, was known to him, and free from hostile troops. On the

* In the army it was said that at a council of war the King and Schwerin were for the attack, Prince Leopold and the other generals against it.

† The Secretary of State, Eichel, said: "es war einer der penibelsten Märsche"—(it was one of the most harassing marches). Seegebart narrates in detail how ill it fared with him.

11th of September, when Frederick crossed the river Neiss with his advanced guard, in order to occupy the heights he had selected for his purpose, he found them already in the possession of the enemy, who had reached the spot a few hours before him. In order to attack them in front, he would have had to pass some difficult marshy ground: besides, the greater part of his troops had not yet arrived. Nothing therefore remained for him to do but to seek a position from which he might threaten Neisse, without endangering the town of Brieg. He took possession of such a spot near Neuendorf, whereupon Neipperg immediately entrenched himself in the same manner.

Thus these two armies, nearly equal in strength, and both of them ably commanded, moved on the great chess-board of war. The King enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing that his light cavalry now began to earn a reputation. To the officer whom he placed at the head of his cavalry must doubtless be ascribed the chief merit of this change. He had overcome the disfavour not unfrequently shown by a superior officer to a subaltern, and had been promoted to be colonel, whereupon he rapidly became one of the most distinguished men in the Prussian army. Ziethen charged the Austrian artillery on the narrow causeways which intersected the morasses, with a boldness that threw the enemy into confusion. He destroyed an Austrian magazine that lay between the cannons of the town and Neipperg's army. On the whole, the King certainly had the advantage; and without giving battle, his tactics had hitherto been success-

ful. In Lower Silesia, he had everywhere been the victor; at the foot of the mountains he enclosed Neipperg within limits which grew narrower every day, and after a time he crossed the Neiss once more.*

But for the attainment of the positive result which he wanted to compass, that great event was required which was preparing in the meantime.

By the side of the provincial war which we have been considering, another and very different spectacle now presented itself—one which involved half the world in its consequences.

* Frederick, 17th Sept., to the Duchess of Brunswick: “ nous avons si bien recoigné ici Neipperg, qu'il n'y restera pas longtemps, en suite de quoi il me reste deux sièges a faire et ma tâche est finie.”

CHAPTER VIII.

BREAKING OUT OF THE AUSTRIAN WAR OF SUCCESSION.

NEVER—since the days when Richelieu had resolved to employ the whole strength not only of France, but of such allies as he could obtain, in order to secure to the house of Bourbon the ascendancy over that of Austria—had circumstances been more favourable to the complete attainment of such an object than at the present time.

In the summer of 1741 the Bourbons no longer had to look with so much anxiety towards South America. In consequence of the resolutions already mentioned, the English had, it is true, collected a fleet of above thirty ships of the line at Jamaica, together with a considerable army, and had then, in March, 1741, made an attack upon Carthagena, the possession of which town would have been of great advantage to their trade. Meanwhile, however, the Spaniards, having received timely notice of this plan, had greatly increased the natural strength of the place. The Viceroy Eslava, one of their ablest officers, who emulated the warriors of old, conducted the defence with consummate skill. After some successes which excited hopes in London equal to the fears they inspired in Madrid, an assault made by the English, and intended to decide the matter,

bravely as it was conducted, was repulsed with great loss. This was followed by sickness peculiar to the climate, and by other disasters, which forced the English to give up their plan altogether.*

Hereupon the two branches of the house of Bourbon were able to employ all their resources in Europe.

It seemed as if the Queen of Spain, Elizabeth Farnese, had expressly prepared for this contingency. A minister of finance who needed her support had withdrawn considerable sums of money from trade, and had left numerous pressing demands unsatisfied, in order to fill the treasury according to her wishes, in preparation for a fresh war. By this means it was possible to place the army on a war footing, and to collect a formidable fleet in the roads of Barcelona. At the same time loans were effected in Genoa, in order to obviate any scarcity of money when the army should reach Italy. The object she had in view was to found, on the ruins of the Austrian dominions, a third Bourbon state for the infant Don Philip, who was married to a French princess.

One cause of delay in the enterprise projected for the summer of 1741, was the necessity of coming to an understanding with the King of Sardinia on this very point. The Bourbons were disposed to grant

* Compare Lord Mahon, cap. 22. Cochrane (Travels in Columbia) thinks that if Vernon had only planted a few cannon on the top of La Popa so as to command the town, he would have taken it: a very modern notion. The opposition then ascribed everything to the government: for "employing new raised troops, officers without experience," . . . whose numbers it increased in order to promote patronage. Pulteney's speech of the 8th Dec., 1741.

the King of Sardinia a very considerable increase of territory, even as far as the Adige, which would have made him master of Lombardy; but the King of Sardinia laid great stress upon the point that he would not have a fresh Italian kingdom established close to his own, and refused to concede to the young Bourbon prince any higher titles than such as were used to be derived from the provinces constituting his dominion.* Although no arrangement had as yet been made on this subject, it was confidently expected that one would soon be effected.

The Swedes now hastened to ally themselves with the French. Though no longer so powerful in war as formerly, they were still as anxious for it as ever.

At the last Diet, the party that wished for an alliance with France and for war with Russia, had undoubtedly had the upper hand. There was no great difficulty in persuading Sweden to declare war against Russia: the debate in which it was decided did not last above an hour. Charles Löwenhaupt, to whom the conduct of the war was intrusted, flattered himself that if he succeeded, he might one day mount the throne of Sweden.

In Germany more interest was felt for France at that moment than at any previous period.

In the first place France made the cause of Bavaria her own. On the 22nd of May, 1741, Marshal Belleisle concluded a definitive treaty with the Elector Charles Albert, at Nymphenburg, near Munich, whi-

* Sardinia required, "che a lui non fosse lecito assumere titoli superiori a quelli che erano soliti a derivarsi dalle provincie costitutive del suo dominio."

ther, on leaving Silesia, he had gone, still in uncertainty as to the issue of the negotiations he had been carrying on there.

This agreement was rather a formal statement of the French promises than a regular treaty. In it, however, two separate views and covenants of the powers were carefully kept distinct from each other.

The first was the general support to be given to the house of Bavaria against Austria, by whom the rights of the former would otherwise be trampled under foot. In the main treaty, which was intended to be shown, if necessary, to a third party, the King of France promised to send to the assistance of the Elector of Bavaria an army of 16,000, or, if he required it, of 26,000 men: the Elector binding himself to pay them. But as the Elector was not in a condition to do this out of his own resources, it was arranged by some secret articles, that in order to enable him to undertake it, he was to receive three millions of livres a month, out of the French military chest, to defray the charge during the first fifteen months. By this peculiar arrangement, then, one party undertook to pay the troops of his ally, while the latter agreed to furnish him with money for the purpose.*

* It is much to be wished that the treaty were printed exactly from the original. I have only seen a copy in which the second special article runs thus: "Le roi tres chretien pour obliger plus intimement S. altesse electorale, qui lui a representé l'épuisement de ses finances, consent a lui preter et a lui faire toucher exactement pendant les premiers 15 mois a la guerre, que S. A E va entreprendre pour le soutien de ses legitimes droits, deux millions de livres tournois, et au cas que S. A. prenne le second corps de troupes, S. M. lui fera toucher un

The second covenant related to the approaching election of an Emperor. In the event of any opposition being offered to the election of Charles Albert to the imperial throne, France promised to send an army of 60,000 over the Rhine, in her own name and at her own charges without further circumlocution. This covenant likewise contained mention of what Charles Albert was to do in return. For supporting the pretensions of Bavaria to the Austrian succession, France had demanded nothing; but for her assistance in the matter of the election to the imperial throne, she required that the Elector when chosen Emperor should recognise all such acquisitions of territory as she might see fit to make, in the Netherlands or elsewhere. They were perfectly right who took for granted that Cardinal Fleury entertained the old favourite scheme of the French to possess themselves of the Netherlands. As must always be the case with pretenders whose fortunes depend upon the exertions of a foreign power, Charles Albert was in the unfortunate predicament of being unable to refuse.

The only delay in concluding this agreement was caused by the difficulty of coming to an understanding with the other pretenders to various portions of the vast inheritance of the house of Austria.

million de plus, par mois." The genuineness of the copies which were circulated at the time was denied, and the government in the Netherlands requested to put a stop to their being printed. A note was then added in the Archives to the effect that the treaty was never ratified and had been repudiated. Schlosser, *Gesch. des achtzehnten Jahrh.* II. 24. Compare Zschokke, *baierische Geschichte*, IV.

It is scarcely credible, but it is nevertheless true, that the Bourbon kings of Spain, not content with the intended appanage of Don Philip, urged their hereditary claims to certain provinces on the German side of the Alps; at first they even demanded the Tyrol, and subsequently the provinces of Trent and Carinthia. It was with some difficulty that they were induced to forego this claim, and to declare themselves ready to pay to the future Emperor subsidies which should enable him to bring 12,000 men into the field. But they demanded that at least half these troops should take the road towards Italy, in order to aid them in the north in the attack which they intended to make from the south. The Spanish ambassador, Montijo, would listen to no objections to this scheme. At length he was prevailed on to content himself with the mention, in a special article, of the possible contingency of sending troops to Italy, and at the same time to promise that, immediately after the ratification of the treaty, the money should be paid to defray the charge of that half of the troops which, even according to the Spanish scheme, were to remain in Germany: this charge would amount to about a million of florins yearly.*

But the negotiations with Saxony respecting the interests of Bavaria offered still greater difficulties.

From the very beginning Saxony had hesitated which part to take. At first she had seemed inclined to declare against Austria, but immediately after she had entered into negotiations for forming the closest

* Tratado, firmado en Nimphenbourg el 28 de Maio de 1741, in Cantillo, 346.

alliance with that power. These, however, led to nothing; Austria never definitively agreed to the terms demanded by Saxony for recognising the coregency of the Duke of Lorraine, or for promoting his election as Emperor. The treaty which had been drawn up was never ratified.

These delays and the great opportunity which now offered itself, suggested to the court of Dresden views similar to those entertained by the former government.

Augustus III. felt some scruples of conscience at the idea of disregarding the renunciation which he had made on his marriage with the eldest daughter of the Emperor Joseph I., and of attacking the Pragmatic Sanction, which he himself had guaranteed. Neither would his confessor, Guarini, take upon himself to decide so weighty a question, but asked advice from Rome on the matter; not indeed of the Pope, but of Cardinal Albani, who was well acquainted with the facts of the case. The Cardinal replied, that the King might assert the rights of his wife with a perfectly tranquil conscience, without caring for the guarantee he had given.

And since, even towards the Russian court, the Saxons had only pledged themselves not to break the guarantee so long as it was observed by others, they now looked upon themselves as perfectly free to act as they chose.

So soon as in the beginning of May, when Belleisle, on his way from Silesia to Bavaria, passed through Saxony and stopped in Hubertsburg, there was but little doubt left as to the intentions of the court of

Saxony. The chief difficulty lay in coming to a preliminary arrangement with Bavaria. Count von Brühl distinguished between a lesser and a greater partition. By the lesser he understood that Bohemia and Upper Silesia should be conquered, and divided between Bavaria and Saxony. By the greater, that if, in addition to these territories, the border provinces and Upper Austria were likewise taken, the latter should belong to Bavaria, and the whole of Upper Silesia be given to Saxony, while Bohemia was to be divided between the two; in which case Prague was to fall to the share of Saxony. Brühl thought that the first plan was practicable, even should Prussia refuse to join them. Belleisle replied, that in that case he considered neither the one nor the other possible.* As to the imperial dignity, the house of Saxony did not choose to renounce its claim. Brühl thought that the choice of an Emperor might be left to the decision of the majority of the Electoral princes, unbiassed by strife and envy.

Hereupon negotiations were carried on with as much eagerness as if the result were beyond the reach of doubt. The Elector of Bavaria would not hear of partitioning Bohemia, but proposed to satisfy the court of Saxony, by adding Moravia to its share of the spoil; in which case he would give up a small strip of Bohemia, to connect Electoral Saxony with the newly acquired territory.

Cardinal Fleury was fully occupied in adjusting these rival claims, and he had every reason to pro-

* Letters from Belleisle, dated Leipzig 10th, and Nymphenburg, 24th May.

mise himself success, as according to all human calculation the power of decision rested with himself.

When Richelieu entered into a contest with the house of Austria, that family possessed Spain, Portugal, the two Indies, and the greater part of Italy, together with the imperial throne, and all the enormous rights and privileges thereunto belonging, which had lately been revived. When Louis XIV. determined to seize the Spanish succession, he had on his side, out of all Germany, only the house of Bavaria. But now a spontaneous and eager movement in the south favoured Cardinal Fleury's schemes; the Elector of Bavaria, who was now allied with his cousins who had hitherto been hostile to him, gained fresh importance by his claim to the Austrian succession. The house of Saxony, powerful in itself, and prepared for war, was on the same side; there was no Emperor, and the military force of Austria was fully employed in another quarter. It is therefore perfectly conceivable that the court of Versailles should have entertained the most ambitious hopes; a complete change in all the relations of Europe seemed impending.

The King of Prussia at least took no part in these schemes.

I cannot discover that the treaty of Nymphenburg was ever communicated to him, or that he was privy to the secrets of the agreement between Bavaria and France; nor did he show any curiosity to know them. It is true that he was told of the schemes of partition and of the requisite guarantees; but he answered, that he would listen to nothing until Bavaria should act.

Montijo appeared in the Prussian camp bearing a despatch from the King of Spain, in which that monarch offered to enter into an alliance with Frederick; the latter, however, replied, that he felt the honour conferred on him by such a proposal; but that alliances, of which it was so difficult to foresee the tendency and extent, did not accord with his views, and he must refuse to enter into them. He was almost angry when Belleisle again wrote to him about the negotiations relating to the election of the Emperor. Frederick repeated what he had already said, that whoever was strongest would win and wear the imperial crown.

At the same time he was no longer disposed to resist the execution of these designs. He was willing that the forces which were now let loose should measure themselves against each other on the field of Europe, and decide the great questions according to their own intrinsic strength. He did not shrink from the idea of a complete remodelling of Europe, conceiving that a new balance of power would be established, if that which then existed could not be maintained. Without troubling himself much about future events, in the midst of his continual military avocations, Frederick only wished to see the troops of the allies appear in the field. Until this should happen, said he to Belleisle, they must not reckon upon him any more than upon a leaf blown by the autumn wind.

After Belleisle's return from Munich and Frankfort, in July, 1741, the most earnest consultations took place between him, the Cardinal, and his assist-

ants, on this subject, and the following plan was determined upon:—

Two French armies were to enter the field. The one, consisting of 32,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry, under the command of Belleisle himself, was to join the Elector of Bavaria, who in the meantime had been enabled, by Spanish and French subsidies, to take the field with 20,000 men. In the middle of August the first column of Belleisle's army was to cross the Rhine, and to reach Donauwörth at the end of the month.

The second French army, under Count Maillebois, was to advance upon the Meuse about the beginning of August, to occupy Liege and Dinant, and encamp opposite Düsseldorf, where it was to be joined by the troops of the Elector of Cologne and the Elector Palatine, who likewise received subsidies. While the first army was engaged in the attack, the second was to prevent any interference on the part of England and Holland, and at the same time to threaten Hanover and to prepare the way for the conquests secretly projected in the Netherlands.

There was a fleet at Brest ready, if necessary, to sail for the German Ocean, to the assistance of the Swedes.

This time all was in earnest. Before the month of July was past, war broke out in Germany. Early in the morning of the last day of that month Bavarian troops entered Passau.

The Prince Bishop, Cardinal Lemberg, was quietly holding his court in the fortress of Oberhaus. His garrison consisted of only 70 men; but the Bava-

rians reflected how important the possession of this well-situated place had always been. On that very morning General Minuzzi, with a division of Bavarian troops, crept close to the fortress unperceived, and caused a postilion's horn to be blown; whereupon the gatekeeper opened the door, and Minuzzi rushed into the town with his grenadiers. After seizing upon the guard and taking possession of the whole town, he summoned the Prince Bishop to surrender the fortress, allowing him two hours to consider of it, and informing him that, should he refuse, the Bavarians were prepared to bombard the place. Nothing, therefore, was left to the Prince Bishop but to yield, under protest.*

While one party complained of the "violence of this unheard-of proceeding," as it was called at Vienna, and the other justified it—while both governments were making active preparations for war—those on the frontier of Bavaria were by far the more considerable—the French troops crossed the Rhine on the 15th of August.

Care was taken that they should only appear as auxiliaries. By a formal patent the chief command of the troops was intrusted to the Elector, who was to have the same control over them as the King of France himself. The first plan had been to say that these troops were intended to secure the freedom of the votes at the election of an Emperor; but the

* Species facti, of the unexpected and violent attack of the Bavarian troops on Passau: statement of the delegate from Passau at the diet. In Olenschlager's *Geschichte des Interregni*, III. 51.

Minister for Foreign Affairs remarked that, in that case, the King must act in his own name. The French wore the Bavarian colours, and maintained excellent discipline. They never neglected to procure certificates from the magistrates of the towns through which they passed; they nowhere met with any resistance. The Electoral Archchancellor of the German Empire declared that this affair did not concern the Empire, but only the two courts of Vienna and Munich, and that he would not interfere. When some persons objected that the Elector had introduced foreigners into Germany, the Chancellor replied that the Elector had only called in the French, who were old allies of the Empire; whereas the late Emperor had sent for the Russians, of whom this could not be said.

By the middle of September the whole of Western Germany—the left bank of the Lower Rhine and the right bank of the Upper Rhine—was filled with French troops.

The Elector of Bavaria had drawn up two corps—one at Schärding, whither he went himself, which was to invade Austria; the other in the Upper Palatinate, which was to march into Bohemia. By degrees the French auxiliaries joined these two bodies.

On the 12th of September Charles Albert crossed the Austrian frontier. Immediately after a deputation from the provincial estates came to him before Beyerbach and invited him to proceed to Linz, and there receive the oaths of allegiance. We are told by eye-witnesses that he was received with delight, especially by the peasantry, who had been told

that the Elector was the rightful heir, and who hoped for some relief from a change of rulers. Of the nobility, only those who were connected with the great families in Vienna were opposed to him; the rest were in his favour. On the 14th of September he entered Linz, and took the title of Archduke. His troops spread over the country extending down the Danube.

At this moment the court of Dresden likewise made up its mind which side to take. In July the King of England had opened great prospects to Saxony, and the latter was still carrying on negotiations in Petersburg,* but the increasing success of France carried Saxony along with it. Augustus III. accepted the offer of Moravia and Upper Silesia. As he at the same time resigned his old claim to Juliers and Cleves in favour of the Palatine house, the possession of Obermannhartsberg was promised him instead.

It was in fact Belleisle who concluded this treaty at Frankfort, without any active intervention on the part of the Bavarian ambassador. The best troops that Saxony could furnish now proceeded without delay to the frontiers of Bohemia.

Frederick wished that the concurrence of all these

* Bitter complaints were made at Petersburg. Duke Ludwig of Brunswick wrote thence on the 27th of Oct., 1741: "denn zu gleicher Zeit, wo der chursächsische Hof den russischen noch immer bewegen will, den König von Preussen zu attackiren, handelt er heimlich mit Frankreich, dem preussischen Hofe und Baiern."—(For at the same time that the Electoral court of Saxony is urging Russia to attack the King of Prussia, it likewise is intriguing secretly with France, Prussia, and Bavaria.)

circumstances should be turned to account in bringing matters to a decision.

A short time previously, a general, who had risen to some eminence in the Austrian army, S. von Schmettau, had entered the Prussian service because he felt himself slighted by Bartenstein and his friends. He was well informed of all that was going on, was an experienced and enterprising officer, and a man of great readiness and resource. Frederick sent Schmettau on a mission to the Elector, to induce him "to direct his operations upon the Austrian provinces, to advance straight upon Vienna, and thus put an end to the matter at once."

Schmettau represented to the Elector that by advancing upon Vienna he would in the first place enable the other corps to occupy Bohemia without opposition; and, moreover, that there could be no doubt that Vienna would be taken. He added, that if Vienna had the reputation of being strongly fortified, it was solely because all former sieges had been ill conducted; and he answered for taking it in fourteen days, with a decent park of artillery. By dropping down the Danube in boats, troops could make themselves masters of the islands and of the Leopoldstadt without difficulty. The Viennese citizens would not bear to see their property in the suburbs destroyed by fire; especially as they were well inclined to Bavaria and hated the Grand Duke of Tuscany.* It was

* Medals were struck in Vienna with this inscription: Reichen zu trutzen, Pfaffen zu stutzen, Armen zu nutzen.—(To defy the rich, to shear the priests, and to aid the poor.) Ac-

possible that Lobkowitz and Neipperg might here-upon march their armies towards Vienna. But nothing could be more desirable than this; as it would enable the King of Prussia to come too, and a peace might be extorted from the Austrians on the spot.*

Had this taken place, it would have brought down upon Austria, and indeed upon Europe, one of the greatest catastrophes that had happened for centuries.

In order to comprehend the general state of affairs, let us turn once more to the court of Vienna, and to the resolutions which it embraced.

According to Kolinowicz, Khevenhüller declared that he feared "*intestinis proditorum niti promissis.*"

* As early as August, according to Schmettau's account, the Elector was inclined to this: *il me confirma qu'il goutoit et adhéroit entièrement à ma proposition de porter le fort des opérations en Autriche et aller même à Vienne.*

CHAPTER IX.

NEGOTIATIONS DOWN TO THE AGREEMENT OF
KLEINSCHNELLENDORF.

WHILE these things were advancing towards maturity, the court of Vienna entertained no suspicion that they were even possible.

In the year 1735 Bartenstein had worded the treaty of peace so carefully, that he thought it impossible to evade it; his whole aim had been to deprive the courts of Saxony and Bavaria of the protection of France; and it appeared to him most improbable that France should now revert to the project of granting it. He showed great acuteness in defending the policy of Cardinal Fleury; he felt his own honour wounded by any doubt cast on the loyalty of the French minister.

He was equally unwearied in representing to the Queen that the claims of the Prussians were not only in themselves null and void, but that moreover the strongest reasons existed for not allowing them. Above all, no part of the Germano-Bohemian territories must be ceded—they were a vital part of the monarchy; Silesia was the fairest jewel of the crown.

Such was also the fixed opinion of the Queen. If we watch the developement of her personal position and conduct in the events of her reign, we shall see

how disastrous, especially at this juncture, were the results of her determination to wield the supreme power according to her own judgment. Goodwill, and a certain amount of talent, are very far from sufficing for the task of autocratic government, especially in troubled and stormy times; it requires also an acute and exercised understanding, a knowledge of the world, and of the ruler's own position, which it would be absurd to look for in a young woman. Maria Theresa believed what she wished; she persisted in thinking the alliance concluded by her father the best; she persuaded herself that she should produce some effect on Fleury by reminding him of the confidence which Charles VI. had reposed in him.* But if she was capable of reverence, confidence, and love, she was also capable of hatred. How, therefore, could she fail to hate a Prince who had invaded one of her fairest provinces in the midst of peace; in justification or extenuation of whose conduct not a single argument presented itself to her mind, and who was represented to her as a man without religion and without faith.

Considerations founded on the view of affairs taken by the Catholic Church also indisposed her to consent to any cession of territory. The Nuntio and the

* On the 26th of May the following words were quoted from a long letter which she addressed to the Cardinal: "qu'elle donnera toutes les sûretés qui dépendent d'elle, pour assurer la France, qu'elle n'entreprendra jamais rien contre elle." When Belleisle was in Dresden, he was invited to come to Vienna, since the greatest trust was reposed in France: "pour la défendre contre le roi de Prusse et autres princes, qui voudroient enfreindre la pragmatique."

Jesuits deemed even the cession of Glogau very dangerous; for they urged that that place would become a nursery not only for Lutheranism, but for the yet more mischievous doctrines of Calvin; far less would they hear of a cession of the whole of Lower Silesia.

These notions were still prevalent when the declaration of the 24th of May was put forth.

Shortly afterwards Bartenstein was obliged to admit that France would not take up arms in behalf of Austria; he, however, still maintained that she would not attack the Queen: as evidence of his assertion he adduced the difficulties which were thrown in the way of the march of the Spanish troops through the south of France.* He acknowledged only one subject of difference—the election of an Emperor—but from this he feared no serious consequences; France would certainly not espouse the cause of the Elector of Bavaria until the latter had secured a sufficient number of votes in the electoral college to cause a split in it; which might yet be prevented.

Even those who did not see things in so favourable a light were of opinion that it was at the discretion of the court either to come to an agreement with

* On sait, que la prétendue exception des prétentions et demandes antérieures à la pragmatique sanction lui (à la France) sert de prétexte pour ne pas vouloir appuyer par les armes le droit de la succession de la reine—mais en même tems on a des avis,—que le passage n'est pas accordé aux troupes Espagnoles, et on a tout lieu de croire que la France n'attaquera pas les états de la reine du moins avant de porter à une scission dans le college électoral la quelle peut être empêché par des moyens moins nuisibles que ne seroit la cession d'une partie de la Silesie. (One of his notes at this time.)

Bavaria, through the mediation of France, or with Prussia, through that of England; and, in fact, the former seemed to him the most expedient. Charles Albert would be satisfied with the Netherlands, which would not be a very disadvantageous arrangement; since in that case Austria would stipulate for the nearest circles of his hereditary domains as compensation, whilst Bavaria, once firmly fixed in the Netherlands, would serve as a bulwark against France.

In the month of June, therefore, the court of Vienna was very far from acceding to the King of Prussia's terms, and was strengthened in its resistance by the Grand Duke, who, little inclined to the French alliance, declared it, from his personal knowledge of the King's sentiments, impossible that he should coalesce with France. The opinion that no imminent danger was to be apprehended, was equally entertained by the most opposite parties.

These dim and vague phantasies, the offspring of inclination and inexperience, were now chased by the stern realities.

The King of England was the first to communicate the intelligence that a treaty was concluded between France and Prussia. The traces that he had discovered of it were certain and undeniable; it was impossible to doubt the correctness of his information.

Not even the first Prussian invasion had made a greater sensation at the Austrian court. The whole condition of the world, such as it appeared to them, was entirely subverted.

We have no information as to the manner in which Bartenstein received those tidings: as to the Grand

Duke, Robinson says that the Queen reproached him, though with tenderness, with suffering himself to be entirely deceived in the policy of Frederick II. The Grand Duke might have replied, that that Prince had been forced into the alliance with France almost against his will. He only said, in that chivalrous style which characterized him at that period of his life, that if such were the case, nothing was left to him but to fall, sword in hand. For no doubt could be entertained that the most terrible contest in which Austria had ever engaged was now at hand.

X Cardinal Fleury, in reply to a very urgent inquiry of the Austrian ambassador, at length answered in a manner plain and direct for him, that he demanded justice for his friends and allies. By this he was understood to mean Spain, Bavaria, and perhaps Saxony; and that all these would combine their forces under a French leader for an attack on Austria.

To so formidable a coalition Austria had on her part nothing to oppose. The only army she possessed was threatened by the King of Prussia. Nothing had yet been done to put the provinces in a state of defence, or even to ensure their fidelity. The Diet of Hungary, which was at this moment assembled at Presburg, and at whose meeting the Queen appeared in person, put forward claims which scarcely any former ruler would have granted. She had not a single ally who would draw the sword in her cause. The envoy from Brunswick,* who was on terms of

* Von Moll: es ist ein eigen Unglück hier, dass man eine Sache nicht glaubet bis man sie siehet.—(It is an especial misfortune, that here nothing is believed until it is actually seen.)

intimacy with the court, is at a loss for words to express "with what anxious thoughts they had to wrestle:" many, who a few months before would not hear of any danger, now at last saw clearly that nothing but peace in Silesia could avail to save them. This was also strongly urged by the only power that still afforded Austria any support—by England.

King George II., who had just concluded the treaty concerning the subsidies granted by parliament, instructed his ambassador to declare that he hoped to be placed in a situation to do more, although the debts which England had contracted in order to support Austria during the war of the Spanish succession were not yet paid; but, he added, that the nation would not make similar exertions in favour of the same family, unless it saw that its most earnest desire was attained, and the balance of power in Europe preserved. This, however, was impossible without the co-operation of Prussia. He reiterated with increased emphasis the counsels which he had given before, that the Queen should yield a little to the exigencies of the times, and try to conciliate that power. If she could not resolve to do this, the war would be hopeless and ruinous to herself, and she would no longer have the good wishes of England.*

* George II. to Robinson, 21st January: "You may strongly assure them that as by hearkening to the king's friendly admonitions and yielding a little to the necessity of the times, they will do the most agreeable thing to H. M. and his people, so they may surely rely upon it, that the English nation, who distinguished them so eminently in the last war for the support of

The Queen persisted in thinking that affairs might undergo a complete change if only George II., who was now her best friend, would take the field in her defence; if he would only speak a word to the Elector of Bavaria, he too might perhaps be gained over. This was a very personal and feminine view of the matter. England was both determined and compelled to carry on her war with France, and could not desire that that power should be seconded by Prussia instead of Bavaria. The ambassador declared an agreement with Bavaria to be wholly impossible, and an understanding with Prussia to be the only means of safety. If she did not resort to this, said he one day, the danger would rise around her, and would swell broader and deeper, like the torrent of the Danube below. From the window at which they were standing they looked on the river, which had overflowed its banks and covered the land with its foaming waters.

To the Queen the hardest thing that could be required of her was to enter into negotiations with

the house of Austria, will be ready, notwithstanding the vast debts thereby contracted and remaining still in great part unpaid, to exert themselves once more in the defence of the same family, whilst they see it connected with any hope of preserving all these other objects which they have mostly at heart; whereas on the contrary, if the Hungarian court shall persist in their resolution of risking the whole rather than make any sacrifice towards gaining the King of Prussia, whose concurrence in the common cause is so necessary towards the public as well as the Queen of Hungaria's security, they cannot, and must not expect that such a hopeless, unnatural, and ruinous war will be entered into with cheerfulness, or carried on with the same degree of spirit and vigour."

the King of Prussia, and to offer him proposals; but the posture of affairs was such that this could no longer be avoided. At length she did it; but with hesitation, reluctance, and aversion.

At first she still thought she should be able to satisfy the demands of Prussia by the cession of a part of the Netherlands. Even that she felt to be very hard. When the draft of the intended proposals was laid before her, she covered the paper with corrections, expressive of the conflict going on within her and the reluctance with which she yielded. After various discussions, the following proposal was at length made:—

As equivalent of the claim laid by the King to certain duchies in Silesia, Austrian Guelders and Limburg were to be offered to him. The Queen scrupled to consent even to this, because her father had always refused to give up Limburg, though he could by that means have put an end to the disputes about Juliers. She told the English ambassador, who wished to conduct the negotiations in person, that she trusted to his address to save this province for her. She declared herself ready, moreover, to pay two millions of dollars; on condition, however, that the King instantly abandoned Silesia. She did not fail to add expressly, that she renounced her claim to compensation for the damage done there, as if there could have been any question of the contrary.

With these proposals Robinson set out on the 31st of July; on the 7th of August he delivered them to the King of Prussia, at his camp of Strehlen.

This camp and the court from which he came were, as we have remarked, two different worlds. No one had occasion to feel this more sensibly than Robinson.

What he had obtained at Vienna with the greatest trouble, as the extremest point of concession, here made not the slightest impression.

On taking the decisive step of connecting himself with France the King had also resolved to keep possession of Silesia. It was not likely that he would be induced to relinquish it before the inevitable consequences of his alliance and the warlike preparations of France had even begun to develop themselves.

Robinson's first proposition, that Silesia should be evacuated in consideration of a few million dollars, struck the King as offensive, as if he had taken the field in order to extort money. He saw in it a fresh proof of the contempt with which the house of Austria regarded him. Hereupon Robinson offered Guelders, and as the King was rather the more irritated at this, as at a fresh meanness, he proceeded, after a short pause, to offer Limburg also. He represented how admirably that country was situated for trade and manufactures; that its chief city might be rendered one of the first in Europe; how large its revenues were even now, and how much larger they might become under a better administration, and that when once in possession of that, nothing would be easier than for the King to proceed to the conquest of Berg. The King suggested that such a convention would be in viola-

tion of the treaty concerning the frontier ; but above all, he declared that it was not his intention to extend his dominions in that direction. What would the world think of him if he were to deliver up Silesia, which had received him with open arms, to the domination and fury of the Papists, who would take the most cruel vengeance on the people for the inclination they had showed towards him? Would he not disgrace both his ancestors and his posterity if he basely surrendered back those undoubted rights which he had now conquered with his sword? Robinson observed to him that the balance of power in Europe might thus be subverted. He replied that he had various duties to fulfil; the first were those which, as King of Prussia, he owed to his house and his country; he knew no sovereign who would consent to maintain the balance of power at his own expense. Upon this Robinson let fall some words to the intent that Russia and even England might be tempted to maintain that balance by supporting Austria. "Sir," said Frederick, laying his finger on his nose, "no threats. The King of England is my friend, and were he not so, the Prince of Anhalt has an army ready to meet him."

At an earlier period the cession of Glogau had frequently been mentioned. Although not authorized, yet as a last resource and in order to avoid a complete rupture, Robinson now recurred to this. He asked whether the King would be satisfied if Glogau were added to the territory already offered him. The King replied, that as the court of Vienna had rejected his previous proposals, he was no longer

bound by them. But a few years ago that court had ceded two kingdoms to the Spanish line of the house of Bourbon; his views were now fixed on Lower Silesia, with Breslau—neither more nor less than what was his by right: he had it already in his possession, and he would keep it; people need not flatter themselves that he would ever give it up. “I will have it,” added he, “or perish in the attempt; I and all my troops.”*

Robinson had been told that he would find a Prince who was his own general and his own council; he clearly saw that nothing was to be effected by persuasions or arguments, and he hastened back to Presburg, to endeavour to prevail on the government to offer better terms.

Meanwhile the news of the attack on Passau, the breaking out of the war on the Bohemian frontier, and the advance of the French, had arrived in that city.† He was expected with painful anxiety; nor

* There are three equally trustworthy reports of this meeting: one in the King's works, which however only gives a summary; the second in Robinson's despatches, of which the greater portion is contained in Raumer's *Frederick II.*, p. 106; and the third, preserved in the Archives, is the *Précis des propositions du S^r Robinson faites au roi dans l'audience qu'il eut de S. M. au camp de Strehlen le 7 août, et la réponse que le roi lui fit.* They agree in all the main points, in spite of a few verbal differences. The *Précis* is the most complete, and I have only amplified it here and there from Robinson's despatches. The King's report is not to be taken literally.

† Letter of the Russian ambassador, Lancinski. After giving his court the important intelligence of the breaking out of the Bavarian war, he says on 5th Aug.: “Gott wolle dass der Herr Robinson in seiner Negotiation reussiren möge.”—(God grant that Mr. Robinson may succeed in his negotiation.) He adds

could the intelligence he brought produce any other than a painful impression.

The Queen was the person who most readily recovered her self-possession and courage. She said there was nothing further to be done; she at least neither could nor would do anything further; she was determined to address herself to Bavaria. The Elector was in fact requested by his mother-in-law, the Empress Dowager Amelia, to send a confidential person to the court, with whom it might treat. X

Robinson repeated, that a negotiation with that power lay within the domain of impossibility; before they had exchanged two or three couriers the King of Prussia might be before the gates of Vienna. Nor must the Queen deceive herself. Europe would have no Emperor under French influence; neither Europe nor the Empire would tolerate such an one.

In this opinion the Queen's ministers now unanimously concurred.* Bartenstein had adhered to the old system of French alliance, of which he himself was the author, as long as possible; indeed, much too long. When at length his eyes were opened to his mistake—at the time we are now speaking of—he adopted the contrary one with equal energy and decision. He feared that otherwise the worst motives

shortly afterwards, that the court was “dans une irresolution et inactivité parfaite en attendant le retour ou du moins les nouvelles du ministre anglais Robinson.”

* The Archduke declared his approval: “mais la reine,” said he, “j'ai peur qu'elle n'y consentira jamais. Stahrenberg says that he does not go to court, “Seeing his mistress in such bad hands, who or what they were he could not tell.”

would be imputed to him.* He now confessed that nothing remained but to restore the ancient alliance against France; and as, according to the repeated declarations of England, a reconciliation with Prussia was necessary to that end, he determined no longer to oppose the means which might be proposed for its attainment.

X Even the small circle of intimates whom the Queen tried to keep steady to the contrary opinion were at length reduced to silence by an unfavourable answer from the Elector of Bavaria to the Empress Amelia. All were at last convinced that a part of Silesia must be ceded to the King of Prussia, and the only question was, what part that should be.

At the conference Count Sinzendorf took out a map, in which he had drawn a line round that which he regarded as the Lower Silesia demanded by the King of Prussia, and which might be ceded to him. This line went from Greifenberg, through Goldberg, to the Oder, in such a manner that Liegnitz and Parchwitz would have remained Austrian, and cut through Wohlau, which was thus to be partitioned. Robinson immediately remarked that nothing could be effected so: according to this plan, not even the whole of Jauer, and only a part of Liegnitz and Wohlau, would come to Prussia; of Breslau and Brieg, which the King also demanded, nothing whatever. To this the others replied, that by Upper Silesia the whole right bank of the Oder was properly meant: and whatever was wanting in Lower Silesia was compen-

* Robinson: "He has no other refuge but in flying from one extremity to another, to avoid the worst of all imputations."

sated for by the concessions which were made on that bank. In answer to a rejoinder of Robinson's they said, that the Queen might perhaps be prevailed upon to give up the whole of Wohlau, but most certainly nothing more; that she was as resolute as the King of Prussia: if the imperial house of which she was the head was to be overthrown, it mattered not whether its ruin were accomplished by Bavaria or by Prussia.

How strange was Robinson's situation! At the court of Vienna he laboured with a zeal which it would have been impossible to surpass, to bring about an agreement with Prussia, and the cession of considerable provinces to that power. But when he presented himself before Frederick, he assumed such an attitude that it appeared to the King as if he had before him an enthusiast for Austria, one of the most ardent champions of the interests of the Queen of Hungary. The fact is, that Robinson, who kept steadily before him the properly English view of affairs—the expediency of reuniting the two great German powers—thought himself justified in pleading the services which England rendered to the one by her subsidies, and to the other by the support she gave to its claims. He was urgent even to importunity with his proposals; and though this was tolerated in Vienna, Frederick was not disposed to endure it. Robinson was now the bearer of offers which, a little while before, the King would have gladly accepted, and which probably would never have been made but through his interference; yet Frederick, otherwise so accessible to all, refused even to see him.

It is true that these propositions (as Podewils, who treated with Robinson, and got a sight of his map, reported to the King) fell far short of what he now demanded, even in a territorial point of view; but, independently of this, the Queen made a counter-demand, with which he would by no means comply. She expressed her desire, just as if every thing was in the same situation as at the first advance of the Prussians into Silesia, that he should make common cause with her, and should instantly send ten thousand men to her assistance against France.

The King answered, that he should sully the glory of his name if he were thus to turn from black to white. Austria had hitherto treated him with disdain; was he to requite this by drawing the thorn out of her side, to plunge it into his own? No, truly.

Robinson sent to ask him to trace the boundary-line, according to his own plan, on the map; adding that he pledged himself to procure a definitive answer from Vienna within a week. The King, however, rejected everything; Robinson's presence was personally disagreeable to him, and moreover it might awaken the suspicions of his allies. Podewils reported this answer to the English Minister, and, at the same time, entreated him not to stay above twenty-four hours longer in Breslau. Exactly as these expired, at eleven o'clock on the 2nd of September, Robinson set out on his journey back.

The inducement to listen once more to the offers of Austria was destined to come from a totally different quarter; it arose from the course of events to which Frederick had himself contributed.

The question was now frequently asked, what would happen if the might of Austria should decay, and whether it were possible to put another power in her place at the head of the Empire, in order to check the encroachments of France.

The King of England often thought that Saxony might be raised to that position. All his overtures to Augustus III. and his Minister assume that the court of Vienna would not be advised, and therefore could not be helped. He made no express objection to Saxony's defending her hereditary claims by arms, provided only she did not attach herself to France. England hoped to recover in the King of Poland a support fully equal to all that she should lose in Austria; his personal qualities, and the consideration he enjoyed in the Empire, inspired the hope that if he acquired the imperial crown he would place the European system on a more solid basis.

Similar expectations were entertained at the Prussian court with regard to Bavaria. In reply to the fears expressed by the English as to the French leanings of the Elector of Bavaria, the Prussians observed, that the last of the house of Habsburg had attached himself, during the last five years, entirely to the policy of France; perhaps not more than one year would be required to detach an ambitious and clever man, as Charles Albert unquestionably was, from France.

For this reason Frederick wished and demanded that the affair might be brought to a termination as soon as possible; and an immediate attack on Vienna, the effect of which he would be able to increase from

the other side, appeared to him an infallible means to that end. Peace would then be made and the French army sent home, whereupon the German powers might settle their disputes among themselves.

It is very remarkable, that the lively and audacious French were not to be prevailed on to seize such an opportunity of striking a decisive blow which would have laid Austria prostrate.

The reasons for this were divined by Frederick at the time, and acknowledged by Charles Albert a little later. Valori relates as follows:—

General Schmettau employed every argument to induce the Marquis de Beauvau, who accompanied the Elector of Bavaria during the expedition as French plenipotentiary, to make an attack on Vienna. The Marquis at last found it impossible to deny that this was practicable, and even that it would very likely succeed; "But then," added he, "this man (the Elector of Bavaria) would no longer want us, and that would be against our interest."*

The French had recognised the hereditary claims of the house of Wittelsbach, but they did not choose to enforce them in their full extent; they had not a sufficiently firm conviction of their validity, nor, indeed, of the right of succession itself. They wished to make the Elector emperor; but they had no intention of creating a powerful German emperor,

* Il échappa au Marquis de Beauvau de dire, mais quand nous aurons pris Vienne, cet homme, parlant de l'Electeur de Baviere, n'aura plus besoin de nous, et ce n'est pas la notre compte. (Valori, despatch of 8th Jan., 1745.)

resting on his own strength; such an one might have become their rival.

The aged Cardinal thought to direct the operations of the war as he had done the negotiations of peace, to conduct things to their predetermined end, and to no other. The Elector of Bavaria should be aggrandized, but he should not found a new Austria; nor should Wittelsbach become the political successor and substitute of Habsburg.

The prevalent opinion in the camp was, that the French had rather establish three or four secondary powers, which could always be played off against each other, than one or two resting on their own strength, which might in time become able to defy them. According to Frederick's assertion, which was justified by all the preliminary French negotiations, there were to be four: Hungary, with the districts of Inner Austria; Bavaria, with Bohemia; Upper Austria, and the border provinces; Saxony, with Moravia and Upper Silesia; Prussia, with Lower Silesia.

The idea of seeing around him neighbours equal to himself in power, and of the negotiations necessary to a preliminary demarcation of the new territory, was extremely disagreeable to the King of Prussia. It is true that he had demanded from the Queen of Hungary only Lower Silesia and Breslau, and had required a guarantee for these alone; but if new states were to be created, or new political combinations attempted, he was not disposed to look favourably on the first who might be put in possession of them. In that case he accordingly laid claim to Glatz and to a wider circle around Neisse than had been apportioned

to him. It appeared to him but just that those whom he was to help to conquer kingdoms should make greater concessions to him than the Queen, who had to give up an ancient possession. His demands were wholly unexpected by the others, and their refusals added to his displeasure: he did not like that Upper Silesia should be given to Saxony, and expressed great impatience that that power would not give way as to the small circle of Neisse.

A real danger, however, lay in the influence which France would necessarily exercise over the states which had been founded by her power; she would thus acquire immense consideration in Germany. King Frederick, who always had the history of antiquity floating before his mind, thought he could predict that the French would exercise a sort of supreme umpireship over the royal neighbours, whose mutual jealousy was inevitable, as the Romans had done over the kings of Bithynia and Pergamus.*

He had proofs, as regarded himself, that he had no partiality or favour to expect from them.

There were despatches, too, which he did not see, containing warnings from the French ministry not to promote the aggrandizement of a prince already too powerful.

France was already stretching out her hand towards another part of Germany. The French ministry wished the army now posted on the Lower

* Charles Albert said later: "Les Français ont voulu ménager la chèvre et le chou: ne voulant, que je m'empare de Vienne ils ont eu leurs raisons, pour détruire les uns par les autres et faire le partage de lion."

Rhine to take up its winter-quarters in Hanover, and invited the King of Prussia to advance from the Elbe and do the same. Frederick saw in this proposal only a design of involving him in hostilities with the King of England (who, however, had offered to preserve the neutrality of Hanover), and generally of carrying the war into North Germany. What had the people of Hanover to do with the war between England and France? said Podewils; the English people had, as it were, forced their King into the war: let the French fight it out with them. Prussia ought on no account to make a new and powerful enemy so long as she still had Austria against her; were the French to overrun Hanover and then (as they inevitably would) Westphalia, Prussia would be wholly at their mercy.

King Frederick was at war with Austria, and dissatisfied—justly or unjustly—with Hanover, but he was not so bad a German as to be willing to sacrifice either of them to the French; nor did he fail to see that he would himself be the next to feel their tyranny. “How unpardonable,” he exclaimed, “would it have been to break the yoke of Austria, only to accept instead the fetters of France.”

While these things passed in the King's mind, and the consciousness of his intimate and natural connexion with the powers he was now defying was awakened in his mind, the court of the Queen of Hungary could no longer resist the conviction that she had no hope of safety but in consenting to the demands of Prussia.

In the first conference held after Robinson's return,

at which the Queen took part in person, a resolution was come to (founded on the report which the Ambassador had made, as he said, "honestly, frankly, and circumstantially,") to cede Lower Silesia, as far as the Neiss, together with Breslau. They still cherished the hope that the King might be induced by this great concession to send an army to the Queen's assistance.

This proposal was brought to Frederick by Lord Hyndford, who had joined Marshal Neipperg, from whose head-quarters he carried on the negotiation with the King's aide-de-camp, Colonel Golz; it was again rejected, as may be supposed, by the King.

But he asked himself, should he then peremptorily decline all advances? Should he detain here the only army that could oppose any obstacle to the plans of the French, and suffer Austria, who possessed few troops, to sink into utter ruin? Thoughts like these probably rendered the answers which Hyndford sent from the Prussian camp far less decidedly repulsive than the preceding ones. They particularly expressed that the King of Prussia demanded the fortress of Neisse, on the other side the river of that name; but that he could promise nothing more than neutrality on his own part.

Some advances had been made to the French from the court of Vienna. A member of the State Chancery had applied to Belleisle in Frankfort; the King of Portugal had offered his mediation in Versailles; a Cardinal of the Church of Rome had tried to excite Cardinal Fleury's compassion for the oppressed Queen—all without the smallest success. There

remained only the choice between a prolongation of the struggle with both enemies, in which Austria was certain to succumb, or an accommodation with the more dangerous of the two.* It was considered that everything depended on setting Marshal Neipperg's hands at liberty—then they might breathe again; if they could but secure themselves from being overwhelmed before the winter, they might afterwards recover. In consequence of these considerations, the Queen at length declared herself ready to surrender Lower Silesia and Breslau to the King of Prussia, without demanding anything in return but peace and amity.

King Frederick, who had not only no authentic report, but not even the smallest suspicion, of the course of these deliberations at the Austrian court, who, from the time of the first experience of Gotter and Borke, had never regarded the advances from that quarter in any other light than as an attempt to deceive him, could not prevail on himself to believe that such was the Queen's serious purpose. He would have thought it an unpardonable fault to interrupt for a moment his warlike movements on this account. On the 26th of September he effected the long-contemplated passage over the Neiss, not with-

* Although there was great difficulty in "Satisfying the King of Prussia first for nothing in return, and all the rest afterwards according to their respective pretensions."—Nevertheless, should Vienna hold firm, and Hungary arm, "Neipperg's having his hands free, this court may breath a little, and if not ruined before the winter, find one resource or other during the following five or six months."

out the greatest caution; the army broke up its quarters by night, and the posts were left for some time guarded; he crossed over by means of three bridges of boats near Sonnenburg, and then moved up the bank of the Neiss, over heathy broken ground, towards Oppersdorf, not without some design of threatening the enemy's camp on its rear: whilst he, at the same time, occupied Oppeln, and established magazines there. Neipperg once more came beforehand with him at Oppersdorf, whereupon the Prussians marched upon Friedland and the Austrians upon Steinau; incessant skirmishes took place between the hussars of the two armies.*

Here, in his camp near Friedland, Frederick received fresh despatches from Hyndford, who informed him that the Queen had at length determined to give up Neisse, which she had hitherto insisted on keeping, in return for which nothing was demanded from the King but his oral assurance that he would desist from any further aggression upon the Queen. That the movement made by Frederick had contributed to this resolution does not admit of a doubt. On the day after the passage of the troops, Neipperg's courier had left Neisse, and in the night of the 4th of October he returned; he had been in Presburg just as very alarming reports of the imminent danger

* The statement in the *Histoire de mon temps* (II. 90) must be a slip of the pen: "le roi le tourna par Friedland et se campa a Steinau." In the original copy it stands thus: "Neuperg surpris de cette manœuvre se campa a Oppersdorf; je me portois sur Friedland, et les Autrichiens marchoiient sur Steinau."

of Vienna reached that city. Neipperg, who had already had one interview with Golz, in the garden of the Capucines' convent, had now the most earnest desire to speak with the King himself: for, said he, more is effected by conversation in a quarter of an hour than by writing in a week.

From the few remaining letters and notes which passed on that occasion, without dates, and often, from the modification which took place in the views of the writers, not very intelligible, it is evident that both Golz and Eichel earnestly wished for a reconciliation. Podewils was at a distance, and was not in the secret.

The proposal made to the King still failed to inspire him with any confidence. The terms indeed were so advantageous to him, and so exactly met the exigencies of the moment, that he did not like to reject them; but what would happen if his acceptance of them were known to his allies? Would he not have reason to fear the most disagreeable discussions, and, at length, complete isolation? He agreed to the interview, which was to take place at a castle belonging to the Stahrenberg family, at Kleinschnelendorf, just between the two armies: but the more he reflected, the more he was of opinion that the sole purpose of the Austrians was, by making known the intended convention, to break up an alliance so dangerous to them. It appeared to him incredible that they would honestly consent to a cession of such magnitude, solely on the faith of an oral declaration, without one word from either himself or one of his ministers in writing. He was not disposed to venture

upon such a transaction and to expose himself to all the mischievous consequences which might arise from it: though he determined not to abandon Austria to the power of the French, he had no intention of quarrelling with them and their allies. Desirous of obtaining from the former a concession in return for the services he was about to render them, and yet cautious—nay, suspicious—in his inmost soul, he determined to make absolute secrecy an essential condition of the treaty;* and what if this condition were violated? We may follow him here, as becomes the impartiality of history, without approbation or disapprobation, but with certainty, into the most secret workings of his mind. Pondering the natural course of events, and the usual conduct of the court of Vienna, he regarded the observance of this condition as unlikely, but that did not hinder him from entering into the agreement; he considered that the violation of the promise of secrecy would set him free from every obligation.

In these thoughts and with this prevision he rode, on the 9th of October, 1741, accompanied only by Golz, to Kleinschnellendorf, where Hyndford, Neip-

* *Histoire de mon temps*, cap. III. 91: this has frequently been denied by Bernhorst and others. The original copy narrates the same even more explicitly. "J'avois lieu de me défier de la cour de Vienne dont la façon de penser m'était connue, je crus donc agir prudemment en exigeant des Autrichiens un secret inviolable sur ce que nous allions convenir ensemble prévoyant qu'ils ne le garderoient pas et qu'ils repanderoient par tout le bruit de cette convention pour semer la méfiance entre les alliés, ce qui m'autoriseroit de mon côté de rompre cet accord verbal."

perg, and Lentulus were assembled at the appointed time.

Here it was determined that Neisse should be surrendered to the King in a feigned siege, and that he, on the other hand, should take no further offensive steps against the Queen and her allies; the contracting parties hoped in the course of this year to conclude a definitive treaty. Neipperg declared, in the name of his Queen, that she would oppose no obstacle to the cession by such a treaty of the whole of Lower Silesia, as far as the Neiss (including the city of that name) on the one side; and on the other, the whole country up to the frontiers of the Duchy of Oppeln, with full sovereignty and independence;* in which case the King promised never to require anything more of her.

Hyndford conducted the protocol, which he alone signed and sealed.

The King demanded, above all things, the most profound secrecy both for the present negotiation and those which might succeed it; if this were not observed, he could not render the Queen any further service; and he declared that he should, in that case, not only not hold himself bound by the treaty, but should disown it. The last article of the protocol promises this inviolable secrecy; Hyndford, Lentulus, and Neipperg make themselves responsible for it on their word of honour.

* Art. 8. Le M^l de Neipperg a déclaré, au nom de S. M. la reine de Hongrie et de Bohême, que S. M. Hongroise cédera sans aucune difficulté a S. M. le roi de Pr. par le traité a faire vers la fin du mois de Decembre prochain toute la basse Silesie etc.

At the conference it was not so much the individual points that were discussed as the general posture of affairs. The King was much pleased to have an opportunity of making the personal acquaintance of Neipperg, who had inspired him with great respect; he talked with him a great deal of the last campaign, and has inserted in his memoirs many things which the Marshal said to him.

If we look at the convention of Kleinschnellendorf only as to its momentary results, its essential provision was, that the King was to occupy Neisse, and take up his winter-quarters in Upper Silesia as well as in Bohemia; while on the other hand, Neipperg and his army were to be allowed to take their way unobstructed and unpursued over the mountains to Moravia.

When we consider that the King already had possession of Lower Silesia (and, indeed, he very shortly afterwards received the hereditary homage at Breslau without any opposition), that he acquired nothing more in addition than Neisse, but that Neipperg put the Austrian army in a condition to resist the French, it clearly appears that the military advantage was at least as great on the side of Austria as on that of Prussia.

Yet no one could assert that a permanent good understanding was thus secured.

The great question—as each party considered the decision of the affair of the succession—was not even touched upon. Though Frederick did not choose to allow Austria to succumb under the might of France, it did not at all follow that he engaged himself to

take part against Bavaria or Saxony. Even the cession of Lower Silesia was not as yet declared in any formal or binding manner; it was only promised that it should form an article of the treaty of peace which both parties hoped to bring about, towards the end of the year, but which never was executed. Colonel Golz urgently requested Lord Hyndford to use his utmost endeavours to accomplish it: he begged him not to await the last days of the year for the conclusion of the peace; the earliest day, he said, would be the best; the Queen's motto ought to be "Now or never." But Hyndford's powers were not extensive enough to resume the negotiations with the requisite authority, nor was there any one there to conduct them on the part of Austria. With regard to Neipperg, we know that he was personally greatly inclined to an accommodation, and only wished to be informed of the further demands which the King meditated making as conditions for the peace; but his retreat upon Moravia daily removed him to a greater distance, and he at length declared that neither he nor Lentulus were any longer able to conduct the negotiations; nor did he name any other who could undertake that office.

We will not affirm that the King on his side was absolutely determined to conclude a peace. The general agitation of affairs was as yet too violent, the great decision too remote and too doubtful for him to labour earnestly and cordially to bring about a definitive agreement.

It must be added that the condition of secrecy, which he had laid down as one of the most essential,

was not adhered to for a moment. No later than October, a very precise report of the conference was sent to the Austrian ambassador at Dresden, who did not keep it secret. Although Frederick had foreseen this, it appeared to him rather too soon and too unscrupulous, and he showed great indignation at it; in what a situation would he have been placed had France broken with him on account of a connexion with Austria that promised so little security!

The Schnellendorf conference may be regarded as a first moment of good understanding, luckily discovered, or rather struck out, in the general conflict; but which was not embraced or improved with earnest zeal by either party, and the results of which were evanescent.

The immediate advantage it secured to the King was, that his army, after so long a campaign, was enabled to recruit itself in winter-quarters, but beyond this no repose was yet possible.

SIXTH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITIVE ACQUISITION OF SILESIA, AND NEW SYSTEM
OF GOVERNMENT INTRODUCED THERE.

ON examining the causes of the conquest of Silesia, we cannot fail to attribute it mainly to the discipline and warlike preparation of the Prussian army, and to the state of religious feeling among the greater portion of the inhabitants of the province. To other invaders they had offered resistance, but to the King of Prussia they offered none, or next to none.

But a great effect was also produced by the actual relations between the great European states.

At the very first conferences which took place at Rheinsberg, Podewils and Schwerin had pointed out two courses, between which lay Frederick's choice; namely, a renewal of the old alliance, or a connexion with France.

The result would indeed have been totally different, had Frederick been able, under whatever conditions, to attain his end by pursuing the first course; but we have already shown how completely he failed in this attempt. The anger of the court of Vienna at the invasion of Silesia, and the wish to

defend its possessions, which indeed was also a duty, overcame all other considerations, for a long time prevented even negotiation, and rendered any concession impossible. Moreover, the members of the old alliance, although they did not come to the assistance of the Queen of Hungary with all their forces, afforded her a moral support; their ambiguous mediation could have no effect.

It is obvious that Frederick would never have obtained anything, but for the armed interference of France. This would not, perhaps, have had much weight, had not Prussia already been in the field; but the union of the two was irresistible. Fear for the stability of the European system, excited by these events, now first caused England to exert her influence to the utmost; and the danger which threatened on every side—to which Austria had hitherto shut her eyes—alone induced the Queen to make those concessions which were required of her, and, painful as it was to her, to recognise—at any rate, provisorily—what had happened in Silesia.

At the first glance it appeared to be the interest of Prussia to pursue the second of the courses which had been suggested, and to consolidate the alliance with France, whose warlike movement had afforded her such powerful and timely aid; Prussia would thus, at any rate, have had a strong support to fall back upon.

But the true nature of any political relation is only shown by the progress of events. If, on the one hand, the first line of policy failed to lead to a successful issue; on the other, the second pursued,

without reserve, would have led to utter destruction. As was said at the Hague, the King of Prussia might promise himself, in virtue of his alliance with Polyphemus, the favour of being the last to be swallowed up.

Frederick had so long refused to ally himself with France, only because he well knew that the superior force of that power boded him the greatest mischief. During the storms which agitate the world it is impossible to put much trust in words and promises, however specious; the great powers are hurried on by their own impulse until they encounter equal resistance. In a later time and another state of the world this was forgotten, and fearfully was the oblivion visited. But Frederick was the last man to put his trust in fair words. If he allied himself with France, it was because no other course was left open to him; but as soon as this power attempted to establish her own supremacy in Germany, Frederick was the first to oppose it, and he felt himself perfectly justified in so doing. He had entered into a defensive alliance with France, and had promised to raise the Elector of Bavaria to the imperial throne; but he had never bound himself to carry out those measures of the court of Versailles which threatened the general freedom of Germany.

The great difficulty of his position was, that he had forsaken the old alliance, and could now no longer side with France.

Neither of the two courses which had formerly been suggested for keeping possession of Lower Silesia was now open to him, and he was forced to chalk out another for himself.

The policy he now had to pursue was, in a word, to win for himself a position so independent that it could not be shaken by either of the two great powers.

One step leads to another : Frederick having succeeded, under very favourable conditions, in securing the inheritance by force of arms, could not stop there ; his designs were at first directed only upon Lower Silesia, but it is obvious that he could not maintain that territory while any one else held the highlands which command it. Dynastic and political ambition impelled Frederick to extend his new conquest so far that no one could dispute his possession ; but this measure was likewise dictated by necessity. Frederick must resolve either to be forced back within his former limits, or to win for himself a degree of independence that should place him on a level with the other sovereigns of Europe, and enable him to maintain the balance of power between France and Austria.

These are schemes easy enough to describe, but immeasurably difficult of execution.

Frederick was at once allied and at variance with the two great powers which were then at war with each other ; his alliance might at any moment be changed into hostility, or his enmity into friendship.

Great progress has been made in later times in banishing the double-dealing of politicians and diplomatists from the management of affairs ; formerly, this method of carrying on political negotiations was the order of the day, and received in a certain measure the sanction of public approval ; at

any rate, no one scrupled to hold a language ostensibly opposed to the very end which it was calculated to attain.

In this incessant conflict of negotiation, supported and occasionally broken by the appeal to arms, the most consummate energy and acuteness, the greatest courage in war and adroitness in the cabinet, were indispensable in order to maintain a position and to make any advance.

Philip de Comines, who was intimately acquainted with some of the most distinguished princes of his time—with Charles the Bold and Louis XI.—endeavours to abate the envy which such a position as theirs is calculated to excite, by dwelling upon the disquiet and uneasiness with which all their days were filled. But the life of an enterprising prince is subject to another still more serious drawback : it not unfrequently happens that his political duties are at variance with his moral sense. For public affairs, which must be treated according to their own necessities, and which are subject to constant variation, are at the same time personal to the prince and touch his moral nature. It is not always that the approval of contemporaries or of posterity can be won, or the judgment of the world convinced ; but the hero should be justified in his own estimation at least.

Let us follow Frederick in the course, surrounded by rocks and shoals, into which he was now driven, not by choice, but by fate.

That he should succeed in his object was a matter of the highest importance, not alone to himself and his kingdom, but to the whole of Europe.

If there was any truth in the common belief that France entertained views which threatened the independence of all other nations, or in the apprehension of dangers which might accrue to the freedom of the Continent and of the sea from the alliance between England and Austria, it is obvious that the general advantage would be materially promoted by the elevation of a new power between the other two—a power, too, whose natural interest it evidently was to ally itself with neither of the others. The independence of Prussia would assist materially in preventing a general division of Europe into two parties, and in preserving the freedom and security of all other states.

We have already seen that the first effect of this line of policy was the salvation of the principal foe with whom Prussia was apparently engaged in a contest of life and death.

X Had Austria accepted the terms offered by France, she might possibly have continued to exist, but certainly not as an independent power, resting upon her own basis. When Prussia withdrew from the contest at a critical moment, Austria gained time to recover. The English minister compares Frederick, in respect to Austria, with Ithuriel, whose spear could heal as well as wound.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIET IN HUNGARY : THE FRENCH AND BAVARIANS
IN BOHEMIA.

WE have already seen that even at the moment of the greatest danger the power of Austria was never threatened with absolute destruction. We must add, that by this very crisis, which affected the internal as well as the external relations of the state, the power of Austria was developed from within to an extent which rendered it possible for her to offer an effectual resistance, and which changed the whole aspect of affairs.

It has often been imagined that, touched by the misfortunes of their Queen, and inspired with sudden devotion to her cause, the whole Hungarian nation with one accord rushed to arms in her defence. But the affair did not by any means pursue so simple a course; the devotion of this nation had to be purchased by concessions of the most important nature.

It is true that things no longer stood as they had done seven and thirty years before, when a former Elector of Bavaria, likewise supported by France, advanced against Vienna, while at the same time, and in connexion with him, a powerful army of malcontents made their appearance in the county of Trentschin, to help him in his attempt upon Vienna. For a few years the Hungarians hesitated whether

they should bend beneath the force of arms or throw off their allegiance; at the end of this time, however, a thorough change began to take place in the state of affairs. If we can judge events aright, the whole thing depended upon the fact that under the Emperor Joseph I. the adherents of Austria at the Diet ventured to pass resolutions favourable to the ancient liberties of the Germanic empire. Hereupon the leaders of the malcontents, who were moreover now placed in an untenable position, made their peace with the Emperor and the court. Men like Nicolas Palfy and Alexander Caroly exercised the greatest influence; they came to an understanding between themselves, and their conduct served as an example to thousands. Nevertheless, nothing would have been obtained, had not the forms and conditions of the government been secured at the same time. Austria gave up the attempt to govern Hungary on the same system as her other hereditary possessions.*

The causes of quarrel, however, still existed: the opposition between the supreme authority of the state and the provincial rights and privileges, which had been called forth on all sides by the conduct of the Austrian government, was especially rife in Hungary when, in May, 1741, Maria Theresa opened the first Diet held during her reign.

* The conferences of Tyrnau in the year 1706 show the ends in view:—the restoration of the clause of Andreas, the right of resistance of the Palatine and the hereditary offices of the Empire; the establishment of a senate; the withdrawal of all foreign troops, and so forth. Engel, *Geschichte des ungrischen Reiches*, V. 216. The peace of Szathmar (April, 1711) shows on what points it was then possible to unite.

Neither must we ascribe it entirely to her own free will that, even before her coronation, Maria Theresa took the necessary steps for the appointment of a Palatine, which had been delayed for some time. The second or lower house* of the Diet made this imperative upon her.†

Another and still more important stipulation was the guarantee of the privileges which the Estates not only maintained entire, as they had come down to them, but were resolved to extend still further. The Queen replied, that she held the kingdom as an entail, and was bound to deliver the royal prerogative into the hands of her successors such as she had received it herself. The Estates replied, that according to this argument a single act of tyranny would form a precedent for the future, and they asserted the permanence of their own privileges. The Queen could only avoid giving an immediate consent to a great portion of their demands by putting off the discussion thereof until the next meeting of the Diet. Nevertheless, the two parties occasionally came into violent collision, for example, on the 24th of June; when the progress of the debate was reported from hour to hour to the court. The Queen received the last deputation with a countenance in which favour and sorrow

* Die Zweite Tafel (Second Table) was the lower house of the Hungarian Diet. Die Erste Tafel, or upper house, was composed of the Magnates only, while the smaller nobility constituted the Zweite Tafel.—*Trans.*

† Kolinowicz nova Vngariae periodus anno primo Gynaecratiae austriacae inchoata, p. 61. Two Protestants were named ut legi satis fieret, as Kolinowicz says, p. 181, so that no favour was shown to the Catholic faith.

were blended;* it was only after long resistance, and in order to cause no delay, that she signed the diploma at nine o'clock in the evening.

Her coronation took place on the following day. She appeared in an open carriage, bareheaded, pale, and agitated. The reception she met with was, however, far heartier than she had expected; the joyous shouts of an enormous mass of people warmed her heart and brought back the colour to her cheeks. The Hungarians rejoiced in the sight when she stepped forth as their king and their mistress (for this was the title they gave her),† wearing the crown of St. Stephen, and surrounded by the magnates in their ancient and splendid costumes; and when on the Königsberg she drew the sword of the Saint, brandished it towards the four quarters of the globe, and then rode down the hill, seated gracefully and fearlessly upon a steed richly caparisoned after the Hungarian fashion. She herself felt pleasure in the splendour of the ceremonial: nevertheless, the day was not without its bitterness.

The husband, whom the Queen loved to consider as the sharer, if not of her power, at least of her honours—and to whom the Hungarians purposely

* The court judge said, according to Kolinowicz: “*regina gratiam et benignitatem ipso etiam vultu praeferens, sed aliquantum tristior.*”

† According to Katona and others, the expression *domina et rex noster* would have been liked. The more accurate narrative in Kolinowicz, p. 149, shows, however, that this was merely proposed by the Primate, and the official designation was to be *rex domina nostra*. The reason was: *quatenus et aëxus habeatur ratio et regia non reginalis duntaxat aut mariti coadjutoria conferri dignitas videatur.*

showed very scanty respect—was not allowed that participation in the ceremonial to which he thought himself entitled. He would have left Presburg that same day, had he not wished to avoid the bad impression which this would have produced upon the people. Now, too, the difficult and often disagreeable business of the Diet really began.

The Hungarians demanded the complete restoration of their ancient constitution under the traditional authority of the great hereditary officers of the Empire; that these should take part in the management of foreign affairs, in so far as they concerned Hungary; the removal of foreigners from every office and every benefice in the kingdom;—in short, such a constitutional independence as they had enjoyed before the house of Austria inherited the kingdom, with the sole exception of the statute of King Andreas. At the same time the donation which they voted was by no means a liberal one; and they were determined to maintain the exclusive dominion over their own peasants.*

Maria Theresa endeavoured to avoid, or at any rate to modify, these demands; but her answers were often received with murmurs, and even with derision. Satirical papers were thrust into her hand, containing jests upon the discrepancy between her promises and her actions. In the second or lower house of the Hungarian Diet a systematic opposition was organized, at the head of which were several bold men, well versed in the ancient laws of the

* *Instantia regnicolaris, und puncta et articuli sacrum regium diploma attinentes*, in Schwandtner, *Scriptt. R. Vng.*, II. 585.

kingdom, and above the reach of any personal influence.

At this very time the French and the Bavarians were advancing into Austria, and Vienna had to be placed in a state of defence. The ministers were divided and uncertain; the older members reproached their juniors with the rashness of their counsels, while the latter found fault with the former for their want of decision. Each individual felt personally aggrieved, dissatisfied with himself, and frightened: those who had formerly known these men, and now came to Presburg, were astonished at the change which had taken place in their countenances and manners.

In fact, the whole system which had hitherto been pursued was at an end, and had to be given up; the compromise with Prussia was followed by other equally important measures with respect to Hungary. "I am but a poor queen," said Maria Theresa one day, "but I have the heart of a king." She not only possessed self-command enough to appear firm and courageous in the midst of all her troubles, but she likewise had the moral courage to quit the path trodden by her ancestors, and to try the effect of a different course of policy at home and abroad.

As it was no longer possible to govern the Hungarians as they had hitherto been governed, by the exercise of a power which, while it oppressed the nation, kept it in a constant state of excitement by vacillation and distrust, the Queen resolved to grant their demands, and to place entire confidence in them, especially with regard to one point on which they were very eager.

Hitherto the Austrian government, mindful of the disastrous events of former times, had always refused to place arms in the hands of the Hungarians. This precaution offended the nation, which attributed it to the narrow antipathy of individual ministers. But at this moment the necessities of the Austrian court superseded all other considerations. On the 11th of September the Queen summoned the Estates, in order to have recourse to them, as she was forsaken by all others, as she expressed it, "to confide her own person and her children to the ancient faith and courage of the Hungarians."* On speaking of her children, she burst into tears and covered her face. Her request exactly accorded with the wishes of the Hungarians, with their love of arms, and with their pride, and when, at the first words of promise and of comfort uttered by the Primate of the kingdom, her beautiful features, which still bore the traces of suffering, were lighted up with a ray of hope, an indescribable emotion seized the assembly: all the feelings of loyalty and courage to which she appealed were awakened in these high-spirited and sturdy sons of nature. They exclaimed with one accord, that they were ready to shed their life's blood for their Queen. Cursing the German ministers, in whose countenances they thought they read displeasure and ill-

* Kolinowicz, p. 491, has given the official statement as it came from the court. It was made public in this form. For instance, it was translated by Olenschlager: *Geschichte des Interregnums*, III. 367. Kolinowicz has another text somewhat different from this, most likely taken from his own recollection of the scene, and which has the appearance of being a more genuine expression of feeling.

will, they proceeded to the house of representatives, where, at the recommendation of the Palatine and of the chief justice, who described to them more at large the distress and the dispositions of the Queen, they without further delay determined by universal acclamation to issue a general call to arms.

The Queen had all the women on her side; she readily granted them audiences and paid them all the respect they could wish. The most obscure woman of noble birth was received with honour; and the influence exercised by women in Hungary and in Poland is well known. Her warmest adherents among the Estates were the magnates; more especially John Palfy, who many years before had had a great share in bringing about the first reconciliation with the malcontents, and who was now elected Palatine. The Queen honoured him with her familiar intercourse, offered him a seat when he came to see her, for he was already stricken in years, and took counsel of him in her affairs. She was also supported by the Esterhazys and the Erdödys, who held the highest offices in church and state. These men brought about, though not without difficulty, the nomination of the Duke of Lorraine as co-regent. On the 21st of September the Queen presented him to the Estates, and in her presence he took the oath. His speech, which he closed with the Hungarian words of devotion, that he would shed his life's blood for the Queen, was received with tumultuous applause. Meanwhile the Queen caused the fruit of her marriage—the young Archduke Joseph, whose birth had been so anxiously desired—to be

brought in, to show him to the assembled Estates. The governess raised the child up in her arms so that it might be seen by every one. The acclamations were repeated, and all present crowded to kiss the child's little hands.

Meanwhile a letter was received from Charles Albert, wherein he laid claim to the inheritance and protested against Maria Theresa's coronation. But the pride of the Hungarians revolted against the claim set up by Charles Albert, since the throne of Hungary had been bestowed by their own free will upon the house of Austria even in the female line.

But spite of all this loyalty, or rather as the first condition of its existence, the constitutional concessions had to be granted in full. The Queen was forced to promise to employ none but natives in the home and foreign departments of the government of the kingdom, to recognise Hungary as the chief of her dominions, to declare that she held Transylvania only as Queen of Hungary, to pronounce the exemption not only of the nobles, but likewise of their lands and tenements, from payment of the contribution, and to swear to observe other articles of a like import. When we compare the new with the old laws, we see how much it cost her: she was allowed to make only a few trifling modifications.*

* The Estates, for example, called upon the Queen to restore the highest temporal and ecclesiastical offices to "their traditional, lawful, and full authority" (in ihrer althergebrachten, gesetzlichen und vollen Autorität) She hoped at first that they would be contented if she made a few concessions, and gave a general promise to maintain the offices as they then stood. But the Estates

No other course was open to her ; this was the only means of winning the confidence of the nation, and of inducing it to take up arms. During the negotiations, which were prolonged far into October, the delegates of the nobles frequently declared that they could effect nothing in their counties unless they took back with them the required concessions. Nor were they even yet satisfied with what they had obtained ; for the magnates and the clergy were the only classes to whose share any real advantages had fallen. At all events the Protestants could not boast of having received any favour ; their demands were met by a peremptory refusal.

The events in Hungary were the very opposite to those which had happened in Silesia. Nevertheless, with regard to the house of Austria, they were alike in their effects. The cession of Silesia and the privileges of the Hungarians were the price paid by Maria Theresa to save herself from the invasion of the Bourbons and their allies.

And now Austria was once more able to offer some opposition to the advancing foes.

The latter meanwhile were one and all marching upon Bohemia. Towards the end of October Count Törring led the Bavarians from Crems and Budweis : on the 1st of November the Elector passed the Danube with his French allies, and followed the same

insisted upon their being restored to what they originally were, and at length the Queen promised to restore them in their " full and lawful authority" (in ihre volle und gesetzliche Autorität), happy enough that the Estates dropped the word " traditional" (althergebracht).

course. Meanwhile two other bodies of troops, one French and the other Bavarian, advanced from the upper Palatinate into Bohemia, and reached Pilsen on the 6th of November. On the 9th the Saxons, on a third side, crossed the Saxon hills in several columns, and ascended the Elbe on their way to Prague.

Bohemia itself was no better prepared for resistance than Austria. But the Queen was now able to oppose the enemy with a very different military force, on the frontiers of Moravia and Bohemia, than she had done a month before on the Danube.

Neipperg, on leaving Silesia, marched through Olmutz to Znaym: he was joined by several scattered divisions; first, that commanded by Browne, and then by a few regiments under Prince Lobkowitz, who had retreated out of Bohemia before an enemy so superior in numbers. The Hungarians, who were busily engaged in arming themselves, were already able to render some assistance, so much so that the Grand Duke could join Neipperg with more confident hopes, and even the Queen again showed "a joyful heart." The troops which had been collected from all quarters for the defence of Vienna—among which were several large bodies of men from Lower Hungary—were now at liberty and ready for action. The bold idea was conceived of leaving Italy for the nonce to herself, and of bringing back the greater part of the regiments quartered in that country to the German side of the Alps; thus, with the troops which could now leave Vienna, a very formidable army might be formed.

It is obvious that the state of affairs, both military and political, was now completely changed.

It was now less important for the Elector of Bavaria to undertake the siege of Prague, where failure would be ruinous, than to fortify Upper Austria and the circles of Bohemia, of which he already had possession. From time immemorial the high mountainous range in Upper Moldavia, where the three territories of Austria, Bohemia, and Bavaria join immediately under the ridge of the Bohemian forest, had been of the greatest importance to the relations of these three countries towards each other. On this spot one of the ablest men who ever reigned in Bohemia, Przemysl Ottokar II., had built Budweis as a bulwark against the other two kingdoms, which were then allied. This town had now fallen without resistance into the hands of Charles Albert. We must do this Prince the justice to remark that the change which had taken place did not escape his observation. As the greater part of the Austrian forces was posted in his immediate neighbourhood, on the frontiers of Moravia and Bohemia, Charles Albert determined to send for such of his troops as had already reached Pilsen, and after effecting this junction to maintain the great strategical advantage which he had gained. With this view he issued his commands to those divisions; but that Prince is indeed unfortunate who has to make war without sufficient forces of his own. Charles Albert, as we have already mentioned, was invested by a diploma from Louis XV. with the chief command over the whole army. This diploma was by no means so seriously meant as Charles Albert imagined.

When the orders of the commander-in-chief reached them, the generals of the several divisions thought themselves entitled to hold a council in order to consider whether they should obey. The chief among them gave in written opinions, after which a numerously attended council of war was held.* Were they, they asked, to give up the attack upon Prague—the success of which they held to be certain—in order to undertake a difficult march in the face of an enemy close at hand? This would have been in direct contradiction with the orders received from Versailles; the taking of Prague was the principal object of the great military plans conceived by Cardinal Fleury in his cabinet. The generals accordingly resolved not to obey the commander-in-chief, but invited him rather to push forward like themselves and take part with them in the attack upon Prague. Charles Albert was a man of ability and of

* Lettre du C^o Clermont-tonnerre au Marquis de Breteuil du camp de Beraun le 13 Nov. 1741. Campagnes de Mss. les Marechaux de Broglie et de Belle-isle, a collection of letters which passed between the generals and the office of the secretary at war. “Jamais Généraux d’armée ne se sont trouvés dans les cas où nous avons été le 10 et le 11 de ce mois: c’est de désobeir tout d’une voix aux ordres reiterés de l’Electeur de Bavière mais cette desobéissance sera cause de l’execution des projets du roi. . . . Comme nous étions pour marcher sur Schebrak à une journée d’ici le 10 de ce mois il nous est venu un courrier de l’Electeur avec ordre de le venir joindre en toute diligence. L’ordre étoit si pressant, qu’il fut ordonné de mettre notre infanterie sur des chariots.” Hereupon a consultation and a council of war were held. “Nous primes notre parti M. de Gassion de marcher en avant sur Prague et moi de le suivre, malgré un second ordre très précisément arrivé de l’Electeur.”

understanding, but he liked to be advised; and he possessed no strength of character; moreover, in his position scarcely any one could have displayed the vigour needed in order to resist the determination of the generals associated with him. On the 21st of November, at Horzelitz, he joined the very men who had disdained to obey his orders. He left the Marquis de Leuville in Budweis, after pointing out to him the importance of the place; Count Töring likewise had placed himself so advantageously at Wessely, that the general opinion was that his camp could, with little labour, be rendered impregnable: the Elector was firmly convinced that, at all events, these generals would maintain their positions; but there is something contagious in insubordination when it has once been left unpunished. These two generals likewise thought the Elector's views erroneous; they considered their position to be less strong than he chose to imagine, especially when the Luschnitz was no longer swelled by the rains, as it had been the day before, and they pronounced the enemy in their front to be far too formidable to be resisted with any chance of success; they accordingly determined to follow the Elector, and took the road by Pisek and Mirowitz to Prague. Instead of blaming them, the Elector entreated them to join him as speedily as possible.

Hereupon the Austrian army was enabled to spread, without let or hinderance, over these mountainous districts. We ought, perhaps, to attribute the strategical plan, in consequence of which this movement was made, to the tried ability of Neip-

perg, who was all-powerful with the Grand Duke. The Austrians were now strong enough to send a considerable detachment into the neighbourhood of Prague. At the lowest calculation their force amounted to 36,000; according to other accounts, to 44,000 men.

The allied army would have found itself in a very dangerous position if it had met with any check in the open field, without having first made itself master of Prague. It was said that the Grand Duke had received orders from the Queen to relieve the capital of Bohemia at any sacrifice.

The danger was discussed at a council of war held by the allies, but the old want of decision again displayed itself. Fortunately for them Marshal Belleisle, although not in the camp, was close at hand, having reached Dresden: in him military skill and the authority given by high position were united. His exhortations decided the others to adopt the plan of immediately making an attempt upon Prague. "The evil," he said, "was pressing, and some operation necessary; in war the most difficult enterprises are exactly those in which success was easiest, when they were undertaken with courage and zeal."

During the night of the 25th of November an attempt was to be made to carry Prague by storm, like that which had succeeded so well at Glogau a short time before.*

* Belleisle to Breteuil, Drede, de 22 Nov.: "Il faut faire l'impossible pour prendre Prague, et je crois la chose faisable, mais les jours et les heures sont precieuses." In a letter to King

For several hours the allies were able to occupy and exhaust the attention of the defenders of the town upon one side. It was not till towards morning, when Ogilvie, the governor of Prague, together with the citizens and students, had retired to rest, after watching for several nights, that the real attack was made. Two sons of Augustus King of Poland, Count Maurice of Saxony, and Count Rutowsky, led the attack with equal courage; the former at the head of the French, the latter at the head of the Saxons from the other side. The attack succeeded as at Glogau; but the walls of Prague had to be scaled by ladders, and the invaders were met by somewhat more resistance in the present instance. The Governor yielded himself prisoner.

This was a great and most fortunate stroke for the allies; it relieved their army from its dangerous position, and afforded them shelter and food. Once in possession of the capital, they might look upon themselves as masters of the kingdom.

Had it depended solely upon the feeling of the Bohemians, Charles Albert would have had some chance of success. On his advance, the people, headed by the priests bearing holy water and the cross, went out to meet him, in order to greet him humbly as their future liege lord. The Estates of the kingdom assembled in considerable numbers to do homage to him, a ceremony which took place on the 19th of December. A deputation of the court, under the

Frederick, dated 9th Dec., he says, "C'est ce qui m'a déterminé à faire tenter l'escalade." So completely does he ascribe the undertaking to himself.

presidence of Count Kollowrath, carried on the government in the name of the new king; many however kept aloof, and all were displeased at the presence of the French and at the demands which they made on their own authority.*

But the fate of the kingdom really depended upon the great military combinations. In accordance with the decision of the assembled council of war, the Austrian army fixed its quarters in the mountainous district and high table-land lying between Strakonitz, Tabor, and Tein.† In Prague this was attributed to fear; the measure was also much blamed both by the court and the people of Vienna; nevertheless, it was undoubtedly the best that could have been adopted under the circumstances.

A considerable division of French and Bavarians under Törring and Aubigné made a single fruitless attempt to penetrate once more into this district, and to retake the places they had lost. Before their eyes the Grand Duke strengthened Budweis, and kept possession of it, to the great satisfaction of the Queen, who desired this above everything. The allied French and Bavarians were driven back as far as Pisek, where they were glad enough not to be attacked with still greater vigour.

By this means their communication with Upper Austria was cut off; which mattered all the more as

* Schmettau, Dez. 1741: Les Français agissent avec un despotisme scandaleux jusqu'à donner des mandemens de la part du roi de France dans les cercles du royaume au lieu de les donner au nom du roi de Bohème.

† Oestreichische militärische Zeitschrift 1827, III. 149.

a fresh army had just made its appearance on the Danube.

The regiments recalled from Italy joined Khevenhüller's troops at Waidhofen on the Ips, and together they formed an army of about 20,000 men. Louis André, Count Khevenhüller (grandson to the learned diplomatist, to whom we are indebted for the annals of King Ferdinand), was a scientific warrior and tactician, who had written on both the infantry and cavalry services; he likewise had a remarkable talent for the internal discipline of an army, as well as for the conduct of a campaign.* He rendered a great service to the Austrian power, and one which was of the utmost importance at that particular moment; he knew how to combine the regular army in the most effective manner with the irregular troops which came out of Hungary. Under his guidance first, those half-savage hordes, which had been trained in combats with robbers and heyducks, again appeared in Central Europe. He was able not only to tame the pandours and hussars, but to make use of them in great military operations; the movements of his light horse, and the positions taken up by his infantry, supported each other admirably. Khevenhüller crossed

* In the book, *L'histoire et les actions heroiques du feu Louis André de Khevenhuller, 1744*, there is scarce anything worth mentioning. Wherever I have examined it I have found merely a translation from the *Leben und Thaten Maria Theresia's*. The second part of *Rochezang von Iscern: historische und geographische Beschreibung von Böhmen*, which contains a narrative of these events, is likewise nothing more than a translation of certain extracts from the *Histoire de la dernière guerre de Bohême*.

the Ens during the last days of the year. An eyewitness has described how the hussars, urging on their horses by their cries, rushed upon the foe, whom they reached even before the dust raised by their horses' feet, how they screened themselves from the first fire of their enemies by bending down beneath the necks of their horses, and then rising in their stirrups furiously cut down all who opposed them with their sabres, which they had until now carried between their teeth. The French could not stand against this wild onslaught, and retired behind the strong walls of Linz. At noon, on new-year's day, 1742, couriers arrived at Vienna with the news of Khevenhüller's success—the first good news which had reached the court for some time. But the decisive event was the taking, by General Bernclau, on the 7th of January, of Schärding, where at one time all the preparations had been made for the attack upon Austria, and which now opened the way to Munich. The Bavarian government, suddenly surprised, in default of other troops, summoned the population to arms. One of the most notorious partisan chiefs of the day, of the name of Menzel, declared that the well-appointed army of her majesty the Queen could not recognise such rabble as a militia; and that, if the inhabitants of Bavaria did not conduct themselves as became their civil character, they should be rewarded with fire and sword.

While Charles Albert was journeying from Prague to Frankfort, there to annex the imperial crown to that of Bohemia, his hereditary dominions were filled with bloodshed, terror, and flight.

It was perfectly obvious that the French could not rescue him from this distress. Charles Albert, accordingly, turned to the King of Prussia. He wrote with his own hand in the most pressing manner, beseeching Frederick not to suffer him to be entirely crushed, and the work which he had undertaken to be destroyed.

The great question was, whether Frederick would agree to this request, and renew hostilities against Austria. All eyes were turned towards him and his army.

CHAPTER III.

FREDERICK II. IN MORAVIA.

AT the negotiation by which the war between Austria and Prussia was interrupted, we have already seen that one of the conditions upon which Frederick most strongly insisted was absolute secrecy.

This condition, however, was not observed for a single moment.

We see from a letter written by the imperial councillor Knorr, on the 18th of October, 1741, to the Duke of Brunswick, that he was already aware of the agreement, and did not scruple to communicate it. The chancellor Sinzendorf spoke of it, as a secret, it is true; still he spoke of it.*

It has been said that concealment was impossible in the present instance; the very birds of the air would have carried the news; but this assertion is disproved by the example of Frederick himself, who never allowed the smallest intimation of the existence

* Knorr: mit dem König von Preussen hat er (der Grossherzog) heimlich Friede gemacht, welchen sie noch geheim halten wollen; Sinzendorf aber sagt im Vertrauen: der König von Preussen erhält was er begehrt.—(He (the Grand-duke) hath secretly made peace with the King of Prussia, the which they wish yet to keep secret; Sinzendorf however says, in confidence, that the King of Prussia is to obtain that which he wants.)

of an agreement to escape him, even among his most intimate associates. It may have been by accident that the news spread so rapidly in the two chief places of diplomatic resort — Frankfort and the Hague—where the partisans of Austria mentioned it in a tone of satisfaction which carried general conviction of its truth.* But we must be blind indeed not to perceive that the agreement was purposely made public.

In the same degree that the Prussian interests required secrecy, those of Austria found advantage in publicity; which was accordingly given to the matter wherever it seemed likely to produce an effect.

On the 19th of October Charles Albert received a letter from his mother-in-law, the Empress Amelia, announcing that a treaty had been concluded between Prussia and Austria: she gave Count Sinzendorf as her authority. The President of the Council of War made no secret of a journal in which the day and the hour were noted when Lord Hyndford and Count Golz had held their conferences, any more than of the meeting which took place on the 9th of October, where the King himself was present; nor was the purpose of the convention kept secret. The Elector of Bavaria received another letter from the Princess of Longueval, wherein she expressly says that the siege

* Belleisle to the King of Prussia, 3rd Nov. "La reine de Hongrie fait publier par tous ses ministres dans toute l'Europe, que son accommodement est fait; . . . ils affectent avec cela un air de satisfaction et de confiance, qui persuade beaucoup de gens et impose aux autres . . . Mr. de Neuperg a repandu lui-même cette nouvelle."

of Neisse was a mere blind; and that Neipperg had instructions to yield, as the Queen would not otherwise be able to succeed in her object with the King of Prussia.

It was said that under existing circumstances the King of Prussia must be gained at any price; that subsequently opportunities would not be wanting for depriving him of all that had been conceded to him.*

Frederick soon began to feel very bitter effects from his negotiation with Austria. It is true he had said that he would deny the whole transaction, if it was bruited about; but it was hard to be forced to take such a step.† His whole enmity to Austria returned. He was now convinced that the real object of the court of Vienna was to create division between

* "Qu'il falloit gagner V M a tout prix et que l'occasion ne manqueroit pas un jour de reprendre ce, qu'on sacrifioit a cause des circonstances et du temps." Klinggräfen, from the Emperor's own mouth.

† Resolution made upon a statement of Hyndford's, 24th Dec. "Von ihm wäre persuadiret er würde das Secret religiöusement halten: hätte man österreichischer Seits solches gethan, und mich nicht in die epineusesten Umstände von der Welt gesetzt, so würde meinerseits nicht gefehlet haben. Wollen die Oestreicher bruit davon machen, ist es desto schlimmer vor sie und ich werde sie hautement dementiren. Besser wäre es wenn Hyndford sie zu vernünftigen Gedanken bringen könnte."—(Of him he was persuaded he would have kept the secret religiöusement. Had this been done by the Austrians, and had I not been placed in the most difficult position in the world, I for my part should never have been found wanting. If the Austrians wish to bruit it abroad, it will be the worse for them, and I will contradict them flatly. It would be much better if Hyndford could bring them to reason.

himself and his allies, as it had endeavoured to do once before by the publication of the protocol delivered by his ambassador ; and that this had been its policy from the beginning. He therefore felt himself released from all further obligations.

He was likewise threatened by another danger, arising from the course now taken by affairs, which drove him to interpose once more. It cannot be denied that the change in the fortune of Austria was originally due to him ; for, with regard to the Hungarians, several months must still elapse in preparations for war before they could be ready to take the field. However, neither their services nor yet the enterprises of Khevenhüller had entered into his calculations. The Queen's arms had achieved a success more brilliant and complete than could have been foreseen. She who but just before had been threatened with complete destruction, was now strong enough not only to resist her enemies, but even to threaten danger to her neighbours.

Frederick, who was not secured by any treaty in the possession of the territory conceded to him—and indeed there had never been any intention of really executing such a treaty—thought that he ought not quietly to await the further progress of events, until Austria, having dispersed her enemies, and re-conquered Bohemia and the mountainous district commanding Lower Silesia, would be strong enough to demand of him the restitution of that province.

We should, however, misconceive Frederick's views did we suppose that Austria was the only power

that caused him anxiety ; he did not feel at all more safe with regard to France.

It caused him the greatest uneasiness to find that French influence was working its way into Russia, and that, after a short war, she quickly allied herself with Sweden ; we shall have occasion to return to this hereafter. Frederick thought it very possible that France, which was at that moment actively engaged in negotiations with Denmark, and was already allied with Polish Saxony, would bring about a grand alliance of all the northern powers, which would deprive Prussia of all independent action, and even threaten her existence. It might readily occur to the French to restore Bremen and Verden to the Swedes, in order to annoy Hanover. This would inevitably cause Sweden to renew her claims to Pomerania, and was therefore utterly at variance with the interests of Prussia. Suppose, too, that Fleury were to forsake the new King of Bohemia as he had before forsaken Stanislaus Lessczynski, and that Maria Theresa were prevailed upon to join this great confederation. She might even suffer the old French and Swedish influence to be once more triumphant, if she had no cause to fear it. The King, likewise, thought it very significant that the man with whom he was on the best terms, and who had just determined the capture of Prague, namely, Marshal Belleisle, was recalled from the French army, and that the one chosen from among all the other generals to replace him was Marshal Broglie, from whom the King had received a personal affront at Strasburg, an occurrence which no one had forgotten.

“I fear,” said he, “that Broglie is appointed in order to make it easier to the Cardinal to break his word. It may be that I am too suspicious, but that is scarcely possible in this world. Nothing that prudence can suggest should be neglected, where the great interests of Europe are at stake.”

Podewils made no attempt to dispel these anxieties. He thought that measures should be taken beforehand for opposing a barrier to the might of France, in case she should become all-powerful. The first object was to prevent Saxony and Denmark from falling into her hands, to urge Holland to assist in maintaining a balance of power and by no means to break with England; moreover it would not be long before the Elector of Bavaria would grow tired of the state of dependence in which he was kept by France.*

On either side distrust and danger were growing apace; while it was the endeavour of every statesman to steer a middle course and to maintain an independent position, upon which everything depended, new and bolder ideas were broached in the art of government and of war. Secret negotiations were given up as fruitless.

How if it were possible not only to arrest Austria in her new career of victory, but likewise to form by her side a strong and durable political combination

* 23rd Dec. S'il arrivoit, que la France voulut abuser un jour de sa superiorité dans le sud et le nord, il faudra toujours songer de loin à un digue equipollente pour contre balancer un pouvoir si enorme. He calls the proposed alliance of Central Europe a counter-battery.

which should for ever neutralize her powers of mischief.

The King of Prussia conceived the idea of actively espousing the claims of Bavaria and Saxony, of gaining possession of Moravia for the one and Bohemia for the other, and thus placing them for ever on a level with the house of Austria.

He certainly had expressed a very different opinion at Kleinschnellendorf, with regard to Moravia at least, and it is hard to reconcile the conviction he then expressed of the necessity of upholding the power and independence of Austria, with his present scheme of forcing her to make such great sacrifices.

The main object of his scheme, however, was not only to leave Upper Austria, Tyrol, and Brisgau to the Queen, as well as the other provinces, but above all to prevent France from acquiring that predominance which she must infallibly obtain if she was allowed to dictate the terms of a peace. His plan would destroy the power of the French to decide the great questions alone, and would relieve the other two German powers from the feeling of being the vassals of France.

It is, however, evident that self-interest had a great share in the scheme.

He would in such case have found little difficulty in gaining possession of those districts upon which the security of Lower Silesia depended, Upper Silesia, Glatz perhaps even more. Charles Albert had already consented to cede Glatz in return for a sum of 400,000 thalers, and the province with its capital had already fallen into the hands of the

Prussians. How important a position, moreover, would Prussia have occupied between these neighbours whose good-will she would have gained by such signal services, who would be detached from France, and for ever opposed to Austria: Frederick did not dream of extending his influence over the world, but he would have secured future safety; the permanent union of the great estates of the Empire, under an Emperor friendly to Prussia, the alliance of central Europe, would have been rendered possible.

Already the Prussian troops, in opposition to both the belligerent powers, were advancing to take up another position. Prince Leopold entered Bohemia, directly at variance to the wishes of the French, with whom he carried on an angry and sometimes even bitter correspondence. The King demanded that his troops, which had been so long in the field, should have winter-quarters assigned to them in a district which had not been yet drained of all its resources.

Without doubt the same motive was at the bottom of the advance of Schwerin's division. The peasantry of Upper Silesia, which had been peculiarly exposed to the ravages of war, could no longer supply the wants of an army; the people thought that they were purposely devoted to destruction, and were prepared for a desperate resolve. Schwerin, who no longer considered himself safe in his quarters, in case the Grand Duke, despairing of success in an attack upon Prague, should turn his forces against him, demanded leave to advance still further as a matter of absolute necessity.* It is remarkable how entirely the King

* 30th Nov. In this manner they would not be able to hold

and his field-marshal coincided in their views; that which Schwerin proposed, while stationed on the Neisse, was ordered by Frederick on the self-same day at Ohlau. On the 19th of December, 1741, Schwerin invested Troppau; he then descended the mountains, not with any present intention of making an attack, but without the slightest regard to the wishes of Austria. On the 27th he fixed his head-quarters in Olmütz.

Schwerin's quarters extended from Prerau to Hohenstadt; Prince Leopold's were close adjoining, at Landskron. The King would not have approved any further advance at that moment; he would not listen to Schwerin's proposal of making an attempt upon Brünn, which might possibly have been surprised; he had likewise expressly ordered Prince Leopold to keep near the Silesian frontiers.

Frederick intended to join his army in the

out till the spring. 5th Dec., "*La prise de cette place (Troppau) nous mettroit un peu plus au large, mais il conviendrait pour les intérêts de V. M. de saisir en même temps de Freudenthal, etc.*" The King said on 5th Dec., *er habe der Sache weiter nachgedacht und gefunden, dass wenn die Oestreicher Troppau behalten und die Garnisonen verstärken, die Garnison zu Ratibor nicht nur von der zu Jägerndorf fast coupirt ist, sondern die Correspondence zwischen den Garnisonen auch sehr schwer zu erhalten sein würde, und die Oestreicher sie leicht incommodiren können.* — (He had further considered the matter, and had found that if the Austrians kept Troppau, and strengthened their garrisons, not only would the Prussian garrison at Ratibor be almost cut off from that at Jägerndorf, but it would be extremely difficult to keep up the communication between the different garrisons, while the Austrians could easily annoy them.) Schwerin, on 9th Dec., said, that the best thing he could do was to advance as far as Olmütz, and to take up his quarters near those of Prince Leopold. The King approved this on the 14th.

middle of February, and then to take further resolutions. He was on the point of going to Rheinsberg, in the middle of January, to enjoy a short interval of rest, when the news of Khevenhüller's advance reached him, together with Charles Albert's pressing requisitions, to which we have already alluded.

Charles Albert's demands were explicit enough: he requested the Prussians to advance further into Moravia, where, in conjunction with the French and Saxons, who, under Polastron and the Chevalier de Saxe, had already marched in that direction, they might take possession of Iglau, whence they could threaten Lower Austria, and thus effect a great diversion in his favour.

Schmettau, who had not accompanied Charles Albert to Frankfort, but had returned to Berlin at the end of the year 1741, pressed this plan upon the King, with the utmost warmth and all the eloquence at his command.

In a long discussion which took place on the 14th of January, 1742, he represented to the King that there was only one way to rescue Bavaria and the French quartered in Linz, which was for Polastron to take possession of Iglau. This he could not effect single-handed. If, however, the King would but allow Schwerin to aid Polastron, the attempt could not fail of success, and would produce great results.*

* Schmettau: Si quelques troupes de V. M. peuvent aider M^r de Polastron à s'emparer de Iglau alors les troupes de M^r le Marechal de Schwerin, qui pourroient même être joints a tous ceux qui sont dans la basse Silésie pourront en sureté camper le long de cette Iglawa. . . .

They could occupy the whole of Moravia without difficulty, and defend the mountainous banks of the Iglawa, which offered admirable positions; by this means they would threaten Lower Austria, and force the Grand Duke to leave Budweis and hasten to the defence of Vienna.

This was a great strategical conception, which pleased the King the more, because it coincided with his political ideas. Young and warlike as he was, and perceiving at the first glance that affairs, which he could not confide to another, might grow out of this scheme, he determined, as he was wont, on the spur of the moment, not only to undertake the enterprise, but to carry it into execution himself. On that very day he sent word to the allies that he would come in person to save Bavaria, and to restore their affairs to a more favourable condition. He stipulated, however, that the advanced body of Saxons and French should be under his orders, for wherever the King of Prussia appeared, he must likewise command. Should they refuse him this, he would wash his hands of the matter. On the 16th of January, for the King required but little preparation for his journeys, he set out to join the army.

And accordingly the allies agreed to his demands.

He stopped at Dresden by the way, and succeeded in gaining over the Saxon court to his project. The conference with the King of Poland, which he mentions in his history, and which was interrupted by the overture of the opera, did not assist him in the least: but a conversation with Guarini, the King's

confessor, decided the matter. There was no lack of representations to the effect that the interests of Saxony and Prussia were much at variance, but as it was vain to think of occupying Moravia without the help of the Prussians, it was resolved that they should be joined by the Saxon troops, which should at any rate take part in the enterprise against Iglau. A French officer, bearing Marshal de Broglie's provisional consent to the employment of Polastron in this matter, met the King on his road into Bohemia. In Prague, Frederick saw De Sechelles, the head of the Commissariat, who was greatly impressed by the King's "fire, intellect, and determination." On the other hand, the ability and zeal of this officer were highly appreciated by Frederick: he and Sechelles soon agreed upon the measures to be taken for the management of the Saxon Commissariat: Frederick had carried, as it were by storm, the consent of the allies to his scheme. On the 30th of January we find him with his own troops in Olmütz, resolved to execute the campaign desired by Bavaria and recommended by Schmettau.

His boldest political combinations seemed to be realized with the utmost rapidity.

He found that the French were not so strong in Bohemia as he had imagined; he now held possession of Moravia, which the court of Saxony hoped to acquire; and he stood at the head of a great army: thus then he felt, what he had long wished, that he could command peace or war. The extent of his previous anxieties may be measured by the satisfaction with which he remarked that, spite of all

her power, France was now no longer able to deceive him, or to conclude a peace otherwise than as he should approve.*

The question now was, whether he should not use his advantage only in order to conclude a separate treaty with Austria. He had scarcely reached Olmütz when an emissary of the Grand Duke of Tuscany made his appearance, for the purpose of renewing the negotiations, which had been broken off. Those who were about the King thought that he ought to listen to this proposal; "for who," said Schwerin, "could expect him to conquer provinces for his allies?"† But Frederick would not hear of it. He saw this emissary, a certain Von Pfitschner, but did not even listen to what he had to say, overwhelmed him with complaints of the conduct of the court of Vienna, and continually repeated the demand that the court of Vienna should endeavour to come to some general arrangement with all parties.

His views were still the same that we before described; that the Queen of Hungary, without losing any part of Austria or the Tyrol, should give up Bohemia and Moravia. He sent her word, through the English ambassador, that he had no wish to ruin her, but that she must now make up her mind to

* To Podewils, Olmütz, 30 Januar: "La France ne sauroit malgré toute sa puissance me leurrer ni faire la paix que de la façon que je la voudrai."

† Schwerin to Podewils, 4 Feb., 1742: "Au bout du compte peut on prétendre du roi, qu'il fasse lui seul la guerre et fasse toutes les conquêtes pour les alliés qu'ils desirent?"

fresh losses. The orders he gave for the internal government of the country involved the supposition that Bohemia was henceforth to belong to Bavaria. The cabinet minister who worked with the King day by day at these affairs asserts in his private letters that the King's most earnest desires were directed towards keeping on terms of close friendship with Saxony.*

This was a very different enterprise from that upon Silesia, and one intended to produce a great effect upon Europe, and to bring about a general pacification in the interests of Prussia. The attempt was difficult enough in itself, but it was rendered doubly so by the necessity for the co-operation of foreigners. This difficulty was felt from the very first.

While Frederick was on his way to save the French who were besieged in Linz, by making a diversion in their favour, they were forced to evacuate the place. In like manner as the rapid movements of her irregular cavalry gave the Queen a great advantage in the open country, so did the unrelenting fury of the Borderers of Warasdin materially assist her in storming places which, like Linz, were not thoroughly fortified. Soon after Linz, Passau fell into the hands of the Austrians, on the 24th or

* Eichel, 1 Feb., to Podewils: Des Königs M. intendiren sich mit dem sächsischen Hofe mehr und mehr zu accochiren, um auf alle Fälle im Stande zu sein, sich eines fourrirten Friedens ohnerachtet souteniren zu können.—(His Majesty intends to hook on to the court of Saxony more and more, in order to be ready, at all events to be able nevertheless to make sure of a forced peace.)

25th of January. At their approach Braunau was evacuated, and Khevenhüller's wild hordes poured unchecked into the open country of Bavaria, where they did ten times the mischief that Austria had endured at the hands of the Elector.

On seeing that hereupon the immediate object proposed was no longer attainable, the Saxons concluded that the whole enterprise must be given up. But Frederick replied, that it had become all the more necessary, as Bavaria would otherwise fall entirely into the hands of the Queen; and the advance of the fresh auxiliary troops from France, which were daily expected in Germany, would thus be rendered impossible.

The French too, who at first seemed only to feel that the King's approach saved them from impending ruin, soon remarked that this was not the sole object of his march, but that he had come to carry out his own policy, and to counterbalance their influence by his presence in the midst of the allies. Polastron joined Frederick's forces, not so much at the command of Broglie, who no longer wished it, than on his own judgment—a disregard of authority not unfrequent at that time among Frenchmen high in the service of the state or the army.

A further and very considerable difficulty was foreseen by Frederick's friends, in the nature of the country and the feeling of the inhabitants. The cabinet minister, Eichel, says, in one of his letters, that he expects no success in the mountainous district of Moravia, where there were few roads, and those quite impassable in the winter when a thaw came

on : moreover, the inhabitants seemed to him cunning and ill-disposed. He feared that this enterprise would be the counterpart to that of Mollwitz in point of danger ; and ends with, " May God avert the threatened mischief."

The impetuous genius of the Prince, which hurried the ideas of some irresistibly along with it, disregarded those of others, and followed only its own impulse, opened a new career for his activity.

On the 5th of February the King, at the head of twenty-four battalions and fifty squadrons, left Olmütz for the interior of Moravia. He divided his army into different columns, which advanced as nearly as possible on a line ; he first directed his march upon Brünn, but afterwards turned towards the wild mountainous district. Difficult as the march was, he was ever cheerful and active, often marching on foot by the side of his troops. From these distant quarters cabinet orders were sent to Berlin, occasionally on the most trifling subjects, *e. g.* from Gurein touching some affair relating to the Joachimsthal gymnasium. At Grossbitesch he came up with Polastron and the Saxons.

The enterprise, which had been so much discussed, was now at once put in execution ; Iglau was taken, on the 15th of February, without resistance. The King, according to his preconceived scheme, took up his position on the Austrian frontier at the head of an army of 30,000 Prussians and Saxons ; the French had gone back to join Broglie. The Saxons took up their quarters on the upper Taya, nearer to the Bohemian frontier, extending from Teltsch and

Datschiz as far as Vöttau ; the Prussians encamped lower down, towards the frontier of Hungary, between Znaim, Kostel, and Göding. Schmettau said that Frederick intended to make war upon the Queen, as the Romans did upon Carthage.* By invading Austria he would force Maria Theresa to evacuate Bavaria. Frederick hoped, as he stated in a letter to Podewils, that the main body of the Queen's troops would retire upon Lower Austria, while the French under Broglie would advance and take up their position at his side. He hoped soon to see Budweis once more in the hands of the allies, and the faults they had committed made good again. The position he had taken up threatened both Presburg and Vienna ; Ziethen's hussars swept the country as far as Stokerau and Korneuberg ; the terror of their name reached even the suburbs of Vienna.†

The Queen had lost the greater portion of Moravia, and could not under such circumstances reconquer Bohemia ; she was threatened in her capital by an enterprising foe ;—there was every reason to suppose that she would now listen to proposals for a general pacification.

* Schmettau to Charles VII., 18 Febr. : “ Mon maître s'étoit proposé,—une diversion—comme l'ont fait les Romains allant en Afrique pour faire retirer les Carthaginois de l'Italie.”

† Frederick to the Cardinal, dated Znaim, 1743 : “ Quant a mes operations elles ont tout l'effet que j'en ai pu esperer. M' de Brolio est hors de tout danger, Prague en sureté, l'ennemi dans la consternation et le decouragement, qui se retire en basse et haute Autriche, la basse Autriche inondée de nos partis et nos troupes en état de combattre et de vaincre lorsque l'ennemi aura . . . l'audace de se presenter. Graces au ciel notre superiorité est retablie, etc. . . .”

Her most immediate and pressing embarrassment was, however, the want of money; Hungary could not even support herself, Austria was completely exhausted by war; Bohemia, whence at one time the whole pay of Neipperg's army had been drawn, as well as Moravia, which, with Carinthia and Styria, had lately borne the chief burthen, were lost; there was one moment when the want of money was so great, that fears were entertained that the army would disband for want of it.

It was at this juncture that the value of the English alliance made itself felt. Some pecuniary assistance was received from the Tyrol and from Brussels, but the largest subsidy came from England; 300,000*l.* sterling, which had been delayed for want of sufficient means of transport, now arrived. The Austrian ministers, even Stahrenberg himself, thankfully informed Porter, the English commercial agent, who was then at Vienna, that this money saved the house of Austria from destruction.*

The possession of money enabled the Austrians not only to keep their troops together, but to add to their number, and they soon showed themselves able to make head against all their enemies.

The advance of the Prussians had this effect: it prevented Khevenhüller from pushing forward his

* Porter to Carteret. "When the Prussian troops extended themselves, and their income from that side failed, the Austrians not recovered from their confusion, and consequently nothing to be had from thence, the remainder of the subsidy, the receipt of which had been retarded through the difficulty of conveyance, was their only resource. It came so opportune, that it saved their whole army from disbanding."

troops to the frontiers of the Empire, or to the Rhine, as he had originally intended. The court of Vienna told him that the flames of war must first be extinguished in their own provinces, before they could venture to light them in those of the enemy. Nevertheless, Khevenhüller was not yet forced to evacuate Bavaria; it was enough that he gave up a portion of his troops, four regiments of foot, two of horse, and 3000 Croats, which he sent back to reinforce the main army in Bohemia.

With these and other additions Neipperg's army was enabled to take up an offensive position.

Matters would have stood very differently had the French showed themselves ready and anxious to fight; but they feared, lest the whole brunt of the Austrian attack might be directed against themselves; they were angry with the King of Prussia, because he did not join his forces to theirs and come to their assistance at once. At the Austrian head-quarters the leaders were convinced, not only from their own observation, but likewise from secret information, that the French would attempt nothing decisive against them; moreover, honour seemed to demand that they should march first against the stronger foe, who threatened their capital; accordingly they determined, in a council of war attended by all the generals—for neither the court nor the commanders liked to decide upon the matter alone—to leave a lesser body of troops under Lobkowitz to act against the French, and to march with the main force*

* Oestreichische Militärzeitschrift, 1827, IV. 53; 1828, III.

against the King, whom they also hoped soon to be able to attack from Hungary.

Thus then the Austrians maintained their military position entire, and even seemed prepared to undertake fresh enterprises. It was not therefore to be supposed that Maria Theresa would enter into negotiations involving the renunciation of large provinces.

It must be admitted, that if Frederick intended to effect anything by his military movement, he ought to have determined to attack Vienna: without this his diversion could never have had the effect he intended. In former days, the Carthaginians—to keep to the simile we have already made—were only compelled by the imminent danger which threatened their capital, to recal Hannibal to their assistance.

The Queen was not to be frightened by slight attacks. She did not hesitate, after her confidence in the Hungarians was once restored, to admit them into Vienna, which had never before been done, and to charge them with the defence of the town.

The positions held by Frederick and Maria Theresa with respect to one another, were very remarkable.

Frederick, who by no means looked upon the question of the war of succession as finally settled, projected a division of the Austrian territories, which would not indeed deprive Austria of existence and power at home, but would no longer allow her to exercise any general influence, or ever again to be dangerous to Prussia.

231. Brown's objections did not, however, make matters retrograde.

Maria Theresa, on the other hand, though she no longer insisted so positively as before on maintaining all her territories absolutely undiminished, was not disposed to yield one step further : she was resolved to support the power of her ancestors, and the general importance of her monarchy.

The fortunes of Austria were once more at stake ; but the Queen was the strongest in herself.

Frederick pursued a bold idea, but rather by way of experiment, and without putting forth all his powers ; besides, he acted in secret, but growing opposition to his allies.

The Queen was determined to resist to the death on this question. She had allies, who, on this point at least, were completely with her. England looked upon the preservation of the might of Austria as the chief means of maintaining the balance of power on the Continent ; and though England took little or no part with her own forces, she afforded the greatest assistance in other ways.

In a short time fortune inclined towards the side of the Queen. In the course of the month of March the King of Prussia was made to feel that he was not master of her dominions.

Disturbances first began on the borders ; the Hungarians were rising on the King's flank : the general summons to arms, called by them "insurrection," had been issued at all their places of meeting. The Walachians of Moravia, who in general were peacefully employed in keeping their flocks on the slopes of the mountains, let themselves be persuaded that it was their duty to fight for their religion and their

Queen, and came down into the plains provided even with cannon.

Prince Dietrich of Anhalt had the merit of dispersing the Hungarians at Göding and Skalitz, and of restoring the honour of the Prussian arms throughout the highlands. Meanwhile, however, the same Roth who had offered such a gallant resistance at Neisse, and who was now commandant of Spielberg, made his appearance in a very inconvenient manner at the town of Brünn. On the 9th of March the King took up a fresh position nearer to this place, in order to put an end to the sorties of that garrison.* Nevertheless he was continually annoyed by them. Roth did not scruple to destroy all the villages surrounding the Prussian camp: one day the King saw from the castle of Selowitz, where he had fixed his head-quarters, no less than eighteen villages in flames. At times a feeling of remorseful irony would steal over him, when he thought of what he had undertaken: at others, war, and this rivalry in mischief, appeared to him most horrible. Meanwhile, the troops tried their strength against each other day after day. Among the minor actions which took place, I will mention one which is characteristic of both parties.

On the 13th of March, General Truchsess, on his way to Brünn, wanted to take up his quarters, with one of his battalions, in the unfortified village of Lösch, which lies in a deep hollow, closely surrounded by hills. As soon as he reached the village,

* Tant pour y attendre l'ennemi, que pour resserrer la garnison de cette place et l'empêcher de continuer ses courses. Stille, campagnes du roi, lettre IV. p. 35.

however, several bodies of hussars made their appearance, got off their horses, penetrated into the village, and fired from the windows of the houses. General Truchsess retired into the principal farmhouse of the village, a two-storied dwelling with out-houses and a garden, dignified with the name of the castle. Here, however, he instantly found himself surrounded by the foe, whose numbers were every moment reinforced by Croats and by some regular infantry, and soon amounted to 2,000 men. They then summoned him to surrender, and, in order to force him to do so, they set fire to the neighbouring houses and farm-buildings. But the Prussians, who amounted at most to about 366 men, had promised their leader to stand by him to the last, and to take no quarter. As it soon became impossible to stay in the courtyard, filled already with smoke and ruin, the Prussians opened the gate, before which was assembled the chief mass of Hungarians, whom they charged through a shower of bullets which received them. The appearance of the Prussians opened a path, and they forced their way through the enemy to an open space, where, though attacked on every side, they could form in somewhat better order. Now a platoon, and now a file of men turned to face the enemy; they were compelled to show two or three fronts at once, and thus, under an incessant fire, the Prussians advanced towards the place where they hoped, rather than trusted, to find the second battalion.* When this did make its appearance,

* Ce regiment ne faisoit que 700 M. à cause des commandés que restoient en Silesie. I quote from the general's report.

towards evening, the Hungarians retreated. They could not boast of having made a single prisoner from among all those who forced their way out of the castle; not even one wounded man fell into their hands. Such at least was the statement of Truchsess, who attributed the whole to the direct intervention of God. "Never," exclaimed Frederick, "did the Spartans perform greater feats than my Prussians; I see that with them I am ten times more powerful than I had thought."

But the discomfort of Frederick's military position was greatly aggravated by the dissatisfaction which showed itself more and more every day among his allies.

It was impossible that Frederick should keep on good terms with the commander of the French forces. Count de Broglie held it to be an indisputable maxim that a man should, above all things, maintain his own dignity and position in the world. In the heat of conversation it once escaped his lips, that he thought more of this than of the common weal. He could not bear to see himself thrown into the shade by the presence of the King of Prussia, nor could he endure not being the first to be consulted on all the schemes which were proposed. It frequently happens that real services rendered by one man to another are not appreciated, because they wound his self-love. But we cannot wonder that the distrust shown by the King created distrust in the French. If he would not suffer them play the part of master, neither would they submit to his domination. All Broglie's letters breathe feelings of bitterness, suspi-

cion, and discontent, and they produced their full effect in Versailles. Cardinal Fleury did not by any means express himself on all occasions as a good ally of Prussia. The King, on his part, complained that Broglie did not even take advantage of the present weakness of the Austrians that were opposed to him, in order to execute some hostile movement, but dispersed his troops far and wide about the country.*

The Saxons were not at all more cordial. They imagined that Frederick intended to make use of their troops simply to serve his own purposes, and never again to let them out of his hands; or perhaps they feared that the Austrian army might suddenly march into Bohemia, cut them off from their own country, and possibly invade it.

The divisions among the allies, more especially those between Saxony and Prussia, were well known in the Austrian camp, when, towards the end of March, they at length carried into execution the plan conceived at the beginning of the month; to advance with their main body against the King of Prussia.

At this very moment the "insurrection" of the Hungarians, which had been determined the year before, was in progress. The attack made by the King of Prussia upon their places of meeting had given no

* Schmettau: Le roi n'est pas content d'apprendre que le M^e de Broglie a separé si fort ses troupes, jusqu'à envoyer la cavallerie vers Pilsen et au cercle de Saatz dans un temps, où il devoit profiter de la faiblesse des ennemis, qui tirent tous vers ici pour faire un coup decisif.

little satisfaction in Vienna, seeing that it tended to hasten the arming of the people. By degrees they crossed the frontiers of Moravia. The intention of the Secretary at War was, that the two armies should advance at once upon the King of Prussia, and force him to give them battle.*

This would have been accompanied by especial danger from the peasantry of Moravia, who were exasperated by the acts of violence to which they had been subject, and eager for revenge.

Before Frederick made up his mind whether he would accept the challenge to battle, he once more asked the commander of the Saxon troops whether he would join forces with the Prussians on the first summons. He received an evasive answer, in which great stress was laid on the difficulties of the case, and the small numbers of the Saxon forces, which had suffered a great deal in winter-quarters. The King feared that this was intended to justify future insubordination, and thought it advisable to allow the Saxon troops to depart, as they had long wished. "I determined," said Frederick, "never again to undertake to lead any troops but such as I alone had the right to command; and never again to share with others either the dangers to be encountered, or the honours to be won."

Under these circumstances, it, however, became impossible to face the enemy, to give him battle, or

* The verses to Algarotti were written about the time he expected the battle to take place (20th March):

De Cadiz a Vibourg, d'Albion a Messine,
Tout attend de nos bras sa gloire ou sa ruine.

to pursue the course originally intended. For the first time Frederick saw obstacles in his way which he could not overcome, and was forced very nearly to give up a great political idea.

On the 5th of April, 1742, he broke up his camp at Selowitz, and made a retrograde movement by Prossnitz upon Zwittau.

This march was not so full of danger as Eichel had feared; nevertheless it was rendered very harassing, especially to the isolated divisions, by the attacks of the Austrian hussars, with whom they had to keep up a continual fight. Occasionally the hussars charged at full gallop with loud shouts, and then the fire of some riflemen, distributed in the defiles, sufficed to throw them into confusion: at other times, drawn up in close lines, they waited for some battalion issuing from a defile; the Prussians would then form into a solid square, surrounded by a sort of moveable fortress of baggage-waggons, under cover of which the battalion would advance, lucky indeed if it were provided with a few pieces of artillery, the effect of which was most telling upon the undisciplined horde. Or again, in difficult passes, the hussars would suddenly rush from the woody heights on all sides, and attack the advancing Prussians; the dragoons were then compelled to dismount, fix bayonets upon their carbines, and drive the enemy out of the houses to the right and left. They once succeeded in setting fire to a hamlet where the Prussians lay; while the fire raged on all sides, the squadrons mounted their horses to defend themselves against the enemy.

The caution which was observed, under these circumstances, in marching from one post to another, is very remarkable.

When a regiment entered a village in which it was to take up its quarters for the night, the first care was to block up all approaches to the village with carts and waggons locked together. Behind these barricades guards were posted, of which each alternate file kept their muskets shouldered: these posts were connected by a chain of sentinels, each of whom was protected by ditches and hedges. The main-guard was stationed behind the stone walls of a churchyard, whence, every quarter of an hour, soldiers went their rounds to the other posts. A light was kept burning in every house; the arms were piled, and the cartouch-boxes carefully hung up ready for use, so that each man might find his own immediately, and one of the soldiers was always bound to be awake. If the march was to be continued on the following morning, the first care was for the security of the baggage. The waggon containing the military chest and other necessaries belonging to the regiment was placed between the two battalions.

Amid exertions and contests of such various kinds, from which the country again suffered enormously, the army made its way through Moravia back to the Bohemian frontier.

The King was very anxious to keep possession of Olmütz, if the magazines with which it was provided had but been sufficient. But Schwerin, who had been left in charge of the place, was probably unprovided with the necessary means; indeed he

complained of this: moreover, he was not fitted by nature for the task. He would much rather have made a dash into Hungary, where the Protestants, who felt themselves aggrieved by the proceedings at the last Diet, were in a great ferment. But more than all the rest, an attack of illness had of late rendered him incapable of service; and Olmütz could only be held long enough to allow the stores collected in that town to be sent to some place of safety.

Prince Charles, with the whole main body of the Austrian forces, was already marching towards Olmütz without delay. On the 8th of April he was at Znaim; on the 18th, at Prosnitz. On the 25th the Prussians evacuated Olmütz, after having secured their stores; and all Moravia was, once more, subject to the Austrian sway. The Prince summoned the whole country to take up arms, in order to guard against similar disasters; and then, like Frederick, took the road towards Bohemia.

On the 17th of April the first column of the Prussian army had reached Chrudim. Here, on the banks of the Sazawa and the Elbe, in a district richly cultivated and teeming with flocks and herds, and where one village almost touched the other, the King intended to allow his troops to rest and refresh after the toils and privations of the Moravian campaign. But he did not think that he should be able to withstand the Austrian forces with only the troops he had with him. As soon as he perceived that the Hungarian nation was arming in right earnest, he ordered the old Prince of Anhalt to march into Bohemia at the head of the army which had been collected to act

against Hanover and Saxony, as the danger from those quarters was now at an end. The first regiments soon crossed the Elbe, at Pardubitz and Kollin, in order to join the King. Schwerin appears to have been deeply wounded, although he would not confess it, when the command of the troops in Upper Silesia was given to the Prince of Anhalt, instead of to him. Shattered in body and disturbed in mind, he quitted the field.* But the Prince of Anhalt was not allowed to exercise any independent authority. Some departure in his order of march from the exact orders of the King, drew down upon the Prince a severe reprimand.† Nevertheless the King intrusted to him with perfect confidence the command of the troops in Upper Silesia.

Thus ended the campaign in Moravia. It was an enterprise fraught with incalculable results, in which Frederick embarked with that sanguine spirit of youth which looks upon all things as possible. He hoped from it nothing less than the boldest schemes of a great position in the world, for ever secure and mighty on every side. But as he had to fight in part

* The words of a letter of the 18th of March show his condition: "J'ai des accès de foiblesse qui me font plus penser à la mort qu'à la vie et souvent je ne sais à quoi je pense . . . Je n'envie en aucune façon la gloire du commandant au prince Leopold en la Silésie, je rends justice à son mérite et connois le peu que je vauz, et ce que je valais s'abaisse avec mon âge et mes infirmités."

† Chrudim, 21st April. Und wenn Sie noch habiler als Cäsar wären, und meinen Ordres nicht accurat und stricte nachlebten, so hülfte mir das übrige nicht.—(If you had more ability than Cæsar, and did not follow my orders accurately and strictly, the rest would avail me nothing.) Orlich, I. 357.

with forces not his own, he experienced doubly the vicissitudes of fortune, which he himself once compared to the stormy waves of the sea, by which he was "carried up to the heaven and down again to the deep, and his soul was melted because of trouble." He had been forced to retreat after a very short time, and it was obvious that the failure of his enterprise would increase neither his reputation nor his authority. But he was far too prudent by nature to have staked the future destiny of his house and kingdom upon one cast of the die, and he speedily resumed an important position between the belligerent powers. At this very moment too, on the 25th of April, the citadel of Glatz fell into the hands of the Prussians, after a siege which had almost reduced the garrison to starvation: Upper Silesia was secured: he himself, by the position he had taken up on the Elbe, covered not only Lower Silesia, but, to a certain extent, even Prague. He saw, with pleasure, that it was in his own power—should the vicissitudes of war render it necessary—to unite once more with the French and the Saxons,* which would give him a decided preponderance, or—what he very much preferred—to follow his own line of policy, and to carry on the war according to his own views and wishes. He had a magnificent army of 28,000 men, composed entirely of Prussian troops—a force fully equal

* Frederick to Podewils, 3rd April: "Par cette nouvelle position je couvre Prague (Broglie had informed him by frequent couriers that this capital was threatened) la Saxe et mon pays, je puis me joindre aux Saxons et aux Français pour aller combattre les Autrichiens en force supérieure."

to the occasion; and he was no longer hampered by the influence of the grumbling Prince of Anhalt or of Schwerin: he felt himself completely his own master.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BATTLE OF CHOTUSITZ.

No sooner had Frederick again taken up arms, than the court of Vienna made offers to him, not only through Pfitschner, as we have already mentioned, but likewise through Lord Hyndford. The terms offered by Pfitschner are not accurately known, but those proposed by Lord Hyndford were distinct and very advantageous. The Queen of Hungary, so said Hyndford in a letter, dated 12th February, was convinced that Frederick would not involve himself deeper with the French, but would prefer being the deliverer of his country. In order to prove how earnestly she wished to conclude a friendship with him, she was prepared to cede to him the whole of Silesia, excepting Teschen. "I have reason to think," added Hyndford, "that the Queen would likewise consent to give up Glatz under certain conditions."*

* On the 1st of February Hyndford declared that he was empowered to make more advantageous proposals than ever. On the 6th the King answered him, "que je ne suis pas contraire à tout ce qui pourra être convenable à ma gloire et compatible avec mon honneur." Hereupon Hyndford wrote an answer on the 12th, in which he endeavoured to throw the whole blame of breaking the promise of secrecy upon a third party,—most likely Saxony: "Elle (the Queen) est prête, à lui (the King) ceder toute la Si-

Frederick, who was still occupied with comprehensive plans for a general pacification, refused all these offers: subsequent events, however, proved that these plans were impracticable, as with such allies as his nothing could be effected. In the middle of March the Prussian court again saw the necessity of making a separate treaty of peace.

Podewils drew up a memorial, in which all the arguments for and against the peace were stated in detail.

The main point was, on the one hand, that it was not politic to suffer Austria to be destroyed, as the balance of power in Europe and in Germany would thus be overthrown; and on the other, that this same Austria, should she recover her strength, or, as Podewils expressed himself, get her head above water again, might become exceedingly dangerous to the King of Prussia. She would never forgive all that she had endured at his hands, or lose sight of the reconquest of Silesia. Sweden, which was so much weaker a power, had not yet abandoned the project of regaining possession of Livonia.

The political history of Prussia had ever been a constant struggle between its natural alliance with, and its natural opposition to Austria.

The King's attention was completely absorbed by the actual posture of affairs. He saw that either the war must shortly become general, which would involve him in fresh difficulties with respect to his pro-

lesie à l'exception du duché de Teschen et j'ai lieu de croire, qu'elle se laissera porter aussi sous de certaines (petites) conditions à la cession de Glatz."

vinces on the Lower Rhine, or that he might expect a peace to be suddenly concluded between France and Austria.* That the latter alternative was the more probable, he gathered from some incautious expressions dropped by the French Ambassador, from the reports made to him by the Saxons—who at this very time were likewise endeavouring to make terms for themselves in Vienna—and from former events. Every man must bear the weight of his past transgressions, and no one could be blamed for arguing from what occurred in 1735, that Cardinal Fleury would act in the same manner in 1742.

When Frederick retired into Bohemia with his army, he thought it advisable to take up the threads of the negotiation which had formerly been broken off.

This determination was in itself an event: he could not negotiate without tacitly acknowledging that Austria should not only be independent of France—which had formed part of the previous treaty—but that she should maintain her place as a great European power. Frederick gave up the idea of depriving the

* “ Plus que j’y pense plus je vois qu’il me faut une prompte paix. L’augmentation des troupes angloises en Hollande, le transport des troupes angloises qu’on medite de faire dans les pays bas pour remplacer les régiments autrichiens qu’on veut tirer des places barrières pour les transporter vers le bas Rhin, la grande envie que le cardinal témoigne pour se tirer des engagements où il est, avec d’autres raisons, sont des motifs assez puissants qui me déterminent pour la paix.” Frederick adds, in an essay dated the 20th of April: “ que la France requiert déjà mon secours pour opposer un corps de troupea dans le pays de Cleves aux Anglais;—que Valori m’a parlé sur un ton, comme si la France avoit envie de me prévenir;—le peu de vigueur des alliés—le risque d’un revers;” and so forth.

Queen of Moravia and Bohemia, greatly as this would have contributed to his own security.

He, in fact, returned to the old path of the European system, and was again able to go hand-in-hand with England.

When the time came for fixing the precise terms of a definitive arrangement, the English were the first to support the demands made by Frederick. All they desired now, as formerly, was a reconciliation between Austria and Prussia, in order to deprive France of the support of the latter. The demands made by the King of Prussia were twofold.

First of all, he would not hear of the proposition which was now again made to him, to support the Queen of Hungary against his former allies. He maintained, that in making this request the Queen contradicted herself; if she were not strong enough to repel the French and the Saxons with her own forces alone, how could she pretend to resist them when he, the King of Prussia, was allied with them? but if she felt herself sufficiently strong to offer resistance to them as well as to himself, it was obvious that her victory would be so much the easier when she had them only to contend with. "In one word," said he, "she does not want my assistance, neutrality on my part ensures her the victory." Hyndford agreed with him entirely, and declared that he considered this dilemma as convincing as any mathematical demonstration of Newton.

Moreover, Frederick now urged those claims to an extension of territory, which he had been meditating in the mean time. The provinces which he

had demanded of the other two princes, Upper Silesia and Glatz, he now claimed from the Queen: he even went so far as to wish to unite two circles in Bohemia, namely, Königingrätz and Pardubitz, with Lower Silesia; these were to be in lieu of Upper Silesia. He had already entered into negotiations with Charles Albert on this subject, and nothing would have been more agreeable to him. Nevertheless, we see from his correspondence that he did not intend to insist upon this point.*

The English agreed with him, though without entering into particulars, that he could not rest contented with the possession of Lower Silesia alone; they saw clearly that this province would be untenable if Austria kept Bohemia and Glatz, Moravia and Upper Silesia. Robinson attributed the King's recent enterprises solely to this political necessity.†

In consequence of this, the English now most strongly urged the Queen to make these concessions; not perhaps unconditionally and for ever, but at any rate under the actual pressure of circumstances.

It is perfectly intelligible why the court of Vienna had no great inclination to revert to conditions which it had once proffered under very different circum-

* For example, 22nd April: vous savez que je ne me cabre point sur le Königingrätz, il nous faut la paix.

† Robinson, somewhat before, makes the following remark, which shows the fluctuation of affairs: "when once," says he, "in possession of Glatz and of Upper Silesia by the consent of this court, he may and must have less to fear from the house of Austria, left by his assistance in possession of Bohemia and Moravia, than from any other power or powers that may acquire these countries by the way of France."

stances. The advancing monarch, supported by the French and the Saxons, had appeared exceedingly formidable; the same monarch retreating, and at variance with his allies, was far less to be feared. Moreover, the Austrians had recovered possession of Moravia, so that the great military position which they had taken up was considerably strengthened.

After some hesitation the Queen returned an answer similar to that which a year ago had driven the King of Prussia to join the French. She would not hear of giving up both the provinces under any conditions whatever, but she was willing to cede to Prussia either the county of Glatz or that portion of Upper Silesia which had been appointed for the Prussian winter-quarters in the preceding year. But she would only consent to this on the express condition that the rest of her possessions should be guaranteed to her, and that Prussia should promise to make common cause with her against all her other enemies.*

The Austrian court thought the offers it was making so great, as to warrant the price it demanded in return. If a province was to be given up, the Queen was determined, at any rate, to be able to lead a new army into the field against the rest of her enemies. But this was only one side of the schemes

* Robinson to Hyndford, 3rd April: "Notwithstanding the disappointment in not having obviated by her offers of the 21st of January and the 14th of February, the late enterprise of his Prussian Majesty, yet she (the Queen of Hungaria) is still willing for the sake of a proper alliance to give that Prince either Glatz and a strip of half a German mile on this side of the Neiss, or to give definitively in Upper Silesia what was allowed in that country for the Prussian winter-quarters."

entertained by the court. The Austrians now thought that they were in a condition to meet the King of Prussia in the field, should he refuse the proffered terms; they felt no want of courage, and everything was prepared for this contingency.

Thus then Frederick had to choose between two courses: either he might gain a great increase of territory and the alliance of Austria; or, on the other hand, he might again try the doubtful decision of a fresh appeal to arms. As may be supposed, he did not hesitate for a moment. He must indeed have been brought low before he would have abandoned those principles which he had so often laid down, and passed over from one camp to the other. The bare suggestion threw him into a violent passion: Eichel asserts that he never saw Frederick more excited than after receiving the answer from the court of Vienna; he thought himself despised, and breathed nothing but vengeance. Without a moment's delay he wrote to Hyndford that no further mediation was now possible — that he must recommence military operations. On the next day ~~but~~ ^{at} one he should again take the field.

On Whitsunday the 13th of May, the troops left their quarters and marched to the camp which the King had selected, near Chrudim. Early in the morning, about eight o'clock, he himself appeared on the height on which his tent was to be pitched, whence his eye ranged over a vast extent of broken ground. His troops were seen advancing from all quarters, through gorges and defiles; they appeared to spring from the earth. If perchance any of his

officers made reflections, akin to those which, according to Herodotus, suggested themselves to the Persian king on the shores of the Hellespont, such thoughts were far from Frederick's mind. With proud joy he saw them approach in the fullness of life and strength, mighty through that very military discipline by which they were strictly controlled, which even now gave them the appearance of a splendid show. Frederick visited each post, as it was occupied by the advancing troops; he himself selected the watch whose duty it was to guard one of the two flanks, leaving the other to be chosen by Prince Leopold of Dessau.

His intention was to wait in this spot for the reinforcements which he expected to arrive from Upper Silesia, and then, if he was not attacked in the mean time, to advance against the enemy himself.

The Austrian court had determined to enter Bohemia immediately with the army then in Moravia, and to advance upon Prague. If the King of Prussia allowed this to take place, he would be cut off from the French and the Saxons, and be compelled to evacuate Bohemia; if he attempted to prevent it, they would oppose him and give him battle in God's name.*

The court of Vienna was induced to adopt this

* The correspondence of the Grand Duke, given at p. 150 of the *Oestr. Milit. Zeitschrift*, proves that this was the plan: in Robinson's words, "to march into Bohemia by Saar, and to advance directly to Prague, where there were no more than 2000 men; if the King of Prussia appeared to the right, they would give him battle." Moll's letters exactly coincide with this.

plan chiefly by the report that Charles Albert, with the co-operation of French auxiliaries which were expected to arrive, designed to advance upon Prague with the intention of there causing himself to be solemnly crowned. On the 8th of May the Austrian army, consisting of thirteen regiments of infantry and twelve regiments of cavalry, appeared at Saar; on the 13th it encamped at Chotieborz, on the high road which runs by Czaslau to Prague. The general impression in the army was that the King of Prussia would not stir, and that in a few days they would enter Prague with drums beating and colours flying.

But as the King, by the mere fact of the advance of the Austrians, was not only cut off from the French and the Saxons, but also found his own position threatened,—the Austrian light troops had already appeared in the valley of the Elbe, and threatened his magazines,—he could on no consideration suffer this to take place. Perceiving at a glance the object of the enemy, Frederick resolved without delay to encounter them at Kuttentberg, and thus oppose their advance. To this spot Frederick accordingly repaired on the 15th, as soon as he had got certain intelligence of the enemy's movements, with a strong detachment of 6000 men. The mass of his army, which could not so easily be moved, was to follow next day under the command of Prince Leopold of Dessau.

Thus, then, on the 16th of May the two hostile armies were marching towards Kuttentberg within a short distance of each other.

In these regions the Gangberge, Kankowy hory, dome-shaped hills divided by open hollows, which join the great Bohemian and Moravian chain of mountains, run between Daubrawa and Chrudinka from Saar down into the valley of the Elbe, at the central point of this range in the domain of Ronow.* The Austrian army, early in the morning of the 16th of May, after a short march from the convent of Willimow, pitched their camp, which had been previously marked out for them. About four miles and a half from them, the Prussians under Prince Leopold, coming from Chrudim, marched with all their artillery and baggage-waggons along a road, cut up by ravines, through forests and over mountains, towards the district near Czaslau. They trembled when afterwards they reflected what might have happened to them, had the enemy destroyed any one of the bridges.

The two armies advanced towards the same point; the Austrians from the south towards the north, the Prussians from the east towards the west. Wherever their routes crossed they must inevitably fight a battle.

When Prince Leopold climbed the heights of Podhorzan, which belong to that range of the Gangberge, he saw before him the camp of the Austrians, who were quite ready for action. Czaslau was already in their hands, and he despaired of retaking it from them that evening. He pushed for-

* Once before, in the thirteenth century, a Margrave of Brandenburg possessed this territory, his right to which the Emperor Rudolf of Habsburg contested. Kopp, König Rudolf, I. 470. Sommer, Königreich Böhmen, Bd. XL. p. 296.

ward still closer to the King, and pitched his camp in the lowlands, near the two domains of Neuhof and Sehusitsch, having before him the small market-town of Chotusitz.* He had marched above thirty miles, the army had been in motion for twenty hours, and the night was far advanced before he entered his camp.

The King, who was immediately informed of all this, had likewise but just reached Kuttenberg, and did not think it advisable to lead his tired soldiers that same night to join the main army; but he promised that he would be there at the earliest dawn with his rested and refreshed troops. He had long been dissatisfied with the suspense in which affairs had been kept, and he looked forward with pleasure to the prospect of a battle, which, as he said, would fix his fate. He once more resolved to advance against the enemy immediately, if they did not first attack him. "If Providence be not against us," said he, "the enemy is in our hands."

This time, however, the Austrians were not inclined to wait until they were attacked. After the battle of Mollwitz the Austrian court and army had blamed nothing so much in Neipperg's proceedings as his protracted manœuvres and his hesitation in attacking the Prussians. When Archduke Charles

* The King said, that he wished to have the camp at Chotusitz: Prince Leopold, on the other hand, said that he was the person who selected it. Prince Leopold asserted that the following day had been intended to be a day of rest: in the King's letters it is stated that he wished to fight then. These trifling variations of detail are inevitable.

took the command in Upper Silesia, in the place of his brother, the first thing he did was to dismiss Neipperg by reason of his dilatory tactics, and he could not, therefore, in any respect follow his example. This was likewise the disposition of Marshal Königsegg, who was associated with him in command. Such, too, were the orders of the court.

The Austrians determined to set out during that very night, in order to surprise the enemy early in the morning; * they presumed that they should find the Prussians, wearied with their march, scattered about in their quarters in the various villages near Kuttenberg. They wished to take revenge upon the King of Prussia for his success against Neipperg.

It may be doubted whether that cheerful confidence prevailed in the Austrian army which is essential to an enterprise of this nature; for we know that Prince Charles thought it necessary to promise not only in the name of the Queen, but likewise under the guarantee of the generals, that in all future promotions the strictest justice should be observed; more especially that no one should be passed over on

* Man ward noch in der Nacht versichert, als ob der Feind noch wirklich zu Kuttenberg und in denen dortig herumliegenden Dörfern cantonniren thäte, folglich hin und wieder zerstreut wäre.—(We were assured during the night that the foe was then actually quartered in Kuttenberg and the neighbouring villages, and thus scattered about here and there.) This was the Austrian account of the battle, the exaggerations of which,—for example, how the Prussian cavalry were driven back as far as Kuttenberg,—were noticed at the time by Eichel.

account of his religion. The true principles of military service were not yet predominant in the Austrian army.

Between eight and nine in the evening of the 16th of May, the Austrians left Ronow in two columns, the reserve marching at their side as a third column: they advanced in the direction of Czaslau. The heavy artillery, the baggage, and all who were not soldiers, were left behind. The sutlers were ordered not to quit the camp, under pain of death. No trumpet was to sound, and all loud calls were forbidden.

The Austrians fully succeeded in concealing their movements during the night from the Prussians: the march, however, owing to the defiles and deep hollows by which, though covered, it was also delayed, lasted much longer than they had anticipated, and it was four o'clock before the army had assembled at Czaslau. Here they first learnt how near the enemy was—not scattered, as they had imagined, in the villages, but united in a single camp. There they resolved to seek the enemy; but it was near seven o'clock before they could advance to the attack.

As yet the Prussians in their camp had no idea of what was going on: neither their scouts nor the Austrian deserters had announced anything certain. A captain, placed on a height, with express orders to give no needless alarm if he saw only hussars, at length distinguished the advance of a regular army. Prince Leopold, who happened to be going the round of the posts, convinced himself that such was really the case, and hastened back to draw up the troops in order of battle.

For this purpose he selected the low ground on either side of Chotusitz, the church tower of which village was taken as the point d'alignement of the first line. The hedges and ditches in front of the village were carefully lined; and from the village itself the right wing extended towards the ponds of Cirkwitz, and the left towards the park of Sehutsich. Just as the Prussians were forming their line, the King, who had broken up his quarters with the earliest dawn, appeared in the very nick of time. His battalions took the place that had been assigned to them, principally in the second line on the right wing.*

The Austrians, who had been delayed some time by the passage of a brook, advanced at this very moment.

The Austrians had about 38, the Prussians 30 battalions; the former had 92, the latter 70 squadrons.† According to ancient custom, both armies were drawn up in two lines, with the cavalry on both flanks.

The contest in which they were about to engage cannot be compared in importance to the battle of Mollwitz. Austria did not now meditate the recovery of Silesia, nor had the King the conquest of Bohemia in view. Supposing the King to be

* The original draft of the Memoirs has: "Ma cavallerie se mit en seconde ligne derrière ceux que commandoit Mr. de Bodenbrug, et mon infanterie se mit en partie dans le flanc droit de la première ligne et en partie dans la seconde."

† Compare Malinowski and Bonin, III. 601, as to the numbers. Many discrepancies exist in the MS. accounts. . .

beaten, he would still have many resources left in his rear upon which to fall back, and he would still be able to offer fresh resistance. If, on the other hand, the Austrians were defeated, they could retire upon Lobkowitz's army, and would not be forced to evacuate Bohemia. The two powers were, in fact, only disputing as to the terms upon which peace was to be concluded—terms which would, it is true, determine their future position with respect to each other. The impending contest must decide what these were to be.

The battle was begun on the right flank by the newly-organized Prussian cavalry. They were instructed to advance at full trot, and as soon as they should come to within a hundred paces of the enemy, to charge in a compact body at the height of their speed. The cuirassiers of Buddenbrock and Rothenburg's dragoons, who followed them at full speed from the second line, threw the Austrians into confusion and dispersed them. It was not until they attacked the infantry in the flank that they met with any resistance. Assailed at the same moment by hussars, and perplexed by thick clouds of dust, the Prussians at length returned to their former position.

Matters went on very differently on the left flank. We will not renew the old dispute, whether—as the King always maintained—it was the fault of the Prince of Anhalt, or whether, as the latter asserted, General Jeetz alone was to blame: at all events, the cavalry, which could not reach its appointed position without making a long detour, was not drawn up in

proper order* before it was attacked in front, on the flank, and presently in the rear, by the Austrians, who directed the whole impetus of their charge upon this point. A few Prussian regiments succeeded in cutting their way out, and assailed the enemy with prodigious vigour. But this could not restore the order of battle; on the contrary, the whole force of the attack on that wing of the Prussian army was now directed against the infantry, which was left without support. The Austrians drove them back, and forced their way almost from the rear into the village, which the Prussians were obliged to leave in the hands of the enemy, who fired it and endeavoured to penetrate between the two lines of the Prussian army. At this point the engagement was most severe: the impetuosity of the attack was met by an equally obstinate defence. Count Königsegg said that, many as were the battles in which he had been engaged, he had never seen so murderous a *melée*. Above two-thirds of the regiment of the Prince of Anhalt, which had to bear the chief brunt of the Austrian attack, and which rallied under cover of the village, were left dead on the field. All did not fight with equal vigour; but what most excited the admiration of the Austrian generals in this hour of tumult was the ease and promptitude, acquired by

* The original draft of the *Memoirs* has: "Le terrain qui était devant le camp de cette cavallerie se trouvoit si entrecoupé de ruisseaux et si marecacheux qu'au lieu de s'avancer en bataille pour occuper son poste, il étoit obligé de defiler en partie par le village de Chotusitz et en partie, pour s'y rendre." Compare the account of the Prince and the explanations of Berenhorst in his *Remains*.

long discipline, with which the Prussians continually formed afresh in different order. The soldiers, though beaten, rallied time after time and returned to the attack. Here it was that the army chaplain, whom we have already had occasion to mention, rushed in among the flying soldiers, and in the midst of the incessant fire of musketry, "the bullets whereof whizzed about him like swarms of gnats," rallied several bodies of men by the sound of that familiar voice which had so often incited them to good resolves.* No one thought of the baggage, which was given up as a prey to the plundering hussars and Pandours. The Prussian cavalry, which had been beaten off the field, when called upon in the name of God and of their King, returned to the attack. Some protection, too, was given by the burning village, which hindered the advance of the Austrians. By degrees the Prussians were enabled to breathe again: they sent some regiments from the second line to reinforce the first, and prepared to retake the village.

The fortune of the day was still doubtful; the glory of deciding it belongs to the King. The genius of the commander is deservedly ranked so high, because nowhere do perception, thought, and action follow in such rapid succession as on the battle-field, where it is impossible to make good a blunder, and where a moment lost is irreparable. By an easy

* Seegebart's letter exists in a complete form in a portfolio in the office of the Minister of War; docketed "rare old papers." Frederick mentions a postmaster, who took part in the battle instead of staying with the baggage. Letter to Jordan, 5th June, VIII. 188.

detour Frederick occupied some high ground which lay before him with his right wing, and appeared on the enemy's flank. His battalions shouldered their muskets; the artillery which preceded them, and that which ably supported their advance from another side, rendered them very formidable. During the previous year Frederick had re-modelled his artillery: instead of the customary six-pounders, he had caused three-pounders to be cast, which were easier to move and load, and which he thought equally efficient. These guns, of which he had seventy-six with him, materially assisted this happy manœuvre, whereby he had already carried terror into the enemy's ranks. By degrees Prince Charles perceived that his attack had failed; he now strove to recall those of his troops which had advanced too far, more especially those which were employed in plundering the Prussian camp, and then, in order to avoid being utterly defeated, he gave the signal for a retreat.* The

* The verses of Quartermaster John Frederick Busse, of the regiment of body guards, should not be altogether lost:—

Dort steckt der Feind Schwarm das Lager in den Brand,
 Doch bietet er dadurch den Unsern nur die Hand
 Die Flanken von dem Feind beherzt zu attaquiren;
 So muss der Gegentheil so Muth als Herz verlieren.
 (There the swarm of enemies set fire to the camp,
 But by so doing they play into our hands,
 And cause us boldly to attack their flank;
 Whereby the enemy loses courage and heart.)

The manners of the soldiers were even then somewhat like those of the old Landsknechts, however altered in tone. The author is not without some claim to cultivation. But this appears to a greater degree in the case of Stille, and in the narrative of the King, whose known intention it was to be perfectly veracious. "Es ist," says he, "solche Relation um so zuverlässiger, als solche von

Prussians pursued him no further than was necessary in order to keep possession of the battle-field.

Three things ensured the victory to the Prussians: the application of the infantry, cavalry, and artillery in their due proportions and in a marvellous perfection of discipline; the combined efforts of the whole army, for which the King expressed his especial gratitude; and, above all, the King's own genius, which in this battle manifested itself for the first time with full vigour and originality. We may place his conduct of this battle by the side of one of the boldest and most successful actions of the young Condé, who, by threatening the rear of the hitherto victorious enemy, with his still unconquered wing, gained the day at Rocroy. Nothing could be more unlike the battle of Mollwitz, which did not really begin until after Frederick had left the field. In this action, on the contrary, he appeared as the actual director of a military organization replete with life and energy. In consequence of this battle the Prussian army first took its proper rank in the world. A salute was fired over the dead with the cannon taken from the Austrians. It is well known how often Czaslau had been the theatre of disturbances during the wars of the Hussites and of the Reformation. In the church of Czaslau a splendid monument had once been erected to the memory of the savage Zizka of *meiner Façon ist, und darin nichts gesetzt worden, als was der Wahrheit sonder etwas zu supprimiren oder zu exageriren vollkommen gemäss ist.*—(This narrative is the more to be relied on, because it is of my own façon, and nothing is therein set down but what is in exact accordance with the truth, and without any suppression or exaggeration.)

Troznow by his followers, but it had long since been destroyed after the battle of the White Mountain, and throughout the district every schism from the Church of Rome had been as much as possible rooted out. Meanwhile, however, the same element had made its appearance in other parts of the world, and had prodigiously developed itself; and now a great army once more on this very spot celebrated its victory by a solemn service according to the Lutheran ritual. The foreigners who had settled in Bohemia during the thirty years' war were terrified when they contemplated the consequences which might arise from Frederick's victory; but, in truth, they had nothing to fear: the King of Prussia did not feel himself called upon to revive the war of religion.

It is said that after the battle Schmettau urged the King to pursue and destroy the enemy; but that Frederick replied, that he did not wish to lower the Queen so much. It is impossible to say whether or no a still more serious blow might have been inflicted upon the enemy, who had not in fact as yet suffered a regular defeat. At all events, great discouragement and considerable relaxation of discipline prevailed in the camp at Willimow, whither Prince Charles had retired; and the Prince deemed it advisable to fall back upon Lobkowitz's army on the Moldau. The King thought this satisfaction enough. With a simplicity, in which modesty and self-reliance were blended, Frederick remarked that the prolonged retreat of the enemy proved that they considered themselves beaten; he asked what was said of his army, and wished to know whether the world now

gave him credit for sufficient prudence and ability to lead it. Of glory and merit with regard to practical life at least, he always formed a just estimate, despising only that which was hollow and unreal. Moreover, to prevent his own victories from being fatal to himself, it was necessary for him to exercise a strong control over his ambitious passions. He had been forced into war, because the terms which he had offered were refused, and others, which he could not possibly accept, were proposed to him; but he now declared himself ready to make peace, upon the terms he had before proffered. The Queen had so willed it, thus he wrote to Hyndford, and her will had been done; he had fought and conquered her; it was enough for him to have lowered her pride, and he reverted to those proposals which he had formerly made to her.*

Thus then the battle he had won only paved the way to fresh negotiations.

* Frederick to Podewils, 23rd May, Camp de Brzezi: "L'armée du pce Charles est diminuée de plus d'un tiers: elle se retire du côté de Neuhaus . . . le corps de Lobkowitz assiège Frauenberg; le M^r de Belle-isle qui est parti de Prague veut attaquer les Autrichiens le 25 ou 26 de ce moi et il est à presumer que la victoire se declarera pour les Français vu leur superiorité—et l'aiguillon d'honneur que leur inspirent mes avantages. Vous voyez par ces circonstances, combien la situation de la reine devient critique et quelle énorme faute elle a fait en refusant mon amitié. Cependant je suis toujours du sentiment, qu'une paix separée me convient mieux que la paix générale.—Je crains que si de Vienne ils ne se pressent point, leur ruine sera totale."

CHAPTER V.

PRELIMINARIES AT BRESLAU—PEACE OF BERLIN.

By his expedition into Moravia, Frederick had thought to strengthen the claims of Bavaria and Saxony to the Austrian succession, and to exclude Austria from the neighbouring territories, where she might be dangerous to him; in this, however, he had failed, and had been compelled to abandon these designs.

On the other hand, Austria had attempted to reduce the claims of Prussia below the level of the proposals previously made to her: and, in return for any concessions she might be induced to grant, to require that Prussia should make common cause with her; but the battle of Chotusitz had now put an end to all schemes of that sort.

Both parties had once more tried their strength. Frederick, in spite of his victory, no longer thought it possible to wrest Bohemia and Moravia from the Queen; while the Austrian court could not fail to perceive that this invincible enemy would never accept the conditions lately offered to him.

Lord Hyndford, before he had any correspondence with the King of Prussia, and immediately after the battle, advised them at once to desist from demanding these conditions, and George II. most urgently pressed the same advice upon the Queen.

At this moment Count Sinzendorf, who had just begun to enjoy a return of prosperity, died at an advanced age. His successor as minister of foreign affairs was Count Uhlefeld, hitherto ambassador to the court of Holland, who had not been very popular in consequence of his dry and domineering manners, but who was personally connected with the leading men there, and was well versed in the policy of the maritime powers. He agreed with the opinion which they incessantly repeated, that the Queen must content herself with the neutrality of the King of Prussia;* that, in the war with France, this would of itself be a great gain; and that it would be impossible to induce him to go further. In his very first communication, King Frederick had made it a preliminary condition of any mediation, that no hostile measures against his former allies should be required of him. To this the Queen assented.

A second question was, whether Austria should concede to the King the two Bohemian circles which he demanded. The English would not have objected to this; for great evils, said Robinson, require great remedies. But the court of Vienna was immovable on this point. They affirmed that Frederick demanded Pardubitz only because it was the best place for breeding horses, and Konigingrätz because the best riders came from thence: in a short time he would increase his cavalry by 10,000 men; and who

* Que la reine de la Hongrie se devoit contenter de la neutralité de S. M. Pr^{me} qui dans la presente condition des affaires seroit un avantage suffisant et que la reine devoit être contente de délémer son affaire seule avec le M. de Pr.

could tell how soon he might get possession of the whole of Bohemia as far as the Elbe?

The Queen had offered either Glatz or Upper Silesia before the battle—one or the other. She now determined to propose to give up both; though, in the case of the latter, with certain limitations. To this she said she should adhere, for she would not appear so obstinate as to refuse to make some sacrifice to the common weal: but to go further, to cede a single circle of Bohemia—to that no power on earth should bring her; rather would she endure every horror and distress, and perish under the ruins of Vienna sword in hand.

On the 2nd of June these declarations were sent to Hyndford, who recommended them to the King, exhorting him not to insist on things that were unattainable. This was also the opinion of Podewils. "Your Majesty," he writes, on the 5th of June, "may now decide whether you will have peace within a month, and enjoy your successes in quiet, or whether you will expose yourself anew to the chances of the wind and waves, and attempt to steer your vessel among the rocks where so many have suffered shipwreck."

The events of the war then going on likewise had some influence on Frederick's determination.

From the time that he had drawn the main force of Austria upon himself, and had kept it employed, Broglie had remained in a state of inactivity with regard to the remainder. The battle of Chotusitz revived a certain degree of military ardour in the French; for they were mortified that a victory should

have been won in Bohemia without even a mention of their name at it.* When Lobkowitz laid siege to Frauenberg, they set out, after receiving a considerable reinforcement, to relieve that place. Their superiority was enhanced by the defective generalship of the Austrians, and on this occasion they were successful; at Sahay they gained an advantage over Lobkowitz, who thought it expedient to retreat on Budweis. Belleisle at this moment reappeared at Broglie's side, and urgently advised an immediate attack on Budweis. It is, in fact, evident from a letter by Lobkowitz, that he despaired of holding the place against the French.† But to this plan Broglie would by no means consent. He had no confidence in the new recruits who had just joined the army, and wished first to accustom them to the sight of the enemy; nor was Belleisle's advice acceptable to him in itself.

The worst understanding prevailed between the two commanders. As Broglie was to take the command in Bavaria and Belleisle in Bohemia, a full explanation was necessary, and, in the course of this the most offensive expressions were often used. Dissatisfied with his colleague, and desirous to stir up Prussia and Saxony to greater activity, Belleisle quitted the army, and on the 2nd of June appeared in the Prussian camp.

* Belleisle : au Marquis de Breteuil : Protivin, 24 Mai 1742. "Il importe extrêmement à la reputation des armes du roi, de secourir Frauenberg, surtout après ce que vient de faire le roi de Prusse."

† Oestreichische Milit.-Zeitschrift 1828, III. 237.

He urged the King to advance with his right wing upon the Moldau, so that the French might have time to provide themselves with fresh troops and horses. The King evinced the greatest astonishment that they were only now thinking of putting themselves in a state of preparation. He reminded the Marshal that the Prussian army had been in active service for eighteen months, even during winter; that its exertions had been incessant, and relieved by only six weeks' rest; its losses by desertion or sickness, or the fire of the enemy, had been enormous, yet they had always been filled up; during the last few months he had secured the French from all attack, and obtained repose for them by his expedition; by his last battle he had just saved Prague and Bohemia for them: how disgraceful it was that they, who had hitherto done nothing, declared themselves still unprepared to take the field. In a word, he must confess that he no longer knew the French; history described them as always earlier in the field than their enemies, now they were become tardy and negligent.*

Belleisle was obliged to admit that these complaints were generally well founded. Indeed, he could hardly have undertaken Broglie's defence at the very time that, in his letters, he laid the blame of all the delays on him. What the King of Prussia

* A more detailed account by Belleisle, Kutenberg, 4th June (in the Archives at Paris). The end is characteristic of the King: "Les vivacités du roi de Pr. n'ont jamais porté que sur les choses. Car il s'est toujours exprimé dans les termes les plus convenables et les plus avantageux sur le roi et sur la France."

said to him was often a mere repetition of his own representations to Broglie.

But even Belleisle himself did not appear to feel the same admiration and sympathy as before. The Prussians were surprised that so scientific a general as the Marshal should no more than his attendant officers show any desire to visit the scene of their glory, the field of Chotusitz.

And hardly had he left them when they heard that the two Austrian armies had united without any impediment on the part of Broglie, and that he had been driven back from Frauenberg to Pisek, and from thence to Prague. His retreat had been accompanied with the greatest disorder.

This made the most unfavourable impression in the Prussian camp. The common soldiers thought that Broglie's retreat was a scheme to force the King to take up arms again, and to throw upon him the support of a cause which the French would no longer earnestly fight for; they believed that their thoughts were already turned towards peace, but they would rejoice in seeing the Germans fight among themselves.

And indeed to that it must come if the present state of uncertainty was much further prolonged.

If peace was not concluded without delay, only one of two results was possible. Either Frederick must allow Prague, against which the Austrians were about to march, to fall into their hands, by which his position would become untenable; or he must defend it with his own forces, and probably risk another battle to do so.

And even a successful battle with the bad constitu-

tion of the alliance, would not have brought affairs to a conclusion.

The moment was dangerous and the necessity for a decision urgent: such were the moments in which Frederick used to form his resolutions.

On the 9th of June he received the news of the disasters of the French and their consequent retreat; in the evening of the same day he sent off a courier with definitive orders to Podewils. He directed him without loss of time to exchange his credentials with those which Lord Hyndford had from the court of Vienna; to try during half a day what terms he could gain from him, and then to close with them without waiting to send further despatches or to receive further instructions. Lower Silesia and Glatz were to remain the basis of the whole; in other respects, he was to get as good conditions as possible;* in Bohemia if possible, if not, then in Upper Silesia. He was to settle the articles with Hyndford, put them into the form of a preliminary treaty, sign them without delay, and send them back by Captain Sydow, who was charged with this order; the whole might be done within twenty-four hours. The King had

* Cela posé pour base vous devez quant aux autres conditions tâcher de les avoir pour moi si bien qu'il sera possible, soit du côté de Bohême ou s'il n'y a rien à faire de ce côté, du côté de la haute Silésie. Mais après avoir tout fait pendant une demijournée, ma volonté expresse est, que sans m'en faire votre rapport, et sans même me demander ou attendre ma résolution la dessus, vous devez absolument régler les points dont vous pourres convenir avec Mr. Hyndford, les coucher par écrit et les signer incontinent avec Myl. Hyndford en forme des préliminaires de paix.

before admonished Podewils, generally as "a faithful servant of the state," to do all that lay in his power to promote peace. He now placed the whole affair in his hands, with full and entire confidence. "I sleep tranquilly," he concludes his letter, "for I know that Sydow will bring me back the preliminary articles signed."

Before he received this authorization Podewils had not only interchanged credentials, but had gone a step further. In order to make out what it was possible for him to obtain, he had, as he said, pursued Hyndford into his last intrenchments, and brought him to show the original of his instructions. He had convinced himself that in the direction of Bohemia there was absolutely nothing to be obtained, "not even," as he says in the despatch, "if the King of England at the head of his parliament were to urge it." On the other hand, Upper Silesia and Glatz, as well as Lower Silesia, were ceded.

Podewils had got thus far when he received the King's last letter, which had crossed on the road his report of what he had been doing.

He said that he trembled at the thought of the responsibility he was taking on himself; nothing but the King's express will had decided him to subject himself to so great a load.

It was, however, clear from the King's letter that he was satisfied with the terms which the other party was disposed to grant.

In short, the struggle had been protracted till the time for decision was come. The two nations had reached the point at which the power of attack and

of defence, the influence of France and of England, met together ; necessity decided for them.

On the 11th of June, at six o'clock in the morning, Podewils received his sovereign's letter ; on the same day he signed the treaty as presented to him by Hyndford.

The fifth article of it says, "In order to put an end to all disputes and claims, the Queen, for herself and her successors, cedes—with full sovereignty and independence of the crown of Bohemia—Lower and Upper Silesia, as far as Teschen, Troppau, and the country on the other side the Oppa and the high mountain-range, as well as the county of Glatz, to the King of Prussia, who, on his part, abandons all further claims upon the Queen, of what nature soever they may be."

On the 13th of June, at seven in the morning, Sydow arrived at the camp at Maleschau, near Kutenberg, with these tidings.

The King expressed himself in the highest degree satisfied, both with the punctual execution of his orders, and with the preliminaries themselves. Perhaps it might have been possible in course of time to obtain a still more advantageous peace ; but, on the other hand, he might perhaps have been forced to accept a far less satisfactory one. He told Podewils in his letter, that when he saw him he would convince him still more fully that, as a politician and for the good of the people he governed, he could not have acted otherwise. "It is," he says, "a great and fortunate event by which my house has come into possession of one of the most flourishing pro-

vinces of Germany, as the consummation of a glorious war. One must know when to stop; if we try to compel fortune, she escapes; to be always wanting more is the way to be never happy."

There was only one great scruple which the King could not conquer: he feared that the concluding a separate peace without regard to his allies might be imputed to him as a moral offence.

This touched an old question, often debated and continually revived—how far it is permitted to violate treaties?

The greatest king and the most retired philosopher of the seventeenth century, Louis XIV. and Spinoza, have each left us their opinions on this subject.

The philosopher starts from the principle that states permanently subsist in a state of nature with respect to one another, and does not hesitate to assert that a treaty has force only so long as the causes of it—fear of injury or hope of gain—exist; that no ruler is to be reproached with faithlessness for breaking an alliance he had formerly concluded, as soon as any of the causes which determined him to it should have ceased, since that condition is equal for both parties.* The only question is, whether such a state of nature can be assumed as existing in Europe, where all states rest on a common foundation, and belong to one great family.

Louis XIV. regards this question, of which he takes a far more delicate view, on occasion of the

* *Tractatus Politicus* by Spinoza, c. III. § 14: *Hæc conditio unicuique contrahentium æqualis fuit, ut scilicet quæ primum extra metum esse posset sui juris esset, etc.*

disputes then subsisting between France and Spain, as one of the nicest points that can come under the consideration of a prince. He is of opinion that the permanent and essential relation between these two kingdoms is one of jealousy and hostility; that no treaties can ever put an end to this, and can only maintain an external and ostensible peace; that each side constantly expected secret breaches of it from the other; that each strove against the other not so much in order to injure his rival as to strengthen himself, which, indeed, it is the natural duty of every one to do.*

In the case before us King Frederick labours particularly to shift off from himself the moral responsibility of the step which he was compelled to take; he denies the right of "dry-brained stoics" to judge of his conduct. "The morality of a private man," he says, "is inviolable; he must on every occasion sacrifice his private advantage to the good of society; but a prince must watch over the welfare of a great nation, and has far other duties. He, the King, has now two allies, of whom the one (France) does nothing that she ought to do, and the other (Saxony) does nothing at all. Accident, which determines the fortune of arms, and the double tongues of politicians, exposed his army to ruin, his people to destruction; he should lose all that he had acquired and exhaust his treasury. Was a prince to be blamed for avoiding certain shipwreck?† A private man," he adds

* Distinctions sur la foi des traités. *Mémoires Historiques*, 63.

† Letter to Jordan, 15th June, O. P. VIII. 193. Avant-propos to the *Histoire de mon temps*.

later, "who suffers from breach of contract, may appeal to the courts of justice for redress; but a prince has no remedy but to secure himself by anticipating those whose faithlessness would cause the ruin of his state." In a word, he claims to have his conduct judged exclusively from the political point of view, and protests against any conclusion by uninterested parties as to his morality; above all, he maintains that he could not have done otherwise. I think posterity, to which he appeals with the utmost confidence, will admit that he had the most urgent reasons for what he did.

In the first place, the efforts of the allies were manifestly insufficient to wrest Bohemia from the Queen: this project, which he had himself cherished awhile, he had been compelled to abandon; an attempt to carry it into execution would have exceeded his strength, and would have reduced him to the most painful state of dependence on the weakness of others.

Secondly, he had reason to fear that while he was fighting for the allies they would conclude a partial peace, leaving him exposed alone to the superior force of arms of the Queen. He had been told of an emissary of Fleury's, who had been seen at Vienna, and probably was there still. The court of Vienna threatened a reconciliation with France: the recollections of 1735 were revived.*

* Robinson, 31st May: "I believe, the Queen would throw herself upon the mercy of France . . . rather—than do upon any consideration the cession of Königsgrätz a. Pardubitz." Lord Stair at the Hague: "on sait de quelle manière le C^l a parlé du roi de Prusse l'hiver passé et durant ce printemps." Chambrier

Had confidence reigned among the allies, all might have turned out otherwise, but as things stood, and after their past experience, nothing was to be hoped, and everything to be feared, from the continuation of the war.

It must be added, that Frederick had never engaged to conquer Bohemia for the Emperor. He had a defensive treaty with France, but an offensive with no one. He cannot be blamed for withdrawing from an enterprise which he had never pledged himself to carry through.

But in spite of all these considerations and of others which we might add to those suggested by the King in his own defence, the judgment of the present time will be by no means favourable to Frederick's conduct.

We admit that an alliance cannot be regarded in the light of a friendship, conferring moral rights of a personal kind; but however we may adhere to the purely political view of it, we must wish that the obligations it imposes had been more accurately determined.

It would surely have been worth while, in the treaty with the French of 1741, to adhere to the neutrality with which they, as we have already mentioned, were inclined to be satisfied.

Would it not have been better to agree on a truce

confirms this from Paris. Chambrier remarks of the emissary Fargis, whom the King mentioned, that he was either still in Vienna or replaced by some one else. French influence always subsisted in Vienna, the English was only rather stronger.

at Kleinschnellendorf (as in fact it amounted to nothing more), and not to postpone everything until a peace which nobody had any earnest and sincere intention of concluding?

The striking thing in these conferences is, that the great questions concerning the general relations of the contracting parties were scarcely alluded to. A complete transformation of the world seemed impending; yet they concluded treaties without coming to any understanding as to the form which they intended to give it. Each cherished some secret plan of which he said nothing, but to which he attached his particular ambition.

In Frederick's negotiations it often appears as if he bound himself more strictly than he really meant to do. He trusted, as we have already remarked, to that ready wit which was sure to find a way for the future; but he found himself entangled in ties which turned out most perplexing to him.

It is far from our intention either to censure or to defend him: the whole policy of the age consisted in these far-reaching schemes, in which each party strove for the ultimate advantage.

It may be as well at once to say, that in tracing up events to their beginnings and exploring their causes, we are by no means disposed to attach unqualified value to the circumstances or the purposes of those times,—either their political or military constitution, or their commercial and economical arrangements; we admire their religious views as little as their political morality. The whole sphere of the tendencies and opinions within which everything then moved is

highly deserving of historical inquiry, as forming one of the most remarkable links in the chain of ages ; but it has long been broken and replaced by others. The mighty events of later times have, as it were, driven it back into the regions of the remote past : for even ideas pass away. Not so those minds which, though they live and move in them as their element, and diffuse them abroad, still possess an independent existence, and so do not pass away with them.

In Frederick we behold a character of the greatest grandeur and force, though not purged from all alloy of baser matter, yet genuine and massive ; an understanding capable of seeing persons and things as they really are, instinctively repudiating error, and embracing the whole horizon around it with the clearest glance ; a vigorous and soaring will, which however grasped only at the attainable, or if by chance it overstepped that line, took into account the possibility of failure, and provided for a retreat ; an energy which in its first stormy impulses and passionate desires for fame and conquest seemed to want measure and guidance, but in its contest with the mighty destinies of the world acquired the stability and rule necessary to the achievement of things not only brilliant but lasting. It may be questioned whether Frederick, in those earlier days, was capable of real moral self-control. But we see that even before events had developed themselves, he was fearful of being hurried away too far by the current of good fortune, and designedly stopped short ; that he rejected means which promised the most magnificent results, *e. g.*, to ferment internal dissensions in the

states of his enemies, or to use a secret which had been involuntarily revealed to him in a moment of undisguised confidence, as an instrument of his policy. He would not allow the passion of conquest to take possession of him, nor violate the laws of the civilized world, nor act in contradiction to his own moral sentiments. We may, indeed, ask whether it would have been possible to form beforehand fixed determinations as to things undetermined in themselves. In the political combats in which he was incessantly engaged, he bore the same arms as were used by others; those who heard him speak, might always know with whom he spoke, and to what end. His actions and demeanour were governed by a strong feeling of the actual situation of things at the moment, in which, opposed to the hostilities he had to encounter, all the advantages to be gained on the other side rose up before him, and seized vividly on his imagination. He really adopted the project of the French, to determine the question of succession in favour of the house of Wittelsbach, until the one-sided policy they followed forced upon him the necessity of opposing them; he wished to excite the resistance of Austria, but it was under the assumption that Austria would have sympathy for his situation. The secret, however, was divulged, and the progress of the Austrian arms became menacing to himself; he then pursued the idea of a new system of German states; he wished to maintain Bohemia for one of his allies, and to conquer Moravia for the other, till he saw that no dependence could ever be placed upon them. His sudden determination to enter into

an alliance and to venture an enterprise was accompanied by a lively consciousness of the slight reliance to be placed either on the men or the things concerned in it, and by an ever-watchful distrust, a point of honour, as it were, not to suffer himself to be duped; as soon as the views of the allies went too far, or their efforts did not go far enough, he had not the least scruple in abandoning them.

In the midst of the storms now let loose from various parts of the world, we must not too severely censure the steersman who guides his bark sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another, in order to escape the rocks or shoals that menace his course. He thought he discharged his duty if he did not suffer himself to be carried away by any of the conflicting currents, if he did not go over from one side to another, but held on his course steadily under his own colours.

Prussia, which under Frederick-William I. had allowed herself to be wronged and menaced on every side, which had given her services without ever seeing the promises made to her fulfilled, and at length had fallen into a system of isolation, around which the great European powers stood divided, had at length seized the moment to assert herself. She was thus drawn into the centre of the general movement, and, in the very conflict with the two states by which she had been neglected or ill-treated, she took up an invincible position between them, under the prudent and energetic leader who first gave an outward direction to her activity and force.

As soon as Frederick held the preliminaries in his

hands, he felt that for the present his work was accomplished. He dismissed from his mind all the manifold fluctuations of events, wishes, and opinions, and reverted to his original way of thinking. He declared to his officers that he never wished to ruin the Queen, only to compel her to give him satisfaction; as soon as this was done he would lay down his arms. He gave himself the pleasure of notifying the conclusion of the preliminaries to Prince Charles, his antagonist in the late battle, with his own hand.

The court of Vienna was deeply sensible to the great loss it sustained. Robinson often alludes to the violent pain which this great amputation (that is his expression) caused; he alone could estimate its violence, since none but he was present at the operation.* It was some consolation that as Saxony, if she would not expose herself to the greatest danger, was now compelled to accept the peace, Austria found herself in a position of manifest superiority to her other enemies; she conceived the hope and the design of indemnifying herself in some other quarter for what she now lost. This time there was no delay or hesitation; as the King had instantly ratified the preliminaries, so the ratification of the court of Vienna arrived at the Prussian camp on the 21st of June.

The impression which the intelligence produced in France was intensely bitter. Notwithstanding the

* Robinson, 31st May, does not declare all the difficulties with which he had to contend: "Lord Hyndford," says he, "may talk at ease of amputations at a distance, but though an assistant at a great operation does not suffer as much as the patient, yet he suffers with him, for him, and often from him."

Cardinal's jealousy of the glory of Prussia, he had regarded the battle of Chotusitz as a piece of that good fortune which had ever created a way for him out of the greatest perils. The news of the peace struck him like a thunderbolt. He saw that the Bourbon houses would not succeed in their designs, and would at last be forced to yield to the English, whose wings they had thought to clip. Chambrier, the French ambassador, affirms that Fleury's self-love was particularly wounded by finding that another had been more cunning than himself. Hitherto he had esteemed himself the keenest-witted man in Europe.

On the other hand, the same news excited infinite satisfaction in the maritime states. The Prussian treaty of peace was the event in which all the statesmen we have mentioned, Carteret, and Stair, Robinson and Hyndford, beheld the salvation of Europe, and which King George II. had made entirely his own cause; they hoped that in course of time events would lead still further. They were cordially prepared to guarantee the possession of Silesia to the King of Prussia without delay.

At the Hague the joy could not have been greater if some stroke of good fortune had befallen the republic itself. All those who thought themselves in any way entitled to do so, called on the Prussian ambassador to congratulate him; the people expressed their sympathy by public festivities. The names of the King of Prussia and the Queen of Hungary were mingled, in their shouts, while that of the French, who were feared and hated, was uttered with execrations.

I do not think that Frederick was pleased at this: he must have been conscious that these people expected things of him very different from what he was inclined to do.

How much better too would it have been for him had he been able to effect a general peace, or at least to strengthen the position of Charles Albert in Germany and Bavaria. New storms might otherwise be anticipated, which indeed even these demonstrations foretold. We shall see how, after some time, they burst, and how every act, condition, and desire of these nations were once more brought into mortal conflict.

We must here examine the state of things established by the peace, and especially the territorial relations.

Among the demands which were discussed at the conclusion of the peace one of the most revolting to the King was, that he should take upon himself the heavy load of debt charged upon Silesia. Frederick had thought that it depended on his will to undertake it or not; he thought that, to the Dutch especially, who had furnished subsidies to the Queen, he was under no obligation whatever. Indeed the English debt alone had been mentioned at the drawing up of the preliminaries.

The Queen, however, declared this to be an error which must be rectified before the conclusion of the peace; for that it would be gross injustice to compel the state which had just ceded a large territory, to pay the debts with which it was encumbered. The Prussian plenipotentiaries replied that it would be no

less unjust to be forced as it were, to buy with money a territory which had been conquered, and already ceded. At length it was agreed that the King should indeed take the debt upon himself, but should set off against it his old claims to the duties of the Maese.

There were also very important differences as to the boundary-line of the territory.

In ceding Upper Silesia, Austria had not only retained Teschen and Troppau, as well as the other Moravian districts surrounded by Silesia, but also some mountain districts comprehended within the general expression "lying between the high mountains and the Oppa." The Austrian plenipotentiaries gave a wider signification to this expression than had been affixed to it by Prussia; not only in relation to the mountainous region generally, but especially to Jägerndorf, to which they laid claim as lying on the other side the Oppa.

The question was a geographical one. The Prussian plenipotentiaries understood by the Oppa only the large stream formed by the junction of the black, the white, the middle, and the lesser Oppa, at Würbenthal; so that Jägerndorf, which, in coming from Silesia, lies on the Prussian side, fell to the share of their King: they designated the little river which rises at Hermannstadt, winds through a long valley, studded with villages, towards Jägerndorf, and falls into the Oppa below that city, by the name used by the country people—the Toppelwitzer, or Comeiser Water. The Austrians, on the other hand, maintained that this river also bore the name of Oppa,

and formed the true boundary, and that consequently Jägerndorf fell to their share.

With the geographical means then in use the affair might appear doubtful. Old Henelius, whose authority was adduced, did actually call both streams the Oppa; whereas the map made by Homann in 1736 carefully distinguishes between the two, and gives to the first only the name of Oppa. Afterwards the name of Lesser Oppa was used for the part from Comeis to Jägerndorf, yet, as the best informed topographers assert, wrongly; since that name belongs of right to another little stream.*

Frederick was bitterly mortified at losing a considerable town upon which he had reckoned, from the mere extension given to the name of a river. It was the very town which had given occasion to all the claims of the House of Brandenburg on Silesia. He maintained that if Austria intended to keep it, she ought to have expressly mentioned it, as well as Teschen and Troppau.

All negotiations were, however, in vain; and Prussia was forced to be content with the little canton of Katscher, which was offered as compensation.

The treaty of peace also contained an article relating to the internal affairs of Silesia, altogether to the advantage of the Queen, which we shall have occasion to mention further on; Austrian interests were everywhere predominant in the details of the treaty, however much it might be hostile to them on the whole.

If it be asked how it was that Frederick acquiesced

* *Ens Oppaland*, III. 22.

in this, although he cherished the persuasion that injustice was done him, especially in respect of the boundary, the reason will be found to be that he saw himself placed in a somewhat more disadvantageous situation by the progress of the Austrian arms against the French and Bavarians, which was no longer checked by his own.

“We must shorten sail,” said he, “as we have no longer the wind in our favour.”

He was, moreover, strongly urged to this course by the English. George II. reminded him that some compensation must be awarded to the Queen of Hungary for the great losses she had sustained. The English ministry commented on the negotiations which the French as well as the Saxon court had set on foot in Vienna, with wholly different views, and which would be facilitated by a longer postponement of the final conclusion.

Hereupon Frederick determined to accept the terms of the definitive treaty of peace, as they were now settled.

After the ratifications were interchanged, the contracting parties proceeded to a more accurate definition of the boundaries, as laid down in settlement.

The commissioners on either side interchanged their credentials in a barn near Rudoltowitz, on the Upper Wesel, at the confluence of the Biela. Here, on the boundary of the Lordship of Pless, in the direction of Teschen, beside a solitary oak, they placed the first Prussian boundary-stone. From the Wesel the line was drawn between the numerous ponds which there cover the surface of the country,

and along the landmarks of the villages towards the banks of the Oder, which were reached by the thirty-first boundary-stone. From thence they followed the smaller stream, the Petrowka, down to the Olse, the Olse to the Oder, and the broad and shallow course of the Upper Oder to the point where it receives the Oppa, which then served as the boundary, up to the brooks of doubtful name already mentioned near Jägerndorf; the natural features of the country, in which settlements had grown up just around the waters, were often cut through the very middle. The work was easier with regard to the large portion of Moravia surrounded by Silesia, the frontiers of which on that side it was only necessary to restore: on a steep hill in the neighbourhood of the Bischofskoppe, from the shadow of which the country people were accustomed to reckon the height of the sun, the 110th pillar was placed. The boundary on the side of Glatz was determined by the fact that Zukmantel, Weidenau, and Jauernik remained Austrian. The landed proprietors, judges, and peasants were called on to determine the more exact details; and in some cases the witnesses had to swear to their assertions before a crucifix placed between two burning tapers. Thus were the boundaries settled after twenty days of skilful and indefatigable labour; and the governments no longer delayed to confirm the Recess that had been drawn up.*

* Schlesischer Gränzt-Recess, wie solcher von Ihrer K. M. in Preussen und der Königin von Ungarn und Böhmei Majestät Allerhöchst hiezu ernannten Commissariis aō 1742 errichtet

It was a magnificent territory round which the line of the Prussian frontier was now carried.

A country of above 2000 square miles, with at least 1,200,000 inhabitants, inhabiting 150 small and some very considerable towns, and 5000 villages and hamlets; partly of Slavonic, but chiefly of German race, of most ancient civilization, and nearly allied to the nation to which they were now annexed, by kindred, origin, primitive institutions, manners, and religion. Of all the conquests which have been made and maintained in modern times, there is not one which exhibits such a similarity between the newly occupied country and that with which it was incorporated. In this case the latter gained a good third in extent, population, and military force.*

worden.—(Recess of the Silesian frontier, as drawn up, anno 1742, by the Commissioners thereunto appointed by your Majesty in Prussia, and the Queen of Hungary and Bohemia.) In it are to be found the protocols which were daily drawn up and signed by the Prussian plenipotentiaries, C. von Nüssler, M. von Schubart, J. G. Rehdanz, and the Austrian plenipotentiaries, J. M. von Dorsch, and G. L. Freiherrn von Skrbensky. Büsching has inserted in his Magazine, X., a description of the settlement of the frontiers, taken from Nüssler's papers, as well as some supplementary matter in his Life of Nüssler.

* Klöber's estimate of 675 square German miles, and Büsching's of 642, are only approximations. Büsching grounds his estimate upon old maps, reducing the Silesian to geographical square miles. (Magazine, X. 515.) Leonhardi (1791) has 640, Krug (1805) 683 square miles: Schubert for 1791, has 685, Dieterici for 1804, 714.—In 1755 it was reckoned there were 1,372,754 inhabitants. There exists an estimate, somewhat earlier than this, in a paper entitled 'Designation of the persons existing in Silesia, exclusive of the Garrisons.' According to this paper there were 1522 noble families, 188,428 families

Voltaire did not at this moment find the King in the most favourable mood for the reception of the eloquent tirade which he directed against princes who seek to secure the welfare of their people by the sword. Frederick answered, that so long as the Platonic republic had not become a reality, there would always be cases in which a king must take up arms in order to extort that satisfaction from his adversaries by force, which he could not obtain by any other means; a war was a less evil in itself than a pestilence, yet they had already completely recovered from the last fever.

But Frederick did not disguise from himself that the maintenance of his conquests would involve many difficulties. He reckoned upon it, however, that people would gradually accustom themselves to see him in possession of Silesia; he regarded the guarantee of England, and more especially of Russia, as necessary; but he adds, "as for the real security of those possessions, I shall found it on a numerous army, a well-filled treasury, and strong fortresses."

The groundwork of the whole was to be the new institutions of the country, which meanwhile were in full progress of construction.

subject to them; which was estimated to make a population of 949,750 souls. In addition to this, there were the people dwelling in villages and hamlets, 73,120; and in towns, 211,666; monks and nuns, 2364; Jews, 3530: altogether, in both departments, 1,240,540. According to a note added by the minister, on the 17th of March, 1751, to the report, the numbers of the villages and hamlets (4882), as well as of the families, were estimated too low. He does not say what was the number of the whole of the inhabitants.

CHAPTER VI.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRUSSIAN GOVERNMENT IN
SILESIA.

WHEN Frederick II. advanced into Silesia, he proclaimed his intention of upholding the government by Estates, which he found there established, but of which, indeed, he had only a general knowledge.

He declared to the chief magistrates (*Landesältesten*), who met him in December, 1740, at Herrendorf to confer with him touching the march of his troops, that he designed to support their authority.* When an idea spread among the country people, as he penetrated further into the province, that the method of raising the revenue which had hitherto prevailed was abolished by the advent of the Prussians, Frederick hastened to set them right on this point. In January, 1741, he approved, without reservation, of an edict of the *Conventus Publicus* concerning the constitutional nature of the Taxing or

* Protocol of 27th Dec., Haymann *gesammelte Nachrichten*, II. 61: "seine Intention gehe dahin, dass die Winterquartiere aus denen ordentlichen Landesprästandis derer Herzogthümer Ober- und Niederschlesien fournirt werden möchten."—(His intention was, that the winter-quarters should be supplied by the ordinary mode of contribution in the duchies of Upper and Lower Silesia.)

Revenue Board (Generalsteueramt) of Silesia, and promised to authorize its continuance, as well as that of all the officers employed in collecting the revenue. He said that he had not come to treat the province according to the usual practice in time of war: everything was to remain as it was, until something should hereafter be determined by the mutual consent of the prince and the Estates. He had at first desired the officers employed in collecting the revenue to take the oaths of allegiance to him; but he subsequently desisted from this demand, and allowed them still to render their accounts to the Conventus. He made but one stipulation; namely, that the income of the country should be applied to the maintenance and pay of his army; upon this his demands were most peremptory.

Founding his estimate upon an account which had fallen into his hands of the general income of the province in February, 1741, he named the sum of two millions and a half of thalers as the amount to be furnished yearly, so that every month the province had to contribute about 190,000 thalers for the wants of his army.* The Revenue

* Memorandum of how much has been produced in the years 1738 and 1739, by all the *praestanda Silesiae sub quocumque titulo*, be they imperial or general assessments, interest on debt, property tax, or imposts for recruiting or mounting the troops. This is signed by the head of the tax-office. The amount for the year 1738 was, 3,605,452, 20 r; for 1739, 3,725,862, 20 r, with this note: "was ein jedes Fürstenthumb und Standesherrschaft pro domestico particulari ausgeschrieben, item, was die Landeseinwohner von wegen des Salzpalto oder Zollgefallen ad camerale beitragen müssen, ist unter obiger Summe nicht be-

Board was to levy this sum upon the various counties, districts, townships, and parishes, and to take care that it was duly paid.

Had the Conventus been able or willing to enter into this scheme, the government by Estates, in a somewhat modified form, might very likely have lasted, for I cannot discover in Frederick any desire to interfere with the details of government, provided only he could manage to maintain the army which gave him his rank in the world. But all negotiations on this point were fruitless. The members of the Conventus raised every sort of objection; sometimes they represented that a part of the money was raised for the definite purpose of paying the interest of capital that had been borrowed; at others they insisted upon the difficulties arising from the separation of Upper from Lower Silesia, since the events of April; and sometimes they founded their objections upon the impediments arising from the general constitution of the province. The Prussian plenipotentiary replied that he felt the justice of

griffen."—(That which each principality or district is supposed to pay pro domestico particulari, item, that which the inhabitants of the country contribute on account of the salt and excise dues, to the Camerale, is not included in this sum.) Frederick now required by an order in council of the 11th of Feb. 3,808,179: i. e. 286,489½ guilders a month, or 2,538,786 thalers a year, or 190,999 thalers a month. Haymann *gesammelte Nachrichten*, III. 321. The documents therein given are extracted from the *Landesdiarium* or journals of 1742, which is to be found in the provincial archives of Breslau. Nevertheless the MS. to which my attention had been called by the keeper of the State Papers, M. Stenzel, goes much further into detail than the printed matter, and is of great value in this respect,

many of these representations; he would only ask how much the province of Silesia was bound to pay to its supreme duke.

Hereupon the *Conventus* declared that the province was not bound to give anything whatever to its supreme duke: all the supplies had hitherto been granted of their own free will, as they were able to prove by the most incontestable evidence.

The opposition between government by Estates and absolute monarchy now made itself felt in the most forcible manner. The monarch declared certain supplies to be absolutely indispensable; the Estates refused as absolutely to grant them.

After seven months of angry discussion, no sort of compromise was effected, and it was obvious that one party or the other must give way.

It was in favour of the monarchical power, which was then in the ascendant, that the prevailing system of government by provincial Estates was exceedingly defective, especially with regard to the system of taxation.

First of all, scarcely a fourth part of the very considerable revenue raised in the province ever reached the coffers of the state. The remaining three-fourths were swallowed up by charges for salaries, and other contingent expenses, which appeared on the expenditure side of the account.

Moreover, a flagrant inequality prevailed in the mode of levying the imposts. By an old act of the year 1527, the Estates fixed the amount of the contributions not with reference to the value of the land, but according to the income which at that moment

chanced to be enjoyed by its possessors, and this estimate of incomes served as their rule in the levying of all taxes. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, a composition was entered into for certain imposts of which the collection was difficult, and this composition again was collected according to the estimate of 1527. In particular districts, too, the weak were obviously overburthened; for instance, there was one case where the lords of a district had distributed the imposts in such a manner, that, instead of having to pay anything, they drew from them a considerable profit.

In course of time the Estates had grown accurately to represent the country. They did not legislate with a view to the wants of the government, but to their own; they contended with the other provinces to contribute as little as possible, and yet they were constantly swayed by personal considerations connected with the court. The taxes were so various, that it was difficult to know what each person had to contribute; whether they were conducive to the general welfare of the state was little considered.

Frederick now determined to alter this state of things and to introduce into Silesia the system of government which prevailed in the rest of his possessions.

As soon as he had in a measure secured his conquest, on the 29th of October, 1741, he declared, "by his own sovereign power and authority," that he would in future cause the taxes, excise dues, and other sources of revenue in Lower Silesia to be managed by colleges to be by himself appointed for this especial service; and that he hereby relieved the

officers charged by the Estates with this duty from their labours and responsibilities.

On the 7th of November, 1741, the oaths of allegiance were administered in the royal hall in the Rathhaus at Breslau.

The only unusual feature in this act of homage was that the inferior order of nobles from the districts which had not been incorporated, and from the independent lordships, were equally summoned, whereas in former times these districts had invariably been represented by princes and sovereign nobles alone. There were as many as four hundred deputies present. According to the official report, the deputies of the bishops and princes took the oath of allegiance kneeling, while the King sat upon the throne with his head covered; the deputies of the sovereign nobles, towns, and the rest took their oaths standing; and the King stood likewise and took off his hat.*

Here, as in Prussia, Frederick refused a donative of 100,000 florins which the Estates offered him.

We naturally ask whether, on this occasion, the question of government by Estates did not arise. The Estates had already written to the King on the subject on the 24th of October. In this memorial they laid before Frederick all the privileges and immunities which they had obtained in the course of centuries, and besought him to renew them.† The

* In Seifart, I.; Appendix, 41, p. 425. I do not venture to quote from Bielefeld's narrative.

† Ew. K. Mt. unterwinden sich unter einem freudenvollen Glückwunsche zu der höchstpreiswürdigsten Regierung die treu-

King replied, that he adhered to his promise of protecting them in the exercise of all their privileges and immunities ; but he added, in downright words, the same proviso which the Elector Frederick-William had once made at Magdeburg, namely, that it should be only "in so far as these privileges and immunities were advantageous to themselves and to the general good."*

At the same moment that an aristocratic form of

gehorsamsten niederschlesischen Fürsten und Stände, durch aus denselben Abgeordnete alle von Seculis her erworbenen und wohlhergebrachten Immunitäten, Freiheiten, Statuten, Rechte, Verfassung und Gerechtsame vor dero geheiligten Thron zu Füßen zu legen, und von Ew. Kgl. Majestät derselben Bestätigung hoffnungsvoll, jedoch nicht anders als durch eine neue allergnädigste Verleihung zu erbitten.—(With the most joyful congratulations to your most excellent government, the true and obedient Princes and Estates of Lower Silesia do venture through their delegates to lay at the feet of your Majesty's throne all the traditional immunities, liberties, statutes, rights, constitutions, and privileges which they have obtained and enjoyed for ages ; and to beg of your Majesty,—in full confidence,—to confirm the same, but only through a new and gracious grant.

* S. K. M. beharren bei dem bereits zum öftern declarirten allergnädigsten Vorsatz, dero treugehorsamste Fürsten und Stände ihrer Niederschlesischen Lande bei erwähnten ihren Immunitäten, Privilegien, Freiheiten und Gerechtigkeiten, in so weit selbige ihnen selbst und der allgemeinen Wohlfahrt auch wahren Interesse und Aufnahme zuträglich, und damit compatible zu sein befunden werden möchten, zu erhalten, auch dabei kräftig und königlich zu schützen und zu handhaben.—(His Majesty adheres to the intention he has already often declared, to maintain the immunities, privileges, liberties, and rights of his obedient Princes and Estates of Lower Silesia, in so far as is compatible with their own real interest and the general welfare of others. His Majesty will protect and govern them right manfully and royally.)

government by Estates was firmly established in Hungary, an attempt analogous in spirit, though not in form, was completely put down in Silesia. In the former, a constitutional power, governing by means of Estates, and determined to resist all encroachments from above and from below, consolidated itself, while in the latter this system was repressed by the ideas of the monarchical state, and of a government founded upon greater equality of rights and duties. Neither the one nor the other excited much attention at that time; the world was too exclusively occupied with the great territorial questions.

The day after the ceremony of homage the King sent for several of the most distinguished members of the Estates; among these were the Counts Schönau, Räder, Logau, the Bishop of S. Matthis, the Lords of Jeutha, Reibnitz, Fürst, Eicke: he then explained to them in private the changes which he intended to introduce in the principality of Silesia.

“First of all, the distinction which had hitherto subsisted between members of the two faiths was to be abolished; no Catholic was in future to forfeit any privilege merely on the score of his religion, nor was any Protestant to gain by it. He himself was ‘a thorough lover of tolerance;’ he wished to bring about a good understanding between the two parties, in lieu of the old hatreds and persecutions.”

“He proposed to institute two courts of justice; one in Breslau, and another in Glogau, over which natives of Silesia were to preside, as they might be presumed to possess greater knowledge of the laws

and customs of the province; but one Brandenburger was to be placed in each of these courts.”

“He could not appoint any Silesian to a financial office until such as wished to serve in that capacity had learnt their business in Prussia or Brandenburg; for he intended to make great changes in that branch of the public service. Within a year he meant to bring about a new classification of landed property and income, and to settle the contribution which was to be raised accordingly, so that each district should know the exact sum it had to pay each time. Moreover, he should require no extraordinary aids, not even when he happened to be engaged in a war. He intended to abolish the tax upon land, and to make up the deficiency by an excise upon food.”

During the course of the war manifold and well-founded complaints had been raised against the violence employed in recruiting for the army. The King said that he would appoint certain regiments, which should be authorized to make recruits. The colonel of each regiment should be bound to redress all grievances, and if he neglected this duty, applications were to be made directly to the King himself.

Frederick added that it would take some time to make all these important arrangements; but they might give him credit for intending to act solely for the good of Silesia; the results would be seen hereafter, though the beginning was difficult and slow.*

* *Diarium der Acten was zwischen dem conventu publico und dem Generalfeldkriegscommissariat im Januar 1741 abgehandelt*

In such decisive, simple, and comprehensive terms was a new future announced to the province of Silesia, and every preparation was now made for carrying these new projects into execution.

On the 19th of December, 1741, the former chief magistrates of the province and a number of deputies from the nobles met together to receive a more detailed explanation of the King's plans.

The proposition made to them proceeded upon three fundamental principles: that the public burthens were to be applied to the actual necessities of the province, and to nothing else; that they were to be equally borne by all alike; and, above all, that the amount was to be strictly determined.* Hitherto nothing of all this had ever obtained in Silesia; but according to the experience acquired in the rest of the King's dominions, nothing was better calculated to

worden. (Journal of the acts which were arranged between the *Conventus Publicus* and the *Commissariat* in Jan. 1741.) Such was the title, but in fact this was a continuation of the *Landesdiarien*, or old journals. In the manuscript there are several corrections: for example, "they" is substituted for "we," proving that the author of the journals was present at the audience.

* Proposition an die auf Königl. Allergnädigste Specialordre vom 15 Nov. 1741 beschiedenen und versammelten bisherigen niederschlesischen Herren Landesältesten und Deputirten zu Regulirung und Ausmachung des Hauptcontributionalis vom platten Lande pro anno 1742 zu Protocoll gegeben.—(Proposal made to the Elders and Deputies of Lower Silesia, who are summoned by his Majesty's gracious special order of the 15th of Nov., 1741, for regulating and fixing the contribution to be raised from the low lands pro anno 1742, and which was adopted in a protocol.) This is contained in a collection of acts in the archives of the government: *Ordre von Einrichtung des Kreis- und Contributionswesens*, I.

accomplish these objects than a fair excise duty in the walled towns, and a well-arranged system of taxation for the country. To administer the funds thus raised, finance departments were to be established in the provinces, served by able officers owing allegiance to the King. The excise, which in Silesia extended over the open country, occasioned infinite vexation, smuggling, and false swearing. It was therefore to cease from and after the 1st of January in the country, and in the towns it was to be so modified as to contribute to their increase and prosperity. The collection of the contribution in the country, in which the old rating must be followed just at first, although the tax itself was totally different, would demand very great exertions. The King would have had no hesitation in intrusting the management and collection of this new contribution to the chief magistrates of the province, but he knew that they were unpaid, and for the most part advanced in years; not one of them would have been willing to neglect his own affairs. He therefore preferred allowing them to retire from the public service, and replaced them in the different circles by paid officers of his own. But he showed so much confidence in the estates of Lower Silesia, that he determined to exclude all foreigners from these offices and to appoint none but native noblemen settled in the respective circles. Those whom he selected for these offices—nineteen for the circles of Breslau, and sixteen for those of Glogau—were present at the meeting, and, with a single exception, declared themselves ready to enter the service of

the King. The conviction was expressed in his name that the same measures from which the old provinces of Prussia had derived so much benefit would likewise contribute to the welfare of the newly acquired territories; that those who had to pay the contribution would be satisfied with the regular and equal distribution of their burthens. Moreover, that it was only by these means that the Prince was enabled to protect his territory from want and misery, and more especially against hostile aggression.

In a short time the two offices, the one for war and the other for the management of the royal domains (Kriegs- und Domänenkammern) were formed, under the presidency of the two former heads of the war and commissariat departments (Feldkriegscommissariat) of Reinhard in Breslau, and of Münchow in Glogau. These two men made all the appointments, and they reminded the King that the condition of Silesia rendered it doubly necessary to pay the civil officers well. The King expressed a hope that these chambers would set a good example of order and regularity, and of strict performance of duty, and that they would moreover observe a discreet silence.*

The same system which had been formed in the old provinces, partly by the action of various conflicting forces, and which had since proved itself useful, was now introduced into the new province, which, on the whole, presented the same national

* Letter from the King, dated 27th Nov., to the head of the commissariat, in a collection of documents in the archives of the government: *Acta generalia von Errichtung der schlesischen Kriegs- und Domänenkammern.*

features. But in the latter the government felt that they were also beginning over again, and wished at the same time to improve the system still further. The province was not placed under the control of the central ministry; and as early as the month of March, 1742, Münchow was made president of the offices of Breslau as well as of Glogau; he was thus placed at the head of the whole administration of Silesia, and was named Minister of State. None other, save the King and the minister, had any power to interfere with this new organization.

Ludwig Wilhelm von Münchow was the son of that President of the Chamber at Cüstrin to whom Frederick owed many indulgences during his sojourn in the fortress, and whom he even called his benefactor. It gave Frederick great pleasure to be able to promote the son of his old friend; and he too proved himself well worthy of the King's favour. He held the same principles of national economy as those which the King had formed for himself in the severe school of Cüstrin, understood all Frederick's views, and entered into them with the utmost devotion. He possessed two alike indispensable qualifications for practical government—prudence and energy.

The first thing to be done was to fix the sum to be contributed by Lower Silesia only. An average was struck of the sum which the province had hitherto produced; the rents that were expected to arise from the royal domains were then deducted; and the remainder, which had hitherto been produced by the contributions and by the excise, was now divided between the towns and the country, in such wise that

the former were only burthened with an excise, the latter with the contribution.* The King found that this sum would suffice to defray his military expenses, if applied solely to this service. After the first trial—for at the beginning some doubt had existed on the subject—Münchow declared that the thing would do;† although, as the former accounts and discharges could no longer serve as precedents, everything was strange and new, and therefore much more difficult to manage.

The main point was to distribute more equally the contribution which constituted the principal burthen. The great boon promised to the Silesians had been the abolition of the inequality of public burthens, which had been a subject of complaint ever since they had paid taxes at all: many persons had left the

* The average amounted to 1,856,219 thalers; the domains produced 397,612 thalers, the land-tax 1,181,044 thalers, the excise made up the rest. The amount of the taxes in Glogau was 650,000 thalers, of which 515,812 was the sum contributed by the country, 134,108 by the towns.

† Münchow to the King, 15th Jan., 1742: "Ich würde gewiss mich nicht unterstehen, dieses so positiv zu avanciren, wenn ich nicht vollkommene Gewissheit davon hätte."—(I would assuredly not have ventured to advance this in so positive manner, had I not been perfectly certain of my fact.) He only held it to be necessary "dass weder Arbeiterfuhren zu denen Fortifications noch sonst etwas vom Lande ohne E. K. M. Specialordre und Anweisung zur Vergütung auf die Obersteuercasse genommen, und dadurch also alle Abrechnungen vermieden werden."—(that no payment for labourers or for conveyances employed on the fortifications, nor for anything else, should be made without your royal Majesty's special order and direction, out of the taxes, and thus all deductions would be avoided.) The King wrote a large "Guht"—(good) against this.

country in consequence. This reform was now begun under Münchow's direction.

The objections to introducing any alteration of the cadaster are obvious enough: its imperfections are either consecrated by the changes which private property has undergone, or are qualified by other causes. But in Silesia the first valuation had been altogether arbitrary; subsequently custom and the predominant influence of the powerful nobles had increased these inequalities, until they had become one of the greatest and best-founded grievances of the people. Nothing could be more fortunate for the new ruler than the opportunity of accomplishing a work which was so universally looked upon as necessary.

The Austrian government had already devoted much zeal and labour to this affair. In the year 1723 the nobles and their subjects had been forced to give in statements of the extent and value of their lands. An account had been drawn up in the year 1725, founded on these data, but it had not been thought sufficiently correct. Since the year 1736 a commission had been employed in rectifying the errors, and in valuing the several profits and revenues. But after all these preparations the court of Vienna had not had the courage to carry out so searching a system of reform, which would necessarily offend many of the most powerful families.

The Prussian government, on the other hand, saw in this scheme not only a duty, but likewise a means of completely securing their new possessions.

The first trial was made in February, 1742, in the circle of Schwiebus. The result was, according to

Münchow's statement, that by this new arrangement a larger sum was raised, while all were satisfied by the more equal distribution. A second attempt, made purposely in a totally different district, the circle of Frankenstein, was equally successful; and it was now resolved to carry out the scheme systematically.

A chief commission was established, which was to sit in Breslau, under the guidance of Münchow.* The most active member of this commission was Charles Godfrey von Thile, whose books, written in an unattractive style, nevertheless show that he possessed a thorough knowledge of his subject, and the rare talent of deducing a theory from practice. Von Thile was now ambitious of attaining a position commensurate with his own estimate of his merits. The commission, with the assistance of the two offices, determined the leading principles upon which the business was to be conducted. After this the classifying commissions—of which several were at work simultaneously in the different official circles—immediately proceeded to business. The tables prepared under the former government served as a basis for this undertaking, which they greatly facilitated. In these tables the different soils were classified according to the amount of their produce; the first class was reckoned to produce sixfold, the second fivefold, the third fourfold, the fourth threefold. Care had been taken to strike an average of the produce

* Instruction for the head commission of Classification, to v. Ziegler and v. Thile, privy-councillors of war (the latter was made privy-councillor on this occasion). Berlin, 1st July, 1742.

in each parish and lordship.* In the same manner the sums raised from forests, fishponds, rents and services were likewise divided into four distinct classes. The commission resolved to abide by these calculations, provided the tax-payers raised no valid objections against them. This, however, not unfrequently happened, and there is a case on record in which above 400 witnesses had to be heard; nevertheless, the commission as much as possible avoided making merely local revisions, the original calculations generally proved good and sound, and the work proceeded with great rapidity. By the middle of December, 1742, the commission had reported upon 650 villages; by the end of February, 1743, upon upwards of 2000; making in all 22 circles; and had made considerable progress in 11 more circles. By the end of May Münchow had the satisfaction of being able to announce to the King

* Fractions of $\frac{1}{4}$, or under that, were omitted; fractions above $\frac{1}{4}$ were included. E. g. 12 quarters of corn from land of the first class, yielding sixfold; 12 from land of the second class, yielding fivefold; 6 from land of the third class, yielding fourfold; and 6 from land of the fourth class, yielding threefold; give 36 quarters for seed, and 174 quarters of produce. The fractions would amount to $4\frac{3}{4}$, but they were reckoned at $4\frac{1}{4}$. This seed corn was then reduced into money. It was calculated that of every bushel of corn from land of the fourth class, yielding threefold, one bushel could be sold, one kept for seed, and one retained for use: out of every bushel of corn from land of the third class, yielding fourfold, they reckoned upon $1\frac{1}{4}$; from land of the second class, upon 2; and from land of the first class, upon $2\frac{1}{4}$ bushels. The tax was only calculated upon the net profit: the bushel of seed corn of the fourth-class land was reckoned at one thaler, that of the first class at $2\frac{1}{4}$. Compare the *Acta generalia von Regulirung des Contributionswesens*.

that the whole work was happily brought to a conclusion throughout Lower Silesia. Once set going, this activity extended to Upper Silesia and Glatz, both of which districts had been conquered in the mean time. By the month of August they had reported upon 600 villages; by October the classification of Upper Silesia was completed; and by the 1st of November the report on the county of Glatz was finished and given in to the government.

Various objections were raised against the proceedings during the whole course of the inquiry. Many thought the valuation of the land too high; but the best refutation of this assertion was, that the estates, when put up to sale, were valued much higher. Others, again, desired more local revisions; the answer to these was, that as much fault would have been found with the new estimates as with the old. Complaints were made in the principality of Sagan that too little account had been taken of the poverty of the soil; even one of the commissioners employed in the inquiry was of this way of thinking: but he was told by the chief commission that he judged more from hearsay than from his own knowledge, and they maintained that the duchy had been treated on exactly the same principles as all the other Silesian principalities, and that sufficient allowance had been made for the poverty of its soil.*

* Thile, in a Memoir of 14th April: "Weil in Niederschlesien die Pretia Rerum nach Situation der Kreise differiren, so ist hierauf reflectirt, und der Getreidepreis als das bei dieser Sache gehörige Hauptstück, nach Beschaffenheit der Anwohner und des Debits in diesem und jenem Kreise, höher oder geringer

Moreover, that it was, above all, this very fairness in the method of assessment that had been so earnestly and so long desired: the cadaster was complete and the classification equitable; and now for the first time the inequalities which had hitherto prevailed in the distribution of the public burthens could be effaced.*

The next step was the assessment of these burthens upon individuals according to the valuation thus made.

The Silesian constitution differed from that of other states, inasmuch as the nobility and the clergy had long borne their share of the public burthens.

A portion of the Silesian nobility hoped that the change in the government would relieve them from this duty. The nobles of Jauer, Glogau, Sagan, Liegnitz, and Wohlau, addressed a memorial to the King, in April, 1742, praying him—as it had been

zu Anschläge gebracht worden.”—(As in Lower Silesia the *Pretia Rerum* differ according to the situation of the circles, we have considered the matter: and the price of corn—the main consideration in this matter—has been estimated higher or lower, according to the capabilities of the neighbouring inhabitants and the market in this or that circle.)

* Ziegler and Thile, 1st Feb., 1743: “Es wird daher durch genaue Befolgung der Befunde und Rectificationstabellen das Classificationswerk auf ein solches gründliches Fundament gelegt, welches just mit dem Endzweck übereinstimmt; nämlich es wird die bisherige Indiction durch Eruirung des wahren Ertrages aller Dominien und Rustical-Stücke notificiret.”—(By accurately following the tables for the rectification of former errors, the work of classification was placed upon a sound basis, exactly suited to the end in view; namely, the existing estimate is rectified by computing the real product of all the domains and lands.)

their good fortune to be placed under his glorious rule, and as none of his vassals could exceed them in the faith and zeal of their loyalty—to put them on an equality in the matter of taxation with his other vassals, and to relieve them from a contribution from which they had been exempted in days of old. Such, however, was by no means the intention of the King or of his Silesian minister. The latter remarked, that if the nobles were relieved from the payment of taxes, either a large portion of the income of the country would fail, or the burthen must be laid upon the shoulders of the peasantry, to their manifest injury. The King laid down as a general principle, which he embodied in an edict (framed by Münchow, and dated the 28th of February, 1743), that in a state in which all enjoy equal protection, all should contribute to burthens applied to that object, each one according to his means. He (the King) subjected his own possessions to the payment of this contribution, and had had them measured by the cadaster.

The clergy, however, opposed a far more vigorous resistance to these measures than the nobility. When the commission requested the archpriests to give the information necessary to enable it to form an estimate of their revenues and offerings, the latter replied, that it was an infringement of the privileges of the clergy to call upon them to pay the contribution. The King of Prussia, however, had no idea of a state existing under the conditions formerly imposed by an all-powerful hierarchy. He declared that the clergy had always been subject to the payment of excise dues, and had invariably paid the tax to meet the expenses

of the Turkish war, besides bearing their share in several other burthens: it was impossible that they should be exempted from the payment of a tax to which all other classes were subject, nor could he, as chief bishop and sovereign lord of the land, allow any one to dictate to him in these matters. It angered him that a few monks, most likely hostile to him from the bottom of their hearts, should possess the richest lands, and that they should not largely contribute to the burthens of the state, in return for the protection it afforded them.

One of the most general movements of the eighteenth century, and one of those most important, was that which abolished the exemptions of ecclesiastical property, especially in Catholic countries, and placed it on the same footing as that of the laity. Frederick was possessed with this idea, and in his first scheme of taxation he went much too far. In fixing the amount of the tax to be paid on the average produce of the land, he at first determined that the laity should pay 28½ per cent., while the ecclesiastical bodies were to pay 65 per cent.

It soon appeared that this project could not be carried into execution. The archbishop, Cardinal Sinsendorf, who had been assessed at a much lower rate, spite of this abatement had to contribute to the state 21,000 thalers out of 80,000 thalers of revenue. He wrote to the King, that the commissioners had only taken into account his income, and not his inevitable expenditure: the consistory and the management of his domains alone cost him 44,000 thalers, while the revenues he drew from the Prussian territory amounted

only to 60,000 thalers. His letter is written in the tone of the best society, and, though very respectfully worded, with a degree of freedom which might have offended any one but Frederick; it was moreover very convincing. Münchow confirmed the cardinal's assertion that he would not be able to support his position under such surcharges,* and a further remission of 12,000 thalers was made. The sum he was now called upon to contribute was not much greater than that which he had formerly paid.

In the same manner it would have been impossible to lay so heavy a contribution upon the country benefices without ruinous consequences, and accordingly it was reduced to 28½ per cent., the same as upon the property of the laity. The Protestant cures had to contribute as much as the Catholic ones; but being placed on an equality with these was a great gain to the Protestants, who had formerly been forced to contribute ten times as much as the Catholics to particular taxes, *e.g.* to that imposed for keeping up the fortifications.

The King persisted somewhat longer in his purpose as far as chapters and convents were concerned. When the Jesuits at Wartemberg complained of the unfair-

* Münchow remarks on 26th Oct., that the chapter of Breslau had sent to Vienna above 28,000 thalers, of which fact he frequently reminded them. But he confesses that all their clergy were in bad circumstances, that they managed ill and were in debt, "und ich alle Mühe von der Welt habe, mit Erinnern, Bitten, Drohen und überhäuftten Klagen die monatliche Contribution richtig zu erhalten."—(And I have all the trouble in the world to obtain the monthly contribution, by dint of reminders, prayers, threats, and constant complaints.)

ness of the tax imposed on them, he observed to them, that great exertions were necessary to avert the disturbances which would entail ruin upon the country, and to pay off the load of debt which weighed upon it. He reminded the chapter of the cathedral of Breslau, that during the preceding year they had sent very considerable sums to the Queen; they might now do something for him. It is evident that he looked upon this heavy contribution as a war-tax, but for this very reason it could not become permanent: in Upper Silesia it would have been utterly impossible. The King, who did not think it advisable to make any distinction between the two provinces, as had been proposed, fixed the impost to be levied on the ecclesiastical corporations at 45 per cent., and on the commanderies at 40 per cent., in both provinces.

These first valuations must be considered as mere experiments, the feasibility of which time only could prove. The tax upon food imposed upon the working classes proved much too high, and had to be diminished by one-half. These abatements were altogether so considerable, and caused such a diminution in the income, that it became impossible to adhere to the original estimate of the other revenues.

To cover this deficiency it was suggested that a tax of 35 per cent. should be imposed upon all lay proprietors, noble as well as peasant. By this means, however, the Silesian nobles would have been placed in a very disadvantageous position with respect to the nobility of the other provinces, and scarcely tenable in itself: and the King would not hear of it; and although there was no class that he would more gladly have

relieved than the peasantry, he was, nevertheless, forced into the determination of laying upon them 40 per cent. according to the new estimate. An additional motive to this measure was, that the distinction between Silesia and the other provinces would otherwise have been too marked. It was calculated that with a tax of 28½ per cent. the peasantry of Silesia would have had only half as much to pay as the same class in the Marches of Brandenburg and in Pomerania. Even with this increase of taxation the Silesians were still more lightly burthened than the peasantry in the aforementioned districts.

The towns contributed their quota by means of the excise, in consideration of which all direct taxes were remitted. The principle that in this manner each one contributed to the general burthens as much as he found necessary and convenient for his trade and domestic economy, was applied in this instance. The change was hailed with joy, more especially as some hopes were held out of a reduction of the excise duties in behalf of trade.

The contribution was to be assessed in the following proportions. The sum to be raised for the support of the army was about two millions and a half: of this sum the peasantry were to contribute two-fifths, the towns nearly one-fifth, the nobles about one-third more than the latter; the remaining fifth was to be levied on church property and on the lower classes. The uniformity of administration throughout the Prussian dominion was on the whole preserved; the nobles retained some of their privileges, though greatly reduced; the peasantry were not only better off than

they had been before, but even than in the other provinces of Prussia.

The introduction of every new order of things is attended by some inconvenience and hardship, and in this instance it was especially the case, owing to the immense difference between the character of the new system and that which formerly prevailed : moreover, fears were entertained lest the King should increase his demands. He, therefore, felt the necessity of doing something to allay this uneasiness. In a special edict he explained, that the revenue would be applied solely to the advantage of the country, more especially to keeping up the army, whose consumption would in turn promote agriculture and manufactures. He added the promise,—which was, however, better suited to the prevailing opinions of the objective value of money than to the true nature of this medium of exchange,—that henceforth and for ever no higher rate of taxation should be imposed on the country : his object was merely to put an end to all anxiety on this point. He pledged himself never to impose any extraordinary tax, to pay for all special services, and to give compensation in cases of accident or misfortune. As this additional expense could not be defrayed out of the taxes, he appropriated certain revenues arising from his own domains to this object.*

* This account always remained much in the same condition : in 1744, it was 3,277,437 11 13 ; 1747, 3,318,316 20 4 ; 1751, 3,406,375 19 3 ; 1754, 3,529,465 17 3 ; 1758, 3,533,818 9 1 ; 1761, 3,533,716 9 1 ; 1767, 3,573,680 16 9 ; 1771, 3,578,680 16 9 ; so that the increase in these five-and-twenty years was not much over 300,000 thalers.

In the year 1744 the revenues of Silesia were fixed at 3,265,000 thalers; about 100,000 thalers less than had originally been intended. This was a sum which, in due proportion to the extent of the country and the number of its inhabitants, increased the revenue as well as the size of the state by about one-third.*

But, on the other hand, Silesia had debts in the shape of mortgages on the province, which formed a peculiar burthen: this now fell upon the royal treasury.

Against the debt to Holland, Frederick, according to the letter of the definitive treaty of peace, set off certain counter claims to the tolls on the Meuse. He took immediate steps for paying off the debt due to England. The transport of the money was managed in a very singular manner. Münchow packed the current coin of the several districts, as it came into the exchequer, in well-seasoned barrels, which he addressed to a man high in office, and intrusted to a certain carrier, recommended to him as honest by Splitgerber and Daum. The object was to avoid exciting attention, and at the same time to profit by the favourable exchange upon silver at that time.

Not above 16,000 or 17,000 thalers a-year were paid into the King's own hands, in monthly instalments: these sums were forwarded by the post, and

* The edict was drawn up by Münchow; the King struck out only some parts: e. g. that neither military nor civil servants should demand anything, which seemed to him useless; and that the officium fisci should watch over the fees of the colleges of justice, which would give cause to think that it was intended to subject them to the jurisdiction of the offices.

the receipts are to be found among the records. No president of a republic could have contented himself with a more modest private income.

Unfortunately most of Münchow's monthly reports, which would have given the best information as to the gradual progress of the administration, are lost. Of those which are extant I will quote from one only, dated the 16th of November, 1743, and showing how matters then stood. In this report Münchow announces that the taxes for the month of October had been paid better than hitherto: only the religious corporations and the circles of Upper Silesia were still much in arrear. The rents from the domains had all been paid, and the same might be hoped for the ensuing year, as the crops looked excellently well;—the Brandenburg regulations with regard to fires had likewise produced good effects in this province; and the emigration of some Silesian peasants had been made up for by the immigration of workmen from Lusatia, and especially of some French and Swiss families, from which great hopes were entertained. The excise from the towns already produced an increased revenue, at the same time that trade was improving, seeing that linen was exported to Hamburg and to Italy, and cloth to Switzerland and to Poland, in large quantities. It was hoped that a great impulse would be given to the trade of Breslau by two fairs which had been established after due consultation with the merchants. Waste lands were being brought into cultivation, manufacturers were induced to settle in the country, and all the principles of the Prussian state were applied. One of the most important consider-

ations was the military organization of the province. Frederick himself devoted incessant attention to the fortifications of Neisse, Cosel, and Glatz. Münchow reported that the system of cantonments was answering well; the country people, even in Upper Silesia, already lent their assistance to the regiments in the capture of deserters. The new barracks and magazines at Breslau, Brieg, and Schweidnitz would shortly be roofed in, and he thought of making a journey into Upper Silesia, in order to form a militia, in accordance with the King's wishes. Care was taken to prevent the soldiers from committing those excesses by which the goodwill which the inhabitants formerly bore them had been much lessened.

In old times conquest involved the subjection of the conquered; in modern times it means union and amalgamation. This was especially the case with regard to Silesia, where an hereditary claim was the motive and pretext of the invasion. Silesia was destined to unite with the other provinces into a uniform whole.

There was, however, one difficulty which had been felt, though in a less degree in other provinces, but upon which, in Silesia, everything turned—namely, the difference of religion.

We have seen that, of all the evils of the Austrian government, the greatest was the favour shown to the Catholic and the oppression of the Protestant population: the discontent and anxiety prevalent among the latter materially contributed to the victories of the King of Prussia. After the conquest of Silesia, the question might well have arisen, whether the Protest-

ant church should not be made dominant in the province.

But, to mention the most simple reason first, the authority gained by Prussia was not sufficient to enforce such a measure. The whole Catholic world would have risen against it, not to mention the dangers which would have arisen within the province itself.* But besides this, all Frederick's sentiments and opinions were directly adverse to such a step.

In the preliminary agreement Frederick had promised to guarantee the *statu quo* of the Catholic church, no less than that of the rights and privileges and property of the inhabitants, reserving, however, to himself alone the rights of sovereignty. At the definitive treaty of peace the Queen wished to have these rights more accurately described, and proposed a clause which would have limited them both in temporal and ecclesiastical affairs.

As regarded the first, the King peremptorily refused to submit to this limitation; not because he intended to be exacting towards his subjects, but because he desired to give them no pretext for resistance. Had he agreed to this, he would not have been enabled to effect the change in the administration of the province which he was then occupied in bringing about, and an inseparable connection would have continued to subsist between the court of Vienna and Silesia. With reference, however, to the question of religion, Fre-

* Ludewig: *Catholica religio in tuto*, &c., calls attention to this with great emphasis and talent, especially § 6: "nulla catholicorum gravamina contra Borussiae regem." Quoted by Haymann, I. 861.

derick gave way without difficulty, and consented to the limitation of his sovereign power, contained in that clause.*

It was by no means the wish of the Austrian court to oppose every little change in subordinate matters of church discipline: it only wished generally to prevent the Catholic church from being oppressed under the pretext of the sovereign rights of the King of Prussia, who might possibly have exercised a right of reformation against the Catholics, which would have endangered the whole outward existence of the church.

But Frederick understood the clause according to the very letter, and adhered strictly to its terms, although the Protestant population was hardly used in the matter. Of all the hundreds of churches which had been taken from them, they did not get back one, not even where their form of worship still predominated.

Frederick was most anxious not to renew the strife between two religious parties, which had so frequently quarrelled about the *meum* and *tuum*. He had to do away with the impression that a strong Protestant reaction would immediately proceed from Prussia.

He thought it quite enough, as had been stated in the treaty, to secure to the Protestants liberty of con-

* Podewils came to this conclusion from the negotiations: "Le passage est désiré par la cour de Vienne dans la crainte ou elle est, que par les mots du droit du souverain V. M. ne se croie avec le tems autorisé d'anéantir et d'éluder tout ce, qu'elle a promis cy dessus en faveur de la religion catholique et des habitans de la Silésie." Hyndford says, "qu'on a nullement envie a Vienne de prescrire a V. M. de quelle façon elle doit gouverner ses nouveaux sujets."

science in the fullest extent. They no longer depended upon the Catholic consistories; they were freed from all the restrictions which had fettered their religious services. In a short time several conversions to the Protestant faith occurred, although the government took care not to encourage them. As soon as it was apparent that the old churches and the property belonging to them would not be given back, every parish which had the means set about building for itself a stone temple, and paying a preacher. In a short time two hundred new houses of prayer were erected, which did not receive the name of churches until much later.

The difference between the old and the new state of things is shown, among other instances, in a speech with which Cocceji opened the oberamptsregiering, or court of justice, in Breslau, on the 1st of February, 1742. He argued that the objects of that institution were not limited solely to the administration of justice, which was merely the outward bond which held human society together by the fear of temporal punishment; but that they likewise comprised the maintenance of the inward bond of religion, inasmuch as each individual was to be dealt with according to the principles of his faith, whereby the spirits of all men subject to the Prussian rule would be brought into greater harmony and union.

Even in the administration of justice an odious distinction had hitherto been made between the two religious parties: henceforth this distinction was to cease. The authorities of the crown were especially charged to protect the Catholics in the exercise of their religion.

It is very evident that this did not by any means solve all the difficulties of the situation. The opposition between Church and State which lies in the very nature of things, necessarily arose, and gained additional strength from the fact that the King belonged to the Protestant confession, to which the Catholic church shrank from conceding rights and privileges which it grants only to its own members. It is very interesting to observe how Frederick viewed and treated these difficulties. We shall crave permission to treat of this subject when we attempt to give an idea of the Prussian state, as a whole, in the form it now assumed: where it is impossible to reconcile opposing principles, it is of some advantage at least to avoid all conflict between those who respectively hold them. Whoever examined the administration of the province was forced to confess that the toleration of all religious parties was perfectly genuine. The Prussian state, in its military and financial organization, of which the province of Silesia was now an integral part, had not the strictly ecclesiastical character of the states of earlier times. One of its chief characteristics was the principle of religious toleration, a principle which the King's education and turn of mind had led him to adopt as his own. In order to estimate the importance of this question, we need only consider what would have happened had Frederick actually given the Protestants predominance in Silesia, or had he attempted to bring about an anti-Catholic reformation. The bitter animosities that he would have roused, would have been a fresh

element of disturbance in the world. But that which no one had hoped to see, now actually took place,—the Catholics praised God in their churches, as much as the Protestants did in theirs, for the peace which had been concluded.

END OF VOL. II.