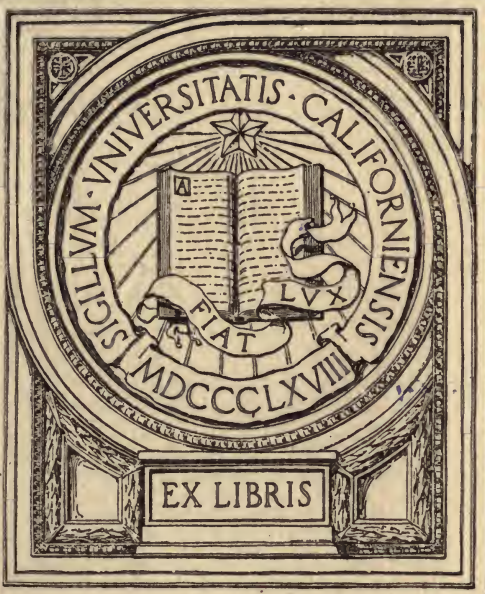
MILITARY BIOGRAPHIES

FREDERICK THE GREAT

COL. C. B. BRACKENBURY R.A.



FREDERICK THE GREAT.

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FREDERICK THE GREAT.

BY

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LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL,
LIMITED.

1884.

LONDON:
R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS,
BREAD STREET HILL.

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FREDERICK THE GREAT.

CHAPTER I.

FREDERICK'S ANCESTRY.

A.D. 928—1686.

928.

THE story of a warrior king like Frederick the Great cannot be rightly understood without taking into consideration the times in which he lived and the events which, during a series of ages, combined to place him in the position which he occupied at the beginning of his reign. And the rise of the Hohenzollern family is peculiarly interesting. Springing from obscurity more than four centuries and a half ago, it has had vitality enough to retain its existence among storms which have overthrown many a royal house, and, fixing its roots deeper and firmer in the soil of central Europe, to gain at last the highest possible European distinction—the Imperial Crown of Germany. Judged by the theoretical morality of the nineteenth century, the diplomatic subtleties and the wars of the Hohenzollerns, especially the seizure of Silesia by Frederick the Great, may appear wanting in honesty and humanity; but if we take into

923.

account the conditions under which society existed before nations asserted the right to have the chief voice in their own government, it will appear that no family more than another had the monopoly of virtue or vice, and that if in the stream of history the Hohenzollerns have gradually destroyed their early companions on the voyage, it is because they were iron pots among earthen pipkins.

The tendency of modern historians is to reject the old hero-worship of kings and to throw the light of their researches upon the growth of nations rather than upon the genius of rulers, generals, and ministers. No doubt there is need of a change from the old method of writing history, by which the masters were glorified at the expense of the people. But the new process may be carried too far. It is possible that, in a not far distant future, the progress of trade and manufactures will be pushed by co-operative societies of workmen; but the historians of that time will be unjust if they forget the services rendered in the past by capitalists and inventors. Politically, the world is travelling in the direction of constitutional government or even republicanism, which are both forms of co-operation; yet the power now known as the Empire of Germany was founded and built up by other means, prominent among which have been the character and actions of various members of the House of Hohenzollern. The Electors of Brandenburg raised themselves and their family by their own exertions at a time when Princes regarded their countries much as landed proprietors now do their estates. Territories with their whole populations were bought and sold without consulting other interests than those of the proprietors, and a Kaiser was not ashamed to wring a *post obit* for an important district out of the necessities of a young hereditary Prince, whose

928.

father was at the same time bargaining away the rights of his son. The people were passed over like cattle to the new possessors, and asked for even less than the protection given to the beasts on a farm. Thus, while it is true that rulers and ministers were the products of their time, we may say with equal justice that the people were often mere tools in the hands of their sovereign; who used their very aspirations towards heaven as means of strengthening his dynasty on earth and adding to his worldly possessions. The bargainings for treaties between royal and princely houses resembled the sharp practice of a horse fair, and there was even more certainty that the agreements would be disavowed if either party saw its advantage in repudiating the transaction. Such being the usual conditions, those countries may be esteemed fortunate whose proprietors were clever in seizing the advantage when it offered, and whose interests were not disassociated from those of their masters.

In the year 928 Brannibor, now Brandenburg, first emerged from the chaos of northern heathendom and took its place in history. Henry the Fowler marched across the frozen bogs, captured Brannibor, and set up there a Margrave, or Warden of the Marches, to keep order among the barbarous Wends. His business was, like that of English and Russian pro-consuls in Asia, to guard the borders of Christendom and save it from invasion. Under such circumstances there can be but one result. The weaker and less civilised nations bring about quarrels which end in their subjection. The Margraves, however, had many vicissitudes, and the final victory was not achieved till two centuries later, when Albert the Bear crushed and half exterminated the Wends with one hand, and thrust upon them, with the other, Christianity

1170-1415.

and colonists from Holland. In consideration of his talents and various achievements Albert became a Kurfurst (Choosing Prince) or Elector of the Empire, and henceforth the Margraves of Brandenburg had the right to one voice in the election of Kaisers. This small seed of territory and power has gradually grown into the kingdom of Prussia, the headship of the German Empire.

About the time of Albert's death in 1170, or a little earlier, began the rise of the Hohenzollern family, which had, however, not yet any connection with Brandenburg. Conrad, a cadet of the House, left his home in Suabia to seek his fortune with the Emperor Barbarossa, and succeeded so well that he shortly became Burgrave of Nuremburg. His descendants grew in power by the same qualities which they have displayed to the present day—the qualities mainly of men of business—and were ever ready to seize and make the most of the opportunities which came under their hands. They acquired larger territories, and became in time Margraves of Culmbach, which included Anspach and Baireuth. Though not Electors of the Empire, their power was such as to give them much influence over the choice of Kaisers, and they stood well for higher honours. Meanwhile Brandenburg had, after a series of troubles, fallen into the hands of the Kaisers, who thus became voters for their own election. In 1415 Sigismund, after having pawned Brandenburg for small sums more than once, sold it with the power which it conferred to Frederick of Hohenzollern for 400,000 golden gulden, and henceforth the talents which had made the family were devoted to the aggrandisement of the northern Principality.

It was time that a strong hand should take the reins, for Brandenburg had fallen into a state of perilous anarchy.

1415.

The towns received Frederick with joy, but the robber barons, who lived by highway plunder or black-mail, had no stomach for regular government. Persuasion and hospitality were tried with no effect, but the louder voice of cannon—novelties to the barons—especially the balls from a heavy twenty-four pounder called *Faule Grete*, or Lazy Peg, brought the walls of the castles to ruin and the barons to a better sense of their duties. Brandenburg was saved and strengthened, and so prominent were the services of Frederick to Germany that he was offered the Kaisership in his old age. He declined that crown of thorns, and it has been the aim of his family ever since rather to add to the power of their own house and country than to grasp at imperial greatness. Even in our days it was not by his own will that William of Prussia became Emperor of Germany.

From the first acquisition of the Electorate to the time of the Great Elector in 1640, near the end of the Thirty Years' War, the lives of the Hohenzollern house may be passed over in silence, except with regard to certain events which bear upon the history of Frederick the Great and his father. The family continued to hold Culmbach and Brandenburg. The practice was for the head of the house to be Elector of Brandenburg, while Culmbach, or sometimes Baireuth and Anspach separated, were governed by younger branches. This arrangement, at first informal, was made definite by the "Gera Bond" in 1598. The bond provided that the younger branch should have Culmbach, which might be split into Baireuth and Anspach on occasion, but if either branch failed the other would take both the Electorship and Margraviate until they should be divided again for the benefit of the younger scions. On the whole the various

members of the family were hard-headed, rather grasping men, with a keen eye for the main chance, but withal good rulers considering the times in which they lived.

Another important point is the acquisition of Prussia. One of the Culmbach line, named Albert, was chosen Grand Master of the Teutonic Order of Knighthood, then in a state of decay, in 1511. The Teutonic knights had taken possession of all East and West Prussia, and converted—that is, nearly exterminated—the heathen owners of the land. Like the Templars, they acquired much property in various directions, became rich, luxurious, and degenerate. The King of Poland forced them to yield West Prussia and to do homage for East Prussia. Albert was elected on the understanding, confirmed by an oath, that he would refuse this homage. He endeavoured to keep his word, but found that neither the empire nor the knights would give him any help at all. After seven years, Albert at last got 8,000 troops together to fight Poland, but was worsted at once, and made truce for four years, during which he besieged the Reich and the Ritters with requests for help, if indeed they cared for the point they had pressed upon him. His prayers were in vain, and with practical sense he consulted Luther, put down the order, and made himself Duke of Prussia, for which he consented to do homage to the King of Poland, his mother's brother. Ripe fruit will fall into the mouth of the capable, whether they shake the tree or not. Thus Prussia came under the government of the Hohenzollerns, and an example of Protestantism was set to the family. The incapable knights disappeared, to be heard of no more, and in 1568 the dukedom was made hereditary by consent of the Reich, the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns to take it if the Culmbach line failed, which it eventually did. Thus

1537.
Prussia was gathered into the possessions of the Northern Hohenzollerns, who became Dukes of Prussia as well as Electors of Brandenburg.

The same Elector Joachim II. who obtained the heritorship of the Dukedom of Prussia made another arrangement, which, aiming at possible future advantages, was in its issue the occasion of the first military adventures of Frederick the Great. This was the famous "Erbverbrüderung"—Heritage Brotherhood—a covenant with the Duke of Liegnitz, by which it was agreed that if either the Brandenburg or Liegnitz lines failed, the other line should take possession, and combine the two countries, or we may say the two properties. The duchy which might thus fall to the Hohenzollerns included Liegnitz, Brieg, and Wohlau, parts of that Silesia which became so memorable in history. The feofs of Brandenburg to be given up did not include the whole of it, and need not be mentioned, because, as usual, the Hohenzollerns survived the other contracting line. The compact was sealed by a double marriage, and bound fast by all the red-tape which lawyers could wind round it. It is true that Ferdinand, who was then King of Bohemia and afterwards Emperor of Germany, objected to the arrangement and forced Liegnitz to give up his portion of the bond. But what a Hohenzollern grasps he keeps if he can, and neither then nor ever afterwards could kings or emperors extract that piece of parchment out of the strong box of combined Brandenburg and Prussia. Probably the question, if argued to-day, might make a Chancery suit enduring for many years. Instead of a suit, the Silesian succession became a burning question, and for arguments Frederick the Great substituted the sword. There was another Silesian claim on the part of the Hohenzollerns, with which, however, we need not

now concern ourselves. The Erbverbrüderung, and its rejection by the Kaiser when it should have been fulfilled, was a pretty quarrel enough.

One more important circumstance remains to be noticed, as upon it turned much of the action of the Hohenzollerns when they came to be kings. Albert Frederick, the first hereditary duke by consent, married Maria Eleanora, daughter of Duke William of Cleve, who was the brother of Anne of Cleves, known in history as the rejected of Harry VIII. of England. Duke William settled Cleve, which included Jülich and Berg, on Maria and her descendants, male or female, in case he should die without male issue. Only if Maria died childless was Cleve to pass to her sisters. Duke William left no heir, while Maria had daughters, one of whom married an Elector of Brandenburg. The settlement had been confirmed by the Kaiser and seemed all in order, but at Maria's death in 1608, the succession was claimed by the Count Palatine of Neuberg, who had married a younger sister of Maria Eleanora. Forthwith other claimants started up, and it was not till long afterwards that the matter was settled by a division between Neuberg and Brandenburg, with the proviso that if either line failed in male issue the other was to take the whole. The Hohenzollerns were rich in children, but the line of the Neubergs was visibly failing in the boyhood of Frederick the Great—we shall presently see with what result to him and to the whole of Europe.

One Hohenzollern, and one only, during the whole of the electoral period deserves nothing but blame at the hands of historians: and he lived precisely at the time when a man of good parts might have done great things. This was George William, who existed, we cannot

1630.

say flourished, in the time of the Thirty Years' War. His sole endeavour appears to have been to keep himself out of danger; and the result was, as happens on continents in such cases, that his country became, in great part, the battlefield of Europe. Considering his opportunities, he might have placed himself at the head of the Protestants and changed the whole character of the war. But instead of this, he tried to shake hands with the Kaiser on one side and the League of Protestant chiefs on the other. Even if he may be forgiven for hesitating at first, there came a time when his duty and his interests were so clearly at one that none but a weak ruler could possibly have doubted. The greatest captain of the age, Gustavus Adolphus, landed in the island of Usedom in 1630, seized Pomerania, and cleared it of the Kaiser's army, which had been occupying it in defiance of all George William's claims. The degenerate Hohenzollern was not to be moved; and when, at last, he was absolutely driven by circumstances to join the side of Gustavus, he sent a poor 3,000 men into Bohemia, who did no single worthy action and soon vanished. The result to himself of this weakness was a miserable and shame-faced life, while his country was almost turned into a desert by the armies which fought on its soil. In the latter part of the war the contending forces strove to starve each other by wasting the districts where they fought. The misery was greater than can be conceived. There was not a peasant who could count his life safe from day to day; and in some places famine reached such terrible dimensions that men hungered for human flesh—fathers and mothers ate their own children. Such was the result of George William's policy of peace at any price; and besides bringing about this misery among the people, he lost Pomerania, which had fallen in to him,

but was occupied by the Swedes; and lost the duchy of Jägerndorf in Silesia, that province being seized by the Kaiser and his generals unrighteously, and, as it turned out afterwards, unfortunately for Austria.

It is impossible to say how low the Hohenzollerns in 1640 might have fallen had not George William been succeeded by his son Frederick William, the Great Elector some eight years before the close of the Thirty Years' War. He was only twenty years old at the time of his succession, but had watched the disgrace of his country with eager mind, longing to retrieve it. As a political factor in Europe, Brandenburg had disappeared. Its actual ruler had been the minister Schwarzenberg, the paid agent of the Kaiser, a Catholic directing Protestant actions in the midst of a religious war. The Great Elector governed for forty-eight years, during which he restored his country, made it richer than it had ever been, got rid of Schwarzenberg from the Cabinet, and the Swedes from a large part of Pomerania, rearranged the whole system of taxation, and brought much waste land into a fertile condition. At the same time he began to form a standing army. His subjects, like the Prussians before 1866, objected to the military measures of their ruler, but were pacified and pleased by the honour gained in many fights, all undertaken in the cause of Protestantism and German freedom. Philosophers may teach and mercantile pursuits may hamper the sword arm of a nation, but there has never yet been found in the history of the world a living people insensible to military glory.

The Great Elector, like smaller men, grew old and weary of struggles. For all his good work he had neither got Pomerania from the Swedes nor Silesia from the Kaiser, who would listen to no solicitations on this head. But in 1685, when the Great Elector was sixty-five years old, the

1686.

Kaiser had need of his help against the Turks, and made a proposal that the Silesian claims should be settled by giving him the "Circle of Schwiebus"—a tract of country lying close to the Elector's dominions north-west of Silesia. While negotiations were in progress, Baron Freytag, the Austrian Ambassador at Berlin, secretly entered upon another bargain. The young Prince Frederick, son and heir of the Elector, had quarrelled with his stepmother and run away from Court, believing himself in danger of poison. His father permitted him to live apart, but tightened the strings of the purse, and gave him hardly enough to exist upon. The wily Freytag crept into the presence of the young man, and told him that all his wants should be supplied if he would give a *post obit* for Schwiebus, which his father was in the act of acquiring. Thus, with one hand the Kaiser, holding Silesia by force, traded with the father to exchange his rights over it for a paltry province, and with the other lent money to the son at usurer's interest, no less than the resignation of his future claims on Schwiebus. Both the old and the young man fell into the snare, and the Austrian rights to Silesia became based upon a transaction which was shameful to the Austrian Court and galling to the pride of the coming Hohenzollerns. The double transaction was closed in 1686, and two years afterwards the Elector died. When Frederick succeeded him, he at first refused to give up Schwiebus, and even held possession of it for seven years. He declared that he had been swindled while an ignorant youth, and asserted that when he signed the *post obit* he had no power to bind Brandenburg. Only on the threat of actual force did he consent to yield Schwiebus to the Emperor, against the advice of his counsellors. His answer to them is recorded in history. He must keep his

1686.

own word, but, having been thus abused, he retained his claim to Silesia, and left it for his posterity to prosecute when the opportunity should come. Perhaps if the Kaiser had known what manner of man was to prosecute this claim hereafter, he might have hesitated to leave a wound to the Hohenzollern spirit so imperfectly closed.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOHENZOLLERNS ARE KINGS.—BIRTH AND TRAINING OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

A.D. 1712—1740.

1712.

THOUGH the great elector did not succeed in obtaining the territory he sought, he left his people so enriched, and his standing army so strong, that no potentate in Europe could make war without questioning himself what would be said and done at Berlin. His son Frederick, though of weaker mould, was strong in the possession of the power built up by his father. Once more the Kaiser wanted help for his war of the Spanish Succession, and got it from Frederick, but only after paying well for it. Frederick demanded and obtained, not without suspicion of bribery at the time, the title of King of Prussia. The Hohenzollerns had sped well in their climb upwards. From a wandering fortune-hunter to Burgraves of Nuremburg, Electors of Brandenburg, Dukes of Prussia, and now at last Kings—of Prussia, because that state did not form part of the German Reich. The new king was a lover of magnificence and ceremonials, for which historians have blamed him. But there were no achievements ready to his

hand beyond good administration, which he faithfully gave; and the people seem to have been content with his coronations and his progresses. His queen, Sophia Charlotte, was so little elated by the new dignity, that in the midst of the ceremony of coronation she was discovered conveying to her nose a sly pinch of snuff in fine irony of the proceedings. She has been called the Republican Queen, and a touch of her nature is to be seen afterwards in her grandson, Frederick the Great. Her discourses with Leibnitz on "The Infinitely Little," of which she writes, "Mon Dieu, as if I did not know enough of that!" seem to foreshadow the philosophic speculations of the great king, and his passion for talk with Voltaire and the like, while her contempt for the forms of courts passed downwards for at least two generations.

The accession of the next king, Frederick William, marks a turning-point in the history of Prussia. Disgusted with the pomp and display of his father, he set himself at once to cut down expenditure in every department except in that of the army. In his childhood he had shown clear proofs of the direction given to his mind by his mother's blood and influence. Once there was brought to him a grand embroidered dressing-gown, heavy with gold, but no sooner had the boy examined it than he made up his mind to have none of such useless and uncomfortable finery, and without more ado put it in the fire. When his father lay dying in 1713, the poor mortal frame heaving its last sighs amid a forest of gold sticks and other paraphernalia of a court, and in an air thick with powder from periwigs, the young man made up his mind. Death came, and the natural grief of Frederick William was driven in by the chilling ceremonies and antic homage of the

1713.

courtiers. He dashed the tears from his eyes, went straight to his room, and sent in less than half an hour for the Ober-Hofmarschall. To him he signified his will that though things might go on as they were till his father's funeral, when he would allow himself to be bedizened for the last time in foolish trappings, the waste and the absurdity must cease from that moment, and the whole apparatus disappear, to be succeeded by the simplicity of an English country gentleman. Right through the list of all expenditure did Frederick William go in like manner, discharging and reducing until his court was the cheapest in Europe—perhaps more suitable for a petty noble than a great king. Instead of an army of gold sticks, silver sticks, and the rest, he would only have eight lackeys at six shillings a week, and three pages. For a thousand saddle-horses, many of them imaginary quadrupeds, the money for whose food went into idle men's pockets, Frederick William would have only thirty, which he kept in good condition with right hard work. His pension-list was reduced from 276,000 thalers to 55,000. These are but samples of the work done throughout the whole of his dominions. The dreams of socialists were realised by this heavy-handed king, to whom it seemed an abominable offence that any man should eat bread without working hard for it. His reforms were real and valuable, but, as he grew older, his tendency towards parsimony and the personal management of his people grew into a mania, which brought at last much unhappiness to himself and his family.

But with all his economy in court and country, Frederick William never spared the money required for his army, which he increased from 38,000 at his father's death to

1713.

84,000 in his own time. Nor were these 84,000 men mere show soldiers; they were trained with a constant supervision and severity of discipline which, though probably never since equalled, have left their traces on the Prussian army of to-day. No other country in Europe has ever succeeded in arriving at the reality of such discipline, though with ape-like fidelity some of them have imitated the Prussian manias, forgetting that the laws of discipline must, like any other laws, be adapted to the circumstances of time and place; and that one race of men will bear with equanimity punishments which would drive freer people to distraction and perhaps mutiny. Blows of the stick administered on the spot are no doubt, like the birch-rod in schools, short, sharp, and effective punishments for those who will endure them without losing soldierly pride and self-esteem. No one objected to them in the north and east of Europe at that time. Nor, in spite of regulations and assertions to the contrary, have they entirely disappeared to this day. To the French and English armies such personal chastisement has long been mere torture.

Frederick William's love of the stick was not confined to the treatment of soldiers alone. He used to carry a rattan with him in his walks, and woe to the unhappy wight who seemed to be doing evil or even idling. Nay, in his palace the stick was active, and no one dare resist him. Servants, pages, and even lady visitors were chastised in this remarkable manner. In fact, Frederick William set himself deliberately to thrash his kingdom, his household, and his family into obedience and good order. Now if we remember how strong used to be the tendency of schoolmasters only a few years ago to flog their boys

1713.

instead of leading them, and if we consider for a moment that the King of Prussia had constituted himself a schoolmaster on a large scale, with no public opinion to criticise or control him, the apparent madness of his conduct as he grew older will but appear to be the natural development of the spirit of discipline in a direction where it must ever go if once acknowledged as of more importance than individual liberty properly trained and directed.

In like manner his determination to increase and perfect the army became a mania with him. He did what he undertook, and did it well. The infantry of the young Prussian monarchy became the first in Europe, and, by its excellence, carried Frederick the Great through his first campaign, the success of which was certainly not due to any military genius on his part. Frederick William's mania for big, well set-up soldiers, led him to commit certain follies, which, however, had at the bottom of them a root of common sense. He had agents throughout the whole of Europe cajoling or kidnapping the tallest men that could be found to swell the ranks of his regiment of giant guards at Potsdam. All Europe rang with the scandalous transactions of these agents. Priests were dragged from the altar, and monks from the convent. One fine man, the Abbé Bastiani, was kidnapped in the very act of celebrating mass in an Italian church. The monk, who is known as the Great Joseph, was given the sum of 5,000 florins for his own enlistment, besides a large sum to the monastery. So far as is known, Ireland had the credit of producing the recruit who extracted the greatest amount of money from Frederick William's pocket. The man himself, James Kirkland, received £1,000, which represented much more value than it would at present, and the rest of the expenses of securing him and bringing him over to Berlin amounted

1713.

to £200 10*s.* 0*d.* In the bill occur some curious items. For instance :—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
For the sending of two spies	18	18	0
To some of his acquaintance in London who helped to persuade him	18	18	0
To two soldiers of the guard (query English or Irish) who assisted	15	15	0
To some persons for secrecy	12	12	0
To a man who accompanied and watched him constantly ...	3	3	0

On one occasion the Austrian ambassador, Herr von Bentenrieder, a tall and handsome diplomatist, was travelling as an envoy to or from the Congress of Cambray. Near Halberstadt his carriage broke down, and he walked on while it was mending. Arrived at a small guard house he found a Prussian officer, who forthwith seized him as a promising recruit for the Potsdam giants. Rich merchants and burgomasters were actually carried off, and could hardly, if ever, get their freedom again. A thousand curious stories are told of this spider king whose web extended over the whole of Europe to catch every human fly who happened to be of greater stature than his fellows. Nay, more, Frederick William not only caught his peculiar pets, but bred from them also. He used to catch gigantic girls when he could, and marry them to his tall grenadiers. Take this story as a sample of his transactions in matrimonial management. Going one day from Potsdam to Berlin, he saw coming towards him in the opposite direction a magnificent girl, young, handsome, and of good figure, superb in number of inches. He was at once struck with admiration for her; stopped to talk, and found that she was unmarried, and was on her way from Berlin to her Saxon home. "Then," said Frederick William, "you will be passing the gate of Potsdam, and will no doubt give

24th Jan. 1712.

this note to the commandant, receiving a dollar for your trouble." But women, even when tall, are not so easily outwitted as Kirklands, Josephs, and the like. The girl knew the king by sight and reputation, and knowing that to refuse the note would probably bring her a shower of blows from the rattan, accepted the commission. Arrived near the gate of Potsdam, she found there a little wizened old hag, to whom she intrusted the delivery of the letter, honestly handing over the dollar with it. Then forthwith she sped away towards home. The commandant opened the note, and found himself ordered to marry the bearer to a certain gigantic Irish grenadier named Macdoll (?McDowall). He rubbed his eyes, but there could be no doubt about the clearness of the command. The grenadier was sent for, and then began a curious scene. The man was in absolute despair. Such a mate for one of his thews and sinews seemed a horrible mockery. The proposed wife, on the contrary, was quite ready to submit herself to the orders of the king. There was no escape; to refuse further would be flat mutiny, and the soldier was actually obliged to obey. The mistake was not discovered till the next morning, when Frederick, finding himself thwarted in his designs for the development of giants in Germany, consented to the divorce of the ill-matched couple.

To this strange historical figure of good intention but vastly exaggerated performance, and to his wife, Sophie Dorothee of Hanover, was born on the 24th of January, 1712, a boy, who was christened Karl Frederick, and is known in history as Friedrich II. of Prussia, or, more commonly, Frederick the Great. The father was still Crown Prince, and twenty-four years old, a rugged, hard-tempered soldier, who had seen fierce fighting under

Marlborough and Eugene during the Netherlands episode of the War of Succession. The child was the fourth-born. Two princes had preceded him, but died in infancy; the first it is said, having fallen a victim to ceremony in the shape of a crown which compressed his soft skull; the second frightened to death by the firing of the cannon which announced his arrival in a world of display. Between these two baby princes came the princess, Frederika Sophie Wilhelmina, Frederick's dear companion in childhood and friend in after life. After Frederick came ten other children, two of whom died in infancy. The survivors of the family to manhood and womanhood were—

Frederika Sophie Wilhelmina,	born	3rd July, 1709.
Frederick the Great,	,,	24th January, 1712.
Frederika Louisa,	,,	28th September, 1714.
Phillipina Charlotte,	,,	13th March, 1716.
Sophie Dorothee Maria,	,,	25th January, 1719.
Louisa Ulrique,	,,	24th July, 1720.
August Wilhelm,	,,	9th August, 1722.
Aunna Amelia,	,,	9th November, 1723.
Friedrich Heinrich Ludwig	,,	18th January, 1726.
August Ferdinand,	,,	23rd May, 1730.

Altogether a family of ten surviving out of fourteen born.

The young Frederick was a boy of great vivacity, but inclined to be delicate, and it is not easy to understand how he escaped with life under the treatment of his hard father, whose more than Spartan discipline—beer soup for food, and scanty allowance of sleep—would have killed any young thing which had not a more than ordinary amount of vitality. Perhaps one element in his training saved him—the strictest regularity in meals, studies, and exercise. He was first under charge of a French Protestant governess, Madame de Roucoulles, for whom he retained ever afterwards a lively affection. In his seventh year he was placed

1712-1717.

in the hands of tutors, men of real experience of life, and his father laid down for his benefit a system of instruction which was adhered to with more or less accuracy. First of all, he was to be impressed with a proper love and fear of God, no false religions or heresies being so much as named in his hearing. To this day, the basis of all Prussian schooling is "God and the king." Reference was to be made to Papistry alone, but only to point out to him its baselessness and absurdity (*Ungrund und Absurditat*). Latin was strictly forbidden, no time for antique learning in the scheme of the Bear of Berlin. Economy to be studied "to the very bottom," arithmetic, mathematics, artillery, modern history thoroughly; but little ancient; the jus naturale and jus gentium, the latter a new study in those days, to be completely known. With increase of years he was to become versed in fortification and all the details of the military art, and have "stamped into him" a true love for soldiership, so that he might be fully persuaded that "as there is nothing in the world which can bring a prince renown and honour like the sword, so he would be a despised creature before all men if he did not love it and seek his sole glory therein." This is the main thought of the father, who considered himself cheated out of Silesia, and whose father had solemnly declared that he left to his successors the task of prosecuting the claim. A little later, when the young prince was in his tenth year, the king drew up a long memorandum, apportioning rigorously the tasks and duties for every hour of the week. Carlyle gives us from Preuss the general features of the scheme, which shall be quoted here, as it serves better than much description to show what Frederick's mental training was.

Sunday.—"On Sunday he is to rise at 7; and as soon as he has got his slippers on, shall kneel down at his bedside, and

pray to God, so as all in the room may hear it" (that there be no deception or short measure palmed upon us) "in these words: 'Lord God, blessed Father, I thank Thee from my heart that Thou hast so graciously preserved me through this night. Fit me for what Thy holy will is; and grant that I do nothing this day, nor all the days of my life, which can divide me from Thee. For the Lord Jesus my Redeemer's sake. Amen.' After which the Lord's Prayer. Then rapidly and vigorously (*geschwinde und hurtig*) wash himself clean, dress, and powder and comb himself; we forget to say that while they are combing and queuing him, he breakfasts, with brevity, on tea. Prayer, with washing, breakfast and the rest, to be done pointedly within fifteen minutes—that is, at a quarter-past 7.

"This finished, all his Domestics and Duhan shall come in, and do family worship (*das grosse Gebet zu halten*). Prayer on their knees, Duhan withal to read a chapter of the Bible, and sing some proper Psalm or Hymn" (as practised in well-regulated families). "It will then be a quarter to 8. All the Domestics then withdraw again; and Duhan now reads with my Son the Gospel of the Sunday; expounds it a little, adducing the main points of Christianity;—questioning from Noltenius's Catechism" (which Fritz knows by heart):—"it will then be 9 o'clock.

"At 9 he brings my Son down to me; who goes to Church, and dines along with me" (dinner at the stroke of noon): "the rest of the day is then his own" (Fritz's and Duhan's). "At half-past 9 in the evening, he shall come and bid me good-night. Shall then directly go to his room; very rapidly (*sehr geschwind*) get off his clothes, wash his hands" (get into some tiny dressing-gown or cassaquin, no doubt); "and as soon as that is done, Duhan makes a prayer on his knees, and sings a hymn; all the Servants being again there. Instantly after which, my Son shall get into bed; shall be in bed at half-past 10";—and fall asleep how soon, your Majesty! This is very strict work.

Monday.—"On Monday as on all weekdays, he is to be called at 6; and so soon as called he is to rise; you are to stand to him (*anhalten*) that he do not loiter or turn in bed, but briskly and at once get up; and say his prayers, the same as on Sunday morning. This done, he shall as rapidly as possible get on his shoes and spatterdashes; also wash his face and hands, but not with soap.

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Farther shall put on his cassaquin" (short dressing-gown), "have his hair combed out and queued, but not powdered. While getting combed and queued, he shall at the same time take breakfast of tea, so that both jobs go on at once, and all this shall be ended before half-past 6." Then enter Duhan and the Domestics, with worship, Bible, Hymn, all as on Sunday; this is done by 7, and the Servants go again.

"From 7 till 9 Duhan takes him on History; at 9 comes Noltenius" (a sublime clerical gentleman from Berlin) "with the Christian Religion, till a quarter to 11. Then Fritz rapidly (*geschwind*) washes his face with water, hands with soap and water; clean shirt; powders, and puts on his coat;—about 11 comes to the King. Stays with the King till 2,"—perhaps promenading a little; dining always at noon; after which Majesty is apt to be slumbrous, and light amusements are over.

"Directly at 2, he goes back to his room. Duhan is there ready; takes him upon the maps and geography, from 2 to 3, giving account" (gradually!) "of all the European Kingdoms; their strength and weakness; size, riches and poverty of their towns. From 3 to 4, Duhan treats of morality (*soll die Moral tractiren*). From 4 to 5, Duhan shall write German letters with him, and see that he gets a good 'stylum'" (which he never in the least did). "About 5, Fritz shall wash his hands, and go to the King; —ride out; divert himself in the air and not in his room; and do what he likes, if it is not against God."

There then is a Sunday, and there is one weekday; which latter may serve for all the other five; though they are strictly specified in the royal monograph, and every hour of them marked out. How, and at what points of time, besides this of History, of Morality, and Writing in German, of Maps and Geography and the strength and weakness of Kingdoms, you are to take up Arithmetic more than once; Writing of French Letters, so as to acquire a good stylum: in what nook you may intercalate "a little getting by heart of something, in order to strengthen the memory"; how instead of Noltenius, Panzendorf (another sublime reverend gentleman from Berlin, who comes out express) gives the clerical drill on Tuesday morning; with which two onslaughts, of an hour-and-half each, the clerical gentlemen seem to withdraw

for the week, and we hear no more of them till Monday and Tuesday come round again.

On Wednesday we are happy to observe a liberal slice of holiday come in. At half-past 9, having done his History, and "got something by heart to strengthen the memory" (very little, it is to be feared), "Fritz shall rapidly dress himself and come to the King. And the rest of the day belongs to little Fritz (*gehört vor Fritzchen*)." On Saturday, too, there is some fair chance of half-holiday.

"Saturday forenoon till half-past 10 come History, Writing, and Ciphering; especially repetition of what was done through the week, and in morality as well" (adds the rapid Majesty), "to see whether he has profited. And General Graf von Finkenstein, with Colonel von Kalkstein, shall be present during this. If Fritz has profited, the afternoon shall be his own. If he has not profited, he shall, from 2 to 6, repeat and learn rightly what he has forgotten on the past days." And so the labouring week winds itself up. Here, however, is one general rule which cannot be too much impressed upon you, with which we conclude:

"In undressing and dressing, you must accustom him to get out of, and into, his clothes as fast as is humanly possible (*hurtig so viel als menschenmöglich ist*). You will also look that he learn to put on and put off his clothes himself, without help from others; and that he be clean and neat, and not so dirty (*nicht so schmutzig*). Not so dirty, that is my last word, and here is my sign manual,

"FREDERICK WILHELM."

But with all the training, military and otherwise, the young prince could not be forced into an early love of soldiering. A miniature soldier company of boys was formed from the sons of noble families, to enable him to learn his exercises while he was still a child, but he was indifferent to the joys of drill. Neither could he be induced to take pleasure in the shooting parties and boar hunts in which he accompanied his father. The warrior king of the future would slip away and hold musical concerts in the woods with some of his young companions, or join his

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mother and her ladies when they were present at the hunts. Music and philosophy, with the society of the queen and his sister Wilhelmina, were more delightful to him than the parade-ground or the sports in the field. Even Latin was studied by him in secret, probably because his father had attempted to deprive him of a liberal education. Once the king caught him and one of the minor tutors at work on Latin, having before them among other books the *Aurea Bulla*, or Golden Bull of Kaiser Karl IV. The trembling preceptor assured the king that he was only explaining the Golden Bull to his pupil. Up rose the rattan in the air over the tutor's head, as his master roared, "Dog, I will Golden Bull you!" The young Frederick was inclined to foppishness, combed his long hair in the French fashion of the day, like a cockatoo, till his father ordered it to be cropped and pig-tailed, and stood by while the operation was performed. In short, the father was harsh and unsympathetic; the son inclined to contradiction. The king acted like a gross sergeant-major even in mental exercises; the prince retorted by aiming at becoming a fop and a speculative philosopher. The elder tried to break his family in by starvation and the cane; the family, queen, Wilhelmina, and the young Fritz worked to get their own way by deceiving the tyrant.

Wilhelmina, in her *Mémoire*, tells some strange stories of this and later times, and they are valuable as showing the influences brought to bear on her brother. In 1717, when the girl was eight years old, and the boy five, Peter the Great passed through Berlin, on his way from France to Russia. The Czarina Catherine was attended by a bevy of women, many of whom carried babies in their arms. When asked if the children were theirs, each one replied,

"The Czar *m'a fait l'honneur de me faire cet-enfant.*" When a German official waited on the Russian majesty to present a complimentary address, the czar stood to receive it between two of these curious creatures, with his arms round their necks. Even worse things than these are related of his morality, tales which would be incredible but for the consent of numerous witnesses. Wilhelmina and her brother knew of all. And as a pendant to the brutality of the czar, we have the miserish order of Frederick William, who allowed the authorities on the line of the Russian progress, only 6,000 thalers for expenses, but ordered them to declare that it had cost the king thirty or forty thousand. Truly a strange court for the training of a boy.

Under these conditions of life, it is not wonderful that as the young Frederick grew in years and stature, his dislike to his father and the training which that father gave him steadily increased. The breach between them widened, and every taste of the king was outraged by opposite desires and actions on the part of the prince. In those days force was the only remedy for every difficulty which could not be overcome by craft, and parents followed the advice of Solomon in the treatment of their children, if in naught else. A king who drove his subjects with the stick was not likely to treat his family with gentleness; and the scenes in the palace, as told by Wilhelmina and others, show that the self will of Frederick William was exaggerated to the extent of madness. On one occasion he attempted to strangle his son with the cord of a curtain, and the mother and her children existed in daily terror of their lives. Young Frederick fell into a state of mental depression, and sought relief from the misery he endured in scenes of dissipation and debauchery. The very elements of

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morality were at this time almost unknown in courts. Public opinion had no power; the will of the sovereign over-rode all laws, human and divine. One scene related by Wilhelmina may serve to show the strange possibilities which existed. When Frederick was sixteen years old he accompanied his father to Saxony, then governed by August the Strong, who was also King of Poland. King August followed the example of Solomon in one respect, though perhaps one only. He had by his concubines no less than three hundred and fifty-four children, who had no means of knowing that they owed their birth to the same father. With him Frederick William feasted and drank heavily. The episode which follows must be given in the words of Wilhelmina's *Mémoires*. Its truth is confirmed by other writers.

One evening, when they had well sacrificed to Bacchus, the King of Poland conducted the king (Frederick William) into a room very richly ornamented, the furniture and arrangements of which were in exquisite taste. The king, charmed with what he saw, paused to look round him, when, suddenly, a curtain was drawn up and displayed to him a most extraordinary sight—a young girl in the condition of our first parents lying negligently on a bed. She was more beautiful than Venus and the Graces are painted, and displayed to view a form of ivory, whiter than snow and shaped more beautifully than the Venus de Medici at Florence. The cabinet which contained this treasure was lighted by so many wax candles that their brilliancy was dazzling, and gave additional splendour to the beauties of the goddess. The authors of this comedy were in hopes that the object would make an impression on the king's heart, but it turned out quite otherwise. No sooner had he cast eyes on this beauty, than he turned sharply round with indignation; and seeing my brother behind him pushed him roughly out of the room, and at once followed him in great anger at the scene he had witnessed. He spoke of it the same evening to Grumkow in strong terms, and declared

that, if the like happened again, he would leave Dresden immediately. With my brother the result was different. In spite of the king's care he had a full view of the Cabinet Venus, and the sight of her did not inspire in him so much horror as in his father.

In short, the Prince "obtained her from the King of Poland in a manner curious enough." Yes, curious enough! The bargain was that young Frederick should resign a pursuit, in which he was engaged, of the Countess Orzelska, one of the three hundred and fifty four, who had already been mistress to Count Rutofski, another of the same band, and was now receiving the warm attentions of August himself. If at this time the morals of young Frederick were loose, his father's friends set him a bad example.

The authors of Frederick's temptation at the Saxon court were Grumkow, prime minister of Prussia, and Count Seckendorf, secretly envoy of the kaiser, and ostensibly Frederick William's friend and adviser. It was but one of their schemes for breaking off a project of a double marriage with the English royal family, concerning which there had been long negotiations. Frederick was to marry the Princess Amelia of England, and Wilhelmina, the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards known as Frederick, Prince of Wales. For political reasons it did not please the Kaiser that Prussia should draw close to the sea powers, and Seckendorf was the instrument selected, not only to spoil this match, but to make a tool of the Prussian monarch. Seckendorf visited Berlin, pretending a mission to Denmark on urgent business for the Kaiser, too pressing even to brook the delay of presentation to the king. Frederick William, looking out of the window of his tobacco-parliament room, with Grumkow at his elbow,

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saw Seckendorf crossing the parade. Rapid presentation ensued, and invitation to remain for a while. Seckendorf was coy, and a promise could hardly be drawn from him that he would return after his visit to Denmark. Within a few days he was at Potsdam again, and, thenceforth, attended the King of Prussia, like an evil genius, separating Frederick William from his natural Protestant allies, and fomenting discord between him and his family. The smoking room where the king used to sit and booze with his boon companions, holding rough "parliament" there, did him this evil turn. From it he first espied the man, who more than any other, brought misery to the royal house of Prussia.

From the time of Seckendorf's appearance, the palace witnessed strange and sad scenes. The royal children, oppressed, ill-treated and threatened, did what lay in them to deceive their hard father, and snatch by stealth the natural pleasures which he denied to them. We do not hear that young Fritz actually neglected his military duties (he was now a major in the regiment of giants), but they were, at least, distasteful to him, and his own favourite pursuits—music and speculative philosophy—were to his father as the red rag to a bull. Add to this the daily struggles between the queen, who never ceased to strive for the double marriage, with Seckendorf who fought against it, and a growing irritability in the king, aggravated by fits of gout; and the result becomes a Prince's Progress which must clearly end in catastrophe of some sort. "God grant he do not end on the gallows," said Frederick William once to the serpent Grumkow. Meanwhile their father supplied them with food hardly eatable, and spat in the dish to prevent their having enough. The king, pushed by Seckendorf, had come to hate the English, and

15th July 1730.

Dubourgay relates that when Fritz once said in his father's presence that he respected the English because he knew that they loved him, Frederick William seized him by the collar and struck him fiercely with his cane. In a letter to his mother, Fritz speaks of a "shower of cruel blows" on this occasion, says that he is in the uttermost despair, and resolved to put an end to it in one way or another. The double marriage project came to the ground with a crash when the king, in a fit of passion, dashed down a document presented to him by the English envoy, shouting, "Messieurs, j'ai eu assez de ces choses là," and young Frederick began to lay plans for escape by flight from a life, the misery of which had become unendurable. It was about this period, in 1730, that the father attempted to strangle his son with the cord of a curtain, and not without reason did the Prince say that he feared for his life. He was asked to resign his position of heir apparent, but answered firmly "No! unless your majesty is prepared to deny the honour of my mother."

Two of Frederick's familiars, Lieutenant Katte, and Keith, a page of the court, were made confidants of his intentions, and helped to devise plans of escape. They were unwise counsellors, careless and loose in their conduct, but withal devoted to Fritz, who indeed sorely lacked support and sympathy from those who were older, and ought to have been wiser. More than once Frederick formed plans of escape, but they came to nothing, and on the 15th of July, 1730, he set out with his father on a journey through the Reich. His designs were suspected, and he was placed in charge of three officials. Seckendorf joined the party, which proceeded as far as Augsburg without any incident worth relating, then turned homewards by another way intending to strike the Rhine at Mayence. Frederick was

4th Aug. 1730.

determined to escape during this journey, and foolishly corresponded with Katte who remained at Berlin, Keith travelling with the royal party. The place fixed for the elopement was Sinzheim, where Keith was to procure post horses, and ride with Frederick to Speyer, crossing the Rhine there, and going on to Paris. Unfortunately for the prince's designs, a sudden decision was taken to spend the night at the village of Steinfurth, some five or six miles short of Sinzheim. In the gray of the dawn, the 4th of August, 1730, Frederick rose and left the barn where he had slept in company with his guardian trio, went out and found Keith ready with two horses. But before Frederick could mount, his watchers were called by vigilant servants, and the project of flight was baffled. The same day an intercepted letter of the prince's to Katte was brought to Frederick William, and Keith confessed the plot. The king was furious, and charged the guardians on their lives to bring his son "living or dead" to Berlin. As soon as the Rhine was reached, Frederick was placed, a prisoner, on board a royal yacht. At Wesel he was brought on shore, and had a terrible interview with the king, who drew sword upon him, and would have thrust him through but for the interference of the commandant, old General Mosel. They were parted, and did not look on each other's faces again for more than a year. Keith escaped, and his evasion quickened the king's wrath against his son. Katte was arrested at Berlin.

Courts of inquiry were held, the king insisting upon it that Frederick was a deserter from the army. The rage of the king knew no bounds. Every familiar friend of the prince came under the royal fierce anger, which vented itself in the very madness of cruelty. A Frenchman, Count Montholieu, was nailed to the gallows in effigy, after

flight, for having lent the prince money. Doris Ritter, an honest girl, with whom Frederick had practised music, was whipped through the streets by the beadle, and clapped in prison for three years. Finally a court-martial was assembled to try the prince, and the associates of his attempted flight. Grumkow was a member. They condemned Frederick to death, two members dissenting; Keith, who had escaped, to be nailed to the gallows in effigy; and Katte, who had only been cognisant of the flight, to perpetual imprisonment in a fortress. This one morsel of mercy was denied by the king, who ordered that Katte should be beheaded, saying that "it is better that he should die than that justice should depart out of the world." Forthwith the king's counsellors, including even Seckendorf, implored mercy for the prince. The Kaiser and foreign courts interposed to stay the hand of the madman, and Frederick William at last consented to a milder punishment. But Katte at least must die, and die, ordered Frederick, before the eyes of his son. Some writers say that this devilish sentence was actually carried out; others, that by the connivance of attendants, the prince was only forced to see his friend on his way to the block. Certain it is, that Frederick saw Katte pass his window close by, and implored his pardon. "Death is sweet for so lovable a prince," replied the unhappy youth. Nature was more merciful than the king. Frederick fainted, and saw his friend no more.

When Frederick awoke to life and captivity, Müller, the chaplain of the *gens d'armes*, was with him, and offered cooling drinks, which the unhappy prince refused, suspecting poison, till Müller swallowed a portion, when the poor lad drank with avidity. Müller's business was to wean him from what his father considered as Calvinistic heresy.

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It is evident that at this time the burning soul of Frederick was struggling for spiritual light. But for such purpose there should be liberty to think freely, not the compulsion of prison walls. Müller, on receiving back a Concordance which he had lent to the prince, found sketched on the fly-leaf the figure of a man on his knees, with two swords hanging crossed over his head. Below were written the words of the Psalmist: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee. My flesh and my heart fainteth and faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." Müller had also to deliver to Frederick, Katte's last words of advice to him, that he should submit to his father. Submission soon came. What with the nervous shock he had received on seeing Katte led out to die, and the ghostly ministrations of the chaplain, perhaps also the absence of his father's irritating ways, the will of the youth yielded. He took and signed an oath of submission on the 19th of November, Katte having died on the 6th. Frederick William prayed that "his godless heart may be beaten till it is softened and changed, and so he be snatched from the claws of Satan." Thus the imagination of men conceives a god like themselves, and the Bear of Berlin places a rattan in the hands of Omnipotence.

Frederick was released from confinement, but placed under surveillance, and not allowed to leave Cüstrin without permission. He was deprived of military uniform, put into a pike-grey frock, with narrow silver cord for ornament, and made a member of the Board for Managing Domain Lands, there to learn practically the economics which had been instilled into him theoretically as a boy. His further treatment was to depend on his diligence and good behaviour. Meanwhile Wilhelmina was almost

starved. "Soup of salt and water, and ragout of old bones full of hairs and slopperies," thus she describes the food grudgingly dealt out to her. The French Protestant colony in Berlin, hearing of her case, left baskets of eatables for her and her governess in out-of-the-way places where they could be picked up. At last the tide began to turn. There was talk of marriage for her with the Margrave of Baireuth, then betrothal, a visit of the king to his son, who fell at his feet and kissed the royal shoes; the marriage of Wilhelmina on the 20th of November, 1731, and on the 23rd her much-loved brother returned to her. But not the old brother of her love. A changed, cold man, with a touch of the father's critical ways, and, worst of all to the feminine mind, with reasons for what he did. His reasons were good. Next day he appeared once more in uniform on parade with his regiment, of which he was made colonel commandant in February of the following year. One slight struggle more he had against betrothal to the Princess of Brunswick Bevern, a lady whose qualities were opposed to all he had dreamed of in a wife; but he submitted to what he called his hard fate, was betrothed on the 10th of March, 1732, and married on the 12th of June, 1733. It was far from being a love match, and there were no children. The pair can hardly be said to have lived together at all, and the princess need not be mentioned again, as she exercised no influence over the events of Frederick's life.

About six months before the marriage, and during the time of betrothal, Frederick William was startled by a proposal from the Kaiser, through Seckendorf, to throw away his plighted word, get rid also, it appears, of Wilhelmina's husband, and bring about the double marriage with England after all. The king was struck to the heart by this proof that the emperor, to whom he had been devotedly

1733—1734.

loyal all his life, should tempt him to do what he considered as the act of a scoundrel. Throughout his reign the influence of Austria had been promised to him in securing the succession to Berg and Jülich,[1] and this was the main lever of Seckendorf to move the power of Prussia. But, with the absolute faithlessness which was the tone of courts in that day, the Kaiser had promised his influence for the same succession to two other different candidates, and this seemed to dawn upon Frederick William when, after some negotiation through Grumkow, Seckendorf actually spoke to the king. Seckendorf's words are not known, nor the exact nature of the shock which he administered to Frederick William; enough that it uprooted his faith in the Kaiser and his own self-esteem. Speaking of it afterwards he said, "It was as if you had turned a dagger about in my heart. That man was he that killed me. Then and there I got my death." He spoke of it often in years to come, and would say, with tears running down his cheeks in grief and rage, "Da steht einer der mich rächen wird." "There stands one (Fritz) who will avenge me." So the legacy to Austria was growing. The first king says, "My rights on Silesia I leave intact for my posterity to prosecute." The second, "There stands one who will avenge me."

In 1734 Frederick accompanied, as a volunteer, his father's contingent of 10,000 men to the Kaiser's campaign on the Rhine. Prince Eugene was in command of the Reich's army. But time had dimmed the brightness of the old general's faculty for war, and there was no fighting worthy of attention. The young prince showed uncommon coolness, riding at a foot's pace between the two armies under a hot fire, and conversing tranquilly with the

[1] See chap. i. p. 8.

1734.

generals who accompanied him. This is to be remembered when we come to remark his conduct on a later occasion. A light is thrown on his opinions of the incessant machine-like drill of the Prussian army by a letter of his to Lieutenant Gröben, written on the 17th of August, wherein he says :—"The drill-demon has now got into the Kaiser's people too; Prince Eugene has grown heavier with his drill than we ourselves. He is often three hours at it, and the Kaiser's people curse us for the same." Yet these "Kaiser's people" were "left seven days without bread," and generally were seen to want many things more than drill. At this time his father fell ill, nearly to death, and Frederick saw close to him the liberty and power he desired. The old king recovered, but was never himself again. In the years of weakness which followed he was often represented by his son, whom he began to recognise as a worthy successor, while that son learnt to appreciate the finer qualities in the rough taskmaster who had trained him with so stern a hand. This period was marked by increasing coldness between Frederick William and the Kaiser, by a correspondence of Fritz with Voltaire, and the writing by the prince of a book called the *Anti-Macchiavel,* a work intended as a refutation of Macchiavelli's *Prince,* and full of advanced ideas and noble thoughts as to the duties of a king, who, wrote Frederick, should practise truth and be "the born servant of his people." He meant what he said at the time, but who could be faithful to such an ideal amid the lying, corruption, and chicanery which was the daily life of European courts at that era? More than one of them supplied money for Frederick's necessities, hoping by that means to bind him in golden chains.

As the king found himself gradually failing he drew closer to his son, and many acts of human kindness passed

1740.

between them. The shadow of the coming fate began to creep over the broken man, and softened the rugged outlines of his character. He had put faith in the goodwill of the Kaiser, and found himself betrayed in the matter of Jülich and Berg. He had thought his son a reprobate, and that son was growing all that he could desire. There were strange bear-like hugs between them, not altogether without scratches. In April, 1740, Fritz entered the tobacco parliament when his father was there. The party, contrary to rule, rose on seeing him, in homage to the rising sun. Frederick William was so offended that he had his chair wheeled out at once, exclaiming, "You shall know that I am not yet dead." It was long before he would forgive the courtiers. In May he was disputing with his chaplain as to the light in which some phases of his life would be regarded by the Great Judge before whom he had no doubt that he would soon appear. One point in his favour he clung to; he had never been an unfaithful husband. On the 26th of May he sent for his son, and at sight of him held out his arms. Fritz knelt, and the strange pair wept in each other's arms. The same day the dying king dictated exact instructions for his funeral, ordering that the volleys over his grave should be fired with attention to accuracy of time. His coffin he had long had ready in the palace, made exactly according to his instructions. When they were singing a German hymn to him which contained the well-known words, "Naked came I into the world and naked shall I go," he said, "No, not quite naked; I shall have my uniform on." He picked out good horses as gifts to his friends, saw a last parade from his window, abdicated in favour of his son, inspected his servants in their new liveries, faintly saying, "O vanity! O vanity!" regarded his face in a mirror to see

31st May 1740.

how it looked in the agonies of death, and spoke for his last words, "Lord Jesus, to Thee I live; Lord Jesus, to Thee I die; in life and death Thou art my gain." He died on the 31st of May, 1740, and the destinies of Prussia were henceforth confided to the hands of his son, who, next morning, broke into a passion of tears on seeing a regiment swearing fealty to him; and seven years after concluded a history of Frederick William in these words: "We have left under silence the domestic chagrins of this great prince: readers must have some indulgence for the faults of the children in consideration of the virtues of such a father."

CHAPTER III.

THE STATE OF EUROPE.

18TH CENTURY.

THE eighteenth century has been said, on one hand, to have no history, and, on the other, to be the father of modern history. Whatever truth there may be in either of these phrases it is certain that the period was one of transition not only in the power of states, but in the political ideas of mankind. The eighteenth century began with the dynastic war of the Spanish Succession, it ended with the French Revolution and the birth of those republican institutions which have since modified profoundly the thoughts and actions of civilised men even in countries which still remain monarchical. In its opening years courts and aristocracy were powerful and corrupt to a degree now almost incredible. In old established monarchies such as France and Spain, the contempt of the rich and high born for the poor, who but lived to minister to their pleasures, had already begotten a savage desire for resistance to daily oppression. The working classes were dogs to their masters, but dogs no longer licking the hands which threw occasional scraps to them. Luxury in the upper classes and the growing hatred of the poor, had sapped the strength of nations formerly all-powerful.

But the decay was imperceptible at the beginning of the century, especially in France—the worst offender and most dangerous mine of explosive materials in Europe. France was apparently rising as a monarchy, and by means of the very cynicism which afterwards led to the destruction of the royal house. In the Thirty Years' War, while Europe was being torn by religious struggles, the last that have occurred; Richelieu had strengthened the army in order to assert the supremacy of the Bourbon over the Hapsburg dynasty. While persecuting the Huguenots at home he prepared to support the Protestants abroad. His ambition was to cut off Spain from the Netherlands, and the Kaiser from the northern states of Europe. He had succeeded in both endeavours. The Rhine, both at its source and mouth, was wrested from the hands of the Hapsburgs. The United Provinces and Switzerland were declared legally independent; and France, fairly seated in the towns and fortresses guarding the course of the river, had become little less than the arbiter of Europe. War followed war, the religious question dropping more and more out of sight, and the idea of "the balance of power" rising in its stead. Each court was struggling for its own advantage, and the intrigues which took place round the sick couch of Old Spain were no grander, though their scale was larger, than those of grasping relatives round the death bed of a childless millionaire. No one of the intriguers gave a single thought for the slaughter which must take place, or dreamt of consulting the wishes of the people who would have to die for the furtherance or opponence of schemes concerning which they were absolutely ignorant. Treaties might be called "felonious" or "highway robbery" in the English House of Commons, but there was not a crowned head in Europe into whose brain the idea of

justice entered for a moment. Within and without the borders of their kingdoms justice only meant the assertion of their will by the strong.

It is also remarkable that a wild spirit of gambling had taken possession of society from top to bottom. Mississippi schemes and South Sea bubbles were but one expression of a recklessness which was universal. If common men gambled in shares, monarchs habitually staked with light hearts their empires on the chances of war. And this they did regardless of the social cancers, luxury, vice, misery, which were eating the hearts of nations. While Louis XIV. was spending vast sums on his wars, his mistresses, and his fortifications, Vauban[1] estimated that every tenth man in France was an actual mendicant, five-tenths did not absolutely beg, but were on the verge of starvation; three-tenths were ill at ease, embarrassed with debts and law suits; and even of the remaining tenth—the army, the bar, and the clergy, the high noblesse, the distinguished noblesse, the officials, the good tradesmen and burghers having property, perhaps a hundred thousand families in all—not more than one-tenth were really in easy circumstances. This was the estimate of the great engineer whose business it was to design the fortresses which have descended to our day. The desolation of France was so great that wolves came down out of the hills of Auvergne and ravaged the valley of the Loire. Other countries were equally afflicted, nor was there any hope of justice or mercy for the poor. The success of suits was obtained by bribing the mistresses of royal personages, and great ministers had to begin every diplomatic attempt at a foreign court by obtaining in one way or another the

[1] *Dixme Royale.*

favour of the class least capable of appreciating the real condition of the people.

Yet, in this strange condition of affairs, France was the rising nation, both Austria and Spain receding before her. Alsace, Lorraine, the Rhine fortresses, were hers, and when Frederick came to the throne her army was the largest and had the greatest reputation in Europe. At that time commerce had revived under the hand of Fleury, and her East India Company was growing rapidly, though the people were no better fed or happier for it. All incoming riches went to swell the expenditure and feed the luxury of the court and its small charmed circle. In 1739 D'Argenson[1] wrote that "in time of peace, with all appearance of an average, if not an abundant crop, men are dying round us as thick as flies; they are wretched, eating grass." And in another place he says: "More Frenchmen have died of misery in these two years than were killed in all the wars of Louis XIV." The French court was more ambitious of dictating to the rest of Europe than of saving the lives of the people.

Austria was even weaker. Equally poor from the results of her late wars, she had not even an army. Her forces at home had almost disappeared; she was still in terror of Turkey, and all her neighbours awaited the first opportunity to cut slices from her. The Kaiser spent his life in getting signatures to a piece of parchment which would give a theoretical title to his daughter, instead of filling his treasury and preserving his army as Prince Eugene advised him.

England was comparatively rich, and her people had already won their liberties. A sea power by necessity, she

[1] *Mémoires du Marquis d'Argenson.*

18th Century.

was vaguely yearning for the command of the ocean, and in that pursuit saw as her rivals France and Spain, but chiefly Spain. Commerce and colonies were the direction of her natural development, and the passion aroused by the famous episode of Jenkins's ear, was a natural outburst of the desire which could not be gratified so long as Spain had the virtual monopoly of the Western trade. But her new royal house had hung Hanover round her neck, and caused an unfounded and unnatural jealousy of the rising Prussia. The struggle with Spain at sea was unceasing, though it only took declared shape in 1739. England may therefore be said to have been divided between her natural instincts on the Spanish Main and her artificial interests in Germany, which led her at first to look with disfavour upon Prussia. Her natural allies were the Dutch and Prussia, her artificial the nations with which she at first acted.

Thus, then, France was strong in military power, with a cancer consuming her vitals; Spain, much weakened, and coming into natural collision with England; Austria, weak in her army, and in dissension with Hungary; Italy, a battle-field for all the powers; Russia making her first steps out of barbarism; England growing at sea and rich, but almost destitute of an army; Prussia poor, but strong in her army and in the frugality and discipline impressed upon her by the House of Hohenzollern. But her strength was not appreciated by other powers; the eccentricities of Frederick William had obscured his higher qualities, and no one in Europe knew what was to come out of the stormy youth of the young Frederick.

The armies of Europe were organised very differently from those of our own time. The soldiers were generally recruited for an indefinite period, and might serve for the whole of their vigorous life, or be dismissed to their

homes if the kings did not require their services. The fire-arm of the infantry was a smooth-bore musket, which carried only about two hundred yards, and with very little accuracy, while much time was required to load it. In the time of Frederick William, Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, who was as thorough a drill sergeant as the king himself, introduced the iron ramrod, which quickened the loading; but it is a mistake to attribute the successes of Frederick the Great to this very trifling development. No division or brigade organisation existed, nor was there any tactical unit between the whole army, or such a part of it as might be broken off for particular purposes, and the battalion of infantry or regiment of cavalry. Artillery was very backward, both in material and organisation. The universal practice was to attach two guns, three pounders or six-pounders, to a battalion of infantry, and there remained besides an indefinite number of pieces, sometimes of heavier calibre, which acted directly under the orders of the commander-in-chief of the army. In many cases there were no artillerymen at all with the battalion guns, and in the heat of the fight the guns were commonly forgotten by the commander of the battalion, falling as a rule into the hands of the victors.

The general characteristic of armies so organised was extreme slowness of motion and heaviness of manœuvre. The great victories of Marlborough could not have been won in the manner they were but for what we should now consider a strange supineness on the part of the enemy. When a position was once taken up, generally after many hours spent in marches and deployments, the commander of the force was loth to attempt any movement on the field of battle which might throw his troops into confusion. An army deployed was usually in two lines, each three deep.

[1]8th Century.

To move to a flank, the whole force was thrown into column, and, seeing that the fight was carried on at very close quarters, it was almost impossible to execute such a manœuvre after the battle was engaged. That general who, like Marlborough, had the courage to attack, and the military insight to discover the weak point of the enemy, might indeed, as at Blenheim, cease his unavailing efforts at one point, move his troops away, and direct them against a weaker spot in the enemy's formation; or he might, as at Ramillies, neglect one part of his adversary's line altogether if it could not advance, and throw his whole force against another part. But in such a case success depended upon considerable want of insight on the part of the enemy, and was not attained by any special rapidity of manœuvre on the field of battle.

It is evident that all movements made in the lumbering manner characteristic of that day depended for their execution on the greatest mechanical precision and steadiness of drill; for, if an enemy moving to a flank lost or gained ever so little distance between the companies or battalions, the wheel into line afterwards performed to face the enemy again would present either a huddled crowd or a line torn into tatters. Here, then, we see the very serious advantage possessed by the Prussian army as handed down by Frederick William to his son. The king was himself the great drill sergeant of Europe, and his efforts had been seconded by Prince Leopold, who was equally exact and persevering, while his original faculty was greater. Nor must it be supposed that the training of the Prussian army consisted in barrack-square drills alone; on the contrary, there had already been instituted the practice of those field operations which, under the title of autumn manœuvres, have since become a regular military institution in every

European army. When the Prussian troops first found themselves in presence of an enemy on the field of battle, there was nothing novel to them in the spectacle. They had been accustomed to face a supposed enemy in their mimic campaigns. The habit of attacking and defending under various circumstances had already been formed, and death itself had few terrors for men whose whole life was for the most part a succession of miseries and petty tyrannies—for the hand of military discipline was terribly heavy, and there was no refuge in the law against the oppression of the hardest of military taskmasters. A campaign, with all its privations, was little harder than the daily lot of the Prussian soldier in garrison at home, and actual war brought him at least excitement, praise, and even rewards in money. He probably lived better on the spoils of an enemy's country than on his usual rations; and the interest of the march and the combat was a pleasant alleviation to the fearful monotony of constant drill. We shall see that, in the course of the Seven Years' War, the old Prussian infantry became almost extinguished, but by that time the genius of Frederick the Great had given him so great a moral ascendancy, and he knew so well how to handle the material which he possessed, that up to the very last he continued to win battles when all the odds were against him. By a happy combination of wiliness and audacity he deceived his enemy, and attacked him at a disadvantage.

CHAPTER IV.

FREDERICK ON THE THRONE.—LIBERAL MEASURES.—INCREASE OF THE ARMY.—VISIT TO STRASBURG.—AFFAIR OF HERSTAL. —DEATH OF THE KAISER.—PRAGMATIC SANCTION BREAKS DOWN.—DECISION TO OCCUPY SILESIA.

1740.

1740.

No authentic portraits of Frederick as king exist anywhere. Pesne, a French refugee, and an artist of considerable power, painted him twice—as a Child beating a drum, with Wilhelmina looking on, and as Crown Prince. From these and other sources it is known that he was below the middle height, rather handsome, with oval, aquiline face, and blue-grey eyes of extraordinary brilliancy and vivacity —eyes that spoke the thoughts of the vivid brain behind them, and could terrify or enchant as the mood of the young king might turn. Without doubt his mind was full of schemes for the improvement of his people and their preparation for higher destinies. In many respects he anticipated the progress in civil and religious liberty which has since become the common property of civilised mankind. Indeed there are, even now, portions of Europe where religious freedom, however professedly guaranteed, is not so real as that of the Prussians under Frederick. Less than a month after his father's death the Department

June 1740.

of Religious Affairs sought his decision on the question what was to be done in the case of the Roman Catholic schools for soldiers' children of that faith, which had been abusing their privileges, and turning themselves into centres of proselytism. The answer rings true in that age of religious prejudice: "All religions must be tolerated, and the fiscal must watch (*das Auge darauf haben*) that none of them shall do injury to the others; for here every one shall be saved (*Selig werden*) in his own way." The press also was practically set free, and Frederick instituted a *Literary and Political Newspaper* for the instruction of the people. He abolished legal torture, with which he had himself been threatened during the days which followed his attempt to escape, and made plans for the establishment, or rather development, of the Academy of Sciences on a grand scale. All these reforms were commenced in the first week of his reign, and were efforts to carry out the principle which he announced on the second day, "Our great care will be to further the country's well-being, and to make every one of our subjects contented and happy." There had been famine in the land before his father's death, but the old king had hesitated to open the state corn magazines lest he should be cheated. Frederick the Second opened them at once for the benefit of the poor, and established houses wherein a thousand poor old women were comfortably fed and clad; but, with characteristic economy, he set them to spin. Like Henry V. of England, whom he resembled in many points, Frederick turned away from the companions of his looser pleasures, and to one who tried to be familiar and jocose, said, "I am now king." On the other hand, he sent for all the young men whom he had observed to be steady and capable, and induced them to enter his service. This was the nearest

August 1740.

approach which he made to his father's enlistment of giants. Frederick William sought for masses of flesh; Frederick the Great for massive brains and clear intellects. The one recruited big men by force, the other, bright men by persuasion and benefits. To his mother he gave love, respect, and comfort. He created a new and charming title for her; she was not to be the Queen Dowager, but "Her Majesty the Queen Mother," and he never failed to visit her every day when he was at Berlin, nor spoke to her without hat in hand. He put an end to the shabby style of court so dear to his parsimonious father, and maintained a moderate number of court functionaries. The ridiculous giants were abolished as soldiers, some of them pensioned, others turned into doorkeepers and the like. Their places were filled by new regiments of well-trained soldiers, and he increased the army by about 16,000 men, so that it now mustered 100,000—a grand unit in the forces of Europe.

One trifling incident there was of the nature of an escapade on Frederick's part before the wild leaven was set to work entirely on the soldier's craft. In August he set out on a journey to Cleves, visiting his sister at Baireuth on his way. Wilhelmina found him changed, somewhat stilted and stiff, the kingly robes not yet sitting easily upon him. From Baireuth, instead of going to Cleves, he struck southward to Strasburg, and slipped *incognito* into France as Count Dufour. He hoped even to visit Paris in this easy fashion, but, being recognised as King of Prussia at Strasburg, gave up the idea, and turned back within forty-eight hours. He caught the philosopher, Maupertuis, at Wesel, and had a visit—longed for during many years—from Voltaire himself, at the castle of Mayland near Cleves. As Voltaire went in at the gate,

1740.

he met Councillor Rambonet on his way out, and his mission is the first use of high-handed power which is known of the master of 100,000 soldiers. Herstal, a small place, which with other heritages had fallen in to Frederick William, had refused to own his sway. The Bishop of Liège claimed it, and resisted Frederick William's recruiting parties there. The old king offered to sell it to the bishop, but could arrive at no definite settlement, and let it alone. A week before Voltaire's arrival, Rambonet had paid one visit to the bishop, requiring within two days a distinct answer to the question whether he still intended to abet the rebellious people of Herstal. Still no definite answer could be obtained, and Rambonet had now to deliver to the bishop Frederick's promise of punishment. General Borck was sent with 2,000 men to occupy part of the bishop's proper territory, and lie there at his expense till the prelate should come to a better frame of mind. He occupied Maaseyk, and exacted a contribution of 20,000 thalers besides living at free charges—the requisition system not unknown to the German army in this century. The bishop applied to the Kaiser, who ordered Frederick to withdraw his forces; but not having 100,000 men ready to march against Prussia, took no steps to enforce the decree. Neither French nor Dutch were in better case to help, and the bishop was at last fain to compromise the dispute by paying 240,000 thalers for Herstal, instead of the 100,000 for which he might have had it from Frederick William. The young king retired to Reinsberg, there to spend some time in rest and relaxation. But the Kaiser's interference, unbacked by force, had added one drop more to the cup of bitterness which the Hohenzollerns had held to their lips for many years, and Frederick was soon to

20th Oct.-6th Dec. 1740.

dash it to the ground. On the 20th of October, 1740, about a fortnight after the date of the demand that Frederick should leave the bishop's territory, Kaiser Karl VI. died, and his daughter, Maria Theresa, was proclaimed inheritress of his power, wheresoever it had extended.

Now, if ever, the painful efforts made by the late Kaiser must bear fruit in a general recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction. Couriers sped forth to announce the news in all the embassies of Europe, and to the electors of the Reich who had to choose the new Emperor of Germany. Sharply back from Bavaria, the nearest court, came the reply. It was a protest against the Pragmatic Sanction, and the right of Maria Theresa to a great part of the titles and power which she had assumed. Nay more, Bavaria was prepared to make good the claims of its prince to Bohemia and even part of Austria. France was known to be covertly or openly a natural foe to Austria, and endeavouring to supplant her in various quarters. She was actually ready to back the Bavarian claims.[1] The Saxon and other electors were certainly not warm lovers of the late imperial court. The Czarina of Russia, who might have helped Austria, died opportunely a few days after the Kaiser. Frederick had now to take his part, and he seems not to have hesitated for an instant. He decided that, for the time at any rate, his chances in a war were good; that, later, either France or England must be on his side, and that now or never must he discharge the legacies bequeathed by his predecessors, and take possession of Silesia. His ministers arrived at Reinsberg, but found that his resolution was already taken, and that their advice must be

[1] For an interesting, though one-sided, picture of these various acts of treachery, see the Duc de Broglié's book, *Frédéric II. et Marie Thérèse.*

limited to the "how" and the "when," for the "whether" was as fixed as if action had already been taken. It was clear to his mind that the old political system had expired with the Kaiser, and that they who would hold a good place in the new must bestir themselves. He was for taking Silesia at once, openly, with the strong hand in assertion of his rights; but his ministers advised him to leave an opening for agreement with Maria Theresa by declaring only that he was about to take charge of Silesia and keep it for the rightful owner. A flimsy pretext this, but worthy of the diplomacy of the eighteenth century. All the world knew that the Hohenzollerns claimed Silesia, and for whom else were they likely to hold it? Clearly, Frederick put no trust in this shabby device, for he first veiled his intentions in impenetrable silence, and when the moment came for movement declared openly that he was going to war. Though international law was then established and codified in learned volumes, it had not yet made much impression on the minds of the many, nor was there, except to some extent in England, a public opinion capable of resisting the desire of monarchs for more territory and military glory. Even in England the apocryphal story of Jenkins's ears and other fictitious tales had been sufficient to create a war with Spain. Without asserting that Frederick was morally right—for who can ever be right in making war lightly?—it may be fairly said that he acted in consonance with the spirit of his time, and had as much justice on his side then as could be urged in favour of some wars in our own generation. Granted that he let slip the dogs of war on Europe, it is none the less true that they were straining at the leash, and it was only a question of time when the frail restraint should be worn through.

6th-13th Dec. 1740.

The intentions of Frederick were unknown, though it soon began to be evident that military preparations were on foot. Wily diplomatists sought to penetrate the veil. Even Voltaire under literary pretexts went to Berlin, was received graciously, and took part in a series of gaieties, but failed to discover the secret. At last on the 6th of December it was announced to the foreign ambassadors at Berlin that the king was about to move a body of troops into Silesia, the pretext being that sketched by his ministers at Reinsberg. On the morning of the 13th, after a ball at the palace, Frederick stepped into a carriage and started for Frankfurt on the Oder, having a day or two before addressed his generals in a short speech commencing with these words:—"Gentlemen, I am undertaking a war in which I have no allies but your valour and goodwill."

He had already sent to Vienna an offer[1] to accept a part of Silesia in settlement of his claims, but had little doubt of the answer. On the 13th of December, 1740, the Rubicon was passed, and the philosopher and musician commenced that military career which was destined to place him in the front rank of generals for all time.

[1] The proposal was: To ally himself and his army with Maria Theresa and defend her rights against other claimants; to resign the claims of the Hohenzollerns to Jülich and Berg; to help the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Maria Theresa's husband, to obtain the imperial crown; and to pay a large sum of money into the Austrian exchequer, then sorely in need of it. In return for these services he demanded the four duchies of Silesia, but was prepared to accept instead Savan and Glogau, which were on his frontier.

CHAPTER V.

THE SILESIAN STRUGGLE BEGINS.—BATTLE OF MOLLWITZ.

A.D. 1740—1741.

14th-28th Dec. 1740.

On the 14th of December, Frederick was at Crossen, the place of concentration for his army. The force was about 28,000 strong, one-fourth being cavalry, and thirty-two pieces of artillery, of which twenty were three-pounders, four twelve-pounders, four howitzers, and four fifty-pound mortars. The number of artillerymen was only 166. About 10,000 were to follow from Berlin in two days. At Crossen the king received and put aside a protest from the authorities at Grünberg on the other side of the frontier against his entering Silesia. This was all in proper order, but could have no effect. While the king was at Crossen, the old bell held up by rotten supports, came thundering down. "This is a good omen," said Frederick; "the high are to be brought low." On the 16th of December the march began. The usual proclamations of invaders were issued. "The troops come as friends. There is to be strict discipline; no plunder, and the best treatment for all who submit." At Grünberg, the burgermaster would not actually give the key of the town, but allowed it to lie on the table and be taken up by a Prussian officer without resistance. This

14th-28th Dec. 1740.

diplomatic action may be taken as the type of Silesia's yielding at first. The country made no pretence of objection, and the towns, whispering they would ne'er consent, consented. Let us not forget that Silesia was more than half Protestant, and had suffered under Austrian religious intolerance. Chains of mountains divided it from Bohemia and Moravia; it was fully open to Prussia. The Austrian military governor, Count Wallis, had proposed on the first alarm, some time ago, to throw a garrison into Breslau, the capital of the province and a free city, but the citizens would have none of it, saying that they were quite able to defend themselves, and even drilling vigorously. They sent provisions however into Glogau, where, strongly fortified, Count Wallis placed himself and a garrison, leaving his second in command, General Browne, to attend to the other two strong places, Brieg and Neisse. The march of the Prussians was slow. The weather, wet and stormy, was against them, and floods impeded their progress; but it is quite evident that at this time Frederick was a tyro in war, and did not understand, as he afterwards came to do, the value of celerity in movement. His army moved in two columns, not counting the reserve which was coming up from Berlin. The right column under Schwerin moved up the valley of the river Bober towards Liegnitz; the left, under the king, marched upon Glogau, but reaching Herrendorf, five miles from the fortress, and finding Glogau prepared for defence, remained inactive there during six days—days of great importance, for this and other delays gave General Browne time to organise some sort of defence, to mend the fortifications of Brieg and Neisse, and throw garrisons, each 1,600 strong, and provisions into them. Glogau remained firm in its attitude of resistance. Frederick sent back for a siege train, but finally decided to

invest the place and leave part of the reserve there under the younger Prince of Dessau, whose father had introduced the iron ramrods, and was now left behind to take charge of the defence of Prussia during Frederick's absence. The army lived chiefly by requisitions with promise to pay at a specified future time. The promise was faithfully kept, and it may be said once for all that Frederick's system of feeding his army by forced contributions punctually paid for, was in its nature and essence the same as that practised by the German armies to this day. The country was divided into circles, and the chief men of each circle were made responsible that troops passing through should receive all they required; the word being passed from circle to circle in advance, what number of troops were coming, and the probable date of their arrival. This was the forerunner of the modern *etappen* system which has been derived from Frederick, and modified to suit the new conditions of railways and telegraphs. The king was already business-like, though as yet not experienced in the great operations of war.

On the 28th of December, Schwerin occupied Liegnitz in the early morning, and, about the same time, the king's column pushed forward on march to Breslau, yielding the duty of blockading Glogau to young Leopold of Dessau, who had come up the day before. Browne had put all the pressure he could on Breslau to receive an Austrian garrison; but the people were as firm in denial as they had been to Count Wallis, and all Browne could do was to carry off the archives of the town, transporting them into Moravia. Frederick marched rapidly upon Breslau, seventy miles in three days, and by dint of combined negotiation and pressure of armed parties, had the town opened to him on the 2nd of January. The Austrian authorities were sent

out of the town, and a campaign commissariat was organised, nominally for military purposes. As time went on, the one organisation of the place asserted its power, and virtually became the government, to the contentment of the Protestant majority.

On the 6th of January Frederick marched southward again, having previously detached General Jeetz to the left, to capture Namslau, a small town and castle on the road to Poland and Hungary, then to sweep round and invest Brieg from the east. Schwerin, with the right column, had also made a detachment to his right into the county of Glatz. So far all had gone well, but now the king began to feel General Browne's retarding efforts. Ohlau fell without difficulty, but Brieg, with its garrison of 1,600 good troops, refused to yield, though summoned by General Kleist, detached from the king's force on the south, and General Jeetz on the north. These detachments were left to invest the place, and the king pushed on towards Neisse. Even the little Namslau was stubborn, and Neisse could neither be tempted by good terms nor overawed by the display of the forces of Frederick and Schwerin, who by this time had rejoined the king, after capturing Ottmachau by force. The resistance of such places as Namslau and Ottmachau, though trifling in itself, served to delay the Prussians, who had been already too slow, and gave time for Neisse to prepare her defences. Jeetz received siege guns about the 24th, and quickly captured Namslau, after which he completed the investment of Brieg. Thus the greater part of Silesia was occupied without resistance; only the three fortresses, Glogau, Brieg, and Neisse held out in a determined manner, and the slowness of Frederick had given time for Neisse to be well armed and provisioned, its defence being in the hands of Colonel von Roth, a good and

determined officer. After some preliminary cannonade, a regular bombardment, partly with red-hot shot, commenced on the 19th, and continued at intervals till the evening of the 22nd, Sunday, but without any serious effect. Neisse would not yield, and the siege was converted into a blockade like those of Glogau and Brieg. General Browne hung watching about the mountains, but was driven back by Schwerin as soon as the bombardment ceased, and, shortly afterwards, was superseded by General Neipperg. The Prussian army scattered into winter quarters, only maintaining the three blockades; and Frederick, who had shown no special generalship yet, went back to Berlin. In the seven weeks or so which were spent in over-running Silesia, a change had come over his spirit, as shown in his correspondence. He had begun by talking much of military glory, but from this time forth care sat behind him wherever he went. Silesia was his, except the fortresses, but without glory, and a storm was brewing in Europe, which might perhaps, sweep him away in its course. He spent three weeks in Berlin, and returned to his army full of grave thoughts. For he saw that all Europe was aroused, and that dangerous enmities to himself had awoke. True, his envoy to Russia had been successful, and returned with a treaty of friendship in his pocket; but Austria refused altogether to come to any terms of compromise, and began to arm. His two near neighbours, George of Hanover (George II., of England) and the Elector of Saxony, who was also King of Poland, were determined to support Austria and the Pragmatic Sanction, and Frederick, successful in Silesia, had reason to fear for his safety at home. He left the old Prince of Anhalt Dessau to take certain measures which we shall hear of later, and passed again to Silesia on the 19th of February.

27th Feb.-5th Mar. 1741.

By this time Austria had begun to work with her irregular troops, masking graver designs in rear, and incursions into Silesia began to be made by Hungarian hussars. On the 27th of February, Frederick, still young in war, set out to visit two of the Prussian posts in the head waters of the Neisse river, due west of the besieged town. The hussars heard daily of his movements, and determined to capture him if possible. Visiting Silberberg first, he next went to Wartha, where, fortunately for him, he halted to dine, sending forward a major with a squadron of Schulenburg dragoons. The hussars, thinking that Frederick was with this party, attacked it from ambush, and defeated it with loss, then made off, as their wont was, leaving the way clear for the king, who thus by good luck escaped the results of his carelessness. At this time he seems to have fallen into a fault common among good soldiers. He often did himself what he should have left to subordinates. The excuse for him and for others, who to this day fall into the same error, is that he was learning his work, and was keen in studying every trifling detail. There was enough for Frederick to attend to in the keeping of the blockade, for on the 5th of March an Austrian detachment, 300 foot and 300 horse, succeeded in eluding his vigilance, and slipped into Neisse as a reinforcement of the garrison. The king for his part was strengthening his army by enlistments in Silesia, 600 men coming from Breslau alone in February and March.

At the beginning of March startling news reached Frederick. The draft of a treaty to partition Prussia was lying at St. Petersburg, and only awaiting the signatures of England, Russia, and Saxony. It is clear that the English nation would have acted more wisely if it had buttoned its pockets and rested quietly in an observant

posture. But England was at that time hampered by Hanover, that very inconvenient appendage of her royal house. George II. cared more for Hanover than for England, and was terribly anxious lest the unimportant German state should be eaten up by Frederick, who, however, had quite enough on his hands without meddling with Hanover. So then Russia, after signing a treaty of friendship with Prussia, was intriguing behind her back against her very life. Check to the king. Frederick's counter move was to direct the elder Prince Leopold of Dessau to place some 36,000 Prussian soldiers in camp at Göttin, near Magdeburg, ostensibly for purposes of manœuvre. This force was in a position to march at a moment's notice, either against Saxony or Hanover. The would-be allies who had dreamed of partitioning Prussia were rudely awakened, and no more was heard of the idea for a long time to come. The camp began to be formed on the 2nd of April.

About the same time as the news of the proposed partition reached Frederick, early in March, he heard also that Austria, having found money at last, probably from England, was sending General Neipperg through Moravia with a considerable force to attack Frederick in Silesia. It was not known exactly where Neipperg was, but the king, anxious to concentrate his forces, pressed the younger Leopold to complete the capture of Glogau, which was accordingly stormed during the night of the 8th–9th of March. The action was important as showing the excellent discipline of the Prussian troops, the clockwork regularity of design and movements, and the steady courage of the men. The Austrian garrison was about 1,000 strong, but so well was the operation conducted that the Prussians only lost fifty-eight men killed and wounded. There was no plundering. The feat attracted much notice in Europe,

2nd April 1741.

and greatly raised the credit of the Prussian army. The king was quick with praise and prize-money; he gave Prince Leopold about £2,000., and to the soldiers gifts rising from about 10*s.* to £20. Prince Leopold quickly joined the king at Schweidnitz, helping to threaten Neisse and resist Neipperg if he should advance through the mountains.

Neipperg had now reached Olmütz, and detached General Lentulus with a corps to occupy the mountain gorges in the principality of Glatz; to cover Bohemia, and be ready to assist in the operations upon the Neisse river. Frederick drew in many of his posts and concentrated, very rightly, though against the advice of Schwerin. The Austrian movements were concealed by a veil of irregular cavalry, which annoyed the Prussian outposts. Towards the close of March, Neipperg began his movement over the mountains to the relief of Neisse. The king wished Schwerin to come in from Jägerndorf, where he was posted, but, over-persuaded by him, reinforced him, and himself accompanied the reinforcing detachment. He was at Jägerndorf on the 2nd of April, in an open town, with only some three or four thousand men, utterly unconscious of Neipperg's movements, when some Austrian deserters came in and reported that the whole Austrian army was within a few miles. It was actually at Freudenthal, some fifteen miles in a south-westerly direction, marching upon Neisse, but Neipperg was as ignorant of Frederick's place as Frederick of his. He lost his opportunity, and his slow creeping movements enabled the king to draw in the detachments to Jägerndorf, to send orders to Holstein-Beck at Frankenstein, and to Kalkstein at Grotkau, that they should unite and join him at Steinau, twenty miles east of Neisse, crossing the river

5th-10th April 1741.

by a temporary bridge at Sorgau, which is about twelve miles north by west of Steinau. Kalkstein joined accordingly with 10,000 men. Holstein-Beck did not, but took no notice of the Austrian movements, though Lentulus must have passed very near him. On the 5th headquarters were at Steinau, and Frederick heard that both Neipperg and Lentulus were at Neisse—actually nearer to Breslau than he himself was. On the 6th he moved northwards to Friedland, intending to work round Neipperg's flank and get between him and Ohlau, where the great Prussian siege park was. His intention was to cross the bridge at Sorgau, but the Austrian cavalry had occupied the far end of it, and, after trying the passage, the king found himself baffled. He moved down the river, and crossed on the 8th at Löwen and Michelau. Nothing yet was heard of Holstein-Beck. The same day the king moved towards Grotkau, heard that the Austrians had taken it, marched about seven miles on the road from Löwen to Ohlau, and bivouacked at Pogarell, a small village, during a snowstorm. The force which had been blockading Brieg also joined him. His intention was to attack Neipperg next day, and fight his first great battle, upon which would hang such issues for his kingdom and himself as few young men of twenty nine years old had ever encountered. That night his fevered brain was unvisited by sleep.

Next day (Sunday) there was wild weather. Frederick made all his dispositions for a battle, but did not move, as nothing could be seen twenty paces distant for the drifting snow. Neipperg, however, made a short march as far as Mollwitz, and was thus between the Prussians and Ohlau. Nothing can be a better proof of the crude state of warfare at that time than the fact that the two armies knew

10th April 1741.

nothing of each other's position, though the Austrian and Prussian head-quarters were only seven miles apart. Neipperg even assigned the morrow as a day of rest for his troops; but there was to be no rest for him. Next day, 10th of April, the king's army, which had now but one day's provisions, marched towards Mollwitz in four columns, two on each side of the high road, struggling along through the snow. Frederick heard of the Austrian position from a peasant. Neipperg knew nothing of the king's advance till detachments of Austrian and Prussian cavalry encountered two miles from Mollwitz. Here was a chance for a surprise which a little later Frederick would not have missed, but he had not yet drawn himself out of the dull style of war usual in that age. He was still wrapped in the meshes of the parade-ground and barrack-square, and neither attempted a surprise nor strove to gain any tactical advantage by manœuvre. Instead of this he solemnly and slowly deployed into two lines, each three deep, and advanced on Mollwitz with bands playing and colours flying, giving time to Neipperg to get himself into battle trim. Probably in this his first battle he acted under advice from Schwerin.

Neipperg was at dinner, but gave orders at once to Römer, who commanded his horse, to do what he could to delay the Prussians, who were effecting their deployment about a mile from Mollwitz. His dispositions, like those of Frederick, were to place the army in two parallel lines. The total strength of each army was about the same, namely, 20,000 men; but Neipperg had about 8,600 cavalry of good quality, Frederick only about 4,000 of inferior stamp. On the other hand, the king had sixty guns, which he advanced well in front of his army, while Neipperg had only eighteen. And now mark the difficulties inherent in

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these parade battles. For all the drill which the Prussians had absorbed, they blundered in their movement on the right. Schulenburg, who commanded the cavalry, an officer of pipeclay and parade, muddled his deployment. His right ought to have rested on the village of Hermsdorf, his left to have touched the right of the infantry, whereas he fell short of reaching Hermsdorf, and crowded upon the infantry, so that there was no room for three battalions, which had to drop back at right-angles to the Prussian line, *en potence* as it is called in military phrase. We shall see afterwards that the blunder was lucky, but it was none the less a blunder. Following the example of Gustavus Adolphus at Lützen, Frederick mixed two battalions of grenadiers with his cavalry, which was chiefly on the right, but partly on the left, of his army, interspersing the foot soldiers between the squadrons. The left of the Prussian lines rested on the boggy brook of Laugwitz. The infantry, in two lines, occupied the whole of the centre with the artillery in front of them. Neipperg was getting his army into position in front of Mollwitz, also in two lines, with its right on the Laugwitz stream, its left on the village of Grüningen.

Römer, the commander of the Austrian cavalry, arrived first on the ground. Seeing the Prussian right in difficulties, and being himself in much suffering from the fire of the Prussian artillery, which opened on the Austrian left at two o'clock, he led thirty squadrons at once to the attack of Schulenburg, whom he caught endeavouring to perfect his parade line by extending to the right in column. The Austrians were thirty squadrons, the Prussians ten; and Schulenburg, with his pipeclay and his wheelings, was dashed into wild ruin, sweeping away Frederick himself, who had joined this part of the army. Schulenburg fell

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dead. The Austrian cavalry passed in front and rear of the first infantry line; but the steady discipline of the Prussian foot soldiers, and the strengthening of the flank by the three battalions *en potence*, saved the army. The quick fire of the Prussians, due partly to the iron ramrods and partly to much practice, repulsed the Austrian cavalry, who, however, carried off nine of the Prussian guns. Again and again did Römer charge the Prussian line, but could make no impression upon it. He even swept round to the rear of the second line and charged them, but Prince Leopold, who commanded it, faced the men to the rear and repulsed the charge. Römer himself was killed. The grenadier battalions which had been mixed with the cavalry stood their ground, and even succeeded in attaching themselves to the main line of the infantry amid the whirl and hurry of the horse. This instance of perfect discipline shows very clearly the excellent quality of Frederick's infantry as bequeathed to him by his father. Saving his first terrible blunder at being surprised, Neipperg seems to have acted vigorously. He supported Römer with cavalry from his right wing, and endeavoured to improve the advantage gained by the cavalry by pushing forward an infantry attack under Göldlein. It was an antique style of fighting, good enough according to the spirit of the day; but the Austrian infantry could not advance under the terrible fire of the Prussian artillery and infantry.

The troops fell back, and placing a line of knapsacks for defence, knelt and fired during the afternoon, gradually, however, melting and streaming back. Seeing this, Schwerin, for Frederick was not now present, advanced his whole line, solid as a wall, with military music and display of banners. The demonstration was enough. Neipperg saw that he had lost control over his troops, and gave the order to retreat. The

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sun had just gone down, and the Prussians, much hampered in those days by desire of keeping their ranks trim, did not pursue beyond the village of Laugwitz. The Austrians retreated upon Neisse, passing next day in confusion within two miles of the Duke of Holstein, who made no attempt whatever to destroy them. The Austrian loss in killed, wounded, and missing was rather less than the Prussian—4,400 against 4,613, but they lost nine out of their eighteen guns, besides eight of the nine Prussian pieces which they had captured.

But where was Frederick during the latter part of the battle? When the charge of the Austrian cavalry appeared so successful as to threaten the life of the army, Schwerin, doubtless uneasy at the condition of events, pressed the king to retire. He, affected by the wild rout of the cavalry, and unnerved by want of sleep for two nights, followed his general's advice and rode through the night. He endeavoured to cross the Oder at Oppeln, but was fired at there by a party of Austrian hussars, who had taken possession of the town; thence back to Löwen, where he heard that Mollwitz was a victory, not a defeat, and was again at that place before night. He had not slept for three nights, and had passed through such a turmoil of mind as was perhaps only equalled in his life when he saw poor Katte led out to execution, not knowing but that his own turn might speedily come.

The philosopher Maupertuis, whom Frederick had attracted to his court, was captured by the Austrians, and carried to Vienna. His wish to see a battle led him into a somewhat ridiculous posture. But the same desire has been felt by other great men. It will be long ere man ceases to be a fighting animal.

I have been thus particular in describing the battle of

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Mollwitz and the manœuvres which led to it, because the genius of Frederick the Great as a soldier cannot be appreciated without first understanding the kind of strategy and tactics which prevailed before he placed upon them the mark of his spirit. The designs of campaigns were usually feeble, and directed to no definite end. The art of rapid marching was almost extinct; the intelligent watch of an enemy's movement, which every cadet of to-day understands to be so necessary, would then have been considered extraordinary. On the field of battle the two opposing armies drew themselves up and fired and charged till one of them had had enough of it and retired, usually more or less unmolested by the victor. Brieg was left untouched till the 26th, sixteen days after the battle. It yielded on the 4th of May, after a heavy bombardment, without assault. The king's army lay inactive for three weeks, in order to allow time to fill up the trenches and revictual the place. Neipperg remained in camp about Neisse, and during the rest of this campaign a series of small outpost and cavalry affairs occurred between his troops and the Prussians, in which the name of the future light cavalry leader, Ziethen, first came into the ears of men. He was made lieutenant-colonel for one of his exploits, being then forty-two years old—a "big-headed, thick-lipped, decidedly ugly little man." [1]

[1] Carlyle's *Frederick the Great.*

CHAPTER VI.

SILESIA IS WON.—MARIA THERESA ROUSES HUNGARY.—FRENCH INTERFERENCE. — BATTLE OF CHOTUSITZ. — PEACE OF BRESLAU.

A.D. 1741—1742.

10th April 1741.

THE opening of the trenches at Brieg was signalised by the presence of the Comte de Belle-Isle of France, grandson of the famous Fouquet, whose splendour of living cost him ruin and loss of liberty in the early days of Louis XIV. Comte Belle-Isle was fifty-six years old, a clever, grandiose, intriguing soldier and diplomatist, worthy to carry out the meddling designs of Louis XV., in opposition to the cautious counsels of the aged Fleury. He had set out from France at the end of March, on a journey which had for its object to upset the Pragmatic Sanction, though France, among other powers, had guaranteed it; and to snatch from the House of Austria the Kaisership, which had, from the habit of many years, become, as it were, vested in the Hapsburg family. Though France could not possibly claim the imperial crown for herself, Belle-Isle had determined that it should grace the brows of a German prince, who would be the nominee and the servant of France. He visited the various German courts, and did

10th April-5th June 1741.

in time succeed by diplomatic arts [1] in causing them all to repudiate the Pragmatic Sanction. Finally, he drew them into an arrangement by which Karl Albert of Bavaria was to be elected Kaiser, Frederick to be confirmed in the possession of Silesia, the King of Poland, who was also Elector of Saxony, to take Moravia and part of Bohemia, resigning to the Palatine Elector his claims upon Berg and Jülich. Under pretence of guarding the freedom of election, France was to send two armies of 40,000 each, with reserves, across the Upper and Lower Rhine. She did actually send these two armies in August. The upper army, which was eventually to be commanded by Belle-Isle, crossed by Strasburg, and was destined to support Karl Albert in attacking Austria along the line of the Danube. The lower army crossed near Düsseldorf under Maillebois, with the object of holding in check the Dutch and the English—or rather the Hanoverians with English help; for at this time there had come upon the English also a burning desire to meddle in business which by no means concerned them.

It would seem that Belle-Isle did little with Frederick, but the regular French ambassador, Valori, remained at his camp in a perpetual, though covert, struggle with the English ambassador, Hyndford. The offer of France was to guarantee Silesia to the king, but one day Valori let fall a letter which he had received from home, telling him by no means to allow Frederick to have Glatz county, though that key of Bohemia was one of the points on which he most strongly insisted. The king put his foot on the letter, and, when Valori was dismissed, picked it up and read it. Here then was one power clearly trying to cheat him. On the other hand, England, through

[1] Bribery was freely employed. See *Frédéric II. et Marie Thérèse.*

Hyndford, was protesting friendship and goodwill, while actually voting supplies for the Austrian court. Hyndford was incessant in his pressure upon Frederick to come to terms with Austria, and the king was quite willing, but only on his own terms, which were gradually raised as he perceived himself more and more to be master of the situation. At first England offered him £200,000 to quit Silesia. When George II. tried pressure of another kind, and persuaded the Dutch to join him in calling upon the King of Prussia to retire from Silesia as a step to negotiations for peace with Austria, Frederick had wind of the Joint Resolution before it was presented, and, on the 5th of June, signed a contingent treaty with France, not agreeing to all the grand schemes of Belle-Isle, but only to that part of them which would strengthen his own hands by combining France and Bavaria in operations against Austria upon the Danube. But the English diplomatists were still indefatigable in endeavouring to detach Frederick from the combination against Austria. Hyndford at Strehlen, and Robinson at Vienna, were immensely active in trying to strengthen Austria now; just as active as English diplomatists had been a few short years before in trying to weaken her. And they did, in fact, succeed at last in bringing about an arrangement.

All men of heart must sympathise with the high-spirited young Queen Maria Theresa, whose husband, Francis of Tuscany, was the Austrian candidate for the imperial crown. It was not her fault that the Hohenzollerns had been cheated out of Silesia, nor had her voice been heard when her father promised Jülich and Berg to Frederick William and to the Elector Palatine at the same time. A woman, young, beautiful, high-souled, and impetuous, it must have appeared to her that the whole of

5th June-10th Aug. 1741.

Europe, except England and the Dutch, were acting vilely by her, and that Frederick's attack on Silesia was the deed of a robber and common enemy of mankind. Arch-Duchess of Austria and Queen of Hungary, she was passionately determined to preserve the integrity of her dominions if she could. She had been received with acclamations by her Hungarian subjects, when, at the ceremony of her coronation, she, a bright young queen, and a mother of three months' standing, galloped to the top of the Königsberg, and with flashing sabre cut defiantly towards the four quarters of the world. Since then there had been differences with the Hungarian Diet; but she had all the elasticity and faith of youth, and could not believe but that all would go well. It was a hard task for her to compromise with Frederick, nor could the solicitations of the English ambassador induce her to do so till she had delivered one more stroke for Silesia.

Neipperg, therefore, marched from Neisse in the first week of August, about thirty miles westward along the river Neisse, then crossed it, intending by forced marches to surprise and seize Breslau. But Frederick's information was good, and on the 10th of August he caused Schwerin to occupy that town, free no longer, with 8,000 men. Neipperg fell back, and the king at last began to manœuvre against his enemy's communications, as he ought to have done long ago if he wished to drive him from the intended camp near Neisse. There is nothing worth relating in these movements, which were cut short by diplomatic action. Neipperg's descent upon Breslau having failed, and the two French armies actually crossing the Rhine in August, the unfortunate Maria Theresa yielded at last, and consented to a secret arrangement by which Neipperg was to be allowed to retire in safety, being much needed nearer home. Neisse

was to be given up to Frederick after a sham siege, and Silesia was to be ceded to the King of Prussia, whose army, instead of acting against Austria, would then go into winter quarters. But Frederick attached to this secret treaty one condition, that if it should be divulged through fault of the Austrian court, it was not to be considered binding, and he should be at liberty to repudiate it. The Austrian court did not keep the secret, and all the facts were blazoned abroad; upon which, as we shall see hereafter, Frederick did repudiate it. It is impossible to defend these transactions from the point of view of morality, or even of common honesty, but it is only fair to Frederick to remember that the whole arrangement was made through the medium of England, whose ambassadors were from first to last busy in the transaction. The fact is that every court was intriguing and deceiving, and the only difference was that Frederick, by his energetic action, had placed himself in a commanding position. They were all trying to cheat him, and he cheated them. To use a familiar illustration they treated the young king like the Heathen Chinee in the American story, and hardly had the right to complain when he was discovered to have the bower ace up his sleeve.[1]

On the 14th of September, Karl Albert, with a Bavarian army, strengthened by two divisions, 15,000 men, of the French upper army, his total force being about 40,000 men, appeared before Linz, and occupied that city. Saxony, anxious to secure her share of the spoil, signed a treaty

[1] The Duc de Broglie is highly indignant with Frederick's actions at this time, mainly because they prevented France from becoming mistress of Europe. But his own book shows how vilely France behaved on all sides. It was, as the Duke confesses, a struggle of wits. Frederick's were keener than Fleury's or Belle-Isle's.

19th-21st Sept. 1741.

with France and Bavaria on the 19th. She was capable of putting about 20,000 men in the field. Vienna was in great terror. Bavaria was advancing towards her with 40,000 men, and all Europe seemed to have determined upon the downfall of Austria. General Khevenhüller, who was in command of the Austrian garrison, had but a poor 6,000 men to defend the place. He showed great energy and considerable ability in preparing the town to resist the attack. Maria Theresa was at Presburg, where she had summoned the Hungarian magnates to her palace on the 11th. She told them that they were her only allies in the world, and that she threw herself on their generosity. The rude but chivalrous Magyars were touched, and thereupon voted an "insurrection," that is, a general armament of the country in her favour, and elected her husband co-regent of the kingdom. He arrived on the 20th; the ceremony of his investiture took place on the 21st, and the charming young mother then and there struck a chord of sympathy, which not only thrilled the hearts of the Hungarians, but vibrated throughout the whole of Europe. While the Magyars were swearing, she had her lusty boy held up to them in the arms of an attendant; her husband shouted, "Life and blood for our queen and kingdom," and the wild chiefs repeated the sentiment with cheers, being touched to the heart with the beauty, courage, and weakness of the young queen and mother. The Hungarian militia, a very ancient institution, were called out and furnished, throughout the wars which ensued, a large number of light troops, very similar in nature and habits of fighting to the Cossacks before they were brought into regular regiments within the last few years. This was the turning point of Maria Theresa's fortunes. At the moment she had almost reason to despair, and nothing could have saved her, if, as

Frederick advised, the Bavarian army had marched upon Vienna. But Karl Albert, probably influenced by the French, whose policy would have been endangered if Austria had been completely crushed, remained inactive at Linz, only pushing detachments forward to threaten Vienna from a distance of forty miles. His delay gave time for the Austrians to recruit Khevenhüller's force, and to draw in some of their Italian garrisons to Vienna. On the 16th of October, in accordance with the secret treaty, Neipperg retired unmolested from Silesia, and in three weeks was at Frating, west of Znaim, in the south-west of Moravia, where he awaited orders from Vienna, ready to descend on the flank of any force moving from Linz to the Austrian capital. On the 21st of October, a month after Maria Theresa's successful appeal to the manhood of the Hungarians, Neisse capitulated after a sham siege but very real bombardment, and Frederick returned to Berlin, where he arrived on the 11th of November, having already heard that the Austrian court had divulged the secret of the treaty, and that he was once more free to act as his interests might dictate.

On the 24th of October, the Bavarian force which was threatening Vienna from Mautern, instead of attacking that city, marched northwards towards Prague. The French advanced divisions, which were further back, moved in the same direction under Count Maurice de Saxe, one of the 354 sons of King August the Strong. We shall hear more of Maurice de Saxe hereafter. He was then forty years old, a clever, reckless soldier, devoid of morality and good faith. Among the utterly untrustworthy, famous men of his time, he was one of those to be trusted least; but such as he stood he was the life of this expedition. Further back again from Donauwörth, came the main body of the French upper

24th Oct.-26th Nov. 1741.

army under General Polastron. All these forces marched in a northerly direction upon Prague, leaving a garrison detachment of about 10,000 French and Bavarians, under the Comte de Ségur, to garrison Linz and observe Vienna. From the north came down towards Prague the whole of the Saxon army, 21,000 strong. The combined French-Bavarian-Saxon army was some 60,000 strong, and crept slowly, as was the habit of the time, towards the doomed city with its garrison of 3,000 under General Ogilvy. The concentration took place between the 19th and 21st of November, four weeks from the time of starting. The longest distance marched was about 250 miles, or at the rate of only nine miles per day.

It is difficult to conceive worse strategy than this. Instead of striking at the enemy's capital, almost within grasp, the whole effort is concentrated upon capturing an unimportant town in Bohemia, which must have fallen afterwards. Munich, the capital of Bavaria, was left insufficiently protected, and a weak force remained at Linz and thereabouts, offering a tempting morsel for Khevenhüller to swallow when he was strong enough.

About the same time as the French and Bavarians moved, Maria Theresa's husband, the Grand Duke Franz, marched with about 30,000 men also for Prague, or at any rate to fight the enemy, picked up Neipperg at Frating on the 7th of November, and Lobkowitz at Neuhaus in Bohemia, so that he was at that time actually stronger than the allies. But like them he lingered on the way, and only arrived in the neighbourhood of Prague on the 26th, in time to learn that, the night before, the town had been stormed by a threefold attack, and that Ogilvy and his garrison were prisoners. Upon this the Grand Duke Franz fell back into the broken and boggy country near Budweis.

19th Dec. 1741-18th Jan. 1742.

Belle-Isle was to have commanded the French army which attacked Prague; but, when the time drew near, he was sick of rheumatic fever, and Field Marshal Broglio was sent from France to take his place. He arrived at Prague about Christmas time; Karl Albert having started from Munich on the 19th of December. The Grand Duke Franz also left his army and went southwards towards Vienna.

Meanwhile Frederick holding himself free from the secret treaty with Vienna because it had been divulged, drew closer the bonds of his alliance with France and Bavaria, signing on the 4th of November the ratification of a definite contract with the allies. On the 8th he signed a separate treaty with Saxony, arranging the boundary between Silesia and the Moravian-Bohemian country, now supposed to be among the dominions of the King of Poland, who called himself also King of Moravia. Frederick had in his mind at this time the design of an expedition which might perhaps undo the mischief wrought by the French and Bavarians when they quited the Danube for Bohemia. His idea was to unite with the French and Saxons and push downwards through Moravia in support of the Comte de Ségur, and perhaps arrive even at Vienna itself. It was indeed time to do something, for Khevenhüller was assembling a formidable Austrian force. On the 31st of December Khevenhüller issued from Vienna with 15,000 men, sending General Bärenklau with 10,000 through the Tyrol by Berchtesgarten to attack Munich itself, now destitute of any proper force to defend it.

Though Frederick was at this period still inexperienced in war, and therefore not to be counted as a model for imitation, we begin to see in him that burning energy and force of character which afterwards made him the first leader of his time. On the 18th of January he left Berlin

Jan. 1742.

for Dresden, where he remained twenty-four hours, succeeding during that short period in persuading the unwilling Saxon court and generals to fall into his scheme. Thence in that wild winter weather he rushed into Bohemia, visiting the Prussian outposts there, and arrived at Glatz on the 24th of January, having travelled about 700 miles, and done much important business in one week. Another mark of his peculiar spirit also presents itself at this time. He had sent in December the younger Prince Leopold to occupy Glatz, and Schwerin to capture Olmütz. Both operations were performed with ease and success, the Austrian forces being weak. In the extremity of danger to Glatz, the wife of the commandant vowed a new robe and decorations to an image of the Virgin Mary there, if only by her aid Glatz might succeed in repulsing the invaders. We have seen that the town was not so fortunate, but when Frederick appeared there he said with mixed good nature and contempt for the forms of religion which had been forced down his throat as a youth, "Never mind, the Virgin shall have her new coat all the same," and he did accordingly supply her with one at his expense.

The day of Frederick's arrival at Glatz, 24th of January, 1742, was memorable for two other occurrences of high fame, the one practical, the other empty of all power in the world. The first was the capture of Linz, and of Ségur's 10,000 men by Khevenhüller. The commander and garrison were suffered to retire on promise that they would not serve against Austria for a year to come; the second was the election of Karl Albert of Bavaria to be Kaiser of Holy Reich. Belle-Isle's schemes had arrived at their fulfilment, with what value or want of value to France and Europe we shall presently see.

It would be vain and wearisome to detail the episodes in

5th Feb.-5th April 1742.

the short campaign which followed. Frederick made his rendezvous at Wirchau on the 5th of February, and did push Schwerin forward with an advance guard of about 5,000 men as far as Stein, some forty or more miles short of Vienna. The cavalry under Ziethen even pushed within twenty miles of the capital. But Frederick could not drag his allies with him. The French contingent,[1] about 5,000 men, gave up the game altogether, and the Saxons could not be got to stir out of Moravia. There was a useless siege of Brünn which failed entirely for want of siege artillery, which the so-called King of Moravia refused to send, saying he could not afford it, though he had just spent an immense sum of money upon a single green diamond to embellish his vaults at Dresden. Early in March the effects of the Hungarian "insurrection" began to appear in the shape of clouds of irregulars who swept over the Carpathians, threatening Moravia and even Silesia.

Worse news soon came to Frederick. By the irony of fate, on the very day, 12th of February, 1742, when Karl Albert, ill with gout and gravel was being crowned Emperor at Frankfurt, the wild irregulars of Bärenklau's force occupied Munich under their cruel leader Mentzel, and on the 25th of February it was decided at Vienna to push forward a strong army against the allies. As neither the French nor the Saxons would fulfil their engagements, Frederick relinquished his purpose, and was back at Wirchau on the 5th of April, exactly two months after he had started on this futile campaign. But he had in the meantime sent orders home that the elder Prince Leopold should join him with 20,000 men, which accordingly Leopold did later, and was sent with part of them to drive back the Hungarian

[1] The Duc de Broglie defends his ancestor, but only makes it clearer that Broglio deliberately spoiled this design of Frederick.

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irregulars in the direction of Troppau-Jablunka, while the rest of them should reinforce the king and the younger Leopold, whose forces were to go into cantonments at Chrudim and its neighbourhood. Prince Dietrich, of Anhalt, another son of old Leopold, was left at Olmütz with a small force to waste the country, sweep in all possible provisions, and join his father. He carried out the service in a masterly manner worthy of the stock which had invented most of the drills of Frederick William's army, and introduced the iron ramrods.

Frederick was greatly irritated at the results of this short campaign, and the untrustworthiness of his allies. Writing of it afterwards he said that his want of success was due to the fact that the French acted like fools, and the Saxons like traitors.

He spoke of winter campaigns generally with aversion, as likely to ruin the best army, and defended himself for having undertaken them on this and other occasions, by saying that each one in which he had engaged was entered upon from necessity, and not from choice. Frederick was now growing in self-confidence, and did not hesitate to pull up sharply old Leopold when he ventured to stray from the orders given him, at which naturally enough the old warrior took some offence, but was even more strict in the performance of his duty. Schwerin on the contrary, who had been recalled from the front, was offended at the preference given to old Leopold for the Troppau-Jablunka expedition, and retired in dudgeon to Berlin.

On the 11th of May Frederick found that Prince Charles's army,[1] about 30,000 strong, was advancing upon him, probably with the intention of stealing round his right flank,

[1] Prince Charles of Loraine had now taken command of the Austrian army, and held it for a long time.

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cutting him off from communication with his allies at Prague, and capturing his magazines, which were on the other side of the Elbe at Königgrätz, Nimburg, Podiebrad, and Pardubitz. The concentration of his troops on Chrudin was effected on the 13th, and he then commanded an army about 28,000 men strong. The king sent to Broglio for reinforcements, which the old marshal, who was more than half-paralysed, refused, trembling lest the attack should be directed against him instead of Frederick. On the 15th all indications showed that the Austrians would turn the king's right, and he accordingly marched with a strong advanced guard of cavalry and grenadiers towards Kuttenberg, on the road to Prague, leaving orders with the younger Leopold to follow him next day, as soon as bread had arrived from Königgrätz. The bread did not come, but Leopold was wise enough to march without it, carrying meal instead. Leopold did well in advancing, for although he did not know it, the Austrian advanced guard had been at Chotieborz on the morning of the 15th, and by the direction of its march, would come into collision with the king. The want of a proper intelligence department in the armies in those days is very apparent. Here were two considerable armies manœuvring with deadly purpose, within fifteen miles of each other, yet neither knowing the whereabouts of the other.

On the night of the 15th Frederick encamped at Podhorzan and saw Prince Karl's advanced guard at Ronnow, within three or four miles. Next day Frederick pushed on to Kuttenberg, sending orders to Leopold to march to Czaslau. But Leopold now found himself in presence of the Austrian main force, and only reached Chotusitz with great difficulty in the first half of the night. He sent no less than four messengers to the king, of whom only one arrived (a good

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lesson here) saying that he expected to be attacked next morning, and desired instructions and reinforcements. At two or three in the morning, the answer came back, ordering him to take up a position near Chotusitz, and that the king would join him at seven o'clock, bringing bread with him.

In the grey of the morning, the 17th of May, 1742, Leopold, in accordance with Frederick's instructions, drew up his forces on the flat ground about Chotusitz. His main cavalry force, under Buddenbrock, was on the right, resting its right flank, which was a little advanced, against a small tract of bog and ponds. His left, also supported by cavalry, extended westward of Chotusitz (which he held as his centre) and beyond the Brtlinka brook, after which it ended in the air, having been intended to reach a park wall further on the left, but falling short of it. The Austrians had been marching in the night with the intention of making a night attack, but had failed to arrive in time. Their advance was made in two lines, like the formation of the defending army, with cavalry on both wings. Prince Charles was, as we have seen, rather superior in force to Frederick's power, even when the king joined Leopold, and placed his reinforcements in the second line between seven and eight o'clock. Jomini gives the relative forces as—Austrians, 30,000; Frederick, about 24,000; but Carlyle, who is very careful as to details, counts the Prussians as 28,000. The Austrian centre was divided by the Brtlinka brook, so that their left wing was over-lapped by Frederick's right, that is, by Buddenbrock's cavalry, while the Austrian right extended further east than the left of the Prussians. Immediately upon Frederick's arrival, his artillery of the right wing, always well in front of the infantry, opened fire upon the cavalry of the Austrian left; and Buddenbrock,

who had hitherto been concealed by a slight elevation, was ordered to launch his cavalry against that of the enemy. Bredow led the charge, which struck fiercely on the Austrian flank, driving in the first line of the southern horsemen. But now a stroke of ill fortune befell the Prussians. As, in the disorder which always follows a cavalry charge, they came upon the second line of the Austrians, and were checked by it; the king's advance guard, under Rothenburg, pressed on to support them, having in front of it a regiment of hussars in green uniform. The dress was new to the eyes of some of the Prussian cavalry, who raised a cry of, "The enemy is in rear of us!" Panic then prevailed, and Buddenbrock's cavalry only rallied behind the infantry of the second line. Rothenburg, however, restored the fortune in this part of the field, by repelling the pursuing Austrian cavalry, and pushing on even to the flank of the enemy's infantry. There was now much confusion here, neither side prevailing for a time. Further eastward the Austrians were successful. The left of the Prussians had become over-stretched in the attempt to find a rest for the flank, so that Chotusitz was weakly defended by only half a regiment. The cavalry of that wing could not act with effect in the broken ground, and were themselves outflanked by the Austrian cavalry. The Austrian infantry captured Chotusitz partially, the Prussian still holding to its northern extremity, and quelling most gallant charges of the enemy by their steadiness and rapidity of fire. But, instead of charging the Prussian flank or rear, the Austrian cavalry galloped off to take and plunder the Prussian camp. Thus, then, to westward, the fight was hanging in suspense: to eastward the Austrian right wing had gained some advantage, but had lost its cavalry by yielding to the temptation so dear to holiday tacticians of

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entering the enemy's camp. Chotusitz was on fire, and interposed with its torrid heat between the two wings of the Austrian army. Arguing after the event, it is always easy for library students to see what ought to have been done; but it is only the true general who can so read the features of a battle during the midst of the turmoil as to see clearly when and how an opportunity has arisen. In this battle we see for the first time that such military vision was possessed by Frederick. In the critical moment he ordered his whole right wing to charge the Austrians, while a weaker general would probably have reinforced his left. The charge was completely successful; the Austrian left, outflanked, began to fall back in confusion on its right; and Prince Charles, to avoid a worse fate, gave the order for a general retreat, which was not pushed as it ought to have been by the Prussians.[1] The Austrian loss in killed, wounded, and missing, was about 7,000; the Prussian between 4,000 and 5,000; but the Prussian loss in killed, principally owing to the cavalry panic, was 1,905 against 1,052 of the Austrians. Above 1,200 of the Prussian cavalry had been destroyed during the day.

Slight as had been the military results of the battle in favour of Frederick, they were enough to dispirit the Austrian court, which had as it were lost its throw of the dice. Maria Theresa was now ready to make peace with Frederick, and it is said that he became possessed, shortly after the battle, of a letter from Fleury to the Queen of Hungary, offering to make peace with her secretly, and leave the king to her tender mercies. Once more he saw, or supposed, that his allies were cheating him, and again played his concealed ace. On

[1] The Duc de Broglie imagines that there were some elaborate reasons for this failure to pursue. It was a common fault of that time.

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the 11th of June he signed at Breslau a treaty by which Silesia and even Glatz were yielded up to him.[1] When Belle-Isle went to him in person to remonstrate with him for treating the King of France badly, Frederick confounded the diplomatist by producing the letter from Fleury to the Austrian court, offering peace on the basis of leaving Prussia for Maria Theresa to deal with as she pleased. It is said that Belle-Isle's equanimity was so disturbed that, on coming out of the king's presence, he tore off his own wig and dashed it on the ground. One can fancy the flash of Frederick's eye as he produced the compromising letter, which was probably written without the knowledge of Belle-Isle. Certainly in those days, truth, instead of finding refuge in the breast of kings, was no where treated with such contempt as in the Courts of Europe.

[1] The Duc de Broglie can find no proof of this story of the letter. But it is at least certain that the French agent at St. Petersburg was trying to reconcile Russia and Sweden, though Frederick had bargained that they were to be kept separate so as not to act against his northern and north-eastern frontiers.

CHAPTER VII.

SILESIA IS PRUSSIANISED.—FREDERICK'S HABITS.—DIPLOMATIC COMPLICATIONS.—PRUSSIAN ARMY AGAIN STRENGTHENED.—VOLTAIRE AT BERLIN.—FRENCH INVADE THE NETHERLANDS.—PRINCE CHARLES CROSSES THE RHINE INTO ALSACE.—FREDERICK STRIKES IN.—AUSTRIANS INVADE SILESIA.

A.D. 1742—1745.

1742.

FREDERICK was now thirty years old, and had learnt much in the last two or three years of his life. The idea of glory which had dazzled him when first deciding on his expedition into Silesia, had now become dim and cold; moreover he had gained what he sought, and vindicated the claims of his house to the rich territory out of which it had been cheated. It was now his hope to settle down to the arts of peace, and on his return to Berlin he busied himself chiefly with the government of the kingdom, the improvement of his capital, and the reorganisation of Silesia in a Prussian sense. So successful were his measures to this end that, under his fostering care, Silesia became six or eight times as valuable to the Prussian crown as it had in former days been to that of Austria. There are few instances on record of a territory lately conquered, becoming so thoroughly

loyal and happy as Silesia under Frederick. He was absolutely tolerant of all religions, though he exacted obedience alike from priests and parsons. As much piety as they liked and could produce he would have, and perfect freedom of worship; but there must be no interference by religionists with the act of government or the secular arm. He himself appointed Cardinal von Sinzendorf vicar-general of Silesia, and gave the Pope, who protested, to understand that he was master in his own territories. Protestant, and even free-thinker as he was, he soon became excellent friends with the Holy Father. His kingdom was thoroughly well-managed; he possessed his father's appetite for the details of work with a liberality of feeling all his own, and while building a new opera-house at Berlin, and developing the academy of sciences, while creating the little country-house and establishment of Sans-Souci, he busied himself with law reform, and greatly increased the army; to which he added new perfections in drill and tactics, derived from his past experiences of war. He seemed to unite in himself various and apparently opposite qualities. The stern king who held his own against the diplomacies and the armies of Europe, was such an exquisite musician that he could melt his audience to tears by his performance on the flute, wept like a child when his mother died, and was known to lament as a weakness in himself that he had more feeling than other men. His admiration of Voltaire and his works was almost passion, yet when that famous man visited him at the baths of Aix-la-Chapelle, being sent by Fleury to try whether private friendship could be used for diplomatic purposes, he had no more success with Frederick than Belle-Isle, or any other professional diplomatist. The King of Prussia saw as clearly in politics as on the field of battle. His own interests and

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those of his country were the objects upon which he fixed his eyes, nor could any wheedling turn him to the right or left out of the straight path to this goal.

Thiébault, in his *Souvenirs de vingt-ans de Sējour à Berlin*, gives an interesting description of the king's habits which he commenced on coming to the throne, and continued throughout almost the whole of his life.[1] Having determined to become an early riser, he ordered his servants to wake him at four o'clock. But like meaner men in the same case, he at first could not shake off the dulness of his faculties, and dropped to sleep again, even entreating his servants for a little more slumber. He was, however, determined to vanquish this weakness, and appointing a special servant for the purpose, commanded him, under pain of becoming a common soldier for life, to put a cold wet towel on his face every morning at four o'clock. This rough measure conquered his sleepiness, and all the rest of his life, until near the end, he rose at that early hour. The practice of quick dressing which his father had impressed upon him as a boy never forsook him. His military dress and high boots which he always wore were slipped on at once, and in a quarter of an hour he was ready. He had neither slippers nor dressing-gown; only at times when he was very ill did he use some kind of linen gown, but even then he had on his military boots. Once in the year, and once only, he discarded the boots, and appeared in silk stockings: it was when he went to his wife's court to congratulate her upon her birthday.

As soon as he was dressed his letters were brought to him by a page, and he examined them with the greatest care to discover if the seals had been broken or not; acting

[1] Preuss gives another description of Frederick's day. It differs slightly in some details, but seems to refer to a later period.

thus as a check upon his secretaries. All post-masters were obliged to send the king a list of any letters for him which passed through their hands, with the address of each person who wrote them; no one being allowed to write to the king without leaving their addresses with the post-master to whom they delivered the letters. Frederick doubled the sheet of paper according as he decided to answer favourably, to refuse or to reserve the letter for future consideration. About eight o'clock, one of his four secretaries entered, and, while the king breakfasted, read in a few words the gist of each letter, Frederick dictating the nucleus of an answer. If the writer was a woman he never failed to say, "It is a woman, you must write courteously to her." His private letters he kept to himself. All the secretaries were then employed until four o'clock in writing the answers, no clerks being employed. Though Frederick had not time to read all the answers, he picked out a few at random, and read them as a check upon the accuracy of his secretaries. These secretaries were little less than slaves to duty. They were almost always unmarried, for Frederick would not trust married men to keep secrets from their wives. When offering Counsellor Müller, who was married, a place of secretary, he said: "You will never forget that, for the good of my service, you must neither have family, nor relations, nor friends." Frederick was perfectly indifferent as to the form in which he was addressed, or to any apparent want of respect for his person; but it came to be known that any one who wrote to him had better complete what he had to say on one side of a sheet of paper, otherwise his letter was sure to be ill-received.

At nine o'clock, when the secretaries had been dismissed to their task, it was the turn of the first aide-de-camp, with

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whom Frederick arranged all his military business for the day. From ten till twelve the king either attended military exercises or devoted himself to literary work, music, or private correspondence, and between ten and twelve he gave audience to individuals who wished to see him. Nor was this a mere matter of form, for during this interval of peace after the conquest of Silesia, the king proclaimed that he was ready to see on business any of his people who might desire an interview with him.

At twelve o'clock precisely the king dined, with guests whom he had invited never earlier than ten o'clock the same morning. He ate with much appetite, and had a set of cooks of different nations, who had each to dress the dishes of their own countries. The only special tastes of the king were for much pepper and spices and good fruit, of which he ate largely. His favourite wine was champagne. He was always gay at table, and full of repartee. After dinner Frederick generally walked, and so fast that his attendants could hardly keep pace with him. After signing his letters at four o'clock, he did whatever business was required with regard to the academy, to the schools of the country, and generally to subjects of art and literature. At six o'clock he had a concert, in which he himself performed on his favourite instrument; nor did he cease this diversion till very late in life, when his teeth were all gone and he could not produce the notes he desired. The concert lasted an hour, after which there was bright conversation till supper at ten o'clock. This meal was given up during the Seven Years' War, Frederick's digestion being no doubt impaired by the hardships of the campaigns. By eleven o'clock, at latest, the king was in bed.

Such were the habits of this remarkable man, of whom his worst enemies have never said that he failed in devo-

tion to business and hard work for the good of the Prussian crown and country. It was a life for the most part of severe self-denial; and no one who studies his character with care can fail to be convinced that Frederick loved peace rather than war and truth more than diplomacy. His early desire for glory was natural enough in so young a man; but it soon disappeared, and if his policy was tortuous it was because no straight path could possibly be pursued among the intricacies of facts and the craft of other courts.

The court of Berlin became at this time the centre of European diplomacies. England was trying to draw Frederick into a war against France; France was equally busy in pressing for his alliance against England and Austria. Frederick desired, in the first place, a peace which should leave him in possession of Silesia, but if that were not to be had, then such a balance in the war as should weaken both sides by degrees and prevent either of them from having force to spare for the attack of Prussia. He refused to join France, and endeavoured, without success, to deter England from meddling with her troops. He also conceived a project of forming an association of the circles of the Reich in order to form a neutral army, but the small states shivered with terror and could not be got to move. To strengthen his diplomatic game he strongly fortified Glogau, Brieg, Neisse, Glatz, and Cosel, and increased his army by 18,000 men. As Voltaire said of him, "Princes nowadays ruin themselves by war, Frederick enriched himself by it."

While Frederick was thus strengthening himself, the war continued with great advantage to the Austrians. The old and semi-paralysed Broglio was shut up in Prague, where he insisted on retaining the command, though Belle-

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Isle was the life of the defence. The greater part of the French upper army had been wasted, and was now besieged, and Maillebois, with the lower army, was ordered to advance to the assistance of the garrison of Prague. It is true that his movement caused the temporary raising of the siege, but he obtained no footing in Bohemia, and, falling back, became inactive in Bavaria. Broglio made use of the opportunity to escape from Prague with a portion of the garrison, and took the command out of the hand of Maillebois. An Anglo-Hanoverian force joined the Austrians on the Rhine, and gave Maria Theresa a distinct superiority in those quarters, and on the 27th of June, 1743, was fought the battle of Dettingen, which was as honourable to the regimental officers and rank and file of the English army as it was absurd in the muddle made by the commanders. English-Hanoverians and Austrians together were somewhat more than 40,000 strong, all paid by England, which was at this time pouring out its treasure with a freedom and for a cause now rather astonishing. But for English money the war would have collapsed long before. The French marshal, Noailles, with about 58,000 men, had completely out-manœuvred the English commander, if indeed that may be called a manœuvre which consists in one side sitting still and becoming surrounded, with its communications cut and a river to be crossed in face of the enemy before the army can get its breakfast. The fine old quality of British doggedness saved at Dettingen, as it has often done before and since, the military honour which the generals had compromised. George II. himself was in command, and spent a considerable proportion of the time during which the battle raged standing in front of his Hanoverian troops in the preposterous position of a fencing master. He and Lord Stair had brought the army into its

trouble, and the king's only idea now was to stand in a defiant attitude and let the troops pull themselves out of the difficulty as they best could. By sheer bull-dog courage the English portion of the force found its way over the bridges, and did in fact get its breakfast without at all knowing that it had done anything heroic. Prague had fallen on the 17th of December, 1742, Marshal Belle-Isle having made a brilliant retreat out of the town with the small remnant of the original French upper army. Thus, everywhere, Austria was successful, and Frederick had reason to fear for himself unless the tide of conquest could be stayed. He explains in the *Histoire de Mon Temps* that he feared lest France should abandon the cause of the emperor, which would mean that the Austrians, who now boldly spoke of compensation for the war, would turn their arms against himself. Frederick knew that when Maria Theresa, now at peace with him, had complained to George II. of the cession of Silesia made by the advice of England, George had replied in words which distinctly pointed to a retrocession of the province: "Madame, ce qui est bon à prendre est bon à rendre." He learnt also that England and Austria intended to force a peace upon France, leaving Silesia to the tender mercies of Austria, and that Saxony, at this time or later, joined these confederates.

He now saw that he would be again obliged to step into the arena, and in the latter part of 1743 he sent Count Rothenburg to the court of Versailles. Voltaire had shortly before paid him a visit at Berlin, hoping to draw him into an alliance with France. Frederick was very friendly, but it must be confessed rather "chaffed him" when he tried to diplomatise. All that Voltaire said, he had taken into account already, and when the brilliant

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writer sent him in one day a paper gravely pressing upon him the danger which threatened him from Austria, Frederick wrote in the margin—

> "On les y recevra, Biribi,
> A la façon de Barbari, mon ami!"

But Rothenburg's message was serious, and France was trembling, not for her conquests, but for her own territory. After the battle of Dettingen the victorious Anglo-Hanoverian force was to cross the Rhine above Mayence, and march into Alsace, while Prince Charles of Lorraine, with a strong Austrian army, was to pass near Basle and occupy Lorraine, taking up his winter quarters in Burgundy and Champagne. The English crossed without any check and moved on to Worms, but the Austrians failed in their attempt. Worms became a centre of intrigue, which Frederick afterwards called "Cette abyme de mauvaise foi." The Dutch were persuaded by Lord Carteret to join the English, and they did at last send 14,000 men, who were never of the least use. Lord Carteret also detached Charles Emanuel, King of Sardinia, from his French leanings, and persuaded him to enter into the Austro-English alliance. It was clear that action could not be long postponed, and Frederick began to recognise the necessity of a new war.

His first anxiety was to guard himself against interference from his northern and eastern neighbours. He secured, as he hoped, the neutrality of Russia by marrying the young princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, afterwards the notorious Empress Catherine, with the Grand-Duke Peter of Russia, nephew and heir to the reigning Empress Elisabeth. The princess had been brought up in Prussia,

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and her father was a Prussian field-marshal, while her mother was the sister of the heir-apparent of Sweden. A second strengthening marriage was made, namely, that of the Princess Ulrica, Frederick's sister, to the same heir-apparent of Sweden. Thus strengthened, as he hoped, in his rear and flank, and having made the commencement of a German league called the "Union of Frankfurt," by which Hesse and the Palatinate agreed to join Frederick and the Kaiser, he concluded on the 5th of June, 1744, a treaty which brought France also into this alliance. It was secretly agreed that Frederick was to invade Bohemia, conquer it for the Kaiser, and have the districts of Königgrätz, Bunzlau, and Leitmeritz to repay him for his trouble and costs; while France, which was all this time at war with Austria and England, should send an army against Prince Charles and the English. In March, 1744, England had narrowly escaped invasion, and readers of the present day will do well to consider that less than a hundred and forty years ago an army of 15,000 men, under the Count de Saxe, was considered a sufficient force for the purpose of seating Charles Edward upon the English throne. There was absolutely no defensive force in the kingdom. The invasion was prevented, not by any action of the English fleet, but by a storm, which dashed the whole flotilla to pieces, steam not having been invented in those days. Let us also remark with thankfulness that after the collapse of the invasion there was a general press for recruiting the army and the fleet, at which time a thousand men were taken out of the gaols of London and Westminster alone, to say nothing of other gaols in the country, and sent to serve the king, with pay of sixpence a day.

The first stroke of the coming war in Germany was

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delivered by France. Louis XV. sent a large army into the Netherlands, under two good leaders, Noailles and Maurice de Saxe. Urged by his mistress, the Duchesse de Châteauroux, he joined it himself early, and took the nominal command early in June, carrying with him the duchess and an immense train, which included even a theatrical company. The towns rapidly fell before him, and Marshal Wade, with the Anglo-Dutch-Hanoverian army, sat still and looked at the success of the French. But on the night of the 30th June–1st July, Prince Charles crossed the Rhine by an operation which is worth the study of military students, and invaded Alsace, the French army of observation falling back before him. Louis XV. hurried back to interpose between the Austrians and Paris, and reached Metz on the 4th of August, where he was stricken with a dangerous illness, and all France was plunged into grief and prayers for the "well-beloved king," who was afterwards to be such a curse to the nation. Maurice de Saxe was left in the Netherlands with 45,000 men. Thus the French army was paralysed, and the Austrian army in its turn was actually invading France. At this time Frederick struck in. He sent word to the king that though all the terms of their arrangement had not yet been fulfilled, he would at once invade Bohemia, and deliver a stroke against Prague which would certainly cause the retreat of Prince Charles with his 70,000 men. If the French army would follow Prince Charles in his retreat, Frederick would attack him, and between France and Prussia the Austrian army would certainly be crushed, and Vienna be at their mercy. This was no doubt an excellent plan of campaign, but, like the previous operations concerted with Broglio, it depended for success upon the good faith of the French, and this turned out to be a

broken reed. On the 7th of August the Prussian ambassador at Vienna gave notice of the Union of Frankfurt, and withdrew from the court of Austria; and on the 15th the Prussian army was put in march upon Prague.

Frederick's forces moved in three columns, the total strength being over 80,000; two columns marched through Saxony, one on either side of the Elbe. Frederick commanded that on the south side, the younger Leopold that on the north. The third column under Schwerin marched from Silesia by Glatz. Besides these three columns there was another force of 20,000, which remained in Silesia; destined, if necessary, to create a diversion by threatening Olmütz. Frederick, anxious not to break with Saxony, did not occupy Dresden, though his flotilla with siege train and provision for three months passed up the Elbe. Maria Theresa was now again in great danger, but as usual retained her high courage, and once more called forth the enthusiasm of her Hungarian subjects, who sent swarms of wild troops, horse and foot, to the seat of war. Frederick's march was unchecked, but his flotilla of 480 boats hung for ten days, delayed by obstructions which the Austrians placed in the Elbe at Tetschen, on the Saxon frontier, where the river, and now the railway, thread their way through the craggy precipices known as the Saxon Switzerland. On the 1st of September the three columns met before Prague, which had better defences than in the last campaign, and a garrison of some 16,000 men, 4,000 of whom were regulars and the rest militia, Hungarian and otherwise. The siege artillery came up on the 8th of September, and during the night of the 9th the bombardment commenced; an important redoubt on Ziscaberg was captured on the 12th, and on the 16th the garrison surrendered. Thus, one month after the commencement of

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the march Prague was captured, and the campaign opened by a brilliant feat of arms.

In later years Frederick's opinion was, that he ought now to have strengthened himself in the part of the country which he had won, seizing magazines which Bathyani had established in those parts, and watching events ready to strike in at the right moment. His own plan at the time was to move south-west, beat Bathyani and capture his magazines; then move to meet Prince Charles on his way through the passes of the Bohemian mountains. Belle-Isle advised another course of action, which the king, paying too much respect for Belle-Isle's ability, adopted, contrary to his own opinion. Leaving a small garrison in Prague, he moved to Budweis and Neuhaus, thus threatening Austria, but leaving his own flank and communications exposed to attack. His heavy artillery was left in Prague. The result was that Bathiyani with his irregulars, not having been destroyed, hung in crowds upon the communications of the Prussians, who were soon shut out from knowledge of what was passing outside the army, and could not even get their messengers through with despatches. The French, whose army should have been thundering in rear of Prince Charles, dropped the pursuit entirely, and turned away towards the Upper Rhine about the Lake of Constance. Frederick had saved them at a critical moment; with cynical indifference they left him to perish, just as they had on another occasion declared to Maria Theresa that if she would make a satisfactory peace with France, she might do what she would with the Prussians. King Louis himself returned to Paris without the duchess, whom he sent away when he was ill, to please the priests, but took back again as soon as he was well; and who died, it is said, by poison immediately afterwards. Seckendorf, the

23rd Oct.-19th Nov. 1744.

enemy of Frederick's youth, had 30,000 men in the Palatinate as part of the Kaiser's army, but he also deserted the King of Prussia, and turned his attention to re-conquering Bavaria. Munich was indeed saved, and the Kaiser returned there on the 23rd of October.

Meanwhile, Prince Charles, being unmolested, crossed from the upper Palatinate into Bohemia and the circle of Pilieu, and united with Bathyani. The Saxons sent a contingent of 20,000 men, under Weissenfels, across the Metal Mountains by Eger and Carlsbad. This was the news which Frederick received from some of the first couriers who succeeded in breaking through the veil of darkness and reaching the Prussian army. The king had blundered, and was now paying for it. Prince Charles, or rather Field-Marshal Traun, who advised him, cut in between the Prussians and Prague, separating Frederick from his magazines, and eating up the country so as to destroy him by want and famine. Frederick tried to bring them to a decisive battle, but they avoided it, and manœuvred so as to oblige him to move rapidly and exhaust his army without being able to feed it properly. He himself says he learnt much by the skilful manœuvring of Marshal Traun in this campaign. On the 17th of October the French sent a letter to say that when their siege of Freyburg was finished they proposed to send a force to Westphalia, as if that would help Frederick much. At the beginning of November the Austrian manœuvres issued in a descent upon Pardubitz, and Frederick found that he must choose between giving up Prague and his retreat that way through hostile Saxony, or his much more important communications with Silesia. He decided, at any rate, to defend Pardubitz and the Elbe; but on the 19th of November the Austrians and Saxons succeeded in crossing at Teinitz, ten miles east of

19th Nov. 1744-Jan. 1745.

Kolin, whereupon the king saw that the game was up, and retreated on Silesia in two main columns, one under his own command by Nachod, the other under the younger Leopold by Glatz. The garrison of Prague under Einsiedel evacuated the place, and succeeded, with considerable loss, in making its way also into Silesia. Frederick wrote of this campaign afterwards: "No general committed more faults than did the king in this campaign. The conduct of M. de Traun is a model of perfection which every soldier who loves his business ought to study and try to imitate, if he have the talent. The king has himself admitted that he regarded this campaign as his school in the art of war, and M. de Traun as his teacher. Bad is often better for princes than good; and instead of intoxicating themselves with presumption, renders them circumspect and modest."

Immediately after the close of this abortive campaign, Frederick returned to Berlin. Both armies intended to go into winter quarters, but the fiery Maria Theresa insisted upon an invasion of Silesia; and Marshal Traun did at last push into Upper Silesia and the county of Glatz, but was driven out again in January by the elder Leopold. His retreat into Moravia over the snow-clad hills was not effected without much loss from privations. Swarms of irregular troops were also driven from Silesia. Prince Charles was not present in these affairs. News had reached him that his much-loved wife had died, after giving birth to a still-born infant. The marriage had been one of love, and such glory as his manœuvres had earned for him, brought him little comfort in the presence of that human sorrow which strikes an equal blow against prince or peasant.

CHAPTER VIII.

SILESIA PULLED OUT OF THE FIRE.—BATTLES OF HOHENFRIEDBURG AND SOHR.

A.D. 1745.

1745.

ONCE more Frederick was back at Berlin after the unlucky campaign, preparing with high courage and energy for the fortunes of the coming season. Blow after blow now fell upon him. Belle-Isle, the Prospero of the storm, the one Frenchman in whom Frederick believed, was captured on the 20th of December, while passing through an outlying part of Hanover, and sent a prisoner to England. The unfortunate Kaiser Karl VII., an Imperator without command of armies, without power over his empire, and almost without an income, sank at last under an accumulated load of anxiety, misery, and disease, and died on the 20th January, 1745, in his forty-eighth year. His last advice to his family has been recorded in two opposite senses. One account says that he advised them to eschew ambition and make friends with Austria; another relates that he enjoined upon them never to repay with ingratitude the services of France and Prussia. But what were they to do? There was now no Kaiser to lend even a name to the cause of France and of Belle-Isle, whose hand no longer

Jan.-May 1745.

directed the gusts of opinion in the German courts. The King of Prussia saw plainly the course likely to be taken by events, and offered peace through England. But George II. was lukewarm in that sense, and did little or nothing. The Saxons, who were only bound to assist Austria in case of invasion, seemed likely to join in the work of aggression. To crown all, money was running short, so that the king actually had some of the silver furniture of his palace at Potsdam sent to the Mint ready for melting. On the 22nd April the Bavarian question was solved by the peace at Füssen, by which Austria relinquished her hold on that country in return for an alliance with it and general good-will. And at the same time there was being negotiated an arrangement, afterwards, the 18th of May, shaped into a treaty, by which the Dutch and the English, dragged at the tail of Hanover, agreed with Austria and Saxony to partition Prussia; the good-natured Sea Powers acting of course once more as milch cows. Nay more, England, diligently building up the national debt, was helping to bribe the Czarina Elisabeth to act against Prussia in consideration of the gift of two millions "for her pleasures."

Such was the state of public affairs when Frederick joined his army at Neisse in the latter part of March, and found it suffering from a putrid fever. Old Leopold—rugged, tender-hearted ancient of nearly seventy—had lost the worship of his youth, the brave companion of his campaigns, the apothecary's daughter whom he had married for love some fifty years ago, and raised to work beside him as a princess of the Reich. The sorrowful old man craved leave to go home, and Frederick took his place in command of the army. In May old Leopold was placed in command of a camp of observation on the frontier of

April-May 1745.

Saxony. Valori, the French ambassador, reported of Frederick at this time that he was graver than of old; changed for the better he thought, mild, humane, and modest. But the king's letters from Neisse to his minister Podewils ring like a trumpet-call. "I will maintain my power, or it may go to ruin, and the Prussian name be buried under it." "Learn from a man who does not go to Elsner's preaching, that one must oppose to ill-fortune a brow of iron; and, during this life, renounce all happiness, all acquisitions, possessions and lying shows, none of which will follow us beyond the grave." High words indeed, but made good by high deeds. In April he prepared for the worst by arranging a retreat for his wife and his mother in case Berlin should be attacked, and in May he drew in his posts and detachments even from the Jägerndorf country, which he left partly a prey to the Austrian irregulars, who, though soundly beaten near Jägerndorf by the Margrave Charles of Schwedt, one of the Brandenburg family, and by Colonel Winterfeld at Landshut, seriously annoyed the Prussians and veiled the movements of the Austrians. In the Jägerndorf action, the cavalry which had been re-created in organisation and drill by Frederick, first showed on a large scale the results of his labours. Ziethen with 500 hussars carried, through swarms of irregulars, Frederick's order for the margrave to join him; and next day the 12,000 Prussians cut their way through a mass of 20,000 opponents, destroying the regular troops, and putting to flight the irregulars with much loss. Thus the margrave and Winterfeld joined the king, who moved his head-quarters to Schweidnitz. His army was then 70,000 strong. Prince Charles, who had rejoined the Austro-Saxon army, was coming on over the mountains, moving from Landshut on the last day of May.

May-3rd June 1745.

While the fate of Silesia hung in the balance, there occurred on the 11th of May one of those battles well known in English history, wherein English troops, led without judgment, but with infinite courage, covered themselves with glory, but lost the day. The battle of Fontenoy does not come within the fair limits of Frederick's battles, and it must suffice to say that a mixed army—English, Dutch, and Austrians, under the Duke of Cumberland, attacked the French in a strong position, when attack was the worst possible strategy, penetrated—at least the English column penetrated—right through the centre of the French army, and for want of tactical leading were completely defeated. The attack of the English infantry was much like that of the light cavalry at Balaklava—magnificent, but not war.

In the first days of May the Prussian army lay extended from Schweidnitz to Jauernik; Prince Charles and the Saxons coming on by Reichenau and Freyburg. "Why do you not defend the mountain passes?" asked Valori. "Because," replied the king, "if we want to catch a mouse, we leave the mouse-trap open." This is the answer to all advocates of a mountain barrier held on the far side. Good, if you are weak, and wish to keep out or delay the enemy. Bad, if you are strong and mean to fight him. Frederick meant to kill his mouse, and baited his trap by causing Prince Charles, who had no Marshal Traun with him now, to believe that his great fear was lest the Austrian army should push between him and Breslau.

On the 3rd of June Frederick, who hourly swept the hills with his telescope, first saw that cloud of dust which usually heralds the approach of an army. All that afternoon the allies streamed down from the hills, the Prussians lying hid, or showing only weak and deceptive parties of hussars. The

4th June 1745.

Saxons pushed on that night to Pilgrimshayn with outposts nearly at Striegau, the Austrians in the right rear of the Saxons reached to Rohnstock and Hausdorf, where they bivouacked. Thus the Austrian position was clearly seen, while Prince Charles did not even know that the Prussian army was present in strength. During the night the king moved his whole force. Du Moulin on his right was ordered to take the hills in front of Striegau during the evening, which he partly did, dislodging the Saxon outposts. The rest of the army defiled silently through the night across the bridge at Striegau; but the rear was delayed for some time by the breaking of the bridge, so that the left of the king's army was late in arriving on the ground. The Austrian leaders saw the movement of Du Moulin, but took his column of 10,000 or 12,000 men for the main Prussian force, or at most for the rear-guard of an army retiring on Breslau.

In the early morning the Duke of Weissenfels, with his Saxons, commenced his attack on the hills which cover Striegau. Du Moulin hurried up a battery of six twenty-four-pounders to the further slopes of the Spitzberg, otherwise called Mount Topaz, in front of the village, then attacked the Saxons, who were shaken by the fire of the guns, and threw them back much shattered. Their cavalry failed to restore the fortune of the fight, and were defeated by the Prussian cavalry of the right wing, which came across during the night and joined Du Moulin at daybreak. Prince Charles was awakened by the sound of the firing, but believed it came from the Saxons capturing Striegau; nor was he undeceived till fugitives began to come in, telling of the disaster which had befallen his advanced guard. The Austrians were brought quickly into line as they had bivouacked, and might have taken advantage of

4th June 1745.

the delay caused to the Prussians by the broken bridge. There was also a gap in the Prussian left centre, caused by a wheel up of the right wing against the Saxons. But with typical Austrian unreadiness, no use was made of the chance, and the destruction of what was now the left of the allies exposed the flank of Prince Charles. Ziethen, with the Prussian cavalry of the left wing, crossed by a ford, and the rest of the army came swiftly into position, pressing the Austrian line in front. Threatened in left flank, and overmatched in front, it gave way, and hardly needed the dashing charge of Gessler's Bareuth dragoons, who passed through the gap in the line and threw themselves with splendid impetuosity into the midst of the shaken Austrians. Beaten at every point, the army, which yesterday had come down from the mountains with banners displayed and military music, was thrown back into the defiles by eight o'clock in the morning, and would have been destroyed by a thorough pursuit. At this time, however, Frederick had not learnt to appreciate the golden rule that a beaten enemy should be pressed at every sacrifice. His troops were fatigued by the night march, and he failed to gather the full fruits of victory. Under cover of their guns, the Austrians retired slowly, and were only pursued to the foot of the mountains, a little beyond Rohnstock and Hausdorf. Thus the mouse, after entering the trap, was allowed to escape, though with loss of skin and fur. The Austrians left on the field 9,000 killed and wounded, 7,000 prisoners, 66 cannon, 73 flags and standards. The Prussians lost 5,000 killed and wounded, and rested on the field of battle. The steadiness of their night march and wheelings during the action had been wonderful, and the cavalry showed that the pains which the king had taken to improve them had not been thrown away.

20th July-Sept. 1745.

Next day began a slow pursuit till the Austrians found a position at Königgrätz, whence Frederick could not drive them. From about the end of June till the 20th of July there were various manœuvres, all caused by the want of rapid pursuit at first, and on that day Frederick formed a camp at Chlum with intention to eat up the country and prevent its becoming a good base for a new invasion. The king was himself suffering from want of money and applied to Louis XV. for help, without which he could not remain in activity with his army. Louis offered him a miserable dole—some £20,000 per month—which Frederick refused, and was very bitter as to the battle of Fontenoy and the capture of Tournay, which he said were of no more use to him than victories at Pekin or the Scamander. On the 26th of August the Convention of Hanover was signed by George II., who, anxious for his throne at home then threatened by the Pretender, agreed to the terms which Frederick was always willing to accept, namely, the secure possession of Silesia. There was no Kaiser to fight for now, and indeed, on the 13th of September, the Grand Duke Franz, Maria Theresa's husband, was elected, even Bavaria voting for him. Anxious as he now was for peace, Frederick was aware of signs that the Saxons had designs against him, and he strengthened old Leopold, who, in the camp of Striegau, watched the frontier with eyes longing for one more fray before the sword should fall from his old and wearied hand for ever. But his time had not yet come.

The Prussian army on the Elbe was greatly annoyed by the Austrian and Hungarian light troops, chiefly furnished by the Hungarian "insurrections." Little subsistence was to be derived from the country, and the communications with Silesia were difficult to be maintained. In the early part of September the left wing of the camp was at

Sept. 1745.

Jaromirz, the main body on the other side of the Elbe with bridges between them, one line of supply was by Neustadt and Glatz, the other nearly due north by the Schatzlar pass. Neustadt was strongly attacked by the Austrians, and even bombarded by heavy artillery. The defence was successful, but the place was finally abandoned on the 16th of September, for want of water. There remained, therefore, only one line of communication through the Schatzlar country, which was so infested by the Austrian light troops, that no convoy could come through without a strong force to defend it. Frederick now determined to retire slowly into Silesia, and moved on the 18th of September; passing to the eastward of the Königreich Wald, he encamped at Staudenz, and lay there for some time, carrying out his intention of consuming the supplies of the country. He intended to move further northwards on the 30th of September, but on the 29th learned from deserters and by a reconnaissance that the whole Austrian army was moving up the Elbe, and that its advance-guard had already arrived at Arnau, nearer to Schatzlar than he himself was. The rear of the Austrians was at Königshof, now known as Königinhof, the scene of one of the actions afterwards fought in 1866. The king now ordered that the whole army should march northward at ten o'clock next morning, but during the night the Austrians, covered by a crowd of light troops, took ground to their right, and lay near Sohr, with outposts close to the Prussian camp. Evidently the Prussian outpost work was not well done, whatever their discipline might be. The camp was about two miles long, facing southwards, protected on its left and left front by a rough country, with defiles and brooks and a ravine close by, and running all along the front of the camp. The weak point was a hill towards the right, near enough to be of advantage to an enemy, yet

30th Sept. 1745.

not close enough to be brought within the compass of the camp. The king's force was only about 18,000 men. In the early morning a message came in from the vedettes posted on the hill to the right, to the intent that the whole Austrian army was advancing close by, raising huge clouds of dust as they came on. This was clearly a surprise, and shows that the Prussian arrangements must have been faulty. But the military instinct of the king came in to the rescue. After a short survey from the hill, Frederick decided upon his plan of action. To retreat would expose him to be destroyed in the hills, to stand still was to wait for destruction. He decided to attack. Already the Austrians had occupied the hill; and placed there a battery of twenty-eight guns. The Prussians came into line to their right with admirable steadiness, under the fire of the Austrian artillery, but, being little more than half as strong as Prince Charles's army, could only for the most part form one line instead of two. We now see the germ of the tactics so often associated with Frederick's name; he refused his left wing as much as possible, and ordered Buddenbrock with the cavalry on the right, supported by the right wing of the infantry, to attack the Austrian left. The Austrian cavalry were completely defeated, and driven back into the hollow Georgengrund, whence they did not emerge for the rest of the day. The infantry right wing attacked the hill, failed at first, but succeeded when supported by the whole of the reserve, namely three regiments. Ten guns were captured, and the Austrian left completely broken. The reserve, however, attacked Burgersdorf, but were repulsed by the Prussians, who set the village on fire as a screen. Gradually from right to left the Prussians pushed forward, and now the victorious Buddenbrock joined the cavalry on the left, and attacked the Austrian

30th Sept. 1745.

right near Prausnitz, thus rolling up that wing of the enemy which had not yet suffered. The whole of the Austrian army then fell back in confusion into the Königreich Wald. Their strength was about 34,000 at the beginning of the battle, against 18,000, and they were totally defeated, the last cavalry charge alone capturing 2,000 prisoners of them.

But where were the light troops during all this time? They were intended to attack the Prussians in rear, and they carried out their instructions to the letter by attacking and pillaging the Prussian camp, but they broke the orders in the spirit, for they did not attack the Prussian army. They did their pillaging work well, and with great cruelty. The camp was gutted, the Prussian sick, and even some women, burnt alive. All the king's camp furniture was taken, and it was difficult to procure for him even a slice of bread after the battle.

Without doubt Frederick's army was caught napping on this occasion, and ought to have been defeated. The Austrian plan was good, but there was not sufficient vigour in execution. If the Austrian cavalry on the left had charged the Prussians vigorously down hill while they were changing their formation under the fire of the big battery, it is probable that success would have been achieved. But the national characteristic is to make good plans, but to fail in energy of execution. The Prussian king, on the contrary, was surprised, but took the initiative with great rapidity and daring, not even hesitating to send his cavalry charging up hill. This was a great risk, but as the least of many risks was one of those inspirations which flash across the minds of great generals. The Austrians acted according to their character, Frederick according to his; and we shall see in his future battles the same military

inspiration bringing him out of great perils, sometimes caused by his own fault.

The Convention of Hanover had detached England from the alliance against Prussia, and Frederick might well suppose that after the battle of Sohr he might count at least upon rest, and probably upon peace. He returned to Berlin to superintend the measures of diplomacy, leaving the younger Leopold in charge of the army, which, from want of provisions, was constrained to retire into Silesia. The elder Leopold still commanded the force which was watching Saxony. But peace was not to be yet. Not Maria Theresa this time, but Count Brühl, the Saxon minister, was now the moving spirit in the combination against Frederick. Field Marshal Grüne with 10,000 men was called up from the Austrian army of the Rhine to Saxony. The plan was that Prince Charles, instead of going into winter quarters as expected, should march northwards to Görlitz and Guben, so as to turn Frederick's Silesian army and cut it off from Prussia; while the Saxon army under Rutowski, combined with Grüne's detachment, should make a sudden attack upon old Leopold, beat him, and move straight on Berlin. This plan was excellent, but clearly required silence as one of the chief constituents to success. Brühl could not hold his tongue, and one day at dinner told the story to Wolfstierna, the Swedish envoy at Dresden, and to Rudenskjöld, the Swedish envoy at Berlin, who was on a visit to Dresden. Since the marriage of the Princess Ulrica the Swedes were friendly to Frederick. Rudenskjöld went straight to Berlin, and on the 8th of November laid the whole scheme before the king. Frederick's counsellors refused to believe it, but he acted on his own counsel. He directed old Leopold to prepare at once for marching, and when the old warrior, with that mingled

15th-23rd Nov 1745.

over-caution and easy sloth which come with declining years, argued against the king's plans, Frederick cut him short with the sharp answer, "When your highness has armies of your own, you will order them according to your mind; at present, it must be according to mine." So old Leopold got ready, and his son in Silesia drew the army there towards the Silesian-Lusatian border in the direction of Prince Charles. On the 15th of November Frederick was off to Liegnitz, and on the 18th took the command of the force, now numbering 35,000 men, and lying at Nieder-Adelsdorf, about forty miles from the line of Prince Charles's march. His object was to conceal his presence, and to that end he allowed every one who chose to pass within his line of outposts, but none to pass out again. Winterfeld, with 3,000 light troops, kept the line of the Queiss river, Frederick himself that of the Bober. Prince Charles was completely deceived, and knew nothing of Frederick's presence. On the 20th of November his army entered Lusatia, the Saxon contingent leading, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Schönberg, between the Neisse and the Queiss; his strength was about 40,000. Winterfeld reported his presence, and the king at once ordered a pontoon bridge to be constructed near Naumburg, which, with a bridge already there and two fords, would give four crossing places for his army. On the 21st Frederick left the Bober, arrived at Naumburg on the 23rd, and crossed the river in four hours; Ziethen with the cavalry clearing the front of the army from Austrian cavalry and light troops. Ziethen pushed on through a heavy mist, actually led by the retiring enemy, with whom he kept touch into the village of Hennersdorf, where he surprised the Saxons in the act of being paid by the quartermaster. Other Prussian reinforcements were pushed

on at speed under great difficulties, struck the rallying Saxons and defeated them, taking 914 prisoners. Next day the Prussians were ready to attack again, but Prince Charles was in rapid retreat. At Görlitz he made a demonstration of fighting, but again retired, leaving the place to capitulate; the same at Zittau; and so back to Bohemia, through the passes of Gabel to Aussig in Bohemia, whence, relinquishing his part of the combined plan, he moved down the Elbe to join his allies in Saxony. Frederick, with the main Prussian army, moved to Bautzen, going into cantonments there, and feeding his troops with the stores collected by the Austrians at Görlitz and Guben for the army of Prince Charles.

It was now the turn of old Leopold, whom the king ordered to advance at once. Grüne, hearing of the affair at Hennersdorf, relinquished his designs upon Berlin, and joined the Saxon army under Rutowski, which fell back from the frontier towards Dresden hoping to unite with Prince Charles. Everything now depended on speed. Was the king to join Leopold, or Prince Charles to unite with Rutowski? Frederick urged Leopold to be speedy; the old general took his time, stopping here and there to build ovens and bake bread. It was necessary to have a bridge over the Elbe for the two armies to combine. Leopold moved by Leipsig to Torgau, too far north. The king spurred him on to Meissen, opposite which Frederick placed an advanced guard under Lehwald. After spending three days at Torgau, old Leopold, in his quiet way, clinging to the old style of war, jogged on to Meissen, and arrived there on the 12th of December, Prince Charles being then through the Metal Mountains, advancing on Dresden. Meissen being seized, Lehwald, with the advanced guard, joined Leopold, and Frederick also marched to his help.

18th-25th Dec. 1745.

Old Leopold moved from Meissen on the 13th towards Dresden, watching for Rutowski, and again on the 14th, still not finding him. At last, on the 15th, the Saxon army was seen strongly posted in a defensive position, which like most defensive positions, the resort of weak generals, had the disadvantage that it hampered the defenders and left all the initiative to the assailants. On the right was placed Grüne with the Austrians, his front covered by a ravine through which ran the Tschone stream. To attack him would be difficult, almost impossible—but then he also could hardly attack. Thus he was for all practical purposes out of calculation for the battle, and the superiority in numbers possessed by the Saxons—35,000 against 32,000 Prussians—was neutralised or worse. The same Tschone stream covered the whole front of the Saxon army, but was more passable at other points than in front of Grüne. The left of the Saxons was at Kesseldorf, in front of which they had a battery of thirty guns well intrenched. This was the key of the position, and Leopold determined to make his main attack there, refusing his left, and extending his right to outflank the Saxons. Nothing could be simpler or clearer, and those who talk of defending England by occupying a series of defensive positions, will do well to lay to heart the lesson afforded by this battle of Kesseldorf.

The nut was however a hard one to crack; and old Leopold, before attempting it, reverently bared his head and prayed, "Lord God, help me yet this once; let me not be disgraced in my old age! Or if Thou wilt not help me don't help those Hundsvögte" (opprobrious epithet), "but leave us to do the best we can." With that he let slip his right wing against the hill near Kesseldorf with its intrenched batteries and Saxon grenadiers, who defended it so well that the Prussians suffered a first and second repulse

with heavy loss. But then the Saxons, thinking the time come for a counter attack, and not having a reserve at hand to make it with, led also into folly by one Austrian battalion with them, rushed out of the works in pursuit. Old Leopold, slow in strategy, was quick-eyed in battle. He instantly launched the cavalry of his right wing against the Saxons as they came on, tumbled them into ruin, and, pushing on the infantry reinforced, captured the great battery. At the same time the Prussian centre, under Leopold's son Moritz, advanced waist-deep across the boggy brook, and helped to destroy the Saxon army, capturing many prisoners. Whole regiments laid down their arms. Their left and centre thus broken and ruined, the Saxons sought safety in flight. Grüne, secure in his useless and idle position, looked on all day during the battle, retiring quietly at night. He was safe enough; the Saxons had lost 3,000 killed and wounded, with 6,000 prisoners.

Next day, the king came up, and, at sight of Leopold, dismounted from his horse, doffed his hat, and advanced to meet the old man with open arms. The bright designer of new methods of war honoured the master of the old ways which he was displacing. The veteran warrior who had besought the God of battles at least to let him alone, saw himself reverenced by the young soldier who had not ceased to push him these many days. Who will not sympathise with the triumph Leopold enjoyed during the short remainder of his life? He died on the 7th of April, 1747.

Prince Charles, who was already about Dresden, and might have joined in the battle had he been quicker of apprehension and action, retired at once into Bohemia. Dresden opened its gates to the conquering Prussians, Saxony made peace, and Austria agreed at last to resign all claim on Silesia. The treaty was signed at Dresden

Dec. 1745.

on Christmas Day, 1745, having been arranged through the medium of Villiers, the English ambassador. Silesia, with Glatz, was henceforth to be an integral portion of the Prussian kingdom.

Thus far we have seen a series of military movements and battles in which the king was learning the art of war. Mollwitz was fought entirely in the old style — parallel formation and hammer-and-tongs fighting in which the steadiness of the Prussian infantry gained the day, the cavalry being inferior to that of the Austrians. At Chotusitz there was parallel order again, but the action of Frederick in attacking with his right wing instead of reinforcing the left, shows courage and military insight. In the campaign against Prince Charles and Traun, Frederick was clearly out-manœuvred by the Austrian general, but made up for many strategical errors by his tactical dispositions and great daring at Hohenfriedburg and Sohr. In both of these battles he used the oblique order, refusing one flank, and attacking with the other reinforced. His cavalry, improved by himself, and led by remarkable commanders, was the best on the European continent, and handled by the king with great boldness and initiative. His artillery was defective for reasons given in Chapter III., and field artillery had not then become more than a defensive arm. Frederick's want of knowledge how to handle artillery boldly, and his failure to pursue a beaten enemy, are evident faults at this period of his career.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TEN YEARS' PEACE.—REFORMS.—BARBERINA.—VOLTAIRE AND MAUPERTUIS.—LEAGUE AGAINST PRUSSIA.—THE MENTZEL DOCUMENTS.—FREDERICK MARCHES FOR DRESDEN.

A.D. 1746—1756.

1746.

THE task which Frederick had set himself to do as his share in the rise of the Hohenzollerns was now accomplished. Silesia was his, guaranteed by solemn treaties. Peace also, much needed for his kingdom, seemed at last assured, and he set himself to gather in the fruits of his victories. Throughout his campaigns two desires had been always present to him. First, to win and hold Silesia as an integral part of his dominions. Second, to win repose, and spend it in improving the condition of his people, and enjoying the society of the chosen spirits of his age. His devotion to literature was only second to that for his kingdom, and there is no doubt that he would rather have been known in history as a successful votary of the Muses than as the winner of campaigns. Bitter experience had taught him that such glory as war brings is dearly purchased; he had yet to learn that the triumphs of peace may be equally disappointing.

The peace which he had gained for himself refused as yet to calm distracted Europe, and England made overtures to

1746.

him, offering great advantages, among others a subsidy of a million annually if he would draw the sword on her side of the quarrel. Frederick was not to be moved. His country house was approaching completion, and the name which he gave it tells clearly the condition of his mind. "Here," he said, one day to D'Argens, "*Je serai sans souci*," and Sans Souci—without worry—came to be the name of the royal cottage. But the meaning of the king had probably been that not in the cottage, but in the tomb which he was building for himself hard by, he would at last lay down his worries. It certainly was not in his mind to seek an inglorious ease at this or any other period of his life.

His first task was to reform the procedure of law. The duty of designing the means was confided to Cocceji, his chief law minister, even before the peace, and the result to be aimed at was, in few words, that every lawsuit should be begun and finished within a year. The chief measures were the extirpation of attorneys, so that clients were brought into direct contact with their advocates; the weeding out of judges and advocates, so that none but the best remained, and those well paid; and the king's own special contrivance, all suits with their appeals and what not, three chances being allowed, to be made an end of within a year. The reform was carried out, and the king generally supported the decisions. But he had in him much of his father's temperament, and there were cases in which his despotic will asserted itself. Some of the stories told of him are, perhaps, mythical, but all cannot be untrue. At least it may be said in his honour that he sometimes knew how to yield his will to the law as administered by just and determined judges.

Frederick's idea of justice was that right should be done,

1744-1745.

and that he was the best judge of what was right. His high-handed proceedings extended not to his kingdom only, but beyond its frontiers. As early as 1744 he had shown his hand in rather humorous fashion. His agent had engaged a dancer at Venice, Barberina by name, to come to Berlin. The time for fulfilling the treaty arrived, but the fair damsel was then in soft dalliance with an Englishman, and laughed at the agent. Nothing should make her leave the pleasant city for the rude admiration of Berlin. Frederick appealed to the doge and senate, but gained nothing from them but good words. After some months, a Venetian ambassador happened to be passing through Berlin, and slept at an hotel there. Next morning he found that his baggage was seized; nor could he get it out of the king's hands till Venetian justice arrested Barberina and packed her off to Berlin, where she eventually became the wife of the very Cocceji who was now reforming the laws.

A still stronger step was taken by Frederick at a later period during the ten years' peace. Ost Friesland, with ports on the Atlantic, having fallen in to Prussia in 1744, the king encouraged maritime adventure, and hoped to make his country a sea power. He even fitted out at one time an expedition to the East Indies—the promised land of that time. Immediately after coming into possession of Ost Friesland, he arranged with England what articles were to be considered as contraband of war. But in 1745 the English began to seize wooden planks which, under the head of timber, were by agreement to be free. Frederick protested, and insisted that his ships so laden and so seized should be released. The English Admiralty courts condemned them. Frederick appointed a special commission, directing its members to

1745-1751.

report "what they could answer to God, to the king, and to the whole world," concerning the dispute. The commission reported that the ships were not carrying contraband of war. The dispute dragged on till, in November, 1752, Frederick notified to the English Government that he should not pay to English holders of Silesian bonds their usual dividend, till his own shipowners were compensated, or the ships and cargoes returned. This was certainly not law, but he carried out his idea of rough justice, thus compensating his own people at the expense, not of England, but of certain innocent Englishmen.

In pursuance of his intention to surround himself with men of genius, Frederick invited Voltaire to Berlin. The great Frenchman arrived in July, 1750, and was made a chamberlain with the cross of the Order of Merit, and a pension of £850 a year—a large sum in those days, especially in so frugal an establishment as that of the Prussian court. At first all went well. The brilliant wit of the satirist enlivened the court, and awoke the duller intellects of the practical Prussian soldiers and statesmen. But it awoke also the jealousy of other favourites, such as Maupertuis, the President of the Academy; and Voltaire, dyspeptic and irritable, made himself enemies on all sides. Quarrels arose with Maupertuis, and Voltaire had a disreputable lawsuit with Hirsch, a Jew, whom he had employed in what we should now call a doubtful stock exchange transaction. On the 24th of February, 1751, the king wrote him a letter from Potsdam, in which, after reproaching him with irritability against other friends and political meddling, he concluded in these words: —

For my own share, I have preserved peace in my house till your arrival: and I warn you, that if you have the passion of intriguing and caballing, you have applied to the wrong hand. I

1751.

like peaceable, composed people, who do not put into their conduct the violent passions of tragedy. If you can resolve to live like a philosopher I shall be glad to see you [at Potsdam]; but if you abandon yourself to all the violence of your passions and get into quarrels with all the world, you will do me no good by coming here, and you may as well stay in Berlin.

Here was warning enough, one might suppose, but Voltaire was incorrigible. A demon of unrest drove him on. His quarrels became more bitter than ever. The pompous Maupertuis committed himself foolishly in a controversy with König, who had questioned the originality of a theory of his on *Maxima and Minima*, wherein the President of the Academy had professed to find proof of the existence of an intelligent Creator of the universe. Of his paper, *Essai de Cosmologie*, Voltaire wittily wrote: "M. de Maupertuis pretended that the only proof of the existence of God is the circumstance that AR + *n* RB is a minimum." This article appeared in the *Bibliothèque Raisonnée*. The academy supported Maupertuis and condemned König. Frederick wrote a sharp reply to Voltaire's article, but evidently knew little of the controversy. Finally, Voltaire wrote his *Doctor Akakia*, a satirical piece in which he gibbeted Maupertuis and his doctrines. The *Akakia* was read to Frederick, who heard it with peals of laughter, but strictly forbade its publication. In vain. The satire of a man to whom nothing was sacred was not to be suppressed. *Doctor Akakia* appeared, first in Holland, then in Berlin. Thirty thousand copies were sold in Paris, and the Academy of Berlin became the laughing-stock of the world of letters. Voltaire swore that the publication was no doing of his, but the king wrote to him:—

Your effrontery astonishes me. After what you have done, and what is as clear as day, you persist, instead of owning yourself

1752.

culpable. . . . If you drive the affair to extremity, all shall be made public; and it will be seen whether, if your works deserve statues, your conduct does not deserve chains.

On the 24th of December, 1752, *Akakia* was burnt in the public streets of Berlin by the common hangman, and though Voltaire was again received at Potsdam, he soon obtained permission to leave Prussia, on pretence of drinking the waters at Plombières, and carried off with him a copy of certain poetical effusions of the king, which their royal author dreaded to have published because some of them were sharp criticisms of brother royalties. From Dresden and Leipzig Voltaire continued to let fly Parthian shafts of ridicule against Maupertuis, who threatened him with a challenge. Voltaire's reply, though witty, was unclean and insulting. Europe roared with laughter, but Frederick was very wrath. Clearly the wit was not to be trusted, and orders were given that the *Œuvre de Poésies* should be taken from him when he passed through Frankfurt. He was arrested accordingly, and detained because the book was not with him. It arrived shortly, and was given up, together with his cross of chamberlain. But meanwhile the irritability of the philosopher and the dulness of the officials brought about a series of scenes more or less discreditable to both. Such was the result of Frederick's efforts to turn his court into a temple of the Muses.

Nor were his hopes of perpetual peace destined to be fulfilled. The great natural quarrel between England and the powers which restrained her free movements on the sea and her extension of colonies, had never ceased. England would have the freedom of the sea; and on land she pushed population and ploughs where France paraded soldiers. In such a struggle war must come, but, by laws invariable as the laws of nature, the population will win

in the end. After much bickering, blows began in 1754, and at the beginning of 1755 England despatched the ill-fated Braddock with a small force, which was destroyed in July—evidently because Braddock, like most English generals of the time, was a brave man absolutely ignorant of the military art. As yet, however, the quarrel was only colonial. England embittered it by seizing French ships without any declaration of war.

But why did Frederick strike in, if indeed he desired peace? In truth there was no choice for him. As early as 1752–53 his secret agents had discovered that Austria, Russia, and Saxony were hatching a plot for the destruction of Prussia, and such a partition as afterwards befell unhappy Poland. In 1753 a Saxon official, Mentzel by name, began to supply the Prussian agents with copies of secret documents from the archives at Dresden, which proved that, during the whole of the peace, negotiations had been proceeding for a simultaneous attack on Frederick, though the astute Brühl, mindful of former defeats, objected to playing the part of jackal to the neighbouring lions. In short, by the end of 1755 the king knew that preparations were already on foot in Austria and Russia, and that he would probably be attacked next year certainly, or at latest, the year after. A great war was coming between England and France, in which the continental power would attack Hanover, and tread closely on the skirts of Prussia. The situation was dangerous, and became terribly menacing when England bargained with Russia to subsidise a Muscovite army of 55,000 men for defence of Hanover. Russia consented with alacrity. Money was all that the czarina needed for her preparations against Frederick, and in the autumn of 1755 she assembled, not 55,000, but 70,000 men on the Prussian frontier, nominally for the

Jan.-June 1756.

use of England. But throughout the winter all the talk at St. Petersburg was of Frederick's destruction in the coming spring.

It was time for him to stir. His first move was one of policy. He offered England a "neutrality convention" by which the two powers jointly should guarantee the German Reich against all foreign intervention during the coming war. On the 16th of January, 1756, the convention was signed in London, and the Russian agreement thrown over, as it could well be, since it had not been ratified.

Europe was now ranking herself for the struggle. In preceding years the Austrian diplomatist Kaunitz, had so managed the French court, especially through the medium of Madame de Pompadour, that Louis XV. was now on the side of Maria Theresa, who had bowed her neck so far as to write to the French king's mistress as "Ma Cousine," while Frederick forgot policy, and spoke of the Pompadour in slighting terms. "*Je ne la connais pas*," said he once, and was never forgiven. Yet some attempts were made by France to enlist Frederick on her side against England. For alliance against England he was offered the plunder of Hanover and the island of Tobago. He sternly refused; and henceforth the Pompadour had her way. France and Austria allied themselves against England, and for revenge of "*Je ne la connais pas.*" The agreement with Russia to partition Prussia had already been made, and Frederick's sharp tongue had betrayed him into calling the czarina that "*Infame catin du nord.*" Saxony waited for the appearance of her stronger neighbours in order to join them. England alone was Frederick's ally. And what an ally for a continental struggle! There were just three battalions in England, and though she was raising others, the Duke of Newcastle dared not have colonels for them

June-Aug. 1756.

because the patronage would be in the hands of his political adversary, the Duke of Cumberland. The French threatened invasion. Hessian and Hanoverian troops were brought over and regarded with hatred by the populace. Fortunately the French expedition sailed for Minorca instead of for England, and the episode of Admiral Byng's retirement occurred in the Mediterranean instead of the Straits of Dover. The result was the capitulation of Minorca in the end of June, 1756. This was the England of the time. But the star of Pitt was rising, and its brilliant rays soon showed the true path to a nation which never needs more than a brave and capable leader, and always finds him at the right moment. Frederick said later, "England has been long in labour, but she has at last brought forth a man."

Meanwhile Austria was arming. Camps were formed in Bohemia and Moravia. War was plainly at hand, and Frederick determined that he would not give his adversaries the first move. Following the advice of Mitchell, the envoy of England at Berlin, he demanded through his ambassador at Vienna a distinct assurance that the armaments were not destined for the invasion of Prussia. He received, first an ambiguous, then a haughty reply, and on the 29th of August, 1756, launched his forces on the road to Dresden. The Seven Years' War had commenced.

CHAPTER X.

THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR BEGINS.—CAMPAIGN OF 1756.—BATTLE OF LOBOSITZ.—CAPITULATION OF PIRNA.—SAXON ARMY ABSORBED.

A.D. 1756.

1756.

THE total force for home purposes and for war, possessed by Frederick when the war opened, was about 150,000 men. Of these about 65,000 marched southward in three columns. The right wing, commanded by Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, marched from Magdeburg by Leipsig—Freiburg—Dippoldiswalde, to the neighbourhood of Pirna. The centre under the king with Marshal Keith as second—a Scotchman trained in the Russian service, but lately drawn into the circle of Frederick's warriors—moved direct on Dresden by the south bank of the Elbe. The left was led by the Duke of Bevern, and marched from Frankfurt on the Oder by Bautzen to Lohmen, where it faced Duke Ferdinand on the other side of the Elbe. Besides these, another army under Schwerin was ordered to march from Silesia through the Glatz mountains by Nachod. The Saxons had a total force of 18,000 men, say a field army of 14,000 or 15,000. The Austrians formed two camps in Bohemia under Marshal Browne and Prince Piccolomini. Frederick's plan of campaign was to sweep up the Saxon army or cause it to disperse, lest it should, as in a previous campaign, interrupt

1756.

his communications. Then the three columns from the north and the one from the east would fall upon the Austrians in Bohemia, drive them back, and perhaps dictate peace at the gates of Vienna. In that case one of his intended executioners would be disposed of, and the league broken up.

This plan was spoiled by the Saxons who, instead of fighting or dispersing, retired to the rugged district on the Elbe now known as the Saxon Switzerland, where they hoped to hold out until Austria or Russia could come to their assistance. Dresden was occupied without a blow, and the first act of the king was to order the seizure of the original documents copied by Mentzel, and still lying in the archives of the Saxon capital.

The retreat of the Saxons was a shock to Frederick's plans. Schwerin's column halted in front of Königgrätz, where Piccolomini's camp was placed. A reconnaissance of the Saxon highlands showed that the army which had taken refuge there, about 14,000 strong, could not be attacked. Frederick, hearing that its store of provisions was small, established a blockade, placing his own head-quarters at Gross-Sedlitz. The principal mass of the Saxons lay at Hennersdorf; but they occupied also the small but impregnable fortress on the steep Königstein, where the Elector of Saxony, who was also King of Poland, slept every night. It is suggestive of the times that, though the Saxon army was to be starved out, Frederick allowed the table of the King of Poland to be well supplied—an indulgence which must have told against the early surrender of his forces. Marshal Keith was despatched with about 32,000 men up the Elbe to Aussig, to protect the blockading force against General Browne, who had been ordered by the Austrian court to relieve the

23rd Sept.-1st Oct. 1756.

Saxons at all hazards. It is clear that the designs of Austria and Russia were not intended to be carried out so soon, for, though Browne marched on the 23rd of September to Budin, on the Eger, he was told to wait there until the 30th for the arrival of his artillery and pontoons, which had to be prepared at Vienna. Frederick was informed of the movements of Browne, and feeling anxious lest his force at Aussig should be turned without an opportunity to fight, moved his head-quarters to that place on the 29th, and took the command. Next day he moved to Türmitz with a strong advance-guard, sending forward a small detachment, which scoured the country as far as Lobositz, and discovered that the Austrian army was already laying down bridges to pass the Eger. Early in the morning of the 30th the heads of his main columns began to arrive at Türmitz, and at 3 A.M. Frederick, with his advance-guard, pushed on rapidly to Welmina, where from his posts on the hills he could descry the Austrian army and camp below on the Bohemian plains, not more than about a mile distant from him. The right flank of the Austrians rested on the Elbe at Lobositz, its left was at Tschirskowitz. It is remarkable that so good a general as Browne neglected to occupy the two hills just in front of his camp, that of Lobosch on his right, and Homolka on his left, for they commanded the issues from the mountains. Frederick, observing their value, seized them at once, and occupied the pass between them, through which ran the road from Welmina to Lobositz.

Next morning, the 1st of October, autumn mists enfolded the lower hills and lay in foggy thickness over the whole plain, completely hiding the Austrians from view. At first the king, expecting an attack from the enemy, deployed a hundred guns in one grand battery extending from the

1756.

Homolka hill right over that of Lobosch, in front of Lobositz, and drew up his infantry first in two lines, afterwards extending them so that they formed only one. The cavalry, in three lines, was behind the infantry. The king, not supposing that Browne would have made so grave a mistake as not to occupy the hills if he intended to fight, and finding that no attack took place, only some annoyance from Croat light troops, judged that the Austrians must be crossing the Elbe with intention to turn his left flank and march down towards the Saxons by the right of the river. He therefore decided to pivot on his left, and drive what he supposed to be Browne's rear-guard into the Elbe. He first sent forward twenty squadrons of cavalry to charge a body of the enemy's cavalry which had been seen through the fog near Lobositz. The Austrian cavalry were driven back, but the Prussian horse came upon well-posted infantry, which fired rapidly, having now—they also—iron ramrods. At the same time the fog-curtain slowly rose and disclosed to the eyes of the king the whole Austrian army drawn up in line of battle—left and centre behind the almost impassable Morell brook, right extending through Lobositz to Welhoten. Lobositz was strongly occupied by infantry, with redoubts and many guns. It was also evident that Browne was moving more infantry through Lobositz on Frederick's left flank. There was one great defect in Browne's position—though his left and centre were protected by the Morell brook, they were hindered by it from advancing. The advantage to Frederick was the same as that to Marlborough at Ramillies, and he used it in the same manner as the English general. The Prussian cavalry having been repulsed in a second charge retired, and the king, instead of swinging round his right as he had intended, decided to neglect the Austrian

1756.

left wing and concentrate his whole power in an attack on Lobositz. In this movement the battalions became crowded, a fact which gave rise to the belief that the infantry were formed in three lines. Browne made a strong frontal attack on the Lobosch hill, outflanking it also from Welhoten. The king extended his left to meet this movement. The Austrians were repulsed and driven down upon Lobositz, some of the troops from Welhoten being even thrust into the Elbe. The Austrians fought gallantly. So severe was the struggle that the Prussian infantry expended the whole of their ammunition, ninety rounds per man, and then, coming to a deadly wrestle with the bayonet and the butt, thrust the enemy through Lobositz, occupied it, and began to push forward in pursuit. Browne had attempted, once or twice, flank attacks with his left, which crossed the brook higher up to attack Lobositz, but every such movement was repulsed by the great Prussian battery. Now that things had gone wrong on the right, Browne drew in his left, and by it checked the Prussian pursuit, so that his army succeeded in disengaging itself and retiring in good order about a couple of miles from the battle-field.

It was not the king's wish that Browne should remain there, and he accordingly detached the Duke of Bevern with a strong force to Tschirskowitz, with orders to threaten Browne's communications, who, fearing the loss of his supplies at Budin, fell back to that place.

Both sides claimed the victory, the Austrians because they had repulsed the early cavalry attack, the Prussians, more justly, because they had foiled Browne's intentions, prevented his advance into the mountains, and caused him to fall back from the battle-field. Each side had lost 3,000 men, the Prussians having suffered slightly more than the Austrians.

Oct. 1756.

The battle of Lobositz was the knell of the Saxon army. One more attempt was indeed made by Browne. Under urgent commands from Vienna he crossed the Elbe further up, and moved by a circuitous route through Böhm-Leipa, Kamnitz, Rumburg, and Schluckenau, then to Lichtenhayn near Schandau. He communicated to the Saxons a plan by which, under cover of fire from the Königstein, they should throw a bridge across the Elbe and attack the Prussian blockading posts in front, while he himself would act upon their rear. It is doubtful whether this plan would have succeeded under any circumstances. Its failure was certain when the Saxons bungled their bridge-making, and were two days late in giving the signal which Browne expected. On the 14th of October the two signal guns were fired from the Königstein, but Browne was already in retreat and out of hearing. The Saxon attack completely failed, and the army, hungering and soaked by several days' rain, had to capitulate. Frederick with cool cynicism incorporated the whole force in his own army—an extraordinary step which turned out the reverse of useful to his arms. The Elector of Saxony was allowed to retire to his Polish court, and Frederick wintered at Dresden, taking the administration of the electorate into his own hands. Schwerin's army fell back on Silesia, and was cantoned on the frontier of Bohemia. That of the king remained in Saxony, forming a cordon from Eger to Pirna, thence extending through Lusatia to the river Queiss.

The inception and conduct of this campaign have been much criticised. Lloyd is astonished that Frederick did not commence operations at the end of 1755 or beginning of 1756, since he knew then as much as afterwards of the combination against him. The English author approves of his invasion of Saxony, but thinks that he ought only

1756.

to have observed the Saxon army when it retired to Pirna. He should then have pushed on to Bohemia, and, if possible, Vienna. Tempelhof defends the measures which were taken, and Jomini, summing up their arguments, is of opinion that the invasion of Saxony was a mistake, as its tendency was to irritate those who would otherwise have remained neutral. According to this writer Frederick should have avoided Saxony, penetrated into Moravia, and marched by Olmütz on Vienna.

This last opinion seems just, but it fails to take into consideration that armies were in those days supplied by huge trains of waggons, that the art of making war feed itself had not then been invented, and, above all, that a Russian army was cantoned on the Prussian frontier ready, as might be supposed, to take the field if Frederick's army were once removed far away from Berlin.

The truth seems to be that the king always hoped to stave off the great crisis, and waited on events. In so doing he yielded to a common human weakness. As a man, leaving home dry-shod on a wet day, picks his footsteps for a while, but by degrees forgets his caution and plods straight through mire and pools, so Frederick hesitated to plunge at first into the sea of his enemies, husbanded the strength of his army, and only became bold to recklessness when war and danger of annihilation had become familiar to him. He was not, like Napoleon, a warlike adventurer, but a king who loved peace.

CHAPTER XI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1757.—BATTLE AND SIEGE OF PRAGUE.

A.D. 1757.

1757.

THE forcible absorption of the Saxon army into that of Prussia startled all the courts of Europe. It was a new thing unrecognised by international law. Frederick was adjudged a monster, who should be put down by all possible means. From our point of view the act was both a crime and a blunder; a crime against the Saxon soldiers whom the king had no right to take, and who were thus placed in a position to fight against their own countrymen; a blunder because the men so seized and incorporated gave a great deal of trouble, and were always untrustworthy. It does not however follow that we need sympathise with the self-elected executioners, whose own interests now urged them on rather than any virtuous wish to protect the liberties of nations.

The combination against Frederick was one to appal the stoutest heart. His own country numbered about 5,000,000 of population; its revenue was rather less than £2,000,000 sterling. He had a hoarded treasure for war purposes, the amount of which is not exactly known. This treasure prepared for first expenditure in case of war is a regular

1757.

Prussian institution which continues in our own time, and enables the army to commence a campaign without fresh supplies granted by Parliament. Frederick's army had been increased during the winter so that it now numbered 150,000 men for the field, besides a home defensive force partly in garrisons of about 40,000. His allies the English had in their pay a composite "Britannic army of observation" in Hanover. It was about 50,000 strong, and consisted of the Hanoverians and Hessians who had been brought to England when invasion was threatened, and other Hanoverians, Brunswickers, and various men from North Germany. About the middle of April the Duke of Cumberland was sent from England to command this force. He was a brave man but an incapable general, and as Frederick's advice was not taken with regard to the strategy of the Duke's army the force had little influence on the campaign. But, including it, the whole strength of himself and his allies amounted to about 240,000 men.

Against him and his small nation were arrayed France, Austria, Hungary, presently Sweden, and, in the background, Russia. Of troops actually in the field with intent to crush him there were altogether 430,000 coming from four different quarters. The French under Marshal d'Estrées, numbering about 110,000, crossed the German border near Cleves and Cologne, with the intention of marching chiefly upon Prussia. Another force under Soubise, 30,000 strong, was to reinforce the Reichs armament as soon as it was ready. The Austrians under Marshal Browne were divided into four corps; one under the Duke of Ahremberg was at Eger, the second under Browne himself was at Budin, the third under Count Königseck was at Reichenberg, and the fourth in Moravia under Count Serbelloni who was afterwards

succeeded by General Daun. The Russians with 100,000 and the Swedes with 17,000 still hung back.

Clearly it would be dangerous for the king to wait until his enemies attacked him; like all great generals he preferred to take the initiative, and directed his armies to march upon Prague. About the end of April the Duke of Bevern from Lusatia, the king himself over the Metal Mountains, and Schwerin from Silesia made an almost simultaneous rush upon Prague. The king's column, 45,000 foot, 15,000 horse, was at first divided into two, but united south of the mountains. Bevern had 18,000 foot and 5,000 horse, Schwerin had 32,000 foot and 12,000 horse. He had the furthest to go, and started on the 18th of April, uniting with Bevern on the 24th, who in the meantime had beaten Königseck at Reichenberg on the 21st, assaulting the Austrian general in a strong position, though the Prussians were inferior in force. The king's column had in crossing the Eger an affair with D'Ahremberg whom Frederick tried to cut off; but, as a main result, the Austrian forces made good their retreat upon and through Prague, outside which town the king arrived on the 2nd May, Schwerin and Bevern not yet being up.

It was perhaps fortunate for Frederick that at this moment Marshal Browne was superseded in command by Prince Charles who had just arrived, and was not, as we know, a brilliant general. The Austrians had a chance given them for attacking Frederick with greatly superior forces before Schwerin and Bevern could unite with him. It is said that a violent altercation took place between Prince Charles and Browne, but that in the end the prince decided to wait for the incoming of Königseck before undertaking any operations. His army lay on the Ziscaberg and kept possession of the city.

5th 6th May 1757.

The first difficulty was to effect a junction with Schwerin, who was a day or two later than the time appointed. Schwerin had fortunately captured an Austrian magazine at Jung-Bunzlau, and was safely across the Elbe. On the 5th the king found a good crossing place at Seltz, north of the city, and put together his pontoons there. He left a force of 30,000 under Keith and Weissenberg and crossed with the rest of the force the same day, coming in contact with Schwerin's advance party the same evening. He appointed a meeting with the marshal near Prossik village at 6 A.M. next morning.

The student of war who would grasp the method of Frederick with its strength and its weakness, and appreciate the character of the man with its influence on his work, should study attentively, map on table, the battle of Prague and that of Kolin, which followed it at no long interval. He will mark the effect of Austrian slowness, and the grievous error of trusting to the defensive absolute in war. And if he will bear in mind the changes which have taken place in modern times, the development of artillery and small arms, he will recognise that, while the great principles of tactics remain the same for all time, their application must vary with the weapons used and with the style of manœuvre, which must change as the cannon and the rifle change. In its main principles the battle of Prague was not unlike that of Gravelotte; but how different were the details!

On the morning of the 6th of May, 1757, the Austrian army was encamped on the Ziscaberg facing north. Its left rested on the height which towers above the city, and drops down sharply some five or six hundred feet. Its right extended to Kyge, and was strengthened by a pond and boggy bottom; for the Ziscaberg, sloping east-

ward, combines with other neighbouring hills to shed there the waters which fall on the highlands. A poor brook marks the lowest contour, but fails to drain the swamp, though it fills a chain of ponds partly artificial. Modern drainage has dried the ponds and hardened the swamp. In 1757 it was all an oozy quagmire. On the 6th of May the sluices of the ponds near Sterbohol had lately been opened, and the muddy bottom sown with weeds, intended for carp food so soon as water and fish should be returned to their places. Already the growth was of a vivid green, which would naturally deceive a schoolboy but not an experienced staff-officer of modern times. To-day there is not a staff in Europe which does not possess accurate maps of all such important positions as Prague. In Frederick's time the king and his generals seem to have been equally ignorant of the ground on which they were to fight a battle of vital importance to Prussia.

Frederick, Winterfeld his adjutant-general, and Schwerin, rode in front of the Austrian position to reconnoitre, and came to the conclusion that its front was unassailable, and the flank at Kyge difficult, because there pools and bogs were defended by batteries. Yet it was possible; and Schwerin, riding on, reported that further round the Austrian flank the ground was more favourable, for he saw there rich green meadows instead of fish ponds. The meadows were the carp food growing in soft mud kneedeep, and even waistdeep in places. The king decided to attack this flank. But when? Here arose a hot discussion. The old marshal, Schwerin, prayed for a day's delay. His men had been marching nearly all night and were fatigued. The fiery king despised delay and fatigue. "Do you, then, wish to wait till, perhaps, Daun arrives with a reinforcement of thirty thousand men for the enemy?" The debate

1757.

waxed hot, and old Schwerin finally rode off in a temper to commit any rash action, and determined that no reproach of hanging back should ever be levelled at him or his men for their deeds on this day.

The Prussian army was thrown into its usual two lines, and set in motion to its left flank, marching with automatic regularity, the pace and distance being kept with a perfection possible to the Prussians alone of all Europe at that time. The Austrian artillery fired some rounds at them, especially as they passed near and through Podschernitz. Not a shot told. The distance was too great for the artillery of that day, though easily within range of modern field guns, and the faulty position of the batteries on too elevated ground caused the shot to fall with sullen thud in the soft ground instead of bounding. Clearly the Austrians should have pushed their heavy batteries more in advance, and been ready to support, by a heavy infantry attack, the effect produced by the guns. But they clung to the defensive, though Prince Charles, by Browne's advice, brought the cavalry of the left to support the right. The right wing was also thrown back *en potence*, and extended a little, so that the right of the army no longer rested on Kyge, but was about Sterbohol, supported by a battery on the Homolyberg. The cavalry were massed still further on the right. By half-past nine o'clock the Prussian vanguard was beginning to wheel up for attack, and the Austrians were hurriedly arriving in their new position to receive it.

Fierce old Schwerin, smarting under the stinging words of his master, had led his troops so swiftly forward that not only were all the slowly toiling twelve-pounder guns left behind, but even the greater part of the regimental guns, three-pounders. Decker, who has made the work of the

artillery in this war his special study, says that Schwerin had no guns up with him. Other authorities say only a few three-pounders. Certainly he was unable to prepare the way with artillery. Winterfeld was the first to attack with the head of the force, and rushed into Sterbohol before the arrival of the Austrians, but was met as he advanced by a storm of case shot from the Homoly battery. His ranks were torn to pieces, and recoiled. He himself fell, grievously wounded, but managed to crawl back to Schwerin, the Austrian grenadiers standing eighty yards off, awe-stricken, and without heart to pursue. Then the veteran Schwerin, with the fire of youth in his hoary head under its snows of seventy-three years, led on his men towards those rich, green carp pastures. Down went the soldiers, some labouring forward knee deep, some held fast sunk to the waist, all under deadly fire from the battery and from the Austrian grenadiers safe on the far side. The trim lines were perforce broken. Some struggled through, some filed on narrow causeways; Schwerin himself, seizing a colour, rode along a dam, crying, "*Heran, meine Kinder*" (This way, my children). Five grape shot struck him at once, and he sank dead—his grief, his rage assuaged together, the light of battle for ever gone from his eyes. His adjutant, Von Platen, seized the flag, but fell instantly like his chief. Yet the Prussians pushed on—the Austrian grenadiers resisting foot by foot—far better than of yore. Fresh troops came up on both sides, and were hurried into the fight. Even the Austrian cavalry joined in the turmoil, till Ziethen found a way round by Michelup and struck the Austrian horsemen, dashing them back, and driving them, as ordered, far from the battle-field. Marshal Browne was the soul of the defence in this struggle till his foot was smashed by cannon ball, and he was carried from the field.

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Prince Charles had tried to rally the horse till he was taken with a spasm of the heart, breast-pang or what not, and incapacitated for the time. By about half-past one the Prussians were victorious, and the Austrian right wing was tumbling back on the centre, for this is one of the faults of the formation *en potence*.

Meanwhile, towards the centre, another episode had occurred contrary to, or at least without the king's orders. Another fault of the formation *en potence* is that, if either wing moves forward or wheels up ever so little, a gap is made in the line. This happened in the struggle on the right. The right wing brought up its left flank, and presented a gaping hole which no soldier could see without longing to push into it. The soul of General Mannstein—one of Frederick's acquirements from Russia—was over-mastered by this craving, and, without leave asked, he dashed at the opening, he too through mud and grape shot. Prince Henry and Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick supported him, not, it is whispered, without a secret understanding. Prince Henry, seeing his men filing slowly along an embankment, cried, "This way, lads," and threw himself boldly into the mire through which, heavy wading as it needed, they passed more quickly than in file on the causeway. The gap was gained, the battery captured, and though the king scolded Mannstein afterwards, there is no doubt that his volunteer exploit greatly helped the defeat of the right wing, a large part of which, 16,000 strong, was cut off from the main Austrian army and followed the cavalry up the river. Where, then, was Ziethen with his hussars to charge these fugitives? Alas, an enemy stronger than Austrian horse, the great foe of all soldiers of the stern north had seized them. Arrived at Nussel in pursuit of the flying Austrians, they had found there plunder and

drink. "Your Majesty, I cannot rank a hundred of them sober," said their commander, with face of shame.

Prince Moritz, who with the right wing of Keith's force on the Weissenberg, had been ordered to cross the Elbe at Branik—up stream—had failed to do so for lack of sufficient pontoons. It is said that only three more were wanting, but the lack of those three was enough to hinder the movement. Thus 16,000 of the best Austrian troops escaped to strengthen Daun. The rest were hurled back into Prague, nor could all the efforts of Prince Charles get them out of the city, though he tried several points of exit. The victory was great. Perhaps it might have been greater if Frederick had waited one day more to refresh the troops as Schwerin had advised; for then the Prussians might possibly have entered Prague and destroyed the Austrian army. Perhaps! But who can say with certainty that what might have been would have been? The result of the day was that a superior Austrian army was, like those of Mack at Ulm and Bazaine at Metz, shut up in a city from which it could not issue, and that by an army inferior in number. The original plan of campaign had named the 6th May for the defeat of the Austrians, and if Schwerin were a day late, the fiat of Jove must stand none the less. It is true that Daun was near—within three marches—but on this and other occasions was abundantly shown a certain rugged obstinacy—shall we say pig-headedness?—of Frederick. He was a great man and a great soldier. Why pretend that he was free from human faults?

The Prussian losses in the battle are variously estimated. Frederick himself gives 18,000; Carlyle, 12,500; Jomini, 13,700; and so on. Probably Carlyle is more nearly right than the others. Frederick says that the Austrians lost 24,000; Carlyle, who has diligently ransacked his much-

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maligned "Dryasdust" records, put their loss at 13,000 only. We have seen that the battle, though bloody at points, was only partial, a great part of the forces on either side not being engaged, and Prague being handy for shelter to the Austrians.

The one great lesson—and it is of vital importance to Englishmen—which we may draw from this battle is, that an army immovably fixed in one position which has extremities not resting on impassable barriers may always be attacked and defeated on one of those extremities. Only by offensive manœuvres is success possible. The enemy must be beaten, not merely repulsed. The idea, too prevalent in this country, that England could be successfully defended by unskilled militia and volunteers taking up a series of positions is a vain imagination, natural to minds bent upon bricks and mortar, but rejected by all masters of strategy and tactics. And the same rule applies to the defence of other countries, such as Turkey.

CHAPTER XII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1757 (*continued*).—BATTLE OF KOLIN.—SIEGE OF PRAGUE RAISED.

A.D. 1757.

1757.

THE Austrian army now caged in Prague numbered 46,000 men, and Frederick hoped to make them yield quickly, while their spirits were still depressed by their defeat. He sent the Duke of Brunswick Bevern, with 20,000 to watch Daun, who had about double that strength. Colonel Mayer, a clever leader of "Free Corps," was beating up the quarters of the Reich, captured a great magazine in the Upper Palatinate, and laid the rich towns under contribution, though he had only some 1,300 foot soldiers and 200 horse with five guns. The Free Corps were Frederick's answer to the Hungarian and Croat irregulars. Recruited from all parts, deserters from other armies, and volunteers attracted by the fame of the great king, they were kept under strict discipline and well commanded. Some plunder was permitted them, but no cruelty. Poor Wilhelmina, always watching her brother's exploits and dangers with passionate rejoicing or tears of terror and mortification, decorated Colonel Mayer with her "Order of Sincerity and Fidelity" when he passed

5th April-29th May 1757.

Baireuth. She could do little for the companion of her childhood but sympathise and honour his servants, and this she did with unvarying love and truth. Would that space permitted quotations from her letters, which tell in every line womanly devotion, and wrath that she is helpless to protect.

Weeks rolled on, and the Prussians still sat before the city. The provisions held out, and bombardment was of no effect. Browne was dying of his wound, and no Austrian General was found to risk a grand sally from the place. Daun, with the Fabian policy natural to his character, held back and watched events. In Hanover, the Duke of Cumberland, though incompetent, stood with his 50,000 to 60,000, awaiting French attack, which came not. The battle of Prague had scared Austria's allies. England was in her usual state of indecision, and, for the time, the panic-mongers had the best ear of the country. Pitt, after four months' office, had been dismissed by the King of England himself on the 5th April, two days before the Royal Highness of Cumberland sailed to take command in Hanover. Feebleness prevailed in America, where Lord Loudon commanded. A blow was necessary for Frederick's interests. Still Prague would not fall. The garrison offered indeed to give up the city, on condition of free withdrawal, but this was the least to be desired of all issues for the Prussian cause. Sallies were made, the heaviest with 10,000 men, but beaten back. On the 29th May a great storm broke the Prussian bridges, and thus cut the army in two. Fearing that the enemy would take advantage of the chance, the king ordered a bombardment of the city. For six hours after the storm the air rained red-hot shot and shell. The town was fired in several places, houses fell with sudden crash, and above all the infernal din rose the

12th 18th June 1757.

"*Weh-Klagen*" (cry of woe) of the miserable townsfolk, 9,000 of whom perished in this siege. That cry would seem to have penetrated to Vienna, for, shortly afterwards, strict orders were sent to Daun to attempt the relief of the city.

Daun's army had been reinforced to a strength of 60,000, partly by the fugitives from the late battle, and the garrison of Prague was now 40,000 strong—total, 100,000. The Prussians were in all about two-thirds that number. On the 12th June Daun sent messengers to Prague, promising to attack on the 20th, and asking the garrison to sally out to his help. The king had wind of the movement, and at once decided to meet the Austrian general on his way. Taking 10,000 from the beleaguering force, and ordering another 4,000 under Prince Moritz to follow in two days, Frederick started to join Brunswick Beverne on the 13th, and found him at Kaurzim, thirty-five miles from Prague, the same evening. Unknown to the Prussians, Daun lay only three miles off that night. Of course Daun, veiled by clouds of irregulars, sat down and fortified. Equally of course, Frederick decided to attack him, but first must wait for his 4,000 men from Prague, and for that plague of armies in those days, baked bread from distant ovens. Manœuvres of little interest ensued till, on the 18th June, the king's army, marching in two columns along the Kolin highway and to north of it, caught sight of the Austrians drawn up in a defensive position near Kolin and facing north. Daun was 60,000 strong; Frederick about 34,000, of which nearly 18,000 were cavalry. The Austrians had about 180 guns, the Prussians about 100.

The Austrian position will be understood by a glance at the map. It is only necessary to say that the hills are

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not high, the slopes are gentle, and the brooks, though small, have cut for themselves during the ages deep channels with swampy bottoms. Daun's left wing, thrown back *en potence*, was well protected by the ground; the centre was in the open, but had several small villages in front of it strengthened by the military art, sown with guns in battery, and protected in front by Croat sharp-shooters in the standing corn. The right flank rested on the brook which flows into Kolin, and had the village of Kreczor[1] for its advanced post. Half a mile behind the village was an oak wood. Nadasti, with the cavalry, was on a hill to the right front of Kreczor. The position was better than usual, because Daun had apparently been unable to find that false refuge of timid generals, an impassable obstacle running all along the front. The Austrian army was about five miles long from flank to flank, and formed in two lines, with a reserve in rear of the centre.

Frederick, reconnoitring, decided to repeat the movement which had succeeded at the battle of Prague. Rightly judging that Daun would maintain his defensive attitude, the king once more made his dispositions for attack in oblique order. The whole army, thrown into two columns to the left, marched close to the Kolin road. Ziethen led with nearly 10,000 cavalry, his orders being to get rid of Nadasti, and, after passing Radowesnitz, to sweep round on the favourable ground and deliver a decisive blow on the right rear of the Austrians, who, the king rightly judged, would be inert for all manœuvring purposes as an ox before a butcher. Hülsen followed with the vanguard of the infantry. He was to wheel up to the right and attack

[1] Actually Krzeczhorz, too dimly suggestive of any possible pronunciation.

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Kreczor, supported by the fresh troops ever arriving. Thus the infantry would begin the pressure on the Austrian right, which would be accelerated by more infantry, and converted by the cavalry attack into a crushing blow.

But the success of this manœuvre, as of all which depend upon the oblique order, demanded that the columns should indeed march on, unchecked, and accumulate their numbers on the decisive point. Otherwise there were no obedience to the master law of all tactics, the rule *to bring superior forces of your own army against inferior forces of the enemy at the right time and place.*

The movement of the Prussian army was easily perceived by Daun. It was plain that his right flank was menaced, and he hastened to strengthen it by placing a battery of eighteen guns from the reserve on the left of Kreczor, and throwing four battalions of the line into the oak wood to support an unknown number of Croats already there. Hülsen, advancing in due time to the attack of Kreczor, was received by the fire of the 18-gun battery, suffered heavy losses, and was checked. The king pushed on three battalions of grenadiers rapidly to his aid. They suffered from the artillery fire in coming up, and Hülsen, finding that nothing could be done in face of those guns, wisely overwhelmed the battery with eight battalions, and carried it. The village of Kreczor also fell into his hands, and with it seven out of the eight battalion guns then present with the infantry.[1] Ziethen, who had already chased Nadasti from the field, endeavoured to wheel round the oak wood,

[1] Carlyle speaks of two batteries, but it may be said once for all that he paid very little attention to the doings of artillery in Frederick's battles. The Prussian artillery was generally inferior and badly handled, and the work of that arm is slurred over in most Prussian accounts. Not till later did Frederick learn the value and the use of field artillery.

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but was taken in flank by the battalion guns posted there, and could by no means either pass the wood or drive the enemy out of it. Again and again he led his cavalry forward, but was always repulsed. He had no guns to reply with, for horse artillery was not yet invented; and Hülsen, who had only four guns at the front, had been obliged to send his chief force—eight battalions—to capture the 18-gun battery; so that he had only two grenadier battalions available to attack the wood, which now contained four Austrian battalions besides Croats.

Here then were the advanced guard of the army and 10,000 cavalry, constituting between them about half the force, checked, after early victory, for lack of a few guns. And, as time is of the essence of success in the oblique order, the battle was already in danger of being lost. Hülsen looked to be speedily reinforced, but no help came. For hours he struggled and Ziethen struggled to carry the oak wood, always expecting help. None ever came.

The chances of war are often so closely balanced, while such great results hang upon them, that men come to ascribe to blind "Fate," or "Luck," apparent accidents which are in truth due to human imperfection. Two such events occurred on this day. The first of them has always been well known. Hot Mannstein, whose breach of arrangements had succeeded so well during the battle of Prague, felt, like the leaders who preceded him in the march, the irritating fire of the Croats in the corn. But, unlike his predecessors, he forgot how much depended on strict accuracy of march to support the advance, and that every regiment was ordered to govern its movements by the one in front of it. Fiery Mannstein could not bear the insult of Croats treading on his skirts, and shouted to his men, "Clear away those Croats." The regiment turned to its

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right and drove away the sharpshooters, who, retreating on reinforcements, led Mannstein clean away from his duty, and, as it seemed to the regiments behind, into an advance against the front of the Austrian army. All the rear of Frederick's force followed the evil example, thinking that a new order had come; and thus, while Hülsen was struggling and praying for reinforcements, a large portion of the infantry broke off from the column and attacked on their own account in another part of the field. The army, already too small, split itself into parts, each of which was of no help to the other.

But Mannstein was not immediately behind Hülsen. The troops of Prince Moritz came between. How was it that Hülsen was not supported even by these? For this Frederick was in fault, led away by that imperious temper which flamed into maddening wrath under contradiction. Seeing that Hülsen was in the way of success, and that he had taken the 18-gun battery, the king rode down to Moritz and ordered him to wheel up to the right. He probably meant half right, which would have put the force in *échelon* and on a short cut to Kreczor. Moritz understood the king to mean a direct wheel up to the right, which would bring the column into line, right in front of the Austrian heavy batteries and strong forces of infantry. Moritz protested, but the son of the king who wielded the rattan blazed into fiery heat, and, flashing out his sword from its scabbard, thundered forth, "Will you obey orders?" Moritz gloomily gave the order, and started on a course which would lead him far away from Hülsen. Frederick returned to the height whence he was watching the battle, and presently saw that Moritz was wandering away from the point intended. He instantly sent the order, "Half left." Moritz, gloomy in spirit, obeyed exactly, as

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on the drill-ground, and the half left, coming then too late, did not take him to Hülsen's help, but short of him, to a point in front of the Austrian army quite separate from either of the other attacks. Thus then the projected concentrated attack on the Austrian right had fallen into one attack on the right, checked for want of guns, and two isolated attacks on the enemy's front, with an inferior force and against well-posted heavy batteries, as well as numerous infantry. The Prussian troops fought splendidly, but no daring of the men could atone for the bad "luck" or bad temper which had thrown the advantages away. Yet, Frederick being what he was, and Daun oppressed by dread of him, the fate of the battle once more hung on the turn of a hair. While the king was in the thick of the fight, striving, urging, commanding, Daun began to calculate what would become of his army if it were driven down the Kamhayek heights into the swampy ground at the bottom, and, from calculation, came to ordering a retreat in another direction, to Suchdol. Some of the troops were actually retiring in obedience to the order, when an aide-de-camp failed to find General Nostitz, who commanded the Saxon horse—a remnant saved from the Pirna catastrophe by absence at Warsaw. Colonel Benkendorf offered to take the order to Nostitz, but, peeping into it on the way, thought to have one good stroke first. He persuaded Nostitz to the same opinion, and together they assembled horse and foot and led them against Hülsen. There was a furious *mêlée*, a struggle body to body, and at last the wearied Prussians were driven back down hill. Both the other attacks had been torn to pieces by the fire of the Austrian batteries, and Hülsen's retreat was signal enough. The whole line fell back, wrestling still for a time, and the battle of Kolin was at an end. A feeble

attempt on Daun's part to pursue with cavalry from the left was checked by the steadiness of Mannstein's infantry, which during the whole affair lost half its strength; but the Austrian general dared not move a single regiment of infantry from the defensive position, though he had nearly twice the Prussian power. The Prussian cavalry was allowed to stand quiet on the field till ten at night, and, after keeping his army all night under arms, Daun retired next day to his old camp, though he could see the Prussian baggage in dire confusion behind Kaurzim and Planian, with only one battalion to guard it. Thus are advantages thrown away by the timid.

The Austrians had lost only 8,114 out of 60,000. The Prussians 13,773 out of 34,000, all the wounded falling as prisoners into the hands of the enemy, together with forty-five guns and twenty-two flags.

The Prussian retreat was on Nimburg, to cross the Elbe there—a march of fifteen miles. Next morning, Frederick saw gather round him the wreck of his splendid infantry: Schwerin gone at Prague; at least 26,000 men lost in two battles, the second of which snatched from before the king's eyes the fruit he had all but gathered from the first. He sat moody, writing with a stick in the sand. But when he saw his own first battalion of Life Guards pass him, every man known to him by name, and could count but 400 left out of the 1,000 who went into battle yesterday, his face grew wet with silent tears. Soon rousing himself, he despatched orders with regard to raising the siege of Prague (the first order had been sent from the battle field), and himself followed the messengers to head-quarters there. The operation was conducted in a masterly way, without any loss, Marshal Keith being the last to leave. The siege equipment was sent to Dresden.

26th-28th June 1757.

Frederick, with the Ziscaberg force, moved eastward to Alt Lissa to lend a hand to the relics of the Kolin army now at Nimburg. Keith moved by Budin to Leitmeritz, where the rest of the Prague army joined him on the 28th—the king with them—Prince Moritz, with the Kolin army, halting at Alt Lissa as a rearguard to check Daun, then moving to Jung Bunzlau. The slow Austrians, Prince Karl and Daun, after much rejoicing in the *Te Deum* way, concentrated on the Prague battle-field on the 26th, having done nothing to hinder the difficult task of the king, except with an irregular force under Loudon.

A heavier loss than that of a battle to the king, fell at this time on Frederick, the man. On the 28th, the day of the concentration with Keith, the tender mother, Queen-Mother as he had christened her, whose breast had been his refuge from his childhood's woes, and in whose presence, when king, he never stood but hat in hand, died at Berlin. When the news reached him at Leitmeritz, he gave vent to the keenness of his grief in frequent solitude. Fortunately, Mitchell, an Englishman of heart, was there to tell of the human suffering of him whom men called "Great," of the tears he shed, and his recalling the goodness of his mother, her sweetness to him, and her sufferings with and for him. It was of this time that he said afterwards, "I have been unhappier than others because I possessed greater sensibility."

CHAPTER XIII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1757 (*continued*).—ILL FORTUNE PURSUES FREDERICK.—THE DISASTER OF THE PRINCE OF PRUSSIA AT ZITTAU.—THE KING MARCHES AGAINST THE DAUPHINESS' ARMY, WHICH AVOIDS HIM.—RETREAT OF BEVERN.—CORRESPONDENCE WITH WILHELMINA.—RAID ON BERLIN.—RUSSIANS GO HOME.

June-Oct. 1757.

1757.

THE battle of Prague had caused a lull in the proceedings of the various allies, who waited to see "What next?" But the king's disaster at Kolin enlivened their spirits, and they prepared to inclose the Prussian army in a ring of fire. Even the Reich's army cheered up and arranged to join the French for operations in North Germany. It was commanded by the Prince of Hildburghausen, and had for second in command the Prince of Hesse Darmstadt, who had lately been one of Frederick's generals, and had a post under Keith when he lay on the Weissenberg. The Reich's army was for field purposes about 25,000 strong, and was reinforced a little later by an Austrian force of 8,000—total 33,000 men.

The French king, urged by the strong will of the Pompadour and the tears of the Dauphiness, drew from his suffering subjects the men and money to equip another army

3rd-9th July 1757.

under Soubise, about 30,000 strong. Its mission was to unite with the Reich's army, and reconquer Saxony. It was called "*L'Armée de la Dauphine.*" The French army already in the field under D'Estrées captured Embden on the 3rd July, and, being about 60,000 strong after dropping garrisons, with 10,000 more to be picked up on the way, marched on the 9th July against the Duke of Cumberland, who retired before it.

Even the Russians took heart of grace at last and crossed the border on the 30th June, 37,000 of them to besiege Memel, which was bombarded by land and sea, and fell on the 5th July; and 70,000 of them in the Tilsit country, where Lehwald, very weak in men, could not be expected to stop them. The Swedes declared war and threatened Pomerania with 17,000 men, but the greatest and nearest danger was, for the time, from the side of the Austrians, who being now united, Prince Charles and Daun together, were manœuvring in the neighbourhood with 70,000 men. Their intention was to avoid the king's force if possible, and to attack the old Kolin army which was now under command of August Wilhelm, Prince of Prussia, Frederick's brother. This prince is chiefly known by his constant attitude of opposition to the king, whose measures he criticised with little reticence. The opposition of an heir apparent is common and of slight detriment in political life, perhaps even useful in countries without a parliamentary government. But opposition in war, combined with self-conceit, may be fatal; and it is strange that Frederick should supersede the well-tried Moritz for asking whether he had not better retreat on Silesia, and should appoint in his place a brother who had shown no military capacity, and was not quite loyal in supporting the measures of the king. Frederick gave him as a coun-

sellor the well-tried Winterfeld, and he had besides, Ziethen, Schmettau (his own favourite), Fouquet, Retzow, and Goltz, all more or less jealous of Winterfeld—too many counsellors for an indifferent general.

At[1] the end of June the prince was in command at Jung Buntzlau. On 1st July the Austrians crossed the Elbe above Brandeis; Nadasti, with clouds of cavalry and light troops, being pushed close to the prince's army, who, 3rd July, retired to Neuschloss, a good position, and nearer the king. Nadasti still pressing, the prince fell back, 7th July, to Böhm-Leipa, further from the king's force at Leitmeritz, but one march nearer his magazines, which were at Zittau. Gabel and other posts on the cross country roads which led from Böhm-Leipa to Zittau were held by detachments. On the same day the Austrian main army arrived at Münchengrätz through Jung Buntzlau, and afterwards moved slowly by Liebenau to Niemes, thus working round the Prussian left flank. They arrived at Niemes on the 14th, and on that day Nadasti, who preceded them, attacked Gabel in the evening, defended by General Puttkammer with 3,000 men, the escort of a return convoy on its way to Zittau. The cannon-thunder was heard at Böhm-Leipa. The magazines at Zittau were known to be in danger, and the prince called a council of war, that refuge of the timid which "never fights."

Three courses suggested themselves. First, to retreat on Leitmeritz, and brave the angry remonstrances of the king, who had already found fault with the constant retirements of the prince. Second, the boldest, to march on Gabel and help Puttkammer, covering Zittau and the line of retreat. Once at Gabel, there was a good road to Zittau. Both these measures demanded decision. The one might lead to

[1] For these manœuvres see small map above Battle of Prague.

16th-24th July 1757.

censure, the other to a battle. Winterfeld, exhausted by his toils, was asleep and did not attend the council of war, which, in his absence, decided on a third and the worst possible course. The decision was to march on Zittau by circuitous roads, by Kamnitz, Kreywitz, Rumburg, leaving Gabel and the rest to their fate. To Gabel direct was only fifteen miles by country road, thence to Zittau another fifteen on a high road. The route selected was between twice and thrice as far, while the Austrian main body would have high road all the way to Zittau.

The march began in the first morning hours of the 16th July, and on the 22nd the prince, who, harassed by light troops in the hills, lost his pontoons, most of his baggage and food supplies, arrived in sight of Zittau only to find the Austrian army lying to northward of the place, having seized the commanding position of the Eckartsberg. He had to look down on a town cruelly bombarded by Prince Charles, cruelly because it was not a fortress and the bombardment was intended to burn the town, not to destroy fortifications, and by no means could he enter the place or draw stores from his magazine. A detachment sent for that purpose next day returned, having failed to procure more than a small quantity of food. On the 24th the Prince of Prussia retired on Löbau, leaving open the way to either Saxony or Silesia, as Prince Charles might choose.

This movement has been described to show how generals should not make war, and with what difficulties a great commander has to contend because he cannot infuse his own spirit into his subordinates. To undo the past was impossible, but Frederick, as soon as he heard of the ill-judged march, started; leaving Keith to bring on the magazines, and Moritz of Dessau, with 10,000 men, to secure the passes

26th July 1757.

about Pirna. He arrived at Bautzen on the 29th, would not speak to his brother at first, and sent a message that he and the generals who had advised him deserved a court-martial. The prince asked permission to retire to Dresden, which was accorded. He never commanded in the field again, and died about a year afterwards, 12th June, 1758, partly of chagrin.

Other bad news reached the king at this time. The action known as the battle of Hastenbeck, fought between the Duke of Cumberland and D'Estrées, was one of the most absurd in history. The Duke, who had been gradually retreating, at last took heart and posted himself behind Hastenbeck on the 22nd July (the day when the Prince of Prussia came in sight of the Austrians at Zittau), with his right wing resting on a swamp near the Weser, and his left on a wooded knoll. On the 26th D'Estrées attacked, knowing only a portion of the duke's position. He sent General Chevert against the duke's left on the knoll, which was attacked in front with some success. General Breitenbach, on the duke's side, was posted with a small detachment in a hollow behind the knoll, and, receiving no orders, threw himself boldly against Chevert's flank, recovered a battery which had been captured, and generally threw Chevert into confusion. With the least support to Breitenbach the battle was the duke's, but that commander was not at hand, and no one dared to act in his absence. Indeed he thought that Breitenbach's attack was a fresh French onslaught, and accordingly ordered a retreat. The Brunswick grenadiers who had fought so well wept with rage, but obeyed. D'Estrées also ordered retreat because of Breitenbach's charge. So then the unauthorised action of a small detachment caused both generals to order retreat, only the duke's forces were the first to go.

July 1757.

They were directed to retire to Hanover, but, as the baggage happened to go to Minden by mistake, the whole army followed. As there was no strategy in the case, it mattered little which way the march turned. Only, Hanover might in some sort be said to cover Berlin and lend a hand to Frederick, while Minden covered nothing, and the duke, once on his way, thought he might as well retire by Bremen and Stade to the sea. D'Estrées had 72,000 men, the Duke of Cumberland 40,000, but, as neither made any use of the bulk of his force, the comparative strength of the two armies had nothing to do with success or failure. If the duke had gone to sleep or fallen down in a fit, the battle would probably have been a victory to him. The allies lost 3,500 men, the French 2,000.

The Duc de Richelieu was sent to supersede D'Estrées, and the other Duke, of Cumberland, concluded with him the Convention of Kloster-Zeven, by which the Anglo-Hanoverian army was to break up and go home without molestation, the French engaging to make no more war in those parts. The convention crowned the absurdity of the battle, for, though the generals signed it, both governments, France first, refused to ratify it. The Duke of Cumberland returned to England on the 5th October, to hear his father say, "Here is my son, who has ruined me and disgraced himself." But, three days after Hastenbeck, 29th July, Pitt came into power, and held it long enough to make English campaigns the reverse of ruinous. Of this more hereafter.

The first weeks after the collapse of the Prince of Prussia were spent by Frederick in striving to draw the Austrians into a battle, but they clung to an unassailable position on the Eckartsberg, and would not move, even though the king divided his army and attacked Nadasti

with a division to tempt them. At length, 25th August, he marched with one division to see what could be done against Soubise and the Reich's army, leaving Bevern and Winterfeld to entertain the Austrians in his absence. At Dresden he picked up Moritz, who had been in the Pirna country, and his combined force now counted 23,000 men, with whom to strike a blow against the Dauphiness' army, which now lay 170 miles due east, about Gotha and Erfurt. If the Convention of Kloster-Zeven were to hold good, the D'Estrées army now under Richelieu might join the Dauphiness' army, and between them meet Frederick with 150,000 men. All therefore depended upon speed.

During the march, Frederick heard that his best general and closest friend, Winterfeld, had been killed in a skirmish, 7th September, and that Bevern, three days later, had retired on Silesia, with Prince Charles and Daun in pursuit of him. Bitterer blows fate could not deal him, short of losing his beloved Wilhelmina, who was at the time wild with anxiety for her brother, and moving heaven and earth to bring about a peace with the French. At her pressing request Frederick did write to Richelieu, who tried but failed to move the women in Paris. They, more than any others, sustained the passion against Prussia, and forced money and tears from the people to build up armies. Richelieu was not very dangerous to Frederick. He had sought command for the sake of what he could make by it, and he managed during his one campaign to pay off £50,000 of debts in Paris.

The movement of 170 miles from Dresden occupied twelve days—1st to 13th September. It was not considered as a forced march, and we may judge from it that a fair average marching pace of the Prussian army, including halts and neglecting no precautions, was about

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fourteen miles a day. This is good marching and management, and compares favourably with the allied concentration on Prague in 1741, when the force which had to march farthest, and therefore quickest, only covered nine miles a day. Arrived at Erfurt, another disappointment awaited him. The Dauphiness' army, with all its grand mission, and feminine enthusiasm at the back of it, would not fight, but retired to the hills in a westerly direction. The king sent Moritz to Torgau and Ferdinand to Magdeburg to watch Richelieu. Richelieu pressed slowly on and occupied Halberstadt, while Moritz was soon called upon for action in quite another direction.

During the period of forced inactivity which ensued, Frederick wrote much, both in prose and verse. His letters to Wilhelmina show that he believed the condition of his affairs to be nearly desperate. In addition to the nearness of two armies, each more than double his own strength, and to the threatened inroads of the Swedes, Silesia, the main object of the war, was now invaded by the Austrians, and, worst of all, Apraxin, with the Russian army, had Prussia herself at his feet. The regular Russian troops behaved well and were under discipline, but the Cossacks and Calmucks, then untrained to obedience, committed frightful excesses and cruelties. Lehwald, whom the king ordered to attack the Russians at all hazards though he had only 25,000 to their 80,000, suffered a defeat at Gross-Jagersdorf, and the road to Berlin was open to Apraxin with his horrible irregulars. All seemed lost but liberty, and the king determined to die ere he would part with that.

He wrote to Wilhelmina in a lofty strain of melancholy, telling her that he would do all he could, but would not live to see the catastrophe which would befall his kingdom

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when once the reins of guidance were certainly gone from his hands. Even in this terrible crisis, when blow after blow fell on the loving Wilhelmina, the ring of her battered soul was ever true and noble. Full of effort in his cause, moving even Voltaire to help towards peace, she wrote to her brother words of sympathy, hope, and good counsel. Amid the trickeries of courts and the cruelties of war, one lingers over the true-hearted correspondence between these companions of childhood.

Frederick's first letter on these topics was in verse, and is well known as the *Épître à ma Sœur*. It was written just before his march to Erfurt, and dated 24th August, 1757. It begins, "O sweet and dear hope of my remaining days: O sister, whose friendship, so fertile in resources, shares all my sorrows, and with helpful arm assists me in the gulf!" It reviews the past with its combinations, successes, failures, and final gatherings against him, and apostrophises his people as his most anxious care. "And thou, loved people, whose happiness is my charge, it is thy lamentable destiny, it is the danger that hangs over thee which pierces my soul." He speaks in tender, mournful strain of his mother's death, and ends with that defiance of the Heavens which has been through all time the note of a strong man's last challenge when falling into despair: "And if there do exist some gloomy and inexorable Being, who allows a despised herd of creatures to go on multiplying here, he values them as nothing; looks down on a Phalaris crowned, on a Socrates in chains; on our virtues our misdeeds, on the horrors of war, and all the cruel plagues which ravage earth, as a thing indifferent to him. Wherefore, loved sister, my sole refuge and only haven is in the arms of death."

On the 12th September, Wilhelmina, in a letter to

17th Sept. 1757.

Voltaire, whom she is persuading to use his influence for peace, says :—

To me there remains nothing but to follow his destiny if it is unfortunate. I have never piqued myself on being a philosopher ; though I have made efforts to become so. The small progress I made did teach me to despise grandeur and riches ; but I could never find in philosophy any cure for the wounds of the heart, except that of ending with our miseries by ceasing to live. The state I am in is worse than death, I see the greatest man of the age, my brother, my friend, reduced to the most frightful extremity. I see my whole family exposed to dangers and perhaps destruction ; my native country torn by pitiless enemies ; the country where I am menaced by perhaps similar misfortune. . . . . You would sigh if you knew the sad condition of Germany and Prussia. The cruelties which the Russians commit in that latter country make nature shudder. How happy you in your hermitage, where you repose on your laurels and can philosophise with a calm mind on the deliriums of men !

On the 17th September Frederick writes to Wilhelmina from near Erfurt :—

My dearest Sister,—I find no other consolation but in your precious letters. May Heaven reward so much virtue and such heroic sentiments.

Since I last wrote to you, my misfortunes have gone on accumulating. (Here he details the troubles which we know.) Happen what may, I am determined, at all risks, to fall upon whatever corps of the enemy approaches me nearest. I shall even bless Heaven for its mercy if it grant me the favour to die sword in hand. . . . A Bavarian elector in his nonage may submit to Austria. But is that the example for me to follow ? No, dear sister, you think too nobly to give me such cowardly advice. Is liberty, that precious prerogative, to be less dear to a sovereign in the eighteenth century than it was to Roman patricians of old ? . . . .

Sept. 1757.

Speaking of Kolin, he says that after the battle he made it a point of honour to straighten all that had gone crooked.

But, no sooner had I hastened here to face new enemies, than Winterfeld was beaten and killed near Görlitz, than the French entered the heart of my states, than the Swedes blockaded Stettin. Now, there is nothing left for me to do: there are too many enemies. Were I even to succeed in beating two armies, the third would crush me. The inclosed note (in cipher) will show you what I am still about to try: it is the last attempt. . . .

But it is time to end this long, dreary letter, which treats almost of nothing but my own affairs. I have had some leisure, and have used it to open on you a heart filled with admiration and gratitude towards you. Yes, my adorable sister, if Providence troubled itself about human affairs, you ought to be the happiest person in the universe. Your not being so confirms me in the sentiments expressed at the end of my *Épître* (the defiance of Heaven). In conclusion, believe that I adore you, and that I would give my life a thousand times to serve you.

One more letter from Wilhelmina, and a last writing of Frederick. Wilhelmina's was written on 15th September, two days before the letter of her brother, just quoted. Frederick's last was written 9th October, just as a prospect of hard work was appearing.

Wilhelmina writes, Baireuth, 15th September, 1757:—

My dearest Brother,—Your letter and the one you wrote to Voltaire, my dear brother, have almost killed me. What fatal resolutions, Great God! Ah, my dear brother, you say you love me; and you drive a dagger into my heart. Your *Épître*, which I did receive, made me shed rivers of tears. I am now ashamed of such weakness. My misfortune would be so great that I should find worthier resources than tears. Your lot shall be mine: I will not survive either your misfortunes or those of the house I belong to. You may calculate that such is my firm resolution.

Oct. 1757.

But, after this avowal, allow me to entreat you to look back at what was the pitiable state of your enemy when you lay before Prague! It is the sudden whirl of Fortune for both parties. The like can occur again, when one is least expecting it. Cæsar was the slave of pirates; and he became master of the world. A great genius like yours finds resources even when all is lost; and it is impossible this frenzy can continue. My heart bleeds to think of the poor souls in Prussia. What horrid barbarity, the detail of cruelties which go on there! I feel all that you feel on it, my dear brother. I know your heart and your sensibility for your subjects.

I suffer a thousand times more than I can tell you; nevertheless, hope does not abandon me. I received your letter of the 14th. What kindness to think of me, who have nothing to give you but a useless affection, which is so richly repaid by yours! I am obliged to finish; but I shall never cease to be, with the most profound respect,

Your

WILHELMINA.

Then for our last quotation let us take Frederick's remarks on Voltaire's safe advice from his hermitage; advice more likely, one would think, to irritate than soothe the king; for it assumes as quite possible that his kingdom may be divided and he himself become a captive.

On the 9th October Frederick wrote:—

I know the *ennui* attending on honours, the burdensome duties, the jargon of grinning flatterers, those pitiabilities of every kind, those details of littleness, with which you have to occupy yourself if set on high on the stage of things. Foolish glory had no charm for me, though a poet and a king (remark that he puts poet before king). When once Atropos has ended me for ever, what will the uncertain honour of living in the temple of Memory avail? One moment of practical happiness is worth a thousand years of imaginary in such temple. Is the lot of high people so very sweet then? Pleasure, gentle ease, true and hearty

mirth, have always fled from the great and their peculiar pomps and labours.

No, it is not fickle Fortune that has ever caused my sorrows; let her smile her blandest, let her frown her fiercest on me, I should sleep every night, refusing her the least worship. But our respective conditions are our law; we are bound and commanded to shape our temper to the employment we have undertaken. Voltaire in his hermitage, in a country where is honesty and safety, can devote himself in peace to the life of the philosopher as Plato has described it. But, as for me, threatened with shipwreck, I must consider how, looking the tempest in the face, I can think, can live, and can die as a king.

Two days after this was written, there arrived a message from Dresden, with the news that an Austrian force, left behind when Prince Charles and Daun pursued Bevern into Silesia, was marching directly upon Berlin. The king supposed this to be part of a combined movement, which would include the Swedes and probably Richelieu's army. He ordered Moritz off at once, and followed as soon as he could make arrangements. Work seems to have calmed his mind; it is now he who encourages Wilhelmina; she, poor soul, writing desperately that she has heard he is ill or killed.

The passage through the valley of the shadow of death was now over. There was no combination to attack Berlin. The city was entered and placed under slight contribution, but the Austrians were gone before Moritz could reach them. Apraxin with his Cossacks retired to Russia, probably on rumour that the Czarina was dead—an event which would place on the throne Paul, a friend and admirer of Frederick. Thus Lehwald was released to attend to the Swedes. Better than all these smiles of fortune was the news brought by Count von Schulenburg, a Hanoverian general, who arrived in plain clothes, to the astonishment

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of all, that England had renounced the Convention of Kloster-Zeven, would put the army again in the field, and requested King Frederick to grant Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick to be general of the same. It was now that Frederick exclaimed to the English envoy, Mitchell: "England has taken long to produce a great man; but here is one at last!" That great man was Pitt.

CHAPTER XIV.

CAMPAIGN OF 1757 (*continued*).—BATTLE OF ROSSBACH.—MARCH TO SILESIA.—BATTLE OF LEUTHEN.

A.D. 1757.

30th Oct. 1757.

THE raid on Berlin, barren as it was in practical result, caused great rejoicing among all Frederick's enemies. The Dauphiness' army was directed to draw 15,000 men from Richelieu's command, and, under pressing orders from Versailles, advanced as far as Leipzig. Keith, who held the town with a small force, refused to evacuate it, saying that he would burn the suburbs. In the moment of hesitation news came to Soubise that the king was at hand. Strong as he was in men, the French general fell back, and it seemed as if the terrible game of delay were about to be played again. In such a game Frederick, whose only hope lay in staking his all on a battle, could not but lose.

On the 30th October Frederick, with his advanced guard, arrived at Lützen, Keith and Duke Ferdinand following with the main body and rear guard. Moritz also had come in from his Berlin trip. On the enemy's part, Broglio, second son of the old marshal, with 15,000 men from Richelieu's army, was at Halle, guarding the bridge there; Soubise at Merseburg, guarding that bridge; Hildburghausen was at Weissenfels, ready to dispute the passage

31st Oct.-4th Nov. 1757.

there. Thus an army nearly three times the size of the king's chose to divide itself and act on the defensive instead of attacking him.[1]

At eight o'clock in the morning of the 31st, Frederick, with part of the army, appeared before Weissenfels. The troops left to defend the eastern position were soon overpowered and retreated over the river, burning the bridge behind them so hurriedly that 400 men had not time to escape, and remained as prisoners. The Prussians constructed another bridge during the night, about a mile further down the river, and made good their footing on the western bank. Keith, with the other half of the army, tried the bridges at Merseburg and Halle, but found them strongly occupied. The Dauphiness' army, instead of continuing to hold these bridges with a moderate force and throwing the bulk against the king, burned them, and actually ceased to dispute the passage of the Saale, concentrating at and near the village of Mücheln, where they placed themselves awkwardly in an ill-chosen defensive position. The Prussians repaired all three bridges, and crossed without further opposition.

In the early morning of the 4th Frederick attempted to attack the enemy, but found that they had shifted their position and were well posted for defence. Knowing that the Dauphiness' army was far from its supplies, he felt sure it must move, and prudently awaited a better chance for attack. His camp also was now shifted a little, and the army lay with its left on Rossbach, right on Bedra, about two miles from the allied right wing.

To understand the battle of Rossbach [2] it is necessary to know that the village so called stands on a lumpy elevation,

[1] See map above Battle of Rossbach.

[2] See plan of Battle of Rossbach.

5th Nov. 1757.

from which the allied camp, lying lower, could be seen. Behind the Prussian camp is a dip in the ground, on the other side of which rises the Janus Hill, and, a little further, the Polsen Hill. There is nothing steep enough to hinder the movements of all arms, and the country is singularly destitute of trees, hedges, or brushwood—just slightly undulating ground, completely open. The water-courses, as given on the map, will show, however, that the highest part of the low swell of land takes in Rossbach as well as the Janus and Pölzen Hills,—water-courses, but seldom water, as the rain soon sinks into the sandy soil and forms no obstacle to movement of troops.

On the morning of the 5th November, the Dauphiness' army began to work out a very remarkable idea which had come into the head of its commander. This was no less than that he would start in full view of the king, work round the Prussian left, attack that together with the rear and even front at the same time, and destroy the whole force, probably capturing the king. To do this it was necessary to catch the most subtle general in Europe asleep in open day. The advantage of placing an army on the enemy's communications is undoubted, provided always that we can beat him there; otherwise, if we are close to him, the result may be disastrous. Clearly, Soubise hoped to conquer and capture Frederick. An Austrian party destroyed that morning the temporary bridge at Weissen-fels—Herren-Mühle bridge it was called—and so strong was the belief at Versailles in the capture of Frederick, that the Duchess of Orleans, forgetful of her monarch's presence, burst out like a school-girl with the words, "At last, then, I shall see a real king."

Frederick, hearing that the Dauphiness' army was getting into motion—a long process with it—ordered all

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the cavalry to saddle. Seidlitz, a rising man then, commanded the regular regiments; Mayer, the light horse. The infantry was also ordered to be in readiness to move, but as yet the tents were left standing. A body of French, chiefly cavalry, advanced, under St. Germain, to the left front of the Prussians and threatened the camp. The main body of the enemy got itself into column and marched by its right through Gröst and Schevenroda. Frederick watched them from the top of the Herrenhaus at Rossbach. About 9 A.M. nearly half the army was through Gröst, and, judging from previous experience, would go to Freiburg towards its magazines. At noon the king sat down to dinner and remained two hours at table. About 2 P.M. one of his adjutants, Gaudi by name, rushed into the room, exclaiming that the enemy were turning to the left at Pettstädt. Frederick answered with a soldier's rough joke, having reference to the effects of fear on the digestive parts. He mounted quietly to the roof, and there saw plainly that the allied army was attempting to march round his left in a long column. The time had come then. That day it would be given to him to "look the tempest in the face, to think, to live or to die as a king." [1]

His orders were promptly issued. About 2.30 P.M. the army had the command to prepare for marching. By three o'clock it was in movement, tents having been struck and packed in the interval. The cavalry, 4,000 strong, ready beforehand, was then disappearing in the hollow behind the camp on its way to the Janus and Pölzen Hills. The infantry followed at the double. Thus, in one hour from the first news of the real allied movement, Frederick had altered all his plans, communicated them to his army encamped; that army had struck tents, packed all its equipage, and was

[1] See Frederick's answer to Voltaire's dissuasion from death (p. 164).

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swiftly rushing forward to deliver a blow which is one of the most famous in history. A French officer who was present describes this rapid movement as like a scene at the opera. . The whole army disappeared in the hollow from the view of the Dauphiness' army, and Soubise, fearing that it might escape him by retreat through Merseburg, gave orders to quicken the pace of his own forces. Thus the two armies were racing for an unknown goal, both in column. Only there were these differences. The plan of the allies to catch the king napping had failed; their judgment of his intentions was now at fault; his army was better trained and speedier than theirs, and Seidlitz took care to keep his flanking parties on the top of the hills whence they could see the enemy. This precaution was neglected by the allies, who blundered along, not informed of the progress made by the Prussian forces.

In those days of stiff, square movements, even more than now, the head of a long column was for all practical purposes the same as the flank in line. A Prussian battery of eighteen guns, four of which were twelve-pounders, established itself on the Janus Hill, and smote the head of the allied cavalry and infantry with its fire. Seidlitz pressed on till his scouts gave notice that he was ahead of the enemy. Then he wheeled up, about 3.30 o'clock, advanced to the top of the Pölzen Hill, and, seeing the movement favourable, lost not a moment in waiting for orders but thundered down the slope on the flank of the allied horse which were leading the column. There was no advanced guard. Four times did Seidlitz go through and through this mass, which had not even time to form up. Only two regiments (Austrian) opposed any front at all to the attack. In half an hour the whole allied cavalry was ruined, and in its

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flight disordered the advancing infantry. Finally, it fled towards Freiburg, and fought no more that day. Seidlitz steadied his squadrons, and reformed them in a hollow near Tagwerben.

Prince Henry came up quickly with seven battalions to support Seidlitz, and attacked the leading regiments of the allied column, which was endeavouring to form up to its left. Crushed by artillery and infantry fire, the Reich's troops and the French melted away. A Würtemberg dragoon, writing of this time, says:—"The artillery tore down whole ranks of us; the Prussian musketry did terrible execution." In vain was an attempt made to deploy on the rear of the column, under the protection of the remaining French cavalry, not yet engaged. Seidlitz rushed out of Tagwerben hollow, and crushed the futile endeavour. Infantry, cavalry, artillery, all were ruined. The army became a disorganised wreck, and fled from the field of battle. Only St. Germain remained intact, to cover, in some sort, the retreat, though he was soon broken by Mayer's light horse. The rear of the Prussian army, now become its right, had been refused, and was never engaged. By a stroke of military capacity acting against an ill-led enemy, from 50,000 to 60,000 men had been defeated by 4,000 horse and seven battalions, supported by eighteen guns well pushed forward. The Prussian loss was only 165 killed, 376 wounded. The allies lost in killed and wounded 3,000, prisoners 5,000, guns about seventy, and many other trophies.

The battle of Rossbach is full of instruction. It shows how helpless is an army, imperfectly trained and commanded, against a skilful general with a force inferior in number but well in hand. It serves to teach us how vain it is to rely on numbers alone, no matter how brave the

men may be; for the French were certainly no cowards. It points, in short, a moral which all Englishmen should lay to heart, when they think in serious moments of possible battles fought in their own country, and with the mixed troops at present available.

The essence of Frederick's manœuvre was, as usual, the attack in oblique order; for the front of the long allied column may be considered as its right flank; and the king's parallel, but swifter, march alongside of his opponents was in principle like the march round the front at Prague or Kolin to gain the flank. The attack of Seidlitz, without waiting for orders, showed the born cavalry commander, and there is a fine lesson, applicable even to-day, in his retirement to the Tagwerben hollow to reorganise his ranks, and his subsequent charge from it at a critical moment. There is hardly a finer example in history of the energetic action of the three arms, each doing its own work, but all closely supporting each other. The Prussian cavalry and infantry had always done their work well, but the artillery, hitherto somewhat neglected, now began to take its place as an independent arm, acting with audacity and decision. It first attacked with its fire the allied cavalry attempting to form up to withstand Seidlitz. It then crushed the allied artillery near the head of the column, and prevented it from acting against the Prussian horse or foot; and it next joined with the seven battalions to annihilate the resistance of the infantry. Its first fire was the signal for Seidlitz to charge, it prevented the formation of the allied guns, and, when these were swept away by the cavalry rout, it never ceased its fire against the infantry. It was subsequently reinforced on its right by a battery the position of which is not known exactly (Carlyle does not even mention it); and it prepared the second

26th Oct.-22nd Nov. 1757.

victory of Seidlitz by firing against a part of the allied infantry which was too distant from the Prussian seven battalions for them to have any effect upon it.

Decker says of it—"We may say, with all assurance, that the success of the day belonged to the artillery. If, as at Kolin, it had remained inactive, the enemy's infantry could have formed and advanced; its defeat would not have been so complete, and the success of the (Prussian) cavalry would have been less brilliant." [1]

St. Germain, writing of it afterwards, declares:—"The first cannon-salvo decided our rout and our shame."

The whole allied army was, as it were, burst asunder over a radius of forty-five miles. The Reich's part of it went home quite disorganised. The French rushed madly towards their frontier, plundering as they went, and re-crossed the Rhine. Richelieu also retired, and Duke Ferdinand, taking charge of the Anglo-Hanoverian forces, soon brought them into a state of order and good heart unknown to them when commanded by the Duke of Cumberland. England blazed with bonfires, and voted reinforcements, which, in the course of the next year, joined to the amount of 20,000 men, of whom 12,000 arrived in August.

Frederick at once took measures to succour his army in Silesia, where Bevern had blundered, weakening himself by detachments instead of delivering a good stroke at the enemy. Breslau was threatened, Schweidnitz besieged. The trenches were opened 26th October, and the place capitulated on the 14th November, handing over to the enemy great wealth of stores and 30,000*l.* in hard cash. Prince Charles, with Daun as second in command, had now 80,000 men, and beat Bevern at the battle of Breslau, November 22nd. The duke had imitated Austrian tactics,

[1] Decker's *Seven Years' War*, French Edition, 1839, p. 115.

entrenched, and fought a defensive battle, with the result that he had to retire in the night, leaving eighty guns and 8,000 killed and wounded in the hands of the enemy. Bevern was himself captured on the second day afterwards, having ridden into an enemy's outpost,—some said, intentionally. Breslau fell into the hands of the Austrians.

On the 13th November, a week after Rossbach, Frederick marched from Leipzig with about 13,000 men, and arrived at Parchwitz—say 170 miles—on the 28th. He placed Ziethen in command of the beaten Breslau army, and ordered a concentration at Parchwitz, which took place on the 3rd of December. That night he spoke to his chief officers words of flame, and kindled in them and in the army the same fiery spirit which animated his own breast. He concealed nothing, but said that he meant to attack the Austrians, "nearly thrice our strength," and conquer or perish. His concluding words were: "Now, good night, gentlemen; shortly we shall have either beaten the enemy, or we never see one another again." The same night he went through his army, visiting each regiment in turn, talking familiarly with the men. Some of these conversations have come down to our time, as related by those who heard them. There were rough camp jokes; the king would say how strong the Austrians were behind their entrenchments, and the men reply, "And if they had the devil in front and all round them, we will knock them out; only thou lead us on." "Good night, Fritz," was always the parting word of the soldiers to the general they trusted. This was Frederick's method with his officers and men; it was also Marlborough's and Napoleon's. Who can find a better bond than this kind of familiarity, which goes well with the sternest discipline?

Breslau had fallen without firing a shot after Bevern's

4th-5th Dec. 1757.

defeat, and the Austrians lay well entrenched in a strong position behind Schweidnitz Water, covering Breslau. A council of war was held, and Prince Charles was persuaded by the bolder spirits to leave this position, cross Schweidnitz Water, so as to make sure of a battle, they being 80,000 strong to Frederick's 30,000 or thereabouts. Nor could any fault be found with this determination, provided it were carried out in full, and the Austrian army led with skill and energy to attack an opponent about a third its strength. But, as we shall see, they did but leave a position of great strength for one less formidable with a river behind, and sat down there to await attack. Their new position [1] was fairly strong, resting the right on bogs about Nypern, the left on a hill behind Sagschütz, protected by abatis. The army lay across the road to Breslau. Its front was covered with redoubts and villages prepared for defence, Leuthen being one of them. On arrival in their new position, they heard that the Prussians had commenced proceedings by seizing on the 4th an Austrian bakery, near Neumarkt, where was found a complete set of bread rations hot from the oven, no small boon in the cold of December—a Sunday treat to the Prussian veterans.

On Monday, the 5th, early in the morning, Frederick marched to attack, riding as usual with the advanced guard. At Borne he found drawn up across the road a line of cavalry, the flanks of which vanished in the haze of early dawn. He attacked at once, and destroyed or captured the force, which proved to be General Nostitz with three Saxon regiments of horse, placed as an advanced post to gain tidings of any Prussian advance. This affair was important, for the remnants of the cavalry galloped back to the Austrian right wing, and caused Count Lucchesi, who

[1] See plan above Battle of Leuthen.

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commanded there, to believe that the king's attack would be directed against his part of the field. Halting his troops, the king rode on to the highest knoll in front, whence he could see clearly the whole Austrian army drawn up. He knew the country well, and decided that the Austrian left wing was more open to attack than the right. Once more he had the usual inert Austrian line in front of him, trusting to purely defensive tactics, though nearly thrice his strength. The occasion was favourable for the oblique attack, and, as the main body came up, he formed it in two columns, which he directed upon the Austrian right in such order that when the companies wheeled up to the left, they would form two lines facing the Austrian right obliquely to Prince Charles's line. A chain of slight eminences concealed the movement, like the Janus and Pölzen Hills at Rossbach, and the Austrian commander committed the error of yielding to repeated solicitations from Lucchesi, who declared that, unless supported, he could not be responsible for a lost battle. The cavalry of the reserve, and part of that on the left wing were sent to the right, Daun himself accompanying them. Thus, at the critical time, the left wing, which was to bear the first attack, sent part of its cavalry five or six miles away.

When the Prussian right wheeled up and advanced suddenly over the knolls near Sagschütz, Nadasti, who commanded the Austrian left, had the courage and initiative to send his weakened cavalry at once against Ziethen's horse, which first threatened attack. Ziethen was moving up hill, had his right flank in the air, and was driven back; but a detachment of infantry which accompanied him forced the Austrian cavalry to halt and retire.

It was about one o'clock when the Prussian advanced guard, which now formed the right of the line, came into

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action. Ten of the heavy 12-pounders from Glogau had been brought up with difficulty, and soon destroyed the Austrian abatis, leaving the ground open for the infantry attack, which the guns potently assisted. Nadasti's troops were pushed out of a fir wood near Sagschütz, and forced back thence, as well as from the positions further to their left. Fourteen guns, which he had unwisely put behind his infantry, were useless in the *mêlée*, and were carried in the rush of the Prussian advanced guard. The whole of the Austrian left now reeled back on the centre, and as more Prussian troops pressed on, the crowd of vanquished threw into confusion all the reinforcements sent to their help. The Prussian advanced guard was moving down in rear of the original Austrian line; the rest of the king's army pressed athwart the front line of Prince Charles's strong but heavy force.

And now was shown one of the disadvantages of the Austrian movement over the Schweidnitz Water, and the value of Frederick's promptitude. At the battle of Breslau Prince Charles had 320 guns; at the battle of Leuthen only 210 pieces, all the heavy field artillery having been left on the other side of the river. These were not numerous enough to guard well the long Austrian front, and were scattered so as to be of no use when wanted. Messengers were sent in hot haste to call in battalions and batteries to defend Leuthen. As Nadasti fell back nearly due north, and Lucchesi swung round from north nearly southward, a new front was established opposite the Prussian advancing line. But the great advantage of a first crushing blow was on the side of the king, and that other advantage of the initiative, namely, that he had a plan and knew where his troops were while it was being carried out. To the Austrians, on the contrary, all seemed confusion.

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A description of the attempt made by the reserve to change the fortunes of the day is given by the Prince de Ligne, who was in one of the regiments which were sent for to defend Leuthen. The troops could not deploy, and stood from thirty to a hundred deep, played upon by case-shot from the guns, the 12-pounders having come up, and by the fire of Prussian infantry at close quarters. Leuthen churchyard was long defended, and the king had to bring the left of his army and all his reserves into action. There was hesitation among the Prussians attacking the churchyard, till Major Möllendorf, without orders from the colonel commanding his battalion, called for volunteers to follow him, dashed in the gate heedless of a murderous fire, and cleared the stronghold of its defenders. The windmills were still disputed for a while, but were carried by the Prussian left wing.

At this moment the Prussian left seemed to be exposed, and Lucchesi, who had arrived with the Austrian right, thought that he saw a chance by attacking it. He was strong in cavalry, and led a charge upon it. But Frederick had been mindful of this danger, and had ordered Driesen, who commanded the cavalry of the left, to devote himself to the one object of covering the exposed flank. Driesen wisely kept his troopers concealed in a hollow and let Lucchesi, with the Austrian horse, pass him; then thundered down upon their rear. Caught between the fire of infantry and guns in front and Driesen's cavalry charge behind, the astonished Austrians wavered, broke, and spread themselves in disorder over the field, leaving bare, in their turn, the flank of Lucchesi's infantry. Against this flank Driesen charged, aud crushed it into ruinous heaps of men without further hope or courage. Lucchesi was killed in the cavalry charge, and the whole Austrian

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army was now a mere mass of fugitives. Some small attempt was made to stand at Saara, but the troops dissolved and melted away, streaming over the four bridges at Stabelwitz, Lissa, Goldsmieden, and Hermannsdorf, under the swords of the pursuing cavalry.

The battle had lasted three hours, and in that short time an army of 80,000 men at least had been totally defeated by one 30,000, some say 32,000, strong. The sun was now down, and Frederick, followed by an escort of only three battalions which volunteered for the service, rode on to Lissa. The place was still full of the enemy, and when the king entered the Schloss he found it occupied by Austrian officers about to take quarters there for the night. He might have been captured, but his gift of reading his adversaries' minds served him in good stead. "Bon soir, messieurs; is there still room?" said he, with a smile, and the Austrians were only too glad to slip away in safety. This is an example of the over-boldness which the king often showed. Sometimes his talents extricated him from difficulties into which he uselessly plunged, sometimes he suffered the due results of over-confidence. On this night he had come out of storms of bullets, having often been in the thick of the fight. His star was in the ascendant, and he judged rightly that his enemies were crushed in spirit. Lissa was soon cleared out, but was still a strange place for the king to sleep in, seeing that only a small river divided him from the Austrian army.

The battle of Leuthen had been fought on the strict principles of Frederick's military art, principles which enchained the minds of strategists and tacticians for many years, and have hardly yet been completely driven out by newer methods suitable for newer weapons. But there is always something more than tactical forms in the

5th-6th Dec. 1757.

winning of battles. Above all things, the troops must have confidence in their general. We have already heard the king's animated harangue to his officers two days before the battle, and his friendly talk with the men. In the midst of his oblique march, when swiftness and sudden attack were all important, some of the regiments were heard singing in chorus a hymn which prayed the Deity to grant them zeal, skill, and success. His staff asked if they should order the sound to cease. "By no means," said the king, and added, "with men like these, don't you think I shall have victory to-day?" Again, at night, when he lay at Lissa, and from both sides of the river a smart fire was kept up, the Prussian troops at Saara, weary as they were, advanced to Lissa, ready to give aid if required. In the solemn night, amid the dead and wounded, a single tenor voice rang out, chanting a psalm of praise. Twenty thousand throats burst into grateful music, and uplifted in the keen air under the dome of heaven their song of thankfulness:—

Nun danket alle Gott
Mit Herzen Mund und Händen,
Der Grosse Dinge thut
An Uns und allen Enden.

This was the Prussian *Te Deum* for the victory, and, like the prayer before the battle, it was delivered while the men were at their work as soldiers, without loss of any time, without need of temple, priest, or incense. Not by military forms alone, however good, but by cultivating a true and steady flame of trust and large enthusiasm among his men, were won the chief victories of Frederick the Great. And, even when he failed, his men still believed in him and recovered themselves quickly.

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The Prussians lost in killed 1,141 men, and in wounded 5,118, with 85 prisoners made in the first passages of the battle.

The Austrian loss at the time or picked up afterwards was 3,000 killed, 7,000 wounded, 21,000 prisoners; that is, a loss of as many men as the Prussians took into the battle, together with 51 flags and 116 guns. Prince Charles retreated as best he could by Schweidnitz and Landshut to Königgrätz, Ziethen sticking close to him and capturing 2,000 prisoners. The remnants which arrived at Königgrätz were only 37,000 strong, having left 17,000 in Breslau, who surrendered after twelve days' resistance. The Austrian garrison at Liegnitz was allowed to withdraw. Of all Maria Theresa's reconquests in Silesia there remained to her now only Schweidnitz, and that fortress fell in the middle of the following April.

The campaign of 1757 was the most interesting in the Seven Years' War. It opened with success, then presented an example of failure in the oblique attack at Kolin. After that battle all went wrong, and a meaner man must have despaired. Berlin itself was threatened and even entered by the enemy, whose armies seemed to be gradually closing round the defenders of Prussia. "At last we shall see a king in Paris" as a prisoner. But Rossbach showed the coolness and resource of Frederick as well as the quality of his soldiers, the cavalry and artillery especially distinguishing themselves. Still Silesia was occupied by the Austrians, and must needs be saved. Frederick passed swiftly to its aid, reanimated the army beaten at Breslau, and fought at Leuthen a battle in which occurred the most perfect illustration of the attack in oblique order. As an exhibition of character and military talent combined the campaign of 1757 is one of the most remarkable in history.

CHAPTER XV.

CAMPAIGN OF 1758.—SIEGE OF OLMÜTZ.—CAPTURE OF THE CONVOY.—FREDERICK'S MARCH TO KÖNIGGRÄTZ.—HE GOES AGAINST FERMOR.—BATTLE OF ZORNDORF.—DAUN ENTERS SAXONY.—FREDERICK'S RETURN TO DRESDEN.—MARCHES TO RELIEVE NEISSE.—DAUN INTERCEPTS HIM.—BATTLE OF HOCHKIRCH.

A.D. 1758.

1758.

THE successes of the Prussian army had raised the Protestant Champion, as Frederick was now called, to great favour in England. The country expressed it in various forms; among others, by a readiness to grant subsidies. Before the ten years' peace, England paid Austria to put down Frederick. She was now paying Frederick to put down Austria and France. The people who had called him a monster now lauded his name to the skies. Pitt—his firm friend—was now in power, and a new Subsidy Treaty was made by which Frederick was to have £670,000 annually to be spent on the maintenance and increase of his army for the common object. The previous treaty had promised an English fleet in the Baltic, but the promise had not been kept, because the Czarina informed King George that such a step would be considered as a declaration of war. Hitherto, in the sort of three-cornered duel which existed,

16th Jan. 1758.

England's ally was at war with Russia, but England herself not.

The rulers of Austria, France and Russia, were furious as ever, and the Czarina not only tried Apraxin by court-martial for evacuating Prussia, but ordered Fermor, who was appointed in his place, to push across the frontier at once, regardless of winter frosts. He did so with 31,000 men on the 16th January, 1758, and occupied East Prussia, which he annexed to Russia, forcing the various functionaries to swear fealty to the Czarina. Frederick never forgave them. The main Russian army remained behind, and did not become dangerous to the king till the summer.

France changed her war minister, the wily veteran Belle-Isle accepting the seals of that office. Maria Theresa relieved Prince Karl of the command of the Austrian army, and appointed Daun in his stead. All the nations which were banded against the king renewed their armaments, and prepared to assail him with fresh energy, France being paymaster.

If at this, or any other time, during the Seven Years' War, the Russians had combined with the Swedes and marched with determination upon Berlin, nothing could have saved Prussia. But the two powers were jealous of each other, and neither acted with full vigour. The Swedes always issued from Stralsund about 20,000 strong, sometimes more, sometimes less, but invariably late in the season. They then moved on slowly some 100 miles or so, resisted by Prussian militia and a regiment or two of regulars till, towards autumn, Frederick could spare reinforcements which pushed them back over the river Peene, and generally besieged them in Stralsund. There they remained half-starved till the thaw came, and allowed

13th March-16th April 1758.

ships to enter with provisions. The threats from the Russian side relieved them in spring, and each year the same routine, or nigh to it, was gone through. The details of their useless proceedings are not worth relating.

In the past year England had mismanaged her naval and military affairs. The attempted descent upon Rochefort in the autumn had been blundered; Lord Loudoun failed in America, showing no energy; Abercromby was little brighter; but Pitt had his eyes upon two better men, Amherst and Wolfe. The great English statesman held his power from the people, the court never having favoured him; and he was ready to accept and use talent wherever he found it. Duke Ferdinand was now in command in the west, and Frederick was easy as to affairs in that quarter where the French had not recovered from their beating at Rossbach.

Having, therefore, no fear of what France, or Russia, or Sweden would do in the spring, the king determined to try once more a bold stroke at the heart of Austria. His field army counted 145,000 men, of whom 53,000 constituted the Silesian army, many of them Austrian deserters. The toils and anxieties of the past year had told upon his health, but a winter in Breslau had refreshed him, and he was again full of vigour. His first stroke was the re-capture of Schweidnitz. The siege began on 1st April, and on the night of the 15th—16th, the key of the place, Galgen Fort, was carried by storm. The Austrians surrendered. The garrison had been reduced to 4,900 from 8,000, and they yielded up 51 guns and £700 in money, with all the stores which they had found or brought there.

Daun arrived at Königgrätz 13th March, and fell to entrenching himself as usual. The town was not then a

25th April-5th May 1758.

fortress, and Daun, who had more the heart of an engineer than a tactician, sat down in a position which he made impregnable. He knew that Frederick was in the country about Landshut, whence Fouquet and Ziethen had been detached before the siege of Schweidnitz, to clear the Austrian light troops out of the Glatz and Troppau neighbourhoods respectively. He expected that the king would advance southward directly against him, and, accordingly, he fortified positions at the mouths of all the passes. Instead of this he found that the Prussians marched, 19th-25th April, to Neisse, and towards Jägerndorf, April 27th. Seeing this, he judged that the king must be about to attack Bohemia from the east, and, to cover the province, he left his grand fortified camp near Königgrätz and moved to Leutomischl, veiled by a cloud of light troops. But Frederick's intentions were far otherwise. His plan was to capture Olmütz and make it a base of operations against Vienna. He had with him from 30,000 to 40,000 men; Prince Henry commanded in Saxony another 30,000, and would, the king hoped, be able to cross the Metal Mountains and join him, while Mayer, with his Free Corps, deranged all the plans of the Reichs army by capturing magazines and striking rapid blows. If Olmütz could be captured quickly, an advance into the fat corn lands of Moravia, hitherto unexhausted by campaigns, would enable Frederick to feed his army and threaten Vienna; thus drawing away from home, and even from Bohemia, all danger on the part of Austrian troops.

Frederick marched from Neisse with the first column, Keith followed with the siege army. The king's force, on arrival, was posted at Aschmeritz, Neustadt, Starnau, Prossnitz, and Sternberg. Daun arrived at Leutomischl 5th May, and formed posts at Nickels, Konitz (where was

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Loudon), Muglitz, Friedland, and Lobnick. Besides these, Deville covered the road to Brunn.

One great advantage possessed by Austria was her irregular troops, by which her armies were always covered and her enemies annoyed. These were warlike men; Hungarians, Bosnians, Croats, Dalmatians, Tyrolese, and even Italians. They formed chains of posts and even strong detachments between the Austrian camp and the enemy. Their officers were skilled in choosing positions for defence and in movements to harass an enemy. The system of using these irregular troops foreshadowed the modern use of outposts, and was in many respects more complete. No tents were needed to guard these hardy warriors from sun and rain. They generally fed themselves. Their enemy could hardly move a battalion without observation from their curious eyes, while, on the other hand, their net of posts and wandering parties swept up any small detachments which might be sent out by their enemy to gain information. Hardly fit to contend with large forces, they felt no shame in retreating on more solid supports. Thus they furnished a cheap means of procuring information and denying it to an enemy; and though the amenities of modern warfare would now render the use of such a force in Europe an anachronism, the Austrian irregulars showed, on the whole, a better temper, during the Seven Years' War, than the Cossacks of Russia. Under Nadasti at first, and later, under Loudon, they were taught to hold their ground sometimes even against the trained troops of Frederick. Their organisation and use might well be studied by English volunteers and yeomanry, who, in case of invasion, might perform similar duties, avoiding the rough habits of these Austrian guerillas.

22nd-28th June 1758.

The siege of Olmütz languished. The first parallel had been opened too far from the place, which was well defended. But the chief difficulty was the transport of stores over the ninety miles of mountain road which had to be traversed between Troppau and Olmütz, through a country infested by the Austrian light troops. The first Austrian success was the throwing a reinforcement of 1,100 picked grenadiers into the besieged town on the 22nd June. Still, it seemed that Olmütz must fall, and the last stages were only postponed till the arrival of an important convoy of 3,000 waggons, which was to leave Troppau on the 26th June, escorted by 7,000 men under Colonel Mosel. So much depended on this convoy that Ziethen was sent from Olmütz with a strong force to assist in covering the march. The convoy started at the time expected, but the country waggoners straggled so that the 27th had to be made a day of rest. This was fatal. Loudon, with a force of some 12,000 men or more, was on the watch for it from the west, and Ziskowitz with another force from the east. Daun had manœuvred so as to deceive the king and make him expect a battle. On the 28th the convoy began to struggle forward again, having already lost or sent back nearly a third of the waggons, which broke down from the terrible state of the roads. As the advanced guard moved slowly forward, it perceived Loudon drawn up to oppose the passage of the defile between Bautsch and Altliebe. Colonel Mosel attacked at once, and drove back Loudon with his Croats and Hungarians. The convoy reached Neudörff that night, where Mosel was overjoyed to find Ziethen, who had come so far to meet him. The state of affairs was critical. The convoy was again in a jumbled condition from bad roads and dread of the enemy. A whole day

30th June 1758.

more had to be spent in restoring some sort of order, and the march began again on the 30th. Ziethen and Mosel knew only too well that in front of them was the worst defile at Domstädtl. All precautions were taken, but when the head of the column, with some 120 waggons, was fairly in the defile, it came under fire of artillery. Horses were killed, waggons disabled, and the road was soon blocked. The rest of the convoy was brought forward as quickly as possible and packed in a mass for defence. The attack came from both flanks at once and was at first repulsed. All soldiers know the result which must follow. The waggoners lost heart and head and the convoy fell into chaos. The Prussian troops fought with great bravery. General Krokow, with the advanced guard and 250 waggons, among which was the military chest, gained the bridges of the Morava and escaped to the king. Ziethen had to fall back on Troppau. The convoy was utterly broken up and lost, in spite of the gallant conduct of the Prussian troops.

Jomini remarks of this action that the recruits who formed a portion of the Prussian force, "though they had never seen an enemy before, covered themselves with glory. Never did veterans of Rome or Sparta fight with more intrepidity for their country than did these youths from seventeen to twenty years of age. Out of 900, only sixty-five were taken; some of the wounded even returned to Troppau. The rest, along with Captain Pirch, who commanded them, resolved to defend themselves to the last breath, and carried to the grave the laurels which they had won. All were found dead on the post which they were ordered to defend."[1] And he adds,

[1] Jomini, *Traité des grandes Opérations militaires*, tom. ii. p. 96, edition 1851.

1st-2nd July 1758.

"The goodness of troops depends upon the genius which knows how to create motives for enthusiasm."

It is to be remarked that, during the siege of Olmütz, Frederick seemed to be hardly himself. It was not like him to allow Daun to manœuvre in the neighbourhood without a battle. It was a mistake to move so huge a convoy instead of several smaller ones, and a strange neglect to suffer at least 20,000 Austrians to reach his line of communications and remain there for days without discovery. Military students will do well to compare the operations about Olmütz, in 1758, with those of Napoleon I., in 1796, when, under greater difficulties he suddenly abandoned the siege of Mantua and even his batteries; defeated the enemy, returned and captured the place.

But if Frederick failed during the siege to uphold his renown as a strategist, his action after the capture of the convoy was remarkable, and remains as one of the great models for soldiers. An ordinary general, knowing that his means of subsistence were reduced, that he was in presence of a superior enemy, and that his communications were cut, would have certainly fallen back behind his fortresses in Silesia, only too glad to find safety and repose. Frederick, on the contrary, raised the siege in a masterly manner during the night of the 1st and 2nd July, and moved with his whole force, not to Silesia but to Bohemia, which Daun had left exposed by his manœuvres south of the king against the convoy. While Daun was doing his usual *Te Deums*, Frederick was off. Never has there been a more remarkable march. The Prussians moved with an advanced guard, a main body composed of the siege parks in the centre, and a column of all arms on each flank, then a rear guard. The whole of this force was, as it were, escorted by Austrians. They were in

14th July–2nd Aug 1758.

front, on the flank and in rear; the king's army was but a convoy on a large scale; nothing but a certain inertness of Austrian nature prevented a battle which ought to have gone against the king. Yet, on the 14th July, the Prussian army was safely assembled at Königgrätz, and in possession of all the fine entrenchments which Daun had made so short a time before. Daun arrived and sat himself once more behind other entrenchments. The two camps were so near that they could see into each other's lines. But Daun dared not attack, though considerably more than twice as strong as Frederick—say 75,000 against 30,000. For all that Daun could or would do the Prussian army might have remained at Königgrätz for months.

Meanwhile in other theatres of war, Prince Henry was in Saxony, with about 25,000 men. The Reichs army with a reinforcement of 15,000 Austrians was in the circle of Saatz ready to invade Saxony. Duke Ferdinand in his pursuit of the French beat them at Crefeld, 23rd June. France, in consternation, dismissed Clermont and appointed Contades to command. Belle-Isle's only son, the Comte de Gisors, fell at Crefeld. On the 8th July, General Amherst's force landed at Louisberg, and on the 8th August the place fell to the English. All was going well except in one direction, and to that point Frederick had now to turn his eyes.

Fermor with his Russians were now in the field, the Cossacks ravaging and murdering horribly. They were at Posen about the time when Frederick advanced into Bohemia, and thence threatened both Brandenburg and Silesia. On the 2nd August, Frederick commenced a march into Silesia with the intention of finding Fermor, and fighting him. The march was conducted with great skill, and is a model for that difficult operation—retiring

2nd-15th Aug. 1758.

through mountain defiles in the face of a superior enemy. More than this, Frederick's enemy had actually beset the principal passes. From the 28th July to the 2nd August the king made several partial movements to deceive the enemy, and clear the road by which he intended to move, and on the latter day commenced his retirement by Scalitz and Nachod to Kloster-Grüssau.[1] During the perilous march he learnt from his brother Henry that the much loved Wilhelmina was apparently dying. In spite of the hurry and difficulties in which he was involved, Frederick wrote tender letters to his sister which were answered by her own hand so long as she could hold a pen, and afterwards by dictation.

But there was no time to indulge in lamentations.

Frederick arrived at Grüssau on August 8th, and remained there two whole days, during which the king drew up careful instructions for Henry in the event of his death, and then, leaving about half the late Olmütz army to strengthen the force for defence of Silesia, thus bringing it to 40,000 men under Keith, marched on the 11th through Liegnitz for Frankfurt on Oder with the intention of fighting the Russians. He had probably with him about 15,000 men, and arrived at Frankfurt on the 20th.

Fermor had left Posen on the 2nd, and moved slowly towards Cüstrin, which town he reduced to ashes on the 15th. But the fortress remained untouched by the flames, and was occupied by a Prussian garrison, behind which lay Dohna with the force detached from looking after the Swedes. Dohna and Frederick together would number perhaps 30,000 men, the Russians may be set down as

[1] There is a good account of these interesting movements in Jomini's *Traité des grandes Opérations militaires.* It is well worth the attentive study of the military student.

22nd-25th Aug. 1758.

about 52,000. On the 22nd the army was concentrated and crossed that night at Güstebiese. Leaving the baggage on the other side of the Oder, the force pushed on ten miles to Klossow, intending to cross the Mützel next day at Neudamm. The head-quarters of the Russians were at Gross Kamin. On the 24th Frederick broke the bridges over the Mützel, south of Neudamm, and crossed there during the night. He broke up the bridge behind him so that no escape across the Mützel would be possible to the Russians. The day before, 23rd, Fermor, hearing of the king's advance, raised the siege of Cüstrin and posted himself north of Zorndorf, sending his huge baggage train rich with plunder to Klein Kamin. Thus on the morning of the 25th the king was nearly due north of the Russians, who were separated from their trains, and arranged in a sort of camp order fronting all round the compass, their light baggage being in the centre. In this formation the army was about two miles long by one mile broad, in a sort of irregular quadrilateral formation with uneven sides. This formation had been found good against the Turks, and is probably the best for a small force which has to meet a large one of irregulars; it was not suited to withstand Frederick's tactics. Considering Fermor as fronting towards Neudamm, the left or broadest part of his quadrilateral rested on the Zabern hollow, with its marshes, the right or narrowest part on mud pools and quagmires near Zicher.

But the king had no intention of attacking the north front; he had broken the bridges over the Mützel with the intention of driving the Russians into that river and the marshes which line its banks. He must therefore march round the Russian army and attack it from the south; his own retreat, if worsted, would be short, and upon the

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fortress of Cüstrin. Bent upon carrying out this purpose, and, with his usual impetuosity, ignoring all but his main intention, he actually marched between the Russian army and its trains, which were at Klein Kamin, without discovering their neighbourhood. By capturing or destroying them he might have forced the Russian army to retire, without wasting a man or a shot on the enterprise. Instead of this, he marched to the south of Wilkersdorf and Zorndorf, to place himself on the western flank of the Russians. The march was seven or eight miles long, and Fermor, seeing what was happening, rearranged his quadrilateral, placing his best troops in the southern face. The Cossacks, retiring from Zorndorf, set fire to the village, and Frederick, reconnoitring the Russian western face, decided that the approach across the Zabern hollow with its quagmires would be too difficult. He decided, therefore, to attack the south-western angle with his left reinforced by the centre, and to refuse his right. The first division ordered to attack marched westward of flaming Zorndorf, the next division east and northward of the burning village. Thus occurred a wide gap between the two divisions. Two strong batteries, numbering together sixty guns, preceded the march, and posted themselves so as to enfilade the two faces of the Russian angle. The Russian artillery responded, but its diverging fire had less effect. The action of the Prussian artillery was terrible by its enfilade fire. Tielcke, who was with the Russians, reports that forty-two men of one regiment were killed or wounded by a single shot.[1] The baggage horses in the interior of the quadrilateral were thrown into great confusion, and Manteufel, who led the Prussian left divi-

[1] Decker denies this, saying that the batteries were too distant. But they certainly advanced afterwards to closer range.

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sion, thought that he saw the moment come for attack. His division pushed gallantly into contact with the enemy and the musketry of the rival infantries was soon at work; but the second division was not yet near enough to help, and Fermor, seeing the gap, poured into it, and upon Manteufel's front at the same time, a tremendous torrent of horse and foot. Manteufel was thrust back, and twenty-six guns captured from the Prussians. For a moment it seemed as if a catastrophe was at hand, but then, as ever, Frederick was well supported by his chosen cavalry captains. Seidlitz, with wonderful cleverness, had found his way across the bogs in the Zabern hollow, and, at the critical moment, formed up on solid ground, and threw himself, with 5,000 horse, upon the flank of the Russian attack, already broken by its own impetuosity. The charge of Seidlitz was decisive. The Russian advance was dashed to pieces, and by its destruction left a gap in the defensive quadrilateral. Into that gap went Seidlitz, supported by Manteufel's division, and, in a quarter of an hour, complete chaos reigned in this part of the Russian army. The Russian cavalry fled to Kutzdorf, Fermor being with them, and would have crossed the Mützel but for the breaking of the bridges. The Russian infantry, with that strange dogged persistency characteristic of their race, fled not, but could hardly resist. The cavalry of Seidlitz, mad with desire for revenge, sabred them as they stood, till the arms of the troopers were too weary to wield the sword. Farther away from Seidlitz the Russians broke open the suttlers' brandy casks and filled themselves with the ardent spirit, even from puddles in the ground when their officers split the casks. This terrible example of human passion and human despair continued until half the Russian army had been destroyed or swept away, but

25th Aug. 1758.

between the two wings of it, and separating the quadrilateral into two parts, was another marshy hollow called the Galgen-grund. On the other side of this the second part of the Russians, about two-thirds, remained firm, nor was there any possibility that the troopers of Seidlitz, weary with killing, or Manteufel's division, after its double fight, could make any impression upon the dogged Muscovites.

It was now the turn of the right wing, which, preceded by the rest of the artillery—formed in three batteries, fifty-seven guns—advanced to the attack of the Russian left front. It would seem that the horrible nature of the carnage which had already prevailed had stricken the Prussian infantry with awe. Their advance was slower than usual, and thus the battery most to the right, thirty pieces, was unsupported. Once more the quadrilateral opened, and a strong force of Russian cavalry rushed upon the battery as it was unlimbering. The guns were taken, and the teams with their limbers rushed wildly back, throwing the infantry into confusion. A supporting battalion was also captured, and again the day seemed lost. The king threw himself into the mass of confusion, and strove to rally the broken battalions.[1] At this moment Seidlitz again appeared with sixty-one squadrons, sprang upon the Russian cavalry, shattered it to atoms, and recaptured both infantry and guns. The infantry which had fled formed part of Dohna's force. The battalions which Frederick had brought over the mountains all stood firm. Three of them had been recruited in the

[1] It is not quite clear whether there were not two similar Russian attacks about this time; the first defeated by cavalry from the right, the second by Seidlitz with his sixty-one squadrons. The point is without importance.

25th Aug. 1758.

Zorndorf country, and blazed with savage wrath against the cruel enemy who had made their homes desolate. These and others pressed on to close quarters. The artillery had torn the enemy's masses to pieces; Seidlitz and the infantry fire had completed the ruin of all formation. Still, with set teeth and stubborn determination the Russians stood in groups or singly, and met their foes like wild beasts at bay. The opposing forces closed, pressed together, mingled in complete confusion. All use of artillery, every power of manœuvre, was gone; and in their place was a death grapple between Teuton and Slav, breast to breast, with bayonet and butt, with hands, feet, and even teeth. Archenholtz says that the Russians would not even fall at once when shot through, but seemed to wait a while.[1] Round this struggling mass wheeled bands of Cossacks, among the dead, the wounded, and the field-pieces, abandoned as useless for the time. A fringe of cold-blooded murder garnished the masses in their horrible strife. Darkness came slowly over the field, and for a time even under its shadow was heard the sobbing breath of foes still struggling, though exhausted. Gradually and sullenly the Russians separated themselves, and drew back. A formed body of them reappeared on a knoll as night fell, and the king could not persuade the battalions which had shrunk from the fight to save their honour by another attack. The battle was ended by exhaustion and darkness, not by any manœuvre, nor because either side was mentally tired of slaying.

The losses were, on the Prussian side, 11,390, of whom 3,680 were killed. The Russians lost 21,529, of whom

[1] This is in accordance with the author's own observation when accompanying the Russian army in 1877. The tenacity of life shown by Russians and still more by Bulgarians was often very remarkable.

26th Aug.-2nd Sept. 1758.

7,990 were killed. Thus each army had lost more than a third of its strength, many of the Russians being drowned or suffocated in the bogs on the banks of the Mützel. The Prussians lost twenty-six guns, the Russians 103.

Next morning the Russians showed themselves in battle order on the Drewitz heath, and there was some cannonading across the Zabern hollow, but neither army had real stomach for another such struggle, and besides, ammunition had run low. It is strange that Frederick still left unseized the Russian trains at Klein-Kamin. His hussars knew of them, for they had plundered them the night before. During the night of the 26th the Russians moved round south of the battle-field to Klein-Kamin, and remained till the 31st, when they slowly withdrew in the direction of Landsberg and Königsberg. Frederick gave to Dohna the charge of pressing the Russian rear, and himself marched for Saxony on the 2nd September.

During the absence of the King a great project had been conceived at Vienna. Daun and the Reichs army were to concentrate near Dresden and crush Prince Henry, who was about half as strong as the Reichs army alone. Parts of Daun's force, under Deville and Harsch, were to enter Silesia and besiege Neisse. All fell out as intended, except the crushing. Prince Henry refused to be exterminated; and after a series of brilliant manœuvres posted himself in an entrenched position on the heights of Gahmig, near Dresden. Prince Henry was always too quick for Daun. The difference between the Prussian and Austrian armies may be judged from the fact that Frederick, advancing upon Fermor, marched with a numerous and heavy artillery, much less mobile then than now, at the rate of nearly fourteen miles per day. In returning towards Dresden he sped back at the rate of twenty-two miles a

day, and arrived just in time to disconcert by his presence a combination which Daun had formed against Prince Henry;[1] Daun's marches had been at the rate of nine miles per day. The name of Frederick was enough for Daun, who fell back to Stolpen, where he fortified himself. On the 12th September the king dined with Prince Henry at Dresden. His army was now at Grossenhain, north of Meissen, with its Elbe bridges; Prince Henry's force covered Dresden, Daun was at Stolpen, and the Reichs army in the Pirna country. The four armies lay for about a month in nearly these positions, to the wonder of the world, Frederick thrusting here and there against Daun's posts. His army much needed the rest which it obtained. On the 26th September the king arrived at Ramenau, near Bischofswerda, where Loudon was posted; reconnoitred the position next day, and would have attacked it the day after, but Loudon prudently fell back towards Stolpen. Drawing nine days' provisions from Dresden, the king now decided to march towards Bautzen, sending General Retzow with an advanced guard to that place. He was ordered to seize Weissenberg and the Stromberg Hill in front of Bautzen, and did so accordingly, on 1st October, *except the Stromberg.* Why should he? all seemed quiet.

He placed a cavalry outpost on that hill by day but retired it by night. On the night of the 6th—7th the Austrian General Wehla, who had till then fallen back before Retzow, reoccupied the hill. For now, Daun, fearing for his magazines at Zittau, was on his way to intercept the

[1] Tempelhof doubts whether Daun had conceived a living plan. That ascribed to him was that his army should march round by Meissen, cross the Elbe, and take Prince Henry in rear, while the Reichs army attacked in front.

7th-11th Oct. 1758.

Prussian army Frederick had been delayed by awaiting the provision columns from Dresden, which only reached Bautzen on the 10th.

The king himself with the army arrived at Bautzen on the 7th, and on the same day Daun finished his march of two days and lay at Kittlitz. Thus Wehla was his advanced guard, and possessed that Stromberg hill which dominated the whole country and was the key of the positions thereabouts. On the 10th Frederick pushed forward to Hochkirch and saw, to his chagrin, Daun's army drawn up opposite him in front of Kittlitz. In vexation he turned his eyes to the Stromberg and saw there, not Prussian troops, but Austrian grenadiers, five battalions of them, with a numerous artillery. Just the one key-point had been neglected. The king was furious. He clapped Retzow in arrest, and with headstrong obstinacy insisted on encamping within a mile of the Austrians, and in a position inferior to theirs. So evident was the folly of this that his favourite adjutant, Marwitz, refused to mark out the ground, and was also placed in arrest. No special pleading can excuse Frederick. He was yielding to childish passion, or rather to that strain of mad self-will which, when displayed by his father, had cost the boy so dear. Yielding to his temper and to his contempt for Daun, he risked the safety of his army and country without any advantage to be gained. Next morning the Stromberg was attempted but found impregnable, the Austrians being already reinforced. As usual Daun fortified assiduously, and Frederick, having never been attacked, had a blind confidence in the inertness of the Austrians. His plan was to move, on the 14th, to Shöps, and place himself there on Daun's right flank, thus turning the position. But, for once, the Austrian general felt that he must act with some vigour.

Never in his career would he see so manifest an opportunity again.

Such insolent neglect as that of Frederick is almost incredible, especially when it is remembered that his force was but 40,000 all told, that Daun had 90,000 in commanding positions only about a mile distant, that the King's right wing, under Keith, and his centre, together only 28,000 strong, occupied about four miles of country from Hochkirch to Drehsa, or thereabouts; and that his left wing under Retzow, 12,000 strong, was beyond Weissenberg, having between it and the centre a gap of four or five miles. But the feeling of the king may be understood by his reply to Keith, who said:—"The Austrians deserve to be hanged if they don't attack us here." Frederick answered—"Let us hope, then, that Daun fears us more than the gallows."

The right of the Prussians was strengthened by a battery of twenty guns, by four battalions thrown back *en potence*, and by Ziethen's cavalry. Opposite them, nearly due south, lay Loudon, with some 3,000 men, principally Croats. Wooded hills covered this force, and Frederick knew nothing of it. Another battery, of thirty guns, strengthened the left of the 28,000 under the king's own command. Retzow, as we know was beyond Weissenberg.

On the Austrian side, D'Ahremberg, with the right wing about 20,000 strong, occupied the Stromberg and thereabouts, ready at any moment to place himself between the king and Retzow. The main force was in front of the Prussians, with Loudon out-flanking them. Far behind, at Reichenbach, the Prince of Baden Durlach commanded a force of 25,000, to observe Retzow and protect the communications. The fronts of the Austrian and Prussian

13th-14th Oct. 1758.

lines were only half a mile apart, with a brook for frontier.

The night of the 13th fell, chill and dark, enshrouding the armies with its folds of fog. The Prussians slept protected from the marsh mists by their tents. The horses were unburdened, by order of Frederick, their saddles and other furniture packed carefully in heaps on the ground. All except Ziethen's cavalry. That brilliant, yet cautious leader, felt the same anxiety as Keith, and kept his horses saddled, in disobedience to the king's command. During the day the hollow woods had resounded to the chopping of axes, the usual noise in Daun's camps. Making abatis, Frederick thought. And all through the night the sound of the chopping and falling of trees continued with added intensity. The Austrian watch fires burned brightly along their lines, and figures flitted in front of them, piling on wood and throwing long shadows on the white mist.

But behind those watch-fires there were no troops. The axe during the last two days had been at work making roads through the woods, and now redoubled its noise to conceal that of an army in motion. All night long the columns moved silently through the dripping woods till 30,000 men cast the arms of their formation round the Prussian right to the very back of Frederick's army. Still, even Ziethen slept, though his horses were saddled. At the same time, D'Ahremberg's men were planting themselves in readiness to attack the king's left and its thirty-gun battery; but no blow was to be struck here till the Prussian right should be driven in. Baden Durlach was preparing to grasp Retzow firmly, and at least prevent him from sending support to his master. As the clock at Hochkirch struck four, all the Austrians were settling into their positions; their deceitful watch fires burned brightly

14th Oct. 1758.

as ever, and the Prussian soldiers lay wrapped in their blankets dead asleep. A few only, whose business it was to repel the usual morning attacks of the Austrian light troops were awake and stirring. All seemed still this dark and misty morning. Even the usual crackle of firearms among the light troops was absent.

The church clock at Hochkirch struck five. It was the signal for the attack of 30,000 men on the weak Prussian right, and the woods began to echo from tree to tree the sound of musketry, becoming ever louder and more frequent. Gradually the idea forced itself on the Prussians that this was no outpost affair, but the approach of a serious struggle. One by one their battalions came into action, but only to be surrounded, and cut their way out through masses of the enemy. The guns fired into the fog and darkness, but were attacked from front, rear, and flank. Zeithen, with his cavalry, swept backwards and forwards, and succeeded in keeping the extremity of the position clear. But all was of no avail. The Austrians were more numerous on that flank than the whole of the king's portion of the army. The twenty-gun battery was taken, and the battalions became skeletons, the bones of them hanging still together, and fighting as best they could with a courage and discipline beyond all praise. Keith, with one fresh battalion and the remnants of others, charged up the hill straight on the battery and recaptured it. But his small force was surrounded and overwhelmed. He tried to force his way out with the bayonet, but fell, shot through the heart, a victim to his master's fierce obstinacy.

Shortly after Keith's repulse and death, Frederick became aware of the terrible nature of the attack, and sent to the right a reinforcement of several battalions. They

14th Oct. 1758.

too were repulsed, and Moritz of Dessau fell, a wounded prisoner, into the hands of the Austrians. Then the king himself rushed into the thick of the combat with more battalions. He too passed beyond Hochkirch, but his horse was shot under him, and, as the fog slowly lifted, he perceived that all was lost on the right, and an iron ring of the enemy was closing in upon him. Now, too, D'Ahremberg came into action against the Prussian front. Steindörfel was gone, and with it the main line of retreat on Bautzen. Nothing remained but to concentrate the army as best might be, and retreat, if retreat were still possible, by the pass of Drehsa where the brook runs.

Sharp orders were despatched to seize the Drehsa heights, and the ever ready Ziethen flung himself into position at Kumschütz and Canitz to guard the new right. Urgent messages were sent to Retzow to come in with his best speed. But Retzow was now in action with Baden Durlach's 20,000, and had much ado to get back by Belgen and thereabouts. To rally the beaten troops was no easy task, but it was done under the shelter of two hastily-formed batteries, one on the heights of Drehsa, which checked Loudon advancing from Steindörfel, another brought together by Frederick himself, of ten heavy pieces, half way between the Drehsa heights and the thirty-gun battery. These two new masses of guns held back the victorious Austrian left wing and saved the army from rout. The thirty-gun battery was left almost defenceless. Twice it repulsed the attack of D'Ahremberg and gave time for the troops to rally. The third time it was surrounded and captured about nine o'clock. The artillery had done its part well. In such a case as this the duty of that arm is to sacrifice itself for the safety of the infantry. The guns were lost, but they gained time for the king to form his new front and

for Retzow to escape being cut off. By ten o'clock Retzow had joined, his movements having been covered by the skilful resistance of two batteries well supported by infantry.

Frederick now ordered a general retreat. It was carried out in perfect order, always fronting the enemy with one echelon while another retired. Grim and savage the Prussians fell back, covered by what guns remained to them, and so surly was their appearance that Daun dared attempt nothing further. The relics of the army took post near the Spree that night; not broken in spirit, hardly disheartened. The king was cheerful, and Daun fell back to his old camp, where he remained for some six or seven days to come, then moved only a little forward. On the 23rd Frederick, already reinforced by artillery from Dresden, and by 6,000 men under Prince Henry in person, marched down the Spree apparently for Glogau, and two days later struck south-eastward by Reichenbach towards Neisse. Daun's flank was turned after all, and the siege of Neisse had to be raised.

The Prussians lost in the battle about 8,000 killed, wounded, or missing, with 101 guns, and the Austrians about as many men. But, to Frederick, Keith and Moritz were irreparable losses, and his heart was even more sorely bruised by news which arrived four days afterwards. Wilhelmina was dead. From that day forth Frederick the man was lonely in a world of pain.

The king, with his army, being gone for Silesia, Daun thought to capture Dresden, moved slowly there and laid siege to the place. But on November 15th he heard that Frederick was speeding back by Lusatia, his work in Silesia being done. Daun faltered and fell back into the Pirna country. On the 20th Frederick was in Dresden, and Daun on his way home to Bohemia.

1758.

This remarkable campaign shows the genius of Frederick at its best and worst. He began with one idea which, with great versatility and address, he changed for another after the capture of the convoy rendered the fall of Olmütz hopeless. His march to Königgrätz, instead of falling back on Silesia, was a magnificent instance of the true way of defending a country. Nothing could be more careful and well-conducted than his passage through the mountains, and his march on the Russians was brilliant. Equally remarkable was his neglect to seize or destroy the Russian trains, for, if on the first day of the battle he was too much occupied to think of them, there could be no such excuse on the second day. The Austrian Loudon, or the king's own partizan leaders, would certainly have seized such a golden opportunity. The rapid return to Saxony was a master stroke, but exception must be taken to the slowness of the movement on Bautzen. It would have been better to wait till all the provision columns were in readiness before moving at all. Frederick was now committing the fault of despising his adversary too much. He would not give Daun credit for the slightest military vigour, and was accordingly out-manœuvred. When he found the Austrian army in front of him, barring the road to Neisse, his anger and self-confidence verged on madness. But he was always great in defeat. Once more he formed a new plan, and executed it with such ability as to atone for his previous errors. The rest of the campaign is a perfect example of well-conducted war. It is true that, according to modern military art, Daun and his other opponents were culpably slow, but so had the old Prince of Dessau been, and the Prussian armies at Mollwitz and elsewhere, till Frederick made them quick and subtle, and taught his generals rapidity of motion.

1758.

Every action must be judged according to the spirit of the age, and if one general appears brighter and bolder than the rest of his time, he must be assigned a niche in the Temple of Fame as a great commander. Military pedants like Jomini may talk of the effect of interior lines on a campaign like this. The fact is that Frederick used them when he had them; Daun had the same advantage when the king was fighting Fermor, and again when he was relieving Neisse. Frederick made the best of them; Daun threw his chances away.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1759.—BATTLE OF KUNERSDORF.—FALL OF DRESDEN.—PRINCE HENRY'S GREAT MARCH.—CAPTURE OF FINCK AT MAXEN.

A.D. 1759.

1759.

THE struggles of the past three years had greatly exhausted the resources of Frederick, and he was driven to strange shifts for procuring the necessary money and means. Prussia, small in population, had produced her best army at the beginning of the war. As the veterans died or retired, young soldiers took their place. Discipline was less perfect, yet, as we shall see, some of the finest marches were made by the new levies. On the other hand the Austrian armies were improving. The population to draw upon was greater, the troops had gained experience, and the generals were learning the art of war from their great opponent. Under these circumstances, Frederick thought himself obliged to relinquish his dashing method of opening the campaign by invasion of his enemy's country. An immense cordon had been drawn round him during the winter. The Russians had withdrawn but were still at enmity. Daun's Austrians were round the western Silesian border and the south-eastern Saxon

1759.

Then came the Reichs army in Thuringia and Franconia. Then Soubise, with 25,000 French in the Frankfurt-Ems country, and lastly, Contades behind the Rhine on the Dutch borders. In this chain of posts were about 300,000 men, all enemies to the life of Prussia. To meet these and the Russians, Frederick had about 150,000; he was reduced to debasing Prussian coin for his necessities, and above all there lay upon him the shadow of that terrible loneliness which never left him after Wilhelmina's death. "Nothing solaces me," he writes, "but the vigorous application required in steady and continuous labour."

Among his labours was an essay on Tactics, in which he speaks of the perpetual sluggishness of the Austrians as the main cause of his success hitherto. He had by this time become aware of the power which might be got from the new arm, a mobile field artillery, and he felt that the Prussian artillery was not equal to the Austrian. Henceforward he set himself to improve it, and he did so more and more as the quality of his infantry fell off.

In the early part of the year his various armies struck blows at the cordon, though without intention of definitely invading any territory; rather to disturb arrangements and capture magazines. As the king himself was not engaged in these, we will take no notice of them, except to say that on the whole they were successful, and delayed the advance of the enemy like sorties from a fortress. Daun was so astonished at the king attempting no invasion that he was long at a loss for any plan of campaign, wasting five weeks in correspondence with the Russians. Neither party liked the task of belling the cat. In June the king made a reconnaissance into Bohemia, of no importance but for the fact that in his small column marched four guns, of lightest equipment, the gunners

July-Aug. 1759.

mounted on the horses as postilions. This was the first attempt at an artillery capable of accompanying cavalry on the march and in the field—the germ of the present horse artillery of Europe.

The Russians took the field this year earlier than usual. Soltikof was now in command, superseding Fermor. Frederick, as usual, drew upon his northern forces, and ordered Dohna, with 18,000 men, to try whether he could not deliver some stroke against the separate parts of the Russian army before it could concentrate. Dohna was old, and trained on the old methods of war, and did nothing of value. Soltikof out-manœuvred him, and Frederick, whose best generals, except Ziethen and Seidlitz, were all killed, appointed Wedell to command, with instructions to fight the Russians somehow and somewhere. On the 23rd July, Wedell, with 26,000 men, attacked Soltikof, 70,000 strong, besides Cossacks, on the march near Zullichau. Wedell was defeated with loss of 6,000, and fell back to Crossen Bridge, five or six miles below the town of Crossen-on-Oder, which Soltikof occupied on the 24th. Daun tried to persuade the Russians to push on, and unite with him for a blow against Frederick; but Soltikof moved down the Oder to Frankfurt, marching always on the eastern bank. Daun had detached Loudon and Haddick some time before, with 35,000 men, to join the Russians. It was necessary for Frederick to prevent the junction if possible, and he determined to do the work himself. Calling Prince Henry to command at Schmöttseifen and watch Daun, he drew in his various detachments to Sagan, and on the 6th August united with Wedell at Müllrose, near Frankfurt, after a vain search for the Haddick-Loudon force. He always missed it by a trifle, yet his swift pursuit had the effect of forcing

2nd-12th Aug. 1759.

Haddick with the bulk of the infantry to relinquish the attempt, and Loudon only joined the Russians on the 2nd August with 20,000 men, chiefly cavalry.

At this time occurred in the western theatre of war the battle of Minden, where Ferdinand defeated the French, the English and Hanoverian infantry in the centre of the fight behaving magnificently. The French army would have been ruined but for the misconduct of Lord George Sackville, who commanded the cavalry, and failed to attack when ordered. The mists of time have veiled the terrible incapacity, to say the least, of some English officers in the Seven Years' War. Were one tenth of their weakness and folly shown in a campaign now, the telegraph would flash the news from the pens of many correspondents, and on the very evening of the battle England would be in a delirium of indignation.

At Müllrose Frederick lay quiescent for some days. He was awaiting Finck with another 10,000 men, which would give him 50,000 altogether ; the Russian enemy being, with Loudon, about 90,000 strong. Finck arrived on the 10th at Reitwein, some fifteen miles below Frankfurt, the king and his army being there to meet him. Two bridges, one of pontoons the other of boats, brought from Cüstrin, were laid speedily, and the whole army crossed that night in two columns, and moved next day towards Kunersdorf. That night the army lay between Leissow and Bischofsee.[1] Finck was placed at Trettin.

On the morning of the 12th, at three o'clock, the king marched to attack the Russians, who had drawn up on the sandhills about Kunersdorf. Frederick did not know the ground, and, being misled by a peasant and by an officer who had hunted in the vicinity, planned his battle

[1] See map. Battle of Kunersdorf.

12th Aug. 1759.

as it could not finally be carried out, because of delay in crossing the boggy ground. The plan was for Finck to remain at Trettin or in front of it, making demonstrations as if the attack of the main army were to be thence. The rest of the army was to move in two columns by the left through the woods. The Russian right wing was to be cannonaded from north by Finck, from east by the king, and then the whole of the army was to bear down together and sweep the Russians out of their position. Frederick would command the centre.

The first difficulty was found in the king's march through the woods. The troops went too far and had to be recalled with great difficulty, the heavier guns, with their teams of twelve horses, being especially hard to reverse among the trees. At last, after a weary march of more than eight hours, the troops arrived in their places, or nearly so; Frederick established two batteries, one on the little Spitzberg, the other on the road to left of that hill. Later, a third battery was established to left of the road. About eleven o'clock the batteries opened fire, Finck assisting from his side. The range was too long for the guns of that time—"1,950 paces at the nearest," Tempelhof says; but so dashing was the infantry attack, that eight grenadier battalions captured the Russian batteries on the Mühlberg in ten minutes.[1] The Russian left wing was beaten, and by one o'clock was streaming back in retreat on the main body. Now was the time for the combined attack, but the left was not

[1] The disposition of the Russian guns had been such that they could not see into the hollow across which the Grenadiers advanced. It is a sad mistake to imagine that a hill is hard to capture if steep enough. On the contrary, it may be too steep for safety. For instance, poor Colley's position on the Majuba Hill.

12th Aug. 1759.

even yet in position, and Finck was in difficulties in the Hünerfliess, which was almost impassable for the guns of that time. There was at first no artillery with which to fire on the retreating Russians, and when it arrived the enemy had formed a new position behind the Kuhgrund (cow hollow).

Upon this position the king now directed his army. He could not wait for the artillery, toiling behind; his men were suffering much from the fire of the Russian guns, and he risked the advance. Finck, pressing up from the Elsbruch (Alder Waste), stormed the left of the position, and the right centre pushed on from the Mühlberg. The left could not attack through Kunersdorf as the village had been set on fire by the Russians. The infantry struggle was desperate, and lasted three hours. Once more the Prussians were successful, and carried the greater part of the position, though the Kuhgrund was literally paved with their bodies fallen under the Russian case-shot. Almost all the position, but how much in that word—almost! About 150 Russian guns had been taken, but again, not all. There remained the Spitzberg to be carried, and upon it was a battery of forty guns. In front too, was a gradually sloping glacis, and behind it Loudon's guns and others which had rallied on them. It was therefore a mass of well-posted artillery which had to be attacked if attack there must be.

Frederick's generals, Seidlitz among them, implored him to rest content with his success so far, and he heard from Wunsch, whom he had sent to Frankfurt to intercept the retreat, that the enemy were actually beginning to cross the river. But again he was headstrong. He ordered some guns to fire on the bridge and insisted that his weary infantry should attack again without waiting for the

1759.

artillery to prepare the way. The left wing, hitherto not engaged, advanced on the Spitzberg and climbed the slope only to be hurled down again by case-shot. Then the king, wild with wrath, sent at it Seidlitz with the cavalry. But the horsemen were shattered by the same fire, and driven in flight beyond the lakes of Kunersdorf. Again and again did Frederick throw his men against the batteries. Thrice he himself led the attack, and three horses were killed under him. A bullet struck a small metal box in his waistcoat jacket and was flattened. In front the same work was going on. The Prussian battalions dashed themselves to pieces against the batteries. That nothing might be left untried Frederick sent the cavalry round by the east of the Mühlberg to attack from the Alder Wastė. Eugen, of Wurtemberg, led them, but, when ready to charge, found that he had no men left with him. They had been over-tried and failed at last. Slowly now the infantry gave back. One last attempt was made at the Kuhgrund and with the last cartridges, but in vain. It was repulsed with the deadly case-shot. The last blow was given by Loudon who charged with his cavalry. From that moment the Prussian army was a miserable mass of fugitives. It melted away, and the king, who was one of the last to leave the field, found at the bridges only 3,000 men awaiting him. The army had lost about 19,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners, the Russians and Austrians together, about 18,000.

Frederick had sent five messages to Berlin during the battle, at first announcing victory, then defeat and despair. He actually handed over the army to Finck, and determined not to survive the disaster. Worse still, he wrote to General Schmettau, who commanded at Dresden, a letter saying that he must expect no help, and might have to

4th-15th Sept. 1759.

make terms for himself. The next day 23,000 men had arrived, the Russians did not pursue, and on the fourth day after the battle the king was himself again. He sent to Berlin for refitments, and ordered Kleist from the Swedish business to join him. He was saved however, not by anything he could do, but by the sluggishness of his enemies. Daun and Soltikof spent their time in talk, each trying to persuade the others to give Frederick the *coup de grace*.

On the 4th of September Schmettau surrendered Dresden to the Reich's army quite unnecessarily, and with great hurt to the cause, for General Wunsch was then within ten miles, having been sent with 8,000 men to relieve him. But though Dresden was gone, Wunsch with his 8,000 and Finck with about the same number managed to hold the Reich's army in check, and to snatch some advantages from them. As for Schmettau, the king ordered him to Berlin, never employed him again nor saw his face more.

The situation was critical. The Russians and Austrians together were 120,000, with free communication. Frederick had 24,000 guarding Berlin; Prince Henry 38,000 at Schmöttseifen, separated from the king by the whole of Daun's army, which stretched its flank as far as Hoyerswerda, headquarters at Triebel. Thus was formed a living wall of enemies between the king and Prince Henry, and the advantage of interior lines was against the Prussians. Prince Henry manœuvred against Daun's communications, and forced him to make detachments. But the one measure which would have ruined Frederick was neglected by the allies. They could not agree to unite and crush either Prussian army. At last, on the 15th September, they held a conference, and agreed that Soltikof should attack Silesia while Daun should strike Prince Henry. Frederick now

Sept. 10th-Oct. 1759.

showed his strategical ability by seizing Sagan, whence he could communicate with Henry, and check Soltikof. Whatever movement was made by the Russians they found Frederick in front of them, ready for a battle, which Soltikof avoided. Soltikof had bargained for food supplies from the Austrians. They sent him money instead, and he growled that his men could not eat silver. Finally, on the 24th October, he withdrew to Posen, and the snows of Russia swallowed him from sight for that year. Loudon had to get home as best he could through western Poland and Cracow.

Daun concentrated and moved to Görlitz on the 22nd September, ready to attack Prince Henry, who was in position there on the Landskron. The attack was to be next morning, but when day broke the Prussians had disappeared. Daun, fearing for his magazines at Bautzen, marched there, but Prince Henry's plan had been far otherwise. He moved first northward to Rothenburg, twenty miles, where he bivouacked three hours; then to Klitten during the second night, a march of eighteen miles. Resting there again only three hours, the prince again marched through the evening and night twenty miles further, arriving on the 25th at Hoyerswerda, where he at once attacked and crushed Wehla, who, with 3,000 troops, formed the most westerly detachment of the Austrian army. The march occupied fifty hours, the distance was fifty-eight miles. Nothing but perfect efficiency in every branch could enable any army to perform such a feat, and the fame of it rang through Europe, adding much to the respect in which Frederick and his Prussians were regarded.

But hard work, fatigue, and exposure were telling on the king. On October 10th he fell sick of the gout. For three weeks he was confined to his room, yet such was his

Oct.-Nov. 1759.

energy that instead of resting, he wrote diligently a memoir on the military character of Charles XII. He was carried in a litter to Glogau.

Prince Henry now commenced a series of manœuvres against Daun, causing that worthy but old-world general to retire gradually. But the king, recovered from his illness—was the gouty blood clean gone from his brain?—joined Prince Henry, and with adventurous rashness determined to crush the Austrians altogether. In his instructions to his generals Frederick speaks strongly against making detachments on the eve of a battle; yet he detached Wunsch before Kunersdorf, and he now detached Finck to circle round in rear of Daun and help in the general destruction. Prince Henry and Finck himself objected, but the king's obstinacy prevailed. On the 15th November Finck marched by Dippoldiswalde to Maxen. Daun brought together a force of the Reich's army as well as his own, and surrounded Finck at Maxen with 42,000 men, the Prussian general having only 12,000. After two days' fighting Finck capitulated, and even had to call back Wunsch, who had escaped with the cavalry, and deliver up him also. For this there was no excuse. Finck ought to have fought to the last in an effort to break out. But the chief fault lay with Frederick, who should not have detached Finck unless he were sure of supporting him by keeping Daun always occupied.

So the armies stood for the winter, Daun occupying Dresden, Frederick holding the rest of Saxony. Both Daun and Frederick prolonged their stay in the field till far into the winter, but nothing came of it. The campaign had been unfortunate above all others, and it is the one in which Frederick for the first time stood on the defensive to await his enemy.

CHAPTER XVII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1760.—FREDERICK'S DOUBLE PLAN.—SIEGE OF DRESDEN.—MARCH TO SILESIA.—MANŒUVRES AGAINST THREE ARMIES. — BATTLE OF LIEGNITZ. — RAID ON BERLIN.—FREDERICK MARCHES FOR SAXONY.—BATTLE OF TORGAU.

A.D. 1760.

THE campaign of 1760 opened with dismal augury for Frederick. His country was nearly exhausted. He had lost 60,000 men in the last year and the quality of the recruits was falling off. His exchequer was nearly ruined, and the successive admixtures of copper with the coin had depreciated the value of Prussian money. His chief enemies, the Austrians and Russians, had at last agreed upon a combined plan of operations, in which Loudon was to have the separate command of an army of 50,000 men, destined for Silesia. He was to operate on the Oder in conjunction with Soltikof, while Daun, with 100,000 men, was to hold Frederick fast in Saxony, or, if the king broke loose against Loudon and Soltikof, was to follow him into Silesia. The Prussian army had lost so many officers that the regiments had by no means their full complement, and so strong was aristocratic prejudice, that it was impossible to throw open the profession of arms to competition among all classes.

May-June 1760.

That great step was reserved for the forces of the French revolution. Yet Frederick's unsurpassed power of administration provided a respectable army for the field, reinforced his artillery, and remounted the cavalry. England granted a subsidy as usual, and men who swelled the army of Ferdinand to 70,000; 20,000 of them English. Against the duke were Broglio with 80,000, the Count of St. Germain, on the Lower Rhine, with 30,000, and Prince Xavier with 15,000 as reserve. United Europe believed that the last hours of Prussia were at hand.

The campaign of 1760 is memorable for its wonderful marches. At the outset Frederick opposed Daun. Prince Henry and Fouquet were to check the Russians and Loudon and to guard Silesia. At the middle of May, the Prince and Fouquet were spread over a line of posts, 300 miles, from Landshut to Colberg. Urged by the king, Prince Henry concentrated between Sagan and Sprottau, then moved northward to Frankfurt, and finally to Landsberg. But no urging could induce him to attack the Russians while on the march in separate divisions. Posen was the Russian main base of operations. Fouquet, deceived by Loudon's manœuvres, was enticed from Landshut; thereupon Loudon pounced upon that place and then blockaded Glatz (7th of June). Frederick, irritated by this failure, ordered Fouquet to retake Landshut. He did so on the 17th, but having only 13,000 men was attacked by Loudon with 31,000 and completely defeated with the loss of nearly his whole force. This terrible blow showed Frederick that he himself must do more than watch Daun, and he forthwith formed a double plan: first, to march to Silesia if he could and strike Loudon; second, if this plan failed, to draw away Daun, rush back and carry Dresden by a sharp siege. This was a combination worthy

2nd-18th July 1760.

of a great general. On hearing the bad news of Fouquet's failure he sent an order to Magdeburg that a siege train should be in readiness at that place. On the 2nd of July the king moved twenty miles northwards from Gross Dobritz to Quosdorf, near Krakau, the first village in Lusatia. Daun sent Lacy with 20,000 to harass the march and stop it if possible. He encamped in sight of Frederick on the 3rd, and on that night the king marched to attack him. Lacy being warned moved off towards Bischofswerda, declining the combat. On the 5th Frederick marched another fifteen miles to Kloster Marienstern. Daun moved to Bautzen with Lacy as rear-guard. July 6th, Frederick pushed on to outflank the Austrians and pass Daun, leaving Bautzen on the right. So intense was the heat that 105 Prussian soldiers died of sunstroke. Daun moved also to Görlitz and lost 200 men from the same cause. Finding that the main force was gone, Frederick occupied Bautzen, and planned to strike Lacy moving from Bischofswerda. On the 8th, in the evening, the attempt was made, but Lacy again escaped back to Bischofswerda, and to Dresden on the 10th, thence to Plauen Chasm and the Reichs Army. Daun was already fifty miles ahead, on the way to Silesia. On the 12th. Frederick was crossing the river close to Dresden with intent to carry the fortress. He knew that Daun must return, but hoped that time enough would be given. On the 18th the siege guns arrived from Magdeburg, and all being prepared for them beforehand, began to bombard the town. It was a cruel torture to the townsfolk, but not out of the war rights of a besieging army. We have lived to see in this generation a bombardment of the gayest capital in the world. Maguire, the commandant of Dresden, mounted guns on the roof of the Kreutz Kirche (Protestant

18th-29th July 1760.

High Church); the Prussian guns destroyed church and battery together, without the king's orders as he always said afterwards.[1] Maguire burned what remained of the suburbs from the last siege, and the Prussians burned a great part of the town during the bombardment. The wretched inhabitants were reduced to extreme misery, and could hardly bless the supposed clemency which had refrained from capturing the place by storm the first day as, it is said, might have been done.

The day after the bombardment commenced, Daun's advanced guard arrived and opened communication with Maguire from the north. Yet he had not courage or conduct enough to act quickly, nor did the torture of the city cease for ten days more. Frederick was at this time in severe mood. During a sortie the regiment Bernburg was driven back from the trenches by very superior numbers, and the king, unforgiving, deprived the regiment of its swords. The situation had become impossible. It was not unlike what the siege of Sebastopol would have been a century later if the Russians had held command of the sea. There were frequent slight attacks and rumours of attacks by Daun. The besiegers had to shift position constantly, and all signs portended a battle under dangerous circumstances. The siege must be raised, and, on the night of the 29th of July, the army moved towards Meissen,

[1] During the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, Giurgevo, an open town, was bombarded by the fortress of Ruschuk in revenge for the opening of Russian batteries not in Giurgevo. Later in the year I was visiting the Russian batteries about two miles from Giurgevo, when a Russian officer pointed out to me red crescent flags erected in Ruschuk, immediately behind some of the principal batteries of the place. He said it was done with a purpose. Soon afterwards there was a bombardment, and the Turks complained that the Russians had fired at the red crescent flag.

29th July-1st Aug. 1760.

down the river, the siege train having been sent away during the two preceding days. On that night, the 29th, the Austrians were firing signals of joy, because they had heard that Glatz had fallen into the hands of Loudon on the 26th.[1] The southern key to Silesia was gone, and, worst of all, had been thrown away by incompetence. The character of Frederick was shown by his conduct on receiving the news. "We will recover Glatz," he said, "at the general peace. Now we must march into Silesia in order not to lose everything." Frederick decided that he must go to the succour of Silesia. He hoped that Loudon might besiege Neisse and be out of the reckoning for a time. One crumb of comfort fell to him. Duke Ferdinand won a victory at Warburg, the English in his force greatly distinguishing themselves. Lord Granby and the English horse more than atoned for the failure of Lord George Sackville at Minden, and Maxwell's brigade covered itself with glory. The English soldiers were always to be trusted when well led. All their failures in the Seven Years' War, wherever they occurred, were due to the incompetence of superior officers. But Warburg could have no effort on Silesia, where the king must go with Daun and Lacy dogging his steps and Soltikof awaiting him. How could he possibly escape disaster?

On the 1st of August, Frederick crossed the Elbe at Zehren, six miles below Meissen, and encamped at Dallwitz. That same night Loudon was outside Breslau in Silesia, and began to bombard the place. The defence was in the

[1] For the exploits of Loudon see his *Life*, which forms another volume of this series. He was a brilliant general and, if he had been in chief command from the first, would have put a very different Austrian stamp on the Seven Years' War.

hands of Tauentzien, a brave and skilful officer, hard as a flint. Nothing would make him and his 3,000 men yield, and Prince Henry, roused to activity, made a splendid march from Landsberg, the last three days from Glogau being at the rate of thirty miles per day. The prince struck at Loudon's supplies and forced him to abandon the siege. Soltikof, arriving near Breslau on the 8th, found, not Loudon and the magazines, but Prince Henry and the Prussians safely entrenched. Thus the Russians were checked, but Loudon was free.

On Sunday, the 3rd of August, the king began a march almost without parallel. Daun had broken roads and bridges, made entanglements of trees here and there, and generally done all things possible to hinder a movement to Silesia. When the Prussians started, Frederick marched in three columns, the left column leading. They would form two lines and a reserve in case of attack. The most careful and business-like orders were given to meet all events, and may be studied in *Tempelhof* to this day with advantage to the military reader. The weather was sultry, the roads, as we have said, made difficult in places; yet the king marched to Bautzen, more than 100 miles, in five days, Daun in front of him, Lacy behind. Daun was at Bischofswerda when Frederick started on his march, and moved to Bautzen immediately. Ried, with Lacy's light troops, was ordered to harass Frederick's march. It may be worth while to follow the movements on a good map, remembering that the distance was over 100 miles—Jomini calls it forty leagues—that five rivers had to be crossed, the Bober, the Queiss, the Neisse, the Spree, and the Elbe; and that Frederick had with him a train of 2,000 wagons.

Aug. 1760.

PRUSSIANS.	AUSTRIANS.
August 3rd.—The king went to Königsbruck. General Hulsen remained in Saxony, opposed to the imperial army.	*August 3rd.* — Daun went to Bautzen. Lacy to Lichtenau.
August 4th.—The army marched to Ratibor and Lugau.	*August 4th.* — Daun went to Reichenbach. Ried, from Bautzen to Weissenberg. Lacy, near Bischofswerda.
August 5th.—The king to Doberschütz.	*August 5th.* — Daun moved to Neukretscham. The reserve, under Prince Löwenstein, remained at Reichenbach. Ried to Löbau. Lacy followed the Prussians and camped at Geblitz.
August 6th.—To Ober-Rothwasser.	*August 6th.*—Daun crossed the Queiss, and occupied the famous camp of Schmöttseifen. The reserve at Haugsdorf, behind the Neisse. Lacy, to Görlitz. Ried, to Bernstädtl.
August 7th.—The king to Bunzlau.	*August 7th.*—Daun halted. The reserve closed up with him. Ried, to Haugsdorf. Lacy, to Mark-Lissa, and left Brentano at Steinkirch, on the Queiss. Beck, who up to this time had watched Prince Henry between Bunzlau and Glogau, now joined the army, and formed the advance-guard.
August 8th.—Rested.	

Aug. 1760.

Arrived at Bunzlau, the Prussian army had a day's rest —much needed. Frederick knew that Daun was at Schmöttseifen with a post at Striegau, and that Lacy was on his left, both between the king and Landshut. His best chance seemed to be to march swiftly to Jauer, some forty miles south-east. If he could be there before Daun he might pass by Striegau and unite with Prince Henry. He marched twenty-five miles on the 9th, only to find Daun opposite him across the Katzbach river, and Lacy on the hills at Goldberg. More terrible still was the fact that behind Daun was Loudon, whom Daun had called up with his army to help to crush the king; Daun, Lacy, Loudon, together about three times as strong in numbers as Frederick. On the 10th he made for Liegnitz to try the road by Parchwitz-Neumarkt-Leuthen. As he moved down the left bank, Daun marched near him on the right bank of the river, while the light troops of Lacy hung on the Prussian rear. Loudon marched near Daun. No escape this way and but a week's provisions left! As he encamped at Liegnitz the enemy were beside and front of him. The Prussian army had marched fifteen miles that day, but at 11 P.M. it had to return on its steps, and at daybreak of the 11th was on its old ground, only Lacy between it and escape. Lacy was now on the other side of the river as rear-guard to Daun. The king crossed to attack him. Lacy withdrew, and before the Prussian baggage could come up Daun was back again with Loudon, nothing but a ravine being between the opposing armies. The Prussians encamped in a hollow of the hills at Seichau and remained there the next day, the 12th, because reconnaissances showed that the ways towards Breslau were beset by the enemy. Even the Prussian officers began to talk of a Maxen for the king himself. Mitchell, the

Aug. 1760.

English ambassador, thought the situation so dangerous that he burned all his secret papers and the cypher key. But at sunset of the 12th, Frederick crossed back to the left bank near Goldberg and pushed down the river again to Liegnitz, arriving about noon on the 13th. Hardly were the tents pitched when the Austrian armies came in sight and soon lay round the king. Daun was to the south,[1] near Jauer, about seven miles distant; Lacy the same distance south-west, near Goldberg; Loudon a little nearer, between Jeschkendorf and Koischwitz in a north-easterly direction, separated from the king by the Katzbach. They were 90,000 to Frederick's 30,000, and, as if this were not enough, Czernichef, with a Russian corps of 24,000, crossed the Oder and stood in support of Loudon, but this last addition to his enemies was unknown to the king. On the 14th the Austrians made a grand reconnaissance in force, and Frederick drew out to meet them. He knew that plans would then be formed to attack him. His provisions were nearly exhausted. Never was general in a more dangerous situation.

Frederick's greatest successes had all been due to his taking the initiative, and he was not a man to rest idly while his enemies executed their plans. The way to Parchwitz seemed still open and he had magazines at Glogau. He decided to march in the night and encamp till daybreak on the heights of Pfaffendorf, sending on his empty wagons to Glogau, where they were to fill up and return to meet him in the neighbourhood of Parchwitz. He personally reconnoitred the Pfaffendorf position, marked the place for the camp, returned and lay down to sleep. Just then a drunken Irish officer of the Austrian army appeared in camp

[1] See map above Battle of Liegnitz. For position of Frederick's camp see plan of battle, *a*—*a*, south-west of Liegnitz.

and reported that a general attack was to be made upon him in the night, but the king saw no need to alter his arrangements.

The watch-fires burned brightly when the Prussian army moved at about 8 P.M. on the 14th, and were kept burning through the night by peasants. All round the horizon, except to the north, glimmered also the fires of the enemy. The Prussians marched in three columns; the artillery and trains crossed the Schwartzwasser by a stone bridge in Liegnitz suburbs, the rest of the army by a pontoon bridge further down the stream. By one o'clock all were safely across. Still the horizon glittered with fires, outdone only by the stars which, Templehof tells us, shone with special brightness that night as the Prussians lay down on the short grass to snatch what rest they could. Few slept. Officers and men spoke in low tones of what the morrow might bring. Frederick himself sat half asleep by a watch-fire. The main army under the king lay northwards, almost fronting Loudon's camp. Ziethen's division was in the angle formed by the Schwartzwasser and Katzbach. All was tranquil and silent under the stars save the low murmurs of the men and the occasional voice of a superior officer growling deep commands. The clocks of Liegnitz chimed half-past two.

Then the silence was broken by the galloping of a horse and an anxious voice exclaiming, "The king? Where is the king?" "Here," said Frederick. The hurried and anxious voice cried quickly, "The enemy in force has driven in my vedettes and is within 500 yards of our left wing!" Frederick was on horseback in a moment, with sharp command to General Schenkendorf's battalion and its share of heavy guns to occupy the crown of the Wolfsberg. It was done in a moment, and the roar of ten twelve-pounders

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broke the silence of the night, pouring case shot full in the faces of the advancing Austrians. The attack came from Loudon's corps, which had the task of seizing these very heights before daybreak. He too had left his fires burning and crossed the Katzbach near Pohlschildern. He marched without advanced guard, the better to surprise the baggage train which he had heard was near the place. In the other Austrian camps the watch-fires were burning without troops to warm. Lacy was marching to turn Frederick's old position, Daun was on his way to attack it in front.

The sudden fire of the guns at close range threw the heads of Loudon's columns into confusion and prevented their formation; but the Austrian general, knowing that retreat was ruin in such a case, deployed what troops he could and sent them at the hill, bringing up batteries to support them. The columns in rear, hearing the firing, halted and gave time to the Prussians to form up rapidly and force back the troops first advanced. As Loudon's columns came gradually forward, he strove to gain the Prussian left flank, but the king extended always and checked him. This extension left a gap in the line near the village of Panten, but the column of Austrians which took that route had halted, and, before advantage could be taken of the breach in the line Möllendorf, of Leuthen fame, dashed at Panten with what troops he could collect and set it on fire, thus barring the passage there. Loudon ordered a charge of cavalry against the Prussian left in the dim light of early dawn. It was met by the regiment Bernburg swordless indeed, but with level bayonets and eager to win back the favour of the king. Bayonet met lance and sabre in close strife and, though greatly suffering and almost alone, the infantry drove back the horsemen. Three dashing attacks were made by Loudon, then he

15th Aug. 1760.

withdrew under cover of a battery at Bienowitz. He had lost 4,000 killed and wounded and 6,000 prisoners, total 10,000 men, with eighty-two guns. His strength had been 35,000 against Frederick's 15,000 or thereabouts. The Prussian loss was 1,800.

Strange to say, Daun, though warned by his light troops about one o'clock that Frederick's camp was vacant, never heard the firing of the battle and moved slowly after the Prussians, warning Lacy also to follow. Daun sent his cavalry across the stone bridge, but they were broken and put to flight by Ziethen's artillery fire. Neither Daun nor Lacy could cross the stream. The surprise had miscarried and the battle of Liegnitz was practically over in one hour and a half.

But the game was not yet won. Loudon, broken but not destroyed, might still be dangerous, and Czernichef, with his 24,000 Russians, was on the hither side of the Oder. The Prussian army had suffered in the battle and was encumbered with the wounded. Daun should have passed the Schwartzwasser or Katzbach, where he could by pontoons, and not rested till he had attacked the king again. Never could that cautious commander understand the fiery rapidity of Frederick. He thought that the Prussians must be delayed for some time, at least a day, and purposed to move on the morrow with a new plan. Not plans were wanted, however, but swift and straight strokes at an adversary weakened and almost beginning to hunger.

Frederick made no delay. On the morning of the battle he found time to pack the severely wounded in empty meal wagons, the slighter cases on horseback, sometimes riding double. Some of the meal wagons were left on the field, cut to pieces, their teams taken for the captured cannon. Even the muskets of the dead and wounded were

15th.-16th Aug. 1760.

not forgotten. Each cavalry soldier and each baggage driver slung one over his back. All this business was put in charge of General Saldern, who managed it in perfect order. As Frederick rode round the battle-field he came upon one battalion standing grim and silent, black with gunpowder, sabreless, amidst a pile of its own dead, surrounded by heaps of Austrian cavalry. The king gazed silently at the faithful band. At last a sergeant stepped out of the ranks, saluted, and said, "Regiment Bernburg, your majesty." "Ah!" said Frederick, "you did well. You shall have your swords back; all that went before shall be forgotten." Tears came to the eyes of the gallant soldier as he replied, "You are then once more our gracious king." "Surely," came gently from the monarch who had once accused himself of having more sensibility than other men. The regiment broke into lusty and heartfelt cheers.

About nine in the morning all was ready. The assembled army, all but Ziethen's corps, which was to follow in the afternoon with the various baggage, stood prepared to march. Its *Te Deum* was three volleys of musketry, and, when that was over, it moved off for Parchwitz and the uncertain future there. Daun had not found time to inform the Russians, but Frederick had been quicker. He confided a despatch to a peasant who was to fall into Russian hands and give it up to save his life. It was addressed to Prince Henry, and said, "Austrians totally defeated to-day; now for the Russians. Do what we agreed upon." Czernichef at once fell back across the Oder and the way was clear, though the king could not be certain of it yet. There were now only two days' provisions. At Parchwitz next morning the question arose whether he should march for Breslau, uncertain of success, or to Glogau, where

17th Aug. 1760.

supplies were sure. Frederick decided for Breslau with all its risks. The choice was bold. In his march the day before he had seen Austrians fall back before him from Parchwitz, and now his hussars were engaged with the patrols of Beck's corps, which soon appeared on the heights of Kumernig. In rear of Beck, about a league distant, marched the heavy columns of the main Austrian army. Still must the race for life continue! Where were the Russians? About mid-day the king rode on with a few hussars to the neighbourhood of Neumarkt, whence he could see the surrounding country. Not an Austrian or Russian was in sight, and Breslau was near. The race was won. He communicated with Prince Henry the same day, and sent on the advanced guard and prisoners as far as Borna. Next day, the 17th, the camp was at Hermannsdorf, only seven miles from Breslau. The Austrians fell back to Striegau.

The slightest study of the events just related will show that the salvation of the king depended upon the mistakes and slowness of his enemies. But some of the Austrian marches had been quick enough, and mistakes are always made in war. That general wins who makes the fewest. Frederick was not only taking great strides in the art of war, but was teaching his enemies. Yet he was always too quick for them. In the movements during the first month of the campaign he showed more than ability. His nimble mind changed from plan to plan as each sudden occasion demanded, and his faults of temper were less conspicuous than usual. With misfortune following him from the last year into this, he retained the calmness of his intellect and the courage of his soul. In the midst of appalling dangers he always retained the initiative, and if Soltikof refused to join the war-dance round Frederick

20th Aug.-9th Oct. 1760.

because, as he said, there were enough already if they knew how to act, who can say that his caution was not justified by events? The general feature of the struggle was that Frederick, with 30,000 men against 90,000 of his enemies, one-third of them under the bright and clever Loudon, out-manœuvred, out-fought them, and succeeded in his adventure.

While Frederick was in Silesia Hülsen was left with about 12,000 men to guard Saxony. He was attacked on the 20th of August by the Reichs Army, reinforced by an Austrian division, altogether 30,000 strong. The assault was weak and repulsed with loss, but Hülsen soon found himself obliged to fall back to Torgau, and Saxony was at the mercy of the king's enemies.

After Liegnitz the Russians retired, but before going home determined to besiege Colberg for the second time. Goltz, with 12,000 Prussians, followed to observe the Russians. Prince Henry went to Breslau for his health, and the king took to himself the rest of Henry's army, thus raising his strength to 50,000 men. Then ensued some weeks of manœuvring between Daun, with Lacy and Loudon, and Frederick. The scene lay between Schweidnitz and Glatz. The king was in bad health, but his enemies could get no advantage over him. Werner, detached from the corps of Goltz with 5,000 men, marched from Glogau to Colberg, 200 miles, in thirteen days, and compelled the Russians to raise the siege on the 18th of September. The place had been splendidly defended by Heyde against a besieging force of 15,000. But on the 20th of September Czernichef, with 20,000 from Sagan, and Lacy, on the 29th with 15,000 from Daun's force in Silesia, marched hurriedly on Berlin, and occupied the city on the 9th of October, where the Cossacks committed some

of their usual cruelties. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, who had the Swedish business in hand this year, rushed with 5,000 men to help Berlin, marching forty miles in one day, and Hülsen arrived from Saxony with 9,000. But they could do little, and the king himself had to leave Daun and make for Berlin on the 4th of October. The Cossacks were playing riot, and even the Saxons, parties of whom were present, destroyed pictures, furniture, and antiques at Charlottenburg. On the 11th of October news came that Frederick was on the march, and forthwith Russians, Austrians, and Saxons disappeared, though the king was still five marches distant. Lacy went to Torgau, the Russians towards Landsberg.

In Hülsen's absence Torgau had been captured, and nothing now remained of Saxony. Daun returned then under orders from Vienna to maintain possession during the winter. When combined with the Reichs army he was 100,000 strong, Loudon had marched for Kosel. Frederick reinforced Goltz to about 20,000, and with 30,000 men marched from Lübben on the 20th of October, crossed the Elbe fourteen miles below Wittenberg on the 26th, and picked up Eugene and Hülsen with their 14,000 at Jonitz next day. The Reichs army, which was at Düben, west of Torgau, fell back on Leipsig. Daun moved towards them on the 26th of October as far as Eilenburg. Frederick rushed to Düben on the 29th. Thence he detached Hülsen to Leipsig to drive the Reichs army. Hülsen arrived on the 30th of October in the evening, and next day pushed forward into the town. The timorous Reichs people, the army supposed to enforce the ban of the Empire against Frederick, had fled homewards. Daun fell back to his entrenchments at Torgau. Frederick formed magazines at Düben, called Hülsen back to him, and on the 2nd of November marched

2nd-3rd Nov 1760.

in four columns against Daun at Torgau. The king's army lay that night at Schilda, south of Torgau.[1]

The Austrian position was very strong. As it now faced Frederick, it lay nearly along the road to Düben; its left was covered by the Great Pond and the Röhrgraben, a channel for the conveyance of water from the heights of Siptitz, on which hill lay the main body. The drinking water for Torgau was carried by a pipe at the bottom of the Röhrgraben; the stream itself was muddy and boggy, ending in the Entefang (decoy pond for ducks), which then broadened out into the Great Pond. The centre and left were on the Siptitz height, which descended steeply to the south, less so on the north and west. The reserve corps was behind Grosswig. The fault of the position was that there was not full space for Daun's 65,000 men to manœuvre, especially was the artillery cramped for room. So Daun, still holding old-world ideas of that arm, placed his reserve artillery in his rear—we shall see presently with what curious result. Frederick judged that he must fight Daun, because otherwise the Russians would winter in his kingdom. But he also saw that the position was too strong for a regular attack anywhere. He therefore risked a double attack, in front and rear, hoping that it might confuse the closely-packed Austrians. The Diagram School of Tacticians, with Jomini at their head, can easily prove that this was a faulty arrangement, because a perfect general would oppose it by holding one-half of the attackers back while marching to overwhelm the other half. But Frederick knew Daun's character, and took the risk as the least that he could see. His plan was to carry about half the army

[1] See plan, battle of Torgau, and map above it for the marches.

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round the Austrian right and attack the rear, while Ziethen moved against the front. Both attacks were to be so timed as to begin at the same moment.

At 6.30 on the morning of the 3rd of November, 1760, the king marched to fight what was to be his last battle and Daun's also. The march was about fourteen or fifteen miles altogether, Ziethen's about half as much. Neglecting the baggage, which moved off westward of the march, there were three columns in Frederick's half of the army. The right column, nearest to Daun, was commanded by the king in person, and consisted chiefly of infantry. It was to move by Mockrehna, Weidenhayn, Neiden. Hülsen's column, also infantry, was to sweep further west and come in about Elsnig. The third column, containing nearly the whole cavalry of both wings and a few infantry, was to go still further out and arrive also near Elsnig. Ziethen's wing was to separate itself at the junction of the Torgau-Leipsig road, follow that road to the Butter Street, then along the Butter Street to the Austrian position, west of the highest elevation of the Siptitz hill.

The success of such a manœuvre as this depends on accuracy of execution; and events soon went wrong with both wings of the Prussian army. Daun, as usual, had placed light troops in the woods through which the columns had to march, and was soon informed of the king's movement. He made what shift he could to form his troops, facing north and north-west instead of south. Countermarching his main body so that the best regiments would face Frederick, he left the reserve still at Grosswig, and posted Lacy's corps between Zinna and the suburb of Torgau, with instructions to guard what had now become the rear of the army. The movement cost time, the space was small. Daun saw that he could not well move the

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reserve artillery at the same time, and therefore left it in front of the new position, along the whole of which it stretched. Archenholtz gives the number of guns as 400, but this is probably an exaggeration. It is certain that Daun was strong in artillery, but 400 guns would be six per 1,000 men, without counting the battalion guns. Be this as it may, the number was great, and the whole front garnished with guns. The left of the main body was thrown back *en potence*. The right was covered by a series of intricate brooks, the centre and left by an old *abattis*, remaining since Prince Henry occupied the position, and broken in parts.

Ziethen moved as directed till he reached the Butter Street and began to turn up there. But there he met some of Lacy's detachments and suffered himself to be drawn astray by them. He deployed his columns and moved to the right front, where he soon became engaged in a fruitless cannonade with Lacy: fruitless because the obstacles in his way prevented him from pushing on to close quarters. This was the first error.

As the king's columns moved through the dripping woods—for it was raining—the wheels of the artillery sunk in the soft sand of the roads, and the guns were delayed. Frederick, wishing to keep punctual appointment with Ziethen, pushed forward with his infantry. Thus it fell out that the right column, intended to be the first line, arrived near Elsnig about one o'clock, alone, and almost without artillery. Hülsen had been delayed on the march, and the third column, with the cavalry, had lost its way in the woods. Frederick sent his adjutants to find and hurry on the laggards, and began to reconnoitre Daun's line. The right wing, which he had intended to attack, was unapproachable because of the boggy brooks, so he drew back

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his force into the woods again, and moved to his right to attack Daun's left, at the north-west corner, where the *potence* part began and the *abattis* seemed defective. Still neither Holstein with the cavalry nor Hülsen with the infantry could be heard of. The sound of Ziethen's cannonade had been heard for some time, and the impatient king felt that his lieutenant might be beaten alone, he knew not where, unless he himself should strike in.

Frederick had with him only seven battalions of grenadiers, one regiment of hussars, and Ramin's brigade; yet he determined to attack. The grenadiers were formed as a front line, Ramin's brigade as a second, and his sole artillery, twenty guns, were ordered to support the movement from a position at the left of the wood. In this campaign the germ of the modern system had been created. The infantry was formed into brigades of about five battalions each, and every brigade had attached to it a portion of the reserve artillery—ten guns. Two such batteries were with Frederick. It would be vain to commence an artillery duel under such circumstances. The grenadiers crossed the broken *abattis* and moved forward to attack. Then the Austrian guns opened fire with grape, and dealt frightful destruction in the ranks of the grenadiers. Stutterheim's brigade was absolutely destroyed, nearly all the officers and men were killed and wounded by the "hellish fire," as the king called it. The grenadiers ceased to exist as a body. Their remnants were charged by Austrian cavalry, and out of the seven battalions there remained not men enough to make one. The two batteries issued from the wood to support the attack, but were instantly destroyed. Tempelhof, who saw the wreck, says, "The batteries which the artillery sent to the left of the

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wood were annihilated in an instant. They had not even time to load their guns. Already the officers, the gunners, and the drivers were either killed or wounded by the artillery fire of the enemy." Such was the effect of Daun's accidentally leaving a mass of artillery in front of his army. Yet in the face of such facts as these, there are still men who doubt the physical effect of field-artillery fire.

Seeing that the 6,000 grenadiers were reduced to 600, certain Austrian battalions rushed out in pursuit of them, but coming upon the second line—brigade Ramin—were at once checked, driven back, and accompanied so closely in their retreat that the Austrian artillery could not crush Ramin's brigade. The brigade was, however, driven back ere long. The fight had begun about 2 P.M.; it was now three, and Frederick's first column badly beaten. The king, who had been with the grenadiers, remained perfectly cool. Turning to one of his adjutants, a grandson of the old Prince of Dessau, he said mournfully, "All goes ill to-day; my friends are quitting me. I have just heard of the death of your brother." This thought, occurring in the midst of the "hellish fire," marks the character of the man who in such a moment could sorrow over a dead friend. Another story is told of him later in the battle, equally characteristic. He was struck down by a spent ball, and was unconscious for some time. Recovering himself, he sat up and saw Berenhorst bending over him in anxiety. In a gruff voice the king exclaimed, "What are you doing here? Go and catch runaways."

Shortly after three o'clock Hülsen arrived; the third column not up yet. By this time a larger force of guns was gathered, and, engaging Daun's mass, drew to them some of its fire. Hülsen's troops attacked again, and actually closed with the Austrians. Some success was

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gained, but Daun brought up the reserve from Grosswig and drove Hülsen back.

It was half-past four, and the sun had gone down when Holstein arrived at last with the cavalry. In the growing darkness the horsemen charged the right of Daun's line, while the infantry attacked again on the left. The mass of guns was now of less use, and the cavalry had many successes. The Austrian formation was broken, and there ensued in the falling night a strange, confused struggle between isolated bodies of men. The armies were intermingled, and none could say what issue there would be on the morrow, when the wearied and wounded king left the field to seek some repose at Elsnig. Daun also was wounded, and went back to sleep at Torgau.

But all was not yet over. Ziethen, contented at first with his artillery play against Lacy, heard, towards evening, the fire of Frederick's people receding—a bad sign. He began to work to his left, in order to communicate with and help the king. The ground checked him till Möllendorf, always ready in trouble, found him a way over the Röhrgraben and its bogs. The road was the Butter Street along which Ziethen was to have gone at first. It led close to the key of the position, the highest point of the Siptitz hill. Ziethen attacked there, and Hülsen, bivouacking on the battle-field, put together what troops he could collect and led them to the sound of Ziethen's firing. Old Hülsen himself had no horse more; all his had been killed, but he went into action again, mounted on a gun-carriage. For an hour this last struggle raged; then the Austrians drew back gradually to Torgau and crossed the river, Lacy's corps moving on the hither bank. After all, Ziethen had repaired his fault, and the victory was for Prussia.

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The battle-field remained in strange confusion. Siptitz hill was crowded with the dead and the wounded, who suffered horribly from want of water and from the bitter cold. Down in the woods blazed fires, where in many cases sat Austrians and Prussians together, agreeing that to-morrow's dawn should decide which side had won, and which of the parties now assembled in mutual goodwill were victors, which prisoners.

After the battle Daun withdrew to the Plauen Chasm. Frederick made demonstrations towards Dresden, but finally went into winter quarters near Meissen.

The battle of Torgau cost the Austrians above 12,000 killed and wounded, with 8,000 prisoners; total, 20,000 men, and forty-five guns. The Prussians lost between 13,000 and 14,000, of whom 4,000 were prisoners. They lost more than 5,000 in the first attack alone, chiefly from the fire of the great artillery mass accidentally placed in the front of Daun's army.

Frederick's campaign of 1760 has been much criticised, especially by Jomini, who cannot see anything but his own diagrams. He thinks that the king should have taken the initiative early and marched against the Austrians. But he forgets the great difficulties Frederick had in assembling an army at all, and also that almost to the last he hoped for peace. No doubt he made mistakes and his enemies made more; but his marches, the splendid courage and boldness of his battle-strokes, his lofty and steadfast endurance, will remain models of military character for all time. With forces greatly inferior in number to those of his enemies, and of a quality gradually falling off, he warded off destruction, gained two battles, and remained victor at the end of the campaign. Ferdinand also held his own against the French.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CAMPAIGN OF 1761.—GROWING EXHAUSTION OF THE ARMIES.—CAMP OF BUNZELWITZ.—LOUDON CAPTURES SCHWEIDNITZ.—DEATH OF THE CZARINA.—PEACE WITH RUSSIA.—CAMPAIGN OF 1762.—DAUN FORTIFIES HIMSELF TO COVER SCHWEIDNITZ.—FREDERICK TURNS HIM OUT.—SCHWEIDNITZ RECAPTURED.—PEACE OF HUBERTSBURG.—RESTORATION OF RUINED PRUSSIA.—PARTITION OF POLAND.—AMBITION OF KAISER JOSEPH LEADS TO QUASI-CAMPAIGN OF 1778–9.

A.D. 1761—1779.

1761.

After 1760 the Seven Years' War languished. The allies adopted the expedient of refusing to exchange prisoners, thus wearing out Prussia by mere friction against the vast hosts which surrounded Frederick. The king found it impossible to recruit his armies, and they dwindled rapidly. The sufferings of France were hardly possible to bear. War was driving people into the agony which afterwards found expression in the Revolution. Austria was pressed for money and even men. England alone had gained any real advantage so far. The French colonies and naval power were falling before the generals and admirals whom war discovered and Pitt quickly used. Wolfe's capture of Quebec on the 13th September, 1759, decided the fate

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of Canada; the destruction of the French fleets in the same year by Hawke and his comrades annihilated French power at sea, and the fall of Pondichery on the 26th of January, 1761, left British arms without rival in India. Yet the negotiations for peace in 1759 had failed. Bruised and weary, the nations dragged themselves into the fight again.

The toils and privations of war were telling on Frederick. In a letter to Madame Camas, written in November, 1760, he describes himself as leading "the life of a dog." "All this has made me so old that you would hardly know me again. On the right side of my head the hair is all grey; my teeth break and fall out; my face is wrinkled like a petticoat; my back bent like the bow of a fiddle; my spirit sad and downcast like a monk of La Trappe." He now had frequent fits of gout, and had been forced to give up his famous suppers for four years past. Still, with suffering body, ruined finances, and weakened army, he had no more thought of yielding one acre of Silesia than he had in the first passages of the Seven Years' War. Choiseul was negotiating for peace, but Pitt was stiff as to the terms; and later in the year came the family compact between the courts of France and Spain, which forced England into war with the Bourbons of Madrid.

All Frederick's exertions produced him only 96,000 men for defence of Silesia and Saxony this year. Prince Henry had to face Daun in Saxony; the king himself stood in Silesia against Loudon and the Russians under Butterlin. Loudon opened the campaign by advancing against Goltz, near Schweidnitz, in April. Goltz had only 12,000 to his adversary's 30,000, but posted himself so well that Loudon could not attack him. Reinforcements came gradually to Loudon, raising his army to 72,000, but orders from

Vienna obliged him to remain inactive till he could be joined near Neisse by the Russians with 60,000. Goltz, manœuvring against the Russians, was taken prisoner. The king himself delayed the junction of his enemies for some time, but could not now offer battle. The junction took place the 18th of August. He then struck at Loudon's communications, but the thrust was well parried, and on the 20th of August, Frederick, for the first time, was reduced to an attitude of pure defence. He formed an intrenched camp at Bunzelwitz, and lay there, blocking the way to Schweidnitz. Loudon's intreaties could not persuade the Russians to join him in full force to attack the position, and on the 9th of September Butterlin's army fell back across the Oder, leaving 20,000 of his men to act under Loudon. Frederick remained a fortnight longer in the camp of Bunzelwitz, but was then forced to go, as his army was eating up the magazines of Schweidnitz. Again he moved against Loudon's magazines, but the Austrian general boldly marched for Schweidnitz, and captured the place by assault on the night of the 30th September—1st October. No fight took place between Loudon and the king. They both went into winter quarters in December—Prussians at Strehlen, Austrians at Kunzendorf, and Russians about Glatz. Frederick went to Breslau, after escaping by a hair's breadth an attempt to capture his person by the treachery of Warkotsch. Colberg, besieged for the third time, was splendidly defended by Heyde, but had to capitulate on the 16th of December from lack of provisions. In the western theatre Ferdinand defeated Broglio and Soubise at Vellinghausen, the English contingent again behaving gloriously. Major Mauvillon speaks of the English as thoroughly brave, but so mixed in character of the men that it was almost impossible to preserve discipline in

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the way of drink and plunder. "The cavalry exhaust a district much sooner than the horse of other armies. The officers, who gain their promotion by purchase, understand, with few exceptions, nothing of their profession. Generals and ensigns, it is all the same. Their self-indulgence is so great, especially in sleep, that they are often led into military negligence. Seldom thinking of surprising, they are themselves exposed to surprise; and a natural arrogance of character leads them to despise their enemy, and to be exceedingly difficult to work with harmoniously." Such was a faithful portrait of the English in the Seven Years' War. Gallant fighters, but not professional soldiers.

Prince Henry and Daun manœuvred skilfully throughout the campaign, but never came to serious blows.

Frederick is described as being very gloomy in mind this winter. The end of the year left him with but 60,000 men in Saxony, Silesia, and the north. Eugene of Wurtemburg had 5,000 to hold back the Swedes, Prince Henry 25,000 in Saxony, the king himself 30,000. But the agony of France was increasing; Maria Theresa had to discharge 20,000 men from want of money, and Frederick's bitter enemy, "cette infame Catin du Nord," was failing fast in health. A worse blow to the king than the loss of a battle had been the fall of Pitt in October, and with him all hope of English subsidies. Still, the enemies of Prussia were almost exhausted. One more year of brave and stubborn resistance, and Prussia must be left in peace. By extraordinary exertions and a power of administrative organisation, which was one of his greatest qualities, Frederick not only kept up his 60,000, but doubled their number. In the spring he had 70,000 for his Silesian army, 40,000 for Prince Henry in Saxony, and 10,000 for the Swedes or other purposes. Best news of all, the

5th Jan.-20th July 1762.

Czarina died on the 5th of January, 1762, and Peter, who succeeded her—only for a short time, poor boy—was an ardent admirer of the great king. Frederick at once released and sent home his Russian prisoners, an act which brought back his Prussians from Russia. On the 23rd February Peter declared his intention to be at peace and amity with Frederick, concluded peace on the 5th of May, and a treaty of alliance a month later. The Swedes, following suit, declared peace on the 22nd of May, and Frederick could now give his sole attention to the Austrians. He even believed that the Grand Turk was about to seize the opportunity and invade Hungary. Czernichef, with the contingent once on Loudon's side, was now allied to Frederick, but little value came of him. Loudon had done too much last year to please his rivals, and was now placed under the orders of slow Daun, who again undertook the Silesian struggle, only the Reich's army being used for Saxony. Amalgamated with the Reich people were 35,000 Austrians under Serbelloni.

Daun took the field early in May, disposing his troops for the defence of Schweidnitz. Frederick awaited the junction of Czernichef with his 20,000, who arrived at Lissa, near Leuthen, the 30th of June, and the king at once began to manœuvre against Daun. The Austrians took up a strong position and fortified it. Frederick formed a plan to attack it, when, on the 17th of July, Czernichef informed him that there was a revolution at Petersburg and the Russian contingent was ordered home. Frederick, fertile in resources, persuaded Czernichef at least to keep the change secret, and to look like an ally for three days more. He disposed his troops, including the Russians, so as to threaten apparently different points round the circle of Daun's fortified hills. On the 20th of July he drove the

20th July-29th Oct. 1762.

Austrians out of the village of Burkersdorf and established there a battery of forty guns. Of all the dispositions he had made, only two forces were to act in reality. All the rest, including Czernichef, was mere semblance. Wied, with one force, was to attack Ludwigsdorf; Möllendorf, with another detachment, was to carry the Burkersdorf heights as soon as Wied had performed his part of the business. It was not a battle, strictly speaking, only a combination of small operations intended to make Daun move. Everything went according to calculation. The forty guns made a great noise against enemies who kept well out of the way, except one cavalry regiment which appeared and was crushed by the fire of the artillery. Wied carried the position assigned him for attack, and Möllendorf was equally successful. As usual, the fortified position was a failure when firmly attacked, and Daun, declining to fight a general action, retired southwards in the evening. The king then laid siege to Schweidnitz which resisted bravely, defended by Guasco, but fell on the 9th of October, after the explosion of a magazine two days before had breached the works. Daun retired to Glatz and Bohemia. Frederick marched on the 29th of October to besiege Dresden. Daun followed heavily. Like a prize-fighter knocked out of time, he had no more fight in him.

Prince Henry had two affairs with the Reich's army and its Austrian contingent. Forced to retire from Freyburg on the 15th, he afterwards attacked them on the 29th of October and defeated them by a turning movement. They had 40,000, he 30,000. The Austrian contingent suffered most.

In the western theatre Ferdinand held his own and had his usual successes. His part in the war was to defend

only, and he never failed to show high qualities as a general.

Thus, nowhere had Frederick's enemies succeeded in crushing his defences. For seven years the little kingdom of Prussia had held her ground against the three great military powers, France, Austria, and Russia. All were now equally exhausted. The constancy, courage, and ability of Frederick were rewarded at last; on the 15th of February, 1763, the treaty of Hubertsburg was signed, by which Austria once more agreed to the cession of Silesia. Prussia was now a Great Power like the rest, her greatness resting on no shams, as she had proved. England had her freedom of the seas, America was for ever to be English as it is to this day, though not under our Queen. The enormous responsibility of India also fell upon this country —a great glory and a great danger. France took her natural place instead of that which Belle-Isle had devised for her. Her kings had gambled with the stolen prosperity of the nation as their stake, and all they had won was the place of a public byword for all time. Revolution had been brewing for many a year. The Seven Years' War with the sufferings entailed on the people brought the convulsion nearer.

On the 30th of March, Frederick reached Berlin, entering the city quietly. He went straight to the queen's apartments and supped there. At last the longed-for peace had come. Prussia, then, had issued victorious out of the war; but how terrible had been her sacrifices! Whole districts had been so ravaged that the traces of the houses were hard to discover. Towns ruined and partly burnt. No fields sown, no corn to make bread. Sixty thousand horses required before the ground could be ploughed. The population of the country was reduced by half a million

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and was now only four millions, that is, the people had been more than decimated. In some places noble and peasant alike were ruined. Tradesmen dare give no credit. The towns had no police and no judges; sometimes not even tax-gatherers. The people had fallen into ways of license, and those who had means were become avaricious, grasping, and oppressive to their neighbours.

Frederick set to work at once. Fortunately he had twenty-five millions of thalers collected in preparation for the next campaign. He supplied money to the most necessitous, and seed-corn where there was none. He turned all his artillery horses into teams for the plough, established banks for lending money on landed security, re-created the law courts and the police. The coinage was restored to its former state in fourteen months. In two years the country was reviving, and in seven most of the traces of war had disappeared. This renovation was perhaps the greatest labour of his life, certainly that in which he took most pride.

Some of his measures were ill-judged. For instance, he imported from France the system of gathering taxes and the very men to carry it out, for he had few capable left in his own dominions. To fill his own treasury for the cost of government and the chances of war, he had a whole corps of financial inquisitors, who came to be called "cellar-rats" among the people. No house, no room was secure from their visitations. They entered private dwellings when they pleased, by day or by night, to search for things contraband. Their decisions were arbitrary, and there was no appeal but to the king. It was even said that they introduced contraband goods in order to exact unjust fines. Such hard measure dealt to an impoverished people caused an access of unpopularity. Yet Frederick was harder on the

comparatively well-to-do than on the poorer classes, which he won by his kindly, familiar ways.

One day, riding through the streets of Berlin, he saw a crowd of people craning their necks to look at a picture posted high up on a wall. Going up to examine it he found that it was a caricature of himself, as a miser, grinding coffee. He ordered his groom to hang it lower, so that the people should not make their necks ache with looking at it. Instantly the crowd cheered him and tore the print into a thousand pieces. Another time it was proposed to him to lay a tax on butchers' meat. "No," said the king, "I am by my office advocate of the poor and the soldier, and have to plead their cause." Yet he was the advocate of women also, even in high station. We have seen how he told his secretaries always to write courteously to women. When one of his cellar-rats treated the Princess Elizabeth of Brunswick discourteously in the matter of a dress which came direct from France, that noble lady slapped his face. The man complained to the king of the dishonour done to him, but Frederick replied, "The loss of the excise dues shall fall upon me, the dress shall remain with the princess, the slaps to him who has received them. As to the alleged dishonour, I entirely relieve the complainant from that: never can the touch of a beautiful hand dishonour the face of an officer of customs."

There has been much controversy on the good and evil of Frederick's measures. Into this question we cannot enter here. The idea of free trade had not then been invented, nor has it yet taken much root in Germany. Like all other monarchs of that time, Frederick regarded his people as children, whose purses, habits, and lives it was his duty to regulate. Unlike other crowned heads, he laboured incessantly for what he believed to be the good of his

1763-1779.

people, and his measures, right and wrong, issued finally in prosperity for Prussia. During all his financial and magisterial work he never forgot the army. He was as strict with the officers as if in the presence of an enemy, and any whose regiments had to receive blame at the parades and manœuvres found themselves dismissed into oblivion without mercy.

In 1779 occurred the famous case of the miller Arnold. The rights of the question matter little. A mill was rented by Arnold and the rent punctually paid till a landed proprietor, higher up the stream, diverted most of the water to fill a fish pond. Arnold could no longer pay rent, and in process of time was turned out and the mill sold over his head. The law gave judgment against the miller, who appealed to the king. Frederick, a believer in military sense and equity, appointed a colonel to revise the judgment of the lawyers. The officer reported in Arnold's favour, but the High Court of Berlin confirmed the decision against him. Frederick clapped the judges in prison and ordered his minister of justice, von Zedlitz, to pronounce sentence of deprivation upon them. Zedlitz firmly, but respectfully refused. Frederick again ordered, and threatened him with his displeasure. Zedlitz was still immovable, and at last the king wrote the sentence of deprivation himself and had it carried out, though society of all ranks in Berlin supported the judges. Zedlitz, instead of punishment, received commendation from Frederick for acting according to his conscience. This was Frederick's idea of reforming judicial administration. It will hardly commend itself to English opinion, and was, in fact, arbitrary to an extreme degree. Still there ran through the whole tissue of extravagant self-will a golden cord of support to the poor and weak against the powerful.

His curious tolerance of religious opinions is shown in a letter written by him in 1768, wherein he says :—

"It is unfortunate for the human race, madam, that men cannot be tranquil—but they never and nowhere can. A parson (at Neufchâtel) had set forth in a sermon that, considering the immense mercy of God, the pains of hell could not last for ever. The synod shouted murder at such a scandal, and has been struggling ever since to get the parson exterminated. The affair was in my jurisdiction, for your royal highness must know that I am pope in that country. Here is my decision. Let those parsons who make for themselves a cruel and barbarous God be eternally damned as they desire and deserve ; and let the parsons who conceive God as good and merciful enjoy the plenitude of His mercy. However, madam, my sentence has failed to calm men's minds ; the schism continues, and the number of the damnatory theologians prevails over the others."

What horror such lax theology must have created at the time ! How mild and just it seems now !

All the acts of Frederick's declining years sink into insignificance beside the partition of Poland. It seemed cruel and cold-blooded at the time. Its consequences have affected Europe to this day and will continue to affect it. The partition came about in this wise. England, changing her policy when Bute succeeded Pitt, turned her back upon Frederick and would have left him to destruction. France and Austria remained bitter against him. The situation of Prussia forced her to have a strong friend, and the king rested upon Russia, with which power he cemented a firm alliance. But Russia had obtained almost complete influence over Poland during the Seven Years' War, when the unfortunate little kingdom had always been a base of operations for the Russian armies. So great was this influence that the Czarina was able to seat on the Polish

1768-1772

throne soon after the peace, one of her discarded lovers, Stanislaus Poniatowski. Poland was little more than a Russian province when the Confederation of Bar, formed by a party of nobles in 1768, took up arms in defence of the liberties of their country. The Russians defeated them and drove them into Turkey. The Turks declared war on Russia, but had no success, and had to see Moldavia and Wallachia—now Roumania—overrun by the enemy. Then, as now, Austria could not bear to see Russia pushing conquests across the Danube, and accordingly mobilised an army on the frontiers, threatening war against Russia. By his treaty of alliance with the Czarina, Frederick was bound to furnish either a contingent of troops or a large sum in money if Russia should go to war. This was inconvenient to him, and there was even a worse danger. It might be that Austria and Russia should agree to divide Turkey between them and then break up Prussia. I do not care to split hairs over the question, "Who first proposed the partition of Poland?" It seems certain that, in the later stages at any rate, Frederick was the most energetic in pushing the affair. He has never attempted to defend himself, nor did he even seem to think that the step needed defence. The Czarina, like Frederick, never thought of making a difficulty about it, and agreed to stay her hand in the south in consideration of Austria's co-operation in the partition of Poland. Maria Theresa alone showed human feeling and a sense of political morality. Her letter to Kaunitz, written in February, 1772, strikes the true note of the judgment of history on this question. She says: "When all my lands were invaded, and I knew not where I could give birth to my child in peace, I trusted in my good right and the help of God, but in this thing, where not only public law cries to Heaven against us, but

1772.

also all justice and sound reason, I must confess that never in my life have I been so troubled, and I am ashamed to show my face. Let the prince [Kaunitz, her first minister] consider what an example we are giving to the whole world if we risk our honour and reputation for a miserable piece of Poland or of Moldavia and Wallachia. I see well that I am alone and no longer in vigour; therefore, though not without the greatest sorrow, I let things take their course." A few days after her official assent was given in these words: "*Placet*, since so many great and learned men will have it so; but long after I am dead it will be known what this violation of all that was hitherto held sacred and just will give rise to." If Frederick was in advance of his time in religious toleration, Maria Theresa was so in political morality. Yet it must not be forgotten that the Seven Years' War was brought about because she had agreed with Russia and France to partition Prussia, the King of Poland being a consenting party. We have also to consider that the freedom of Poland was past praying for. The country would soon have been annexed by Russia. There was no political morality to hinder that.

The partition took place in 1772. The portion assigned to Frederick comprised 9,465 square miles, against 62,500 acquired by Austria and 87,500 by Russia. But the territory was important, for it connected east Prussia with Pomerania and the rest of Frederick's dominions. Above all, the partition staved off a general war. Poor Poland went forth into the desert as the scapegoat of Europe. Since then the cries of the Russian Poles have never ceased their shrill lament in the ears of the civilised world; he would be a bold man who should say that Maria Theresa's prophecy is not still awaiting fulfilment. Besides their undoubted courage and patriotism,

1772.

the Poles, like the Italians before they were free, have a sort of feminine power of exciting sympathy. The outer world has for many years gazed more or less calmly upon the moral and physical suffering of Christian populations under the Turks; Alsace and Lorraine have been tossed from Germany to France and from France to Germany; Denmark has been crushed and partitioned; Nice and Savoy, the very birthplace of the royal house of Italy, have been sold to France for her help in a war. Yet never have the woes of Armenia, or even, except for a brief interval, of Bulgaria, created so much sympathy as those of Poland. Denmark, Alsace, Lorraine, Nice, Savoy, are interesting to their immediate neighbours; the heart of Europe has almost forgotten them. To this very day the destruction of Polish nationality is felt like a new wound by every generous soul. The sorrows of Poland are the sorrows of the world.

Frederick found his new acquisition in a miserable state. Religious persecution had been rampant in the land. Only a few German towns were intact. The rest lay almost in ruins. The people had ceased to inhabit the houses, which were tumbling about their ears, but dwelt in wretched cellars. Of the forty houses in the market-place at Culm, twenty-eight had no doors, no roofs, no windows, and no owners. Other towns were in a similar condition. The country people hardly knew the taste of bread. Few villages possessed an oven. The weaving loom was rare, the spinning-wheel unknown. The main article of furniture was a crucifix and a vessel of holy water. It was a desolate land without discipline, without law, without a master. On 9,000 English square miles lived 500,000 souls, about fifty-five to the square mile.[1]

[1] Freytag, *Neue Bilder aus dem Leben deutsches Volkes.* Leipzig, 1862.

At the touch of Frederick's vivifying and reorganising hand, these horrors of darkness were put to flight. The country was organised on the Prussian system, and German order soon prevailed. The cities were re-peopled, and new streets arose. In the first year the great canal of Bromberg was dug, which connects the Vistula with the Oder and the Elbe; vast tracts of land were drained by the canal and immediately peopled by German colonists. The face of Prussian Poland was changed and a new life was infused into the country. As with Prussia, so with Poland. Frederick was arbitrary in his regulations; but at least he transformed misery into comparative comfort and brought order out of chaos.

The partition of Poland salved for a time the soreness of Austria; but the Emperor Joseph, who had succeeded his father in 1765, was full of ambition. He professed the greatest admiration for Frederick. Yet in 1775, when the king had a fit of gout and reports were spread abroad that he was dying, Joseph prepared an army and arranged for its concentration in Bohemia, whence it was to march through Saxony to the frontiers of Brandenburg, and there give the new king the alternative of surrendering Silesia or being overwhelmed before he could assemble his troops. Frederick recovered, and was informed of the preparations, which, of course, collapsed instantly. It would be well if those who never tire of proclaiming Frederick's bad faith, would sometimes deign to remember the conduct of his rivals.

In 1778 the Emperor Joseph claimed a large portion of the Bavarian inheritance, just fallen in by the death of the elector without issue. Frederick distinctly vetoed the transaction. He proclaimed himself the champion of the other claimants and the protector of that Reich, which had

1778-13th May 1779.

placed him under its ban some years before. As the negotiations went on, step by step, and seemed less likely to reach a favourable end, the king's military measures were gradually taken. He was to march on Bohemia by Glatz and Nachod, while Prince Henry, with an equal force, moved by Dresden. The plan was exactly similar to the campaign of 1866, and must have had a similar termination, for the Austrians were not ready. But Frederick did not wish for war. One delay succeeded another, and when at last the king and Prince Henry moved they found Loudon and Lacy with 250,000 men occupying a strong intrenched camp which lay between the two Prussian armies and prevented their junction. Nearly fifty miles of country was intrenched in a masterly manner, no less than 1,500 guns being placed in advantageous positions. In his youth the king would undoubtedly have attacked and carried some portion of this position, and the young blood of his army chafed against his inaction. But, like most men who know war well, he had conceived a horror of it, and was determined not to strike a blow without absolute necessity. So passed the summer, autumn, and the early winter, the king having started from Berlin on April 5th. On November the 27th the Czarina Catherine interfered and offered to mediate. Her offer was snatched at by both the combatants. Austria had to relinquish her claims, but the affair was not concluded until May 13th, 1779, when Frederick returned to Berlin, happy that he had not been forced to buy glory with the lives of his subjects.

CHAPTER XIX.

DEATH OF MARIA THERESA IN 1780.—FREDERICK'S SHARP CRITICISM OF HIS GENERALS AT AUTUMN MANŒUVRES.—INSPECTION OF SILESIAN ARMY.—CATCHES A CHILL.—LAST ILLNESS.—DEATH IN 1786.—HIS CHARACTER AS A KING, A SOLDIER, A MAN.

A.D. 1780—1786.

FREDERICK was now an old man, long ago disenchanted with military glory, fame, and even friendship. Nearly all his old friends had dropped round him one by one, and he was now to lose his old enemy Maria Theresa. For fifteen years she had sorrowed for her husband, with a grief, the loneliness of which can perhaps only be understood by women whose station is exalted above the consolations of ordinary human life. Like one whose sorrows have been shared by every inhabitant of these isles, she continued to wear widow's weeds. The 18th of every month was spent by her in solitary prayer. On the 18th of August she always descended to the vaults where the body of Kaizer Frantz lay, and sat in meditation beside his coffin; faithful beyond death, though in her case the man whom she mourned had been a burden to her rather than a guide and counseller. In November, 1780, she caught

19th Nov. 1780-23rd July 1785.

a chill which fell upon her lungs and she sank quickly. When the hour of death approached she refused to sleep, saying, "For fifteen years I have been making ready for death. I must meet him awake." She died on the 29th of November, 1780.

Her son Joseph soon gave loose to his ambitious schemes. He was possessed of very considerable talent, resolution, and energy. His designs for reform and aggrandisement of his country were magnificent, only, as Frederick said of him, he had the fault of generally taking the second step without having taken the first. He was quite as arbitrary as the Prussian king, swept away routine in every direction, and was even known to set peccant high officials in the pillory, or to make them sweep the streets in Vienna. Absolute monarchy had its freaks in every country, little dreaming of the revolution which was so near at hand. Joseph revived the designs upon Bavaria and intrigued against Frederick with the Czarina. But his conduct aroused the terror of the other German states, and Frederick succeeded in forming the Fürstenbund, or league of princes, to resist the encroachments of Austria and place Prussia in the position of guardian to German liberties. If this had happened a few years earlier, it is probable that the transfer of the kaisership from the Austrian to the Prussian house might have been anticipated by a century. But the Fürstenbund was only founded definitely on the 23rd of July, 1785, when Frederick was rapidly failing in strength and had but another year to live.

During the autumn manœuvres in Silesia the year before, Frederick had been greatly disappointed at the want of tactical knowledge displayed by some of the generals, who had committed exactly the same faults that we see at autumn manœuvres now. In a letter to General von

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Tauentzien, the same who had defended Breslau so well against Loudon and who was now Inspector-General of Silesia, the king spoke very sharply, "Were I to make shoemakers or tailors into generals the regiments could not be worse." One regiment, he said, was not fit to be the poorest militia battalion; in another, the men were so spoiled by smuggling that they had no resemblance to soldiers; whilst a third was like a heap of undrilled boors. As for tactics, "Schwartz, at Neisse, made the unpardonable mistake of not sufficiently occupying the height on the left wing." One can imagine him thinking of Hochkirch and the Stromberg. "Had it been serious the battle had been lost. At Breslau, Erlach, instead of covering the army by seizing the heights, marched off with his division straight as a row of cabbages into that defile, whereby, had it been real war, the enemy's cavalry would have cut down our infantry and the fight been lost. It is not my purpose to lose battles by the base conduct of my generals; wherefore I hereby appoint that you next year, if I be alive, assemble the army between Breslau and Ohlau, and for four days before I arrive in your camp carefully manœuvre with the ignorant generals and teach them what their duty is. Regiment von Arnim and garrison-regiment von Kanitz are to act as enemy; and whoever does not then fulfil his duty shall be brought before a court-martial; for I should think it shame of any country to keep such people who trouble themselves so little about their business. Erlach will remain four weeks longer in arrest. You are to make known this my present declared will to your whole inspection." This specimen of Frederick's dealing with inefficient officers may serve to show how terribly in earnest he was, and, to some extent also, why the Prussian army was then, and has since been, so tremendous a weapon in the hand of those who

20th Aug. 1785-1786.

have known how to use it. Next year, 1785, he again appeared in Silesia. The manœuvres began on Saturday, August the 20th, and lasted till Thursday the 25th. Many foreign officers were present, among others Lafayette, Lord Cornwallis, and the Duke of York. On the Wednesday rain fell in torrents, yet so intent was the king upon his business that he remained on horseback from the beginning, at five o'clock in the morning, till the end of the manœuvres after ten o'clock, riding about on horseback, as the present Emperor of Germany does, and watching everything with a keen eye. He did not even put on his cloak, and was so thoroughly wet through, that, when he returned to head-quarters and changed his clothes, the water is said to have poured out of his long boots as if they were a pair of pails. The chill which he caught settled on his body, wearied with war, and he was now seventy-three years old, too aged to shake it off. Still he completed his Silesian inspections, returned to Berlin for an artillery review on September the 10th, and made no complaint of his health. On the night of the 18th he was seized with a fit of suffocation, and from that time failed rapidly. In January, 1786, symptoms of asthma and dropsy appeared, and he was unable to sleep, except in an arm-chair, for fear of suffocation. Still he lingered on, always as attentive to business as he had ever been. In the summer he was seen on horseback again, but only for very short exercise. His longest ride was two miles. Erysipelas came in addition to the asthma and dropsy. He could hardly ever sleep, and said one morning to some one who came in, "If you happened to want a night-watcher I should suit you well." Having for some years past begun work with the clerks about six or seven o'clock in the morning, he now ordered them to come at four A.M., saying, "My situation forces

me to give them this trouble, which they will not have to suffer long. My life is on the decline, the time which I still have I must employ, it belongs not to me but to the state." His last letter was written to his sister, the Duchess Dowager of Brunswick, on the 10th of August. In it he says, "The old must give place to the young, that each generation may find room clear for it; and life, if we examine strictly what its course is, consists in seeing one's fellow-creatures die and be born." Still his attention to business was unwearied. His last minute was to De Launay, head of the excise. "Your account of receipts and expenditures came to hand yesterday, the 13th, but is much too slight. I require one in more detail." And he explained shortly and clearly what details he required.

Next morning, Tuesday, August the 15th, the king did not wake till eleven o'clock. On arousing he seemed at first confused, but called in his generals and secretaries and did business with them, giving minute directions with regard to a review at Potsdam next day, and, among other things, dictated to his clerks an instruction for an ambassador just leaving, "four quarto pages, which," says Hertzberg, "would have done honour to the most experienced minister."

On Wednesday morning, August the 16th, 1786, the generals and secretaries came as usual for business, but came in vain. All through the early hours the king lay in stertorous slumber, unconscious save at fleeting moments. In one of these he tried to give to the commandant the usual parole, but found he could not speak. An expression of sorrow passed over his face. He turned his head and sank back into the corner of his chair. Towards evening the king fell into a soft sleep, but soon awoke complaining of cold. It was the chill of death. When the clock struck eleven he asked, "What o'clock?" They answered,

16th Aug. 1786.

"Eleven." He murmured, "I will rise at four." About midnight he noticed that one of his dogs, which sat on a stool near him, was shivering with cold. "Throw a quilt over it," said he; and these were his last conscious words. Strütski, one of his three faithful valets, took the king on his knee to save him from doubling up in the corner of his chair. For two hours Frederick sat thus, with his right arm around Strütski's neck, Strütski kneeling on his right knee with his left arm supporting the king's back and shoulders. In this position, at twenty minutes past two, the sufferer drew his last breath. Frederick the Great was no more. No beloved woman was there to soothe his last moments, no children to receive his last blessing. He died, as he had lived for many years, a dutiful worker to the last, but in spirit absolutely alone. Across the dark river Maria Theresa thought she saw awaiting her the spirit of a husband with outstretched arms. Frederick had no such vision. To him death meant total oblivion.

A century has passed since the death of Frederick, and the world has not yet agreed what his character was as a king, a soldier, or a man. It was natural that during his life he should have many bitter enemies and a few fervent friends; for he was possessed of an absolute will and the power to crush those who opposed him. But it is remarkable that his name should continue to be idolised by one portion of mankind and detested by another. English opinion seems to have generally mixed the life of Frederick the Great with that of his father, and has attributed to the son qualities and eccentricities which he did not possess. There is the less need for this because Frederick displayed startling characteristics of his own. Carlyle, in a book the genius of which becomes more striking as it grows more familiar, has made a grand defence of his favourite

1786.

hero, obscuring his defects and pointing triumphantly to his shining virtues. The only result has been that Carlyle has been considered as eccentric as Frederick. For all that, French writers have largely accepted the facts and the deductions of the English philosopher and wit, whose history at least approaches nearer to accuracy than that of Voltaire. Quite lately, the Duc de Broglie has taken upon himself the office of devil's advocate in opposition to the canonisation proposed by Carlyle; but his book,[1] more forensic than judicial, must impress the attentive reader with the conviction that all the royal houses and diplomatists of Europe are put out of court by their own misdeeds when they pose as critics of Frederick.

When Frederick came to the throne, France was distinctly the leading power of Europe. Her diplomatic subtlety and her arms had prevailed to put her in the first place of the first rank. Her comparative refinement, the brillancy of her court, which attracted all the wit and wisdom of Europe, enabled her to claim for herself the position of leader in civilisation. The literature, the manners, and even the persons of other nations and other courts were treated with ridicule and made the butt for every shaft of French wit. No object had seemed more laughable to the French nation than the court of what was considered that little upstart power—Prussia, under Frederick William. As for the political position of France it is enough to remember that the designs of Belle-Isle were considered possible. So far as Prussia was concerned, the intention evidently was to use her for the moment and then throw her away like an old glove. France had been paid heavily, by Alsace and Lorraine, for a formal treaty,

[1] *Fréderic deux et Marie Therése d'apres des documents nouveaux*, 1740—1742. Paris, 1883.

1786.

in which she bound herself not only to agree to the Pragmatic sanction, but to defend it by force of arms if necessary. When the time came, France first shuffled and then declared against the claims of Maria Theresa. Belle-Isle's schemes were to make his country, not the arbitress only, but the tyrant of Europe in politics, in arts, and in arms.

Then arose upon the horizon a new planet, with the brightness of a sun and the strangeness of a comet. It came from the dark regions of the north and flamed suddenly in the political sky, attracting all Europe by its lurid brilliancy. The wit, the diplomatic wiles, and the arms of France paled before it. Not only did Paris, hitherto the home of all that was bright and clever, now seem dull in comparison, but even the first Frenchmen of the day flew to Berlin to worship the rising sun. The arbitress of Europe became a weeping Niobe; her sons slain by the shafts of the new Apollo, or seduced by his attractions. It is impossible to conceive a blow more bitter to the vanity of a nation, nor can there be any wonder that France was and remains the bitterest enemy of that Germany by which she was so completely eclipsed. Yet France has no right to complain of Frederick, because he only treated her as she would have treated him but for his surpassing ability. In turning to Austria, it is but simple justice to separate between the crown, with its claims, and the noble woman who was to wear it. For centuries Austria had been strong, self-willed, and oppressive. Young Prussia had not been allowed room to grow and expand. Prussia was the young and weak; Austria, the old and strong, held towards Prussia, upon the soil of central Europe, much the same position as Spain occupied towards England on the ocean. The opportunity came both to Prussia and to England when Austria and Spain were growing weak.

1786.

It was an accident of history that the noble Maria Theresa was the one to suffer for the accumulated misdeeds of the Austrian dynasty. Frederick determined to close the account by acquiring Silesia; and if in that respect his conduct was wrong, when judged from the standpoint of modern morality, it was at least in accordance with the ideas and the habits of his time. Compared with the actions of France, Frederick's political sin appears mild by contrast.

Then as to the means which were used. It is abundantly evident that all the kings and all the ministers were straining every nerve to cheat each other. Even the Duc de Broglie admits that it was an "encounter of wits," in which Frederick gained the victory. He was not in the least proud of it, neither was he ashamed. With capacity for far higher things, he seems to have regarded himself as a civilised man among savages, obliged to save his life by answering lies with lies. In the midst of the political and military embroglio during the early Silesian wars, Frederick wrote thus to Podewils: "We are dealing on the one side with the most headstrong people in Europe [the Austrians] and on the other with the most ambitious [the French]. To go on playing the part of an honest man with rogues is a perilous thing; to be cunning with deceivers is a desperate game and its success equivocal. What then is to be done? War and negotiation? That is just what your humble servant and his ministers are doing. If there is anything to be gained by being honest, we will be so. If it is necessary to dupe, let us be rogues." Here we have the clearest possible profession of what may be called political immorality, quite text enough for a long sermon on the wickedness of Frederick. But those who wish to see clearly the character of this remarkable man will

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observe that in this and other cynical speeches, he only professed what others practised without professing. He did not pay to virtue that homage of vice—hypocrisy. Others professing to be true and noble acted ignobly and vilely. Frederick's actions were no better, but he did not pretend that they were. It is not often that a man at thirty years of age refuses himself even the indulgence of illusions as to his own conduct. Frederick was a great worker, and continually kept before himself the idea that he was the shepherd of his people. The marvellous administrative faculty and the fertility of resource, which enabled him with a mere handful of people at his back to bring, year after year, fresh armies into the field, is almost unequalled in history; but the king would rather have rested his fame on the talents which produced the renovation of Prussia. Hard-handed and arbitrary as he was sometimes, his people loved him, and perhaps a weaker hand could not have guided the vessel of state into safety.

As a soldier, Frederick certainly deserves the credit of having restored a brilliant style of campaigning which had fallen into abeyance for ages. His strategy was sometimes at fault, but his critics have not sufficiently borne in mind the fact that he was hampered by political considerations. Hardly a winter passed during the Seven Years' War without finding him or his friends negotiating for peace. The conception of his campaigns was not equal to that of Napoleon, nor is there much in his general strategy to commend itself to students of war. His tactics on the field of battle were for the most part superb. Having made his army superior in quality, he never stayed to count numbers but attacked boldly and skilfully, thus seizing for himself the mighty power of The Initiative. When he was absent from any part of his dominions the enemy

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gained some advantage there. He appeared and fought—resistance collapsed before him. Yet his actions as a general were frequently marred by a passionate self-will, which more than once lost him a battle. He was not perfect as a soldier any more than as a king or as a man. Yet his figure will always occupy one of the most distinguished places in the military Pantheon. He possessed in a high degree the great art of obtaining complete command over the hearts and the minds of his soldiers. He was a very strict disciplinarian but perfectly familar with his men, who bandied rough jokes with him when he was pleased and wept when he was angry with them. They would rather die with him than live with other generals, and the affection which he first created for the royal house has descended to our own times. This mastery over the minds and affections of soldiers is a quality which, almost of necessity, carries success with it, for it can never be possessed by a weak or foolish man. No campaigns will be won by an army unless it has confidence in itself and its commander. Frederick possessed in a large degree the power of inspiring that confidence.

The most remarkable feature in our knowledge of this great king, and perhaps that which most causes men to misunderstand him, is the astounding candour with which he lays open his own character for inspection. In his writings we read the whole man with his faults and his virtues clearly exposed to view. Nothing is so uncommon, and this is why the character of Frederick will perhaps never be fully understood.

THE END.

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