

# ТОМАС КАРЛЕЙЛЬ

HISTORY OF FRIEDRICH  
II OF PRUSSIA —  
VOLUME 17

Томас Карлейль

**History of Friedrich II  
of Prussia — Volume 17**

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# **Thomas Carlyle**

## **History of Friedrich II of Prussia — Volume 17**

### **Book XVII—THE SEVEN-YEARS WAR: FIRST CAMPAIGN.—1756-1757**

#### **Chapter I.—WHAT FRIEDRICH HAD READ IN THE MENZEL DOCUMENTS**

The ill-informed world, entirely unaware of what Friedrich had been studying and ascertaining, to his bitter sorrow, for four years past, was extremely astonished at the part he took in those French-English troubles; extremely provoked at his breaking out again into a Third Silesian War, greater than all the others, and kindling all Europe in such a way. The ill-informed world rang violently, then and long after, with a Controversy, "Was it of his beginning, or Not of his beginning?" Controversy, which may in our day be considered as settled by unanimous mankind; finished forever; and can now have no interest for any creature.

Omitting that, our problem is (were it possible in brief compass), To set forth, by what authentic traits there are,—not the "ambitious," "audacious," voracious and highly condemnable Friedrich of the Gazetteers,—but the thrice-intricately situated Friedrich of Fact. What the Facts privately known to Friedrich were, in what manner known; and how, in a more complex crisis than had yet been, Friedrich demeaned himself: upon which latter point, and those cognate to it, readers ought not to be ignorant, if now fallen indifferent on so many other points of the Affair. What a loud-roaring, loose and empty matter is this tornado of vociferation which men call "Public Opinion"! Tragically howling round a man; who has to stand silent the while; and scan, wisely under pain of death, the altogether inarticulate, dumb and inexorable matter which the gods call Fact! Friedrich did read his terrible Sphinx-riddle; the Gazetteer tornado did pipe and blow. King Friedrich, in contrast with his Environment at that time, will most likely never be portrayed to modern men in his real proportions, real aspect and attitude then and there,—which are silently not a little heroic and even pathetic, when well seen into;—and, for certain, he is not portrayable at present, on our side of the Sea. But what hints and fractions of feature we authentically have, ought to be given with exactitude, especially with brevity, and left to the ingenuous imagination of readers.

The secret sources of the Third Silesian War, since called "Seven-Years War," go back to 1745; nay, we may say, to the First Invasion of Silesia in 1740. For it was in Maria Theresa's incurable sorrow at loss of Silesia, and her inextinguishable hope to reconquer it, that this and all Friedrich's other Wars had their origin. Twice she had signed Peace with Friedrich, and solemnly ceded Silesia to him: but that too, with the Imperial Lady, was by no means a finis to the business. Not that she meant to break her Treaties; far from her such a thought,—in the conscious form. Though, alas, in the unconscious, again, it was always rather near! practically, she reckoned to herself, these Treaties would come to be broken, as Treaties do not endure forever; and then, at the good moment, she did purpose to be ready. "Silesia back to us; Pragmatic Sanction complete in every point! Was not that our dear Father's will, monition of all our Fathers and their Patriotisms and Traditionary Heroisms; and in fact, the behest of gods and men?" Ten years ago, this notion had been cut down to apparent death, in a disastrous manner, for the second time. But it did not die in the least: it never thinks of dying; starts always anew, passionate to produce itself again as action valid at last; and lives in the

Imperial Heart with a tenacity that is strange to observe. Still stranger, in the envious Valet-Heart, —in that of Bruhl, who had far less cause!

The Peace of Dresden, Christmas, 1745, seemed to be an act of considerable magnanimity on Friedrich's part. It was, at the first blush of it, "incredible" to Harrach, the Austrian Plenipotentiary; whose embarrassed, astonished bow we remember on that occasion, with English Villiers shedding pious tears. But what is very remarkable withal is a thing since discovered: [INFRA, next Note (p. 276).] That Harrach, magnanimous signature hardly yet dry, did then straightway, by order of his Court, very privately inquire of Bruhl, "There is Peace, you see; what they call Peace:—but our TREATY OF WARSAW, for Partition of this magnanimous man, stands all the same; does n't it?" To which, according to the Documents, Bruhl, hardly escaped from the pangs of death, and still in a very pale-yellow condition, had answered in effect, "Hah, say you so? One's hatred is eternal;—but that man's iron heel! Wait a little; get Russia to join in the scheme!"—and hung back; the willing mind, but the too terrified! And in this way, like a famishing dog in sight of a too dangerous leg of mutton, Bruhl has ever since rather held back; would not re-engage at all, for almost two years, even on the Czarina's engaging; and then only in a cautious, conditional and hypothetic manner,—though with famine increasing day by day in sight of the desired viands. His hatred is fell; but he would fain escape with back unbroken.

## HOW FRIEDRICH DISCOVERED THE MYSTERY. CONCERNING MENZEL AND WEINGARTEN

Friedrich has been aware of this mystery, at least wide awake to it and becoming ever more instructed, for almost four years. Traitor Menzel the Saxon Kanzellist—we, who have prophetically read what he had to confess when laid hold of, are aware, though as yet, and on to 1757, it is a dead secret to all mortals but himself and "three others"—has been busy for Prussia ever since "the end of 1752." Got admittance to the Presses; sent his first Excerpt "about the time of Easter-Fair, 1753,"—time of Voltaire's taking wing. And has been at work ever since. Copying Despatches from the most secret Saxon Repositories; ready always on Excellency Mahlzahn's indicating the Piece wanted; and of late, I should think, is busier than ever, as the Saxon Mystery, which is also an Austrian and Russian one, gets more light thrown into it, and seems to be fast ripening towards action of a perilous nature. The first Excerpts furnished by Menzel, readers can judge how enigmatic they were. These Menzel Papers, copies mainly of Petersburg or Vienna DESPATCHES to Bruhl, with Bruhl's ANSWERS,—the principal of which were subsequently printed in their best arrangement and liveliest point of vision [In Friedrich's Manifestoes, chiefly in MEMOIRE RAISONNE SUR LA CONDUITE DES COURS DE VIENNE ET DE SAXE (compiled from the MENZEL ORIGINALS, so soon as these were got hold of: Berlin, Autumn, 1756). A solid and able Paper; rapidly done, by one Count Herzberg, who rose high in after times. Reprinted, with many other "Pieces" and "Passages," in *Gesammelte Nachrichten und Urkunden*,—which is a "Collection" of such (2 vols., 113 Nos. small 8vo, no Place, 1757, my Copy of it).]—are by no means a luminous set of Documents to readers at this day. Think what a study they were at Potsdam in 1753, while still in the chaotic state; fished out, more or less at random, as Menzel could lay hold of them, or be directed to them; the enigma clearing itself only by intense inspection, and capability of seeing in the dark!

It appears,—if you are curious on the anecdotic part,—

"Winterfeld was the first that got eye on this dangerous Saxon Mystery; some Ex-Saxon, about to settle in Berlin, giving hint of it to Winterfeld; who needed only a hint. So soon as Winterfeld convinced himself that there was weight in the affair, he imparted it to Friedrich: 'Scheme of partitioning, your Majesty, of picking quarrel, then overwhelming and partitioning; most serious scheme, Austrian-Russian as well as Saxon; going on steadily for years past, and very lively at this time!' If true, Friedrich cannot but admit that this is serious enough: important, thrice over, to discover

whether it is true;—and gives Winterfeld authority to prosecute it to the bottom, in Dresden or wherever the secret may lie. Who thereupon charged Mahl Zahn, the Prussian Minister at Dresden, to find some proper Menzel, and bestir himself. How Mahl Zahn has found his Menzel, and has bestirred himself, we saw. Thief-keys were made to pattern in Berlin; first set did not fit, second did; and stealthy Menzel gains admittance to that Chamber of the Archives, can steal thither on shoes of felt when occasion serves, and copy what you wish,—for a consideration. Intermittently, since about Easter-Fair, 1753. Three persons are cognizant of it, Winterfeld, Mahl Zahn, Friedrich; three, and no more. Probably the abstrusest study; and the most intense, going on in the world at that epoch. [Rotzow, *Charakteristik des Siebenjahrigen Krieges* (Berlin, 1802), i. 23.]

"At a very early stage of the Menzel Excerpts it became manifest that certain synchronous Austrian Ditto would prove highly elucidative; that, in fact, it would be indispensable to get hold of these as well. Which also Winterfeld has managed to do. A deep-headed man, who has his eyes about him; and is very apt to manage what he undertakes. One Weingarten Junior, a Secretary in the Austrian Embassy at Berlin (Excellency Peubla's second Secretary), has his acquaintanceships in Berlin Society; and for one thing, as Winterfeld discovers, is 'madly in love' with some Chambermaid or quasi-chambermaid (let us call her Chambermaid), 'Daughter of the Castellan at Charlottenburg.' Winterfeld, through the due channels, applied to this Chambermaid, 'Get me a small secret Copy of such and such Despatches, out of your Weingarten; it will be well for you and him; otherwise perhaps not well!' Chambermaid, hope urging, or perhaps hope and fear, did her best; Weingarten had to yield the required product and products, as required. By this Weingarten, from some date not long after Menzel's first mysterious Dresden Excerpts, the necessary Austrian glosses, so far as possible to Weingarten on the indications given him, have been regularly had, for the two or three years past.

"Weingarten first came to be seriously suspected June, 1756 (Weingarten Junior, let us still say, for there was a Senior of unstained fidelity); 'June 15th,' Excellency Peubla pointedly demands him from Friedrich and the Berlin Police: 'Weingarten Junior, my SECOND Secretar, fugitive and traitor; hidden somewhere!' ["BERLIN, 22d JUNE: Every research making for Mr. Weingatten,—in vain hitherto" (*Gentleman's Magazine*, xxvi., i. e. for 1756, p. 363).] Excellency Peubla is answered, 24th June: 'We would so fain catch him, if we could! We have tried at Stendal,—not there: tried his Mother-in-law; knows nothing: have forborne laying up his poor Wife and Children; and hope her Imperial Majesty will have pity on that poor creature, who is fallen so miserable.' [*Helden-Geschichte*, iii. 713.] So that Excellency Peubla had nothing for it but to compose himself; to honor the unstainable fidelity of Weingarten Senior by a public piece of promotion, which soon ensued; and let the Junior run. Weingarten Junior, on the first suspicion, had vanished with due promptitude,—was not to be unearthed again. We perceive he has married his Charlottenburg Beauty, and there are helpless babies. It seems, he lived long years after, in the Altmark, as a Herr von Weiss,—his reflections manifold, but unknown. [Retzow, i. 37.] What is much notabler, Cogniazzo, the Austrian Veteran, heard Weingarten's MASTER, Graf von Peubla, talk of the 'GRAND MYSTERE,' soon after, and how Friedrich had heard of it, not from Weingarten alone, but from Gross-Furst PETER, Russian Heir-Apparent! [Cogniazzo, i. 225.]

"As to Menzel, he did not get away. Menzel, as we saw, lasted in free activity till 1757; and was then put under lock and key. Was not hanged; sat prisoner for twenty-seven years after; overgrown with hair, legs and arms chained together, heavy iron bar uniting both ankles; diet bread-and-water;—for the rest, healthy; and died, not very miserable it is said, in 1784. Shocking traitors, Weingarten and he."

Yes, a diabolical pair, they, sure enough;—and the thing they betrayed against their Masters, was that a celestial thing? Servants of the Devil do fall out; and Servants not of the Devil are fain, sometimes, to raise a quarrel of that kind!—

The then world, as we said, was one loud uproar of logic on the right reading and the wrong of those Sibylline Documents: "Did your King of Prussia interpret them aright, or even try it? Did

not he use them as a cloak for highway robbery, and swallowing of a peaceable Saxony, bad man that he surely is?" For Friedrich's demeanor, this time again, when it came to the acting point, was of eminent rapidity; almost a swifter lion-spring than ever; and it brought on him, in the aerial or vocal way, its usual result: huge clamor of rage and logic from uninformed mankind. Clamorous rage and logic, which has now sunk irresuscitably dead;—nothing of it much worth mentioning to modern readers, scarcely even its HIC JACET (in Footnotes, for the benefit of the curious!),—and it is, at last, a thing not doubtful to anybody that Friedrich, in that matter did read aright. So that now the loud uproar is reduced to one small question with us, What did he read in those Menzel Documents? What Fact lying in them was it that Friedrich had to read? Here, smelted down by repeated roastings, is succinct answer;—for the ultimate fragment of incombustible here as elsewhere, will go into a nutshell, once the continents of Diplomatist-Gazetteer logic and disorderly stable-litter, threatening to heap themselves over the very stars, have been faithfully burnt away.

Readers heard of a "Union of Warsaw," early in 1745, concluded by the Sea-Powers and the Saxon-Polish and Hungarian Majesties: very harmless UNION of Warsaw, public to all the world, —but with a certain thrice-secret "TREATY of Warsaw" (between Polish and Hungarian Majesty themselves two, the Sea-Powers being horror-struck by mention of it) which had followed thereupon, in an eager and wonderful manner. Thrice-secret Treaty, for Partitioning Friedrich, and settling the respective shares of his skin. Treaty which, to denote its origin, we called of Warsaw; though it was not finished there (shares of skin so difficult to settle), and "Treaty of LEIPZIG, 18th May, 1745," is its ALIAS in Books:—of which Treaty, as the Sea-Powers had recoiled horror-struck, there was no whisper farther, to them or to the rest of exoteric mankind;—though it has been one of the busiest Entities ever since. From the Menzel Documents, I know not after what circuitous gropings and searchings, Friedrich first got notice of that Treaty: [Now printed in *OEuvres de Frederic*, iv. 40-42.] figure his look on discovering it!

We said it was the remarkablest bit of sheepskin in its Century. Readers have heard too, That it was proposed to Bruhl, by a grateful Austria, directly on signing the Peace of Dresden: "Our Partition-Treaty stands all the same, does it not?"—and in what humor Bruhl answered: "Hah? Get Russia to join!" Both these facts, That there is a Treaty of Warsaw and that this is the Austrian-Saxon temper and intention towards him and it, Friedrich learned from the Menzel Documents. And if the reader will possess himself of these two facts, and understand that they are of a germinative, most vital quality, indestructible by the times and the chances; and have been growing and developing themselves, day and night ever since, in a truly wonderful manner,—the reader knows in substance what Menzel had to reveal.

Russia was got to join;—there are methods of operating on Russia, and kindling a poor fat Czarina into strange suspicions and indignations. In May, 1746, within six months of the Peace of Dresden, a Treaty of Petersburg, new version of the Warsaw one, was brought to parchment; Czarina and Empress-Queen signing,—Bruhl dying to sign, but not daring. How Russia has been got to join, and more and more vigorously bear a hand; how Bruhl's rabidities of appetite, and terrors of heart, have continued ever since; how Austria and Russia,—Bruhl aiding with hysterical alacrity, haunted by terror (and at last mercifully EXCUSED from signing),—have, year after year, especially in this last year, 1755, brought the matter nearer and nearer perfection; and the Two Imperial Majesties, with Bruhl to rear, wait only till they are fully ready, and the world gives opportunity, to pick a quarrel with Friedrich, and overwhelm and partition him, according to covenant: This, wandering through endless mazes of detail, is in sum what the Menzel Documents disclose to Friedrich and us. How, in a space of ten years, the small seed-grain of a Treaty of Warsaw, or Treaty of Petersburg, planted and nourished in that manner, in the Satan's Invisible World, has grown into a mighty Tree there,—prophetic of Facts near at hand; which were extremely sanguinary to the Human Race for the next Seven Years.

This is the sum-total: but for Friedrich's sake, and to illustrate the situation, let us take a few glances more, into the then Satan's Invisible World, which had become so ominously busy round Friedrich and others. The Czarina, we say, was got to engage; 22d May, 1746, there came a Treaty of Petersburg duly valid, which is that of Warsaw under a new name: and still Bruhl durst not, for above a year coming,—not till August 15th, 1747; [MEMOIRE RAISONNE (in *Gesammelte Nachrichten*), i. 459.] and then, only in a hypothetic half-and-half way, with fear and trembling, though with hunger unspeakable, in sight of the viands. A very wretched Bruhl, as seen in these Menzel Documents. On poor Polish Majesty Bruhl has played the sorcerer, this long while, and ridden him as he would an enchanted quadruped, in a shameful manner: but how, in turn (as we study Menzel), is Bruhl himself hagridden, hunted by his own devils, and leads such a ghastly phantasmal existence yonder, in the Valley of the Shadow of CLOTHES,—mere Clothes, metaphorical and literal! ["MONTREZ-MOI DES VERTUS, PAS DES CULOTTES (Have you no virtues then to show me; nothing but pain of breeches)!" exclaimed an impatient French Traveller, led about in Bruhl's Palace one day: Archenholtz, *Geschichte des Siebenjahrigen Krieges*, i. 63.] Wretched Bruhl, agitated with hatreds of a rather infernal nature, and with terrors of a not celestial, comes out on our sympathies, as a dog almost pitiable,—were that possible, with twelve tailors sewing for him, and a Saxony getting shoved over the precipices by him.

A famishing dog in the most singular situation. What he dare do, he does, and with such a will. But there is almost only one thing safe to him: that of egging on the Czarina against Friedrich; of coining lies to kindle Czarish Majesty; of wafting on every wind rumors to that end, and continually besieging with them the empty Czarish mind. Bruhl has many Conduits, "the Sieur de Funck," "the Sieur Gross" plenty of Legationary Sieurs and Conduits;—which issue from all quarters on Petersburg, and which find there a Reservoir, and due Russian SERVICE-PIPES, prepared for them;—and Bruhl is busy. "Commerce of Dantzic to be ruined," suggests he, "that is plain: look at his Asiatic Companies, his Port of Embden. Poland is to be stirred up;—has not your Czarish Majesty heard of his intrigues there? Courland, which is almost become your Majesty's—cunningly snatched by your Majesty's address, like a valuable moribund whale adrift among the shallows,—this bad man will have it out to sea again, with the harpoons in it; fairly afloat amid the Polish Anarchies again!" These are but specimens of Bruhl. Or we can give such in Bruhl's own words, if the reader had rather. Here are Two, which have the advantage of brevity:—

1.... The Sieur de Funck, Saxon Minister at Petersburg, wrote to Count Bruhl, 9th July, 1755 (says an inexorable Record), "That the Sieur Gross [now Minister of Russia at Dresden, who vanished out of Berlin like an angry sky-rocket some years ago] would do a good service to the Common Cause, if he wrote to his Court, 'That the King of Prussia had found a channel in Courland, by which he learned all the secrets of the Russian Court;'" and Sieur Funck added, "that it was expected good use could be made of such a story with her Czarish Majesty."—To which Count Bruhl replies, 23d July, "That he has instructed the Sieur Gross, who will not fail to act in consequence."

2. Sieur Prasse, same Funck's Secretary of Legation, at Petersburg, writes to Count Bruhl, 12th April, 1756:—

"I am bidden signify to your Excellency that it is greatly wished, in order to favor certain views, you would have the goodness to cause arrive in Petersburg, by different channels, the following intelligence: 'That the King of Prussia, on pretext of Commerce, is sending officers and engineers into the Ukraine, to reconnoitre the Country and excite a rebellion there.' And this advice, be pleased to observe, is not to come direct from the Saxon Court, nor by the Envoy Gross, but by some third party, —to the end there may be no concert noticed;—as they [L'ON, the "service-pipes," and managing Excellencies, Russian and Austrian] have given the same commission to other Ministers, so that the news shall come from more places than one.

"They [the said managing Excellencies] have also required me to write to the Baron de Sack," our Saxon Minister in Sweden, "upon it, which I will not fail to do; and they assured me that our

Court's advantage was not less concerned in it than that of their own; adding these words [comfortable to one's soul], 'The King of Prussia [in 1745] gave Saxony a blow which it will feel for fifty years; but we will give him one which he will feel for a hundred.'"

To which beautiful suggestion Excellency Bruhl answers, 2d June, 1756: "As to the Secret Commission of conveying to Petersburg, by concealed channels, Intelligence of Prussian machinations in the Ukraine, we are still busy finding out a right channel; and they [L'ON, the managing Excellencies] shall very soon, one way or the other, see the effect of my personal inclination to second what is so good an intention, though a little artful (UN PEU ARTIFICIEUSE,"—UN PEU, nothing to speak of)! [MEMOIRE RAISONNE (in *Gesammelte Nachrichten* ), i. 424-425; and ib. 472.]

Fancy a poor fat Czarina, of many appetites, of little judgment, continually beaten upon in this manner by these Saxon-Austrian artists and their Russian service-pipes. Bombarded with cunningly devised fabrications, every wind freighted for her with phantasmal rumors, no ray of direct daylight visiting the poor Sovereign Woman; who is lazy, not malignant if she could avoid it: mainly a mass of esurient oil, with alkali on the back of alkali poured in, at this rate, for ten years past; till, by pouring and by stirring, they get her to the state of SOAP and froth! Is it so wonderful that she does, by degrees, rise into eminent suspicion, anger, fear, violence and vehemence against her bad neighbor? One at last begins to conceive those insane whirls, continual mad suspicions, mad procedures, which have given Friedrich such vexation, surprise and provocation in the years past.

Friedrich is always specially eager to avoid ill-will from Russia; but it has come, in spite of all he could do and try. And these procedures of the Czarish Majesty have been so capricious, unintelligible, perverse, and his feeling is often enough irritation, temporary indignation,—which we know makes Verses withal! I can nowhere learn from those Prussian imbroglios of Books, what the Friedrich Sayings or Satirical Verses properly were: Retzow speaks of a PRODUKT, one at least, known in interior Circles. [Retzow, i. 34.] PRODUKT which decidedly requires publication, beyond anything Friedrich ever wrote;—though one can do without it too, and invoke Fancy in defect of Print. The sharpness of Friedrich's tongue we know; and the diligence of birds of the air. To all her other griefs against the bad man, this has given the finish in the tender Czarish bosom;—and like an envenomed drop has set the saponaceous oils (already dosed with alkali, and well in solution) foaming deliriously over the brim, in never-imagined deluges of a hatred that is unappeasable;—very costly to Friedrich and mankind. Rising ever higher, year by year; and now risen, to what height judge by the following:—

AT PETERSBURG, 14th-15th MAY, 1753, "There was Meeting of the Russian Senate, with deliberation held for these two days; and for issue this conclusion come to:—

"That it should be, and hereby is, settled as a fundamental maxim of the Russia Empire, Not only to oppose any farther aggrandizement of the King of Prussia, but to seize the first convenient opportunity for overwhelming (ECRASER), by superior force, the House of Brandenburg [Hear, hear!], and reducing it to its former state of mediocrity." [MEMOIRE RAISONNE (in *Gesammelte Nachrichten* ), i. 421.] Leg of mutton to be actually gone into. With what an enthusiasm of "Hear, hear!" from Bruhl and kindred parties; especially from Bruhl,—who, however, dare not yet bite, except hypothetically, such his terrors and tremors. Or, look again (same Senate),

AT PETERSBURG, (OCTOBER, 1755): "To which Fundamental Maxim, articulately fixed ever since those Maydays of 1753, the august Russian Sanhedrim, deliberating farther in October, 1755, adds this remarkable extension,

"That it is our resolution to attack the King of Prussia without farther discussion, whensoever the said King shall attack any Ally of Russia's, or shall himself be attacked by any of them." Hailed by Bruhl, as natural, with his liveliest approval. "A glorious Deliberation, that, indeed!" writes he: "It clears the way of action for Russia's Allies in this matter; and for us too; though nobody can blame us, if we proceed with the extremest caution,"—and rather wait till the Bear is nearly killed. [MEMOIRE RAISONNE (in *Gesammelte Nachrichten* ), i. 422.]

Many marvels Friedrich had deciphered out of this Weingarten-Menzel Apocalypse of Satan's Invisible World; and one often fancies Friedrich's tone of mind, in his intense inspecting of that fateful continent of darkness, and his labyrinthic stepping by degrees to the oracular points, which have a light in them when flung open. But in respect of practical interest, this of October, 1755 (which would get to Potsdam probably in few weeks after) must have surpassed all the others. Marvels many, one after the other: [For example, or in recapitulation: a Treaty of Warsaw or Leipzig, to partition him (18th May, 1745); Treaty of Petersburg (22d May, 1746, new form of Warsaw Treaty, with Czarina superadded); tremulous Quasi-Accession thereto of his Polish Majesty (most tremulous, hypothetic Quasi-Accession, "Yes-AND-No," 15th August, 1747, and often afterwards); first Deliberation of the Russian Senate, 15th May, 1753; &c. &c. For example, or in recapitulation: a Treaty of Warsaw or Leipzig, to partition him (18th May, 1745); Treaty of Petersburg (22d May, 1746, new form of Warsaw Treaty, with Czarina superadded); tremulous Quasi-Accession thereto of his Polish Majesty (most tremulous, hypothetic Quasi-Accession, "Yes-AND-No," 15th August, 1747, and often afterwards); first Deliberation of the Russian Senate, 15th May, 1753; &c. &c.] no doubt left, long since, of the constant disposition, preparation and fixed intention to partition him. But here, in this last indication by the Russian Senate,—which kindles into dismal evidence so many other enigmatic tokens,—there has an ulterior oracular point disclosed itself to Friedrich; in vaguer condition, but not less indubitable, and much more perilous: namely, That now, at last (end of 1755), the Two Imperial Majesties, very eager both, consider that the time is come. And are—as Friedrich looks abroad on the Austrian-Russian marchings of troops, campings, and unusual military symptoms and combinations—visibly preparing to that end.

"They have agreed to attack me next Year (1756), if they can; and next again (1757), without IF:" so Friedrich, putting written word and public occurrence together, gradually reads; and so, all readers will see, the fact was,—though Imperial Majesty at Schonbrunn, as we shall find, strove to deny it when applied to; and scouted, as mere fiction and imagination, the notion of such an "Agreement." Which I infer, therefore, NOT to have existed in parchment; not in parchment, but only in reality, and as a mutual Bond registered in—shall we say "in Heaven", as some are wont?—registered, perhaps, in TWO Places, very separate indeed! No truer "Agreement" ever did exist;—though a devout Imperial Majesty denies it, who would shudder at the lie direct.

Poor Imperial Majesty: who can tell her troubles and straits in this abstruse time! Heaven itself ordering her to get back the Silesia of her Fathers, if she could;—yet Heaven always looking dubious, surely, upon this method of doing it. By solemn Public Treaties signed in sight of all mankind; and contrariwise, in the very same moments, by Secret Treaties, of a fell nature, concocted underground, to destroy the life of these! Imperial Majesty flatters herself it may be fair: "Treaty of Dresden, Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle; Treaties wrung from me by force, the tyrannic Sea-Powers screwing us; Kaunitz can tell! A consummate Kaunitz; who has provided remedies. Treaties do get broken. Besides, I will not go to War, unless HE the Bad One of Prussia do!"—Alas, your noble Majesty, plain it at least is, your love of Silesia is very strong. And consummate Kaunitz and it have led you into strange predicaments. The Pompadour, for instance: who was it that answered, "JE NE LA CONNAIS PAS; I don't know her!"? How gladly would the Imperial Maria Theresa, soul of Propriety, have made that answer! But she did not; she had to answer differently. For Kaunitz was imperative: "A kind little Note to the Pompadour; one, and then another and another; it is indispensable, your Imperial Majesty!" And Imperial Majesty always had to do it. And there exist in writing, at this hour, various flattering little Notes from Imperial Majesty to that Address; which begin, "MA COUSINE," "PRINCESSE ET COUSINE," say many witnesses; nay "MADAME MA TRES CHERE SOEUR," says one good witness: [Hormayr (cited in Preuss, i. 433 n.),—as are Duclos; Montgaillard; MEMOIRES DE RICHELIEU; &c.]—Notes which ought to have been printed, before this, or given at least to the Museums. "My Cousin," "Princess and Cousin," "Madame my dearest Sister:" Oh, high Imperial Soul, with what strange bed-fellows does Misery of various kinds bring us acquainted!

Friedrich was blamably imprudent in regard to Pompadour, thinks Valori: "A little complaisance might have—what might it not have done!—" But his Prussian Majesty would not. And while the Ministers of all the other Powers allied with France "went assiduously to pay their court to Madame, the Baron von Knyphausen alone, by his Master's order, never once went." ["Don't! JE NE LA CONNAIS PAS"],—while the Empress-Queen was writing her the most flattering letters. The Prince of Prussia, King's eldest Brother, wished ardently to obtain her Portrait, and had applied to me for it; as had Prince Henri to my Predecessor. The King, who has such gallant and seductive ways when he likes, could certainly have reconciled this "celebrated Lady",—a highly important Improper Female to him and others. [Valori, i. 320.]

Yes; but he quite declined, not counting the costs. Costs may be immediate; profits are remote, —remote, but sure. Costs did indeed prove considerable, perhaps far beyond his expectation; though, I flatter myself, they never awoke much remorse in him, on that score!—

Friedrich's Enigma, towards the end of 1755 and onwards, is becoming frightfully stringent; and the solution, "What practically will be the wise course for me?" does not lessen in abstruse intricacy, but the reverse, as it grows more pressing. A very stormy and dubious Future, truly! Two circumstances in it will be highly determinative: one of them evident to Friedrich; the other unknown to him, and to all mortals, except two or three. **FIRST,**

That there will be an English-French War straightway; and that, as usual, the French, weaker at sea, will probably attack Hanover;— that is to say, bring the War home to one's own door, and ripen into fulfilment those Austrian-Russian Plots. This is the evident circumstance, fast coming on; visible to Friedrich and to everybody. But that, in such event, Austria will join, not with England, but with France: this is a **SECOND** circumstance, guessable by nobody; known only to Kaunitz and a select one or two; but which also will greatly complicate Friedrich's position, and render his Enigma indeed astonishingly intricate, as well as stringent for solution!

## Chapter II.—ENGLISH DIPLOMACIES ABROAD, IN PROSPECT OF A FRENCH WAR

Britannic Majesty, I know not at what date, but before the launching of that poor Braddock thunder-bolt, much more after the tragic explosion it made, had felt that French War was nearly inevitable, and also that the French method would be, as heretofore, to attack Hanover, and wound him in that tender part. There goes on, accordingly, a lively Foreign Diplomatzing, on his Majesty's part, at present,—in defect, almost total, of Domestic Preparation, military and other;—Majesty and Ministers expecting salvation from abroad, as usual. Military preparation does lag at a shameful rate: but, on the other hand, there is a great deal of pondering, really industrious considering and contriving, about Foreign Allies, and their subsidies and engagements. That step, for example, the questionable Seizure of the French Ships WITHOUT Declaration of War, was a contrivance by diplomatic Heads (of bad quality): "Seize their ships," said some bad Head, after meditating; "put their ships in SEQUESTRATION, till they do us justice. If they won't, and go to War,—then THEY are the Aggressors, not we; and our Allies have to send their auxiliary quotas, as per contract!" So the Ships were seized; held in sequestration, "till many of the cargoes (being perishable goods, some even fish) rotted." [Smollett's *History of England*; &c. &c.] And in return, as will be seen, not one auxiliary came to hand: so that the diplomatic Head had his rotted cargoes, and much public obloquy, for his pains. Not a fortunate stroke of business, that!—

Britannic Majesty, on applying at Vienna (through Keith, Sir or Mr. Robert Keith, the FIRST Excellency of that name, for there are two, a father and a son, both Vienna Excellencies), was astonished to learn That, in such event of an Aggression, even on Hanover, there was no co-operation to be looked for here. Altogether cold on that subject, her Imperial Majesty seems; regardless of Excellency Keith's remonstrances and urgencies; and, in the end, is flatly negatory: "Cannot do it, your Excellency; times so perilous, bad King of Prussia so minatory,"—not to mention, SOTTO VOCE that we have turned on our axis, and the wind (thanks to Kaunitz) no longer hits us on the same cheek as formerly!

"Cannot? Will not?" Britannic Majesty may well stare, wide-eyed; remembering such gigantic Subsidizings and Alcides Labors, Dettingens, Fontenoy's, on the per-contra side. But so stands the fact: "No help from an ungrateful Vienna;—quick, then, seek elsewhere!" And Hanbury and the Continental British Excellencies have to bestir themselves as they never did. Especially Hanbury; who is directed upon Russia,—whom alone of these Excellencies it is worth while to follow for a moment. Russia, on fair subsidy, yielded us a 35,000 last War (willingly granted, most useful, though we had no fighting out of them, mere terror of them being enough): beyond all things, let Hanbury do his best in Russia!

Hanbury, cheerfully confident, provides himself with the requisites, store of bribe-money as the chief;—at Warsaw withal, he picks up one Poniatowski (airy sentimental coxcomb, rather of dissolute habits, handsomest and windiest of young Polacks): "Good for a Lover to the Grand-Duchess, this one!" thinks Hanbury. Which proved true, and had its uses for Hanbury;—Grand-Duchess and Grand-Duke (Catherine and Peter, whom we saw wedded twelve years ago, Heirs-Apparent of this Russian Chaos) being an abstrusely situated pair of Spouses; well capable of something political, in private ways, in such a scene of affairs; and Catherine, who is an extremely clever creature, being out of a lover just now. A fine scene for the Diplomatist, this Russia at present. Nowhere in the world can you do so much with bribery; quite a standing item, and financial necessary-of-life to Officials of the highest rank there, as Hanbury well knows. [His Letters (in Raumer), PASSIM.] That of Poniatowski proved, otherwise too, a notable stroke of Hanbury's; and shot the poor Polish Coxcomb aloft into tragic altitudes, on the sudden, as we all know!

Hanbury's immense dexterities, and incessant labors at Petersburg, shall lie hidden in the slop-pails: it is enough to say, his guineas, his dexterities and auxiliary Poniatowskis did prevail; and he triumphantly signed his Treaty (Petersburg, 30th September) "Subsidy-Treaty for 55,000 men, 15,000 of them cavalry," not to speak of "40 to 50 galleys" and the like; "to attack whomsoever Britannic Majesty bids: annual cost a mere 500,000 pounds while on service; 100,000 pounds while waiting." [In *Adelung*, vii. 609.] And, what is more, and what our readers are to mark, the 55,000 begin on the instant to assemble,—along the Livonian Frontier or Lithuanian, looking direct into Preussen. Diligently rendezvousing there; 55,000 of them, nay gradually 70,000; no stinginess in the Czarina to her Ally of England. A most triumphant thing, thinks Hanbury: Could another of you have done it? Signed, ready for ratifying, 30th September, 1755 (bad Braddock news not hindering);—and before it is ratified (this also let readers mark), the actual Troops getting on march.

Hanbury's masterpiece, surely; a glorious triumph in the circumstances, and a difficult, thinks Hanbury. Had Hanbury seen the inside of the cards, as readers have, he would not have thought it so triumphant. For years past,—especially since that "Fundamental maxim, May 14th-15th, 1753," which we heard of,—the Czarina's longings had been fixed. And here now—scattering money from both hands of it, and wooing us with diplomatic finessings—is the Fulfilment come! "Opportunity" upon Preussen; behold it here.

The Russian Senate again holds deliberation; declares (on the heel of this Hanbury Treaty), "in October, 1755," what we read above, That its Anti-Prussian intentions are—truculent indeed. And it is the common talk in Petersburg society, through Winter, what a dose the ambitious King of Prussia has got brewed for him, [MEMOIRE RAISONNE (in *Gesammelte Nachrichten*), i. 429, &c.] out of Russian indignation and resources, miraculously set afloat by English guineas. A triumphant Hanbury, for the time being,—though a tragical enough by and by!

## **THE TRIUMPHANT HANBURY TREATY BECOMES, ITSELF, NOTHING OR LESS;—BUT PRODUCES A FRIEDRICH TREATY, FOLLOWED BY RESULTS WHICH SURPRISE EVERYBODY**

King Friedrich's outlooks, on this consummation, may well seem to him critical. The sore longing of an infuriated Czarina is now let loose, and in a condition to fulfil itself! To Friedrich these Petersburg news are no secret; nor to him are the Petersburg private intentions a thing that can be doubted. Apart from the Menzel-Weingarten revelations, as we noticed once, it appears the Grand-Duke Peter (a great admirer of Friedrich, poor confused soul) had himself thrice-secretly warned Friedrich, That the mysterious Combination, Russia in the van, would attack him next Spring;—"not Weingarten that betrayed our GRAND MYSTERE; from first hand, that was done!" said Excellency Peubla, on quitting Berlin not long after. [Cogniazzo, *Gestandnisse eines Oesterreichischen Veterans* (as cited above), i. 225. "September 16th, 1756," Peubla left Berlin (Rodenbeck, i. 298),—three months after Weingarten's disappearance.] The Grand Mystery is not uncertain to Friedrich; and it may well be very formidable,—coupled with those Braddock explosions, Seizures of French ships, and English-French War imminent, and likely to become a general European one; which are the closing prospects of 1755. The French King he reckons not to be well disposed to him; their old Treaty of "twelve years" (since 1744) is just about running out. Not friendly, the French King, owing to little rubs that have been; still less the Pompadour;—though who could guess how implacable she was at "not being known (NE LA CONNAIS PAS)"! At Vienna, he is well aware, the humor towards him is mere cannibalism in refined forms. But most perilous of all, most immediately perilous, is the implacable Czarina, set afloat upon English guineas!

With a hope, as is credibly surmised, that the English might soothe or muzzle this implacable Czarina, Friedrich, directly after Hanbury's feat in Petersburg, applied at London, with an Offer which was very tempting there: "Suppose your Britannic Majesty would make, with me, an express

'NEUTRALITY CONVENTION;' mutual Covenant to keep the German Reich entirely free of this War now threatening to break out? To attack jointly, and sweep home again with vigor, any and every Armed Non-German setting foot on the German soil!" An offer most welcome to the Heads of Opposition, the Pitts and others of that Country; who wish dear Hanover safe enough (safe in Davy-Jones's locker, if that would do); but are tired of subsidizing, and fighting and tumulting, all the world over, for that high end. So that Friedrich's Proposal is grasped at; and after a little manipulation, the thing is actually concluded.

By no means much manipulation, both parties being willing. There was uncommonly rapid surgery of any little difficulties and discrepancies; rapid closure, instant salutary stitching together of that long unhealable Privateer Controversy, as the main item: "20,000 pounds allowed to Prussia for Prussian damages; and to England, from the other side, the remainder of Silesiau Debt, painfully outstanding for two or three years back, is to be paid off at once;"—and in this way such "NEUTRALITY CONVENTION OF PRUSSIA WITH ENGLAND" comes forth as a Practical Fact upon mankind. Done at Westminster, 16th January, 1756. The stepping-stone, as it proved, to a closer Treaty of the same date next Year; of which we shall hear a great deal. The stepping-stone, in fact, to many large things;—and to the ruin of our late "Russian-Subsidy Treaty" (Hanbury's masterpiece), for one small thing. "That is a Treaty signed, sure enough," answer they of St. James's; "and we will be handsome about it to her Czarish Majesty; but as to RATIFYING it, in its present form,—of course, never!"

What a clap of thunder to Excellency Hanbury; his masterpiece found suddenly a superfluity, an incommodity! The Orthodox English course now is, "No foreign soldiers at all to be allowed in Germany;" and there are the 55,000 tramping on with such alacrity. "We cannot ratify that Treaty, Excellency Hanbury," writes the Majesty's Ministry, in a tone not of gratitude: "you must turn it some other way!" A terrible blow to Hanbury, who had been expecting gratitude without end. And now, try how he might, there was no turning it another way; this, privately, and this only, being the Czarina's own way. A Czarina obstinate to a degree; would not consent, even when they made her the liberal offer, "Keep your 55,000 at home; don't attack the King of Prussia with them; you shall have your Subsidy all the same!" "No, I won't!" answered she,—to Hanbury's amazement. Hanbury had not read the Weingarten-Menzel Documents;—what double double of toil and trouble might Hanbury have saved himself and others, could he have read them!

Hanbury could not, still less could the Majesty's Ministry, surmise the Czarina's secret at all, now or for a good while coming. And in fact, poor Hanbury, busy as a Diplomatic bee, never did more good in Russia, or out of it. By direction of the Majesty's Ministry, Hanbury still tried industriously, cash in both hands; tried various things: "Assuage the Czarina's mind; reconcile her to King Friedrich;"—all in vain. "Unite Austria, Russia and England, can't you, then?—in a Treaty against the Designs of France:" how very vain! Then, at a later stage, "Get us the Czarina to mediate between Prussia and Austria" (so very possible to sleek them down into peace, thought Majesty's Ministry):—and unwearied Hanbury, cunning eloquence on his lips, and money in both hands, tries again, and ever again, for many months. And in the way of making ropes from sand, it must be owned there never was such twisting and untwisting, as that appointed Hanbury. Who in fact broke his heart by it;—and died mad, by his own hand, before long. [Hanbury's "Life" (in *Works*, vol. iii.) gives sad account.] Poor soul, after all!—Here are some Russian Notices from him (and he has many curious, not pertinent here), which are still worth gleaning.

PETERSBURG, 2d OCTOBER, 1755.... "The health of the Empress [Czarina Elizabeth, CATIN DU NORD, age now forty-five] is bad. She is affected with spitting of blood, shortness of breath, constant coughing, swelled legs and water on the chest; yet she danced a minuet with me," lucky Hanbury. "There is great fermentation at Court. Peter [Grand-Duke Peter] does not conceal his enmity to the Schuwalofs [paramours of CATIN, old and new]; Catherine [Grand-Duchess, who at length has an Heir, unbeautiful Czar Paul that will be, and "miscarriages" not a few] is on good terms

with Bestuchef" (corruptiblest brute of a Chancellor ever known, friend to England by England's giving him 10,000 pounds, and the like trifles, pretty frequently; Friedrich's enemy, chiefly from defect of that operation)—she is "on good terms with Bestuchef. I think it my duty to inform the King [great George, who will draw his prognostics from it] of my observations upon her; which I can the better do, as I often have conversations with her for hours together, as at supper my rank places me always next to her," twice-lucky Hanbury.

"Since her coming to this Country, she has, by every method in her power, endeavored to gain the affections of the Nation: she applied herself with diligence to study their language; and speaks it at present, as the Russians tell me, in the greatest perfection. She has also succeeded in her other aim; for she is esteemed and beloved here in a high degree. Her person is very advantageous, and her manners very captivating. She has great knowledge of this Empire; and makes it her only study. She has parts; and Great-Chancellor [brute Bestuchef] tells me that nobody has more steadiness and resolution. She has, of late, openly declared herself to me in respect of the King of Prussia;"—hates him a good deal, "natural and formidable enemy of Russia;" "heart certainly the worst in the world [and so on; but will see better by and by, having eyes of her own]:—she never mentions the King of England but with the utmost respect and highest regard; is thoroughly sensible of the utility of the union between England and Russia; always calls his Majesty the Empress's best and greatest Ally [so much of nourishment in him withal, as in a certain web-footed Chief of Birds, reckoned chief by some]; and hopes he will also give his friendship and protection to the Grand-Duke and herself. —As for the Grand-Duke, he is weak and violent; but his confidence in the Grand-Duchess is so great, that sometimes he tells people, that though he does not understand things himself, his Wife understands everything. Should the Empress, as I fear, soon die, the Government will quietly devolve on them." [Hanbury's Despatch, "October 2d, 1755" (Raumer, pp. 223-225); Subsidy Treaty still at its floweriest.]

Catherine's age is twenty-six gone; her Peter's twenty-seven: one of the cleverest young Ladies in the world, and of the stoutest-hearted, clearest-eyed;—yoked to a young Gentleman much the reverse. Thank Hanbury for this glimpse of them, most intricately situated Pair; who may concern us a little in the sequel.—And, in justice to poor Hanover, the sad subject-matter of Excellency Hanbury's Problems and Futilities in Russia and elsewhere, let us save this other Fraction by a very different hand; and close that Hanbury scene:—

"Friedrich himself was so dangerous," says the Constitutional Historian once: "Friedrich, in alliance with France, how easy for him to catch Hanover by the throat at a week's notice, throw a death-noose round the throat of poor Hanover, and hand the same to France for tightening at discretion! Poor Hanover indeed; she reaps little profit from her English honors: what has she had to do with these Transatlantic Colonies of England? An unfortunate Country, if the English would but think; liable to be strangled at any time, for England's quarrels: the Achilles'-heel to invulnerable England; a sad function for Hanover, if it be a proud one, and amazingly lucrative to some Hanoverians. The Country is very dear to his Britannic Majesty in one sense, very dear to Britain in another! Nay Germany itself, through Hanover, is to be torn up by War for Transatlantic interests,—out of which she does not even get good Virginia tobacco, but grows bad of her own. No more concern than the Ring of Saturn with these over-sea quarrels; and can, through Hanover, be torn to pieces by War about them. Such honor to give a King to the British Nation, in a strait for one; and such profit coming of it:—we hope all sides are grateful for the blessings received!"

## **THERE HAS BEEN A COUNTER-TREATY GOING ON AT VERSAILLES IN THE INTERIM; WHICH HEREUPON STARTS OUT, AND TUMBLES THE WHOLLY ASTONISHED EUROPEAN DIPLOMACIES HEELS-OVER-HEAD**

To expectant mankind, especially to Vienna and Versailles, this Britannic-Prussian Treaty was a great surprise. And indeed it proved the signal of a general System of New Treaties all round. The first signal, in fact,—though by no means the first cause,—of a total circumgyration, sumerset, or tumble heels-over-head in the Political relations of Europe altogether, which ensued thereupon; miraculous, almost as the Earthquake at Lisbon, to the Gazetteer, and Diplomatic mind, and incomprehensible for long years after. First signal we say, by no means that it was the first cause, or indeed that it was a cause at all,—the thing being determined elsewhere long before; ever since 1753, when Kaunitz left it ready, waiting only its time.

Kaiser Franz, they say, when (probably during those Keith urgencies) the joining with France and turning against poor Britannic Majesty was proposed in Council at Vienna, opened his usually silent lips; and opined with emphasis against such a course, no Kaunitz or creature able to persuade Kaiser Franz that good would come of it;—though, finding Sovereign Lady and everybody against him, he held his peace again. And returned to his private banking operations, which were more extensive than ever, from the new troubles rising. "Lent the Empress-Queen, always on solid securities," says Friedrich, "large sums, from time to time, in those Wars; dealt in Commissariat stores to right and left; we ourselves had most of our meal from him this year." [*OEuvres de Frederic*, iv. 8.] Kaiser Franz was, and continued, of the old way of thinking; but consummate Kaunitz, and the High Lady's fixed passion for her Schlesien, had changed everybody else. The ulterior facts are as follows, abbreviated to the utmost.

September 22d, 1755, a few days before Hanbury's Subsidy-feat at Petersburg, which took such a whirl for Hanbury, there had met for the first time at Versailles, more especially at Babiole, Pleasure-House of the Pompadour, a most Select Committee of Three Persons: Graf von Stahremberg, Austrian Ambassador; Pompadour herself; and a certain infinitely elegant Count and Reverence de Bernis (beautiful Clerico-Mundane Gentleman, without right Benefice hitherto, but much in esteem with the Pompadour);—for deepest practical consideration in regard to closure of a French-Austrian Alliance. Reverend Count (subsequently Cardinal) de Bernis has sense in Diplomacy; has his experiences in Secular Diplomatic matters; a soft-going cautious man, not yet official, but tending that way: whom the Pompadour has brought with her as henchman, or unghostly counsellor, in this intricate Adventure.

Stahremberg, instructed from home, has no hesitation; nor has Pompadour herself, remembering that insolent "JE NE LA CONNAIS PAS," and the per-contra "MA COUSINE," "PRINCESSE ET SOEUR:"—but Bernis, I suppose, looks into the practical difficulties; which are probably very considerable, to the Official French eye, in the present state of Europe and of the public mind. From September 22d, or autumnal equinox, 1755, onward to this Britannic-Prussian phenomenon of January, 1756, the Pompadour Conclave has been sitting,—difficulties, no doubt, considerable. I will give only the dates, having myself no interest in such a Committee at Babiole; but the dates sufficiently betoken that there were intricacies, conflicts between the new and the old. Hitherto the axiom always was, "Prussia the Adjunct and Satellite of France:" now to be entirely reversed, you say?

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