

# ТОМАС КАРЛЕЙЛЬ

HISTORY OF FRIEDRICH  
II OF PRUSSIA —  
VOLUME 21

**Томас Карлейль**  
**History of Friedrich II**  
**of Prussia — Volume 21**

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History of Friedrich II of Prussia — Volume 21:*

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KING OF POLAND (7th Sept. 1764), AND  
IS CROWNED WITHOUT LOSS OF HIS  
HAIR

FOR SEVERAL YEARS THE DISSIDENT  
QUESTION CANNOT BE GOT SETTLED;  
CONFEDERATION OF RADOM (23d June,  
1767-5th March, 1768) PUSHES IT INTO  
SETTLEMENT

CONFEDERATION OF BAR ENSUES,  
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1768); AND, AS FIRST RESULT OF ITS  
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# **Thomas Carlyle**

## **History of Friedrich II of Prussia — Volume 21**

### **BOOK XXI.—AFTERNOON AND EVENING OF FRIEDRICH'S LIFE—1763-1786**

#### **Chapter I.—PREFATORY**

The Twelve Hercules-labors of this King have ended here; what was required of him in World-History is accomplished. There remain to Friedrich Twenty-three Years more of Life, which to Prussian History are as full of importance as ever; but do not essentially concern European History, Europe having gone the road we now see it in. On the grand World-Theatre the curtain has fallen for a New Act; Friedrich's part, like everybody's for the present, is played out. In fact, there is, during the rest of his Reign, nothing of World-History to be dwelt on anywhere. America, it has been decided, shall be English; Prussia be a Nation. The French, as finis of their attempt to cut Germany in

Four, find themselves sunk into torpor, abeyance and dry-rot; fermenting towards they know not what. Towards Spontaneous Combustion in the year 1789, and for long years onwards!

There, readers, there is the next milestone for you, in the History of Mankind! That universal Burning-up, as in hell-fire, of Human Shams. The oath of Twenty-five Million men, which has since become that of all men whatsoever, "Rather than live longer under lies, we will die!"—that is the New Act in World-History. New Act,—or, we may call it New PART; Drama of World-History, Part Third. If Part SECOND was 1,800 years ago, this I reckon will be Part THIRD. This is the truly celestial-infernal Event: the strangest we have seen for a thousand years. Celestial in one part; in the other, infernal. For it is withal the breaking out of universal mankind into Anarchy, into the faith and practice of NO-Government,—that is to say (if you will be candid), into unappeasable Revolt against Sham-Governors and Sham-Teachers,—which I do charitably define to be a Search, most unconscious, yet in deadly earnest, for true Governors and Teachers. That is the one fact of World-History worth dwelling on at this day; and Friedrich cannot be said to have had much hand farther in that.

Nor is the progress of a French or European world, all silently ripening and rotting towards such issue, a thing one wishes to dwell on. Only when the Spontaneous Combustion breaks out; and, many-colored, with loud noises, envelops the whole world in anarchic flame for long hundreds of years: then has the Event

come; there is the thing for all men to mark, and to study and scrutinize as the strangest thing they ever saw. Centuries of it yet lying ahead of us; several sad Centuries, sordidly tumultuous, and good for little! Say Two Centuries yet,—say even Ten of such a process: before the Old is completely burnt out, and the New in any state of sightliness? Millennium of Anarchies;—abridge it, spend your heart's-blood upon abridging it, ye Heroic Wise that are to come! For it is the consummation of All the Anarchies that are and were;—which I do trust always means the death (temporary death) of them! Death of the Anarchies: or a world once more built wholly on Fact better or worse; and the lying jargoning professor of Sham-Fact, whose name is Legion, who as yet (oftenest little conscious of himself) goes tumulting and swarming from shore to shore, become a species extinct, and well known to be gone down to Tophet!—

There were bits of Anarchies before, little and greater: but till that of France in 1789, there was none long memorable; all were pygmies in comparison, and not worth mentioning separately. In 1772 the Anarchy of Poland, which had been a considerable Anarchy for about three hundred years, got itself extinguished,—what we may call extinguished;—decisive surgery being then first exercised upon it: an Anarchy put in the sure way of extinction. In 1775, again, there began, over seas, another Anarchy much more considerable,—little dreaming that IT could be called an Anarchy; on the contrary, calling itself Liberty, Rights of Man; and singing boundless Io-Paeans to itself, as is

common in such cases; an Anarchy which has been challenging the Universe to show the like ever since. And which has, at last, flamed up as an independent Phenomenon, unexampled in the hideously SUICIDAL way;—and does need much to get burnt out, that matters may begin anew on truer conditions. But neither the PARTITION OF POLAND nor the AMERICAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE have much general importance, or, except as precursors of 1789, are worth dwelling on in History. From us here, so far as Friedrich is concerned with them, they may deserve some transient mention, more or less: but World-History, eager to be at the general Funeral-pile and ultimate Burning-up of Shams in this poor World, will have less and less to say of small tragedies and premonitory symptoms.

Curious how the busy and continually watchful and speculating Friedrich, busied about his dangers from Austrian encroachments, from Russian-Turk Wars, Bavarian Successions, and other troubles and anarchies close by, saw nothing to dread in France; nothing to remark there, except carelessly, from time to time, its beggarly decaying condition, so strangely sunk in arts, in arms, in finance; oftenest an object of pity to him, for he still has a love for France;—and reads not the least sign of that immeasurable, all-engulfing FRENCH REVOLUTION which was in the wind! Neither Voltaire nor he have the least anticipation of such a thing. Voltaire and he see, to their contentment, Superstition visibly declining: Friedrich rather disapproves the heat of Voltaire's procedures on the INFAME.



"Why be in such heat? Other nonsense, quite equal to it, will be almost sure to follow. Take care of your own skin!" Voltaire and he are deeply alive, especially Voltaire is, to the horrors and miseries which have issued on mankind from a Fanatic Popish Superstition, or Creed of Incredibilities,—which (except from the throat outwards, from the bewildered tongue outwards) the orthodox themselves cannot believe, but only pretend and struggle to believe. This Voltaire calls "THE INFAMOUS;" and this—what name can any of us give it? The man who believes in falsities is very miserable. The man who cannot believe them, but only struggles and pretends to believe; and yet, being armed with the power of the sword, industriously keeps menacing and slashing all round, to compel every neighbor to do like him: what is to be done with such a man? Human Nature calls him a Social Nuisance; needing to be handcuffed, gagged and abated. Human Nature, if it be in a terrified and imperilled state, with the sword of this fellow swashing round it, calls him "Infamous," and a Monster of Chaos. He is indeed the select Monster of that region; the Patriarch of all the Monsters, little as he dreams of being such. An Angel of Heaven the poor caitiff dreams himself rather, and in cheery moments is conscious of being:—Bedlam holds in it no madder article. And I often think he will again need to be tied up (feeble as he now is in comparison, disinclined though men are to manacling and tying); so many helpless infirm souls are wandering about, not knowing their right hand from their left, who fall a prey to him. "L'INFAME" I also name him,—

knowing well enough how little he, in his poor muddled, drugged and stupefied mind, is conscious of deserving that name. More signal enemy to God, and friend of the Other Party, walks not the Earth in our day.

Anarchy in the shape of religious slavery was what Voltaire and Friedrich saw all round them. Anarchy in the shape of Revolt against Authorities was what Friedrich and Voltaire had never dreamed of as possible, and had not in their minds the least idea of. In one, or perhaps two places you may find in Voltaire a grim and rather glad forethought, not given out as prophecy, but felt as interior assurance in a moment of hope, How these Priestly Sham Hierarchies will be pulled to pieces, probably on the sudden, once people are awake to them. Yes, my much-suffering M. de Voltaire, be pulled to pieces; or go aloft, like the awakening of Vesuvius, one day,—Vesuvius awakening after ten centuries of slumber, when his crater is all grown grassy, bushy, copiously "tenanted by wolves" I am told; which, after premonitory grumblings, heeded by no wolf or bush, he will hurl bodily aloft, ten acres at a time, in a very tremendous manner! [First modern Eruption of Vesuvius, A.D. 1631, after long interval of rest.] A thought like this, about the Priestly Sham-Hierarchies, I have found somewhere in Voltaire: but of the Social and Civic Sham-Hierarchies (which are likewise accursed, if they knew it, and indeed are junior co-partners of the Priestly; and, in a sense, sons and products of them, and cannot escape being partakers of their plagues), there is no hint, in Voltaire,

though Voltaire stood at last only fifteen years from the Fact (1778-1793); nor in Friedrich, though he lived almost to see the Fact beginning.

Friedrich's History being henceforth that of a Prussian King, is interesting to Prussia chiefly, and to us little otherwise than as the Biography of a distinguished fellow-man, Friedrich's Biography, his Physiognomy as he grows old, quietly on his own harvest-field, among his own People: this has still an interest, and for any feature of this we shall be eager enough; but this withal is the most of what we now want. And not very much even of this; Friedrich the unique King not having as a man any such depth and singularity, tragic, humorous, devotionally pious, or other, as to authorize much painting in that aspect. Extreme brevity beseems us in these circumstances: and indeed there are,—as has already happened in different parts of this Enterprise (Nature herself, in her silent way, being always something of an Artist in such things),—other circumstances, which leave us no choice as to that of detail. Available details, if we wished to give them, of Friedrich's later Life, are not forthcoming: masses of incondite marine-stores, tumbled out on you, dry rubbish shot with uncommon diligence for a hundred years, till, for Rubbish-Pelion piled on Rubbish-Ossa, you lose sight of the stars and azimuths; whole mountain continents, seemingly all of cinders and sweepings (though fragments and remnants do lie hidden, could you find them again):—these are not details that will be available! Anecdotes there are in quantity;

but of uncertain quality; of doubtful authenticity, above all. One recollects hardly any Anecdote whatever that seems completely credible, or renders to us the Physiognomy of Friedrich in a convincing manner. So remiss a creature has the Prussian Clio been,—employed on all kinds of loose errands over the Earth and the Air; and as good as altogether negligent of this most pressing errand in her own House. Peace be with her, poor slut; why should we say one other hard word on taking leave of her to all eternity!—

The Practical fact is, what we have henceforth to produce is more of the nature of a loose Appendix of Papers, than of a finished Narrative. Loose Papers,—which, we will hope, the reader can, by industry, be made to understand and tolerate: more we cannot do for him. No continuous Narrative is henceforth possible to us. For the sake of Friedrich's closing Epoch, we will visit, for the last time, that dreary imbroglio under which the memory of Friedrich, which ought to have been, in all the epochs of it, bright and legible, lies buried; and will try to gather, as heretofore, and put under labels. What dwells with oneself as human may have some chance to be humanly interesting. In the wildest chaos of marine-stores and editorial shortcomings (provided only the editors speak truth, as these poor fellows do) THIS can be done. Part the living from the dead; pick out what has some meaning, leave carefully what has none; you will in some small measure pluck up the memory of a hero, like drowned honor by the locks, and rescue it, into visibility.

That Friedrich, on reaching home, made haste to get out, of the bustle of joyances and exclamations on the streets; proceeded straight to his music-chapel in Charlottenburg, summoning the Artists, or having them already summoned; and had there, all alone, sitting invisible wrapt in his cloak, Graun's or somebody's grand TE-DEUM pealed out to him, in seas of melody,—soothing and salutary to the altered soul, revolving many things,—is a popular myth, of pretty and appropriate character; but a myth only, with no real foundation, though it has some loose and apparent. [In PREUSS, ii. 46, all the details of it.] No doubt, Friedrich had his own thoughts on entering Berlin again, after such a voyage through the deeps; himself, his Country still here, though solitary and in a world of wild shipwrecks. He was not without piety; but it did not take the devotional form, and his habits had nothing of the clerical.

What is perfectly known, and much better worth knowing, is the instantaneous practical alacrity with which he set about repairing that immense miscellany of ruin; and the surprising success he had in dealing with it. His methods, his rapid inventions and procedures, in this matter, are still memorable to Prussia; and perhaps might with advantage be better known than they are in some other Countries. To us, what is all we can do with them here, they will indicate that this is still the old Friedrich, with his old activities and promptitudes; which indeed continue unabated, lively in Peace as in War, to the end of his life and reign.

The speed with which Prussia recovered was extraordinary. Within little more than a year (June 1st, 1764), the Coin was all in order again; in 1765, the King had rebuilt, not to mention other things, "in Silesia 8,000 Houses, in Pommern 6,500." [Rodenbeck, ii. 234, 261.] Prussia has been a meritorious Nation; and, however cut and ruined, is and was in a healthy state, capable of recovering soon. Prussia has defended itself against overwhelming odds,—brave Prussia; but the real soul of its merit was that of having merited such a King to command it. Without this King, all its valors, disciplines, resources of war, would have availed Prussia little. No wonder Prussia has still a loyalty to its great Friedrich, to its Hohenzollern Sovereigns generally. Without these Hohenzollerns, Prussia had been, what we long ago saw it, the unluckiest of German Provinces; and could never have had the pretension to exist as a Nation at all. Without this particular Hohenzollern, it had been trampled out again, after apparently succeeding. To have achieved a Friedrich the Second for King over it, was Prussia's grand merit.

An accidental merit, thinks the reader? No, reader, you may believe me, it is by no means altogether such. Nay, I rather think, could we look into the Account-Books of the Recording Angel for a course of centuries, no part of it is such! There are Nations in which a Friedrich is, or can be, possible; and again there are Nations in which he is not and cannot. To be practically reverent of Human Worth to the due extent, and

abhorrent of Human Want of Worth in the like proportion, do you understand that art at all? I fear, not,—or that you are much forgetting it again! Human Merit, do you really love it enough, think you;—human Scoundrelism (brought to the dock for you, and branded as scoundrel), do you even abhor it enough? Without that reverence and its corresponding opposite-pole of abhorrence, there is simply no possibility left. That, my friend, is the outcome and summary of all virtues in this world, for a man or for a Nation of men. It is the supreme strength and glory of a Nation;—without which, indeed, all other strengths, and enormities of bullion and arsenals and warehouses, are no strength. None, I should say;—and are oftenest even the REVERSE.

Nations who have lost this quality, or who never had it, what Friedrich can they hope to be possible among them? Age after age they grind down their Friedrichs contentedly under the hoofs of cattle on their highways; and even find it an excellent practice, and pride themselves on Liberty and Equality. Most certain it is, there will no Friedrich come to rule there; by and by, there will none be born there. Such Nations cannot have a King to command them; can only have this or the other scandalous swindling Copper Captain, constitutional Gilt Mountebank, or other the like unsalutary entity by way of King; and the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children in a frightful and tragical manner, little noticed in the Penny Newspapers and Periodical Literatures of this generation. Oh, my friends—! But there is

plain Business waiting us at hand.



## Chapter II.—REPAIRING OF A RUINED PRUSSIA

That of Friedrich's sitting wrapt in a cloud of reflections Olympian-Abysmal, in the music-chapel at Charlottenburg, while he had the Ambrosian Song executed for him there, as the preliminary step, was a loose myth; but the fact lying under it is abundantly certain. Few Sons of Adam had more reason for a piously thankful feeling towards the Past, a piously valiant towards the Future. What king or man had seen himself delivered from such strangling imbroglios of destruction, such devouring rages of a hostile world? And the ruin worked by them lay monstrous and appalling all round. Friedrich is now Fifty-one gone; unusually old for his age; feels himself an old man, broken with years and toils; and here lies his Kingdom in haggard slashed condition, worn to skin and bone: How is the King, resourceless, to remedy it? That is now the seemingly impossible problem. "Begin it,—thereby alone will it ever cease to be impossible!" Friedrich begins, we may say, on the first morrow morning. Labors at his problem, as he did in the march to Leuthen; finds it to become more possible, day after day, month after month, the farther he strives with it.

"Why not leave it to Nature?" think many, with the Dismal Science at their elbow. Well; that was the easiest plan, but it was not Friedrich's. His remaining moneys, 25 million thalers

ready for a Campaign which has not come, he distributes to the most necessitous: "all his artillery-horses" are parted into plough-teams, and given to those who can otherwise get none: think what a fine figure of rye and barley, instead of mere windlestraws, beggary and desolation, was realized by that act alone. Nature is ready to do much; will of herself cover, with some veil of grass and lichen, the nakedness of ruin: but her victorious act, when she can accomplish it, is that of getting YOU to go with her handsomely, and change disaster itself into new wealth. Into new wisdom and valor, which are wealth in all kinds; California mere zero to them, zero, or even a frightful MINUS quantity! Friedrich's procedures in this matter I believe to be little less didactic than those other, which are so celebrated in War: but no Dryasdust, not even a Dryasdust of the Dismal Science, has gone into them, rendered men familiar with them in their details and results. His Silesian Land-Bank (joint-stock Moneys, lent on security of Land) was of itself, had I room to explain it, an immense furtherance. [Preuss, iii. 75; *OEuvres de Frederic*, vi. 84.] Friedrich, many tell us, was as great in Peace as in War: and truly, in the economic and material provinces, my own impression, gathered painfully in darkness, and contradiction of the Dismal-Science Doctors, is much to that effect. A first-rate Husbandman (as his Father had been); who not only defended his Nation, but made it rich beyond what seemed possible; and diligently sowed annuals into it, and perennials which flourish aloft at this day.

Mirabeau's *Monarchie Prussienne*, in 8 thick Volumes 8vo, —composed, or hastily cobbled together, some Twenty years after this period,—contains the best tabular view one anywhere gets of Friedrich's economics, military and other practical methods and resources:—solid exact Tables these are, and intelligent intelligible descriptions, done by Mauvillon FILS, the same punctual Major Mauvillon who used to attend us in Duke Ferdinand's War;—and so far as Mirabeau is concerned, the Work consists farther of a certain small Essay done in big type, shoved into the belly of each Volume, and eloquently recommending, with respectful censures and regrets over Friedrich, the Gospel of Free Trade, dear to Papa Mirabeau. The Son is himself a convert; far above lying, even to please Papa: but one can see, the thought of Papa gives him new fire of expression. They are eloquent, ruggedly strong Essays, those of Mirabeau Junior upon Free Trade:—they contain, in condensed shape, everything we were privileged to hear, seventy years later, from all organs, coach-horns, jews-harps and scrannel-pipes, PRO and CONTRA, on the same sublime subject: "God is great, and Plugson of Undershot is his Prophet. Thus saith the Lord, Buy in the cheapest market, sell in the dearest!" To which the afflicted human mind listens what it can;—and after seventy years, mournfully asks itself and Mirabeau, "M. le Comte, would there have been in Prussia, for example, any Trade at all, any Nation at all, had it always been left 'Free'? There would have been mere sand and quagmire, and a community of wolves and

bisons, M. le Comte. Have the goodness to terminate that Litany, and take up another!"

We said, Friedrich began his problem on the first morrow morning; and that is literally true, that or even MORE. Here is how Friedrich takes his stand amid the wreck, speedy enough to begin: this view of our old friend Nussler and him is one of the Pieces we can give,—thanks to Herr Busching and his *Beitrag*e for the last time! Nussler is now something of a Country Gentleman, so to speak; has a pleasant place out to east of Berlin; is LANDRATH (County Chairman) there, "Landrath of Nether-Barnim Circle;" where we heard of the Cossacks spoiling him: he, as who not, has suffered dreadfully in these tumults. Here is Busching's welcome Account.

## **LANDRATH NUSSLER AND THE KING (30th March-3d April, 1763)**

"MARCH 30th, 1763, Friedrich, on his return to Berlin, came by the route of Tassdorf,"—Tassdorf, in Nether-Barnim Circle (40 odd miles from Frankfurt, and above 15 from Berlin);—"and changed horses there. During this little pause, among a crowd assembled to see him, he was addressed by Nussler, Landrath of the Circle, who had a very piteous story to tell. Nussler wished the King joy of his noble victories, and of the glorious Peace at last achieved: 'May your Majesty reign in health and happiness over us many years, to the blessing of us all!'—

and recommended to his gracious care the extremely ruined, and, especially by the Russians, uncommonly devastated Circle, for which," continues Busching "this industrious Landrath had not hitherto been able to extract any effective help." Generally for the Provinces wasted by the Russians there had already some poor 300,000 thalers (45,000 pounds) been allowed by a helpful Majesty, not over-rich himself at the moment; and of this, Nether-Barnim no doubt gets its share: but what is this to such ruin as there is? A mere preliminary drop, instead of the bucket and buckets we need!—Busching, a dull, though solid accurate kind of man, heavy-footed, and yet always in a hurry, always slipshod, has nothing of dramatic here; far from it; but the facts themselves fall naturally into that form,—in Three Scenes:—

I. TASSDORF (still two hours from Berlin), KING, NUSSLER AND A CROWD OF PEOPLE, Nussler ALONE DARING TO SPEAK.

KING (from his Carriage, ostlers making despatch). "What is your Circle most short of?"

LANDRATH NUSSLER. "Of horses for ploughing the seedfields of rye to sow them, and of bread till the crops come."

KING. "Rye for bread, and to sow with, I will give; with horses I cannot assist."

NUSSLER. "On representation of Privy-Councillor van Brenkenhof [the Minister concerned with such things], your Majesty has been pleased to give the Neumark and Pommern an allowance of Artillery and Commissariat Horses: but poor

Nether-Barnim, nobody will speak for it; and unless your Majesty's gracious self please to take pity on it, Nether-Barnim is lost!" (A great many things more he said, in presence of a large crowd of men who had gathered round the King's Carriage as the horses were being changed; and spoke with such force and frankness that the King was surprised, and asked:)—

KING. "Who are you?" (has forgotten the long-serviceable man!)

NUSSLER. "I am the Nussler who was lucky enough to manage the Fixing of the Silesian Boundaries for your Majesty!"

KING. "JA, JA, now I know you again! Bring me all the Landraths of the Kurmark [Mark of Brandenburg Proper, ELECTORAL Mark] in a body; I will speak with them."

NUSSLER. "All of them but two are in Berlin already."

KING. "Send off estafettes for those two to come at once to Berlin; and on Thursday," day after to-morrow, "come yourself, with all the others, to the Schloss to me: I will then have some closer conversation, and say what I can and will do for helping of the country," (King's Carriage rolls away, with low bows and blessings from Nussler and everybody).

II. THURSDAY, APRIL 1st, NUSSLER AND ASSEMBLED LANDRATHS AT THE SCHLOSS OF BERLIN. To them, enter KING....

NUSSLER (whom they have appointed spokesman).... "Your Majesty has given us Peace; you will also give us Well-being in the Land again: we leave it to Highest-the-Same's gracious

judgment [no limit to Highest-the-Same's POWER, it would seem] what you will vouchsafe to us as indemnification for the Russian plunderings."

KING. "Be you quiet; let me speak. Have you got a pencil (HAT ER CRAYON)? Yes! Well then, write, and these Gentlemen shall dictate to you:—

"How much rye for bread; How much for seed; How many Horses, Oxen, Cows, their Circles do in an entirely pressing way require?"

"Consider all that to the bottom; and come to me again the day after to-morrow. But see that you fix everything with the utmost exactitude, for I cannot give much." (EXIT King.)

NUSSLER (to the Landraths). "MEINE HERREN, have the goodness to accompany me to our Landschaft House [we have a kind of County Hall, it seems]; there we will consider everything."

And Nussler, guiding the deliberations, which are glad to follow him on every point, and writing as PRO-TEMPORE Secretary, has all things brought to luminous Protocol in the course of this day and next.

### **III. SATURDAY, APRIL 3d, IN THE SCHLOSS AGAIN: NUSSLER AND LANDRATHS. To them, the KING**

Nussler. "We deliver to your Majesty the written Specification you were graciously pleased to command of us. It contains only the indispensablest things that the Circles are in need of. Moreover, it regards only the STANDE [richer Nobility], who pay contribution; the Gentry [ADEL], and other poor people, who have been utterly plundered out by the Russians, are not included in it:—the Gentry too have suffered very much by the War and the Plundering."

KING. "What EDELLEUTE that are members of STANDE have you [ER] got in your Circle?"

NUSSLER (names them; and, as finis of the list, adds):... "I myself, too, your Majesty, I have suffered more than anybody: I absolutely could not furnish those 4,000 bushels of meal ordered of me by the Russians; upon which they—"

KING. "I cannot give to all: but if you have poor Nobles in your Circle, who can in no way help themselves, I will give them something."

NUSSLER (has not any in Nether-Barnim who are altogether in that extreme predicament; but knows several in Lebus Circle, names them to the King;—and turning to the Landrath of Lebus,



and to another who is mute): "Herr, you can name some more in Lebus; and you, in Teltow Circle, Herr Landrath, since his Majesty permits."... In a word, the King having informed himself and declared his intention, Nussler leads the Landraths to their old County Hall, and brings to Protocol what had taken place.

Next day, the Kammer President (Exchequer President), Van der Groben, had Nussler, with other Landraths, to dinner. During dinner, there came from Head Secretary Eichel (Majesty's unwearied Clerk of the PELLs, Sheepskins, or PAPERS) an earnest request to Von der Groben for help,—Eichel not being able to remember, with the requisite precision, everything his Majesty had bid him put down on this matter. "You will go, Herr von Nussler; be so kind, won't you?" And Nussler went, and fully illuminated Eichel....

To the poorest of the Nobility, Busching tells us, what is otherwise well known, the King gave considerable sums: to one Circle 12,000 pounds, to another 9,000 pounds, 6,000 pounds, and so on. By help of which bounties, and of Nussler laboring incessantly with all his strength, Nieder-Barnim Circle got on its feet again, no subject having been entirely ruined, but all proving able to recover. [Busching, *Beitrag* (Nussler), i. 401-405.]

This Busching Fragment is not in the style of the Elder Dramatists, or for the Bankside Theatre; but this represents a Fact which befell in God's Creation, and may have an interest of its own to the Practical Soul, especially in anarchic Countries, far advanced in the "Gold-nugget and Nothing to Buy with it"

## Career of unexampled Prosperities.

On these same errands the King is soon going on an Inspection Journey, where we mean to accompany. But first, one word, and one will suffice, on the debased Coin. The Peace was no sooner signed, than Friedrich proceeded on the Coin. The third week after his arrival home, there came out a salutary Edict on it, April 21st; King eager to do it without loss of time, yet with the deliberation requisite. Not at one big leap, which might shake, to danger of oversetting, much commercial arrangement; but at two leaps, with a halfway station intervening. Halfway station, with a new coinage ready, much purer of alloy (and marked HOW much, for the benefit of parties with accounts to settle), is to commence on TRINITATIS (Whitsunday) instant; from and after Whitsunday the improved new coin to be sole legal tender, till farther notice. Farther notice comes accordingly, within a year, March 29th, 1764: "Pure money of the standard of 1750 [honest silver coinage: readers may remember Linsenbarth, the CANDIDATUS THEOLOGIAE, and his sack of Batzen, confiscated at the Paekhof] shall be ready on the 1st of June instant;" [Rodenbeck, ii. 214, 234.]—from and after which day we hear no more of that sad matter. Finished off in about fourteen months. Here, meanwhile, is the Inspection Journey.

## **KRIEGSRATH RODEN AND THE KING (6th-13th June, 1763)**

JUNE 2d, 1763, Friedrich left Potsdam for Westphalia; got as far as Magdeburg that day. Intends seeing into matters with his own eyes in that region, as in others, after so long and sad an absence. There are with him Friedrich Wilhelm Prince of Prussia, a tall young fellow of nineteen; General-Adjutant von Anhalt; and one or two Prussian military people. From Magdeburg and onwards the great Duke Ferdinand accompanies,—who is now again Governor of Magdeburg, and a quiet Prussian Officer as heretofore, though with excellent Pensions from England, and glory from all the world.

The Royal Party goes by Halberstadt, which suffered greatly in the War; thence by MINDEN (June 4th); and the first thing next day, Friedrich takes view of the BATTLE-FIELD there,—under Ferdinand's own guidance, doubtless; and an interesting thing to both Friedrich and him, though left silent to us. This done, they start for Lippstadt, are received there under joyous clangorous outburst of all the bells and all the honors, that same afternoon; and towards sunset, Hamm being the Night-quarter ahead, are crossing VELLINGHAUSEN BATTLE-GROUND,—where doubtless Ferdinand again, like a dutiful apprentice, will explain matters to his old master, so far as needful or permissible. The conversation, I suppose, may have been lively

and miscellaneous: Ferdinand mentions a clever business-person of the name of Roden, whom he has known in these parts; "Roden?" the King carefully makes note;—and, in fact, we shall see Roden presently; and his bit of DIALOGUE with the King (recorded by his own hand) is our chief errand on this Journey. From Hamm, next morning (June 6th), they get to Wesel by 11 A.M. (only sixty miles); Wesel all in gala, as Lippstadt was, or still more than Lippstadt; and for four days farther, they continue there very busy. As Roden is our chief errand, let us attend to Roden.

WESEL, MONDAY, JUNE 6th, "Dinner being done," says an authentic Third-Party, [Rodenbeck, ii. 217.] "the King had Kammer-Director Meyen summoned to him with his Register-Books, Schedules and Reports [what they call ETATS]; and was but indifferently contented with Meyen and them." And in short, "ordering Meyen to remodel these into a more distinct condition,"—we may now introduce the Herr Kriegrath Roden, a subaltern, in rank, but who has perhaps a better head than Meyen, to judge of these ETATS. Roden himself shall now report. This is the Royal Dialogue with Roden; accurately preserved for us by him;—I wish it had been better worth the reader's trouble; but its perfect credibility in every point will be some recommendation to it.

"MONDAY, 6th JUNE, 1763, about 11 A.M., his Majesty arrived in Wesel," says Roden (confirming to us the authentic Third-Party); "I waited on Adjutant-General Colonel von Anhalt

to announce myself; who referred me to Kriegrath Coper ["MEIN SEGRETER KOPER" is a name we have heard before], who told me to be ready so soon as Dinner should be over. Dinner was no sooner over [2 P.M. or so], than the Herr Kammer-Director Meyen with his ETATS was called in. His Majesty was not content with these, Herr Meyen was told; and they were to be remodelled into a more distinct condition. The instant Herr Meyen stepped out, I was called in. His Majesty was standing with his back to the fire; and said:—

KING. "'Come nearer [Roden comes nearer]. Prince Ferdinand [of Brunswick, whom we generally call DUKE and great, to distinguish him from a little Prussian Prince Ferdinand] has told me much good of you: where do you come from?'

RODEN. "'From Soest' [venerable "stone-old" little Town, in Vellinghausen region].

KING. "'Did you get my Letter?'

RODEN. "'Yea, IHRO MAJESTAT.'

KING. "'I will give you some employment. Have you got a pencil?'

RODEN. "'Yea' [and took out his Note-book and tools, which he had "bought in a shop a quarter of an hour before"].

KING. "'Listen. By the War many Houses have got ruined: I mean that they shall be put in order again; for which end,—to those that cannot themselves help, particularly to Soest, Hamm, Lunen and in part Wesel, as places that have suffered most,—I intend to give the moneys. Now you must make me an exact

List of what is to be done in those places. Thus [King, lifting his finger, let us fancy, dictates; Roden, with brand-new pencil and tablets, writes:]

"1. In each of those Towns, how many ruined Houses there are which the proprietors themselves can manage to rebuild. 2. How many which the proprietors cannot. 3. The vacant grounds or steadings of such proprietors as are perhaps dead, or gone elsewhither, must be given to others that are willing to build: but in regard to this, Law also must do its part, and the absent and the heirs must be cited to say, Whether they will themselves build? and in case they won't, the steadings can then be given to others." Roden having written,—

KING. "In the course of six days you must be ready [what an expeditious King! Is to be at Cleve the sixth day hence: Meet me there, then],—longer I cannot give you.'

RODEN (considering a moment). "If your Majesty will permit me to use ESTAFETTES [express messengers] for the Towns farthest off,—as I cannot myself, within the time, travel over all the Towns,—I hope to be ready.'

KING. "That I permit; and will repay you the ESTAFETTE moneys.—Tell me, How comes the decrease of population in these parts? Recruits I got none.'

RODEN. "Under favor of your Majesty, Regiment Schenkendorf got, every year, for recompletion, what recruits were wanted, from its Canton in the Grafschaft Mark here.'

KING. "There you may be right: but from Cleve Country we

had no recruits; not we, though the Austrians had, [with a slight sarcasm of tone].

RODEN. "'Out of Cleve, so far as I know, there were no recruits delivered to the Austrians.'

KING. "'You could not know; you were with the Allied Army' [Duke Ferdinand's, commissariating and the like, where Duke Ferdinand recognized you to have a head].

RODEN. "'There have been many epidemic diseases too; especially in Soest;—after the Battle of Vellinghausen all the wounded were brought thither, and the hospitals were established there.'

KING. "'Epidemic diseases they might have got without a Battle [dislikes hearing ill of the soldier trade]. I will have Order sent to the Cleve Kammer, Not to lay hindrance in your way, but the contrary. Now God keep you (GOTT BEWAHRE IHN).'"—EXIT Roden;—"DARAUF RETIRIRTE MICH," says he;—but will reappear shortly.

Sunday, 12th June, is the sixth day hence; later than the end of Sunday is not permissible to swift Roden; nor does he need it.

Friday, 10th, Friedrich left Wesel; crossed the Rhine, intending for Cleve; went by CREFELD,—at Crefeld had view of another BATTLE-FIELD, under good ciceroneship; remarks or circumstances otherwise not given:—and, next day, Saturday, 11th, picked up D'Alembert, who, by appointment, is proceeding towards Potsdam, at a more leisurely rate. That same Saturday, after much business done, the King was at Kempen, thence

at Geldern; speeding for Cleve itself, due there that night. At Geldern, we say, he picked up D'Alembert;—concerning whom, more by and by. And finally, "on Saturday night, about half-past 8, the King entered Cleve," amid joyances extraordinary, hut did not alight; drove direct through by the Nassau Gate, and took quarter "in the neighboring Country-house of Bellevue, with the Dutch General von Spaen there,"—an obliging acquaintance once, while LIEUTENANT Spaen, in our old Crown-Prince times of trouble! Had his year in Spandau for us there, while poor Katte lost his head! To whom, I have heard, the King talked charmingly on this occasion, but was silent as to old Potsdam matters. [Supra, vii. 165.]—

By his set day, Roden is also in Cleve, punctual man, finished or just finishing; and ready for summons by his Majesty. And accordingly:—

"CLEVE, MONDAY, JUNE 13th, At 9 in the morning," records he, "I had audience of the King's Majesty. [In Spaen's Villa of Bellevue, shall we still suppose? Duke Ferdinand, Prince of Prussia and the rest, have bestowed themselves in other fit houses; D'Alembert too,—who is to make direct for Potsdam henceforth, by his own route; and will meet us on arriving.]—I handed him my Report, with the Tabular Schedule. His Majesty read it carefully through, in my presence; and examined all of it with strictness. Was pleased to signify his satisfaction with my work. Resolved to allow 250,000 thalers (37,500 pounds) for this business of Rebuilding; gave out the due Orders to his



Kammer, in consequence, and commanded me to arrange with the Kammer what was necessary. This done, his Majesty said:—

KING. "What you were described to me, I find you to be. You are a diligent laborious man; I must have you nearer to me;—in the Berlin Hammer you ought to be. You shall have a good, a right good Salary; your Patent I will give you gratis; also a VORSPANN-PASS [Standing Order available at all Prussian Post-Stations] for two carriages [rapid Program of the thing, though yet distant, rising in the Royal fancy!]. Now serve on as faithfully as you have hitherto done.'

RODEN. "That is the object of all my endeavors." (EXIT:—I did not hear specially whitherward just now; but he comes to be supreme Kammer-President in those parts by and by.)

"The Herr Kriegrath Coper was present, and noted all the Orders to be expedited." [Preuss, ii. 442; Rodenbeck, ii. 217, 218: in regard to D'Alembert, see *OEuvres de Frederic*, xxiv. 190.]

These snatches of notice at first-hand, and what the reader's fancy may make of these, are all we can bestow on this Section of Friedrich's Labors; which is naturally more interesting to Prussian readers than to English. He has himself given lucid and eloquent account of it,—Two ample Chapters, "DES FINANCES;" "DU MILITAIRE," [*OEuvres de Frederic*, vii. 73-90, 91-109.]—altogether pleasant reading, should there still be curiosity upon it. There is something of flowingly eloquent in Friedrich's account of this Battle waged against the inanimate

Chaos; something of exultant and triumphant, not noticeable of him in regard to his other Victories. On the Leuthens, Rossbachs, he is always cold as water, and nobody could gather that he had the least pleasure in recording them. Not so here. And indeed here he is as beautiful as anywhere; and the reader, as a general son of Adam,—proud to see human intellect and heroism slaying that kind of lions, and doing what in certain sad epochs is unanimously voted to be impossible and unattemptable,—exults along with him; and perhaps whispers to his own poor heart, nearly choked by the immeasurable imbroglio of Blue-books and Parliamentary Eloquences which for the present encumber Heaven and Earth, "MELIORA SPERO." To Mirabeau, the following details, from first-hand, but already of twenty-three years distance, were not known, [Appeared first in Tome v. of *"OEuvres Posthumes de Frederic II."* (are in Tome vi. of Preuss's Edition of OEUVRES), "Berlin, 1788;"—above a year after Mirabeau had left.] while he sat penning those robust Essays on the Duty of LEAVE-ALONE.

"To form an idea of the general subversion," says the King, in regard to 1763, "and how great were the desolation and discouragement, you must represent to yourself Countries entirely ravaged, the very traces of the old habitations hardly discoverable; Towns, some ruined from top to bottom, others half destroyed by fire;—13,000 Houses, of which the very vestiges were gone. No field in seed; no grain for the food of the inhabitants; 60,000 horses needed, if there was to be

ploughing carried on: in the Provinces generally Half a Million Population (500,000) less than in 1756,—that is to say, upon only Four Millions and a Half, the ninth man was wanting. Noble and Peasant had been pillaged, ransomed, foraged, eaten out by so many different Armies; nothing now left them but life and miserable rags.

"There was no credit, by trading people, even for the daily necessities of life." And furthermore, what we were not prepared for, "No police in the Towns: to habits of equity and order had succeeded a vile greed of gain and an anarchic disorder. The Colleges of Justice and of Finance had, by these frequent invasions of so many enemies, been reduced to inaction:" no Judge, in many places not even a Tax-gatherer: the silence of the Laws had produced in the people a taste for license; boundless appetite for gain was their main rule of action: the noble, the merchant, the farmer, the laborer, raising emulously each the price of his commodity, seemed to endeavor only for their mutual ruin. Such, when the War ended, was the fatal spectacle over these Provinces, which had once been so flourishing: however pathetic the description may be, it will never approach the touching and sorrowful impression which the sight of it produced."

Friedrich found that it would never do to trust to the mere aid of Time in such circumstances: at the end of the Thirty-Years War, "Time" had, owing to absolute want of money, been the one recipe of the Great Elector in a similar case; and Time was

then found to mean "about a hundred Years." Friedrich found that he must at once step in with active remedies, and on all hands strive to make the impossible possible. Luckily he had in readiness, as usual, the funds for an Eighth Campaign, had such been needed. Out of these moneys he proceeded to rebuild the Towns and Villages; "from the Corn-Stores (GRANARIES D'ABONDANCE," Government establishments gathered from plentiful harvests against scarce, according to old rule) "were taken the supplies for food of the people and sowing of the ground: the horses intended for the artillery, baggage and commissariat," 60,000 horses we have heard, "were distributed among those who had none, to be employed in tillage of the land. Silesia was discharged from all taxes for six months; Pommern and the Neumark for two years. A sum of about Three Million sterling [in THALERS 20,389,000] was given for relief of the Provinces, and as acquittance of the impositions the Enemy had wrung from them.

"Great as was this expense, it was necessary and indispensable. The condition of these Provinces after the Peace of Hubertsburg recalled what we know of them when the Peace of Munster closed the famous Thirty-Years War. On that occasion the State failed of help from want of means; which put it, out, of the Great Elector's power to assist his people: and what happened? That a whole century elapsed before his Successors could restore the Towns and Champaigns to what they were. This impressive example was admonitory to the King: that to

repair the Public Calamities, assistance must be prompt and effective. Repeated gifts (LARGESSES) restored courage to the poor Husbandmen, who began to despair of their lot; by the helps given, hope in all classes sprang up anew: encouragement of labor produced activity; love of Country rose again with fresh life: in a word [within the second year in a markedly hopeful manner, and within seven years altogether], the fields were cultivated again, manufacturers had resumed their work; and the Police, once more in vigor, corrected by degrees the vices that had taken root during the time of anarchy." [*OEuvres de Frederic*, vi. 74, 75.]

To Friedrich's difficulties, which were not inconsiderable, mark only this last additament: "During this War, the elder of the Councillors, and all the Ministers of the Grand Directorium [centre of Prussian Administration], had successively died: and in such time of trouble it had been impossible to replace them. The embarrassment was, To find persons capable of filling these different employments [some would have very soon done it, your Majesty; but their haste would not have tended to speed!]—We searched the Provinces (ON FOUILLA, sifted), where good heads were found as rare as in the Capital: at length five Chief Ministers were pitched upon,"—who prove to be tolerable, and even good. Three of them were, the VONS Blumenthal, Massow, Hagen, unknown to readers here: fourth and fifth were, the Von Wedell as War-Minister, once Dictator at Zullichan; and a Von der Horst, who had what we might partially call the Home

Department, and who may by accident once or so be namable again.

Nor was War all, says the King: "accidental Fires in different places," while we struggled to repair the ravagings of War, "were of unexampled frequency, and did immense farther damage. From 1765 to 1769, here is the list of places burnt: In East Preussen, the City of Konigsberg twice over; in Silesia, the Towns of Freystadt, Ober-Glogau [do readers recollect Manteuffel of Foot and "WIR WOLLEN IHM WAS"!], Parchwitz, Naumburg-on-Queiss, and Goldberg; in the Mark, Nauen; in the Neumark, Calies and a part of Lansberg; in Pommern, Belgard and Tempelburg. These accidents required incessantly new expenditures to repair them."

Friedrich was not the least of a Free Trader, except where it suited him: and his continual subventions and donations, guidances, encouragements, commandings and prohibitions, wise supervision and impulsion,—are a thing I should like to hear an intelligent Mirabeau (Junior or Senior) discourse upon, after he had well studied them! For example: "ON RENDIT LES PRETRES UTILES, The Priests, Catholic Priests, were turned to use by obliging all the rich Abbeys to establish manufactures: here it was weavers making damasks and table-cloths; there oil-mills [oil from linseed]; or workers in copper, wire-drawers; as suited the localities and the natural products,—the flaxes and the metals, with water-power, markets, and so on." What a charming resuscitation of the rich Abbeys from their dormant condition!

I should like still better to explain how, in Lower Silesia, "we (ON) managed to increase the number of Husbandmen by 4,000 families. You will be surprised how it was possible to multiply to this extent the people living by Agriculture in a Country where already not a field was waste. The reason was this. Many Lords of Land, to increase their Domain, had imperceptibly appropriated to themselves the holdings (TERRES) of their vassals. Had this abuse been suffered to go on, in time a great"—But the commentary needed would be too lengthy; we will give only the result: "In the long-run, every Village would have had its Lord, but there would have been no tax-paying Farmers left." The Landlord, ruler of these Landless, might himself (as Majesty well knows) have been made to PAY, had that been all; but it was not. "To possess something; that is what makes the citizen attached to his Country; those who have no property, and have nothing to lose, what tie have they?" A weak one, in comparison!" All these things being represented to the Landlord Class, their own advantage made them consent to replace their Peasants on the old footing."...

"To make head against so many extraordinary demands," adds the King (looking over to a new Chapter, that of the MILITARY, which Department, to his eyes, was not less shockingly dilapidated than the CIVIL, and equally or more needed instant repair), "new resources had to be devised. For, besides what was needed for re-establishment of the Provinces, new Fortifications were necessary; and all our

Cannon, E'VASES (worn too wide in the bore), needed to be refounded; which occasioned considerable new expense. This led us to improvement of the Excises,"—concerning which there will have to be a Section by itself.

## OF FRIEDRICH'S NEW EXCISE SYSTEM

In his late Inspection-Journey to Cleve Country, D'Alembert, from Paris, by appointment waited for the King; [In (*OEuvres de Frederic*, xxiv. 377-380 (D'Alembert's fine bits of Letters in prospect of Potsdam, "Paris, 7th March-29th April, 1763;" and two small Notes while there, "Sans-Souci, 6th July-15th August, 1763").]—picked up at Geldern (June 11th), as we saw above. D'Alembert got to Potsdam June 22d; stayed till middle of August. He had met the King once before, in 1755; who found him "a BON GARCON," as we then saw. D'Alembert was always, since that time, an agreeable, estimable little man to Friedrich. Age now about forty-six; has lately refused the fine Russian post of "Tutor to the Czarowitsh" (Czarowitsh Paul, poor little Boy of eight or nine, whom we, or Herr Busching for us, saw galloping about, not long since, "in his dressing-gown," under Panin's Tutorage); refuses now, in a delicate gradual manner, the fine Prussian post of Perpetual President, or Successor to Maupertuis;—definitely preferring his frugal pensions at Paris, and garret all his own there. Continues, especially after this two months' visit of 1763, one of the King's chief correspondents for



the next twenty years. ["29th October, 1783," D'Alembert died: "born 16th November, 1717;"—a Foundling, as is well known; "Mother a Sister of Cardinal Tencin's; Father," accidental, "an Officer in the Artillery."] A man of much clear intellect; a thought SHRIEKY in his ways sometimes; but always prudent, rational, polite, and loyally recognizing Friedrich as a precious article in this world. Here is a word of D'Alembert's to Madame du Deffand, at Paris, some ten or twelve days after the Cleve meeting, and the third day after his arrival here:—

"POTSDAM, 25th JUNE, 1763. MADAME,—... I will not go into the praises of this Prince," King Friedrich, my now Host; "in my mouth it might be suspicious: I will merely send you two traits of him, which will indicate his way of thinking and feeling. When I spoke to him [at Geldern, probably, on our first meeting] of the glory he had acquired, he answered, with the greatest simplicity, That there was a furious discount to be deducted from said glory; that chance came in for almost the whole of it; and that he would far rather have done Ratine's ATHALIE than all this War:—ATHALIE is the work he likes, and rereads oftenest; I believe you won't disapprove his taste there. The other trait I have to give you is, That on the day [15th February last] of concluding this Peace, which is so glorious to him, some one saying, 'It is the finest day of your Majesty's life:' 'The finest day of life,' answered he, 'is the day on which one quits it.'...—Adieu, Madame." [*OEuvres Posthumes de D'Alembert* (Paris, 1799). i. 197:] cited in PREUSS, ii. 348.]

The meeting in Cleve Country was, no doubt, a very pretty passage, with Two pretty Months following;—and if it be true that HELVETIUS was a consequence, the 11th of June, 1763, may almost claim to be a kind of epoch in Friedrich's later history. The opulent and ingenious M. Helvetius, who wrote DE L'ESPRIT, and has got banished for that feat (lost in the gloom of London in those months), had been a mighty Tax-gatherer as well; D'Alembert, as brother Philosophe, was familiar with Helvetius. It is certain, also, King Friedrich, at this time, found he would require annually two million thalers more;—where to get them, seemed the impossibility. A General Krockow, who had long been in French Service, and is much about the King, was often recommending the French Excise system;—he is the Krockow of DOMSTADTL, and that SIEGE OF OLMUTZ, memorable to some of us:—"A wonderful Excise system," Krockow is often saying, in this time of straits. "Who completely understands it?" the King might ask. "Helvetius, against the world!" D'Alembert could justly answer. "Invite Helvetius to leave his London exile, and accept an asylum here, where he may be of vital use to me!" concludes Friedrich.

Helvetius came in March, 1765; stayed till June, 1766: [Rodenbeck, ii. 254; Preuss, iii. 11.]—within which time a French Excise system, which he had been devising and putting together, had just got in gear, and been in action for a month, to Helvetius's satisfaction. Who thereupon went his way, and never returned;—taking with him, as man and tax-gatherer, the

King's lasting gratitude; but by no means that of the Prussian Nation, in his tax-gathering capacity! All Prussia, or all of it that fell under this Helvetius Excise system, united to condemn it, in all manner of dialects, louder and louder: here, for instance, is the utterance of Herr Hamann, himself a kind of Custom-house Clerk (at Königsberg, in East Prussia), and on modest terms a Literary man of real merit and originality, who may be supposed to understand this subject: "And so," says Hamann, "the State has declared its own subjects incapable of managing its Finance system; and in this way has intrusted its heart, that is the purse of its subjects, to a company of Foreign Scoundrels, ignorant of everything relating to it!" ["Hamann to Jacobi" (see Preuss, iii. 1-35), "Königsberg, 18th January, 1786."]

This lasted all Friedrich's lifetime; and gave rise to not a little buzzing, especially in its primary or incipient stages. It seems to have been one of the unsuccessfullest Finance adventures Friedrich ever engaged in. It cost his subjects infinite small trouble; awakened very great complaining; and, for the first time, real discontent,—skin-deep but sincere and universal,—against the misguided Vater Fritz. Much noisy absurdity there was upon it, at home, and especially abroad: "Gripping miser," "greedy tyrant," and so forth! Deducting all which, everybody now admits that Friedrich's aim was excellent and proper; but nobody denies withal that the means were inconsiderate, of no profit in proportion to the trouble they gave, and improper to adopt unless the necessity compelled.

Friedrich is forbidden, or forbids himself, as we have often mentioned, to impose new taxes: and nevertheless now, on calculations deep, minute and no doubt exact, he judges That for meeting new attacks of War (or being ready to meet, which will oftenest mean averting them),—a thing which, as he has just seen, may concern the very existence of the State,—it is necessary that there should be on foot such and such quantities and kinds of Soldiery and War-furniture, visible to all neighbors; and privately in the Treasury never less than such and such a sum. To which end Arithmetic declares that there is required about Two Million thalers more of yearly revenue than we now have. And where, in these circumstances, are the means of raising such a sum?

Friedrich imposes no new taxes; but there may be stricter methods of levying the old;—there may, and in fact there must, be means found! Friedrich has consulted his Finance Ministers; put the question *SERIATIM* to these wise heads: they answer with one voice, "There are no means." [Rodenbeck, ii. 256.] Friedrich, therefore, has recourse to Helvetius; who, on due consideration, and after survey of much documentary and tabulary raw-material, is of opinion, That the Prussian Excises would, if levied with the punctuality, precision and vigilant exactitude of French methods, actually yield the required overplus. "Organize me the methods, then; get them put in action here; under French hands, if that be indispensable." Helvetius bethought him of what fittest French hands there were to his

knowledge,—in France there are a great many hands flung idle in the present downbreak of finance there:—Helvetius appears to have selected, arranged and contrived in this matter with his best diligence. De Launay, the Head-engineer of the thing, was admitted by all Prussia, after Twenty-two years unfriendly experience of him, to have been a suitable and estimable person; a man of judicious ways, of no small intelligence, prudence, and of very great skill in administering business.

Head-engineer De Launay, one may guess, would be consulted by Helvetius in choice of the subaltern Officials, the stokers and steerers in this new Steam-Machinery, which had all to be manned from France. There were Four heads of departments immediately under De Launay, or scarcely under him, junior brothers rather:—who chose these I did not hear; but these latter, it is evident, were not a superior quality of people. Of these Four,—all at very high salaries, from De Launay downwards; "higher than a Prussian Minister of State!" murmured the public,—two, within the first year, got into quarrel; fought a duel, fatal to one of them; so that there were now only Three left. "Three, with De Launay, will do," opined Friedrich; and divided the vacant salary among the survivors: in which form they had at least no more duelling.

As to the subaltern working-parties, the VISITATEURS, CONTROLLEURS, JAUGEURS (Gaugers), PLOMBEURS (Lead-stampers), or the strangest kind of all, called "Cellar-Rats (COMMIS RATS-DE-CAVE), "they were so detested and

exclaimed against, by a Public impatient of the work itself, there is no knowing what their degree of scoundrelism was, nor even, within amazingly wide limits, what the arithmetical number of them was. About 500 in the whole of Prussia, says a quiet Prussian, who has made some inquiry; ["Beguelin, ACCISE-UND ZOLL-VERFASSUNG, s. 138" (Preuss, iii, 18).] 1,500 says Mirabeau; 3,000 say other exaggerative persons, or even 5,000; De Launay's account is, Not at any time above 200. But we can all imagine how vexatious they and their business were. Nobody now is privileged with exemption: from one and all of you, Nobles, Clergy, People, strict account is required, about your beers and liquors; your coffee, salt; your consumptions and your purchases of all excisable articles:—nay, I think in coffee and salt, in salt for certain, what you will require, according to your station and domestic numbers, is computed for you, to save trouble; such and such quantities you will please to buy in our presence, or to pay duty for, whether you buy them or not. Into all houses, at any hour of the day or of the night, these cellar-rats had liberty,—(on warrant from some higher rat of their own type, I know not how much higher; and no sure appeal for you, except to the King; tolerably sure there, if you be INNOCENT, but evidently perilous if you be only NOT-CONVICTED!)—had liberty, I say, to search for contraband; all your presses, drawers, repositories, you must open to these beautiful creatures; watch in nightcap, and candle in hand, while your things get all tumbled hither and thither, in the search for what perhaps is not there;

may, it was said and suspected, but I never knew it for certain, that these poisonous French are capable of slipping in something contraband, in purpose to have you fined whether or not.

Readers can conceive, though apparently Friedrich did not, what a world of vexation all this occasioned; and how, in the continual annoyance to all mankind, the irritation, provocation and querulous eloquence spread among high and low. Of which the King knew something; but far from the whole. His object was one of vital importance; and his plan once fixed, he went on with it, according to his custom, regardless of little rubs. The Anecdote Books are full of details, comic mostly, on this subject: How the French rats pounced down upon good harmless people, innocent frugal parsonages, farm-houses; and were comically flung prostrate by native ready wit, or by direct appeal to the King. Details, never so authentic, could not be advisable in this place. Perhaps there are not more than Two authentic Passages, known to me, which can now have the least interest, even of a momentary sort, to English readers. The first is, Of King Friedrich caricatured as a Miser grinding Coffee. I give it, without essential alteration of any kind, in Herr Preuss's words, copied from those of one who saw it:—the second, which relates to a Princess or Ex-Princess of the Royal House, I must reserve for a little while. Herr Preuss says:—

"Once during the time of the 'Regie' [which lasted from 1766 to 1786 and the King's death: no other date assignable, though 1768, or so, may be imaginable for our purpose], as the

King came riding along the Jager Strasse, there was visible near what is called the Furstenhaus," kind of Berlin Somerset House, [Nicolai, i. 155.] "a great crowd of people. 'See what it is!' the King sent his one attendant, a heiduc or groom, into it, to learn what it was. 'They have something posted up about your Majesty,' reported the groom; and Friedrich, who by this time had ridden forward, took a look at the thing; which was a Caricature figure of himself: King in very melancholy guise, seated on a Stool, a Coffee-mill between his knees; diligently grinding with the one hand, and with the other picking up any bean that might have fallen. 'Hang it lower,' said the King, beckoning his groom with a wave of the finger: 'Lower, that they may not have to hurt their necks about it!' No sooner were the words spoken, which spread instantly, than there rose from the whole crowd one universal huzza of joy. They tore the Caricature into a thousand pieces, and rolled after the King with loud (LEBE HOCH, Our Friedrich forever!' as he rode slowly away." [Preuss, iii. 275 ("from BERLIN CONVERSATIONSBLATT &c. of 1827, No. 253").] That is their Friedrich's method with the Caricature Department. Heffner, Kapellmeister in Upsala, reports this bit of memorability; he was then of the King's Music-Chapel in Berlin, and saw this with his eyes.

The King's tendency at all times, and his practice generally, when we hear of it, was to take the people's side; so that gradually these French procedures were a great deal mitigated; and DIE REGIE—so they called this hateful new-fangled system



of Excise machinery—became much more supportable, "the sorrows of it nothing but a tradition to the younger sort," reports Dohm, who is extremely ample on this subject. [Christian Wilhelm von Dohm, *Denkwürdigkeiten meiner Zeit* (Lemgo und Hanover, 1819), iv. 500 et seq.] De Launay was honorably dismissed, and the whole Regie abolished, a month or two after Friedrich's death.

With a splenetic satisfaction authentic Dohm, who sufficiently condemns the REGIE, adds that it was not even successful; and shows by evidence, and computation to the uttermost farthing, that instead of two million thalers annually, it yielded on the average rather less than one. The desired overplus of two millions, and a good deal more did indeed come in, says he: but it was owing to the great prosperity of Prussia at large, after the Seven-Years War; to the manifold industries awakening, which have gone on progressive ever since. Dohm declares farther, that the very object was in a sort fanciful, nugatory; arguing that nobody did attack Friedrich;—but omitting to prove that nobody would have done so, had Friedrich NOT stood ready to receive him. We will remark only, what is very indisputable, that Friedrich, owing to the Regie, or to other causes, did get the humble overplus necessary for him; and did stand ready for any war which might have come (and which did in a sort come); that he more and more relaxed the Regie, as it became less indispensable to him; and was willing, if he found the Caricatures and Opposition Placards too high posted, to save the poor reading

people any trouble that was possible.

A French eye-witness testifies: "They had no talent, these Regie fellows, but that of writing and ciphering; extremely conceited too, and were capable of the most ridiculous follies. Once, for instance, they condemned a common soldier, who had hidden some pounds of tobacco, to a fine of 200 thalers. The King, on reviewing it for confirmation, wrote on the margin: 'Before confirming this sentence, I should wish to know where the Soldier, who gets 8 groschen [ninepence halfpenny] in the 5 days, will find the 200 crowns for paying this Fine!'" [Laveaux (2d edition), iii. 228.] Innumerable instances of a constant disposition that way, on the King's part, stand on record. "A crown a head on the import of fat cattle, Tax on butcher's-meat?" writes he once to De Launay: "No, that would fall on the poorer classes: to that I must say No. I am, by office, Procurator of the Poor (L'AVOCAT DU PAUVRE)." Elsewhere it is "AVOCAT DEC PAUVRE ET DU SOLDAT (of the working-man and of the soldier); and have to plead their cause." [Preuss, iii. 20.]

We will now give our Second Anecdote; which has less of memorability to us strangers at present, though doubtless it was then, in Berlin society, the more celebrated of the two; relating, as it did, to a high Court-Lady, almost the highest, and who was herself only too celebrated in those years. The heroine is Princess Elizabeth of Brunswick, King's own Niece and a pretty woman; who for four years (14th July, 1765-18th April, 1769) of her long life was Princess Royal of Prussia,—Wife of that tall young

Gentleman whom we used to see dancing about, whom we last saw at Schweidnitz getting flung from his horse, on the day of Pirch's saddle there:—his Wife for four years, but in the fourth year ceased to be so [Rodenbeck, ii. 241, 257.] (for excellent reasons, on both sides), and lived thenceforth in a divorced eclipsed state at Stettin, where is laid the scene of our Anecdote. I understand it to be perfectly true; but cannot ascertain from any of the witnesses in what year the thing happened; or whether it was at Stettin or Berlin,—though my author has guessed, "Stettin, in the Lady's divorced state," as appears.

"This Princess had commissioned, direct from Lyon, a very beautiful dress; which arrived duly, addressed to her at Stettin. As this kind of stuffs is charged with very heavy dues, the DOUANIER, head Custom-house Personage of the Town, had the impertinence to detain the dress till payment were made. The Princess, in a lofty indignation, sent word to this person, To bring the dress instantly, and she would pay the dues on it. He obeyed: but,"—mark the result,—"scarcely had the Princess got eye on him, when she seized her Lyon Dress; and, giving the Douanier a couple of good slaps on the face, ordered him out of her apartment and house.

"The Douanier, thinking himself one and somewhat, withdrew in high choler; had a long PROCES-VERBAL of the thing drawn out; and sent it to the King with eloquent complaint, 'That he had been dishonored in doing the function appointed him.' Friedrich replied as follows: TO THE DOUANIER AT

STETTIN: "The loss of the Excise-dues shall fall to my score; the Dress shall remain with the Princess; the slaps to him who has received them. As to the pretended Dishonor, I entirely relieve the complainant from that: never can the appliance of a beautiful hand dishonor the face of an Officer of Customs.—F." [Laveaux (abridged), iii. 229.]

Northern Tourists, Wraxall and others, passing that way, speak of this Princess, down to recent times, as a phenomenon of the place. Apparently a high and peremptory kind of Lady, disdaining to be bowed too low by her disgraces. She survived all her generation, and the next and the next, and indeed into our own. Died 18th February, 1840: at the age of ninety-six. Threescore and eleven years of that eclipsed Stettin Existence; this of the Lyon gown, and caitiff of a Custom-houser slapped on the face, her one adventure put on record for us!—

She was signally blamable in that of the Divorce; but not she alone, nor first of the Two. Her Crown-Prince, Friedrich Wilhelm, called afterwards, as King, "DER DICKE (the Fat, or the Big)," and held in little esteem by Posterity,—a headlong, rather dark and physical kind of creature, though not ill-meaning or dishonest,—was himself a dreadful sinner in that department of things; and had BEGUN the bad game against his poor Cousin and Spouse! Readers of discursive turn are perhaps acquainted with a certain "Gräfin von Lichtenau," and her MEMOIRS so called:—not willingly, but driven, I fish up one specimen, and one only, from that record of human puddles and perversities:—

"From the first year of our attachment," says this precious Grafin, "I was already the confidant of his," the Prince of Prussia's, "most secret thoughts. One day [in 1767, second year of his married life, I then fifteen, slim Daughter of a Player on the French Horn, in his Majesty's pay], the Prince happened to be very serious; and was owing to me with frankness that he had some wrongs towards my sex to reproach himself with,"—alas, yes, some few:—"and he swore that he would never forsake ME; and that if Heaven disposed of my life before his, none but he should close my eyes. He was fingering with a penknife at the time; he struck the point of it into the palm of his left hand, and wrote with his blood [the unclean creature], on a little bit of paper, the Oath which his lips had just pronounced in so solemn a tone. Vainly should I undertake to paint my emotion on this action of his! The Prince saw what I felt; and took advantage of it to beg that I would follow his example. I hastened to satisfy him; and traced, as he had done, with my blood, the promise to remain his friend to the tomb, and never to forsake him. This Promise must have been found among his Papers after his death [still in the Archives? we will hope not!]  
—Both of us stood faithful to this Oath. The tie of love, it is true, we broke: but that was by mutual consent, and the better to fix ourselves in the bonds of an inviolable friendship. Other mistresses reigned over his senses; but I"—ACH GOTT, no more of that. [*Memoires de la Comtesse de Lichtenau* (a Londres, chez Colburn Libraire, Conduit-street, Bond-street, 2 tomes, small 8vo, 1809), i. 129.]

The King's own account of the affair is sufficiently explicit. His words are: "Not long ago [about two years before this of the penknife] we mentioned the Prince of Prussia's marriage with Elizabeth of Brunswick [his Cousin twice over, her Mother, Princess Charlotte of Prussia, being his Father's Sister and mine, and her Father HIS Mother's Brother,—if you like to count it]. This engagement, from which everybody had expected happy consequences, did not correspond to the wishes of the Royal House." Only one Princess could be realized (subsequently Wife to the late Duke of York),—she came this same year of the penknife,—and bad outlooks for more. "The Husband, young and dissolute (SANS MOEURS), given up to a crapulous life, from which his relatives could not correct him, was continually committing infidelities to his Wife. The Princess, who was in the flower of her beauty, felt outraged by such neglect of her charms; her vivacity, and the good opinion she had of herself, brought her upon the thought of avenging her wrongs by retaliation. Speedily she gave in to excesses, scarcely inferior to those of her Husband. Family quarrels broke out, and were soon publicly known. The antipathy that ensued took away all hope of succession [had it been desirable in these sad circumstances!]. Prince Henri [JUNIOR, this hopeful Prince of Prussia's Brother], who was gifted with all the qualities to be wished in a young man [witness my tears for him], had been carried off by small-pox. ["26th May, 1767," age 19 gone; ELOGE of him by Friedrich ("MS. still stained with tears"), in *OEuvres de Frederic*, vii.

37 et seq.] The King's Brothers, Princes Henri and Ferdinand, avowed frankly that they would never consent to have, by some accidental bastard, their rights of succession to the crown carried off. In the end, there was nothing for it but proceeding to a divorce." [*OEuvres de Frederic*, vi. 23.]

Divorce was done in a beautiful private manner; case tried with strictly shut doors; all the five judges under oath to carry into the grave whatever they came to know of it: [Preuss, iv. 180-186.] divorce completed 18th April, 1769; and, within three months, a new marriage was accomplished, Princess Frederika Luisa of Hessen-Darmstadt the happy woman. By means of whom there was duly realized a Friedrich Wilhelm, who became "King Friedrich Wilhelm III." (a much-enduring, excellent, though inarticulate man), as well as various other Princes and Princesses, in spite of interruptions from the Lichtenau Sisterhood. High-souled Elizabeth was relegated to Stettin; her amount of Pension is not mentioned; her Family, after the unhappy proofs communicated to them, had given their consent and sanction;—and she stayed there, idle, or her own mistress of work, for the next seventy-one years.—Enough of HER Lyon Dress, surely, and of the Excise system altogether!—

## **THE NEUE PALAIS, IN SANS-SOUCI NEIGHBORHOOD, IS FOUNDED AND FINISHED (1763-1770)**

If D'Alembert's Visit was the germ of the Excise system, it will be curious to note,—and indeed whether or not, it will be chronologically serviceable to us here, and worth noting,—that there went on a small synchronous affair, still visible to everybody: namely, That in the very hours while Friedrich and D'Alembert were saluting mutually at Geldern (11th June, 1763), there was laid the foundation of what they call the NEUE PALAIS; New Palace of Sans-Souci: [Rodenbeck, ii. 219.] a sumptuous Edifice, in the curious LOUIS-QUINZE or what is called "Rococo" style of the time; Palace never much inhabited by Friedrich or his successors, which still stands in those ornamental Potsdam regions. Why built, especially in the then down-pressed financial circumstances, some have had their difficulties to imagine. It appears, this New Palace had been determined on before the War broke out; and Friedrich said to himself: "We will build it now, to help the mechanical classes in Berlin,—perhaps also, in part [think some, and why should not they, a little?] to show mankind that we have still ready money; and are nothing like so ruined as they fancy."

"This NEUE PALAIS," says one recent Tourist, "is a pleasant quaint object, nowadays, to the stranger. It has the air DEGAGE



POCOCURANTE; pleasantly fine in aspect and in posture;—spacious expanses round it, not in a waste, but still less in a strict condition; and (in its deserted state) has a silence, especially a total absence of needless flunkies and of gaping fellow-loungers, which is charming. Stands mute there, in its solitude, in its stately silence and negligence, like some Tadmor of the Wilderness in small. The big square of Stables, Coach-houses, near by, was locked up,—probably one sleeping groom in it. The very CUSTOS of the grand Edifice (such the rarity of fees to him) I could not awaken without difficulty. In the gray autumn zephyrs, no sound whatever about this New Palace of King Friedrich's, except the rustle of the crisp brown leaves, and of any faded or fading memories you may have.

"I should say," continues he, "it somehow reminds you of the City of Bath. It has the cut of a battered Beau of old date; Beau still extant, though in strangely other circumstances; something in him of pathetic dignity in that kind. It shows excellent sound masonries; which have an over-tendency to jerk themselves into pinnacles, curvatures and graciosities; many statues atop,—three there are, in a kind of grouped or partnership attitude; 'These,' said diligent scandal, 'note them; these mean Maria Theresa, Pompadour and CATIN DU NORD' (mere Muses, I believe, or of the Nymph or Hamadryad kind, nothing of harm in them). In short, you may call it the stone Apotheosis of an old French Beau. Considerably weather-beaten (the brown of lichens spreading visibly here and there, the firm-set ashlar telling you, 'I have

stood a hundred years');—Beau old and weather-beaten, with his cocked-hat not in the fresh condition, all his gold-laces tarnished; and generally looking strange, and in a sort tragical, to find himself, fleeting creature, become a denizen of the Architectural Fixities and earnest Eternities!"—

From Potsdam Palace to the New Palace of Sans-Souci may be a mile distance; flat ground, parallel to the foot of Hills; all through arbors, parterres, water-works, and ornamental gardenings and cottagings or villa-ings,—Cottage-Villa for Lord Marischal is one of them. This mile of distance, taking the COTTAGE Royal of Sans-Souci on its hill-top as vertex, will be the base of an isosceles or nearly isosceles triangle, flatter than equilateral. To the Cottage Royal of Sans-Souci may be about three-quarters of a mile northeast from this New Palace, and from Potsdam Palace to it rather less. And the whole square-mile or so of space is continuously a Garden, not in the English sense, though it has its own beauties of the more artificial kind; and, at any rate, has memories for you, and footsteps of persons still unforgotten by mankind.—Here is a Notice of Lord Marischal; which readers will not grudge; the chronology of the worthy man, in these his later epochs, being in so hazy a state:—

Lord Marischal, we know well and Pitt knows, was in England in 1761,—ostensibly on the Kintore Heritage; and in part, perhaps, really on that errand. But he went and came, at dates now uncertain; was back in Spain after that, had difficult voyagings about; [King's Letters to him, in *OEuvres de Frederic*,

xx. 282-285.]—and did not get to rest again, in his Government of Neufchatel, till April, 1762. There is a Letter of the King's, which at least fixes that point:—

"BRESLAU, 10th APRIL, 1762. My nose is the most impertinent nose in the universe, MON CHER MYLORD [Queen-Dowager snuff, SPANIOL from the fountain-head, of Marischal's providing; quality exquisite, but difficult to get transmitted in the Storms of War]; I am ashamed of the trouble it costs you! I beg many pardons;—and should be quite abashed, did I not know how you compassionate the weak points of your friends, and that, for a long time past, you have a singular indulgence for my nose. I am very glad to know you happily returned to your Government, safe at Colombier (DOVE-COTE) in Neufchatel again." This is 10th April, 1762. There, as I gather, quiet in his Dove-cote, Marischal continued, though rather weary of the business, for about a year more; or till the King got home,—who delights in companionship, and is willing to let an old man demit for good.

It was in Summer, 1762 (about three months after the above Letter from the King), that Rousseau made his celebrated exodus into Neufchatel Country, and found the old Governor so good to him,—glad to be allowed to shelter the poor skinless creature. And, mark as curious, it must have been on two of those mornings, towards the end of the Siege of Schweidnitz, when things were getting so intolerable, and at times breaking out into electricity, into "rebuke all round," that Friedrich received that

singular pair of Laconic Notes from Rousseau in Neufchatel: forwarded, successively, by Lord Marischal; NOTE FIRST, of date, "Motier-Travers, Neufchatel, September," nobody can guess what day, "1762:" "I have said much ill of you, and don't repent it. Now everybody has banished me; and it is on your threshold that I sit down. Kill me, if you have a mind!" And then (after, not death, but the gift of 100 crowns), NOTE SECOND, "October, 1762:"... "Take out of my sight that sword, which dazzles and pains me; IT has only too well done its duty, while the sceptre is abandoned:" Make Peace, can't you! [*OEuvres completes de Rousseau* (a Geneve, 1782-1789), xxxiii. 64, 65.] —What curious reading for a King in such posture, among the miscellaneous arrivals overnight! Above six weeks before either of these NOTES, Friedrich, hearing of him from Lord Marischal, had answered: "An asylum? Yes, by all means: the unlucky cynic!" It is on September 1st, that he sends, by the same channel, 100 crowns for his use, with advice to "give them in NATURA, lest he refuse otherwise;" as Friedrich knows to be possible. In words, the Rousseau Notes got nothing of Answer. "A GARCON SINGULIER," says Friedrich: odd fellow, yes indeed, your Majesty;—and has such a pungency of flattery in him too, presented in the way of snarl! His Majesty might take him, I suppose, with a kind of relish, like Queen-Dowager snuff.

There was still another shift of place, shift which proved temporary, in old Marischal's life: Home to native Aberdeenshire. The two childless Brothers, Earls of Kintore,

had died successively, the last of them November 22d, 1761: title and heritage, not considerable the latter, fell duly, by what preparatives we know, to old Marischal; but his Keith kinsfolk, furthermore, would have him personally among them,—nay, after that, would have him to wed and produce new Keiths. At the age of 78; decidedly an inconvenient thing! Old Marischal left Potsdam "August, 1763," [Letter of his to the King ("LONDRES, 14 AOUT, 1763"), in *OEuvres de Frederic*, xx. 293.—In *Letters of Eminent Persons to David Hume* (Edinburgh, 1849), pp. 57-71, are some Nine from the Old Marischal; in curiously mixed dialect, cheerful, but indistinct; the two chief dates of which are: "Touch" (guttural TuCH, in Aberdeenshire), "28 October, 1763," and "Potsdam, 20 February, 1765." ]—NEW-PALACE scaffoldings and big stone blocks conspicuous in those localities; pleasant D'Alembert now just about leaving, in the other direction;—much to Friedrich's regret, the old Marischal especially, as is still finely evident.

FRIEDRICH TO LORD MARISCHAL (in Scotland for the last six months).

"SANS-SOUCI, 16th February, 1764.

"I am not surprised that the Scotch fight to have you among them; and wish to have progeny of yours, and to preserve your bones. You have in your lifetime the lot of Homer after death: Cities arguing which is your birthplace;—I myself would dispute it with Edinburgh to possess you. If I had ships, I would make a descent on Scotland, to steal off my CHER MYLORD, and

bring him hither. Alas, our Elbe Boats can't do it. But you give me hopes;—which I seize with avidity! I was your late Brother's friend, and had obligations to him; I am yours with heart and soul. These are my titles, these are my rights:—you sha'n't be forced in the matter of progeny here (FAIRE L'ETALON ICI), neither priests nor attorneys shall meddle with you; you shall live here in the bosom of friendship, liberty and philosophy." Come to me!...—F. [*OEuvres de Frederic*, xx. 295.]

Old Marischal did come; and before long. I know not the precise month: but "his Villa-Cottage was built for him," the Books say, "in 1764." He had left D'Alembert just going; next year he will find Helvetius coming. He lived here, a great treasure to Friedrich, till his death, 25th May, 1778, age 92.

The New Palace was not finished till 1770;—in which year, also, Friedrich reckons that the general Problem of Repairing Prussia was victoriously over. New Palace, growing or complete, looks down on all these operations and occurrences. In its cradle, it sees D'Alembert go, Lord Marischal go; Helvetius come, Lord Marischal come; in its boyhood or maturity, the Excise, and French RATS-DE-CAVE, spring up; Crown-Prince Friedrich Wilhelm prick his hand for a fit kind of ink; Friedrich Wilhelm's Divorced Wife give her Douanier two slaps in the face, by way of payment. Nay, the same Friedrich Wilhelm, become "Friedrich Wilhelm II., or DER DICKE," died in it,—his Lichtenau AND his second Wife, jewel of women, nursing him in his last sickness there. ["Died 16th November, 1797."]

The violent stress of effort for repairing Prussia, Friedrich intimates, was mostly over in 1766: till which date specifically, and in a looser sense till 1770, that may be considered as his main business. But it was not at any time his sole business; nor latterly at all equal in interest to some others that had risen on him, as the next Chapter will now show. Here, first, is a little Fraction of NECROLOGY, which may be worth taking with us. Readers can spread these fateful specialties over the Period in question; and know that each of them came with a kind of knell upon Friedrich's heart, whatever he might be employed about. Hour striking after hour on the Horologe of Time; intimating how the Afternoon wore, and that Night was coming. Various meanings there would be to Friedrich in these footfalls of departing guests, the dear, the less dear, and the indifferent or hostile; but each of them would mean: "Gone, then, gone; thus we all go!"

## **"OBITUARY IN FRIEDRICH'S CIRCLE TILL 1771."**

Of Polish Majesty's death (5th October, 1763), and then (2d December following) of his Kurprinz or Successor's, with whom we dined at Moritzburg so recently, there will be mention by and by. November 28th, 1763, in the interval between these two, the wretched Bruhl had died. April 14th, 1764, died the wretched Pompadour;—"To us not known, JE NE LA CONNAIS PAS:"—hapless Butterfly, she had been twenty years

in the winged condition; age now forty-four: dull Louis, they say, looked out of window as her hearse departed, "FROIDEMENT," without emotion of any visible kind. These little concern Friedrich or us; we will restrict ourselves to Friends.

"DIED IN 1764. At Pisa, Algarotti (23d May, 1764, age fifty-two); with whom Friedrich has always had some correspondence hitherto (to himself interesting, though not to us), and will never henceforth have more. Friedrich raised a Monument to him; Monument still to be seen in the Campo-Santo of Pisa: 'HIC JACET OVIDII AEMULUS ET NEUTONI DISCIPULUS;' friends have added 'FREDERICUS MAGNUS PONI FECIT;' and on another part of the Monument, 'ALGAROTTUS NON OMNIS.' [Preuss, iv. 188.]

"—IN 1765. At the age of eighty, November 18th, Grafín Camas, 'MA BONNE MAMAN' (widow since 1741); excellent old Lady,—once brilliantly young, German by birth, her name Brandt;—to whom the King's LETTERS used to be so pretty." This same year, too, Kaiser Franz died; but him we will reserve, as not belonging to this Select List.

"—IN 1766. At Nanci, 23d February, age eighty-six, King Stanislaus Leczinsky: 'his clothes caught fire' (accidental spark or sputter on some damask dressing-gown or the like); and the much-enduring innocent old soul ended painfully his Titular career.

"DIED IN 1767. October 22d, the Grand-Duchess of Sachsen-Gotha, age fifty-seven; a sad stroke this also, among



one's narrowing List of Friends.—I doubt if Friedrich ever saw this high Lady after the Visit we lately witnessed. His LETTERS to her are still in the Archives of Gotha: not hers to him; all lost, these latter, but an accidental Two, which are still beautiful in their kind. [Given in *OEuvres de Frederic*, xviii. 165, 256.]

"—IN 1770. Bielfeld, the fantastic individual of old days. Had long been out of Friedrich's circle,—in Altenburg Country, I think;—without importance to Friedrich or us: the year of him will do, without search for day or month.

"—IN 1771. Two heavy deaths come this year. January 28th, 1771, at Berlin, dies our valuable old friend Excellency Mitchell, —still here on the part of England, in cordial esteem as a man and companion; though as Minister, I suppose, with function more and more imaginary. This painfully ushers in the year. To usher it out, there is still worse: faithful D'Argens dies, 26th December, 1771, on a visit in his native Provence,—leaving, as is still visible, [Friedrich's two Letters to the Widow (*Ib.* xix. 427-429).] a big and sad blank behind him at Potsdam." But we need not continue; at least not at present.

Long before all these, Friedrich had lost friends; with a sad but quiet emotion he often alludes to this tragic fact, that all the souls he loved most are gone. His Winterfelds, his Keiths, many loved faces, the War has snatched: at Monbijou, at Baireuth, it was not War; but they too are gone. Is the world becoming all a Mausoleum, then; nothing of divine in it but the Tombs of vanished loved ones? Friedrich makes no noise on such subjects:

loved and unloved alike must go.

We have still to mark Kaiser Franz's sudden death; a thing politically interesting, if not otherwise. August, 1765, at Innsbruck, during the Marriage-festivities of his Second Son, Leopold (Duke of Florence, who afterwards, on Joseph's death, was Kaiser),—Kaiser Franz, sauntering about in the evening gala, "18th August, about 9 P.M.," suddenly tottered, staggered as falling; fell into Son Joseph's arms; and was dead. Above a year before, this same Joseph, his Eldest Son, had been made King of the Romans: "elected 26th March; crowned 3d April, 1764;"—Friedrich furthering it, wishful to be friendly with his late enemies. [Rodenbeck, ii. 234.]

On this Innsbruck Tragedy, Joseph naturally became Kaiser, —Part-Kaiser; his Dowager-Mother, on whom alone it depends, having decided that way. The poor Lady was at first quite overwhelmed with her grief. She had the death-room of her Husband made into a Chapel; she founded furthermore a Monastery in Innsbruck, "Twelve Canonesses to pray there for the repose of Franz;" was herself about to become Abbess there, and quit the secular world; but in the end was got persuaded to continue, and take Son Joseph as Coadjutor. [Hormayr, OESTERREICHISCHER PLUTARCH ( Maria Theresa), iv. (2tes Bandchen) 6-124; MARIA THERESIENS LEBEN, p. 30.] In which capacity we shall meet the young man again.

## Chapter III.—TROUBLES IN POLAND

April 11th, 1764, one year after his Seven-Years labor of Hercules, Friedrich made Treaty of Alliance with the new Czarina Catharine. England had deserted him; France was his enemy, especially Pompadour and Choiseul, and refused reconciliation, though privately solicited: he was without an Ally anywhere. The Russians had done him frightful damage in the last War, and were most of all to be dreaded in the case of any new one. The Treaty was a matter of necessity as well as choice. Agreement for mutual good neighborhood and friendly offices; guarantee of each other against intrusive third parties: should either get engaged in war with any neighbor, practical aid to the length of 12,000 men, or else money in lieu. Treaty was for eight years from day of date.

As Friedrich did not get into war, and Catharine did, with the Turks and certain loose Polacks, the burden of fulfilment happened to fall wholly on Friedrich; and he was extremely punctual in performance,—eager now, and all his life after, to keep well with such a Country under such a Czarina. Which proved to be the whole rule of his policy on that Russian side. "Good that Country cannot bring me by any quarrel with it; evil it can, to a frightful extent, in case of my quarrelling with others! Be wary, be punctual, magnanimously polite, with that grandiose Czarina and her huge territories and notions:" this was Friedrich's

constant rule in public and in private. Nor is it thought his  
CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE EMPRESS CATHARINE,  
when future generations see it in print, will disclose the least  
ground of offence to that high-flying Female Potentate of the  
North. Nor will it ever be known what the silently observant  
Friedrich thought of her, except indeed what we already know, or  
as good as know, That he, if anybody did, saw her clearly enough  
for what she was; and found good to repress into absolute zero  
whatever had no bearing upon business, and might by possibility  
give offence in that quarter. For we are an old King, and have  
learned by bitter experiences! No more nicknames, biting verses,  
or words which a bird of the air could carry; though this poor  
Lady too has her liabilities, were not we old and prudent;—and  
is entirely as weak on certain points (deducting the devotions  
and the brandy-and-water) as some others were! The Treaty was  
renewed when necessary; and continued valid and vital in every  
particular, so long as Friedrich ruled.

By the end of the first eight years, by strictly following  
this passive rule, Friedrich, in counterbalance of his losses,  
unexpectedly found himself invested with a very singular bit of  
gain,—"unjust gain!" cried all men, making it of the nature of  
gain and loss to him,—which is still practically his, and which  
has made, and makes to this day, an immense noise in the world.  
Everybody knows we mean West-Preussen; Partition of Poland;  
bloodiest picture in the Book of Time, Sarmatia's fall unwept  
without a crime;—and that we have come upon a very intricate

part of our poor History.

No prudent man—especially if to himself, as is my own poor case in regard to it, the subject have long been altogether dead and indifferent—would wish to write of the Polish Question. For almost a hundred years the Polish Question has been very loud in the world; and ever and anon rises again into vocality among Able Editors, as a thing pretending not to be dead and buried, but capable of rising again, and setting itself right, by good effort at home and abroad. Not advisable, beyond the strict limits of compulsion, to write of it at present! The rather as the History of it, any History we have, is not an intelligible series of events, but a series of vociferous execrations, filling all Nature, with nothing left to the reader but darkness, and such remedies against despair as he himself can summon or contrive.

"Rulhiere's on that subject," says a Note which I may cite, "is the only articulate-speaking Book to which mankind as yet can apply; [Cl. Rulhiere, *Histoire de l'Anarchie de Pologne* (Paris, 1807), 4 vols. 12mo.] and they will by no means find that a sufficient one. Rulhiere's Book has its considerable merits; but it absolutely wants those of a History; and can be recognized by no mind as an intelligible cosmic Portraiture of that chaotic Mass of Occurrences: chronology, topography, precision of detail by time and place; scene, and actors on scene, remain unintelligible. Rulhiere himself knew Poland, at least had looked on it from Warsaw outwards, year after year, and knew of it what an inquiring Secretary of Legation could pick up on those terms,

which perhaps, after all, is not very much. His Narrative is drowned in beautiful seas of description and reflection; has neither dates nor references; and advances at an intolerable rate of slowness; in fact, rather turns on its axis than advances; produces on you the effect of a melodious Sonata, not of a lucid and comfortably instructive History.

"I forget for how long Rulhiere had been in Poland, as Ambassador's Assistant: but the Country, the King and leading Personages were personally known to him, more or less; Events with all details of them were known: 'Why not write a History of the Anarchy and Wreck they fell into?' said the Official people to him, on his return home: 'For behoof of the Dauphin [who is to be Louis XVI. shortly]; may not he perhaps draw profit from it? At the top of the Universe, experience is sometimes wanted. Here are the Archives, here is Salary, here are what appliances you like to name: Write!' It is well known he was appointed, on a Pension of 250 pounds a year, with access to all archives, documents and appliances in possession of the French Government, and express charge to delineate this subject for benefit of the Dauphin's young mind. Nor can I wonder, considering everything, that the process on Rulhiere's part, being so full of difficulties, was extremely deliberate; that this Book did not grow so steadily or fast as the Dauphin did; and that in fact the poor Dauphin never got the least benefit from it,—being guillotined, he, in 1793, and the Book intended for him never coming to light for fourteen years afterwards, it too in a posthumous and still unfinished condition.

"Rulhiere has heard the voices of rumor, knows an infinitude of events that were talked of; but has not discriminated which were the vital, which were the insignificant; treats the vital and the insignificant alike; seldom with satisfactory precision; mournfully seldom giving any date, and by no chance any voucher or authority;—and instead of practical terrestrial scene of action, with distances, milestones, definite sequence of occurrences, and of causes and effects, paints us a rosy cloudland, which if true at all, as he well intends it to be, is little more than symbolically or allegorically so; and can satisfy no clear-headed Dauphin or man. Rulhiere strives to be authentic, too; gives you no suspicion of his fairness. There is really fine high-colored painting in Rulhiere! and you hope always he will let you into the secret of the matter: but the sad fact is, he never does. He merely loses himself in picturesque details, philosophic eloquences, elegancies; takes you to a Castle of Choczim, a Monastery of Czenstochow, a Bay of Tschesme, and lets off extensive fire-works that contain little or no shot; leads you on trackless marches, inroads or outroads, through the Lithuanian Peat-bogs, on daring adventures and hair-breadth escapes of mere Pulawski, Potocki and the like;—had not got to understand the matter himself, you perceive: how hopeless to make you understand it!"

English readers, however, have no other shift; the rest of the Books I have seen,—*Histoire des Revolutions de Pologne*; [1778 (A WARSOVIE, ET SE TROUVE A PARIS), 2 vols. 8vo.]

*Histoire des Trois Demembrements de la Pologne*; [Anonymous (by one FERRAND, otherwise unknown to me), Paris, 1820, 3 vols. 8vo.] *Letters on Poland*; [Anonymous (by a "Reverend Mr. Lindsey," it would seem), LETTERS CONCERNING THE PRESENT STATE OF POLAND, TOGETHER WITH &c. (London, 1773; 1 vol. 8vo): of these LETTERS, or at least of Reverend Lindsey, Author of them, "Tutor to King Stanislaus's Nephew," and a man of painfully loud loose tongue, there may perhaps be mention afterwards.] and many more,—are not worth mentioning at all. Comfortable in the mad dance of these is Hermann's recent dull volume; [Hermann, *Geschichte des Russischen Staats*, vol. v. (already cited in regard to the Peter-Catharine tragedy); seems to be compiled mainly from the Saxon Archives, from DESPATCHES written on the spot and at the time.]—commonplace, dull, but steady and faithful; yielding us at least dates, and an immunity from noise. By help of Hermann and the others, distilled to CAPUT MORTUUM, a few dated facts (cardinal we dare not call them) may be extracted;—dimly out of these, to the meditating mind, some outline of the phenomenon may begin to become conceivable. King of Poland dies; and there ensue huge Anarchies in that Country.



# **KING OF POLAND DIES; AND THERE ENSUE HUGE ANARCHIES IN THAT COUNTRY**

The poor old King of Poland—whom we saw, on that fall of the curtain at Pirna seven years ago, rush off for Warsaw with his Bruhl, with expressive speed and expressive silence, and who has been waiting there ever since, sublimely confident that his powerful terrestrial friends, Austria, Russia, France, not to speak of Heaven's justice at all, would exact due penalty, of signal and tremendous nature, on the Prussian Aggressor—has again been disappointed. The poor old Gentleman got no compensation for his manifold losses and woes at Pirna or elsewhere; not the least mention of such a thing, on the final winding-up of that War of Seven Years, in which his share had been so tragical; no alleviation was provided for him in this world. His sorrows in Poland have been manifold; nothing but anarchies, confusions and contradictions had been his Royal portion there: in about Forty different Diets he had tried to get some business done,—no use asking what; for the Diets, one and all, exploded in NIE POZWALAM; and could do no business, good, bad or indifferent, for him or anybody. An unwise, most idle Country; following as chief employment perpetual discrepancy with its idle unwise King and self; Russia the virtual head of it this long while, so far as it has any head.

FEBRUARY-AUGUST, 1763, just while the Treaty of Hubertsburg was blessing everybody with the return of Peace, and for long months after Peace had returned to everybody, Polish Majesty was in sore trouble. Trouble in regard to Courland, to his poor Son Karl, who fancied himself elected, under favor and permission of the late Czarina our gracious Protectress and Ally, to the difficult post of Duke in Courland; and had proceeded, three or four years ago, to take possession,—but was now interrupted by Russian encroachments and violences. Not at all well disposed to him, these new Peters, new Catharines. They have recalled their Bieren from Siberia; declare that old Bieren is again Duke, or at least that young Bieren is, and not Saxon Karl at all; and have proceeded, Czarina Catharine has, to install him forcibly with Russian soldiers. Karl declares, "You shall kill ME before you or he get into this Palace of Mietau!"—and by Domestics merely, and armed private Gentlemen, he does maintain himself in said Palatial Mansion; valiantly indignant, for about six months; the Russian Battalions girdling him on all sides, minatory more and more, but loath to begin actual bloodshed. [Rulhiere, ii. (livre v.) 81 et antea; Hermann, v. 348 et seq.] A transaction very famed in those parts, and still giving loud voice in the Polish Books, which indeed get ever noisier from this point onward, till they end in inarticulate shrieks, as we shall too well hear.

Empress Catharine, after the lapse of six months, sends an Ambassador to Warsaw (Kayserling by name), who declares,

in tone altogether imperative, that Czarish Majesty feels herself weary of such contumacy, weary generally of Polish Majesty's and Polish Republic's multifarious contumacies; and, in fine, cruelest of all, that she has troops on the frontier; that Courland is not the only place where she has troops. What a stab to the poor old man! "Contumacies?" Has not he been Russia's patient stepping-stone, all along; his anarchic Poland and he accordant in that, if in nothing else? "Let us to Saxony," decides he passionately, "and leave all this." In Saxony his poor old Queen is dead long since; much is dead: Saxony and Life generally, what a Golgotha! He immediately sends word to Karl, "Give up Courland; I am going home!"—and did hastily make his packages, and bid adieu to Warsaw, and, in a few weeks after to this anarchic world altogether. Died at Dresden, 5th October, 1763.

Polish Majesty had been elected 5th October, 1733; died, you observe, 5th October, 1763;—was King of Poland ("King," save the mark!) for 30 years to a day. Was elected—do readers still remember how? Leaves a ruined Saxony lying round him; a ruined life mutely asking him, "Couldst thou have done no better, then?" Wretched Bruhl followed him in four or five weeks. Nay, in about two months, his Son and Successor, "Friedrich Christian" (with whom we dined at Moritzburg), had followed him; [Prince died 17th December (Bruhl, 18th November), 1763.] leaving a small Boy, age 13, as new Kurfurst, "Friedrich August" the name of him, with guardians to manage

the Minority; especially with his Mother as chief guardian,—of whom, for two reasons, we are now to say something. Reason FIRST is, That she is really a rather brilliant, distinguished creature, distinguished more especially in Friedrich's world; whose LETTERS to her are numerous, and, in their kind, among the notablest he wrote;—of which we would gladly give some specimen, better or worse; and reason SECOND, That in so doing, we may contrive to look, for a moment or two, into the preliminary Polish Anarchies at first-hand; and, transiently and far off, see something of them as if with our own eyes.

Marie-Antoine, or Marie-Antoinette, Electress of Saxony, is still a bright Lady, and among the busiest living; now in her 40th year: "born 17th July, 1724; second child of Kaiser Karl VII.;"—a living memento to us of those old times of trouble. Papa, when she came to him, was in his 27th year; this was his second daughter; three years afterwards he had a son (born 1727; died 1777), who made the "Peace of Fussen," to Friedrich's disgust, in 1745, if readers recollect;—and who, dying childless, will give rise to another War (the "Potato War" so called), for Friedrich's behoof and ours. This little creature would be in her teens during that fatal Kaisership (1742-1745, her age then 18-21),—during those triumphs, flights and furnished-lodging intricacies. Her Mamma, whom we have seen, a little fat bullet given to devotion, was four years younger than Papa. Mamma died "11th December, 1756," Germany all blazing out in War again; she had been a Widow eleven years.

Marie-Antoine was wedded to Friedrich Christian, Saxon Kurprinz, "20th June, 1747;" her age 23, his 25:—Chronology itself is something, if one will attend to it, in the absence of all else! The young pair were Cousins, their Mothers being Sisters; Polish Majesty one's Uncle, age now 51,—who was very fond of us, poor indolent soul, and glad of our company on an afternoon, "being always in his dressing-gown by 2 o'clock." Concerning which the tongue of Court scandal was not entirely idle,—Hanbury chronicling, as we once noticed. All which I believe to be mere lying wind. The young Princess was beautiful; extremely clever, graceful and lively, we can still see for ourselves: no wonder poor Polish Majesty, always in his dressing-gown by 2, was charmed to have her company,—the rather as I hope she permitted him a little smoking withal.

Her husband was crook-backed; and, except those slight, always perfectly polite little passages, in Schmettau's Siege (1759), in the Hubertsburg Treaty affair, in the dinner at Moritzburg, I never heard much history of him. He became Elector 5th October, 1763; but enjoyed the dignity little more than two months. Our Princess had borne him seven children,—three boys, four girls,—the eldest about 13, a Boy, who succeeded; the youngest a girl, hardly 3. The Boy is he who sent Gellert the caparisoned Horse, and had estafettes on the road while Gellert lay dying. This Boy lived to be 77, and saw strange things in the world; had seen Napoleon and the French Revolution; was the first "King of Saxony" so called; saw Jena,

retreat of Moscow; saw the "Battle of the Nations" (Leipzig, 15th-18th October, 1813), and his great Napoleon terminate in bankruptcy. He left no Son. A Brother, age 72, succeeded him as King for a few years; whom again a Brother would have succeeded, had not he (this third Brother, age now 66) renounced, in favor of HIS Son, the present King of Saxony. Enough, enough!—

August 28th, 1763, while afflicted Polish Majesty is making his packages at Warsaw, far away,—Marie-Antoinette, in Dresden, had sent Friedrich an Opera of her composing, just brought out by her on her Court-theatre there. Here is Friedrich's Answer,—to what kind of OPERA I know not, but to a Letter accompanying it which is extremely pretty.

FRIEDRICH TO THE ELECTORAL PRINCESS (at Dresden).

"POTSDAM, 5th September, 1763.

"MADAM MY SISTER,—The remembrance your Royal Highness sends is the more flattering to me, as I regret infinitely not to have been spectator and hearer of the fine things [Opera THALESTRIS, words and music entirely lost to us] which I have admired for myself in the silent state.

"I wish I could send you things as pleasant out of these parts: but, Madam, I am obliged to give you a hint, which may be useful if you can have it followed. In Saxony, however, my Letters get opened;—which obliges me to send this by a special Messenger; and him, that he may cause no suspicion, I have

charged with fruits from my garden. You will have the goodness to say [if anybody is eavesdropping] that you asked them of me at Moritzburg, when I was happy enough to see you there [six months ago, coming home from the Seven-Years War]. The hint I had to give was this:—

"In Petersburg people's minds are getting angry at the stubbornness your friends show in refusing to recognize Duke Bieren [home from Siberia, again Duke of Courland, by Russian appointment, as if Russia had that right; Polish Majesty and his Prince Karl resisting to the uttermost]. I counsel you to induce the powerful in your circle to have this condescension [they have had it, been obliged to have it, though Friedrich does not yet know]; for it will turn out ill to them, if they persist in being obstinately stiff. It begins already to be said That there are more than a million Russian subjects at this time refugees in Poland; whom, by I forget what cartel, the Republic was bound to deliver up. Orders have been given to Detachments of Military to enter certain places, and bring away these Russians by force. In a word, you will ruin your affairs forever, unless you find means to produce a change of conduct on the part of him they complain of. Take, Madam, what I now say as a mark of the esteem and profound regard with which—"—F. [*OEuvres de Frederic*, xxiv. 46.]

This hint, if the King knew, had been given, in a less kind shape, by Necessity itself; and had sent Polish Majesty, and his Bruhls and "powerful people," bodily home, and out of that

Polish Russian welter, in a headlong and tragically passionate condition. Electoral Princess, next time she writes, is become Electress all at once.

ELECTRESS MARIE-ANTOINE TO FRIEDRICH.

"DRESDEN, 5th October, 1763.

"SIRE,—Your Majesty has given me such assurance of your goodness and your friendship, that I will now appeal to that promise. You have assured us, too, that you would with pleasure contribute to secure Poland for us. The moment is come for accomplishing that promise. The King is dead [died this very day; see if *I* lose time in sentimental lamentations!]*—*with him these grievances of Russia [our stiffness on Courland and the like] must be extinct; the rather as we [the now reigning] will lend ourselves willingly to everything that can be required of us for perfect reconciliation with that Power.

"You can do all, if you will it; you can contribute to this reconciliation. You can render it favorable to us. You will, give me that proof of the flattering sentiments I have been so proud of hitherto,"*—*won't you, now? "Russia cannot disapprove the mediation you might deign to offer on that behalf;*—*our intentions being so honestly amicable, and all ground of controversy having died with the late King. Russia reconciled, our views on the Polish Crown might at once be declared (ECLATER)." Oh, do it, your Majesty;*—*"my gratitude shall only end with life!*—*M. A." [*OEuvres de Frederic*, xxiv. 47.]

Friedrich, who is busy negotiating his Treaty with Russia



(perfected 11th April next), and understands that they will mean not to have a Saxon, but to have a Piast, and perhaps dimly even what Piast (Stanislaus Poniatowski, the EMERITUS Lover), who will be their own, and not Saxony's at all,—must have been a little embarrassed by such an appeal from his fair friend at this moment. "Wait a little; don't answer yet," would have occurred to the common mind. But that was not Friedrich's resource: he answers by return of post, as always in such cases;—and in the following adroit manner brushes off, without hurt to it, with kisses to it rather, the beautiful hand that has him by the button:

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TO THE ELECTRESS MARIE-ANTOINE (at Dresden).

"BERLIN, 8th October, 1763.

"MADAM MY SISTER,—I begin by making my condolences and my congratulations to your Electoral Highness on the death of the King your Father-in-law, and on your Accession to the Electorate.

"Your Electoral Highness will remember what I wrote, not long since, on the affairs of Poland. I am afraid, Madam, that Russia will be more contrary to you than you think. M. de Woronzow [famous Grand-Chancellor of Russia; saved himself dexterously in the late Peter-Catharine overturn; has since fallen into disfavor for his notions about our Gregory Orlof, and is now on his way to Italy, "for health's sake," in consequence], who is just arrived here, ["Had his audience 7th October" (yesterday): Rodenbeck, ii. 224.] told me, too, of some things which raise an

ill augury of this affair. If you do not disapprove of my speaking frankly to you, it seems to me that it would be suitable in you to send some discreet Diplomatist to that Court to notify the King's death; and you would learn by him what you have to expect from her Czarish Majesty [the Empress, he always calls her, knowing she prefers that title]. It seems to me, Madam, that it would be precipitate procedure should I wish to engage you in an Enterprise, which appears to myself absolutely dubious (HASARDEE), unless approved by that Princess. As to me, Madam, I have not the ascendant there which you suppose: I act under rule of all the delicacies and discretions with a Court which separated itself from my Enemies when all Europe wished to crush me: but I am far from being able to regulate the Empress's way of thinking.

"It is the same with the quarrels about the Duke of Courland; one cannot attempt mediation except by consent of both parties. I believe I am not mistaken in supposing that the Court of Russia does not mean to terminate that business by foreign mediation. What I have heard about it (what, however, is founded only on vague news) is, That the Empress might prevail upon herself (POURRAIT SE RESOUDRE) to purchase from Bruhl the Principality of Zips [Zips, on the edge of Hungary; let readers take note of that Principality, at present in the hand of Bruhl,—who has much disgusted Poland by his voracity for Lands; and is disgorging them all again, poor soul!], to give it to Prince Karl in compensation: but that would lead to a negotiation with the Court

of Vienna, which might involve the affair in other contentions.

"I conjure you, Madam, I repeat it, Be not precipitate in anything; lest, as my fear is, you replunge Europe into the troubles it has only just escaped from! As to me, I have found, since the Peace, so much to do within my own borders, that I have not, I assure you, had time, Madam, to think of going abroad. I confine myself to forming a thousand wishes for the prosperity of your Electoral Highness, assuring you of the high esteem with which I am,—F." [*OEuvres de Frederic*, xxiv. 48.]

After some farther Letters, of eloquently pressing solicitation on the part of the Lady, and earnest advising, as well as polite fencing, on the part of Friedrich, the latter writes:—

#### FRIEDRICH TO ELECTRESS.

"MADAM MY SISTER,—At this moment I receive a Letter from the

Empress of Russia, the contents of which do not appear to me favorable, Madam, to your hopes. She requires (EXIGE) that I should instruct my Minister in Poland to act entirely in concert with the Count Kayserling; and she adds these very words: 'I expect, from the friendship of your Majesty, that you will not allow a passage through your territory, nor the entry into Poland, to Saxon troops, who are to be regarded there absolutely as strangers.'

"Unless your Letters, Madam [Madam had said that she had written to the Empress, assuring her &c.] change the sentiments of the Empress, I do not see in what way the Elector could arrive

at the throne of Poland; and consequently, whether I deferred to the wishes of the Empress in this point, or refused to do so, you would not the more become Queen; and I might commit myself against a Power which I ought to keep well with (MENAGER). I am persuaded, Madam, that your Electoral Highness enters into my embarrassment; and that, unless you find yourself successful in changing the Empress's own ideas on this matter, you will not require of me that I should embroil myself fruitlessly with a neighbor who deserves the greatest consideration from me.

"All this is one consequence of the course which Count Bruhl induced his late Polish Majesty to take with regard to the interests of Prince Karl in Courland; and your Electoral Highness will remember, that I often represented to you the injury which would arise to him from it.

"I will wish, Madam, that other opportunities may occur, where it may be in my power to prove to your Electoral Highness the profound esteem and consideration with which I am—"—F. [*OEuvres de Frederic*, xxiv. 52.]

ELECTRESS TO FRIEDRICH.

"DRESDEN, 11th November, 1763.

"SIRE,—I am not yet disheartened. I love to flatter myself with your friendship, Sire, and I will not easily renounce the hope that you will give me a real mark of it in an affair which interests me so strongly. Nobody has greater ascendancy over the mind of the Empress of Russia than your Majesty; use it, Sire, to incline it to our favor. Our obligation will be infinite.... Why should she

be absolutely against us? What has she to fear from us? The Courland business, if that sticks with her, could be terminated in a suitable manner."—Troops into Poland, Sire?"My Husband so little thinks of sending troops thither, that he has given orders for the return of those already there. He does not wish the Crown except from the free suffrages of the Nation: if the Empress absolutely refuse to help him with her good offices, let her, at least, not be against him. Do try, Sire." [Ib. xxiv. 53.]—Friedrich answers, after four days, or by return of post—But we will give the rest in the form of Dialogue.

FRIEDRICH (after four days).... "If, Madam, I had Crowns to give away, I would place the first on your head, as most worthy to bear it. But I am far from such a position. I have just got out of a horrible War, which my enemies made upon me with a rage almost beyond example; I endeavor to cultivate friendship with all my neighbors, and to get embroiled with nobody. With regard to the affairs of Poland, an Empress whom I ought to be well with, and to whom I owe great obligations, requires me to enter into her measures; you, Madam, whom I would fain please if I could, you want me to change the sentiments of this Empress. Do but enter into my embarrassment!... According to all I hear from Russia, it appears to me that every resolution is taken there; and that the Empress is resolved even to sustain the party of her partisans in Poland with the forces she has all in readiness at the borders. As for me, Madam, I wish, if possible, not to meddle at all with this business, which hitherto is not complicated, but

which may, any day, become so by the neighbors of Poland taking a too lively part in it. Ready, otherwise, on all occasions, to give to your Electoral Highness proofs of my—" [*OEuvres de Frederic*, xxiv, 54: "Potsdam, 16th November, 1763."]

Electress (after ten days).... "Why should the Empress be so much against us? We have not deserved her hatred. On the contrary, we seek her friendship. She declares, however, that she will uphold the freedom of the Poles in the election of their King. You, Sire"—[*Ib.* xxiv. 55: "Dresden, 26th November, 1763."]

But we must cut short, though it lasts long months after this. Great is the Electress's persistence,—"My poor Husband being dead, cannot our poor Boy, cannot his uncle Prince Xavier try? O Sire!" Our last word shall be this of Friedrich's; actual Election-time now drawing nigh:—

FRIEDRICH. "I am doing like the dogs who have fought bitterly till they are worn down: I sit licking my wounds. I notice most European Powers doing the same; too happy if, whilst Kings are being manufactured to right and left, public tranquillity is not disturbed thereby, and if every one may continue to dwell in peace beside his hearth and his household gods." ["*Sans-Souci*, 26th June, 1764" (*Ib.* p. 69).] Adieu, bright Madam.

No reader who has made acquaintance with Polish History can well doubt but Poland was now dead or moribund, and had well deserved to die. Anarchies are not permitted in this world. Under fine names, they are grateful to the Populaces, and to the Editors of Newspapers; but to the Maker of this Universe they are

eternally abhorrent; and from the beginning have been forbidden to be. They go their course, applauded or not applauded by self and neighbors,—for what lengths of time none of us can know; for a long term sometimes, but always for a fixed term; and at last their day comes. Poland had got to great lengths, two centuries ago, when poor John Casimir abdicated his Crown of Poland, after a trial of twenty years, and took leave of the Republic in that remarkable SPEECH to the Diet of 1667.

This John is "Casimir V.," last Scion of the Swedish House of Vasa,—with whom, in the Great Elector's time, we had some slight acquaintance; and saw at least the three days' beating he got (Warsaw, 28th-30th July, 1656) from Karl Gustav of Sweden and the Great Elector, [Supra, v. 284-286.] ancestors respectively of Karl XII. and of our present Friedrich. He is not "Casimir the Great" of Polish Kings; but he is, in our day, Casimir the alone Remarkable. It seems to me I once had IN EXTENSO this Valedictory Speech of his; but it has lapsed again into the general Mother of Dead Dogs, and I will not spend a week in fishing for it. The gist of the Speech, innumerable Books and Dead Dogs tell you, [HISTOIRE DES TROIS DEMEMBREMENTS does, and many others do;—copied in *Biographie Universelle*, vii. 278 (? Casimir).] is "lamentation over the Polish Anarchies" and "a Prophecy," which is very easily remembered. The poor old Gentleman had no doubt eaten his peck of dirt among those Polacks, and swallowed chagrins till he felt his stomach could no more, and determined to have done

with it. To one's fancy, in abridged form, the Valediction must have run essentially as follows:—

"Magnanimous Polack Gentlemen, you are a glorious Republic, and have NIE POZWALAM, and strange methods of business, and of behavior to your Kings and others. We have often fought together, been beaten together, by our enemies and by ourselves; and at last I, for my share, have enough of it. I intend for Paris; religious-literary pursuits, and the society of Ninon de l'Enclos. I wished to say before going, That according to all record, ancient and modern, of the ways of God Almighty in this world, there was not heretofore, nor do I expect there can henceforth be, a Human Society that would stick together on those terms. Believe me, ye Polish Chivalries, without superior except in Heaven, if your glorious Republic continue to be managed in such manner, not good will come of it, but evil. The day will arrive [this is the Prophecy, almost IN IPSISSIMIS VERBIS], the day perhaps is not so far off, when this glorious Republic will get torn into shreds, hither, thither; be stuffed into the pockets of covetous neighbors, Brandenburg; Muscovy, Austria; and find itself reduced to zero, and abolished from the face of the world.

"I speak these words in sorrow of soul; words which probably you will not believe. Which only Fate can compel you to believe, one day, if they are true words:—you think, probably, they are not? Me at least, or interest of mine, they do not regard. I speak them from the fulness of my heart, and on behest of friendship



and conviction alone; having the honor at this moment to bid you and your Republic a very long farewell. Good-morning, for the last time!" and so EXIT: to Rome (had been Cardinal once); to Paris and the society of Ninon's Circle for the few years left him of life. ["Died 16th December, 1672, age 63."]

This poor John had had his bitter experiences: think only of one instance. In 1662, the incredible Law of LIBERUM VETO had been introduced, in spite of John and his endeavors. LIBERUM VETO; the power of one man to stop the proceedings of Polish Parliament by pronouncing audibly "NIE POZWALAM, I don't permit!"—never before or since among mortals was so incredible a Law. Law standing indisputable, nevertheless, on the Polish Statute-Book for above two hundred years: like an ever-flowing fountain of Anarchy, joyful to the Polish Nation. How they got any business done at all, under such a Law? Truly they did but little; and for the last thirty years as good as none. But if Polish Parliament was universally in earnest to do some business, and Veto came upon it, Honorable Members, I observe, gathered passionately round the vetoing Brother; conjured, obtested, menaced, wept, prayed; and, if the case was too urgent and insoluble otherwise, the NIE POZWALAM Gentleman still obstinate, they plunged their swords through him, and in that way brought consent. The commoner course was to dissolve and go home again, in a tempest of shrieks and curses.

The Right of Confederation, too, is very curious: do readers know it? A free Polack gentleman, aggrieved by anything that

has occurred or been enacted in his Nation, has the right of swearing, whether absolutely by himself I know not, but certainly with two or three others of like mind, that he will not accept said occurrence or enactment, and is hereby got into arms against its abettors and it. The brightest jewel in the cestus of Polish Liberty is this right of confederating; and it has been, till of late, and will be now again practised to all lengths: right of every Polish, gentleman to confederate with every other against, or for, whatsoever to them two may seem good; and to assert their particular view of the case by fighting for it against all comers, King and Diet included. It must be owned, there never was in Nature such a Form of Government before; such a mode of social existence, rendering "government" impossible for some generations past.

On the strength of Saxony and its resources and connections, the two Augusts had contrived to exist with the name of Kings; with the name, but with little or nothing more. Under this last August, as we heard, there have been about forty Diets, and in not one of them the least thing of business done; all the forty, after trying their best, have stumbled on NIE POZWALAM, and been obliged to vanish in shrieks and curses. [Buchholz (*Preussisch-Brandenburgische Geschichte*, ii. 133, 134, &c. &c.) gives various samples, and this enumeration.] As to August the Physically Strong, such treatment had he met with,—poor August, if readers remember, had made up his mind to partition Poland; to give away large sections of it in purchase of the

consent of neighbors, and plant himself hereditarily in the central part;—and would have done so, had not Grumkow and he drunk so deep, and death by inflammation of the foot suddenly come upon the poor man. Some Partition of Poland has been more than once thought of by practical people concerned. Poland, as "a house chronically smoking through the slates," which usually brings a new European War every time it changes King, does require to be taken charge of by its neighbors.

Latterly, as we observed, there has been little of confederating; indeed, for the last thirty years, as Rulhiere copiously informs us, there has been no Government, consequently no mutiny needed; little or no National business of any kind,—the Forty Diets having all gone the road we saw. Electing of the Judges,—that, says Rulhiere, and wearisomely teaches by example again and ever again, has always been an interesting act, in the various Provinces of Poland; not with the hope of getting fair or upright Judges, but Judges that will lean in the desirable direction. In a country overrun with endless lawsuits, debts, credits, feudal intricacies, claims, liabilities, how important to get Judges with the proper bias! And these once got, or lost till next term,—what is there to hope or to fear? Russia does our Politics, fights her Seven-Years War across us; and we, happy we, have no fighting;—never till this of Courland was there the least ill-nature from Russia! We are become latterly the peaceable stepping-stone of Russia into Europe and out of it;—what may be called the door-mat of Russia, useful to her

feet, when she is about paying visits or receiving them! That is not a glorious fact, if it be a safe and "lucky" one; nor do the Polish Notabilities at all phrase it in that manner. But a fact it is; which has shown itself complete in the late Czarina's and late August's time, and which had been on the growing hand ever since Peter the Great gained his Battle of Pultawa, and rose to the ascendancy, instead of Karl and Sweden.

The Poles put fine colors on all this; and are much contented with themselves. The Russians they regard as intrinsically an inferior barbarous people; and to this day you will hear indignant Polack Gentlemen bursting out in the same strain: "Still barbarian, sir; no culture, no literature,"—inferior because they do not make verses equal to ours! How it may be with the verses, I will not decide: but the Russians are inconceivably superior in respect that they have, to a singular degree among Nations, the gift of obeying, of being commanded. Polack Chivalry sniffs at the mention of such a gift. Polack Chivalry got sore stripes for wanting this gift. And in the end, got striped to death, and flung out of the world, for continuing blind to the want of it, and never acquiring it.

Beyond all the verses in Nature, it is essential to every Chivalry and Nation and Man. "Polite Polish Society for the last thirty years has felt itself to be in a most halcyon condition," says Rulhiere: [Rulhiere, i. 216 (a noteworthy passage).] "given up to the agreeable, and to that only;" charming evening-parties, and a great deal of flirting; full of the benevolences,

the philanthropies, the new ideas,—given up especially to the pleasing idea of "LAISSEZ-FAIRE, and everything will come right of itself." "What a discovery!" said every liberal Polish mind: "for thousands of years, how people did torment themselves trying to steer the ship; never knowing that the plan was, To let go the helm, and honestly sit down to your mutual amusements and powers of pleasing!"

To this condition of beautifully phosphorescent rot-heap has Poland ripened, in the helpless reigns of those poor Augusts;—the fulness of time not now far off, one would say? It would complete the picture, could I go into the state of what is called "Religion" in Poland. Dissenterism, of various poor types, is extensive; and, over against it, is such a type of Jesuit Fanaticism as has no fellow in that day. Of which there have been truly savage and sanguinary outbreaks, from time to time; especially one at Thorn, forty years ago, which shocked Friedrich Wilhelm and the whole Protestant world. [See *supra*, vi. 64 (and many old Pamphlets on it).] Polish Orthodoxy, in that time, and perhaps still in ours, is a thing worth noting. A late Tourist informs me, he saw on the streets of Stettin, not long since, a drunk human creature staggering about, who seemed to be a Baltic Sailor, just arrived; the dirtiest, or among the dirtiest, of mankind; who, as he reeled along, kept slapping his hands upon his breast, and shouting, in exultant soliloquy, "Polack, Catholik!" *I* am a Pole and Orthodox, ye inferior two-legged entities!.—In regard to the Jesuit Fanaticisms, at Thorn and elsewhere, no blame can attach

to the poor Augusts, who always leant the other way, what they durst or could. Nor is specialty of blame due to them on any score; it was "like People, like King," all along;—and they, such their luck, have lived to bring in the fulness of time.

The Saxon Electors are again aspirants for this enviable Throne. We have seen the beautiful Electress zealously soliciting Friedrich for help in that project; Friedrich, in a dexterously graceful manner, altogether declining. Hereditary Saxons are not to be the expedient this time, it would seem; a grandiose Czarina has decided otherwise. Why should not she? She and all the world are well aware, Russia has been virtual lord of Poland this long time. Credible enough that Russia intends to continue so; and also that it will be able, without very much expenditure of new contrivance for that object.

So far as can be guessed and assiduously deduced from RULHIÈRE, with your best attention, Russian Catharine's interference seems first of all to have been grounded on the grandiose philanthropic principle. Astonishing to the liberal mind; yet to appearance true. Rulhière nowhere says so; but that is gradually one's own perception of the matter; no other refuge for you out of flat inconceivability. Philanthropic principle, we say, which the Voltaires and Sages of that Epoch are prescribing as one's duty and one's glory: "O ye Kings, why won't you do good to mankind, then?" Catharine, a kind of She-Louis Quatorze, was equal to such a thing. To put one's cast Lover into a throne,—poor soul, console him in that manner;—and reduce

the long-dissentient Country to blessed composure under him: what a thing! Foolish Poniatowski, an empty, windy creature, redolent of macassar and the finer sensibilities of the heart: him she did make King of Poland; but to reduce the long-dissentient Country to composure,—that was what she could not do. Countries in that predicament are sometimes very difficult to compose. The Czarina took, for above five years, a great deal of trouble, without losing patience. The Czarina, after every new effort, perceived with astonishment that she was farther from success than ever. With astonishment; and gradually with irritation, thickening and mounting towards indignation.

There is no reason to believe that the grandiose Woman handled, or designed to handle, a doomed Poland in the merciless feline-diabolic way set forth with wearisome loud reiteration in those distracted Books; playing with the poor Country as cat does with mouse; now lifting her fell paw, letting the poor mouse go loose in floods of celestial joy and hope without limit; and always clutching the hapless creature back into the blackness of death, before eating and ending it. Reason first is, that the Czarina, as we see her elsewhere, never was in the least a Cat or a Devil, but a mere Woman; already virtual proprietress of Poland, and needing little contrivance to keep it virtually hers. Reason second is, that she had not the gift of prophecy, and could not foreknow the Polish events of the next ten years, much less shape them out beforehand, and preside over them, like a Devil or otherwise, in the way supposed.

My own private conjecture, I confess, has rather grown to be, on much reading of those RULHIERES and distracted Books, that the Czarina,—who was a grandiose creature, with considerable magnanimities, natural and acquired; with many ostentations, some really great qualities and talents; in effect, a kind of She-Louis Quatorze (if the reader will reflect on that Royal Gentleman, and put him into petticoats in Russia, and change his improper females for improper males),—that the Czarina, very clearly resolute to keep Poland hers, had determined with herself to do something very handsome in regard to Poland; and to gain glory, both with the enlightened Philosophe classes and with her own proud heart, by her treatment of that intricate matter. "On the one hand," thinks she, or let us fancy she thinks, "here is Poland; a Country fallen bedrid amid Anarchies, curable or incurable; much tormented with religious intolerance at this time, hateful to the philosophic mind; a hateful fanaticism growing upon it for forty years past [though it is quite against Polish Law]; and the cries of oppressed Dissidents [Dissenters, chiefly of the Protestant and of the Greek persuasion] becoming more and more distressing to hear. And, on the other hand, here is Poniatowski who, who—!"

Readers have not forgotten the handsome, otherwise extremely paltry, young Polack, Stanislaus Poniatowski, whom Excellency Williams took with him 8 or 9 years ago, ostensibly as "Secretary of Legation," unostensibly as something very different? Handsome Stanislaus did duly become Lover of the



Grand-Duchess; and has duly, in the course of Nature, some time ago (date uncertain to me), become discarded Lover; the question rising, What is to be done with that elegant inane creature, and his vaporous sentimentalisms and sublime sorrows and disappointments? "Let us make him King of Poland!" said the Czarina, who was always much the gentleman with her discarded Lovers (more so, I should say, than Louis Quatorze with his;—and indeed it is computed they cost her in direct moneys about twenty millions sterling,—being numerous and greedy; but never the least tiff of scolding or ill language): [Castera (*Vie de Catharine II.*) has an elaborate Appendix on this part of his subject.]—"King of Poland, with furnishings, and set him handsomely up in the world! We will close the Dissident Business for him, cure many a curable Anarchy of Poland, to the satisfaction of Voltaire and all leading spirits of mankind. He shall have outfit of Russian troops, poor creature; and be able to put down Anarchies, and show himself a useful and grateful Viceroy for us there. Outfit of 10,000 troops, a wise Russian Manager: and the Question of the Dissidents to be settled as the first glory of his reign!"

Ingenuous readers are invited to try, in their diffuse vague RULHIERES, and unintelligible shrieky Polish Histories, whether this notion does not rise on them as a possible human explanation, more credible than the feline-diabolic one, which needs withal such a foreknowledge, UNattainable by cat or devil? Poland must not rise to be too strong a Country, and turn its back

on Russia. No, truly; nor, except by miraculous suspension of the Laws of Nature, is there danger of that. But neither need Poland lie utterly lame and prostrate, useless to Russia; and be tortured on its sick-bed with Dissident Questions and Anarchies, curable by a strong Sovereign, of whom much is expected by Voltaire and the leading spirits of mankind.

What we shall have to say with perfect certainty, and what alone concerns us in our own affair, is, **FIRST**, that Catharine did proceed by this method, of crowning, fitting out and otherwise setting up Stanislaus; did attempt settlement (and at one time thought she had settled) the Dissident Question and some curable Anarchies,—but stirred up such legions of incurable, waxing on her hands, day after day, year after year, as were abundantly provoking and astonishing:—and that within the next eight years she had arrived, with Poland and her cargo of anarchies, at results which struck the whole world dumb. Dumb with astonishment, for some time; and then into tempests of vociferation more or less delirious, which have never yet quite ended, though sinking gradually to lower and lower stages of human vocality. Fact **FIRST** is abundantly manifest. Nor is fact **SECOND** any longer doubtful, That King Friedrich, in regard to all this, till a real crisis elsewhere had risen, took little or no visible interest whatever; had one unvarying course of conduct, that of punctually following Czarish Majesty in every respect; instructing his Minister at Warsaw always to second and reinforce the Russian one, as his one rule of policy in

that Country,—whose distracted procedures, imbecilities and anarchies, are, beyond this point of keeping well with a grandiose Czarina concerned in it, of no apparent practical interest to Prussia or its King.

Friedrich, for a long time, passed with the Public for contriver of the Catastrophe of Poland,—"felonious mortal," "monster of maleficence," and what not, in consequence. Rulhiere, whose notion of him is none of the friendliest nor correctest, acquits him of this atrocity; declares him, till the very end, mainly or altogether passive in it. Which I think is a little more than the truth,—and only a little, as perhaps may appear by and by. Beyond dispute, these Polish events did at last grow interesting enough to Prussia and its King;—and it will be our task, sufficient in this place, to extricate and riddle out what few of these had any cardinal or notable quality, and put them down (dated, if possible, and in intelligible form), as pertinent to throwing light on this distressing matter, with careful exclusion of the immense mass which can throw only darkness.

**EX-LOVER PONIATOWSKI  
BECOMES KING OF POLAND (7th  
Sept. 1764), AND IS CROWNED  
WITHOUT LOSS OF HIS HAIR**

WARSAW, 7th SEPTEMBER 1764, Stanislaus Poniatowski,

by what management of an Imperial Catharine upon an anarchic Nation readers shall imagine AD LIBITUM, was elected, what they call elected, King of Poland. Of course there had been preliminary Diets of Convocation, much dieting, demonstrating and electing of imaginary members of Diet,—only "ten persons massacred" in the business. There was a Saxon Party; but no counter-candidate of that or any other nation. King Friedrich, solicited by a charming Electress-Dowager, decides to remain accurately passive. Polish emissaries came entreating him. A certain Mockranowski, who had been a soldier under him (never of much mark in that capacity, though now a flamingly conspicuous "General" and Politician, in the new scene he has got into), came passionately entreating (Potsdam, Summer of 1764, is all the date), "DONNEZ NOUS LE PRINCE HENRI, Give us Prince Henri for a King!" the sound of which almost made Friedrich turn pale: "Have you spoken or hinted of this to the Prince?" "No, your Majesty." "Home, then, instantly; and not a whisper of it again to any mortal!" [Rulhiere, ii. 268; Hermann, vi. 355-364.] which, they say, greatly irritated Prince Henri, and left a permanent sore-place in his mind, when he came to hear of it long after.

"A question rises here," says one of my Notes, which perhaps I had better have burnt: "At or about what dates did this glorious Poniatowski become Lover of the Grand-Duchess, and then become Ex-Lover? Nobody will say; or perhaps can? [Preuss (iv. 12) seems to try, but does not succeed.]

Would have been a small satisfaction to us, and it is denied! 'Ritter Williams' (that is, Hanbury) must have produced him at Petersburg some time in 1756; '11th January, 1757,' finding it would suit, Poniatowski appeared there on his own footing as 'Ambassador from Warsaw,'"—(easy to get that kind of credential from a devoted Warsaw, if you are succeeding at the Court of Petersburg; "Warsaw watchfully makes that the rule of distributing its honors; and, from freezing-point upwards, is the most delicate thermometer," says Hermann somewhere). And this, is our one date, "Poniatowski in business, SPRING, 1757;" of "Poniatowski fallen bankrupt," date is totally wanting.

"Poniatowski's age is 32 gone;—how long out of Russia, readers have to guess. Made his first public appearance on the streets of Warsaw, in the late Election time, as a Captain of Patriot Volunteers,—'Independence of Poland! Shall Poland be dictated to!' cried Stanislaus and an indignant Public at one stage of the affair. His Uncles Czartoryski were piloting him in; and in that mad element, the cries, and shiftings of tack, had to be many. [In HERMANN, v. 362-380 (still more in RULHIÈRE, ii. 119-289), wearisome account of every particular.] He is Nephew, by his mother, of these Czartoryskis; but is not by the father of very high family. 'Ought he to be King of Poland?' argued some Polish Emissary at Petersburg: 'His Grandfather was Land-steward to the Sapiehas.' 'And if he himself had been it!' said the Empress, inflexible, though with a blush.—It seems the family was really good, though fallen poor; and, since that

Land-steward phasis, had bloomed well out again. His Father was conspicuous as a busy, shifting kind of man, in the Charles-Twelfth and other troubles; had died two years ago, as 'Castellan of Cracow;' always a dear friend of Stanislaus Leczinski, who gets his death two years hence [in 1766, as we have seen].

"King Stanislaus Poniatowski had five Brothers: two of them dead long before this time; a third, still alive, was Bishop of Something, Abbot of Something; ate his revenues in peace, and demands silence from us. The other two, Casimir and Andreas, are better worth naming,—especially the Son of one of them is. Casimir, the eldest, is 'Grand Crown-Chamberlain' in the days now coming, is also 'Starost of Zips [a Country you may note the name of!]'—and has a Son,' who is NOT the remarkable one. Andreas, the second Brother (died 1773), was in the Austrian Service, 'Ordnance-Master,' and a man of parts and weight;—who has been here at Warsaw, ardently helping, in the late Election time. He too had a Son (at this time a child in arms),—who is really the remarkable 'Nephew of King Stanislaus,' and still deserves a word from us.

"This Nephew, bred as an Austrian soldier, like his Father, is the JOSEPH PONIATOWSKI, who was very famous in the Newspapers fifty years ago. By all appearance, a man of some real patriotism, energy and worth. He had tried to believe (though, I think, never rightly able) what his omnipotent Napoleon had promised him, that extinct Poland should be resuscitated; and he fought and strove very fiercely, his Poles and

he, in that faith or half-faith. And perished, fiercely fighting for Napoleon, fiercely covering Napoleon's retreat when his game was lost: horse and man plunged into the Elster River (Leipzig Country, October 19th, 1813, evening of the 'Battle of the Nations' there), and sank forever;—and the last gleam of Poland along with him. [*Biographie Universelle* (Poniatowski, Joseph), xxxv. 349-359.] Not even a momentary gleam of hope for her, in the sane or half-sane kind, since that,—though she now and then still tries it in the insane: the more to my regret, for her and others!

"Besides these three Brothers, King Stanislaus had two Sisters still living: one of them Wife of a very high Zamoiski; the other of a ditto Branicki (pronounce BraniTZki)—him whom our German Books call KRON-GROSSFELDHERR; (Grand Crown-General,' if the Crown have any soldiers at all; the sublime, debauched old Branicki, of whom Rulhiere is continually talking, and never reports anything but futilities in a futile manner. So much is futile, and not worth reporting, in this Polish element!—King Stanislaus himself was born 17th January, 1732; played King of shreds and patches till 1790,—or even farther (not till 1795 did Catharine pluck the paper tabard quite off him); he died in Petersburg, February 11th or 12th) 1798." After such a life!—

Stanislaus was crowned 25th November, 1764. He needs, as preliminary, to be anointed, on the bare scalp of him, with holy oil before crowning; ought to have his head close-shaved

with that view. Stanislaus, having an uncommonly fine head of hair, shuddered at the barbarous idea; absolutely would not: whereupon delay, consultation; and at length some artificial scalp, or second skull, of pasteboard or dyed leather, was contrived for the poor man, which comfortably took the oiling in a vicarious way, with the ambrosial locks well packed out of sight under it, and capable of flowing out again next day, as if nothing had happened. [Rulhiere.] Not a sublime specimen of Ornamental Human Nature, this poor Stanislaus! Ornamental wholly: the body of him, and the mind of him, got up for representation; and terribly plucked to pieces on the stage of the world. You may try to drop a tear over him, but will find mostly that you cannot.

**FOR SEVERAL YEARS THE DISSIDENT  
QUESTION CANNOT BE GOT  
SETTLED; CONFEDERATION OF  
RADOM (23d June, 1767-5th March,  
1768) PUSHES IT INTO SETTLEMENT**

For several years after this feat of the false scalp, through long volumes, wearisome even in RULHIERE, there turns up nothing which can now be called memorable. The settling of the Dissident Question proves extremely tedious to an impatient Czarina; as to curing of the other curable



Anarchies, there is absolutely nothing but a knitting up by A, with a ravelling-out again by B, and no progress discernible whatever. Impatient Czarina ardently pushes on some Dissident settlement,—seconded by King Friedrich and the chief Protestant Courts, London included, and by the European leading spirits everywhere,—through endless difficulties: finds native Orthodoxy an unexpectedly stiff matter; Bishops generally having a fanaticism which is wonderful to think of, and which keeps mounting higher and higher. Till at length there will Images of the Virgin take to weeping,—as they generally do in such cases, when in the vicinity of brew-houses and conveniences; [Nicolai, in his TRAVELS OVER GERMANY, doggedly undertook to overhaul one of those weeping Virgins (somewhere in Austria, I think); and found her, he says, to depend on subterranean percolation of steam from a Brewery not far off.]—a Carmelite Monk go about the country working miracles; and, in short, an extremely ugly phasis of religious human nature disclose itself to the afflicted reader. King Friedrich thinks, had it not been for this Dissident Question, things would have taken their old Saxon complexion, and Poland might have rotted on as heretofore, perhaps a good while longer.

As to the knitting-up and ravelling-out again, which is called curing of the other anarchies, no reader can or need say anything: it seems to be a most painful knitting-up, by the Czartoryskis chiefly, then an instant ravelling out by malignant Opposition parties of various indistinct complexion; the knitting,

the ravelling, and the malign Opposition parties, alike indistinct and without interest to mankind. A certain drunken, rather brutal Phantasm of a Prince Radzivil, who hates the Czartoryskis, and is dreadfully given to drink, to wasteful ambitions and debaucheries, figures much in these businesses; is got banished and confiscated, by some Confederation formed; then, by new Confederations, is recalled and reinstated,—worse if possible than ever. The thing is reality; but it reads like a Phantasmagory produced by Lapland Witches, under presidency of Diabolus (very certainly the Devil presiding, as you see at all turns),—and is not worth understanding, were it even easy.

Much semi-intelligible, wholly forgettable stuff about King Stanislaus and his difficulties, and his duplicities and treacherous imbecilities, [Hermann, v. 400, &c.; Rulhiere PASSIM.] now of interest to no mortal. Stanislaus is at one time out with the uncles Czartoryski, at another in with these worthy gentlemen: a man not likely to cure Anarchies, unless wishing would do it. On the Dissident Question itself he needs spurring: a King of liberal ideas, yes; but with such flames of fanaticism under the nose of him. In regard to the Dissident and all other curative processes he is languid, evasive, for moments recalcitrant to Russian suggestions; a lost imbecile,—forget him, with or without a tear. He has still a good deal of so-called gallantry on his hands; flies to his harem when outside things go contradictory. [Hermann, v. 402, &c.] Think of malign Journalists printing this bit of Letter at one time, to do him ill in a certain quarter: "Oh, come to

me, my Princess! Dearer than all Emperresses:—imperial charms, what were they to thine for a heart that has—" with more of the like stuff, for a Czarina's behoof.

WINTER OF 1766, Imperial Majesty, whether after or before that miraculous Carmelite Monk, I do not remember, became impatient of these tedious languors and tortuosities about the Dissident Question, and gave express order, "Settle it straightway!" To which end, Confederations and the other machinery were set agoing: Confederations among the Protestants and Dissidents themselves, about Thorn and such places (got up by Russian engineering), and much more extensively in the Lithuanian parts; Confederations of great extent, imperative, minatory; ostensibly for reinstating these poor people in their rights (which, by old Polish Law, they quite expressly were, if that were any matter), but in reality for bringing back drunken Radzivil, who has covenanted to carry that measure. And so,

JUNE 23d, 1767, These multiplex Polish-Lithuanian Confederations, twenty-four of them in all, with their sublime marshals and officials, and above 80,000 noblemen in them, meet by deputies at Radom, a convenient little Town within wind of Warsaw (lies 60 miles to south of Warsaw); and there coalesce into one general "Confederation of Radom," [Hermann, v. 420.] with drunken Radzivil atop, who, glad to be reinstated in his ample Domains and Wine-cellars, and willing at any rate to spite the Czartoryskis and others, has pledged himself to carry that

great measure in Diet, and quash any NIE POZWALAMS and difficulties there may be. This is the once world-famous, now dimly discoverable, CONFEDERATION OF RADOM, which—by preparatory declaring, under its hand and seal, That the Law of the Land must again become valid, and "Free Polacks of Dissident opinions concerning Religion (NOS DISSIDENTES DE RELIGIONE)," as the old Law phrases it, "shall have equal rights of citizenship"—was beautifully instrumental in achieving that bit of Human Progress, and pushing it through the Diet, and its difficulties shortly ensuing.

Not that the Diet did not need other vigorous treatment as well, the flame of fanaticism being frightfully ardent; many of the poor Bishops having run nearly frantic at this open spoliation of Mother Church, and snatching of the sword from Peter. So that Imperial Majesty had to decide on picking out a dozen, or baker's dozen, of the hottest Bishops; and carrying them quietly into Russia under lock and key, till the thing were done. Done it was, surely to the infinite relief of mankind;—I cannot say precisely on what day: October 13th-14th (locking up of the dozen Bishops), was one vital epoch of it; November 19th, 1767 (report of Committee on it, under Radzivil's and Russia's coercion), was another: first and last it took about five months baking in Diet. Diet met Oct. 4th, 1767, Radzivil controlling as Grand-Marshal, and Russia as minatory Phantom controlling Radzivil; Diet, after adjournments, after one long adjournment, disappeared 5th March, 1768; and of work mentionable it had

done this of the Dissidents only. That of contributing to "the sovereign contempt with which King Stanislaus is regarded by all ranks of men," is hardly to be called peculiar work or peculiarly mentionable.

At this point, to relieve the reader's mind, and, at any rate, as the date is fully come, we will introduce a small NEWSPAPER ARTICLE from a very high hand, little guessed till long afterwards as the writer,—namely, from King Friedrich's own. It does not touch on the Dissident Question, or the Polish troubles; but does, in a back-handed way, on Prussian Rumors rising about them; and may obliquely show more of the King's feeling on that subject than we quite suppose. It seems the King had heard that the Berlin people were talking and rumoring of "a War being just at hand;" whereupon—"MARCH 5th, 1767, IN THE VOSSISCHE ZEITUNG (Voss's Chronicle), No. 28," an inquisitive Berlin public read as follows:—

"We are advised from Potsdam, that, on the 27th of February, towards evening, the sky began to get overcast; black clouds, presaging a tempest of unexampled fury, covered all the horizon: the thunder, with its lightnings, forked bolts of amazing brilliancy, burst out; and, under its redoubled peals, there descended such a torrent of hail as within man's memory had not been seen. Of two bullocks yoked in their plough, with which a peasant was hastening home, one was struck on the head by a piece of it, and killed outright. Many of the common people were wounded in the streets; a brewer had

his arm broken. Roofs are destroyed by the weight of this hail; all the windows that looked windward while it fell were broken. In the streets, hailstones were found of the size of pumpkins (CITROUILLES), which had not quite melted two hours after the storm ceased. This singular phenomenon has made a very great impression. Scientific people say, the air had not buoyancy enough to support these solid masses when congealed to ice; that the small hailstones in these clouds getting so lashed about in the impetuosity of the winds, had united the more the farther they fell, and had not acquired that enormous magnitude till comparatively near the earth. Whatever way it may have happened, it is certain that occurrences of that kind are rare, and almost without example." [VOSSISCHE ZEITUNG, ubi supra: *OEuvres de Frederic*, xv. 204.]

Another singularity is, "Professor Johann Daniel Titius of Wittenberg," who teaches NATURAL PHILOSOPHY in that famous University, one may judge with what effect, wrote a Monograph on this unusual Phenomenon! [Rodenbeck (ii. 285) gives the Title of it, "CONSIDERATIONS ON THE POTSDAM HAIL OF LAST YEAR (Wittenberg, 1768)."]

# **CONFEDERATION OF BAR ENSUES, ON THE PER-CONTRA SIDE (March 28th, 1768); AND, AS FIRST RESULT OF ITS ACHIEVEMENTS (October 6th, 1768), A TURK-RUSSIAN WAR**

The Confederation of Radom, and its victorious Diet, had hardly begun their Song of Triumph, when there ensued on the per-contrā side a flaming CONFEDERATION OF BAR;—which, by successive stages, does at last burn out the Anarchies of Poland, and reduce them to ashes. Confederation of Bar; and then, as progeny of that, for and against, such a brood of Confederations, orthodox, heterodox, big, little, short-lived, long-lived, of all complexions and degrees of noisy fury, potent, at any rate, each of them for murder and arson, within a certain radius, as the Earth never saw before. Now was the time of those inextricable marchings (as inroads and outroads) through the Lithuanian Bogs, of those death-defiant, unparalleled exploits, skirmishings, scaladings, riding by the edge of precipices, of Pulawski, Potocki and others,—in which Rulhiere loses himself and turns on his axis, amid impatient readers.

For the Russian troops (summoned by a trembling Stanislaus and his Senate, in terms of Treaty 1764), and in more languid manner, the Stanislaus soldiery, as per law of the case, proceeded

to strike in,—generally, my impression was, with an eye to maintain the King's Peace and keep down murder and arson:—and sure enough, the small bodies of drilled Russians blew an infuriated orthodox Polack chivalry to right and left at a short notice; but as to the Constable's Peace or King's, made no improvement upon that, far the reverse. It is certain the Confederate chivalry were driven about, at a terrible rate,—over the Turk frontier for shelter; began to appeal to the Grand Turk, in desperate terms: "Brother of the Sun and Moon, saw you ever such a chance for finishing Russia? Polack chivalry is Orthodox Catholic, but also it is Anti-Russian!" The Turk beginning to give ear to it, made the matter pressing and serious. Here, more specifically, are some features and successive phases,—unless the reader prefer to skip.

"BAR, MARCH, 1768. The Confederation of Radom, as efficient preliminary, and chief agent in that Diet of emancipation to the Dissident human mind, might long have been famous over Poland and the world; but there instantly followed as corollary to it a CONFEDERATION OF BAR, which quite dimmed the fame of Radom, and indeed of all Confederations prior or posterior! As the Confederation of Bar and its Doings, or rather sufferings and tragical misdoings and undoings, still hang like fitful spectralities, or historical shadows, of a vague ghastly complexion, in the human memory, one asks at least: Since they were on this Planet, tell us where? Bar is in the Waiwodship Podol (what we call Podolia), some 400



miles southeast of Warsaw; not far from the Dniester River:—not far very from that mystery of the Dniester, the Zaporavian Cossacks,—from those rapids or cataracts (quasi-cataracts of the Dniester, with Islands in them, where those Cossack robbers live unassailable):—across the Dniester lies Turkey, and its famed Fortress of Choczim. This is a commodious station for Polish Gentlemen intending mutiny by law.

"MARCH 8th, 1768, Three short days after the Diet of Radom had done its fine feat, and retired to privacy, news came to Warsaw, That Podolia and the Southern parts are all up, confederating with the highest animation; in hot rage against such decision of a Diet, contrary to Holy Religion and to much else; and that the said decision will have to fight for itself, now that it has done voting. This interesting news is true; and goes on intensifying and enlarging itself, one dreadful Confederation springing up, and then another and ever another, day after day; till at last we hear that on the 27th of the month, MARCH 27th, 1768, at Bar, a little Town on the Southern or Turkish Frontier, all these more or less dreadful Confederations have met by delegates, and coalesced into one 'Confederatiou of Bar,'—which did surely prove dreadful enough, to itself especially, in the months now ensuing!"

No history of Bar Confederation shall we dream of; far be such an attempt from us. It consists of many Confederations, and out of each, PRO and CONTRA, spring many. Like the Lernean Hydra, or even Hydras in a plural condition. A many-headed dog:

and how many whelps it had,—I cannot give even the cipher of them, or I would! One whelp Confederation, that of Cracow, is distinguished by having frequently or generally been "drunk;" and of course its procedures had often a vinous character. [In HERMANN (v. 431-448); and especially in RULHIÈRE (ii. livre 8 et seq.), details in superabundance.] I fancy to have read somewhere that the number of them was one hundred and twenty-five. The rumor and the furious barking of Bar and its whelps goes into all lands: such rabid loud baying at mankind and the moon; and then, under Russia's treatment, such shrill yelping and shrieking, was not heard in the world before, though perhaps it has since.

Poor BAR'S exploits in the fighting way were highly inconsiderable; all on the same scale; and spread over such a surface of country, mostly unknown, as renders it impossible to give them head-room, were you never so unfurnished. They can be read in eloquent Rulhière; but by no mortal held in memory. Anarchy is not a thing to be written of; a Lernean Hydra, several Lernean Hydras, in chaotic genesis, getting their heads lopped off, and at the same time sprouting new ones in such ratio, where is the Zoologist that will give account of it? There was not anything considerable of fighting; but of bullying, plundering, murdering and being murdered, a frightful amount. There are seizures of castles, convents, defensible houses; marches at a rate like that of antelopes, through the Lithuanian parts, boggy, hungry, boundless, opening to the fancy the Infinitude of Peat,

in the solid and the fluid state. This, perhaps, is the finest species of feats, though they never lead to anything. There are heroes famed for these marches.

The Pulawskis, for example,—four of them, Lawyer people,—showed much activity, and a talent for impromptu soldiering, in that kind. The Magnates of the Confederation, I was surprised to learn, had all quitted it, the instant it came to strokes: "You Lawyer people, with your priests and orthodox peasantries, you do the fighting part; ours is the consulting!" And except Potocki (and he worse than none), there is presently not a Magnate of them left in Poland,—the rest all gone across the Austrian Border, to Teschen, to Bilitz, a handy little town and domain in that Duchy of Teschen;—and sit there as "Committee of Government:" much at their ease in comparison, could they but agree among themselves, which they cannot. Bilitz is one of the many domains of Magnate Sulkowski:—do readers recollect the Sulkowski who at one time "declared War" on King Friedrich; and was picked up, both War and he, so compendiously by General Goltz, and locked in Glogau to cool? This is the same Sulkowski; much concerned now in these matters; a rich Magnate, glad to see his friends about him as Governing Committee; but gets, and gives, a great deal of vexation in it, the element proving again too hot!—

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