

# History of Friedrich II of Prussia V 5

Thomas Carlyle

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by Thomas Carlyle

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Prepared by D.R. Thompson <drthom@ihug.co.nz>

## Carlyle's "History of Friedrich II of Prussia"

### BOOK V.

#### DOUBLE-MARRIAGE PROJECT, AND WHAT ELEMENT IT FELL INTO. 1723-1726.

##### Chapter I.

#### DOUBLE-MARRIAGE IS DECIDED ON.

We saw George I. at Berlin in October, 1723, looking out upon his little Grandson drilling the Cadets there; but we did not mention what important errand had brought his Majesty thither.

Visits between Hanover and Berlin had been frequent for a long time back; the young Queen of Prussia, sometimes with her husband, sometimes without, running often over to see her Father; who, even after his accession to the English crown, was generally for some months every year to be met with in those favorite regions of his. He himself did not much visit, being of taciturn splanetic nature: but this once he had agreed to return a visit they had lately made him,--where a certain weighty Business had been agreed upon, withal; which his Britannic Majesty was to consummate formally, by treaty, when the meeting in Berlin took effect. His Britannic Majesty, accordingly, is come; the business in hand is no other than that thrice-famous "Double-Marriage" of Prussia with England; which once had such a sound in the ear of Rumor, and still bulks so big in the archives of the Eighteenth Century; which worked such woe to all parties concerned in it; and is, in fact, a first-rate nuisance in the History of that poor Century, as written hitherto. Nuisance demanding urgently to be abated;--were that well possible at present. Which, alas, it is not, to any great degree; there being an important young Friedrich inextricably wrapt up in it, to whom it was of such vital or almost fatal importance! Without a Friedrich, the affair could be reduced to something like its real size, and recorded in a few pages; or might even, with advantage, be forgotten altogether, and become zero. More gigantic instance of much ado about nothing has seldom occurred in human annals;--had not there been a Friedrich in the heart of it.

Crown-Prince Friedrich is still very young for marriage-speculations on his score: but Mamma has thought good to take matters in time. And so we shall, in the next ensuing parts of this poor History, have to hear almost as much about Marriage as in the foolishdest Three-volume Novel, and almost to still less purpose. For indeed, in that particular, Friedrich's young Life may be called a ROMANCE FLUNG HELLS-OVER-HEAD;--Marriage being the one event there, round which all events turn,--but turn in the inverse or reverse way (as if the Devil were in them); not only towards no happy goal for him or Mamma, or us, but at last towards hardly any goal at all for anybody! So mad did the affair grow;--

and is so madly recorded in those inextricable, dateless, chaotic Books. We have now come to regions of Narrative, which seem to consist of murky Nothingness put on boil; not land, or water, or air, or fire, but a tumultuously whirling commixture of all the four;--of immense extent too. Which must be got crossed, in some human manner. Courage, patience, good reader!

#### QUEEN SOPHIE DOROTHEE HAS TAKEN TIME BY THE FORELOCK.

Already, for a dozen years, this matter has been treated of. Queen Sophie Dorothee, ever since the birth of her Wilhelmina, has had the notion of it; and, on her first visit afterwards to Hanover, proposed it to "Princess Caroline,"--Queen Caroline of England who was to be, and who in due course was;--an excellent accomplished Brandenburg-Anspach Lady, familiar from of old in the Prussian Court: "You, Caroline, Cousin dear, have a little Prince, Fritz, or let us call him FRED, since he is to be English; little Fred, who will one day, if all go right, be King of England. He is two years older than my little Wilhelmina: why should not they wed, and the two chief Protestant Houses, and Nations, thereby be united?" Princess Caroline was very willing; so was Electress Sophie, the Great-Grandmother of both the parties; so were the Georges, Father and Grandfather of Fred: little Fred himself was highly charmed, when told of it; even little Wilhelmina, with her dolls, looked pleasantly demure on the occasion. So it remained settled in fact, though not in form; and little Fred (a florid milk-faced foolish kind of Boy, I guess) made presents to his little Prussian Cousin, wrote bits of love-letters to her; and all along afterwards fancied himself, and at length ardently enough became, her little lover and intended,--always rather a little fellow:--to which sentiments Wilhelmina signifies that she responded with the due maidenly indifference, but not in an offensive manner.

After our Prussian Fritz's birth, the matter took a still closer form: "You, dear Princess Caroline, you have now two little Princesses again, either of whom might suit my little Fritzchen; let us take Amelia, the second of them, who is nearest his age?" "Agreed!" answered Princess Caroline again. "Agreed!" answered all the parties interested: and so it was settled, that the Marriage of Prussia to England should be a Double one, Fred of Hanover and England to Wilhelmina, Fritz of Prussia to Amelia; and children and parents lived thenceforth in the constant understanding that such, in due course of years, was to be the case, though nothing yet was formally concluded by treaty upon it. [*Pollnitz, Memoiren, ii. 193.*]

Queen Sophie Dorothee of Prussia was always eager enough for treaty, and conclusion to her scheme. True to it, she, as needle to the pole in all weathers; sometimes in the wildest weather, poor lady. Nor did the Hanover Serene Highnesses, at any time, draw back or falter: but having very soon got wafted across to England, into new more complex conditions, and wider anxieties in that new country, they were not so impressively eager as Queen Sophie, on this interesting point. Electress Sophie, judicious Great-Grandmother, was not now there: Electress Sophie had died about a month before Queen Anne; and never saw the English Canaan, much as she had longed for it. George I., her son, a taciturn,



rather splenetic elderly Gentleman, very foreign in England, and oftenest rather sulky there and elsewhere, was not in a humor to be forward in that particular business.

George I. had got into quarrel with his Prince of Wales, Fred's Father,--him who is one day to be George II., always a rather foolish little Prince, though his Wife Caroline was Wisdom's self in a manner:--George I. had other much more urgent cares than that of marrying his disobedient foolish little Prince of Wales's offspring; and he always pleaded difficulties, Acts of Parliament that would be needed, and the like, whenever Sophie Dorothee came to visit him at Hanover, and urge this matter. The taciturn, inarticulately thoughtful, rather sulky old Gentleman, he had weighty burdens lying on him; felt fretted and galled, in many ways; and had found life, Electoral and even Royal, a deceptive sumptuousness, little better than a more or less extensive "feast of SHELLS," next to no real meat or drink left in it to the hungry heart of man. Wife sitting half-frantic in the Castle of Ahlden, waxing more and more into a gray-haired Megaera (with whom Sophie Dorothee under seven seals of secrecy corresponds a little, and even the Prince of Wales is suspected of wishing to correspond); a foolish disobedient Prince of Wales; Jacobite Pretender people with their Mar Rebellions, with their Alberoni combinations; an English Parliament jangling and debating unmelodiously, whose very language is a mystery to us, nothing but Walpole in dog-latin to help us through it: truly it is not a Heaven-on-Earth altogether, much as Mother Sophie and her foolish favorite, our disobedient Prince of Wales, might long for it! And the Hanover Tail, the Robethons, Bernstorfs, Fabrices, even the Blackamoor Porters,--they are not beautiful either, to a taciturn Majesty of some sense, if he cared about their doings or them. Voracious, plunderous, all of them; like hounds, long hungry, got into a rich house which has no master, or a mere imaginary one. "MENTERIS IMPUDENTISSIME," said Walpole in his dog-latin once, in our Royal presence, to one of these official plunderous gentlemen, "You tell an impudent lie!"--at which we only laughed. [Horace Walpole, *Reminiscences of George I. and George II.* (London, 1786.)]

His Britannic Majesty by no means wanted sense, had not his situation been incurably absurd. In his young time he had served creditably enough against the Turks; twice commanded the REICHS-Army in the Marlborough Wars, and did at least testify his indignation at the inefficient state of it. His Foreign Politics, so called, were not madder than those of others. Bremen and Verden he had bought a bargain; and it was natural to protect them by such resources as he had, English or other. Then there was the World-Spectre of the Pretender, stretching huge over Creation, like the Brocken-Spectre in hazy weather;--against whom how protect yourself, except by cannonading for the Kaiser at Messina; by rushing into every brabble that rose, and hiring the parties with money to fight it out well? It was the established method in that matter; method not of George's inventing, nor did it cease with George. As to Domestic Politics, except it were to keep quiet, and eat what the gods had provided, one does not find that he had any.--The sage Leibnitz would very fain have followed him to England; but, for reasons indifferently good, could never be allowed. If the truth must be told, the sage Leibnitz had a wisdom which now looks dreadfully like that of a wiseacre! In Mathematics

even,--he did invent the Differential Calculus, but it is certain also he never could believe in Newton's System of the Universe, nor would read the PRINCIPIA at all. For the rest, he was in quarrel about Newton with the Royal Society here; ill seen, it is probable, by this sage and the other. To the Hanover Official Gentlemen devouring their English dead-horse, it did not appear that his presence could be useful in these parts. [Guhrauer, *Gottfried Freiherr von Leibnitz, eine Biographie* (Breslau, 1842); Ker of Kersland, *Memoirs of Secret Transactions* (London, 1727).

Nor are the Hanover womankind his Majesty has about him, quasi-wives or not, of a soul-entrancing character; far indeed from that. Two in chief there are, a fat and a lean: the lean, called "Maypole" by the English populace, is "Duchess of Kendal," with excellent pension, in the English Peerage; Schulenburg the former German name of her; decidedly a quasi-wife (influential, against her will, in that sad Konigsmark Tragedy, at Hanover long since), who is fallen thin and old. "Maypole,"--or bare Hop-pole, with the leaves all stript; lean, long, hard;--though she once had her summer verdures too; and still, as an old quasi-wife, or were it only as an old article of furniture, has her worth to the royal mind, Schulenburgs, kindred of hers, are high in the military line; some of whom we may meet.

Then besides this lean one, there is a fat; of whom Walpole (Horace, who had seen her in boyhood) gives description. Big staring black eyes, with rim of circular eyebrow, like a coach-wheel round its nave, very black the eyebrows also; vast red face; cheeks running into neck, neck blending indistinguishably with stomach,--a mere cataract of fluid tallow, skinned over and curiously dizen'd, according to Walpole's portraiture. This charming creature, Kielmannsegge by German name, was called "Countess of Darlington" in this country--with excellent pension, as was natural. They all had pensions: even Queen Sophie Dorothee, I have noticed in our State-Paper Office, has her small pension, "800 pounds a year on the Irish Establishment:" Irish Establishment will never miss such a pittance for our poor Child, and it may be useful over yonder!--This Kielmannsegge, Countess of Darlington was, and is, believed by the gossiping English to have been a second simultaneous Mistress of his Majesty's; but seems, after all, to have been his Half-Sister and nothing more. Half-Sister (due to Gentleman Ernst and a Countess Platen of bad Hanover fame); grown dreadfully fat; but not without shrewdness, perhaps affection; and worth something in this dull foreign country, mere cataract of animal oils as she has become. These Two are the amount of his Britannic Majesty's resources in that matter; resources surely not extensive, after all!--

His Britannic Majesty's day, in St. James's, is not of an interesting sort to him; and every evening he comes precisely at a certain hour to drink beer, seasoned with a little tobacco, and the company of these two women. Drinks diligently in a sipping way, says Horace; and smokes, with such dull speech as there may be,--not till he is drunk, but only perceptibly drunkish; raised into a kind of cloudy narcotic Olympus, and opaquely superior to the ills of life; in which state he walks uncomplainingly to bed. Government, when it can by any art be avoided, he rarely meddles with; shows a rugged sagacity, where he does and must meddle:

consigns it to Walpole in dog-latin,--laughs at his "MENTIRIS."  
This is the First George; first triumph of the Constitutional Principle, which has since gone to such sublime heights among us, --heights which we at last begin to suspect might be depths, leading down, all men now ask: Whitherwards? A much-admired invention in its time, that of letting go the rudder, or setting a wooden figure expensively dressed to take charge of it, and discerning that the ship would sail of itself so much more easily! Which it will, if a peculiarly good seaboat, in certain kinds of sea,--for a time. Till the Sinbad "Magnetic Mountains" begin to be felt pulling, or the circles of Charybdis get you in their sweep; and then what an invention it was!--This, we say, is the new Sovereign Man, whom the English People, being in some perplexity about the Pope and other points, have called in from Hanover, to walk before them in the ways of heroism, and by command and by example guide Heavenwards their affairs and them. And they hope that he will do it? Or perhaps that their affairs will go thither of their own accord? Always a singular People!--

Poor George, careless of these ulterior issues, has always trouble enough with the mere daily details, Parliamentary insolences, Jacobite plottings, South-Sea Bubbles; and wishes to hunt, when he gets over to Hanover, rather than to make Marriage-Treaties. Besides, as Wilhelmina tells us, they have filled him with lies, these Hanover Women and their emissaries: "Your Princess Wilhelmina is a monster of ill-temper, crooked in the back and what not," say they. If there is to be a Marriage, double or single, these Improper Females must first be persuaded to consent. [*Memoires de Bareith.*] Difficulties enough. And there is none to help; Friedrich Wilhelm cares little about the matter, though he has given his Yes,--Yes, since you will.

But Sophie Dorothee is diligent and urgent, by all opportunities; --and, at length, in 1723, the conjuncture is propitious. Domestic Jacobitism, in the shape of Bishop Atterbury, has got, itself well banished; Alberoni and his big schemes, years ago they are blown into outer darkness; Charles XII. is well dead, and of our Bremen and Verden no question henceforth; even the Kaiser's Spectre-Hunt, or Spanish Duel, is at rest for the present, and the Congress of Cambrai is sitting, or trying all it can to sit: at home or abroad, there is nothing, not even Wood's Irish Halfpence, as yet making noise. And on the other hand, Czar Peter is rumored (not without foundation) to be coming westward, with some huge armament; which, whether "intended for Sweden" or not, renders a Prussian alliance doubly valuable.

And so now at last, in this favorable aspect of the stars, King George, over at Herrenhausen, was by much management of his Daughter Sophie's, and after many hitches, brought to the mark. And Friedrich Wilhelm came over too; ostensibly to bring home his Queen, but in reality to hear his Father-in-law's compliance to the Double-Marriage,--for which his Prussian Majesty is willing enough, if others are willing. Praised be Heaven, King George has agreed to everything; consents, one propitious day (Autumn 1723, day not otherwise dated),--Czar Peter's Armament, and the questionable aspects in France, perhaps quickening his volitions a little. Upon which Friedrich Wilhelm and Queen Sophie have returned home, content in that matter; and expect shortly his Britannic Majesty's counter-visit, to perfect the details, and

make a Treaty of it.

His Britannic Majesty, we say, has in substance agreed to everything. And now, in the silence of Nature, the brown leaves of October still hanging to the trees in a picturesque manner, and Wood's Halfpence not yet begun to jingle in the Drapier's Letters of Dean Swift,--his Britannic Majesty is expected at Berlin.

At Berlin; properly at Charlottenburg a pleasant rural or suburban Palace (built by his Britannic Majesty's late noble Sister, Sophie Charlotte, "the Republican Queen," and named after her, as was once mentioned), a mile or two Southwest of that City. There they await King George's counter-visit.

Poor Wilhelmina is in much trepidation about it; and imparts her poor little feelings, her anticipations and experiences, in readable terms:--

"There came, in those weeks, one of the Duke of Gloucester's gentlemen to Berlin,"--DUKE OF GLOUCESTER is Fred our intended, not yet Prince of Wales, and if the reader should ever hear of a DUKE OF EDINBURGH, that too is Fred,--"Duke of Gloucester's gentlemen to Berlin," says Wilhelmina: "the Queen had Soiree (APPARTEMENT); he was presented to her as well as to me. He made me a very obliging compliment on his Master's part; I blushed, and answered only by a courtesy. The Queen, who had her eye on me, was very angry I had answered the Duke's compliments in mere silence; and rated me sharply (ME LAVA LA TETE D'IMPORTANCE) for it; and ordered me, under pain of her indignation, to repair that fault to-morrow. I retired, all in tears, to my room; exasperated against the Queen and against the Duke; I swore I would never marry him, would throw myself at the feet--" And so on, as young ladies of vivacious temper, in extreme circumstances, are wont: --did speak, however, next day, to my Hanover gentleman about his Duke, a little, though in an embarrassed manner. Alas, I am yet but fourteen, gone the 3d of July last: tremulous as aspen-leaves; or say, as sheet-lightning bottled in one of the thinnest human skins; and have no experience of foolish Dukes and affairs!--

"Meanwhile," continues Wilhelmina, "the King of England's time of arrival was drawing nigh. We repaired, on the 6th of October, to Charlottenburg to receive him. The heart of me kept beating, and I was in cruel agitations. King George [my Grandfather, and Grand Uncle] arrived on the 8th, about seven in the evening;"--dusky shades already sinking over Nature everywhere, and all paths growing dim. Abundant flunkies, of course, rush out with torches or what is needful. "The King of Prussia, the Queen and all their Suite received him in the Court of the Palace, the 'Apartments' being on the ground-floor. So soon as he had saluted the King and Queen, I was presented to him. He embraced me; and turning to the Queen said to her, 'Your daughter is very big of her age!' He gave the Queen his hand, and led her into her apartment, whither everybody followed them. As soon as I came in, he took a light from the table, and surveyed me from head to foot. I stood motionless as a statue, and was much put out of countenance. All this went on without his uttering the least word. Having thus passed me in review, he addressed himself to my Brother, whom he caressed much, and amused himself with, for a good while." Pretty little Grandson this, your Majesty;--any future of history in this one, think you? "I," says Wilhelmina, "took the

opportunity of slipping out;"--hopeful to get away; but could not, the Queen having noticed.

"The Queen made me a sign to follow her; and passed into a neighboring apartment, where she had the English and Germans of King George's Suite successively presented to her. After some talk with these gentlemen, she withdrew; leaving me to entertain them, and saying: 'Speak English to my Daughter; you will find she speaks it very well.' I felt much less embarrassed, once the Queen was gone; and picking up a little courage, I entered into conversation with these English. As I spoke their language like my mother-tongue, I got pretty well out of the affair, and everybody seemed charmed with me. They made my eulogy to the Queen; told her I had quite the English air, and was made to be their Sovereign one day. It was saying a great deal on their part: for these English think themselves so much above all other people, that they imagine they are paying a high compliment when they tell any one he has got English manners.

"Their King [my Grandpapa] had got Spanish manners, I should say: he was of an extreme gravity, and hardly spoke a word to anybody. He saluted Madam Sonsfeld [my invaluable thrice-dear Governess] very coldly; and asked her 'If I was always so serious, and if my humor was of the melancholy turn?' 'Anything but that, Sire,' answered the other: 'but the respect she has for your Majesty prevents her from being as sprightly as she commonly is.' He wagged his head, and answered nothing. The reception he had given me, and this question, of which I heard, gave me such a chill, that I never had the courage to speak to him,"--was merely looked at with a candle by Grandpapa.

"We were summoned to supper at last, where this grave Sovereign still remained dumb. Perhaps he was right, perhaps he was wrong; but I think he followed the proverb, which says, Better hold your tongue than speak badly. At the end of the repast he felt indisposed. The Queen would have persuaded him to quit table; they bandied compliments a good while on the point; but at last she threw down her napkin, and rose. The King of England naturally rose too; but began to stagger; the King of Prussia ran up to help him, all the company ran bustling about him; but it was to no purpose: he sank on his knees; his peruke falling on one side, and his hat [or at least his head, Madam!] on the other. They stretched him softly on the floor; where he remained a good hour without consciousness. The pains they took with him brought back his senses, by degrees, at last. The Queen and the King [of Prussia] were in despair all this while. Many have thought this attack was a herald of the stroke of apoplexy which came by and by,"--within four years from this date, and carried off his Majesty in a very gloomy manner.

"They passionately entreated him to retire now," continues Wilhelmina; "but he would not by any means. He led out the Queen, and did the other ceremonies, according to rule; had a very bad night, as we learned underhand;" but persisted stoically nevertheless, being a crowned Majesty, and bound to it. He stoically underwent four or three other days, of festival, sight-seeing, "pleasure" so called;--among other sights, saw little Fritz drilling his Cadets at Berlin;--and on the fourth day (12th October, 1723, so thinks Wilhelmina) fairly "signed the

Treaty of the Double-Marriage," English Townshend and the Prussian Ministry having settled all things. [*Wilhelmina, Memoires de Bareith, i. 83, 87,--In Coxe (Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, London, 1798), ii. 266, 272, 273, are some faint hints, from Townshend, of this Berlin journey.]*

"Signed the Treaty," thinks Wilhelmina, "all things being settled." Which is an error on the part of Wilhelmina. Settled many or all things were by Townshend and the others: but before signing, there was Parliament to be apprised, there were formalities, expenditure of time; between the cup and the lip, such things to intervene;--and the sad fact is, the Double-Marriage Treaty never was signed at all!--However, all things being now settled ready for signing, his Britannic Majesty, next morning, set off for the GOHRDE again, to try if there were any hunting possible.

This authentic glimpse, one of the few that are attainable, of their first Constitutional King, let English readers make the most of. The act done proved dreadfully momentous to our little Friend, his Grandson; and will much concern us!

Thus, at any rate, was the Treaty of the Double-Marriage settled, to the point of signing,--thought to be as good as signed. It was at the time when Czar Peter was making armaments to burn Sweden; when Wood's Halfpence (on behalf of her Improper Grace of Kendal, the lean Quasi-Wife, "Maypole" or Hop-pole, who had run short of money, as she often did) were about beginning to jingle in Ireland; [Coxe (i. 216, 217, and SUPPLY the dates); Walpole to Townshend, 13th October, 1723 (ib. ii. 275): *"The Drapier's Letters"* are of 1724.] when Law's Bubble "System" had fallen, well flaccid, into Chaos again; when Dubois the unutterable Cardinal had at length died, and d'Orleans the unutterable Regent was unexpectedly about to do so,--in a most surprising Sodom-and-Gomorrhah manner. [2d December, 1723: Barbier, *Journal Historique du Regne de Louis XV.* (Paris, 1847), i. 192, 196; Lacretelle, *Histoire de France, 18me siecle;* &c.] Not to mention other dull and vile phenomena of putrid fermentation, which were transpiring, or sluttishly bubbling up, in poor benighted rotten Europe here or there;--since these are sufficient to date the Transaction for us; and what does not stick to our Fritz and his affairs it is more pleasant to us to forget than to remember, of such an epoch.

Hereby, for the present, is a great load rolled from Queen Sophie Dorothee's heart. One, and, that the highest, of her abstruse negotiations, cherished, labored in, these fourteen years, she has brought to a victorious issue,--has she not? Her poor Mother, once so radiant, now so dim and angry, shut in the Castle of Ahlden, does not approve this Double-Marriage; not she for her part;--as indeed evil to all Hanoverian interests is now chiefly her good, poor Lady; and she is growing more and more of a Megaera every day. With whom Sophie Dorothee has her own difficulties and abstruse practices; but struggles always to maintain, under seven-fold secrecy, some thread of correspondence and pious filial ministrations wherever possible; that the poor exasperated Mother, wretchedest and angriest of women, be not quite cut off from the kinship of the living, but that some soft breath of pity

may cool her burning heart now and then. [In *Memoirs of Sophia Dorothea* (London, 1845), ii. 385, 393, are certain fractions of this Correspondence, "edited" in an amazing manner.] A dark tragedy of Sophie's, this; the Bluebeard Chamber of her mind, into which no eye but her own must ever look.

#### PRINCESS AMELIA COMES INTO THE WORLD.

In reference to Queen Sophie, and chronologically if not otherwise connected with this Double-Marriage Treaty, I will mention one other thing. Her Majesty had been in fluctuating health, all summer; unaccountable symptoms turning up in her Majesty's constitution, languors, qualms, especially a tendency to swelling or increase of size, which had puzzled and alarmed her Doctors and her. Friedrich Wilhelm, on conclusion of the Marriage-Treaty, had been appointed to join his Father-in-law, Britannic George, at the Gohrde, in some three weeks' time, and have a bout of hunting. On the 8th of November, bedtime being come, he kissed his Wilhelmina and the rest, by way of good-by; intending to start very early on the morrow:--long journey (150 miles or so), to be done all in one day. In the dead of the night, Queen Sophie was seized with dreadful colics,--pangs of colic or who knows what;--Friedrich Wilhelm is summoned; rises in the highest alarm; none but the maids and he at hand to help; and the colic, or whatever it may be, gets more and more dreadful.

Colic? O poor Sophie, it is travail, and no colic; and a clever young Princess is suddenly the result! None but Friedrich Wilhelm and the maid for midwives; mother and infant, nevertheless, doing perfectly well. Friedrich Wilhelm did not go on the morrow, but next day; laughed, ever and anon in loud hahas, at the part he had been playing; and was very glad and merry. How the experienced Sophie, whose twelfth child this is, came to commit such an oversight is unaccountable; but the fact is certain, and made a merry noise in Court circles. [Pollnitz, ii. 199; Wilhelmina, i. 87, 88.]

The clever little Princess, now born in this manner, is known by name to idle readers. She was christened AMELIA; and we shall hear of her in time coming. But there was, as the Circulating Libraries still intimate, a certain loud-spoken braggart of the histrionic-heroic sort, called Baron Trenck, windy, rash, and not without mendacity, who has endeavored to associate her with his own transcendent and not undeserved ill-luck; hinting the poor Princess into a sad fame in that way. For which, it would now appear, there was no basis whatever! Most condemnable Trenck;--whom, however, Robespierre guillotined finally, and so settled that account and others.

Of Sophie Dorothee's twelve children, including this Amelia, there are now eight living, two boys, six girls; and after Amelia, two others, boys, are successively to come: ten in all, who grew to be men and women. Of whom perhaps I had better subjoin a List; now that the eldest Boy and Girl are about to get settled in life; and therewith close this Chapter.

#### FRIEDRICH WILHELM'S TEN CHILDREN.

Marriage to Sophie Dorothee, 28th November, 1706.

A little Prince, born 23d November, 1707, died in six months.

Then came,

1. FREDERIKA SOPHIE WILHELMINA, ultimately Margravine of Baireuth, after strange adventures in the marriage-treaty way. Wrote her *Memoires* there, about 1744. Of whom we shall hear much. Left a Daughter, her one child; Daughter badly married, to "Karl reigning Duke of Wurtemberg" (Poet Schiller's famous Serene Highness there), from whom she had to separate, &c., with anger enough, by and by.

After Wilhelmina in the Family series came a second Prince, who died in the eleventh month. Then, 24th January, 1712,

2. FRIEDRICH.

After whom (1713) a little Princess, who died in few months.

And then,

3. FREDERIKA LOUISA, born 28th September, 1714; age now about nine. Margravine of Anspach, 30th May, 1729; Widow 1757.

Her one Son, born 1736, was the LADY-CRAVEN'S Anspach.

Frederika Louisa died 4th February, 1734.

4. PHILIPPINA CHARLOTTE, born 13th of March, 1716; became Duchess of Brunswick (her Husband was Eldest Brother of the "Prince Ferdinand" so famous in England in the Seven-Years War); her Son was the Duke who invaded France in 1792, and was tragically hurled to ruin in the Battle of Jena, 1806. The Mother lived till 1801; Widow since 1780.

After whom, in 1717, again a little Prince, who died within two years (our Fritz then seven,--probably the first time Death ever came before him, practically into his little thoughts in this world): then,

5. SOPHIE DOROTHEE MARIA, born 25th January, 1719; Margravine of Schwedt, 1734 (eldest Magraf of Schwedt, mentioned above as a comrade of the Crown-Prince). Her life not very happy; she died 1765. Left no son (Brother-in-law succeeded, last of the Schwedt MARGRAVES): her Daughter, wedded to Prince Friedrich Eugen, a Prussian Officer, Cadet of Wurtemberg and ultimately Heir there, is Ancestress of the Wurtemberg Sovereignities that now are, and also (by one of HER daughters married to Paul of Russia) of all the Czar kindred of our time. [Preuss, iv. 278; Erman, *Vie de Sophie Charlotte*, p. 272.]

6. LOUISA ULRIQUE, born 24th July, 1720; married Adolf Friedrich, Heir-Apparent, subsequently King of Sweden, 17th July, 1744; Queen (he having acceded) 6th April, 1751; Widow 1771; died, at Stockholm, 16th July, 1782. Mother of the subsequent Kings; her Grandson the DEPOSED [Oertel, p. 83; Hubner, tt. 91, 227.]

7. AUGUST WILHELM, born 9th August, 1722; Heir-Apparent after Friedrich (so declared by Friedrich, 30th June, 1744); Father of the Kings who have since followed. He himself died, in sad circumstances, as we shall see, 12th June, 1758.

8. ANNA AMELIA, born 9th November, 1723,--on the terms we have seen.

9. FRIEDRICH HEINRICH LUDWIG, born 18th January, 1726;--the famed Prince Henri, of whom we shall hear.

10. AUGUST FERDINAND, born 23d May, 1730: a brilliant enough



little soldier under his Brother, full of spirit and talent, but liable to weak health;--was Father of the "Prince Louis Ferdinand," a tragic Failure of something considerable, who went off in Liberalism, wit, in high sentiment, expenditure and debauchery, greatly to the admiration of some persons; and at length rushed desperate upon the French, and found his quietus (10th October, 1806), four days before the Battle of Jena.

## Chapter II.

### A KAISER HUNTING SHADOWS.

Treaty of Double-Marriage is ready for signing, once the needful Parliamentary preludings are gone through; Treaty is signed, thinks Wilhelmina,--forgetting the distance between cup and lip!-- As to signing, or even to burning, and giving up the thought of signing, alas, how far are we yet from that! Imperial spectre-huntings and the politics of most European Cabinets will connect themselves with that; and send it wandering wide enough,-- lost in such a jungle of intrigues, pettifoggings, treacheries, diplomacies domestic and foreign, as the course of true-love never got entangled in before.

The whole of which extensive Cabinet operations, covering square miles of paper at this moment,--having nevertheless, after ten years of effort, ended in absolute zero,--were of no worth even to the managers of them; and are of less than none to any mortal now or henceforth. So that the method of treating them becomes a problem to History. To pitch them utterly out of window, and out of memory, never to be mentioned in human speech again: this is the manifest prompting of Nature;--and this, were not our poor Crown-Prince and one or two others involved in them, would be our ready and thrice-joyful course. Surely the so-called "Politics of Europe" in that day are a thing this Editor would otherwise with his whole soul, forget to all eternity! "Putrid fermentation," ending, after the endurance of much mal-odor, in mere zero to you and to every one, even to the rotting bodies themselves:--is there any wise Editor that would connect himself with that? These are the fields of History which are to be, so soon as humanly possible, SUPPRESSED; which only Mephistopheles, or the bad Genius of Mankind, can contemplate with pleasure.

Let us strive to touch lightly the chief summits, here and there, of that intricate, most empty, mournful Business,--which was really once a Fact in practical Europe, not the mere nightmare of an Attorney's Dream;--and indicate, so far as indispensable, how the young Friedrich, Friedrich's Sister, Father, Mother, were tribulated, almost heart-broken and done to death, by means of it.

### IMPERIAL MAJESTY ON THE TREATY OF UTRECHT.

Kaiser Karl VI., head of the Holy Romish Empire at this time, was a handsome man to look upon; whose life, full of expense, vicissitude, futile labor and adventure, did not prove of much use to the world. Describable as a laborious futility rather. He was second son of that little Leopold, the solemn little Herr in red

stockings, who had such troubles, frights, and runnings to and fro with the sieging Turks, liberative Sobieskis, acquisitive Louis Fourteenth; and who at length ended in a sea of futile labor, which they call the Spanish Succession War.

This Karl, second son, had been appointed "King of Spain" in that futile business; and with much sublimity, though internally in an impoverished condition, he proceeded towards Spain, landing in England to get cash for the outfit;--arrived in Spain; and roved about there as Titular-King for some years, with the fighting Peterboroughs, Galways, Stahrembergs; but did no good there, neither he nor his Peterboroughs. At length, his Brother Joseph, Father Leopold's successor, having died, [17th April, 1711.] Karl came home from Spain to be Kaiser. At which point, Karl would have been wise to give up his Titular Kingship in Spain; for he never got, nor will get, anything but futile labor from hanging to it. He did hang to it nevertheless; and still, at this date of George's visit and long afterwards, hangs,--with notable obstinacy. To the woe of men and nations: punishment doubtless of his sins and theirs!--

Kaiser Karl shrieked mere amazement and indignation, when the English tired of fighting for him and it. When the English said to their great Marlborough: "Enough, you sorry Marlborough! You have beaten Louis XIV. to the suppleness of wash-leather, at our bidding; that is true, and that may have had its difficulties: but, after all, we prefer to have the thing precisely as it would have been without any fighting. You, therefore, what is the good of you? You are a--person whom we fling out like sweepings, now that our eyesight returns, and accuse of common stealing. Go and be--!"

Nothing ever had so disgusted and astonished Kaiser Karl as this treatment,--not of Marlborough, whom he regarded only as he would have done a pair of military boots or a holster-pistol of superior excellence, for the uses that were in him,--but of the Kaiser Karl his own sublime self, the heart and focus of Political Nature; left in this manner, now when the sordid English and Dutch declined spending blood and money for him farther. "Ungrateful, sordid, inconceivable souls," answered Karl, "was there ever, since the early Christian times, such a martyr as you have now made of me!" So answered Karl, in diplomatic groans and shrieks, to all ends of Europe. But the sulky English and Allies, thoroughly tired of paying and bleeding, did not heed him; made their Peace of Utrecht [Peace of Utrecht, 11th April, 1713; Peace of Rastadt (following upon the Preliminaries of Baden), 6th March, 1714.] with Louis XIV., who was now beaten supple; and Karl, after a year of indignant protests and futile attempts to fight Louis on his own score, was obliged to do the like. He has lost the Spanish crown; but still holds by the shadow of it; will not quit that, if he can help it. He hunts much, digests well; is a sublime Kaiser, though internally rather poor, carrying his head high; and seems to himself, on some sides of his life, a martyred much-enduring man.

IMPERIAL MAJESTY HAS GOT HAPPILY WEDDED.

Kaiser Karl, soon after the time of going to Spain had decided

that a Wife would be necessary. He applied to Caroline of Anspach, now English Princess of Wales, but at that time an orphaned Brandenburg-Anspach Princess, very Beautiful, graceful, gifted, and altogether unprovided for; living at Berlin under the guardianship of Friedrich the first King. Her young Mother had married again,--high enough match (to Kur-Sachsen, elder Brother of August the Strong, August at that time without prospects of the Electorate);--but it lasted short while: Caroline's Mother and Saxon Stepfather were both now, long since, dead. So she lived at Berlin brilliant though unportioned;--with the rough cub Friedrich Wilhelm much following her about, and passionately loyal to her, as the Beast was to Beauty; whom she did not mind except as a cub loyal to her; being five years older than he. [Forster, i. 107.] Indigent bright Caroline, a young lady of fine aquiline features and spirit, was applied for to be Queen of Spain; wooer a handsome man, who might even be Kaiser by and by. Indigent bright Caroline at once answered, No. She was never very orthodox in Protestant theology; but could not think of taking up Papistry for lucre's and ambition's sake: be that always remembered on Caroline's behalf.

The Spanish Majesty next applied at Brunswick Wolfenbuttel; no lack of Princesses there: Princesa Elizabeth, for instance; Protestant she too, but perhaps not so squeamish? Old Anton Ulrich, whom some readers know for the idle Books, long-winded Novels chiefly, which he wrote, was the Grandfather of this favored Princess; a good-natured old gentleman, of the idle ornamental species, in whose head most things, it is likely, were reduced to vocables, scribble and sentimentality; and only a steady internal gravitation towards praise and pudding was traceable as very real in him. Anton Ulrich, affronted more or less by the immense advancement of Gentleman Ernst and the Hanoverian or YOUNGER Brunswick Line, was extremely glad of the Imperial offer; and persuaded his timid Grand-daughter, ambitious too, but rather conscience-stricken, That the change from Protestant to Catholic, the essentials being so perfectly identical in both, was a mere trifle; that he himself, old as he was, would readily change along with her, so easy was it. Whereupon the young Lady made the big leap; abjured her religion; [1st May, 1707, at Bamberg.]--went to Spain as Queen (with sad injury to her complexion, but otherwise successfully more or less);--and sits now as Empress beside her Karl VI. in a grand enough, probably rather dull, but not singularly unhappy manner.

She, a Brunswick Princess, with Nephews and Nieces who may concern us, is Kaiserinn to Kaiser Karl: for aught I know of her, a kindly simple Wife, and unexceptionable Sovereign Majesty, of the sort wanted; whom let us remember, if we meet her again one day. I add only of this poor Lady, distinguished to me by a Daughter she had, that her mind still had some misgivings about the big leap she had made in the Protestant-Papist way. Finding Anton Ulrich still continue Protestant, she wrote to him out of Spain:--"Why, O honored Grandpapa, have you not done as you promised? Ah, there must be a taint of mortal sin in it, after all!" Upon which the absurdly situated old Gentleman did change his religion; and is marked as a Convert in all manner of Genealogies and Histories;--truly an old literary gentleman ducal and serene, restored to the bosom of the Church in a somewhat peculiarly ridiculous manner. {Michaelis, i. 131.}--But to return.

## IMPERIAL MAJESTY AND THE TERMAGANT OF SPAIN.

Ever after the Peace of Utrecht, when England and Holland declined to bleed for him farther, especially ever since his own Peace of Rastadt made with Louis the year after Kaiser Karl had utterly lost hold of the Crown of Spain; and had not the least chance to clutch that bright substance again. But he held by the shadow of it, with a deadly Hapsburg tenacity; refused for twenty years, under all pressures, to part with the shadow: "The Spanish Hapsburg Branch is dead; whereupon do not I, of the Austrian Branch, sole representative of Kaiser Karl the Fifth, claim, by the law of Heaven, whatever he possessed in Spain, by law of ditto? Battles of Blenheim of Malplaquet, Court-intrigues of Mrs. Masham and the Duchess: these may bring Treaties of Utrecht, and what you are pleased to call laws of Earth;--but a Hapsburg Kaiser knows higher laws, if you would do a thousand Utrechts; and by these, Spain is his!"

Poor Kaiser Karl: he had a high thought in him really though a most misguided one. Titular King of Men; but much bewildered into mere indolent fatuity, inane solemnity, high sniffing pride grounded on nothing at all; a Kaiser much sunk in the sediments of his muddy Epoch. Sure enough, he was a proud lofty solemn Kaiser, infinitely the gentleman in air and humor; Spanish gravities, ceremonials, reticences;--and could, in a better scene, have distinguished himself by better than mere statuesque immovability of posture, dignified endurance of ennui, and Hapsburg tenacity in holding the grip. It was not till 1735, after tusslings and wrenchings beyond calculation, that he would consent to quit the Shadow of the Crown of Spain; and let Europe BE at peace on that score.

The essence of what is called the European History of this Period, such History as a Period sunk dead in spirit, and alive only in stomach, can have, turns all on Kaiser Karl, and these his clutchings at shadows. Which makes a very sad, surprising History indeed; more worthy to be called Phenomena of Putrid Fermentation, than Struggles of Human Heroism to vindicate itself in this Planet, which latter alone are worthy of recording as "History" by mankind.

On the throne of Spain, beside Philip V. the melancholic new Bourbon, Louis XIV.'s Grandson, sat Elizabeth Farnese, a termagant tenacious woman, whose ambitious cupidities were not inferior in obstinacy to Kaiser Karl's, and proved not quite so shadowy as his. Elizabeth also wanted several things: renunciation of your (Kaiser Karl's) shadowy claims; nay of sundry real usurpations you and your Treaties have made on the actual possessions of Spain,-- Kingdom of Sicily, for instance; Netherlands, for instance; Gibraltar, for instance. But there is one thing which, we observe, is indispensable throughout to Elizabeth Farnese: the future settlement of her dear Boy Carlos. Carlos, whom as Spanish Philip's second Wife she had given to Spain and the world, as Second or supplementary INFANT there,--a troublesome gift to Spain and others.

"This dear Boy, surely he must have his Italian Apanages, which,

you have provided for him: Duchies of Parma and Piacenza, which will fall heirless soon. Security for these Italian Apanages, such as will satisfy a Mother: Let us introduce Spanish garrisons into Parma and Piacenza at once! How else can we be certain of getting those indispensable Apanages, when they fall vacant?" On this point Elizabeth Farnese was positive, maternally vehement; would take no subterfuge, denial or delay: "Let me perceive that I shall have these Duchies: that, first of all; or else not that only, but numerous other things will be demanded of you!"

Upon which point the Kaiser too, who loved his Duchies, and hoped yet to keep them by some turn of the game, never could decide to comply. Whereupon Elizabeth grew more and more termagant; listened to wild counsels; took up an Alberoni, a Ripperda, any wandering diplomatic bull-dog that offered; and let them loose upon the Kaiser and her other gainsayers. To the terror of mankind, lest universal war should supervene. She held the Kaiser well at bay, mankind well in panic; and continually there came on all Europe, for about twenty years, a terror that war was just about to break out, and the whole world to take fire. The History so called of Europe went canting from side to side; heeling at a huge rate, according to the passes and lunges these two giant figures, Imperial Majesty and the Termagant of Spain, made at one another, --for a twenty years or more, till once the duel was decided between them.

There came next to no war, after all; sputterings of war twice over,--1718, Byng at Messina, as we saw; and then, in 1727, a second sputter, as we are to see:--but the neighbors always ran with buckets, and got it quenched. No war to speak of; but such negotiating, diplomatizing, universal hope, universal fear, and infinite ado about nothing, as were seldom heard of before. For except Friedrich Wilhelm drilling his 50,000 soldiers (80,000 gradually, and gradually even twice that number), I see no Crowned Head in Europe that is not, with immeasurable apparatus, simply doing ZERO. Alas, in an age of universal infidelity to Heaven, where the Heavenly Sun has SUNK, there occur strange Spectre-huntings. Which is a fact worth laying to heart.--Duel of Twenty Years with Elizabeth Farnese, about the eventualities of Parma and Piacenza, and the Shadow of the lost Crown of Spain; this was the first grand Spectrality of Kaiser Karl's existence; but this was not the whole of them.

#### IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S PRAGMATIC SANCTION.

Kaiser Karl meanwhile was rather short of heirs; which formed another of his real troubles, and involved him in much shadow-hunting. His Wife, the Serene Brunswick Empress whom we spoke of above, did at length bring him children, brought him a boy even; but the boy died within the year; and, on the whole, there remained nothing but two Daughters; Maria Theresa the elder of them, born 1717,--the prettiest little maiden in the world;--no son to inherit Kaiser Karl. Under which circumstances Kaiser Karl produced now, in the Year 1724, a Document which he had executed privately as long ago as 1713, only his Privy Councillors and other Official witnesses knowing of it then; [19th April, 1713 (Stenzel, iii. 5222).] and solemnly publishes it to the world, as a thing all men are to take notice of. All men had notice enough

of this Imperial bit of Sheepskin, before they got done with it, five-and-twenty years hence. [Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748.] A very famous Pragmatic Sanction; now published for the world's comfort!

By which Document, Kaiser Karl had formally settled, and fixed according to the power he has, in the shape of what they call a Pragmatic Sanction, or unalterable Ordinance in his Imperial House, "That, failing Heirs-male, his Daughters, his Eldest Daughter, should succeed him; failing Daughters, his Nieces; and in short, that Heirs-female ranking from their kinship to Kaiser Karl, and not to any prior Kaiser, should be as good as Heirs-male of Karl's body would have been." A Pragmatic Sanction is the high name he gives this document, or the Act it represents; "Pragmatic Sanction" being, in the Imperial Chancery and some others, the received title for Ordinances of a very irrevocable nature, which a sovereign makes, in affairs that belong wholly to himself, or what he reckons his own rights. [A rare kind of Deed, it would seem; and all the more solemn. In 1438, Charles VI. of France, conceding the Gallican Church its Liberties, does, it by "SANCTION PRAGMATIQUE;" Carlos III. of Spain (in 1759, "settling the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies on his third son") does the like, --which is the last instance of "PRAGMATIC SANCTION" in this world.]

This Pragmatic Sanction of Kaiser Karl's, executed 19th April, 1713, was promulgated, "gradually," now here now there, from 1720 to 1724, {Stenzel, pp. 522, 523.}--in which later year it became universally public; and was transmitted to all Courts and Sovereignities, as an unalterable law of Things Imperial. Thereby the good man hopes his beautiful little Theresa, now seven years old, may succeed him, all as a son would have done, in the Austrian States and Dignities; and incalculable damages, wars, and chances of war, be prevented, for his House and for all the world.

The world, incredulous of to-morrow, in its lazy way, was not sufficiently attentive to this new law of things. Some who were personally interested, as the Saxon Sovereignty, and the Bavarian, denied that it was just: reminded Kaiser-Karl that he was not the Noah or Adam of Kaisers; and that the case of Heirs-female was not quite a new idea on sheepskin. No; there are older Pragmatic Sanctions and settlements, by prior Kaisers of blessed memory; under which, if Daughters are to come in, we, descended from Imperial Daughters of older standing, shall have a word to say!-- To this Kaiser Karl answers steadily, with endless argument, That every Kaiser is a Patriarch, and First Man, in such matters; and that so it has been pragmatically sanctioned by him, and that so it shall and must irrevocably be. To the other Powers, and indolent impartial Sovereigns of the world, he was lavish in embassies; in ardent representations; and spared no pains in convincing them that to-morrow would surely come, and that then it would be a blessedness to have accepted this Pragmatic Sanction, and see it lying for you as a Law of Nature to go by, and avoid incalculable controversies.

This was another vast Shadow, or confused high-piled continent of shadows, to which our poor Kaiser held with his customary tenacity. To procure adherences and assurances to this dear Pragmatic Sanction, was, even more than the shadow of the Spanish

Crown, and above all after he had quitted that, the one grand business of his Life henceforth. With which he kept all Europe in perpetual travail and diplomacy; raying out ambassadors, and less ostensible agents, with bribes, and with entreaties and proposals, into every high Sovereign Court and every low; negotiating unweariedly by all methods, with all men. For it was his evening-song and his morning-prayer; the grand meaning of Life to him, till Life ended. You would have said, the first question he asks of every creature is, "Will you covenant for my Pragmatic Sanction with me? Oh, agree to it; accept that new Law of Nature: when the morrow comes, it will be salutary for you!"

Most of the Foreign Potentates idly accepted the thing,--as things of a distant contingent kind are accepted;--made Treaty on it, since the Kaiser seemed so extremely anxious. Only Bavaria, having heritable claims, never would. Saxony too (August the Strong), being in the like case, or a better, flatly refused for a long time; would not, at all,--except for a consideration. Bright little Prince Eugene, who dictated square miles of Letters and Diplomacies on the subject (Letters of a steady depth of dulness, which at last grows almost sublime), was wont to tell his Majesty: "Treatying, your Majesty? A well-trained Army and a full Treasury; that is the only Treaty that will make this Pragmatic Sanction valid!" But his Majesty never would believe. So the bright old Eugene dictated,--or, we hope and guess, he only gave his clerks some key-word, and signed his name (in three languages, "Eugenio von Savoye") to these square miles of dull epistolary matter,--probably taking Spanish snuff when he had done. For he wears it in both waistcoat-pockets;--has (as his Portraits still tell us) given up breathing by the nose. The bright little soul, with a flash in him as of Heaven's own lightning; but now growing very old and snuffy.

Shadow of Pragmatic Sanction, shadow of the Spanish Crown,--it was such shadow-huntings of the Kaiser in Vienna, it was this of the Pragmatic Sanction most of all, that thwarted our Prussian Double-Marriage, which lay so far away from it. This it was that pretty nearly broke the hearts of Friedrich, Wilhelmina, and their Mother and Father. For there never was such negotiating; not for admittance to the Kingdom of Heaven, in the pious times. And the open goings-forth of it, still more the secret minings and mole-courses of it, were into all places. Above ground and below, no Sovereign mortal could say he was safe from it, let him agree or not. Friedrich Wilhelm had cheerfully, and with all his heart, agreed to the Pragmatic Sanction; this above ground, in sight of the sun; and rashly fancied he had then done with it. Till, to his horror, he found the Imperial moles, by way of keeping assurance doubly sure, had been under the foundations of his very house for long years past, and had all but brought it down about him in the most hideous manner!--

### THIRD SHADOW: IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S OSTEND COMPANY.

Another object which Kaiser Karl pursued with some diligence in these times, and which likewise proved a shadow, much disturbance as it gave mankind, was his "Ostend East-India Company." The Kaiser had seen impoverished Spain, rich England, rich Holland; he had taken up a creditable notion about commerce and

its advantages. He said to himself, Why should not my Netherlands trade to the East, as well as these English and Dutch, and grow opulent like them? He instituted (OCTROYA) an "Ostend East-India Company," under due Patents and Imperial Sheepskins, of date 17th December, 1722, [Buchholz, i. 88; Pfeffel, *Abrege Chronologique de l'Histoire d'Allemagne* (Park, 1776), ii. 522.] gave it what freedom he could to trade to the East. "Impossible!" answered the Dutch, with distraction in their aspect; "Impossible, we say; contrary to Treaty of Westphalia, to Utrecht, to Barrier Treaty; and destructive to the best interests of mankind, especially to us and our trade-profits! We shall have to capture your ships, if you ever send any."

To which the Kaiser counterpleaded, earnestly, diligently, for the space of seven years,--to no effect. "We will capture your ships if you ever send any," answered the Dutch and English. What ships ever could have been sent from Ostend to the East, or what ill they could have done there, remains a mystery, owing to the monopolizing Maritime Powers.

The Kaiser's laudable zeal for commerce had to expend itself in his Adriatic Territories,--giving privileges to the Ports of Trieste and Fiume; [Hormayr, *Oesterreichischer Plutarch*, x. 101.] making roads through the Dalmatian Hill-Countries, which are useful to this day;--but could not operate on the Netherlands in the way proposed. The Kaiser's Imperial Ostend East-India Company, which convulsed the Diplomatic mind for seven years to come, and made Europe lurch from side to side in a terrific manner, proved a mere paper Company; never sent any ships, only produced Diplomacies, and "had the honor to be." This was the third grand Shadow which the Kaiser chased, shaking all the world, poor crank world, as he strode after it; and this also ended in zero, and several tons of diplomatic correspondence, carried once by breathless estaffettes, and now silent, gravitating towards Acheron all of them, and interesting to the spiders only.

Poor good Kaiser: they say he was a humane stately gentleman, stately though shortish; fond of pardoning criminals where he could; very polite to Muratori and the Antiquaries, even to English Rymer, in opening his Archives to them,--and made roads in the Dalmatian Hill-Country, which remain to this day. I do not wonder he grew more and more saturnine, and addicted to solid taciturn field-sports. His Political "Perforce-Hunt (PARFORCE JAGD)," with so many two-footed terriers, and legationary beagles, distressing all the world by their baying and their burrowing, had proved to be of Shadows; and melted into thin air, to a very singular degree!

Chapter III.

THE SEVEN CRISES OR EUROPEAN TRAVAIL-THROES.

In process of this so terrific Duel with Elizabeth Farnese, and general combat of the Shadows, which then made Europe quake, at every new lunge and pass of it, and which now makes Europe yawn to hear the least mention of it, there came two sputterings of actual



War. Byng's sea-victory at Messina, 1718; Spanish "Siege of Gibraltar," 1727, are the main phenomena of these two Wars,-- England, as its wont is, taking a shot in both, though it has now forgotten both. And, on the whole, there came, so far as I can count, Seven grand diplomatic Spasms or Crises,--desperate general European Treatyings hither and then thither, solemn Congresses two of them, with endless supplementary adhesions by the minor powers. Seven grand mother-treaties, not to mention the daughters, or supplementary adhesions they had; all Europe rising spasmodically seven times, and doing its very uttermost to quell this terrible incubus; all Europe changing color seven times, like a lobster boiling, for twenty years. Seven diplomatic Crises, we say, marked changings of color in the long-suffering lobster; and two so-called Wars,--before this enormous zero could be settled. Which high Treaties and Transactions, human nature, after much study of them, grudges to enumerate. Apanage for Baby Carlos, ghost of a Pragmatic Sanction; these were a pair of causes for mankind! Be no word spoken of them, except with regret and on evident compulsion.

For the reader's convenience we must note the salient points; but grudge to do it. Salient points, now mostly wrapt in Orcus, and terrestrially interesting only to the spiders,--except on an occasion of this kind, when part of them happens to stick to the history of a memorable man, To us they are mere bubblings-up of the general putrid fermentation of the then Political World; and are too unlovely to be dwelt on longer than indispensable. Triple Alliance, Quadruple Alliance, Congress of Cambrai, Congress of Soissons; Conference of Pardo, Treaty of Hanover, Treaty of Wusterhausen, what are they? Echo answers, What? Ripperda and the Queen of Spain, Kaiser Karl and his Pragmatic Sanction, are fallen dim to every mind. The Troubles of Thorn (sad enough Papist-Protestant tragedy in their time),--who now cares to know of them? It is much if we find a hearing for the poor Salzburg Emigrants when they get into Preussen itself. Afflicted human nature ought to be, at last, delivered from the palpably superfluous; and if a few things memorable are to be remembered, millions of things unmemorable must first be honestly buried and forgotten! But to our affair,--that of marking the chief bubblings-up in the above-said Universal Putrid Fermentation, so far as they concern us.

#### CONGRESS OF CAMBRAI.

We already saw Byng sea fighting in the Straits of Messina; that was part of Crisis Second,--sequel, in powder-and-ball, of Crisis First, which had been in paper till then. The Powers had interfered, by Triple, by Quadruple Alliance, to quench the Spanish-Austrian Duel (about Apanage for Baby Carlos, and a quantity of other Shadows): "Triple Alliance" [4th January, 1717.] was, we may say, when France, England, Holland laboriously sorted out terms of agreement between Kaiser and Termagant: "Quadruple" [18th July, 1718.] was when Kaiser, after much coaxing, acceded, as fourth party; and said gloomily, "Yes, then." Byng's Sea-fight was when Termagant said, "No, by--the Plots of Alberoni! Never will I, for my part, accede to such terms!" and attacked the poor Kaiser in his Sicilies and elsewhere. Byng's Sea-fight, in aid of a suffering Kaiser and his Sicilies, in consequence. Furthermore, the French invaded Spain, till Messina were retaken;

nay the English, by land too, made a dash at Spain, "Descent on Vigo" as they call it,--in reference to which take the following stray Note:--

"That same year [1719, year after Byng's Sea-fight, Messina just about recaptured], there took effect, planned by the vigorous Colonel Stanhope, our Minister at Madrid, who took personal share in the thing, a 'Descent on Vigo,' sudden swoop-down upon Town and shipping in those Gallician, north-west regions. Which was perfectly successful,--Lord Cobham leading;--and made much noise among mankind. Filled all Gazettes at that time;--but now, again, is all fallen silent for us,--except this one thrice-insignificant point, That there was in it, 'in Handyside's Regiment,' a Lieutenant of Foot, by name STERNE, who had left, with his poor Wife at Plymouth, a very remarkable Boy called Lorry, or LAWRENCE; known since that to all mankind. When Lorry in his LIFE writes, 'my Father went on the Vigo expedition,' readers may understand this was it. Strange enough: that poor Lieutenant of Foot is now pretty much all that is left of this sublime enterprise upon Vigo, in the memory of mankind;--hanging there, as if by a single hair, till poor TRISTRAM SHANDY be forgotten too." [*Memoirs of Laurence Sterne, written by himself for his Daughter (see Annual Register, Year 1775, pp. 50-52).*]

In short, the French and even the English invaded Spain; English Byng and others sank Spanish ships: Termagant was obliged to pack away her Alberoni, and give in. She had to accede to "Quadruple Alliance," after all; making it, so to speak, a Quintuple one; making Peace, in fact, [17th February, 1720.]--general Congress to be held at Cambrai and settle the details.

Congress of Cambrai met accordingly; in 1722,--"in the course of the year," Delegates slowly raining in,--date not fixable to a day or month. Congress was "sat," as we said,--or, alas, was only still endeavoring to get seated, and wandering about among the chairs,--when George I. came to Charlottenburg that evening, October, 1723, and surveyed Wilhelmina with a candle. More inane Congress never met in this world, nor will meet. Settlement proved so difficult; all the more, as neither of the quarrelling parties wished it. Kaiser and Termagant, fallen as if exhausted, had not the least disposition to agree; lay diplomatically gnashing their teeth at one another, ready to fight again should strength return. Difficult for third parties to settle on behalf of such a pair. Nay at length the Kaiser's Ostend Company came to light: what will third parties, Dutch and English especially, make of that?

This poor Congress---let the reader fancy it--spent two years in "arguments about precedencies," in mere beatings of the air; could not get seated at all, but wandered among the chairs, till "February, 1724." Nor did it manage to accomplish any work whatever, even then; the most inane of Human Congresses; and memorable on that account, if on no other. There, in old stagnant Cambrai, through the third year and into the fourth, were Delegates, Spanish, Austrian, English, Dutch, French, of solemn outfit, with a big tail to each,--"Lord Whitworth" whom I do not know, "Lord Polwarth" (Earl of Marchmont that will be, a friend of Pope's), were the English Principals: [Scholl, ii. 197.]--there, for about four years, were these poor fellow-creatures busied, baling out water with sieves. Seen through the Horn-Gate of

Dreams, the figure of them rises almost grand on the mind.

A certain bright young Frenchman, Francois Arouet,--spoiled for a solid law-career, but whose OEDIPE we saw triumphing in the Theatres, and who will, under the new name of VOLTAIRE, become very memorable to us,--happened to be running towards Holland that way, one of his many journeys thitherward; and actually saw this Congress, then in the first year of its existence. Saw it, probably dined with it. A Letter of his still extant, not yet fallen to the spiders, as so much else has done, testifies to this fact. Let us read part of it, the less despicable part,--as a Piece supremely insignificant, yet now in a manner the one surviving Document of this extraordinary Congress; Congress's own works and history having all otherwise fallen to the spiders forever. The Letter is addressed to Cardinal Dubois;--for Dubois, "with the face like a goat," [Herzogin von Orleans, BRIEFE.] yet lived (first year of this Congress); and Regent d'Orleans lived, intensely interested here as third party:--and a goat-faced Cardinal, once pimp and lackey, ugliest of created souls, Archbishop of this same Cambrai "by Divine permission" and favor of Beelzebub, was capable of promoting a young fellow if he chose:--

"TO HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL DUBOIS (from Arouet Junior).

"CAMBRAI, July, 1722.

". . . We are just arrived in your City, Monseigneur; where, I think, all the Ambassadors and all the Cooks in Europe have given one another rendezvous. It seems as if all the Ministers of Germany had assembled here for the purpose of getting their Emperor's health drunk. As to Messieurs the Ambassadors of Spain, one of them hears two masses a day, and the other manages the troop of players. The English Ministers [a LORD POLWARTH and a LORD WHITWORTH] send many couriers to Champagne, and few to London. For the rest, nobody expects your Eminence here; it is not thought you will quit the Palais-Royal to visit the sheep of your flock in these parts [no!], it would be too bad for your Eminence and for us all. . . . Think sometimes, Monseigneur, of a man who [regards your goat-faced Eminence as a beautiful ingenious creature; and such a hand in conversation as never was). The one thing I will ask [of your goat-faced Eminence] at Paris will be, to have the goodness to talk to me." [*OEuvres de Voltaire*, <end italic> 97 vols. (Paris, 1825-1834), lxviii. 95, 96.]

Alas, alas!--The more despicable portions of this Letter we omit, as they are not history of the Congress, but of Arouet Junior on the shady side. So much will testify that this Congress did exist; that its wiggeries and it were not always, what they now are, part of a nightmare-vision in Human History.--

Elizabeth Farnese, seeing at what rate the Congress of Cambrai sped, lost all patience with it; and getting more and more exasperations there, at length employed one Ripperda, a surprising Dutch Black-Artist whom she now had for Minister, to pull the floor from beneath it (so to speak), and send it home in that manner. Which Ripperda did. An appropriate enough catastrophe, comfortable to the reader; upon which perhaps he will not grudge

to read still another word?

## CONGRESS OF CAMBRAI GETS THE FLOOR PULLED FROM UNDER IT.

Termagant Elizabeth had now one Ripperda for Minister; a surprising Dutch adventurer, once secretary of some Dutch embassy at Madrid; who, discerning how the land lay, had broken loose from that subaltern career, had changed his religion, insinuated himself into Elizabeth's royal favor; and was now "Duke de Ripperda," and a diplomatic bull-dog of the first quality, full of mighty schemes and hopes; in brief, a new Alberoni to the Termagant Queen. This Ripperda had persuaded her (the third year of our inane Congress now running out, to no purpose), That he, if he were sent direct to Vienna, could reconcile the Kaiser to her Majesty, and bring them to Treaty, independently of Congresses. He was sent accordingly, in all privacy; had reported himself as laboring there, with the best outlooks, for some while past; when, still early in 1725, there occurred on the part of France,--where Regent d'Orleans was now dead, and new politics had come in vogue,--that "sending back," of the poor little Spanish: Infanta, ["5th April, 1725, quitted Paris" (Barbier, *<italic>* Journal du Regne de Louis XV., *<end italic>* i. 218).] and marrying of young Louis XV. elsewhere, which drove Elizabeth and the Court of Spain, not unnaturally, into a very delirium of indignation.

Why they sent the poor little Lady home on those shocking terms? It seems there was no particular reason, except that French Louis was now about fifteen, and little Spanish Theresa was only eight; and that, under Duc de Bourbon, the new Premier, and none of the wisest, there was, express or implicit, "an ardent wish to see royal progeny secured." For which, of course, a wife of eight years would not answer. So she was returned; and even in a blundering way, it is said,--the French Ambassador at Madrid having prefaced his communication, not with light adroit precludings of speech, but with a tempest of tears and howling lamentations, as if that were the way to conciliate King Philip and his Termagant Elizabeth. Transport of indignation was the natural consequence on their part; order to every Frenchman to be across the border within, say eight-and-forty hours; rejection forever of all French mediation at Cambrai or elsewhere; question to the English, "Will you mediate for us, then?" To which the answer being merely "Hm!" with looks of delay,--order by express to Ripperda, to make straightway a bargain with the Kaiser; almost any bargain, so it were made at once. Ripperda made a bargain: Treaty of Vienna, 30th April, 1725: [Scholl, ii. 201; Coxe, *<italic>* Walpole, *<end italic>* i. 239-250.] "Titles and Shadows each of us shall keep for his own lifetime, then they shall drop. As to realities again, to Parma and Piacenza among the rest, let these be as in the Treaty of Utrecht; arrangeable in the lump;--and indeed, of Parma and Piacenza perhaps the less we say, the better at present." This was, in substance, Ripperda's Treaty; the Third great European travail-throe, or change of color in the long-suffering lobster. Whereby, of course, the Congress of Cambrai did straightway disappear, the floor miraculously vanishing under it; and sinks--far below human eye-reach by this time--towards the Bottomless Pool, ever since. Such was the beginning, such the end of that Congress, which Arouet LE JEUNE, in 1722, saw as a contemporary Fact, drinking champagne in

Ramillies wigs, and arranging comedies for itself.

## FRANCE AND THE BRITANNIC MAJESTY TRIM THE SHIP AGAIN: HOW FRIEDRICH WILHELM CAME INTO IT. TREATY OF HANOVER, 1725.

The publication of this Treaty of Vienna (30th April, 1725),-- miraculous disappearance of the Congress of Cambrai by withdrawal of the floor from under it, and close union of the Courts of Spain and Vienna as the outcome of its slow labors,--filled Europe, and chiefly the late mediating Powers, with amazement, anger, terror. Made Europe lurch suddenly to the other side, as we phrased it,-- other gunwale now under water. Wherefore, in Heaven's name, trim your ship again, if possible, ye high mediating Powers. This the mediating Powers were laudably alert to do. Duc de Bourbon, and his young King about to marry, were of pacific tendencies; anxious for the Balance: still more was Fleury, who succeeded Duc de Bourbon. Cardinal Fleury (with his pupil Louis XV. under him, producing royal progeny and nothing worse or better as yet) began, next year, his long supremacy in France; an aged reverend gentleman, of sly, delicately cunning ways, and disliking war, as George I. did, unless when forced on him: now and henceforth, no mediating power more anxious than France to have the ship in trim.

George and Bourbon laid their heads together, deeply pondering this little less than awful state of the Terrestrial Balance; and in about six months they, in their quiet way, suddenly came out with a Fourth Crisis on the astonished populations, so as to right the ship's trim again, and more. "Treaty of Hanover," this was their unexpected manoeuvre; done quietly at Herrenhausen, when his Majesty next went across for the Hanover hunting-season. Mere hunting:--but the diplomatists, as well as the beagles, were all in readiness there. Even Friedrich Wilhelm, ostensibly intent on hunting, was come over thither, his abstruse lgens, with their inkhorns, escorting him: Friedrich Wilhelm, hunting in unexpected sort, was persuaded to sign this Treaty; which makes it unusually interesting to us. An exceptional procedure on the part of Friedrich Wilhelm, who beyond all Sovereigns stays well at home, careless of affairs that are not his:--procedure betokening cordiality at Hanover; and of good omen for the Double-Marriage?

Yes, surely;--and yet something more, on Friedrich Wilhelm's part. His rights on the Cleve-Julich Countries; reversion of Julich and Berg, once Karl Philip shall decease:--perhaps these high Powers, for a consideration, will guarantee one's undoubted rights there? It is understood they gave promises of this kind, not too specific. Nay we hear farther a curious thing: "France and England, looking for immediate war with the Kaiser, advised Friedrich Wilhelm to assert his rights on Silesia." Which would have been an important procedure! Friedrich Wilhelm, it is added, had actual thoughts of it; the Kaiser, in those matters of the RITTER-DIENST, of the HEIDELBERG PROTESTANTS, and wherever a chance was, had been unfriendly, little less than insulting, to Friedrich Wilhelm: "Give me one single Hanoverian brigade, to show that you go along with me!" said his Prussian Majesty;--but the Britannic never altogether would. [*OEuvres de Frederic*, <end italic> i. 153.] Certain it is, Friedrich Wilhelm signed: a man with such Fighting-Apparatus as to be important in a Hanover Treaty. "Balance of Power, they tell me, is in a dreadful way:

certainly if one can help the Balance a little, why not? But Julich and Berg, one's own outlook of reversion there, that is the point to be attended to:--Balance, I believe, will somehow shift for itself!" On these principles, Friedrich Wilhelm signed, while ostensibly hunting. [Fassmann, p. 368; Forster, *<italic>* Urkundenbuch, *<end italic>* p. 67.] Treaty of Hanover, which was to trim the ship again, or even to make it heel the other way, dates itself 3d September, 1725, and is of this purport: "We three, France, England, Prussia to stand by each other as one man, in case any of us is attacked,--will invite Holland, Denmark, Sweden and every pacific Sovereignty to join us in such convention,"--as they all gradually did, had Friedrich Wilhelm but stood firm.

For it is a state of the Balances little less than awful. Rumor goes that, by the Ripperda bargain, fatal to mankind, Don Carlos was to get the beautiful young Maria Theresa to wife: that would settle the Parma-Piacenza business and some others; that would be a compensation with a witness! Spain and Austria united, as in Karl V.'s time; or perhaps some Succession War, or worse, to fight over again!--

Fleury and George, as Duc de Bourbon and George had done, though both pacific gentlemen, brandished weapons at the Kaiser; strongly admonishing him to become less formidable, or it would be worse for him. Possible indeed, in such a shadow-hunting, shadow-hunted hour! Fleury and George stand looking with intense anxiety into a certain spectral something, which they call the Balance of Power; no end to their exorcisms in that matter. Truly, if each of the Royal Majesties and Serene Highnesses would attend to his own affairs,--doing his utmost to better his own land and people, in earthly and in heavenly respects, a little,--he would find it infinitely profitabler for himself and others. And the Balance of Power would settle, in that case, as the laws of gravity ordered: which is its one method of settling, after all diplomacy!--Fleury and George, by their manifestoing, still more by their levying of men, George I. shovelling out his English subsidies as usual, created deadly qualms in the Kaiser; who still found it unpleasant to "admit Spanish Garrisons in Parma;" but found likewise his Termagant Friend inexorably positive on that score; and knew not what would become of him, if he had to try fighting, and the Sea-Powers refused him cash to do it.

Hereby was the ship trimmed, and more; ship now lurching to the other side again. George I. goes subsidying Hessians, Danes; sounding manifestoes, beating drums, in an alarming manner: and the Kaiser, except it were in Russia, with the new Czarina Catherine I. (that brown little woman, now become Czarina [8th February, 1725. Treaty with Kaiser (6th August, 1726) went to nothing on her death, 11th May, 1727.]), finds no ally to speak of. An unlucky, spectre-hunting, spectre-hunted Kaiser; who, amid so many drums, manifestoes, menaces, is now rolling eyes that witness everywhere considerable dismay. This is the Fourth grand Crisis of Europe; crisis or travail-throe of Nature, bringing forth, and unable to do it, Baby Carlos's Apanage and the Pragmatic Sanction. Fourth conspicuous change of color to the universal lobster, getting itself boiled on those sad terms, for twenty years. For its sins, we need not doubt; for its own long-continued cowardices, sloths and greedy follies, as well as those of Kaiser Karl!--

At this Fourth change we will gladly leave the matter, for a time; much wishing it might be forever. Alas, as if that were possible to us! Meanwhile, let afflicted readers, looking before and after, readier to forget than to remember in such a case, accept this Note, or Summary of all the Seven together, by way of help:--

#### TRAVAIL-THROES OF NATURE FOR BABY CARLOS'S ITALIAN APANAGE; SEVEN IN NUMBER.

1. Triple Alliance, English, Dutch, French (4th January, 1717), saying, "Peace, then! No Alberoni-plotting; no Duel-fighting permitted!" Same Powers, next year, proposing Terms of Agreement; Kaiser gloomily accepting them; which makes it Quadruple Alliance (18th July, 1718); Termagant indignantly refusing,--with attack on the Kaiser's Sicilies.

2. First Sputter of War; Byng's Sea-fight, and the other pressures, compelling Termagant: Peace (26th January, 1720); Congress of Cambrai to settle the Apanage and other points.

3. Congress of Cambrai, a weariness to gods and men, gets the floor pulled from under it (Ripperda's feat, 30th April, 1725); so that Kaiser and Termagant stand ranked together, Apanage wrapt in mystery,--to the terror of mankind.

4. Treaty of Hanover (France, England, Prussia, 3d September, 1725) restores the Balances, and more. War imminent. Prussia privately falls off,--as we shall see.

[These first Four lie behind us, at this point; but there are Three others still ahead, which we cannot hope to escape altogether; namely:]

5. Second Sputter of War: Termagant besieges Gibraltar (4th March, 1727--6th March, 1728): Peace at that latter date;-- Congress of Soissons to settle the Apanage and other points, as formerly.

6. Congress of Soissons (14th June, 1728--9th November, 1729), as formerly, cannot in the least: Termagant whispers England;-- there is Treaty of Seville (9th November, 1729), France and England undertaking for the Apanage. Congress vanishes; Kaiser is left solitary, with the shadow of Pragmatic Sanction, in the night of things. Pause of an awful nature:--but Fleury does not hasten with the Apanage, as promised. Whereupon, at length,

7. Treaty of Vienna (16th March, 1731): Sea-Powers, leading Termagant by the hand, Sea-Powers and no France, unite with Kaiser again, according to the old laws of Nature;--and Baby Carlos gets his Apanage, in due course;--but does not rest content with it, Mamma nor he, very long!

Huge spectres and absurd bugaboos, stalking through the brain of dull thoughtless pusillanimous mankind, do, to a terrible extent, tumble hither and thither, and cause to lurch from side to side, their ship of state, and all that is embarked there, BREAKFAST-TABLE, among other things. Nevertheless, if they were only bugaboos, and mere Shadows caused by Imperial hand-lanterns in the general Night of the world,--ought they to be spoken of in the family, when avoidable?

## Chapter IV.

### DOUBLE-MARRIAGE TREATY CANNOT BE SIGNED.

Hitherto the world-tides, and ebbs and flows of external Politics, had, by accident, rather forwarded, than hindered the Double-Marriage. In the rear of such a Treaty of Hanover, triumphantly righting the European Balances by help of Friedrich Wilhelm, one might have hoped this little domestic Treaty would, at last, get itself signed. Queen Sophie did hasten off to Hanover, directly after her husband had left it under those favorable aspects: but Papa again proved unmanageable; the Treaty could not be achieved.

Alas, and why not? Parents and Children, on both sides, being really desirous of it, what reason is there but it should in due time come to perfection, and, without annihilating Time and Space, make four lovers happy? No reason. Rubs doubtless had arisen since that Visit of George I., discordant procedures, chiefly about Friedrich Wilhelm's recruiting operations in the Hanover territory, as shall be noted by and by: but these the ever-wakeful enthusiasm of Queen Sophie, who had set her whole heart with a female fixity on this Double-Marriage Project, had smoothed down again: and now, Papa and Husband being so blessedly united in their World Politics, why not sign the Marriage-Treaty? Honored Majesty-Papa, why not!--"Tush, child, you do not understand. In these tremendous circumstances, the celestial Sign of the BALANCE just about canting, and the Obliquity of the Ecliptic like to alter, how can one think of little marriages? Wait till the Obliquity of the Ecliptic come steadily to its old pitch!"--

Truth is, George was in general of a slow, solemn, Spanish turn of manners; "intolerably proud, too, since he got that English dignity," says Wilhelmina: he seemed always tacitly to look down on Friedrich Wilhelm, as if the Prussian Majesty were a kind of inferior clownish King in comparison. It is certain he showed no eagerness to get the Treaty perfected. Again and again, when specially applied to by Queen Sophie, on Friedrich Wilhelm's order, he intimated only: "It was a fixed thing, but not to be hurried,--English Parliaments were concerned in it, the parties were still young," and so on;--after which brief answer he would take you to the window, and ask, "If you did not think the Herrenhausen Gardens and their Leibnitz waterworks, and clipped-beech walls were rather fine?" [*Pollnitz*, <italic> Memoiren, <end italic> ii. 226, 228, &c.]

In fact, the English Parliaments, from whom money was so often demanded for our fat Improper Darlings, lean Improper Kendals and other royal occasions, would naturally have to make a marriage-revenue for this fine Grandson of ours;--Grandson Fred, who is now a young lout of, eighteen; leading an extremely dissolute life, they say, at Hanover; and by no means the most beautiful of mortals, either he or the foolish little Father of him, to our old sad heart. They can wait, they can wait! said George always.

But undoubtedly he did intend that both Marriages should take



effect: only he was slow; and the more you hurried him, perhaps the slower. He would have perfected the Treaty "next year," say the Authorities; meant to do so, if well let alone: but Townshend whispered withal, "Better not urge him." Surly George was always a man of his word; no treachery intended by him, towards Friedrich Wilhelm or any man. It is very clear, moreover, that Friedrich Wilhelm, in this Autumn 1725, was, and was like to be, of high importance to King George; a man not to be angered by dishonorable treatment, had such otherwise been likely on George's part. Nevertheless George did not sign the Treaty "next year" either,-- such things having intervened;--nor the next year after that, for reasons tragically good on the latter occasion!

These delays about the Double-Marriage Treaty are not a pleasing feature of it to Friedrich Wilhelm; who is very capable of being hurt by slights; who, at any rate, dislikes to have loose thrums flying about, or that the business of to-day should be shoved over upon to-morrow. And so Queen Sophie has her own sore difficulties; driven thus between the Barbarians (that is, her Husband), and the deep Sea (that is, her Father), to and fro. Nevertheless, since all parties to the matter wished it, Sophie and the younger parties getting even enthusiastic about it; and since the matter itself was good, agreeable so far to Prussia and England, to Protestant Germany and to Heaven and Earth,--might not Sophie confidently hope to vanquish these and other difficulties; and so bring all things to a happy close?

Had it not been for the Imperial Shadow-huntings, and this rickety condition of the celestial Balance! Alas, the outer elements interfered with Queen Sophie in a singular manner. Huge foreign world-movements, springing from Vienna and a spectre-haunted Kaiser, and spreading like an avalanche over all the Earth, snatched up this little Double-Marriage question; tore it along with them, reeling over precipices, one knew not whitherward, at such a rate as was seldom seen before. Scarcely in the Minerva Press is there record of such surprising, infinite and inextricable obstructions to a wedding or a double-wedding. Time and space, which cannot be annihilated to make two lovers happy, were here turned topsy-turvy, as it were, to make four lovers,--four, or at the very least three, for Wilhelmina will not admit she was ever the least in love, not she, poor soul, either with loose Fred or his English outlooks,--four young creatures, and one or more elderly persons, superlatively wretched; and even, literally enough, to do all but kill some of them.

What is noteworthy too, it proved wholly inane, this huge world-ocean of Intrigues and Imperial Necromancy; ran dry at last into absolute nothing even for the Kaiser, and might as well not have been. And Mother and Father, on the Prussian side, were driven to despair and pretty nearly to delirium by it; and our poor young Fritz got tormented, scourged, and throttled in body and in soul by it, till he grew to loathe the light of the sun, and in fact looked soon to have quitted said light at one stage of the business.

We are now approaching Act Second of the Double-Marriage, where Imperial Ordnance-Master Graf von Seckendorf, a Black-Artist of supreme quality, despatched from Vienna on secret errand, "crosses the Palace Esplanade at Berlin on a summer evening of the year

1726;" and evokes all the demons on our little Crown-Prince and those dear to him. We must first say something of an important step, shortly antecedent thereto, which occurred in the Crown-Prince's educational course.

Chapter V.

#### CROWN-PRINCE GOES INTO THE POTSDAM GUARDS.

Amid such commotion of the foreign elements and the domestic, an important change occurs in the Crown-Prince's course of schooling. It is decided that, whatever be his progress in the speculative branches, it is time he should go into the Army, and practically learn soldiering. In his fourteenth year, 3d May, 1725, [Preuss, i. 26; 106; and *Buch für Jedermann* (a minor book of his, on the same subject, Berlin, 1837), ii. 13.] not long before the Treaty of Hanover, he was formally named Captain, by Papa in War-council. Grenadier Guards, Potsdam Lifeguards, to be the regiment; and next year he is nominated Major, and, a vacancy occurring, appointed to begin actual duty. It is on the "20th of August, 1726, that he flat leads out his battalion to the muster," on those terms. His age is not yet fifteen by four months;--a very tiny Major among those Potsdam giants; but by rank, we observe, he rides; and his horse is doubtless of the due height. And so the tiny Cadet-drilling have ended; long Files of Giants, splendent in gold-lace and grenadier-caps, have succeeded; and earnest work instead of mimic, in that matter, has begun.

However it may have fared with his other school-lessons, here now is a school-form he is advanced to, in which there will be no resource but learning. Bad spelling might be overlooked by those that had charge of it; bad drilling is not permissible on any terms. We need not doubt the Crown-Prince did his soldier-duty faithfully, and learned in every point the conduct of an officer: penalty as of Rhadamanthus waited upon all failure there. That he liked it is by no means said; he much disliked it, and his disgusts were many. An airy young creature:--and it was in this time to give one instance, that that shearing of his locks occurred: which was spoken of above, where the Court-Chirurgus proved so merciful. To clog the winged Psyche in ever-returning parade-routine and military pipe-clay,--it seems very cruel. But it is not to be altered: in spite of one's disgusts, the dull work, to the last item of it, has daily to be done. Which proved infinitely beneficial to the Crown-Prince, after all. Hereby, to his Athenian-French elegancies, and airy promptitudes and brilliancies, there shall lie as basis an adamantine Spartanism and Stoicism; very rare, but very indispensable, for such a superstructure. Well exemplified, through after life, in this Crown-Prince.

#### OF THE POTSDAM GIANTS, AS A FACT.

His regiment was the Potsdam Grenadier Guard; that unique giant-regiment, of which the world has heard so much in a vague half-mythical way. The giant-regiment was not a Myth, however, but a big-boned expensive Fact, tramping very hard upon the earth at

one time, though now gone all to the ghostly state. As it was a CLASS-BOOK, so to speak, of our Friedrich's,--Class-Book (printed in huge type) for a certain branch of his schooling, the details of which are so dim, though the general outcome of it proved so unforgettable,--readers, apart from their curiosity otherwise, may as well take a glimpse of it on this occasion. Vanished now, and grown a Giant Phantom, the like of it hardly again to be in this world; and by accident, the very smallest Figure ever ranked in it makes it memorable there!--

With a wise instinct, Friedrich Wilhelm had discerned that all things in Prussia must point towards his Army; that his Army was the heart and pith; the State being the tree, every branch and leaf bound, after its sort, to be nutritive and productive for the Army's behoof. That, probably for any Nation in the long-run, and certainly for the Prussian Nation straightway, life or death depends on the Army: Friedrich Wilhelm's head, in an inarticulate manner, was full of this just notion; and all his life was spent in organizing it to a practical fact. The more of potential battle, the more of life is in us: a MAXIMUM of potential battle, therefore; and let it be the OPTIMUM in quality! How Friedrich Wilhelm cared, day and night, with all his heart and all his soul, to bring his Army to the supreme pitch, we have often heard; and the more we look into his ways, the more we are impressed with that fact. It was the central thing for him; all other things circulating towards it, deriving from it: no labor too great, and none too little, to be undergone for such an object. He watched over it like an Argus, with eyes that reached everywhere. Discipline shall be as exact as Euclid;--short of perfection we do not stop! Discipline and ever better discipline; enforcement of the rule in all points, improvement of the rule itself where possible, were the great Drill-sergeant's continual care. Daily had some loop fallen, which might have gone ravelling far enough; but daily was he there to pick it up again, and keep the web unrent and solidly progressive.

We said, it was the "poetic ideal" of Friedrich Wilhelm; who is a dumb poet in several particulars,--and requires the privileges of genius from those that READ his dumb poem. It must be owned he rises into the fantastic here and there; and has crotchets of ultraperfection for his Army, which are not rational at all. Crotchets that grew ever madder, the farther he followed them. This Lifeguard Regiment of foot, for instance, in which the Crown-Prince now is,--Friedrich Wilhelm got it in his Father's time, no doubt a regiment then of fair qualities; and he has kept drilling it, improving it, as poets polish stanzas, unweariedly ever since:--and see now what it has grown to! A Potsdam Giant Regiment, such as the world never saw, before or since. Three Battalions of them,--two always here at Potsdam doing formal lifeguard duty, the third at Brandenburg on drill; 800 to the Battalion,--2,400 sons of Anak in all. Sublime enough, hugely perfect to the royal eye, such a mass of shining giants, in their long-drawn regularities and mathematical manoeuvrings,--like some streak of Promethean lightning, realized here at last, in the vulgar dusk of things!

Truly they are men supreme in discipline, in beauty of equipment; and the shortest man of them rises, I think, towards seven feet, some are nearly nine feet high. Men from all countries; a hundred

and odd come annually, as we saw, from Russia,--a very precious windfall: the rest have been collected, crimped, purchased out of every European country, at enormous expense, not to speak of other trouble to his Majesty. James Kirkman, an Irish recruit of good inches, cost him 1,200 pounds before he could be got inveigled, shipped and brought safe to hand. The documents are yet in existence; [Forster, *Handbuch der Geschichte, Geographie und Statistik des Preussischen Reichs* (Berlin, 1820), iv. 130, 132;--not in a very lucid state.] and the Portrait of this Irish fellow-citizen himself, who is by no means a beautiful man. Indeed, they are all portrayed; all the privates of this distinguished Regiment are, if anybody cared to look at them--Redivanoff from Moscow" seems of far better bone than Kirkman, though still more stolid of aspect. One Hohmann, a born Prussian, was so tall, you could not, though yourself tall, touch his bare crown with your hand; August the Strong of Poland tried, on one occasion, and could not. Before Hohmann turned up, there had been "Jonas the Norwegian Blacksmith," also a dreadfully tall monster. Giant "Macdoll,"--who was to be married, no consent asked on EITHER side, to the tall young woman, which latter turned out to be a decrepit OLD woman (all Jest-Books know the myth),--he also was an Irish Giant; his name probably M'Dowal. [Forster, *Preussens Helden im Krieg und Frieden* (Berlin, 1848), i. 531; no date to the story, no evidence what grain of truth may be in it.] This Hohmann was now FLUGELMANN ("fugleman" as we have named it, leader of the file), the Tallest of the Regiment, a very mountain of pipe-clayed flesh and bone.

Here, in reference to one other of those poor Giants, is an Anecdote from Fassmann (who is very full on this subject of the Giants; abstruse Historical Fassmann, often painfully cited by us): a most small Anecdote, but then an indisputably certain one; --which brings back to us, in a strange way, the vanished Time and its populations; as the poorest authentic wooden lucifer may do, kindling suddenly, and' peopling the void Night for moments, to the seeing eye!--

Fassmann, a very dark German literary man, in obsolete costume and garniture, how living or what doing we cannot guess, found himself at Paris, gazing about, in the year 1713; where, among other things, the Fair of St. Germain was going on. Loud, large Fair of St. Germain, "which lasts from Candlemas to the Monday before Easter;" and Fassmann one day took a walk of contemplation through the same. Much noise, gesticulation, little meaning. Show-booths, temporary theatres, merry-andrews, sleight-of-hand men; and a vast public, drinking, dancing, gambling, flirting, as its wont is. Nothing new for us there; new only that it all lies five generations from us now. Did "the Old Pretender," who was then in his expectant period, in this same village of St. Germain, see it too, as Fassmann did? And Louis XIV., he is at Versailles; drooping fast, very dull to his Maintenon. And our little Fritz in Berlin is a child in arms;--and the world is all awake as usual, while Fassmann strolls through this noisy inanity of show-booths, in the year 1713.

Strolling along, Fassmann came upon a certain booth with an enormous Picture hung aloft in front of it: "Picture of a very tall man, in HEYDUC livery, coat reaching to his ankles, in grand peruke, cap and big heron-plume, with these words, 'LE GEANT

ALLEMAND (German Giant),' written underneath. Partly from curiosity, partly "for country's sake," Fassmann expended twopence; viewed the gigantic fellow-creature; admits he had never seen one so tall; though "Bentenrieder, the Imperial Diplomatist," thought by some to be the tallest of men, had come athwart him once. This giant's name was Muller; birthplace the neighborhood of Weissenfels;--"a Saxon like myself. He had a small German Wife, not half his size. He made money readily, showing himself about, in France, England, Holland;--and Fassmann went his way, thinking no more of the fellow.--But now, continues Fassmann:--

"Coming to Potsdam, thirteen years after, in the spring of 1726, by his Majesty's order, to"--in fact, to read the Newspapers to his Majesty, and be generally useful, chiefly in the Tobacco-College, as we shall discover,--"what was my surprise to find this same 'GEANT ALLEMAND' of St. Germain ranked among the King's Grenadiers! No doubt of the identity: I renewed acquaintance with the man; his little German Wife was dead; but he had got an English one instead, an uncommonly shifty creature. They had a neat little dwelling-house [as most of the married giants had], near the Palace: here the Wife sold beer [brandy not permissible on any terms], and lodged travellers;-- I myself have lodged there on occasion. In the course of some years, the man took swelling in the legs; good for nothing as a grenadier; and was like to fall heavy on society. But no, his little Wife snatched him up, easily getting his discharge; carried him over with her to England, where he again became a show-giant, and they were doing very well, when last heard of,"-- in the Country-Wakes of George II.'s early time. And that is the real Biography of one Potsdam Giant, by a literary gentleman who had lodged with him on occasion. [Fassmann, pp. 723-730.]

The pay of these sublime Footguards is greatly higher than common; they have distinguished privileges and treatment: on the other hand, their discipline is nonpareil, and discharge is never to be dreamt of, while strength lasts. Poor Kirkman, does he sometimes think of the Hill of Howth, and that he will never see it more? Kirkman, I judge, is not given to thought;--considers that he has tobacco here, and privileges and perquisites; and that Howth, and Heaven itself, is inaccessible to many a man.

#### FRIEDRICH WILHELM'S RECRUITING DIFFICULTIES.

Tall men, not for this regiment only, had become a necessary of life to Friedrich Wilhelm. Indispensable to him almost as his daily bread, To his heart there is no road so ready as that of presenting a tall man or two. Friedrich Wilhelm's regiments are now, by his exact new regulations, levied and recruited each in its own Canton, or specific district: there all males as soon as born are enrolled; liable to serve, when they have grown to years and strength. All grown men (under certain exceptions, as of a widow's eldest son, or of the like evidently ruinous cases) are liable to serve; Captain of the Regiment and AMTMANN of the Canton settle between them which grown man it shall be. Better for you not to be tall! In fact it is almost a kindness of Heaven to be gifted with some safe impediment of body, slightly crooked back or the like, if you much dislike the career of honor under Friedrich Wilhelm. A general shadow of unquiet apprehension we can well

fancy hanging over those rural populations, and much unpleasant haggling now and then;--nothing but the King's justice that can be appealed to. King's justice, very great indeed, but heavily checked by the King's value for handsome soldiers.

Happily his value for industrial laborers and increase of population is likewise great. Townsfolk, skilful workmen as the theory supposes, are exempt; the more ingenious classes, generally, his Majesty exempts in this respect, to encourage them in others. For, on the whole, he is not less a Captain of Work, to his Nation, than of other things. What he did for Prussia in the way of industries, improvements, new manufactures, new methods; in settling "colonies," tearing up drowned bogs and subduing them into dry cornfields; in building, draining, digging, and encouraging or forcing others to do so, would take a long chapter. He is the enemy of Chaos, not the friend of it, wherever you meet with him.

For example, Potsdam itself. Potsdam, now a pleasant, grassy, leafy place, branching out extensively in fine stone architecture, with swept pavements; where, as in other places, the traveller finds land and water separated into two firmaments,--Friedrich Wilhelm found much of it a quagmire, land and water still weltering in one. In these very years, his cuttings, embankments, buildings, pile-drivings there, are enormous; and his perseverance needs to be invincible. For instance, looking out, one morning after heavy rain, upon some extensive anti-quagmire operations and strong pile-drivings, he finds half a furlong of his latest heavy piling clean gone. What in the world has become of it? Pooh, the swollen lake has burst it topsy-turvy; and it floats yonder, bottom uppermost, a half-furlong of distracted liquid-peat. Whereat his Majesty gave a loud laugh, says Bielfeld, [*Baron de Bielfeld, <italic> Lettres Familieres <end italic>* (second edition, a Leide, 1767), i. 31.] and commenced anew. The piles now stand firm enough, like the rest of the Earth's crust, and carry strong ashlar houses and umbrageous trees for mankind; and trivial mankind can walk in clean pumps there, shuddering or sniggering at Friedrich Wilhelm, as their humor may be.

No danger of this "Canton-system" of recruitment to the more ingenious classes, who could do better than learn drill. Nor, to say truth, does the poor clayey peasant suffer from it, according to his apprehensions. Often perhaps, could he count profit and loss, he might find himself a gainer: the career of honor turns out to be, at least, a career of practical Stoicism and Spartanism; useful to any peasant or to any prince. Cleanliness, of person and even of mind; fixed rigor of method, sobriety, frugality, these are virtues worth acquiring. Sobriety in the matter of drink is much attended to here: his Majesty permits no distillation of strong-waters in Potsdam, or within so many miles; [Fassmann, p. 728.] nor is sale of such allowed, except in the most intensely select manner. The soldier's pay is in the highest degree exiguous; not above three halfpence a day, for a common foot-soldier, in addition to what rations he has:--but it is found adequate to its purpose, too; supports the soldier in sound health, vigorously fit for his work; into which points his Majesty looks with his own eyes, and will admit no dubiety. Often, too, if not already OFTENEST (as it ultimately grew to be), the peasant-soldier gets home for many months of the year, a

soldier-ploughman; and labors for his living in the old way. His Captain (it is one of the Captain's perquisites, who is generally a veteran of fifty, with a long Spartan training, before he gets so high) pockets the pay of all these furloughs, supernumerary to the real work of the regiment;--and has certain important furnishings to yield in return.

At any rate, enrolment, in time of peace, cannot fall on many: three or four recruits in the year, to replace vacancies, will carry the Canton through its crisis. For we are to note withal, the third part of every regiment can, and should by rule, consist of "foreigners,"--men not born Prussians. These are generally men levied in the Imperial Free-towns; "in the REICH" or Empire, as they term it; that is to say, or is mainly to say, in the countries of Germany that are not Austrian or Prussian. For this foreign third-part too, the recruits must be got; excuses not admissible for Captain or Colonel; nothing but recruits of the due inches will do. Captain and Colonel (supporting their enterprise on frugal adequate "perquisites," hinted of above) have to be on the outlook; vigilantly, eagerly; and must contrive to get them. Nay, we can take supernumerary recruits; and have in fact always on hand, attached to each regiment, a stock of such. Any number of recruits, that stand well on their legs, are welcome; and for a tall man there is joy in Potsdam, almost as if he were a wise man or a good man.

The consequence is, all countries, especially all German countries, are infested with a new species of predatory two-legged animals: Prussian recruiters. They glide about, under disguise if necessary; lynx-eyed, eager almost as the Jesuit hounds are; not hunting the souls of men, as the spiritual Jesuits do, but their bodies in a merciless carnivorous manner. Better not to be too tall, in any country, at present! Irish Kirkman could not be protected by the aegis of the British Constitution itself. In general, however, the Prussian recruiter, on British ground, reports, That the people are too well off, that there is little to be done in those parts. A tall British sailor, if we pick him up strolling about Memel or the Baltic ports, is inexorably claimed by the Diplomats; no business do-able till after restoration of him; and he proves a mere loss to us. [Despatches in the State-Paper Office.] Germany, Holland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, these are the fruitful fields for us, and there we do hunt with some vigor.

For example, in the town of Julich there lived and worked a tall young carpenter: one day a well-dressed positive-looking gentleman ("Baron von Hompesch," the records name him) enters the shop; wants "a stout chest, with lock on it, for household purposes; must be of such and such dimensions, six feet six in length especially, and that is an indispensable point,--in fact it will be longer than yourself, I think, Herr Zimmermann: what is the cost; when can it be ready?" Cost, time, and the rest are settled. "A right stout chest, then; and see you don't forget the size; if too short, it will be of no use to me: mind;"--"JA WOHL! GEWISS!" And the positive-looking, well-clad gentleman goes his ways. At the appointed day he reappears; the chest is ready;--we hope, an unexceptionable article? "Too short, as I dreaded!" says the positive gentleman. "Nay, your honor," says the carpenter, "I am certain it is six feet six!" and takes out his

foot-rule.--"Pshaw, it was to be longer than yourself." "Well, it is."--"No it isn't!" The carpenter, to end the matter, gets into his chest; and will convince any and all mortals. No sooner is he in, rightly flat, than the positive gentleman, a Prussian recruiting officer in disguise, slams down the lid upon him; locks it; whistles in three stout fellows, who pick up the chest, gravely walk through the streets with it, open it in a safe place; and find-horrible to relate--the poor carpenter dead; choked by want of air in this frightful middle-passage of his. [Forster, ii. 305, 306; Pollnitz, ii. 518, 519.] Name of the Town is given, Julich as above; date not. And if the thing had been only a popular Myth, is it not a significant one? But it is too true; the tall carpenter lay dead, and Hompesch got "imprisoned for life" by the business.

Burgermeisters of small towns have been carried off; in one case, "a rich merchant in Magdeburg," whom it cost a large sum to get free again. [Stenzel, iii. 356.] Prussian recruiters hover about barracks, parade-grounds, in Foreign Countries; and if they see a tall soldier (the Dutch have had instances, and are indignant at them), will persuade him to desert,--to make for the country where soldier-merit is understood, and a tall fellow of parts will get his pair of colors in no-time.

But the highest stretch of their art was probably that done on the Austrian Ambassador,--tall Herr von Bentenrieder; tallest of Diplomatists; whom Fassmann, till the Fair of St. Germain, had considered the tallest of men. Bentenrieder was on his road as Kaiser's Ambassador to George I., in those Congress-of-Cambrai times; serenely journeying on; when, near by Halberstadt, his carriage broke. Carriage takes some time in mending; the tall Diplomatic Herr walks on, will stretch his long legs, catch a glimpse of the Town withal, till they get it ready again. And now, at some Guard-house of the place, a Prussian Officer inquires, not too reverently of a nobleman without carriage, "Who are you?" "Well," answered he smiling, "I am BOTSCHAFTER (Message-bearer) from his Imperial Majesty. And who may you be that ask?"--"To the Guard-house with us!" Whither he is marched accordingly. "Kaiser's messenger, why not?" Being a most tall handsome man, this Kaiser's BOTSCHAFTER, striding along on foot here, the Guard-house Officials have decided to keep him, to teach him Prussian drill-exercise;--and are thrown into a singular quandary, when his valets and suite come up, full of alarm dissolving into joy, and call him "Excellenz!" [Pollnitz, ii. 207-209.]

Tall Herr von Bentenrieder accepted the prostrate apology of these Guard-house Officials. But he naturally spoke of the matter to George I.; whose patience, often fretted by complaints on that head, seems to have taken fire at this transcendent instance of Prussian insolency. In consequence of this adventure, he commenced, says Pollnitz, a system of decisive measures; of reprisals even, and of altogether peremptory, minatory procedures, to clear Hanover of this nuisance; and to make it cease, in very fact, and not in promise and profession merely. These were the first rubs Queen Sophie met with, in pushing on the Double-Marriage; and sore rubs they were, though she at last got over them. Coming on the back of that fine Charlottenburg Visit, almost within year and day, and directly in the teeth of such friendly aspects and prospects, this conduct on the part of his



Britannic Majesty much grieved and angered Friedrich Wilhelm; and in fact involved him in considerable practical troubles.

For it was the signal of a similar set of loud complaints, and menacing remonstrances (with little twinges of fulfilment here and there) from all quarters of Germany; a tempest of trouble and public indignation rising everywhere, and raining in upon Friedrich Wilhelm and this unfortunate Hobby of his. No riding of one's poor Hobby in peace henceforth. Friedrich Wilhelm always answered, what was only superficially the fact, That HE knew nothing of these violences and acts of ill-neighborship; he, a just King, was sorrier than any man to hear of them; and would give immediate order that they should end. But they always went on again, much the same; and never did end. I am sorry a just King, led astray by his Hobby, answers thus what is only superficially the fact. But it seems he cannot help it: his Hobby is too strong for him; regardless of curb and bridle in this instance. Let us pity a man of genius, mounted on so ungovernable a Hobby; leaping the barriers, in spite of his best resolutions.

Perhaps the poetic temperament is more liable to such morbid biases, influxes of imaginative crotchet, and mere folly that cannot be cured? Friedrich Wilhelm never would or could dismount from his Hobby: but he rode him under much sorrow henceforth; under showers of anger and ridicule;--contumelious words and procedures, as it were SAXA ET FAECES, battering round him, to a heavy extent; the rider a victim of Tragedy and Farce both at once.

#### QUEEN SOPHIE'S TROUBLES: GRUMKOW WITH THE OLD DESSAUER, AND GRUMKOW WITHOUT HIM.

Queen Sophie had, by delicate management, got over those first rubs, and arrived at a Treaty of Hanover, and clear ground again; far worse rubs lay ahead; but smooth travelling, towards such a goal, was not possible for this Queen. Poor Lady, her Court, as we discern from Wilhelmina and the Books, is a sad welter of intrigues, suspicions; of treacherous chambermaids, head-valets, pickthank scouts of official gentlemen and others striving to supplant one another. Satan's Invisible World very busy against Queen Sophie! Under any terms, much more under those of the Double-Marriage, her place in a kindly but suspicious Husband's favor was difficult to maintain. Restless aspirants, climbing this way or that, by ladder-steps discoverable in this abstruse element, are never wanting, and have the due eavesdropping satellites, now here, now there. Queen Sophie and her party have to walk warily, as if among precipices and pitfalls. Of all which wide welter of extinct contemptibilities, then and there so important, here and now become minus quantities, we again notice the existence, but can undertake no study or specification whatever. Two Incidents, the latter of them dating near the point where we now are, will sufficiently instruct the reader what a welter this was, in which Queen Sophie and her bright little Son, the new Major of the Potsdam Giants, had to pass their existence.

Incident First fell out some six years ago or more,--in 1719, year of the Heidelberg Protestants, of Clement the Forger, when his Majesty "slept for weeks with a pistol under his pillow," and had other troubles. His Majesty, on one of his journeys, which were

always many, was taken suddenly ill at Brandenburg, that year: so violently ill, that thinking himself about to die, he sent for his good Queen, and made a Will appointing her Regent in case of his decease. His Majesty quite recovered before long. But Grumkow and the old Dessauer, main aspirants; getting wind of this Will, and hunting out the truth of it,--what a puddling of the waters these two made in consequence; stirring up mire and dirt round the good Queen, finding she had been preferred to them! [Wilhelmina, i. 26, 29.] Nay Wilhelmina, in her wild way, believes they had, not long after, planned to "fire a Theatre" about the King, one afternoon, in Berlin City, and take his life, thereby securing for themselves such benefit in prospect as there might be! Not a doubt of it, thinks Wilhelmina: "The young Margraf, [Born 1700 (see vol. v. p. 393.) our precious Cousin, of Schwedt, is not he Sister's-son of that Old Dessauer? Grandson of the Great Elector, even as Papa is. Papa once killed (and our poor Crown-Prince also made away with),--that young Margraf, and his blue Fox-tiger of an Uncle over him, is King in Prussia! Obviously they meant to burn that Theatre, and kill Papa!" This is Wilhelmina's distracted belief; as, doubtless, it was her Mother's on the day in question: a jealous, much-suffering, transcendently exasperated Mother, as we see.

Incident Second shows us those, two rough Gentlemen fallen out of partnership, into open quarrel and even duel. "Duel at the Copenick Gate," much noised of in the dull old Prussian Books,--though always in a reserved manner; not even the DATE, as if that were dangerous, being clearly given! It came in the wake of that Hanover Treaty, as is now guessed; the two having taken opposite sides on that measure, and got provoked into ripping up old sores in general. Dessau was AGAINST King George and the Treaty, it appears; having his reasons, family-reasons of old standing: Grumkow, a bribable gentleman, was FOR,--having also perhaps his reasons. Enough, it came to altercations, objurgations between the two; which rose ever higher,--rose at length to wager-of-battle. Indignant challenge on the part of the Old Dessauer; which, however, Grumkow, not regarded as a BARESARK in the fighting way, regrets that his Christian principles do not, forsooth, allow him to accept. The King is appealed to; the King, being himself, though an orthodox Christian, yet a still more orthodox Soldier, decides That, on the whole, General Grumkow cannot but accept this challenge from the Field-marshal Prince of Dessau.

Dessau is on the field, at the Copenick Gate, accordingly,--late-autumn afternoon (I calculate) of the year 1725;--waits patiently till Grumkow make his appearance. Grumkow, with a chosen second, does at last appear; advances pensively with slow steps. Gunpowder Dessau, black as a silent thunder-cloud, draws his sword: and Grumkow--does not draw his; presents it undrawn, with unconditional submission and apology: "Slay me, if you like, old Friend, whom I have injured!" Whereat Dessau, uttering no word, uttering only some contemptuous snort, turns his back on the phenomenon; mounts his horse and rides home. [Pollnitz, ii. 212, 214.] A divided man from this Grumkow henceforth. The Prince waited on her Majesty; signified his sorrow for past estrangements; his great wish now to help her, but his total inability, being ousted by Grumkow: We are for Halle, Madam, where our Regiment is; there let us serve his Majesty, since we cannot

here! [Wilhelmina, i. 90, 93.] --And in fact the Old Dessauer lives mostly there in time coming; sunk inarticulate in tactics of a truly deep nature, not stranding on politics of a shallow;-- a man still memorable in the mythic traditions of that place. Better to drill men to perfection, and invent iron ramrods, against the day they shall be needed, than go jostling, on such terms, with cattle of the Grumkow kind! And thus, we perceive, Grumkow is in, and the Old Dessauer out; and there has been "a change of Ministry," change of "Majesty's-Advisers," brought about;--may the Advice going be wiser now!

What the young Crown-Prince did, said, thought, in such environment, of backstairs diplomacies, female sighs and aspirations, Grumkow duels, drillings in the Giant Regiment, is not specified for us in the smallest particular, in the extensive rubbish-books that have been written about him. Ours is, to indicate that such environment was: how a lively soul, acted on by it, did not fail to react, chameleon-like taking color from it, and contrariwise taking color against it, must be left to the reader's imagination--One thing we have gathered and will not forget, That the Old Dessauer is out, and Grumkow in, that the rugged Son of Gunpowder, drilling men henceforth at Halle, and in a dumb way meditating tactics as few ever did, has no share in the foul enchantments that now supervene at court.

## Chapter VI.

### ORDNANCE-MASTER SECKENDORF CROSSES THE PALACE ESPLANADE.

The Kaiser's terror and embarrassment at the conclusion of the Hanover Treaty, as we saw, were extreme. War possible or likely; and nothing but the termagant caprices of Elizabeth Farnese to depend on: no cash from the Sea-Powers; only cannonshot, invasion and hostility, from their cash and them: What is to be done? To "caress the pride of Spain;" to keep alive the hopes, in that quarter, of marrying their Don Carlos, the supplementary Infant, to our eldest Archduchess; which indeed has set the Sea-Powers dreadfully on fire, but which does leave Parma and Piacenza quiet for the present, and makes the Pragmatic Sanction too an affair of Spain's own: this is one resource, though a poor one, and a dangerous. Another is, to make alliance with Russia, by well flattering the poor little brown Czarina there: but is not that a still poorer? And what third is there!--

There is a third worth both the others, could it be got done: To detach Friedrich Wilhelm from those dangerous Hanover Confederates, and bring him gently over to ourselves. He has an army of 60,000, in perfect equipment, and money to maintain them so. Against us or for us,--60,000 PLUS or 60,000 MINUS;--that will mean 120,000 fighting men; a most weighty item in any field there is like to be. If it lie in the power of human art, let us gain this wild irritated King of Prussia. Dare any henchman of ours venture to go, with honey-cakes, with pattings and cajoleries, and slip the imperial muzzle well round the snout of that rugged ursine animal? An iracund bear, of dangerous proportions, and justly irritated against us at present? Our experienced FELDZEUGMEISTER, Ordnance-Master and Diplomatist, Graf von

Seckendorf, a conscientious Protestant, and the cunningest of men, able to lie to all lengths,--dare he try it? He has fought in all quarters of the world; and lied in all, where needful; and saved money in all: he will try it, and will succeed in it too! [Pollnitz, ii. 235; Stenzel, iii. 544; Forster, ii. 59, iii. 235, 239.]

The Second Act, therefore, of this foolish World-Drama of the Double-Marriage opens,--on the 11th May, 1726, towards sunset, in the TABAGIE of the Berlin Palace, as we gather from laborious comparison of windy Pollnitz with other indistinct witnesses of a dreary nature,--in the following manner:--

Prussian Majesty sits smoking at the window; nothing particular going on. A square-built shortish steel-gray Gentleman, of military cut, past fifty, is strolling over the SCHLOSSPLATZ (spacious Square in front of the Palace), conspicuous amid the sparse populations there; pensively recreating himself, in the yellow sunlight and long shadows, as after a day's hard labor or travel. "Who is that?" inquires Friedrich Wilhelm, suspending his tobacco. Grumkow answers cautiously, after survey: He thinks it must be Ordnance-Master Seckendorf; who was with him to-day; passing on rapidly towards Denmark, on business that will not wait.--"Experienced Feldzeugmeister Graf von Seckendorf, whom we stand in correspondence with, of late, and were expecting about this time? Whom we have known at the Siege of Stralsund, nay ever since the Marlborough times and the Siege of Menin, in war and peace; and have always reckoned a solid reasonable man and soldier: Why has he not come to us?"--"Your Majesty," confesses Grumkow, "his business is so pressing! Business in Denmark will not wait. Seckendorf owned he had come slightly round, in his eagerness to see our grand Review at Tempelhof the day after to-morrow: What soldier would omit the sight (so he was pleased to intimate) of soldiering carried to the non-plus-ultra? But he hoped to do it quite incognito, among the general public;--and then to be at the gallop again: not able to have the honor of paying his court at this time."--"Court? NARREN-POSSEN (Nonsense)!" answers Friedrich Wilhelm,--and opening the window, beckons Seckendorf up, with his own royal head and hand. The conversation of a man who had rational sense, and could tell him anything, were it only news of foreign parts in a rational manner, was always welcome to Friedrich Wilhelm.

And so Seckendorf, how can he help it, is installed in the Tabagie; glides into pleasant conversation there. A captivating talker; solid for religion, for the rights of Germany against intrusive French and others: such insight, orthodoxy, sense and ingenuity; pleasant to hear; and all with the due quantity of oil, though he "both snuffles and lisps;" and has privately, in case of need, a capacity of lying,--for he curiously distils you any lie, in his religious alembics, till it become tolerable to his conscience, or even palatable, as elixirs are;--capacity of double-distilled lying probably the greatest of his day.-- Seckendorf assists at the grand Review, 13th May, 1726; witnesses with unfeigned admiration the non-plus-ultra of manoeuvring, and, in fact, the general management, military and other, of this admirable King. [Pollnitz, ii. 235; Fassmann, pp. 367, 368.] Seckendorf, no question of it, will do his Denmark business swiftly, then, since your Majesty is pleased so to wish.

Seckendorf, sure enough, will return swiftly to such a King, whose familiar company, vouchsafed him in this noble manner, he likes,-- oh, how he likes it!

In a week or two, Seckendorf is back to Berlin; attends his Majesty on the annual Military Tour through Preussen; attends him everywhere, becoming quite a necessary of life to his Majesty; and does not go away at all. Seckendorf's business, if his Majesty knew it, will not lead him "away;" but lies here on this spot; and is now going on; the magic-apparatus, Grumkow the mainspring of it, getting all into gear! Grumkow was once clear for King George and the Hanover Treaty, having his reasons then; but now he has other reasons, and is clear against those foreign connections. "Hm, hah--Yes, my estimable, justly powerful Herr von Grumkow, here is a little Pension of 1,600 ducats (only 500 pounds as yet), which the Imperial Majesty, thinking of the service you may do Prussia and Germany and him, graciously commands me to present;-- only 500 pounds by the year as yet; but there shall be no lack of money if we prosper!" [Forster, iii. 233, 232; see also iv. 172, 121, 157, &c.]

And so there are now two Black-Artists, of the first quality, busy on the unconscious Friedrich Wilhelm; and Seckendorf, for the next seven years, will stick to Friedrich Wilhelm like his shadow; and fascinate his whole existence and him, as few wizards could have done. Friedrich Wilhelm, like St. Paul in Melita, warming his innocent hands at the fire of dry branches here kindled for him,-- that miracle of a venomous serpent is this that has fixed itself upon his finger? To Friedrich Wilhelm's enchanted sense it seems a bird-of-paradise, trustfully perching there; but it is of the whip-snake kind, or a worse; and will stick to him tragically, if also comically, for years to come. The world has seen the comedy of it, and has howled scornful laughter upon Friedrich Wilhelm for it: but there is a tragic side, not so well seen into, where tears are due to the poor King; and to certain others horsewhips, and almost gallows-ropes, are due!--Yes, had Seckendorf and Grumkow both been well hanged, at this stage of the affair, whereby the affair might have soon ended on fair terms, it had been welcome to mankind; welcome surely to the present Editor; for one; such a saving to him, of time wasted, of disgust endured! And indeed it is a solacement he has often longed for, in these dreary operations of his. But the Fates appointed otherwise; we have all to accept our Fate!--

Grumkow is sworn to Imperial orthodoxy, then,--probably the vulpine MIND (so to term it) went always rather that way, and only his interest the other;--Grumkow is well bribed, supplied for bribing others where needful; stands orthodox now, under peril of his very head. All things have been got distilled into the palatable state, spiritual and economic, for oneself and one's grand Trojan-Horse of a Grumkow; and the adventure proceeds apace. Seckendorf sits nightly in the TABAGIE (a kind of "Smoking Parliament," as we shall see anon); attends on all promenades and journeys: one of the wisest heads, and so pleasant in discourse, he is grown indispensable, and a necessary of life to us. Seckendorf's Biographer computes, "he must have ridden, in those seven years, continually attending his Majesty, above 5,000 German miles," [Anonymous (Seckendorf's Grand-Nephew) <italic> Versuch einer Lebensbeschreibung des Feldmarschalls Grafen von Seckendorf

<end italic> (Leipzig, 1792, 1794), i. 6.]--that is 25,000 English miles; or a trifle more than the length of the Terrestrial Equator.

In a month or two, [13th August, 1726 (Preuss, i. 37).] Seckendorf--since Majesty vouchsafes to honor us by wishing it--contrives to get nominated Kaiser's Minister at Berlin: unlimited prospects of Tabagie, and good talk, now opening on Majesty. And impartial Grumkow, in Tabagie or wherever we are, cannot but admit, now and then, that the Excellenz Herr Graf Ordnance-Master has a deal of reason in what he says about Foreign Politics, about intrusive French and other points. "Hm, Na," muses Friedrich Wilhelm to himself, "if the Kaiser had not been so lofty on us in that Heidelberg-Protestant affair, in the Ritter-Dienst business, in those damned 'recruiting' brabbles; always a very high-sniffing surly Kaiser to us!" For in fact the Kaiser has, all along, used Friedrich Wilhelm bitterly ill; and contemplates no better usage of him, except in show. Usage? thinks the Kaiser: A big Prussian piece of Cannon, whom we wish to enchant over to us! Did LAZY PEG complain of her "usage"?--So that the Excellenz and Grumkow have a heavy problem of it; were they not so diligent, and the Cannon itself well disposed. "Those BLITZ FRANZOSEN (blasted French)!" growls Friedrich Wilhelm sometimes, in the Tobacco-Parliament: [Forster, ii. 12, &c.] for he hates the French, and would fain love his Kaiser; being German to the bone, and of right loyal heart, though counted only a piece of cannon by some. For one thing, his Prussian Majesty declines signing that Treaty of Hanover a second time: now when the Dutch accede to it, after almost a year's trouble with them, the Prussian Ambassador, singular to observe, "has no orders to sign;" leaves the English with their Hollanders and Blitz Franzosen to sign by themselves, this time. [9th August, 1726. (Boyer, <italic> The Political State of Great Rrilain, <end italic> a monthly periodical, vol. xxxii. p. 77, which is the number for July, 1726.)] "We will wait, we will wait!" thinks his Prussian Majesty:--"Who knows?"

"But then Julich and Berg!" urges he always; "Britannic Majesty and the Blitz Franzosen were to secure me the reversion there. That was the essential point!"--For this too Excellenz has a remedy; works out gradually a remedy from headquarters, the amiable dexterous man: "Kaiser will do the like, your Majesty; Kaiser himself will secure it you!"--In brief, some three months after Seckendorf's instalment as Kaiser's Minister, not yet five months since his appearance in the Schlossplatz that May evening, --it is now Hunting-season, and we are at Wusterhausen; Majesty, his two Black-Artists and the proper satellites on both sides all there,--a new and opposite Treaty, in extreme privacy, on the 12th of October, 1726, is signed at that sequestered Hunting-Schloss: "Treaty of Wusterhausen" so called; which was once very famous and mysterious, and caused many wigs to wag. Wigs to wag, in those days especially, when knowledge of it was first had; the rather as only half knowledge could be had of it;--or can, mourns Dryasdust, who has still difficulties about some "secret articles" in the Document. [Buchholz, i. 94 n.] Courage, my friend; they are now of no importance to any creature.

The essential purport of this Treaty, [Given IN EXTENSO (without the secret articles) in Forster, iv. 159-166.] legible to all eyes, is, "That Friedrich Wilhelm silently drops the Hanover

Treaty and Blitz Franzosen; and explicitly steps over to the Kaiser's side; stipulates to assist the Kaiser with so many thousand, if attacked in Germany by any Blitz Franzose or intrusive Foreigner whatever. In return for which, the Kaiser, besides assisting Prussia in the like case with a like quantity of thousands, engages, in circuitous chancery language, To be helpful, and humanly speaking effectua<sup>1</sup>, in that grand matter of Julich and Berg;--somewhat in the following strain: 'To our Imperial mind it does appear the King of Prussia has manifest right to the succession in Julich and Berg; right grounded on express ERBVERGLEICH of 1624, not to speak of Deeds subsequent: the Imperial mind, as supreme judge of such matters in the Reich, will not fail to decide this Cause soon and justly, should it come to that. But we hope it may take a still better course: for the Imperial mind will straightway set about persuading Kur-Pfalz to comply peaceably; and even undertakes to have something done, that way, before six months pass.'" [Art. v. in Forster, ubi supra.]

Humanly speaking, surely the Imperial mind will be effectual in the Julich and Berg matter. But it was very necessary to use circuitous chancery language,--inasmuch as the Imperial mind, desirous also to secure Kur-Pfalz's help in this sore crisis, had, about three months ago, [Treaty with Kur-Pfalz, 16th August, 1726 (Forster, ii. 71).] expressly engaged to Kur-Pfalz, That Julich and Berg should NOT go to Friedrich Wilhelm in terms of the old Deed, but to Kur-Pfalz's Cousins of Sulzbach, whom the old gentleman (in spite of Deeds) was obstinate to prefer! There is no doubt about that fact, about that self-devouring pair of facts. To such straits is a Kaiser driven when he gets deep into spectre-hunting.

This is the once famous, now forgotten, "Treaty of Wusterhausen, 12th October, 1726;" which proved so consolatory to the Kaiser in that dread crisis of his Spectre-Hunt; and the effects of which are very visible in this History, if nowhere else. It caught up the Prussian-English Double-Marriage; launched it into the huge tide of Imperial Spectre Politics, into the awful swagging and swayings of the Terrestrial LIBRA in general; and nearly broke the heart of several Royal persons; of a memorable Crown-Prince, among others. Which last is now, pretty much, its sole claim to be ever mentioned again by mankind. As there was no performance, nor an intention of any, in that Julich-Berg matter, Excellenz Seckendorf had the task henceforth of keeping, by art-magic or the PRETERNatural method,--that is, by mere help of Grumkow and the Devil,--his Prussian Majesty steady to the Kaiser nevertheless. Always well divided from the English especially. Which the Excellency Seckendorf managed to do. For six or seven years coming; or, in fact, till these Spectre-chasings ended, or ran else-whither for consummation. Steady always, jealous of the English; sometimes nearly mad, but always ready as a primed cannon: so Friedrich Wilhelm was accordingly managed to be kept;--his own Household gone almost into delirium; he himself looking out, with loyalty fierce survey, for any Anti-Kaiser War: "When do we go off, then?"--though none ever came. And indeed nothing came; and except those torments to young Friedrich and others, it was all Nothing. One of the strangest pieces of Black-Art ever done.

Excellenz Seckendorf, whom Friedrich Wilhelm so loves, is by no means a beautiful man; far the reverse. Bodily,--and the spirit

corresponds,--a stiff-backed, petrified, stony, inscrutable-looking, and most unbeautiful old Intriguer. Portraits of him, which are frequent, tell all one story. The brow puckered together, in a wide web of wrinkles from each temple, as if it meant to hide the bad pair of eyes, which look suspicion; inquiry, apprehension, habit of double-distilled mendacity; the indeterminate projecting chin, with its thick, chapped under-lip, is shaken out, or shoved out, in mill-hopper fashion,--as if to swallow anything there may be, spoken thing or other, and grind it to profitable meal for itself. Spiritually he was an old Soldier let for hire; an old Intriguer, Liar, Fighter, what you like. What we may call a human Soul standing like a hackney-coach, this half-century past, with head, tongue, heart, conscience, at the hest of a discerning public and its shilling.

There is considerable faculty, a certain stiff-necked strength in the old fellow; in fact, nature had been rather kind to him; and certainly his Uncle and Guardian--the distinguished Seckendorf who did the HISTORIA LUTHERANISMI, a RITTER, and man of good mark, in Ernst THE PIOUS of Saxe-Gotha's time--took pains about his education. But Nature's gifts have not prospered with him: how could they, in that hackney-coach way of life? Considerable gifts, we say; shrunk into a strange bankruptcy in the development of them. A stiff-backed, close-fisted old gentleman, with mill-hopper chin,--with puckery much-inquiring eyes, which have never discovered any noble path for him in this world. He is a strictly orthodox Protestant; zealous about external points of moral conduct; yet scruples not, for the Kaiser's shilling, to lie with energy to all lengths; and fight, according to the Reichs-Hofrath code, for any god or man. He is gone mostly to avarice, in these mature years; all his various strengths turned into strength of grasping. He is now fifty-four; a man public in the world, especially since he became the Kaiser's man: but he has served various masters, in various capacities, and been in many wars;--and for the next thirty years we shall still occasionally meet him, seldom to our advantage.

He comes from Anspach originally; and has kindred Seckendorfs in office there, old Ritters in that Country. He inherited a handsome castle and estate, Meuselwitz, near Altenburg in the Thuringen region, from that Uncle, Ernst of Saxe-Gotha's man, whom we spoke of; and has otherwise gained wealth; all which he holds like a vice. Once, at Meuselwitz, they say, he and some young secretary, of a smartish turn, sat working or conversing, in a large room with only one candle to illuminate it: the secretary, snuffing the candle, snuffed it out: "Pshaw," said Seckendorf impatiently, "where did you learn to handle snuffers?" "Excellenz, in a place where there were two lights kept!" replied the Other. [*Seckendorfe Leben* (already cited), i. 4.]--For the rest, he has a good old Wife at Meuselwitz, who is now old, and had never any children; who loves him much, and is much loved by him, it would appear: this is really the best fact I ever knew of him,--poor bankrupt creature; gone all to spiritual rheumatism, to strict orthodoxy, with unlimited mendacity; and avarice as the general outcome! Stiff-backed, close-fisted strength, all grown wooden or stony; yet some little well of human Sympathy does lie far in the interior: one wishes, after all (since he could not be got hanged in time for us), good days to his poor old Wife and him! He both lisps and snuffles, as was mentioned; writes



cunningly acres of despatches to Prince Eugene; never swears, though a military man, except on great occasions one oath, JARNI-BLEU,--which is perhaps some flash-note version of CHAIR-DE-DIEU, like PARBLEU, 'Zounds and the rest of them, which the Devil cannot prosecute you for; whereby an economic man has the pleasure of swearing on cheap terms.

Herr Pollnitz's account of Seckendorf is unusually emphatic; babbling Pollnitz rises into a strain of pulpit eloquence, inspired by indignation, on this topic: "He affected German downrightness, to which he was a stranger; and followed, under a deceitful show of piety, all the principles of Machiavel. With the most sordid love of money he combined boorish manners. Lies [of the distilled kind chiefly] had so become a habit with him, that he had altogether lost notion of employing truth in speech. It was the soul of a usurer, inhabiting now the body of a war-captain, now transmigrating into that of a huckster. False oaths, and the abominablest basenesses, cost him nothing, so his object might be reached. He was miserly with his own, but lavish with his Master's money; daily he gave most striking proofs of both these habitudes. And this was the man whom we saw, for a space of time, at the head of the Kaiser's Armies, and at the helm of the State and of the German Empire," [Pollnitz, ii. 238.]--having done the Prussian affair so well.

This cunning old Gentleman, to date from the autumn of 1726, may be said to have taken possession of Friedrich Wilhelm; to have gone into him, Grumkow and he, as two devils would have done in the old miraculous times: and, in many senses, it was they, not the nominal proprietor, that lived Friedrich Wilhelm's life. For the next seven years, a figure went about, not doubting it was Friedrich Wilhelm; but it was in reality Seckendorf-and-Grumkow much more. These two, conjurer and his man, both invisible, have caught their royal wild Bear; got a rope round his muzzle;--and so dance him about; now terrifying, now exhilarating all the market by the pranks he plays! Grumkow, a very Machiavel after his sort, knew the nature of the royal animal as no other did. Grumkow, purchased by his Pension of 500 pounds, is dog-cheap at the Money, as Seckendorf often urges at Vienna, Is he not? And they add a touch of extraordinary gift now and then, 40,000 florins (4,000 pounds) on one occasion: [In 1732: Forster, iii. 232.] for "Grumkow DIENET EHRlich (serves honorably)," urges Seckendorf; and again, "If anybody deserves favor [GNADE, meaning extra pay], it is this gentleman;"--WAHRLICH! Purchased Grumkow has ample money at command, to purchase other people needed; and does purchase; so that all things and persons can be falsified and enchanted, as need is. By and by it has got so far, that Friedrich Wilhelm's Ambassador at London maintains a cipher-correspondence with Grumkow; and writes to Friedrich Wilhelm, not what is passing in city or court there, but what Grumkow wishes Friedrich Wilhelm to think is passing.

Of insinuations, by assent or contradiction, potent if you know the nature of the beast; of these we need not speak. Tabaks-Collegium has become a workshop:--human nature can fancy it! Nay human nature can still read it in the British State-Paper Office, to boundless stupendous extent;--but ought mostly to suppress it when read.

This is a very strange part of Friedrich Wilhelm's history; and has caused much wonder in the world: Wilhelmina's Book rather aggravating than assuaging that feeling, on the part of intelligent readers. A Book written long afterwards, from her recollections, from her own oblique point of view; in a beautifully shrill humor; running, not unnaturally, into confused exaggerations and distortions of all kinds. Not mendaciously written anywhere, yet erroneously everywhere. Wilhelmina had no knowledge of the magical machinery that was at work: she vaguely suspects Grumkow and Seckendorf; but does not guess, in the mad explosions of Papa, that two devils have got into Papa, and are doing the mischief. Trusting to memory alone, she misdates, mistakes, misplaces; jumbles all things topsy-turvy;--giving, on the whole, an image of affairs which is altogether oblique, dislocated, exaggerative; and which, in fine, proves unintelligible, if you try to construe it into a fact or thing DONE. Yet her Human Narrative, in that wide waste of merely Pedant Maunderings, is of great worth to us. A green tree, a leafy grove, better or worse, in the wilderness of dead bones and sand,--how welcome! Many other Books have been written on the matter; but these to my experience, only darken it more and more. Pull Wilhelmina STRAIGHT, the best you can; deduct a twenty-five or sometimes even a seventy-five per cent, from the exaggerative portions of her statement; you will find her always true, lucid, charmingly human; and by far the best authority on this part of her Brother's History. State-Papers to some extent have also been printed on the matter; and of written State-Papers, here in England and elsewhere, this Editor has, had several hundred-weights distilled for him: but except as lights hung out over Wilhelmina, nothing yet known, of published or manuscript, can be regarded as good for much.

O Heavens, had one but seven-league boots, to get across that inane country,--a bottomless whirlpool of dust and cobwebs in many places;--where, at any rate, we had so little to do! Elucidating, rectifying, painfully contrasting, comparing, let us try to work out some conceivable picture of this strange Imperial MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING; and get our unfortunate Crown-Prince, and our unfortunate selves, alive through it.

Chapter VII.

TOBACCO-PARLIAMENT.

In these distressing junctures, it may cheer the reader's spirits, and will tend to explain for him what is coming, if we glance a little into the Friedrich-Wilhelm TABAGIE (TABAKS-COLLEGIUM or Smoking College), more worthy to be called Tobacco-Parliament, of which there have already been incidental notices. Far too remarkable an Institution of the country to be overlooked by us here.

Friedrich Wilhelm, though an absolute Monarch, does not dream of governing without Law, still less without Justice, which he knows well to be the one basis for him and for all Kings and men. His life-effort, prosecuted in a grand, unconscious, unvarying and instinctive way, may be defined rather as the effort to find out

everywhere in his affairs what was justice; to make regulations, laws in conformity with that, and to guide himself and his Prussia rigorously by these. Truly he is not of constitutional turn; cares little about the wigs and formalities of justice, pressing on so fiercely towards the essence and fact of it; he has been known to tear asunder the wigs and formalities, in a notably impatient manner, when they stood between him and the fact. But Prussia has its Laws withal, tolerably abundant, tolerably fixed and supreme: and the meanest Prussian man that could find out a definite Law, coming athwart Friedrich Wilhelm's wrath, would check Friedrich Wilhelm in mid-volley,--or hope with good ground to do it. Hope, we say; for the King is in his own and his people's eyes, to some indefinite extent, always himself the supreme ultimate Interpreter, and grand living codex, of the Laws,--always to some indefinite extent;--and there remains for a subject man nothing but the appeal to PHILIP SOBER, in some rash cases! On the whole, however, Friedrich Wilhelm is by no means a lawless Monarch; nor are his Prussians slaves by any means: they are patient, stout-hearted, subject men, with a very considerable quantity of radical fire, very well covered in; prevented from idle explosions, bound to a respectful demeanor, and especially to hold their tongues as much as possible.

Friedrich Wilhelm has not the least shadow of a Constitutional Parliament, nor even a Privy-Council, as we understand it; his Ministers being in general mere Clerks to register and execute what he had otherwise resolved upon: but he had his TABAKS-COLLEGIUM, Tobacco-College, Smoking Congress, TABAGIE, which has made so much noise in the world, and which, in a rough natural way: affords him the uses of a Parliament, on most cheap terms, and without the formidable inconveniences attached to that kind of Institution. A Parliament reduced to its simplest expression, and, instead of Parliamentary eloquence, provided with Dutch clay-pipes and tobacco: so we may define this celebrated Tabagie of Friedrich Wilhelm's.

Tabagies were not uncommon among German Sovereigns of that epoch: George I. at Hanover had his Smoking-room, and select smoking Party on an evening; and even at London, as we noticed, smoked nightly, wetting his royal throat with thin beer, in presence of his fat and of his lean Mistress, if there were no other company. Tobacco,--introduced by the Swedish soldiers in the Thirty-Years War, say some; or even by the English soldiers in the Bohemian or Palatinate beginnings of said War, say others;--tobacco, once shown them, was enthusiastically adopted by the German populations, long in want of such an article; and has done important multifarious functions in that country ever since. For truly, in Politics, Morality, and all departments of their Practical and Speculative affairs, we may trace its influences, good and bad, to this day.

Influences generally bad; pacificatory but bad, engaging you in idle cloudy dreams;--still worse, promoting composure among the palpably chaotic and discomposed; soothing all things into lazy peace; that all things may be left to themselves very much, and to the laws of gravity and decomposition. Whereby German affairs are come to be greatly overgrown with funguses in our Time; and give symptoms of dry and of wet rot, wherever handled. George I., we say, had his Tabagie; and other German Sovereigns had: but none of

them turned it to a Political Institution, as Friedrich Wilhelm did. The thrifty man; finding it would serve in that capacity withal. He had taken it up as a commonplace solace and amusement: it is a reward for doing strenuously the day's heavy labors, to wind them up in this manner, in quiet society of friendly human faces, into a contemplative smoke-canopy, slowly spreading into the realm of sleep and its dreams. Friedrich Wilhelm was a man of habitudes; his evening Tabagie became a law of Nature to him, constant as the setting of the sun. Favorable circumstances, quietly noticed and laid hold of by the thrifty man, developed this simple evening arrangement of his into a sort of Smoking Parliament, small but powerful, where State-consultations, in a fitful informal way, took place; and the weightiest affairs might, by dexterous management, cunning insinuation and manoeuvring from those that understood the art and the place, be bent this way or that, and ripened towards such issue as was desirable.

To ascertain what the true course in regard to this or the other high matter will be; what the public will think of it; and, in short, what and how the Executive-Royal shall DO therein: this, the essential function of a Parliament and Privy-Council, was here, by artless cheap methods, under the bidding of mere Nature, multifariously done; mere taciturnity and sedative smoke making the most of what natural intellect there might be. The substitution of Tobacco-smoke for Parliamentary eloquence is, by some, held to be a great improvement. Here is Smelfungus's opinion, quaintly expressed, with a smile in it, which perhaps is not all of joy:--

"Tobacco-smoke is the one element in which, by our European manners, men can sit silent together without embarrassment, and where no man is bound to speak one word more than he has actually and veritably got to say. Nay, rather every man is admonished and enjoined by the laws of honor, and even of personal ease, to stop short of that point; at all events, to hold his peace and take to his pipe again, the instant he has spoken his meaning, if he chance to have any. The results of which salutary practice, if introduced into Constitutional Parliaments, might evidently be incalculable. The essence of what little intellect and insight there is in that room: we shall or can get nothing more out of any Parliament; and sedative, gently soothing, gently clarifying tobacco-smoke (if the room were well ventilated, open atop, and the air kept good), with the obligation to a MINIMUM of speech, surely gives human intellect and insight the best chance they can have. Best chance, instead of the worst chance as at present: ah me, ah me, who will reduce fools to silence again in any measure? Who will deliver men from this hideous nightmare of Stump-Oratory, under which the grandest Nations are choking to a nameless death, bleeding (too truly) from mouth and nose and ears, in our sad days?"

This Tobacco-College is the Grumkow-and-Seckendorf chief field of action. These two gentlemen understand thoroughly the nature of the Prussian Tobacco-Parliament; have studied the conditions of it to the most intricate cranny: no English Whipper-in or eloquent Premier knows his St. Stephen's better, or how to hatch a measure in that dim hot element. By hint, by innuendo; by contemplative smoke, speech and forbearance to speak; often looking one way and rowing another,--they can touch the secret springs, and guide in a

surprising manner the big dangerous Fireship (for such every State-Parliament is) towards the haven they intend for it. Most dexterous Parliament-men (Smoke-Parliament); no Walpole, no Dundas, or immortal Pitt, First or Second, is cleverer in Parliamentary practice. For their Fireship, though smaller than the British, is very dangerous withal. Look at this, for instance: Seckendorf, one evening, far contrary to his wont, which was prostrate respect in easy forms, and always judicious submission of one's own weaker judgment, towards his Majesty,--has got into some difficult defence of the Kaiser; defence very difficult, or in reality impossible. The cautious man is flustered by the intricacies of his position, by his Majesty's indignant counter-volleys, and the perilous necessity there is to do the impossible on the spur of the instant;--gets into emphasis, answers his Majesty's volcanic fire by incipient heat of his own; and, in short, seems in danger of forgetting himself, and kindling the Tobacco-Parliament into a mere conflagration. That will be an issue for us! And yet who dare interfere? Friedrich Wilhelm's words, in high clangorous metallic plangency, and the pathos of a lion raised by anger into song, fall hotter and hotter; Seckendorf's puckered brow is growing of slate-color; his shelf-lip, shutting violently, lisps and snuffles mere unconciliatory matter:--"What on earth will become of us?"--"Hoom! Boom!" dexterous Grumkow has drawn a Humming-top from his pocket, and suddenly sent it spinning. There it hums and caracoles, through the bottles and glasses; reckless what dangerous breakage and spilth it may occasion. Friedrich Wilhelm looked aside to it indignantly. "What is that?" inquired he, in metallic tone still high. "Pooh, a toy I bought for the little Prince August, your Majesty: am only trying it!" His Majesty understood the hint, Seckendorf still better; and a jolly touch of laughter, on both sides, brought the matter back into the safe tobacco-clouds again. [Forster, ii. 110.]

This Smoking Parliament or (TABAKS-COLLEGIUM of his Prussian Majesty was a thing much talked of in the world; but till Seckendorf and Grumkow started their graud operations there, its proceedings are not on record; nor indeed till then had its political or parliamentary function become so decidedly evident. It was originally a simple Smoking-Club; got together on hest of Nature, without ulterior intentions:--thus English PARLIAMENTA themselves are understood to have been, in the old Norman time, mere royal Christmas-Festivities, with natural colloquy or PARLEYING between King and Nobles ensuing thereupon, and what wisest consultation concerning the arduous things of the realm the circumstances gave rise to. Such parleyings or consultations,--always two in number in regard to every matter, it would seem, or even three; one sober, one drunk, and one just after being drunk, --proving of extreme service in practice, grew to be Parliament, with its three readings, and what not.

A Smoking-room,--with wooden furniture, we can suppose,--in each of his Majesty's royal Palaces, was set apart for this evening service, and became the Tabagie of his Majesty. A Tabagie-room in the Berlin Schloss, another in the Potsdam, if the cicerone had any knowledge, could still be pointed out:--but the Tobacco-PIPES that are shown as Friedrich Wilhelm's in the KUNSTKAMMER or Museum of Berlin, pipes which no rational smoker, not compelled to it, would have used, awaken just doubt as to the cicerones; and you

leave the Locality of the Tabagie a thing conjectural. In summer season, at Potsdam and in country situations, Tabagie could be held under a tent: we expressly know, his Majesty held Tabagie at Wusterhausen nightly on the Steps of the big Fountain, in the Outer Court there. Issuing from Wusterhausen Schloss, and its little clipped lindens, by the western side; passing the sentries, bridge and black ditch, with live Prussian eagles, vicious black bears, you come upon the royal Tabagie of Wusterhausen; covered by an awning, I should think; sending forth its bits of smoke-clouds, and its hum of human talk, into the wide free Desert round. Any room that was large enough, and had height of ceiling, and air-circulation and no cloth-furniture, would do: and in each Palace is one, or more than one, that has been fixed upon and fitted out for that object.

A high large Room, as the Engravings (mostly worthless) give it us: contented saturnine human figures, a dozen or so of them, sitting round a large long Table, furnished for the occasion; long Dutch pipe in the mouth of each man; supplies of knaster easily accessible; small pan of burning peat, in the Dutch fashion (sandy native charcoal, which burns slowly without smoke), is at your left hand; at your right a jug, which I find to consist of excellent thin bitter beer. Other costlier materials for drinking, if you want such, are not beyond reach. On side-tables stand wholesome cold-meats, royal rounds of beef not wanting, with bread thinly sliced and buttered: in a rustic but neat and abundant way, such innocent accommodations, narcotic or nutritious, gaseous, fluid and solid, as human nature, bent on contemplation and an evening lounge, can require. Perfect equality is to be the rule; no rising, or notice taken, when anybody enters or leaves. Let the entering man take his place and pipe, without obligatory remarks: if he cannot smoke, which is Seckendorf's case for instance, let him at least affect to do so, and not ruffle the established stream of things. And so, Puff, slowly Pff!--and any comfortable speech that is in you; or none, if you authentically have not any.

Old official gentlemen, military for most part; Grumkow, Derschau, Old Dessauer (when at hand), Seckendorf, old General Flans (rugged Platt-Deutsch specimen, capable of TOCADILLE or backgammon, capable of rough slashes of sarcasm when he opens his old beard for speech): these, and the like of these, intimate confidants of the King, men who could speak a little, or who could be socially silent otherwise,--seem to have been the staple of the Institution. Strangers of mark, who happened to be passing, were occasional guests; Ginckel the Dutch Ambassador, though foreign like Seckendorf, was well seen there; garrulous Pollnitz, who has wandered over all the world, had a standing invitation. Kings, high Princes on visit, were sure to have the honor. The Crown-Prince, now and afterwards, was often present; oftener than he liked,--in such an atmosphere, in such an element. "The little Princes were all wont to come in," doffing their bits of triangular hats, "and bid Papa good-night. One of the old Generals would sometimes put them through their exercise; and the little creatures were unwilling to go away to bed."

In such Assemblage, when business of importance, foreign or domestic, was not occupying the royal thoughts,--the Talk, we can believe, was rambling and multifarious: the day's hunting, if at Wusterhausen; the day's news, if at Berlin or Potsdam;

old reminiscences, too, I can fancy, turning up, and talk, even in Seckendorf's own time, about Siege of Menin (where your Majesty first did me the honor of some notice), Siege of Stralsund, and--duly on September 11th at least--Malplaquet, with Marlborough and Eugene: what Marlborough said, looked: and especially Lottum, late Feldmarschall Lottum; [Died 1719.] and how the Prussian Infantry held firm, like a wall of rocks, when the horse were swept away,--rocks highly volcanic, and capable of rolling forward too; and "how a certain Adjutant [Derschau smokes harder, and blushes brown] snatched poor Tettau on his back, bleeding to death, amid the iron whirlwinds, and brought him out of shot-range." [*Militair-Lexikon*, iv. 78, ? Major-General von Tettau, and i. 348, ? Derschau. This was the beginning of Derschau's favor with Friedrich Wilhelm, who had witnesssd this piece of faithful work.]--"Hm, na, such a Day, that, Herr Feldzeugmeister, as we shall not see again till the Last of the Days!"

Failing talk, there were Newspapers in abundance; scraggy Dutch Courants, Journals of the Rhine, FAMAS, Frankfurt ZEITUNGS; with which his Majesty exuberantly supplied himself;--being willing to know what was passing in the high places of the world, or even what in the dark snuffy Editor's thoughts was passing. This kind of matter, as some picture of the actual hour, his Majesty liked to have read to him, even during meal-time. Some subordinate character, with clear windpipe,--all the better too, if he be a book-man, cognizant of History, Geography, and can explain everything,--usually reads the Newspaper from some high seat behind backs, while his Majesty and Household dine. The same subordinate personage may be worth his place in the Tabagie, should his function happen to prove necessary there. Even book-men, though generally pedants and mere bags of wind and folly, are good for something, more especially if rich mines of quizzability turn out to be workable in them.

#### OF GUNDLING, AND THE LITERARY MEN IN TOBACCO-PARLIAMENT.

Friedrich Wilhelm had, in succession or sometimes simultaneously, a number of such Nondescripts, to read his Newspapers and season his Tabagie;--last evanescent phasis of the old Court-Fool species;--who form a noticeable feature of his environment. One very famous literary gentleman of this description, who distanced every competitor, in the Tabagie and elsewhere, for serving his Majesty's occasions, was Jakob Paul Gundling; a name still laughingly remembered among the Prussian People. Gundling was a Country-Clergyman's son, of the Nurnberg quarter; had studied, carrying off the honors, in various Universities; had read, or turned over, whole cartloads of wise and foolish Books (gravitating, I fear, towards the latter kind); had gone the Grand Tour as travelling tutor, "as companion to an English gentleman." He had seen courts, perhaps camps, at lowest cities and inns; knew in a manner, practically and theoretically, all things, and had published multifarious Books of his own. [List of them, Twenty-one in number, mostly on learned Antiquarian subjects,--in Forster, ii. 255, 256.] The sublime long-eared erudition of the man was not to be contested; manifest to everybody; thrice and four times manifest to himself, in the first place.

In the course of his roamings, and grand and little tours, he had come to Berlin in old King Friedrich's time; had thrown powder in the eyes of men there, and been appointed to Professorships in the Ritter-Academy, to Chief-Heraldships,--"Historiographer Royal," and perhaps other honors and emoluments. The whole of which were cut down by the ruthless scythe of Friedrich Wilhelm, ruthlessly mowing his field clear, in the manner we saw at his Accession. Whereby learned grandiloquent Gundling, much addicted to liquor by this time, and turning the corner of forty, saw himself cast forth into the general wilderness; that is to say, walking the streets of Berlin, with no resources but what lay within himself and his own hungry skin. Much given to liquor too. How he lived, for a year or two after this,--erudite pen and braggart tongue his only resources,--were tragical to say. At length a famous Tavern-keeper, the "LEIPZIGE POLTER-HANS (Leipzig Kill-Cow, or BOISTEROUS-JACK)," as they call him, finding what a dungeon of erudite talk this Gundling was, and how gentlemen got entertained by him, gave Gundling the run of his Tavern (or, I fear, only a seat in the drinking-room); and it was here that General Grumkow found him, talking big, and disserting DE OMNI SCIBILI, to the ancient Berlin gentlemen over their cups. A very Dictionary of a man; who knows, in a manner, all things; and is by no means ignorant that he knows them: Would not this man suit his Majesty? thought Grumkow; and brought him to Majesty, to read the Newspapers and explain everything. Date is not given, or hinted at; but incidentally we find Gundling in full blast "in the year 1718;" [Von Loen, <italic> Kleine Schriften, i. 201 (cited in Forster, i. 260).] and conclude his instalment was a year or two before. Gundling came to his Majesty from the Tap-room of Boisterous-Jack; read the Newspapers, and explained everything: such a Dictionary-in-breeches (much given to liquor) as his Majesty had got, was never seen before. Working into the man, his Majesty, who had a great taste for such things, discovered in him such mines of college-learning, court-learning, without end; self-conceit, and depth of appetite, not less considerable: in fine, such Chaotic Blockheadism with the consciousness of being Wisdom, as was wondrous to behold,--as filled his Majesty, especially, with laughter and joyful amazement. Here are mines of native Darkness and Human Stupidity, capable of being made to phosphoresce and effervesce,--are there not, your Majesty? Omniscient Gundling was a prime resource in the Tabagie, for many years to come. Man with sublimer stores of long-eared Learning and Omniscience; man more destitute of Mother-wit, was nowhere to be met with. A man, bankrupt of Mother-wit;--who has Squandered any poor Mother-wit he had in the process of acquiring his sublime long-eared Omniscience; and has retained only depth of appetite,--appetite for liquor among other things, as the consummation and bottomless cesspool of appetites:--is not this a discovery we have made, in Boisterous-Jack's, your Majesty!

The man was an Eldorado for the peculiar quizzing humor of his Majesty; who took immense delight in working him, when occasion served. In the first years, he had to attend his Majesty on all occasions of amusement; if you invite his Majesty to dinner, Gundling too must be of the party. Daily, otherwise, Gundling was at the Tabagie; getting drunk, if nothing better. Vein after vein, rich in broad fun (very broad and Brobdignagian, such as suits there), is discovered in him: without wit himself, but much the cause of wit. None oftener shook the Tabagie with inextinguishable



Hahas: daily, by stirring into him, you could wrinkle the Tabagie into grim radiance of banter and silent grins.

He wore sublime clothes: Friedrich Wilhelm, whom we saw dress up his regimental Scavenger-Executioners in French costume, for Count Rothenburg's behoof, made haste to load Gundling with Rathships, Kammerherrships, Titles such as fools covet;--gave him tolerable pensions too, poor devil, and even functions, if they were of the imaginary or big insignificant sort. Above all things, his Majesty dressed him, as the pink of fortunate ambitious courtiers. Superfine scarlet coat, gold buttonholes, black-velvet facings and embroideries without end: "straw-colored breeches; red silk stockings," with probably blue clocks to them, "and shoes with red heels:" on his learned head sat an immense cloud-periwig of white goat's-hair (the man now growing towards fifty); in the hat a red feather:--in this guise he walked the streets, the gold Key of KAMMERHERR (Chamberlain) conspicuously hanging at his coat-breast; and looked proudly down upon the world, when sober. Alas, he was often not sober; and fiends in human shape were ready enough to take advantage of his unguarded situation. No man suffered ruder tarring-and-feathering;--and his only comfort was his bane withal, that he had, under such conditions, the use of the royal cellars, and could always command good liquor there.

His illustrious scarlet coat, by tumblings in the ditch, soon got dirty to a degree; and exposed him to the biting censures of his Majesty, anxious for the respectability of his Hofraths. One day, two wicked Captains, finding him prostrate in some lone place, cut off his Kammerherr KEY; and privately gave it to his Majesty. Majesty, in Tabagie, notices Gundling's coat-breast: "Where is your Key, then, Herr Kammerherr?" "Hm, hah--unfortunately lost it, Ihro Majestat!"--"Lost it, say you?" and his Majesty looks dreadfully grave.--"Key lost?" thinks Tabagie, grave Seckendorf included: "JARNI-BLEU, that is something serious!" "As if a Soldier were to drink his musket!" thinks his Majesty: "And what are the laws, if an ignorant fellow is shot, and a learned wise one escapes?" Here is matter for a deliberative Tabagie; and to poor Gundling a bad outlook, fatal or short of fatal. He had better not even drink much; but dispense with consolation, and keep his wits about him, till this squall pass. After much deliberating, it is found that the royal clemency can be extended; and an outlet devised, under conditions. Next Tabagie, a servant enters with one of the biggest trays in the world, and upon it a "Wooden Key gilt, about an ell long;" this gigantic implement is solemnly hung round the repentant Kammerherr; this he shall wear publicly as penance, and be upon his behavior, till the royal mind can relent. Figure the poor blockhead till that happen! "On recovering his metal key, he goes to a smith, and has it fixed on with wire."

What Gundling thought to himself, amid these pranks and hoaxings, we do not know. The poor soul was not born a fool; though he had become one, by college-learning, vanity, strong-drink, and the world's perversity and his own. Under good guidance, especially if bred to strict silence, he might have been in some measure a luminous object,--not as now a phosphorescent one, shining by its mere rottenness! A sad "Calamity of Authors" indeed, when it overtakes a man!--Poor Gundling probably had lucid intervals now and then; tragic fits of discernment, in the inner-man of him.

He had a Brother, also a learned man, who retained his senses; and was even a rather famed Professor at Halle; whose Portrait, looking very academic, solemn and well-to-do, turns up in old printshops; whose Books, concerning "Henry the Fowler (<italic> De Henrico Aucupe <end italic>)," "Kaiser Conrad I.," and other dim Historical objects, are still consultable,--though with little profit, to my experience. The name of this one was NICOLAUS HIERONYMUS; ours is JAKOB PAUL, the senior brother,--once the hope of the House, it is likely, and a fond Father's pride,--in that poor old Nurnberg Parsonage long ago!

Jakob Paul likewise continued to write Books, on Brandenburg Heraldries, Topography, Genealogies: even a "LIFE" or two of some old Brandenburg Electors are still extant from his hand; but not looked at now by any mortal. He had been, perhaps was again, Historiographer Royal; and felt bound to write such Books: several of them he printed; and we hear of others still manuscript, "in five folio volumes written fair." He held innumerable half-mock Titles and Offices; among others, was actual President of the Berlin Royal Society, or ACADEMIE DES SCIENCES, Leibnitz's pet daughter,--there Gundling actually sat in Office; and drew the salary, for one certainty. "As good he as another," thought Friedrich Wilhelm: "What is the use of these solemn fellows, in their big perukes, with their crabbed X+Y's, and scientific Pedler's-French; doing nothing that I can see, except annually the <italic> Berlin Almanac, <end italic> which they live upon? Let them live upon it, and be thankful; with Gundling for their head man."

Academy of Sciences makes its ALMANAC, and some peculium of profit by it; lectures perhaps a little "on Anatomy" (good for something, that, in his Majesty's mind); but languishes--without encouragement during the present reign. Has his Majesty no prize questions to propose, then? None, or worse. He once officially put these learned Associates upon ascertaining for him "Why Champagne foamed?" They, with a hidden vein of pleasantry, required "material to experiment upon." Friedrich Wilhelm sent them a dozen, or certain dozens; and the matter proved insoluble to this day. No King, scarcely any man, had less of reverence for the Sciences so called; for Academic culture, and the art of the Talking-Schoolmaster in general! A King obtuse to the fine Arts, especially to the vocal Arts, in a high degree. Literary fame itself he regards as mountebank fame; the art of writing big admirable folios is little better to him than that of vomiting long coils of wonderful ribbon, for the idlers of the market-place; and he bear-baits his Gundling, in this manner, as phosphorescent blockhead of the first magnitude, worthy of nothing better.

Nay, it is but lately (1723 the exact year) that he did his ever-memorable feat in regard to Wolf and his Philosophy, at Halle. Illustrious Wolf was recognized, at that time, as the second greater Leibnitz, and Head-Philosopher of Nature, who "by mathematical method" had as it were taken Nature in the fact, and illuminated everything, so that whosoever ran might read,--which all manner of people then tried to do, but, have now quite ceased trying "by the Wolf-method:"--Immortal Wolf, somewhat of a stiff, reserved humor, inwardly a little proud, and not wanting in private contempt of the contemptible, had been accused of

heterodoxy by the Halle Theologians. Immortal Wolf, croakily satirical withal, had of course defended himself; and of course got into a shoreless sea of controversy with the Halle Theologians; pestering his Majesty with mere wars, and rumors of war, for a length of time, from that Halle University. [In Busching (<italic> Beitrage, <end italic> i. I-140) is rough authentic account of Wolf, and especially of all that,--with several curious LETTERS of Wolf's.] So that Majesty, unable to distinguish top or bottom in such a coil of argument; or to do justice in the case, however willing and anxious, often passionately asked: "What, in God's name, is the real truth of it?" Majesty appointed Commissions to inquire; read Reports; could for a long while make out nothing certain. At last came a decision on the sudden;--royal mind suddenly illuminated, it is a little uncertain how. Some give the credit of it to Gundling, which is unlikely; others to "Two Generals" of pious orthodox turn, acquainted with Halle;--and I have heard obscurely that it was the Old Dessauer, who also knew Halle; and was no doubt wearied to hear nothing talked of there but injured Philosopher Wolf, and injuring Theologian Lange, or VICE VERSA. Some practical military man, not given to take up with shadows, it likeliest was. "In God's name, what is the real truth of all that?" inquired his Majesty, of the practical man: "DOES Wolf teach hellish doctrines; as Lange says, or heavenly, as himself says?" "Teaches babble mainly, I should think, and scientific Pedler's French," intimated the practical man: "But they say he has one doctrine about oaths, and what he calls foundation of duty, which I did not like. Not a heavenly doctrine that. Follow out that, any of your Majesty's grenadiers might desert, and say he had done no sin against God!" [Busching, i. 8; Benekendorf, <italic> Charakterzilge aus dem Leben Konig Friedrich Wilhelm I. <end italic> (Anonymus, Berlin, 1787), ii. 23.] Friedrich Wilhelm flew into a paroxysm of horror; instantly redacted brief Royal Decree [15th November (Busching says 8th), 1723.] (which is still extant among the curiosities of the Universe), ordering Wolf to quit Halle and the Prussian Dominions, bag and baggage, forevermore, within eight-and-forty hours, "BEY STRAFE DES STRANGES, under pain of the halter!"

Halter: the Head-Philosopher of Nature, found too late, will be hanged, as if he were a sheep-stealer; hanged, and no mistake! Poor Wolf gathered himself together, wife and baggage; girded up his loins; and ran with the due despatch. He is now found sheltered under Hessen-Darmstadt, at Marburg, professing something there; and all the intellect of the world is struck with astonishment, and with silent or vocal pity for the poor man.-- It is but fair to say, Friedrich Wilhelm, gradually taking notice of the world's humor in regard to this, began to have his own misgivings; and determined to read some of Wolf's Books for himself. Reading in Wolf, he had sense to discern that here was a man of undeniable talent and integrity; that the Practical Military judgment, loading with the iron ramrod, had shot wide of the mark, in this matter; and, in short, that a palpable bit of foul-play had been done. This was in 1733;--ten years after the shot, when his Majesty saw, with his own eyes, how wide it had gone. He applied to Wolf earnestly, more than once, to come back to him: Halle, Frankfurt, any Prussian University with a vacancy in it, was now wide open to Wolf. But Wolf knew better: Wolf, with bows down to the ground, answered always evadingly;--and never would come back till the New Reign began.

Friedrich Wilhelm knew little of Book-learning or Book-writing; and his notion of it is very shocking to us. But the fact is, O reader, Book-writing is of two kinds: one wise, and may be among the wisest of earthly things; the other foolish, sometimes far beyond what can be reached by human nature elsewhere. Blockheadism, Unwisdom, while silent, is reckoned bad; but Blockheadism getting vocal, able to speak persuasively,--have you considered that at all? Human Opacity falling into Phosphorescence; that is to say, becoming luminous (to itself and to many mortals) by the very excess of it, by the very bursting of it into putrid fermentation;--all other forms of Chaos are cosmic in comparison!--Our poor Friedrich Wilhelm had seen only Gundlings among the Book-writing class: had he seen wiser specimens, he might have formed, as he did in Wolf's case, another judgment. Nay in regard to Gundling himself, it is observable how, with his unutterable contempt, he seems to notice in him glimpses of the admirable (such acquirements, such dictionary-faculties, though gone distracted!),--and almost has a kind of love for the absurd dog. Gundling's pensions amount to something like 150 pounds; an immense sum in this Court. [Forster, i. 263, 284 (if you can RECONCILE the two passages).] A blockhead admirable in some sorts; and of immense resource in Tobacco-Parliament when business is slack!--

No end to the wild pranks, the Houyhnhnm horse-play they had with drunken Gundling. He has staggered out in a drunk state, and found, or not clearly FOUND till the morrow, young bears lying in his bed;--has found his room-door walled up; been obliged to grope about, staggering from door to door and from port to port, and land ultimately in the big Bears' den, who hugged and squeezed him inhumanly there. Once at Wusterhausen, staggering blind-drunk out of the Schloss towards his lair, the sentries at the Bridge (instigated to it by the Houyhnhnms, who look on) pretend to fasten some military blame on him: Why has he omitted or committed so-and-so? Gundling's drunk answer is unsatisfactory. "Arrest, Herr Kammerrath, is it to be that, then!" They hustle him about, among the Bears which lodge there;--at length they lay him horizontally across two ropes;--take to swinging him hither and thither, up and down, across the black Acherontic Ditch, which is frozen over, it being the dead of winter: one of the ropes, LOWER rope, breaks; Gundling comes souse upon the ice with his sitting-part; breaks a big hole in the ice, and scarcely with legs, arms and the remaining rope, can be got out undrowned. [Forster (i. 254-280); founding, I suppose, on *Leben und Thaten des Freiherrn Paul von Gundling* (Berlin, 1795); probably not one of the exactest Biographies.]

If, with natural indignation, he shut his door, and refuse to come to the Tabagie, they knock in a panel of his door; and force him out with crackers, fire-works, rockets and malodorous projectiles. Once the poor blockhead, becoming human for a moment, went clean away; to Halle where his Brother was, or to some safer place: but the due inveiglements, sublime apologies, increase of titles, salaries, were used; and the indispensable Phosphorescent Blockhead, and President of the Academy of Pedler's-French, was got back. Drink remained always as his consolation; drink, and the deathless Volumes he was writing and printing. Sublime returns came to him;--Kaiser's Portrait set in diamonds, on one occasion,

--for his Presentation-Copies in high quarters: immortal fame, is it not his clear portion; still more clearly abundance of good wine. Friedrich Wilhelm did not let him want for Titles;--raised him at last to the Peerage; drawing out the Diploma and Armorial Blazonry, in a truly Friedrich-Wilhelm manner, with his own hand. The Gundlings, in virtue of the transcendent intellect and merits of this Founder Gundling, are, and are hereby declared to be, of Baronial dignity to the last scion of them; and in "all RITTER-RENNEN (Tournaments), Battles, Fights, Camp-pitchings, Sealings, Siguetings, shall and may use the above-said Shield of Arms,"--if it can be of any advantage to them. A Prussian Majesty who gives us 150 pounds yearly, with board and lodging and the run of his cellar, and honors such as these, is not to be lightly sneezed away, though of queer humors now and then. The highest Personages, as we said, more than once made gifts to Gundling; miniatures set in diamonds; purses of a hundred ducats: even Gundling, it was thought, might throw in a word, mad or otherwise, which would bear fruit. It was said of him, he never spoke to harm anybody with his Majesty. The poor blown-up blockhead was radically not ill-natured,--at least, if you let his "phosphorescences" alone.

But the grandest explosious, in Tobacco-Parliament, were producible, when you got Two literary fools; and, as if with Leyden-jars, positive and negative, brought their vanities to bear on one another. This sometimes happened, when Tobacbo-Parliament was in luck. Friedrich Wilhelm had a variety of Merry-Andrew Rathes of the Gundling sort, though none ever came up to Gundling, or approached him, in worth as a Merry-Andrew.

Herr Fassmann, who wrote Books, by Patronage or for the Leipzig Booksellers, and wandered about the world as a star or comet of some magnitude, is not much known to my readers:--but he is too well known to me, for certain dark Books of his which I have had to read. [*Life of Friedrich Wilhelm*, occasionally cited here; *Life of August the Strong*; &c.] A very dim Literary Figure; undeniable, indecipherable Human Fact, of those days; now fallen quite extinct and obsolete; his garniture, equipment, environment all very dark to us. Probably a too restless, imponderous creature, too much of the Gundling type; structure of him GASEOUS, not solid; Perhaps a little of the coxcomb naturally; much of the sycophant on compulsion,--being sorely jammed into corners, and without elbow-room at all, in this world. Has, for the rest, a recognizable talent for "Magazine writing,"--for Newspaper editing, had that rich mine, "California of the Spiritually Vagabond," been opened in those days. Poor extinct Fassmann, one discovers at last a vein of weak geniality in him; here and there, real human sense and eyesight, under those strange conditions; and his poor Books, rotted now to inanity, have left a small seed-pearl or two, to the earnest reader. Alas, if he WAS to become "spiritually vagabond" ("spiritually" and otherwise), might it not perhaps be wholesome to him that the California was NOT discovered?--

Fassmann was by no means such a fool as Gundling; but, he was much of a fool too. He had come to Berlin, about this time, [1726, as he himself says (*supra* p. 8).] in hopes of patronage from the King or somebody; might say to himself, "Surely I am a better man than

Gundling, if the Berlin Court has eyesight." By the King, on some wise General's recommending it, he was, as a preliminary, introduced to the Tabagie at least. Here is the celebrated Gundling; there is the celebrated Fassmann. Positive Leyden-jar, with negative close by: in each of these two men lodges a full-charged fiery electric virtue of self-conceit; destructive each of the other;--could a conductor be discovered. Conductors are discoverable, conductors are not wanting; and many are the explosions between these mutually-destructive human varieties;--welcomed with hilarious, rather vacant, huge horse-laughter, in this Tobacco-Parliament and Synod of the Houyhnhnms.

Of which take this acme; and then end. Fassmann, a fellow not without sarcasm and sharpness, as you may still see, has one evening provoked Gundling to the transcendent pitch,--till words are weak, and only action will answer. Gundling, driven to the exploding point, suddenly seizes his Dutch smoking-pan, of peat-charcoal ashes and red-hot sand; and dashes it in the face of Fassmann; who is of course dreadfully astonished thereby, and has got his very eyebrows burnt, not to speak of other injuries. Stand to him, Fassmann! Fassmann stands to him tightly, being the better man as well as the more satirical; grasps Gundling by the collar, wrenches him about, lays him at last over his knee, sitting-part uppermost; slaps said sitting-part (poor sitting-part that had broken the ice of Wusterhausen) with the hot pan,--nay some say, strips it and slaps. Amid the inextinguishable horse-laughter (sincere but vacant) of the Houyhnhnm Olympus.

After which, his Majesty, as epilogue to such play, suggests, That feats of that nature are unseemly among gentlemen; that when gentlemen have a quarrel, there is another way of settling it. Fassmann thereupon challenges Gundling; Gundling accepts; time and place are settled, pistols the weapon. At the appointed time and place Gundling stands, accordingly, pistol in hand; but at sight of Fassmann, throws his pistol away; will not shoot any man, nor have any man shoot him. Fassmann sternly advances; shoots his pistol (powder merely) into Gundling's sublime goat's-hair wig: wig blazes into flame; Gundling falls shrieking, a dead man, to the earth; and they quench and revive him with a bucket of water. Was there ever seen such horse-play? Roaring laughter, huge, rude, and somewhat vacant, as that of the Norse gods over their ale at Yule time;--as if the face of the Sphinx were to wrinkle itself in laughter; or the fabulous Houyhnhnms themselves were there to mock in their peculiar fashion.

His Majesty at length gave Gundling a wine-cask, duly figured; "painted black with a white cross," which was to stand in his room as MEMENTO-MORI, and be his coffin. It stood for ten years; Gundling often sitting to write in it; a good screen against draughts. And the poor monster was actually buried in this cask; [Died 11th April, 1731, age 58: description of the Burial "at Bornstadt near Potsdam," in Forster, i. 276.] Fassmann pronouncing some funeral oration,--and the orthodox clergy uttering, from the distance, only a mute groan. "The Herr Baron von Gundling was a man of many dignities, of much Book-learning; a man of great memory," admits Fassmann, "but of no judgment," insinuates he,--LOOKING FOR the Judgment (EXPECTANS JUDICIUM)," says Fassmann, with a pleasant wit. Fassmann succeeded to all the emoluments and

honors; but did not hold them; preferred to run away before long: and after him came one and the other, whom the reader is not to be troubled with here. Enough if the patient reader have seen, a little, into that background of Friedrich Wilhelm's existence; and, for the didactic part, have caught up his real views or instincts upon Spiritual Phosphorescence, or Stupidity grown Vocal, which are much sounder than most of us suspect.

These were the sports of the Tobacco-Parliament; and it was always meant primarily for sport, for recreation: but there is no doubt it had a serious function as well. "Business matters," adds Beneckendorf, who had means of knowing, [Benekendorf, *<italic>Karakterzüge, </italic>* i. 137-149; vi. 37.] "were often a subject of colloquy in the TABAKS-COLLEGIUM. Not that they were there finished off, decided upon, or meant to be so. But Friedrich Wilhelm often purposely brought up such things in conversation there, that he might learn the different opinions of his generals and chief men, without their observing it,"--and so might profit by the Collective Wisdom, in short.

## Chapter VIII.

### SECKENDORF'S RETORT TO HER MAJESTY.

The Treaty of Wusterhausen was not yet known to Queen Sophie, to her Father George, or to any external creature: but that open flinching, and gradual withdrawal, from the Treaty of Hanover was too well known; and boded no good to her pet project. Female sighs, male obdurances, and other domestic phenomena, are to be imagined in consequence. "A grand Britannic Majesty indeed; very lofty Father to us, Madam, ever since he came to be King of England: Stalking along there, with his nose in the air; not deigning the least notice of us, except as of a thing that may be got to fight for him! And he does not sign the Double-Marriage Treaty, Madam; only talks of signing it,--as if we were a starved coach-horse, to be quickened along by a wisp of hay put upon the coach-pole close ahead of us always!"--"JARNI-BLEU!" snuffles Seckendorf with a virtuous zeal, or looks it; and things are not pleasant at the royal dinner-table.

Excellenz Seckendorf, we find at this time, "often has his Majesty to dinner:" and such dinners; fitting one's tastes in all points, --no expense regarded (which indeed is the Kaiser's, if we knew it)! And in return, Excellenz is frequently at dinner with his Majesty; where the conversation; if it turn on England, which often happens, is more and more an offence to Queen Sophie. Seckendorf studies to be polite, reserved before the Queen's Majesty at her own table; yet sometimes he lisps out, in his vile snuffling tone, half-insinuations, remarks on our Royal Kindred, which are irritating in the extreme. Queen Sophie, the politest of women, did once, says Pollnitz, on some excessive pressure of that lispng snuffling unendurability, lose her royal patience and flame out. With human frankness, and uncommonly kindled eyes, she signified to Seckendorf, That none who was not himself a kind of scoundrel could entertain such thoughts of Kings and gentlemen! Which hard saying kindled the stiff-backed rheumatic soul of Seckendorf (Excellenz had withal a temper in him, far down in the

deeps); who answered: "Your Majesty, that is what no one else thinks of me. That is a name I have never permitted any one to give me with impunity." And verily, he kept his threat in that latter point, says Pollnitz. [ii. 244.]

At this stage, it is becoming, in the nature of things, unlikely that the projected Double-Marriage, or any union with England, can ever realize itself for Queen Sophie and her House. The Kaiser has decreed that it never shall. Here is the King already irritated, grown indisposed to it; here is the Kaiser's Seckendorf, with preternatural Apparatus, come to maintain him in that humor. To Queen Sophie herself, who saw only the outside of Seckendorf and his Apparatus, the matter doubtless seemed big with difficulties; but to us, who see the interior, the difficulties are plainly hopeless. Unless the Kaiser's mind change, unless many fixed things change, the Double-Marriage is impossible.

One thing only is a sorrow; and this proved an immeasurable one: That they did not, that Queen Sophie did not, in such case, frankly give it up: Double-Marriage is not a law of Nature; it is only a project at Hanover that has gone off again. There will be a life for our Crown-Prince, and Princess, without a marriage with England!-It is greatly wise to recognize the impossible, the unreasonably difficult, when it presents itself: but who of men is there, much more who of women that can always do it?

Queen Sophie Dorothee will have this Double-Marriage, and it shall be possible. Poor Lady, she was very obstinate; and her Husband was very arbitrary. A rough bear of a Husband, yet by no means an unloving one; a Husband who might have been managed. She evidently made a great mistake in deciding not to obey this man; as she had once vowed. By perfect prompt obedience she might have had a very tolerable life with the rugged Orson fallen to her lot; who was a very honest-hearted creature. She might have done a pretty stroke of female work, withal, in taming her Orson; might have led him by the muzzle far enough in a private way,--by obedience.

But by disobedience, by rebellion open or secret? Friedrich Wilhelm was a Husband; Friedrich Wilhelm was a King; and the most imperative man then breathing. Disobedience to Friedrich Wilhelm was a thing which, in the Prussian State, still more in the Berlin Schloss and vital heart of said State, the laws of Heaven and of Earth had not permitted, for any man's or any woman's sake, to be. The wide overarching sky looks down on no more inflexible Sovereign Man than him in the red-collared blue coat and white leggings, with the bamboo in his hand. A peaceable, capacious, not ill-given Sovereign Man, if you will let him have his way. But to bar his way; to tweak the nose of his sovereign royalty, and ignominiously force him into another way: that is an enterprise no man or devil, or body of men or devils, need attempt. Seckendorf and Grumkow, in Tobacco-Parliament, understand it better. That attempt is impossible, once for all. The first step in such attempt will require to be assassination of Friedrich Wilhelm; for you may depend on it, royal Sophie, so long as he is alive, the feat cannot be done. O royal Sophie, O pretty Feekin, what a business you are making of it!

The year 1726 was throughout a troublous one to Queen Sophie. Seckendorf's advent; King George's manifestoing; alarm of imminent



universal War, nay sputters of it actually beginning (Gibraltar invested by the Spaniards, ready for besieging, it is said): nor was this all. Sophie's poor Mother, worn to a tragic Megaera, locked so long in the Castle of Ahlden, has taken up wild plans of outbreak, of escape by means of secretaries, moneys in the Bank of Amsterdam, and I know not what; with all which Sophie, corresponding in double and triple mystery, has her own terrors and sorrows, trying to keep it down. And now, in the depth of the year, the poor old Mother suddenly dies. [13th November, 1726: *Memoirs of Sophia Dorothea, Consort of George I.* (i. 386),--where also some of her concluding Letters ("edited" as if by the Nightmares) can be read, but next to no sense made of them.] Burnt out in this manner, she collapses into ashes and long rest; closing so her nameless tragedy of thirty years' continuance:--what a Bluebeard-chamber in the mind of Sophie! Nay there rise quarrels about the Heritage of the Deceased, which will prove another sorrow.

END OF BOOK V

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