

tenances of the city guard, who were endeavoring to unloose the chains. With one bound Trenck was beside his door, balancing in his right hand a large stone, and in the left his broken knife. He cried out, in a furious voice:

"Back! back!—let no one dare to enter here. My stones shall have good aim; I will kill any one who ventures to enter this room. Major, tell his excellency, the commandant, that I will remain no longer in chains. I wish him to have me shot down at once! I will thank him for my death, but I will curse him if he forces me to become a murderer. For I swear, before God, I will stone any one who seeks to overpower me. I will die—yes, die!"

It was a fearful sight—this man, thin, wan, naked, and bleeding, who seemed to have risen from the grave to revenge the sufferings of his life. His countenance was ghastly pale, his hair lying in matted locks on his neck; and the long beard, covering the lower part of his face, and falling almost to his waist, gave him a wild, insane look, which was heightened by the fearful brightness of his eyes.

With terror and pity they gazed at the poor unfortunate one whom despair had driven to this extremity; who remained deaf to all their representations, all their entreaties, still swearing that he would kill any one who approached him. It was in vain that the officers besought him in the most tender manner to submit—that the prison chaplain came and implored him, in the name of God, to give up this useless resistance. God's name had no effect whatever upon him. What was God to him—to him on whom no one had pity, neither God nor man; he whom they treated like a wild beast, and fastened in a cage? It was in vain that the commandant ordered the guard to storm the fortified door. Trenck received them with stones, and sent the two foremost ones reeling to the floor, causing the others to fall back in dismay.

Trenck raised his hand with a shout of exultation, armed with another stone, and fixing his wild, triumphant glance upon the commandant, he cried:

"You see it is useless to endeavor to take me while living. Order the guards to fire! Let me die!"

The commandant lacked the power to do as Trenck requested, however willing he may have been to grant his request. Instead of continuing his threats, he withdrew into another chamber, signing to the major to follow him.

Trenck still stood with uplifted arm when the major returned. And now, as the stern, much-feared commandant had left, no one withheld the tender sympathy that was almost breaking the hearts of the lookers-on. Trenck saw it written upon every countenance,

and he to whom a look and word of pity had been so long unknown, felt deeply touched. His expression became milder, and as the major, whom he had known in the other prison, commenced to speak to him in gentle, loving tones, and implored him not to cause his ruin, for all the punishment would fall upon his head, as, through his negligence, Trenck had been allowed to retain his knife—as he finished, Trenck's arm fell to his side, and tears streamed from his eyes.

"No one," said he, gently—"no one shall become unhappy through me, for misery is a fearful thing. I will make no further resistance, if you will swear to me that no heavy chains shall be put upon me—that I shall suffer no unworthy punishment."

The major promised him, in the commandant's name, that if he ceased to resist, no further notice would be taken of the affair.

"Then," whispered Trenck, with a bitter smile, "I must suffer anew—suffer forever."

He approached the door and drew off the chains.

"Now, guards," said he, "the door can be opened. The wild beast has become tame."

Then, with a low moan, he sank fainting upon the floor. He was lifted up and laid upon his bed. Tears were in every eye, but Trenck did not see them; he did not hear their low, whispered words of sympathy and friendship. Death, from whom Trenck had once more been torn, had sent her twin sister, insensibility, to cause him to forget his sufferings for a while.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE BATTLE OF COLLIN.

LOST!—the battle was lost! This was the cry of woe throughout the Prussian camp—this was the fearful cry that palsied the hands of those who could not endure defeat.

The Prussians who had defeated the enemy at Losovitz and Prague, were condemned to yield the palm of victory at Collin to their enemy's commander, Marshal Daun. They had fought bravely, desperately for this victory; and when all was over, death would have been preferable to defeat.

The Prussians were beaten, though their king, Ziethen, and Moritz von Dessau—all of them heroes—were in the field. At the first thought of the possibility of losing the battle, there was a fearful panic throughout the army.

"We are lost! lost!"—and this cry caused them to throw down their arms and fly, as if followed by a thousand furies; as victory was impossible, they wished at least to save their lives.

It was in vain that the officers implored them to rally again and fall upon the enemy. They did not heed. In vain that the king himself rode among them, pointing with his sword to the enemy and crying:

"Forward! forward, boys! Would you live forever? Death comes to all!"

They looked at him stubbornly; they feared not now his piercing, eagle glance, his royal countenance. They looked and said:

"We have worked hard enough to-day for eightpence," and then continued their flight.

But the king could not yet be brought to believe the truth. He still trusted in the possibility of victory. He clung with desperation to this hope; he let his voice be heard—that voice that generally had such power over his soldiers; he called them to him, and pointed out to them the enemy's battery; he ordered the band to play a martial air to inspire the men. This call brought a few faithful soldiers around him—only forty warriors were ready to follow their king.

"Forward! we will take the battery!" cried he, as he pressed on, regardless of the shower of the enemy's balls.

What was this to him? what had he to do with death—he whose only thought was for the honor and glory of his army? If he succeeded in taking this battery, it would encourage his desponding soldiers. They would once more believe in the star of their king, and assemble bravely around him. This it was that gave hope to the king.

Without once looking back, he pressed onward to the battery—when suddenly, amid the clatter of trumpets and the roar of cannon, this fearful question reached him:

"Sire, would you take the battery alone?"

The king reined in his horse and looked behind him. Yes, he was alone; no one was with him but his adjutant, Major von Grant, who had asked this question.

A deep groan escaped the king; his head fell upon his breast, and he gave himself up to the bitterness of despair.

A cannon-ball fell beside him—he did not heed it; he was too utterly wretched. Another ball struck his horse, causing it to prance with pain and terror.

Major Grant grasped the king's bridle.

"Sire," said he, "are you determined to be shot? If so, let me know it, and with your majesty's permission I will withdraw."

The king raised his head, and looked at the daring adjutant with a bitter smile.

"We will both withdraw," said he, gently, advancing toward the generals who had been seeking him throughout the battle-field. He greeted them with a silent bow, and passed without a word. Whither he was now going, none of the generals knew, but they followed him in silence.

The king rode up the slight eminence from which, on that morning, his army had fallen like a glittering avalanche upon the enemy. This avalanche was now transformed into a stream of blood, and corpse upon corpse covered the ground. He reined in his horse and gazed at the Austrian army, who were now withdrawing to their camp, midst shoutings and rejoicings, to rest after their glorious victory. Then, turning his horse, he looked at the remains of his little army flying hither and thither in the disorder of defeat. A deep sigh escaped him. Throwing his head back proudly, he called Prince Moritz von Dessau and the Duke of Bevern to his side.

"Sirs," said he, firmly; "the fate of to-day is decided. All that now remains for us to do, is to deprive the enemy of the advantages of this victory. Collect our scattered regiments, and lead the army through the defile of Plainan, back to Nimburg. There we will decide what is best to do. I go on before you, and wish no one to accompany me."

He turned his horse, rode slowly down the hill, then took the road leading to Nimburg. Lost in deep thought, he continued his way. He was followed by his faithful body-guard, who, at a sign from Prince von Dessau, had hastened after him. A few flying officers and sergeants joined him. These were the followers of Prussia's hero-king; but they were suddenly scattered. A soldier galloped up to them, and stated that he had just encountered a regiment of the enemy's hussars, who were pursuing them. There was a cry of terror throughout the guards, and then, as if with one accord, putting spurs to their horses, they fled in wild disorder.

The king continued his way, slowly and quietly—slowly and quietly a few of his guard followed him. In funereal silence they passed through the defile of Plainan, and reached at last Nimburg, the king's appointed place of meeting.

The king now reined in his horse, and, looking back, he became aware of his followers. Beckoning to his adjutant, he ordered him to get quarters for the soldiers, and then to inform the generals that he awaited them.

"Where?" asked the astonished adjutant.

"Here!" said the king, pointing to a fallen pump, a few steps from where he stood.

He dismounted, and, when the adjutant had disappeared, he threw himself upon the old pump, and rested his head upon his cane. Thus he remained a long while, thinking painfully of the occurrences of the past day. He remembered that he had appointed the site of to-day's battle, without listening to the warnings of his experienced generals, and that Moritz von Dessau had implored him to put his army in another position, before attacking the enemy. He remembered the prince saying to him—"It would be impossible for an attack from this point to succeed," and his entreating him to draw back and change his position. He remembered, also, his riding up to the prince, with his naked sword, and inquiring, in a threatening tone, "whether he meant to obey or not?" And Prince Moritz von Dessau had obeyed; his prophecy had been fulfilled—the battle was lost.

"Ah," whispered the king, "how poor, how weak is man! The happiness of an hour intoxicates him, and he defies his coming fate; he should know that happiness is a fleeting guest, but that misfortune is the constant companion of man. I have allowed myself to be deceived by fortune, and she has turned against me. Fortune is a woman, and I am not gallant. The fickle goddess watches carefully, and makes good use of my faults. It was a great fault to dare, with twenty-three battalions of infantry, to attack an army of sixty thousand men, half of whom are cavalry. Ah! my great ancestor, Frederick William, what have you to say of your poor nephew, who, with his little host, is fighting against Russia, Austria, a large part of Germany, and a hundred thousand French troops? Will you assist me? Will you be my guardian angel, praying for me above? Yes, yes! you will assist me if I assist myself, and do not give way to my faults. Had I been killed in to-day's battle, I would now be in a safe haven, beyond the reach of storms. But now I must swim still farther into the stormy sea, until at last I find in the grave that rest and peace which I shall never attain in this world. This is a consoling thought; it shall rouse me again to life. I am glad I did not die to-day. I can still repair my fault. All the responsibility will be thrown on me; it will be said, the battle would have been won, but for Frederick's obstinacy. But let this be! It is a necessary consequence that a warrior should suffer for the faults of his followers. Through me this battle was lost, and in history it will go down thus to future generations. But many a victory shall still be recorded, and as the defeat was owing to me, so shall the victory also come through me alone. I alone will bear upon my shoulders Prussia's honor, Prussia's glory. It lies now, with me, bleeding on the ground. It shall be lifted and sustained by me alone!" And raising his burning eyes

heavenward, he seemed to see these future victories branded upon the skies. Gradually the inspiration left his countenance, giving place to deep thought. He had delivered his funeral oration to the lost battle, and now gave his thought to his future victories. He drew lines and figures upon the sand with his cane. It may have been a drawing of the last or a sketch of the next battle.

The king was so absorbed in this occupation, that he did not perceive his generals, who, having reached Nimburg with the wreck of the army, hastened to the place of appointment, and were now assembled at a respectful distance from him.

Frederick continued to sketch. The generals gazed at him in silence, anxiously awaiting the moment when he would arouse himself. He suddenly looked up, and did not seem surprised to see them; lifting his hat slightly, he greeted them, and rose from his lowly seat.

"It is well, sirs, that you are here," said he. "We must now make our preparations for the future; for our enemies, having beaten us once, will think us no longer capable of resisting them, and will fall upon us with renewed courage. We will convince them, gentlemen, that though we are stricken to the ground for a moment, we are not crushed, not dead. We will convince them that we still live to tear from them the laurels they have taken from us this day. Prince von Dessau, hasten immediately to our army at Prague. I command the Prince of Prussia to raise the siege there at once. He shall call all his generals together, and hold council with them as to the most suitable mode of retreat. He shall determine with them how the siege can best be raised; to avoid, as far as possible, the appearance of flying from their enemy. With gay music they should leave their posts; they should not all leave together, but in groups, so as to mislead the enemy. In small companies should also the retreat through Bohemia to Lausitz be made, for it would be difficult for a large army to pass this mountainous district; but they should remain as near together as possible, choosing the widest, most convenient roads. These are the orders you are to deliver my brother, the Prince of Prussia, and his generals. I give to the prince the command of this portion of my army, and require of him to hasten to Lausitz. I will join him in Bautzen. And then, gentlemen, we will seek an occasion to repay our enemies for their civilities of to-day."

The generals had listened to him with breathless attention; and as he now dismissed them, with a glorious smile upon his lips, they repeated unanimously his last words, "We will repay our enemies for their civilities."

As if inspired by this shout, the soldiers, lying about the market-

place, at a slight distance from the king, broke into a loud hurrah, and shouted, "Long live our king!"

The king turned slowly toward them, but when he saw all that remained of his noble army, he became pale, and pressed his lips tightly together, as if to suppress a cry of horror. Then advancing, followed by his generals, to where his weary, wounded soldiers were lying, he said:

"Children, is this all that is left of you?"

"Yes, father, we are the last," said an old gray-headed officer, standing before the king. "There were many thousands of us, now there are two hundred and fifty."

"Two hundred and fifty!" repeated the king, with a bitter smile.

"And it was not our fault," continued the old officer, "that we did not fall with the rest. We fought as bravely as they; but Death did not want us. Perhaps he thought it best to leave a few of us, to guard our king. We all think so! Some were left to repay those abominable Saxons for their to-day's work."

"And why alone the Saxons?" asked the king.

"Because it was those infamous Saxon troops that hewed down our regiment. They fell upon us like devils, and striking their cursed swords into us, cried out, 'This is for Striegau!'"

"Ah! you see," cried the king, "that while beating you, they could but think of the many times you had conquered them."

"They shall think of this again, father," said another soldier, raising himself with great pain from the ground. "Wait until our wounds have healed, and we will repay them with interest."

"You are wounded, Henry?" said the king.

"Yes, your majesty, in the arm."

"And old Klaus?"

"Is dead!"

"And Fritz Verder?"

"Dead! He lies with the others upon the battle-field. There are seven hundred and fifty of us in heaven, and only two hundred and fifty on earth. But those above, as well as below, still cry—'Long live our king!'"

"Long live our king," cried they all, rising.

The king made no reply; his eye passed from one to the other pale, exhausted countenance, and an inexpressible sorrow overcame him.

"Dead!" murmured he, "my faithful guards dead! seven hundred and fifty of my choice men have fallen." And overpowered by his emotion, the king did not force back the tears welling to his eyes. They stole softly down his cheek, and Frederick was not ashamed. He did not blush, because his warriors had seen him weep.

"Children," cried the old officer, after a pause, and wiping the tears from his weary eyes, "from now on it will be glorious to die; for when we are dead, our king weeps for us."

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE INIMICAL BROTHERS.

"THE king comes! The king is entering Bautzen!"

This announcement brought pale terror to the hearts of the Prince of Prussia and his generals. They who had heretofore sprang joyfully to meet the call of their king, now trembled at his glance. They must now present to him the sad and despoiled remnant of that great army which, under the command of the Prince Augustus William of Prussia, had made the retreat from Lausitz.

It had, indeed, been the most fearful retreat ever attempted by the Prussian troops. It had cost them more than the bloodiest battle, and they had suffered more from hardships during the last few days than ever before during a whole campaign. They had marched over narrow, stony, rugged mountain-paths, between hills and horrible abysses, sometimes climbing upward, sometimes descending. Thousands died from exhaustion; thousands pressed backward, crushed by those in the front; thousands, forced onward by those in the rear, had stumbled and fallen into fathomless caverns, which lay at the foot of these mountain passes, yawning like open graves. If a wheel broke, the wagon was burned; there was no time for repairs, and if left in the path, it interrupted the passage of the flying army. At last, in order to facilitate the flight, the provision-wagons were burned, and the bread divided amongst the soldiers; the equipages and pontoon-wagons were also burned. Exhausted by their unusual exertions, beside themselves from pain and unheard-of suffering the whole army was seized with a death-panic.

The soldiers had lost not only all faith in their good fortune, but all faith in their leaders. Thousands deserted; thousands fled to escape death, which seemed to mock at and beckon to them from every pointed rock and every dark cavern.\*

While one part of the army deserted or died of hunger or exhaustion, another part fought with an intrenched enemy, for three long days, in the narrow pass of Gabel, under the command of General von Puttkammer. They fought like heroes, but were at last obliged to surrender, with two thousand men and seven cannon. Utterly

\* Warner's "Campaigns of Frederick the Great"

broken by these losses, dead and dying from starvation and weariness, the army drew off toward Zittau.

There was but one thought which sustained the wearied, and lent strength to the starving. In Zittau were immense magazines of grain. In Zittau, the rich Saxon city, which throughout all Saxony was called the gold-mine, they dared hope for rest and opportunity to recover.

Before this unhappy army reached Zittau, Duke Charles of Lothringen was in advance of them. With wanton cruelty he reduced the industrious, open city to ashes, destroyed the Prussian magazines, and, with his army, trampled upon the ruins and the corpses of this unfortified town. The Prussians had now lost their last hope. They encamped by Lodau, and after a short rest, advanced to Bautzen, which city the king had appointed for the reunion of the two army corps. And now, one day after the arrival of this miserable remnant of an army, the king entered the camp of Bautzen.

The unhappy moment was at hand; they must now meet the stern eye of the king. These were bold, heroic generals—the Prince of Prussia, Von Bevern, Von Wurtemberg, Von Dessau, Winterfeldt, Goltz, Ziethen, Krokow, and Schmettau. Bravely, triumphantly had they fought in all previous battles, but now, amidst defeat and disaster, they must meet the eye of the king. This was more dangerous to them than the most deadly battle, and they shrank appalled before this fearful encounter.

Silently, and frowning darkly, the generals mounted their horses, and rode down the highway—the Prince of Prussia in advance, and by his side the Duke of Wurtemberg. And now, in front of them, in an open space, they saw the king. He was on his horse, and looked sternly toward them. The Prince of Prussia trembled, and, involuntarily checking his horse, he stooped with a weary smile toward the duke.

“I have a feeling,” said he, in low tones, “as if my fate was advancing threateningly, in the form of my brother. It glowers upon me with a glance which announces that I am condemned to death. Look, duke! my sentence is written in the raging eye of the king.”

“The king’s wrath will not fall upon you alone,” whispered the duke, “but upon us all. This is a wild tempest, which threatens us all in the same moment with destruction.”

“A tempest? yes! the thunder rolls over all, but the stroke of lightning falls only upon one; and I—I am the one,” said the prince, solemnly; “I am the sacrificial offering chosen by the king, with which he will seek to propitiate the frowning gods of destiny.”

“God forbid!” said the duke, sadly. “The king will be just!

He will see that these frightful misfortunes were unavoidable; that we are innocent.” He will listen to our explanations; he—”

“I tell you,” said Augustus William, “he will demand a subject for his scorn. I shall be this sacrifice! Well, so let it be; I am willing to be offered up for my fatherland! Let us go onward, duke.” He drew his bridle and they rode forward.

The king remained immovable in the same spot, his proud head erect, and his icy glance fixed steadily upon them.

As they drew nearer, and could no longer doubt that he recognized them, the king moved slowly round, and turned his back upon them. They were greatly embarrassed—undecided what to do; they looked to the prince, in the hope that he would advance and announce himself to the king, and compel him to notice them. Prince Augustus William did not advance; he stood firm and immovable, as if moulded in brass. No muscle of his face moved, but his pale and tightly-compressed lips slightly trembled. The generals followed his example. Silently, immovably they stood behind him, their eyes fixed upon the king, who remained still with his back turned to them.

There was a long and painful pause; not a word was spoken. Those who were arranging the tents for the king’s troops were moving actively about, and now they drew near with their measuring-line, exactly to the spot upon which the king stood. He was forced to take another position; he turned his horse, and stood exactly in front of his generals. His countenance was not calm and cold, it flashed with rage. The Prince of Prussia had the courage to brave his anger, and, drawing near, he bowed profoundly.

The king did not answer his greeting, and, indeed, appeared not to see him. A black cloud was on his brow, and it became still blacker as the other generals dared to approach and salute him. Suddenly, in that tone of voice he was accustomed to use only upon the field of battle, the king called out:

“Goltz, come here!”

The general advanced from the circle, with a firm military bearing, and approached the king.

“Goltz,” said he, loudly, and looking as if he wished to crush the unhappy general—“Goltz, tell my brother and the other generals that if I did justice, I would take off their heads—Winterfeldt only excepted.”\*

A murmur of discontent was heard amongst the generals, and every eye was fixed angrily upon Winterfeldt. He turned deadly pale, and looked down, as if ashamed of the exception the king had

\*The king’s own words.—“Characteristics of the Seven Years’ War.”

made, and dared not gaze upon those whose guilt he shared, and whose punishment he escaped.

The king fixed his eye so piercingly upon the murmurers, that they felt his glance upon them, without daring to meet it. Only the Prince of Prussia drew still nearer to the king.

"Sire," said he, in a calm voice, "my duty demands that I should give your majesty a list of the army. Will you be graciously pleased to accept it from me?" He took the paper from his pocket, and handed it to the king, who snatched it from him hastily, and turned his back again upon them.

"Withdraw, messieurs," said he, "your presence oppresses me; you remind me of the disgraceful defeat my army has suffered, through the guilt of its leaders."

"Sire," said the Duke of Bevern, "will your majesty listen to our justification?"

"Justification!" cried the king, with flashing eyes—"if this unparalleled disgrace which you have all brought upon my army could be justified, I might pity; but I must curse you. Go, sir duke, I will not look upon you." And springing with youthful activity from his horse, he entered his tent.

The generals were alone. They looked upon each other's death-like faces with suppressed scorn upon their trembling lips, and tears of rage in their eyes.

"Shall we bear this shame silently?" said one.

"Shall we allow ourselves to be scolded like schoolboys?" said another. "Shall we suffer foul accusations to be brought against us, and no opportunity granted for justification?"

As the murmur of the generals became louder, the Prince of Prussia, who had been standing aside in deep thought, came forward. An expression of calm resolve was written upon his noble features.

"No, gentlemen, you shall not suffer this. I undertake to justify you to the king."

"Do not attempt it, prince," said the Duke of Wurtemberg; "at least, not in this hour. The king will crush you in his rage!"

Prince Augustus William cast his eyes to heaven, saying, "I am in the hands of God. I would rather die by the king's rage than to endure his contempt. The king made me commander-in-chief of this army corps, and accuses me of failure in duty! He shall hear my defence. As a Hohenzollern, as a general, as his brother, I demand the right to make my report." He advanced hastily toward the king's tent, but the Duke of Bevern held him back.

"Will your royal highness allow me to accompany you?" said he. "The king's scorn fell upon me personally, and I also demand a hearing."



THE INTERVIEW IN FREDERICK'S TENT AFTER THE DEFEAT.

"No one shall accompany me," said the prince, solemnly. "None but God shall be witness to what we have to say. Wait for me, therefore, gentlemen. I shall soon return." He bowed and entered the king's tent.

"Announce me to his majesty," he said to the guard, who returned immediately and opened the inner door of the tent.

The prince entered with a firm step and head erect—the door closed behind him—the two brothers were alone.

The king sat upon a camp-stool by a little table covered with papers. He held in his hand the paper which the prince had given him, and appeared to be reading it eagerly. The prince stood for some time silently at the door; at last, weary of waiting, he entered the tent and stepped directly before the king.

King Frederick arose and fixed his great eyes scornfully upon his brother. "I gave you an army corps of thirty-six thousand men, and you bring me back sixteen thousand! Where have you left my soldiers?"

"They lie in the narrow pass of Gabel—in the chasms of the Erz mountains—they have died of hunger and thirst, and they have deserted," said Prince Augustus, solemnly.

"And you dare to tell me this?" said the king.

"I dare to tell you what fate has brought upon us."

"Fate?" cried the king, shrugging his shoulders. "Fate is ever the excuse for the crimes and follies of man. Your obstinacy and your disobedience are what you call fate. Prince Augustus William of Prussia, how did you dare to act contrary to my instructions, and to conduct this retreat through the mountains, and not by the highways?"

"Your majesty gave me no instructions," said the prince, eagerly. "Your majesty commanded me to take counsel of my generals in every movement, and I did so. I should not have retreated through the mountains had they not advised it in consideration of the near approach of the enemy. But I do not say this to excuse myself, or to accuse them, but to prove to my brother the king that it was unjust to place me under the guardianship and direction of his generals—unjust to place a mentor by my side who is my enemy—who hates me and seeks my destruction!"

"Do you dare to reproach me?" said the king, in a thundering voice.

"In this hour I dare all," said the prince, steadily. "This is a decisive hour between you and me, my brother. It is a strife of intellect, of spirit; and although I know I am too weak to conquer, I will at least fall with honor—with my sword in my hand! I shall fall, but you shall not consider me a cowardly mute who does not

dare to defend himself. I know that I have been slandered to you; I know that those whom you honor with your friendship are spies upon my every word and look, and report to your majesty what they hear and what they do not hear—what is true and what is not true. I know I have been robbed of my brother's love, but I will not consent to the loss of his respect and consideration. Sire, Winterfeldt wrote to you; I know that he did so. If he wrote that I was obstinate and self-willed, and alone answerable for the disasters of the army,\* I call God to witness that he slandered me. Your majesty speaks of instructions. I received none. I would remind you that I entreated you in vain to give me partial instructions—that I wrote down your majesty's verbally expressed opinions, and implored you to add to them your approval, or written remarks and explanations.† Your majesty returned the paper without signature or remark. I alone should bear the responsibility, and if this sad retreat should end disastrously, the whole world might say, 'This was the work of the Prince of Prussia!' Look you, my brother, I know, I feel this. The lost battle of Collin demanded an offering, and I was predestined for the sacrifice."

The king uttered a cry of rage, and advanced against the prince without outstretched arm, but suddenly recovered his self-control, folded his arms, and stared coldly at the prince.

"I have listened quietly to you, hoping always I might possibly find in your words a glimmer of excuse for your blasphemous deeds. I find none. Have you finished, or have you still something to say?"

"I have this to say, sire: I demand that my conduct be investigated."

"Woe to you if I do this—woe to you if I listen to your bold, insane demand!" Stepping before the prince, and fixing his eye upon him, he said: "You have acted not like a Prussian, not like a general of Prussian troops, but like an enemy—like an ally of Austria and of France, who sought only for means to destroy the Prussian army and put an end to this war. I know that it never had your approval, because directed against your beloved France."

"Ah, my brother, you distrust me!" cried the prince, fiercely.

"Yes, I distrust you," said the king, eagerly—"I distrust you, and you merit it! You have just said that this was an important hour between us. Well, then, it shall be so. I accept this strife of words which you have the audacity to offer me. This was not cautiously, not wisely done, on your part. You yourself have armed me—my weapons are sharp. I have suffered much during my whole

\* Warner's "Campaigns of Frederick the Great."

† Recueil des Lettres du Roi de Prusse et du Prince de Prusse."

life because of you, my brother. This began even in the days of our childhood, and will, as it appears, follow me to the grave. You were the favorite of my father, and I remember well that he one day proposed to me to relinquish the throne in your favor. I withstood him. I did not pay for this opposition with my life, but with my life's happiness. I will not account this against you; perhaps you were innocent; but it appears to me you have not forgotten our father's wish—that you look upon me as a usurper, who has robbed you of your throne. You act as if you had the right to measure and criticise all my undertakings, and to make yourself a judge over me. I undertook this war with the conviction of my right and my royal duty. You dared to protest against it. You dared, in the presence of my generals, to speak of your claims and the claims of your children! Oh, sir, you were already thinking of the time when you would lay my head in the vault and walk over my dead body to a throne! In that hour you stood no longer by my side as my subject, as my brother, as my friend, but as an ambitious prince royal, who hates his king who keeps him from his crown, and who is hated of the king because he reminds him of his death! And during no moment since then could you have denied this hatred."

"Oh, my brother!" said the prince, painfully, "your own hatred has blinded you and made you unjust. I have always loved and admired you, even when I did not approve of your undertakings."

"And yet it was you, you alone," said the king, hastily, "who dared, after the fatal disaster of Collin, to utter loud cries of grief and despair. When my courier brought to you and the generals and the army the mournful news of the lost battle of Collin, in place of strengthening and encouraging my warriors—consoling and inspiring them with confidence in their royal leader—you dared, in the presence of all my generals, to cry and whimper, not over destiny, not over the inconstancy of fortune, but over the conduct of your brother and your king. In place of justifying me to my silent and cast-down generals, you accused me boldly, and made my misfortune my crime."\*

"It is true, murmured the prince, "distress and grief overcame me and robbed me of my reason."

"Even because you were so wise and bold a warrior," said the king, with a cold smile, "I wished to give you an opportunity to prove your genius to my whole people, whose sovereign you will one day be. Because you wept and clamored before my generals over my faults as a leader, I wished you to prove to them that you were capable of commanding and bringing good out of evil. I trusted

\* Retzow's "Characteristics of Frederick."



you with my third army corps—I expected it to retreat safely and surely under your command, after I had almost led it to destruction in a bloody, disastrous battle. I gave you the opportunity to make yourself a god in the eyes of my soldiers, a glorious model to my generals. What use have you made of these advantages? You bring me crippled, hungry, desperate soldiers! You bring me generals covered with shame, and blushing over their guilt. If I should deal with them as they deserved, I would give them over to a court-martial and they would be condemned.”

“And still I am not conscious of any fault,” said the prince. “I dare to say fate was against me, and that I am wholly innocent.”

“And I repeat to you your conduct has been that of an ally of France, who wished destruction to the Prussians, and to close this hated war!”

“If that were so, I would be a traitor!” said the prince.

“And who will dare say that you are not?” cried the king. “Who will say that he who, while I was engaged in war with France, exchanged the most tender letters with the former French ambassador Valori, and complained to this Frenchman of the obstinacy of his brother, who is also his king? Who will say that this man is not a traitor? Was it not known to you, my brother, when you wrote to Valori, that the French had already invaded my Westphalian provinces? It was known to you—and yet you dared to write to a Frenchman that you were convinced of the decline of my kingdom. And yet you dared to bring charges against me, and to say: ‘*Ce seront mes enfants qui seront les victimes des fautes passées.*’ Did you not know that it was the Marquise de Pompadour who gave occasion for this war? You knew it, and yet you commissioned Valori to entreat the marquise to have her portrait painted for you! Now, sir, I ask you, in all candor, if these are not the acts of a traitor?”

The prince made a passionate exclamation, and laid his hand upon his sword.

“You dare to dishonor me, sire!”

“I dare it! I dare to tell you the truth,” said the king, solemnly. “Take your hand from your sword—the truth is an enemy that you cannot contend against with weapons, but with deeds, and your conduct testifies against you.”

The prince breathed heavily, and turned deadly pale.

“The contest is over. Your majesty fights against me with weapons which I do not possess, and would not dare use, and against which I cannot defend myself. You open my private letters, and from the harmless confidences of friendship you make a traitor of me. To call me a traitor, is to degrade me. I am dishonored; and

with a dishonored culprit your majesty cannot contend. I will therefore withdraw. No one will see the wounds you have inflicted—which have pierced my heart; but, I tell you, my brother, I will die of these wounds.”

“And in heaven, I suppose, you will accuse me as your murderer?” said the king, ironically.

“No! in heaven I will pray for my fatherland,” said Prince Augustus William, mildly. He bowed respectfully, turned, and left the room.

Without stood the generals, maintaining a solemn silence. When they saw the prince appear at the door of the king’s tent, so pale, so suffering, a prophetic warning filled every breast. It seemed to them that a dying man approached them, and with inexpressible sorrow held out his hand for a last farewell.

“It is passed! The battle is ended!”

At this moment the adjutant of the king left the tent, and approached the generals, who stood near the prince.

“His majesty commands you to see that the soldiers of the third army corps are kept, as far as it is possible, entirely separated from the rest of the army. You will immediately convey the order to the king’s army, that all intercourse between them and the third army corps is forbidden, as this corps seems to have lost all courage and all honorable feeling.”\*

“The king’s commands shall be obeyed,” said the generals, coldly.

The prince was completely overcome by this last blow, and leaned for a moment upon the arm of the Duke of Wurtemberg; he soon recovered himself, and turning to General Schultz, he said:

“Go and bring me, from the king, the watchword of the third army corps.”

General Schultz withdrew, but returned quickly from the king’s tent, with a dark frown upon his face.

“Well,” said the prince, “have you the watchword?”

“No, your royal highness! The king says, that for cowards and fugitives he has no watchword, and he commanded me to go to the devil.”

A murmur of rage was heard amongst the generals. The prince let his glance wander from one to the other of these dark faces.

“Gentlemen,” said he, “the tempest will soon be over, and the sun will shine again for you; I am the only cloud now round about you, and I will withdraw.”

“What! will you desert us?” said the generals, sadly.

“Do I not belong to the third army corps?” said the prince, with a painful smile. “It may be that the king will command his sol-

\* Kustrin, “Characteristics from the Life of Frederick the Great.”

diers to have no intercourse with the commander of the third army corps, and you can understand that I prefer to anticipate him."

"Will your highness allow me to accompany you?" said the Duke of Bevern. "I also will not allow myself to be despised and railed at without any opportunity accorded me of explanation."

The prince shook his head.

"You must remain, general; the army cannot spare its brave leaders. I, however—I must go. I will be the peace-offering for you all. I am sure this will content my brother the king."

"Allow me, at least, to accompany your royal highness," said General Schmettau. "The king commanded me, through his adjutant, to withdraw, and never dare to present myself before his eyes again. I also must leave the army."

The prince gave him his hand.

"You are, then, a welcome companion. Let us ride on to Bautzen, where we can refresh ourselves, and then go on to Dresden."

"Will you really leave us?" said the Duke of Wurtemberg, sadly.

"Would you have me wait for still further degradation?" said the prince. "No, it is enough—more than I can bear.—My horse! General, let us mount."

The two horses were brought forward. The generals placed themselves in front, to take leave of their former commander-in-chief, with all military honor.

Prince Augustus rode slowly on. Everywhere he met sad faces and eyes filled with tears. Tears indeed were in his own eyes, but he would not weep—not now; there was time enough for tears. He could weep during the sad remainder of his life. He forced his voice to be firm, and, waving his sword to the generals, as a last greeting, he said:

"I hope no one of you will hold me for a coward. I am forced by the king to leave the army." He turned his horse, and, followed by Schmettau, with head erect, he moved slowly off.

"Now, by Heaven," cried Ziethen, "he shall not leave the camp in this contemptible way! I will give him a suitable guard. Let the king rage; I can stand it!" He nodded to an officer. "Listen, Von Wendt, take half a company for a guard, and follow immediately behind the prince, to Bautzen."

A few moments later, an officer sprang along the highway to Bautzen, accompanied by his hussars; they soon overtook the prince, who greeted them kindly.

"Schmettau," said he, "Death avoided me so long as I was on the battle-field, now I bear him along with me; and thus must it be, till the pale king of terrors carries me to another world." He turned his eyes away from the Prussian camp, and rode slowly to Bautzen.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE LETTERS.

A FEW hours later a courier rode into the camp. He came from Bautzen, and had a letter from the Prince of Prussia to his royal brother. The king was still in his tent, busily engaged in looking over the army list. He took his brother's letter, and, opening it with evident anger, read:

"Your majesty's commands, and the incidents of our last meeting, have taught me that I have lost my honor and my reputation. As I have nothing to reproach myself with, this causes me much sorrow, but no humiliation. I am convinced that I was not actuated by obstinacy, and that I did not follow the advice of incompetent men. All the generals in the third army corps commanded by me, will testify to this. I consider it necessary to request your majesty to have my conduct investigated. Your majesty would thereby do me a kindness. I have, therefore, no right to count upon it. My health is much impaired since the war. I have withdrawn to Bautzen for its restoration, and have requested the Duke of Bevern to give you all the information relative to the army. In spite of my unhappiness, my daily prayer is, and shall be, that every undertaking of your majesty shall be crowned with glory.

"Your unhappy brother,

"AUGUSTUS WILLIAM."

The king read this letter several times; then taking up his pen, he wrote hastily:

"MY DEAR BROTHER: Your improper conduct has greatly disturbed my equanimity. Not my enemies, but your want of principle, has caused all these disasters. My generals are not to be excused. They have either given you bad advice, or have agreed too readily to your foolish plans. The one is as bad as the other. Your ears are accustomed to flattery, my brother. Daun did not flatter you, and you now see the consequences. But little hope remains. I shall commence the attack—if we do not conquer, we shall die together. I do not bewail the loss of your heart, but rather your utter incapacity and want of judgment. I tell you this plainly, for with one who has perhaps but a few days to live, there is no use of deception. I wish you more happiness than has fallen to my lot, and hope that your misfortunes and disappointments may teach you to act with more wisdom and judgment where matters of importance are concerned. Many of the painful events I now look forward to, I ascribe to you. You and your children will suffer from their re-