

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MARIA THERESA.

FROM 1743 TO 1748.

PROSPEROUS ASPECT OF AUSTRIAN AFFAIRS.—CAPTURE OF EGRA.—VAST EXTENT OF AUSTRIA.—DISPUTE WITH SARDINIA.—MARRIAGE OF CHARLES OF LORRAINE WITH THE QUEEN'S SISTER.—INVASION OF ALSACE.—FREDERIC OVERRUNS BOHEMIA.—BOHEMIA RECOVERED BY PRINCE CHARLES.—DEATH OF THE EMPEROR CHARLES VII.—VENALITY OF THE OLD MONARCHIES.—BATTLE OF HOHENFRIEDBERG.—SIR THOMAS ROBINSON'S INTERVIEW WITH MARIA THERESA.—HUNGARIAN ENTHUSIASM.—THE DUKE OF LORRAINE ELECTED EMPEROR.—CONTINUATION OF THE WAR.—TREATY OF PEACE.—INDIGNATION OF MARIA THERESA.

THE cause of Maria Theresa, at the commencement of the year 1743, was triumphant all over her widely extended domains. Russia was cordial in friendship. Holland, in token of hostility to France, sent the queen an efficient loan of six thousand men, thoroughly equipped for the field. The King of Sardinia, grateful for his share in the plunder of the French and Spanish provinces in Italy, and conscious that he could retain those spoils only by the aid of Austria, sent to the queen, in addition to the coöperation of his armies, a gift of a million of dollars. England, also, still anxious to check the growth of France, continued her subsidy of a million and a half, and also with both fleet and army contributed very efficient military aid. The whole force of Austria was now turned against France. The French were speedily driven from Bavaria; and Munich, the capital, fell into the hands of the Austrians. The emperor, in extreme dejection, unable to present any front of resistance, sent to the queen entreating a treaty of neutrality, offering to withdraw all claims to the

Austrian succession, and consenting to leave his Bavarian realm in the hands of Maria Theresa until a general peace. The emperor, thus humiliated and stripped of all his territories, retired to Frankfort.

On the 7th of September Egra was captured, and the queen was placed in possession of all her hereditary domains. The wonderful firmness and energy which she had displayed, and the consummate wisdom with which she had conceived and executed her measures, excited the admiration of Europe. In Vienna, and throughout all the States of Austria, her popularity was unbounded. After the battle of Dettingen, in which her troops gained a decisive victory, as the queen was returning to Vienna from a water excursion, she found the banks of the Danube, for nine miles, crowded with her rejoicing subjects. In triumph she was escorted into the capital, greeted by every demonstration of the most enthusiastic joy.

Austria and England were now prepared to mature their plans for the dismemberment of France. The commissioners met at Hanau, a small fortified town, a few miles east of Frankfort. They met, however, only to quarrel fiercely. Austrian and English pride clashed in instant collision. Lord Stair, imperious and irritable, regarded the Austrians as outside barbarians whom England was feeding, clothing and protecting. The Austrian officers regarded the English as remote islanders from whom they had hired money and men. The Austrians were amazed at the impudence of the English in assuming the direction of affairs. The British officers were equally astounded that the Austrians should presume to take the lead. No plan of coöperation could be agreed upon, and the conference broke up in confusion.

The queen, whose heart was still fixed upon the elevation of her husband to the throne of the empire, was anxious to depose the emperor. But England was no more willing to see Austria dominant over Europe than to see France thus powerful. Maria Theresa was now in possession of all her

vast ancestral domains, and England judged that it would endanger the balance of power to place upon the brow of her husband the imperial crown. The British cabinet consequently espoused the cause of the Elector of Bavaria, and entered into a private arrangement with him, agreeing to acknowledge him as emperor, and to give him an annual pension that he might suitably support the dignity of his station. The wealth of England seems to have been inexhaustible, for half the monarchs of Europe have, at one time or other, been fed and clothed from her treasury. George II. contracted to pay the emperor, within forty days, three hundred thousand dollars, and to do all in his power to constrain the queen of Austria to acknowledge his title.

Maria Theresa had promised the King of Sardinia large accessions of territory in Italy, as the price for his coöperation. But now, having acquired those Italian territories, she was exceedingly reluctant to part with any one of them, and very dishonorably evaded, by every possible pretense, the fulfillment of her agreement. The queen considered herself now so strong that she was not anxious to preserve the alliance of Sardinia. She thought her Italian possessions secure, even in case of the defection of the Sardinian king. Sardinia appealed to England, as one of the allies, to interpose for the execution of the treaty. To the remonstrance of England the queen peevishly replied,

"It is the policy of England to lead me from one sacrifice to another. I am expected to expose my troops for no other end than voluntarily to strip myself of my possessions. Should the cession of the Italian provinces, which the King of Sardinia claims, be extorted from me, what remains in Italy will not be worth defending, and the only alternative left is that of being stripped either by England or France."

While the queen was not willing to give as much as she had agreed to bestow, the greedy King of Sardinia was grasping at more than she had promised. At last the king, in a

rage threatened, that if she did not immediately comply with his demands, he would unite with France and Spain and the emperor against Austria. This angry menace brought the queen to terms, and articles of agreement satisfactory to Sardinia were signed. During the whole of this summer of 1743, though large armies were continually in motion, and there were many sanguinary battles, and all the arts of peace were destroyed, and conflagration, death and woe were sent to ten thousand homes, nothing effectual was accomplished by either party. The strife did not cease until winter drove the weary combatants to their retreats.

For the protection of the Austrian possessions against the French and Spanish, the queen agreed to maintain in Italy an army of thirty thousand men, to be placed under the command of the King of Sardinia, who was to add to them an army of forty-five thousand. England, with characteristic prodigality, voted a million of dollars annually, to aid in the payment of these troops. It was the object of England, to prevent France from strengthening herself by Italian possessions. The cabinet of St. James took such an interest in this treaty that, to secure its enactment, one million five hundred thousand dollars were paid down, in addition to the annual subsidy. England also agreed to maintain a strong squadron in the Mediterranean to coöperate with Sardinia and Austria.

Amidst these scenes of war, the usual dramas of domestic life moved on. Prince Charles of Lorraine, had long been ardently attached to Mary Anne, younger sister of Maria Theresa. The young prince had greatly signalized himself on the field of battle. Their nuptials were attended in Vienna with great splendor and rejoicings. It was a union of loving hearts. Charles was appointed to the government of the Austrian Netherlands. One short and happy year passed away, when Mary Anne, in the sorrows of child-birth, breathed her last.

The winter was passed by all parties in making the most

vigorous preparations for a new campaign. England and France were now thoroughly aroused, and bitterly irritated against each other. Hitherto they had acted as auxiliaries for other parties. Now they summoned all their energies, and became principals in the conflict. France issued a formal declaration of war against England and Austria, raised an army of one hundred thousand men, and the debauched king himself, Louis XV., left his *Parc Aux Cerfs* and placed himself at the head of the army. Marshal Saxe was the active commander. He was provided with a train of artillery superior to any which had ever before appeared on any field. Entering the Netherlands he swept all opposition before him.

The French department of Alsace, upon the Rhine, embraced over forty thousand square miles of territory, and contained a population of about a million. While Marshal Saxe was ravaging the Netherlands, an Austrian army, sixty thousand strong, crossed the Rhine, like a torrent burst into Alsace, and spread equal ravages through the cities and villages of France. Bombardment echoed to bombardment; conflagration blazed in response to conflagration; and the shrieks of the widow, and the moans of the orphan which rose from the marshes of Burgundy, were reëchoed in an undying wail along the valleys of the Rhine.

The King of France, alarmed by the progress which the Austrians were making in his own territories, ordered thirty thousand troops, from the army in the Netherlands, to be dispatched to the protection of Alsace. Again the tide was turning against Maria Theresa. She had become so arrogant and exacting, that she had excited the displeasure of nearly all the empire. She persistently refused to acknowledge the emperor, who, beyond all dispute, was legally elected; she treated the diet contemptuously; she did not disguise her determination to hold Bavaria by the right of conquest, and to annex it to Austria; she had compelled the Bavarians to take the oath of allegiance to her; she was avowedly meditating

gigantic projects in the conquest of France and Italy; and it was very evident that she was maturing her plans for the reconquest of Silesia. Such inordinate ambition alarmed all the neighboring courts. Frederic of Prussia was particularly alarmed lest he should lose Silesia. With his accustomed energy he again drew his sword against the queen, and became the soul of a new confederacy which combined many of the princes of the empire whom the haughty queen had treated with so much indignity. In this new league, formed by Frederic, the Elector Palatine and the King of Sweden were brought into the field against Maria Theresa. All this was effected with the utmost secrecy, and the queen had no intimation of her danger until the troops were in motion. Frederic published a manifesto in which he declared that he took up arms "to restore to the German empire its liberty, to the emperor his dignity, and to Europe repose."

With his strong army he burst into Bohemia, now drained of its troops to meet the war in the Netherlands and on the Rhine. With a lion's tread, brushing all opposition away, he advanced to Prague. The capital was compelled to surrender, and the garrison of fifteen thousand troops became prisoners of war. Nearly all the fortresses of the kingdom fell into his hands. Establishing garrisons at Tabor, Budweiss, Frauenberg, and other important posts, he then made an irruption into Bavaria, scattered the Austrian troops in all directions, entered Munich in triumph, and reinstated the emperor in the possession of his capital and his duchy. Such are the fortunes of war. The queen heard these tidings of accumulated disaster in dismay. In a few weeks of a summer's campaign, when she supposed that Europe was almost a suppliant at her feet, she found herself deprived of the Netherlands, of the whole kingdom of Bohemia, the brightest jewel in her crown, and of the electorate of Bavaria.

But the resolution and energy of the queen remained indomitable. Maria Theresa and Frederic were fairly pitted

against each other. It was Greek meeting Greek. The queen immediately recalled the army from Alsace, and in person repaired to Presburg, where she summoned a diet of the Hungarian nobles. In accordance with an ancient custom, a blood-red flag waved from all the castles in the kingdom, summoning the people to a levy *en masse*, or, as it was then called, to a general insurrection. An army of nearly eighty thousand men was almost instantly raised. A cotemporary historian, speaking of this event, says:

“This amazing unanimity of a people so divided amongst themselves as the Hungarians, especially in point of religion, could only be effected by the address of Maria Theresa, who seemed to possess one part of the character of Elizabeth of England, that of making every man about her a hero.”

Prince Charles re-crossed the Rhine, and, by a vigorous march through Suabia, returned to Bohemia. By surprise, with a vastly superior force, he assailed the fortresses garrisoned by the Prussian troops, gradually took one after another, and ere long drove the Prussians, with vast slaughter, out of the whole kingdom. Though disaster, in this campaign, followed the banners of Maria Theresa in the Netherlands and in Italy, she forgot those reverses in exultation at the discomfiture of her great rival Frederic. She had recovered Bohemia, and was now sanguine that she soon would regain Silesia, the loss of which province ever weighed heavily upon her heart. But in her character woman's weakness was allied with woman's determination. She imagined that she could rouse the chivalry of her allies as easily as that of the Hungarian barons and that foreign courts, forgetful of their own grasping ambition, would place themselves as pliant instruments in her hands.

In this posture of affairs, the hand of Providence was again interposed, in an event which removed from the path of the queen a serious obstacle, and opened to her aspiring mind new visions of grandeur. The Emperor Charles VII., an

amiable man, of moderate abilities, was quite crushed in spirit by the calamities accumulating upon him. Though he had regained his capital, he was in hourly peril of being driven from it again. Anguish so preyed upon his mind, that, pale and wan, he was thrown upon a sick bed. While in this state he was very injudiciously informed of a great defeat which his troops had encountered. It was a death-blow to the emperor. He moaned, turned over in his bed, and died, on the 20th of January, 1745.

The imperial crown was thus thrown down among the combatants, and a scramble ensued for its possession such as Europe had never witnessed before. Every court was agitated, and the combinations of intrigue were as innumerable as were the aspirants for the crown. The spring of 1745 opened with clouds of war darkening every quarter of the horizon. England opened the campaign in Italy and the Netherlands, her whole object now being to humble France. Maria Theresa remained uncompromising in her disposition to relinquish nothing and to grasp every thing. The cabinet of England, with far higher views of policy, were anxious to detach some of the numerous foes combined against Austria; but it was almost impossible to induce the queen to make the slightest abatement of her desires. She had set her heart upon annexing all of Bavaria to her realms. That immense duchy, now a kingdom, was about the size of the State of South Carolina, containing over thirty thousand square miles. Its population amounted to about four millions. The death of the Emperor Charles VII., who was Elector of Bavaria, transmitted the sovereignty of this realm to his son, Maximilian Joseph.

Maximilian was anxious to withdraw from the strife. He agreed to renounce all claim to the Austrian succession, to acknowledge the validity of the queen's title, to dismiss the auxiliary troops, and to give his electoral vote to the Duke of Lorraine for emperor. But so eager was the queen to grasp

the Bavarian dominions, that it was with the utmost difficulty that England could induce her to accede even to these terms.

It is humiliating to record the readiness of these old monarchies to sell themselves and their armies to any cause which would pay the price demanded. For seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars England purchased the alliance of Poland, and her army of thirty thousand men. Before the treaty was formally ratified, the Emperor Charles VII. died, and there were indications that Bavaria would withdraw from the French alliance. This alarmed the French ministry, and they immediately offered Poland a larger sum than England had proffered, to send her army to the French camp. The bargain was on the point of being settled, when England and Austria again rushed in, and whispered in the ear of Augustus that they intended to chastise the King of Prussia thoroughly, and that if Poland would help them, Poland should be rewarded with generous slices of the Prussian territory. This was a resistless bribe, and the Polish banners were borne in the train of the Austrian alliance.

The Duke of Lorraine was much annoyed by the imperial assumption of his wife. She was anxious to secure for him the crown of Germany, as adding to her power and grandeur. But Francis was still more anxious to attain that dignity, as his position in the court, as merely the docile subject of his wife, the queen, was exceedingly humiliating. The spring of 1745 found all parties prepared for the renewal of the fight. The drama was opened by the terrible battle of Fontenoy in the Netherlands. On the 11th of May eighty thousand French met the Austrian allied army of fifty thousand. After a few hours of terrific slaughter the allies retreated, leaving the French in possession of the field. In Italy, also, the tide of war set against the queen. The French and Spaniards poured an army of seventy thousand men over the Alps into Italy. The queen, even with the aid of Sardinia, had no force capable of resisting them. The allies swept the country,

The King of Sardinia was driven behind the walls of his capital. In this one short campaign Tortona, Placentia, Parma, Pavia, Cazale and Aste were wrested from the Austrians, and the citadels of Alexandria and Milan were blockaded.

The queen had weakened her armies both in the Netherlands and Italy that she might accumulate a force sufficient to recover Silesia, and to crush, if possible, her great antagonist Frederic. Maria Theresa was greatly elated by her success in driving the Prussians from Bavaria, and Frederic was mortified and irritated by this first defeat of his arms. Thus animated, the one by hope, the other by vengeance, Maria and Frederic gathered all their resources for a trial of strength on the plains of Silesia. France, fully occupied in the Netherlands and in Italy, could render Frederic no assistance. His prospects began to look dark. War had made sad ravages in his army, and he found much difficulty in filling up his wasted battalions. His treasury was exhausted. Still the indomitable monarch indulged in no emotions of dejection.

Each party was fully aware of the vigilance and energy of its antagonist. Their forces were early in the field. The month of April was passed in stratagems and skirmishes, each endeavoring in vain to obtain some advantage over the other in position or combinations. Early in May there was a pretty severe conflict, in which the Prussians gained the advantage. They feigned, however, dejection and alarm, and apparently commenced a retreat. The Austrians, emboldened by this subterfuge, pursued them with indiscreet haste. Prince Charles pressed the retiring hosts, and followed closely after them through the passes of the mountains to Landshut and Friedburg. Frederic fled as if in a panic, throwing no obstacle in the path of his pursuers, seeming only anxious to gain the ramparts of Breslau. Suddenly the Prussians turned—the whole army being concentrated in columns of enormous strength. They had chosen their ground and their hour. It was before the break of day on the 3d of June,

among the hills of Hohenfriedberg. The Austrians were taken utterly by surprise. For seven hours they repelled the impetuous onset of their foes. But when four thousand of their number were mangled corpses, seven thousand captives in the hands of the enemy, seventy-six standards and sixty-six pieces of artillery wrested from them, the broken bands of the Austrians turned and fled, pursued and incessantly pelted by Frederic through the defiles of the mountains back to Bohemia. The Austrians found no rest till they had escaped beyond the Riesengeberg, and placed the waves of the Elbe between themselves and their pursuers. The Prussians followed to the opposite bank, and there the two armies remained for three months looking each other in the face.

Frederic, having gained so signal a victory, again proposed peace. England, exceedingly desirous to detach from the allies so energetic a foe, urged the queen, in the strongest terms, to accede to the overtures. The queen, however, never dismayed by adversity, still adhered to her resolve to reconquer Silesia. The English cabinet, finding Maria Theresa deaf to all their remonstrances and entreaties, endeavored to intimidate her by the threat of withdrawing their subsidies.

The English ambassador, Sir Thomas Robinson, with this object in view, demanded an audience with the queen. The interview, as he has recorded it, is worthy of preservation.

"England," said the ambassador to the queen, "has this year furnished five million, three hundred and ninety-three thousand seven hundred and sixty-five dollars. The nation is not in a condition to maintain a superiority over the allies in the Netherlands, Italy and Silesia. It is, therefore, indispensable to diminish the force of the enemy. France can not be detached from the alliance. Prussia can be and must be. This concession England expects from Austria. What is to be done must be done immediately. The King of Prussia can not be driven from Bohemia this campaign. By making peace with him, and thus securing his voluntary withdrawal, your

majesty can send troops to the Netherlands, and check the rapid progress of the French, who now threaten the very existence of England and Holland. If they fall, Austria must inevitably fall also. If peace can be made with Prussia France can be checked, and the Duke of Lorraine can be chosen emperor."

"I feel exceedingly grateful," the queen replied, "to the king and the English nation, and am ready to show it in every way in my power. Upon this matter I will consult my ministers and acquaint you with my answer. But whatever may be the decision, I can not spare a man from the neighborhood of the King of Prussia. In peace, as well as in war, I need them all for the defense of my person and family."

"It is affirmed," Sir Thomas Robinson replied, "that seventy thousand men are employed against Prussia. From such a force enough might be spared to render efficient aid in Italy and in the Netherlands."

"I can not spare a man," the queen abruptly replied.

Sir Thomas was a little touched, and with some spirit rejoined, "If your majesty can not spare her troops for the general cause, England will soon find it necessary to withdraw her armies also, to be employed at home."

This was a home thrust, and the queen felt it, and replied, "But why may we not as well detach France from the alliance, as Prussia?"

"Because Prussia," was the reply, "can be more easily induced to accede to peace, by allowing her to retain what she now has, than France can be induced to yield, by surrendering, as she must, large portions of her present acquisitions."

"I must have an opportunity," Maria Theresa continued, "to strike Prussia another blow. Prince Charles has still enough men to give battle."

"But should he be the victor in the battle," Sir Thomas replied, "Silesia is not conquered. And if the battle be lost, your majesty is well nigh ruined."

"If I had determined," said the queen, "to make peace with Frederic to-morrow, I would give him battle to-night. But why in such a hurry? Why this interruption of operations which are by no means to be despaired of? Give me only to October, and then you may do as you please."

"October will close this campaign," was the answer. "Our affairs are going so disastrously, that unless we can detach Prussia, by that time France and Prussia will be able to dictate terms to which we shall be compelled to accede."

"That might be true," the queen replied, tartly, "if I were to waste my time, as you are urging me to do, in marching my troops from Bohemia to the Rhine, and from the Rhine to the Netherlands. But as for my troops, I have not a single general who would condescend to command such merely *machinery* armies. As for the Duke of Lorraine, and my brother, Prince Charles, they shall not thus degrade themselves. The great duke is not so ambitious of an empty honor, much less to enjoy it under the patronage of Prussia. You speak of the imperial dignity! Is it compatible with the loss of Silesia? Great God! give me only till October. I shall then at least be able to secure better conditions."

The English ambassador now ventured, in guarded phrase, but very decisively, to inform the queen that unless she could accede to these views, England would be constrained to withdraw her assistance, and, making the best terms she could for herself with the enemy, leave Austria to fight her own battles; and that England requested an immediate and a specific answer. Even this serious menace did not move the inflexible will of the queen. She, with much calmness, replied,

"It is that I might, with the utmost promptness, attend to this business, that I have given you so expeditious an audience, and that I have summoned my council to meet so early. I see, however, very clearly, that whatever may be my decisions, they will have but little influence upon measures which are to be adopted elsewhere."

The queen convened her council, and then informed England, in most courteous phrase, that she could not accede to the proposition. The British cabinet immediately entered into a private arrangement with Prussia, guaranteeing to Frederic the possession of Silesia, in consideration of Prussia's agreement not to molest England's Hanoverian possessions.

Maria Theresa was exceedingly indignant when she became acquainted with this treaty. She sent peremptory orders to Prince Charles to prosecute hostilities with the utmost vigor, and with great energy dispatched reinforcements to his camp. The Hungarians, with their accustomed enthusiasm, flocked to the aid of the queen; and Frederic, pressed by superior numbers, retreated from Bohemia back to Silesia, pursued and pelted in his turn by the artillery of Prince Charles. But Frederic soon turned upon his foes, who almost surrounded him with double his own number of men. His army was compact and in the highest state of discipline. A scene of terrible carnage ensued, in which the Austrians, having lost four thousand in killed and two thousand taken prisoners, were utterly routed and scattered. The proud victor, gathering up his weakened battalions, one fourth of whom had been either killed or wounded in this short, fierce storm of war, continued his retreat unmolested.

While Maria Theresa, with such almost superhuman inflexibility, was pressing her own plans, the electoral diet of Germany was assembled at Frankfort, and Francis, Duke of Lorraine, was chosen emperor, with the title of Francis I. The queen was at Frankfort when the diet had assembled, and was plying all her energies in favor of her husband, while awaiting, with intense solicitude, the result of the election. When the choice was announced to her, she stepped out upon the balcony of the palace, and was the first to shout, "Long live the emperor, Francis I." The immense concourse assembled in the streets caught and reëchoed the cry. This result was exceedingly gratifying to the queen; she regarded it as a

noble triumph, adding to the power and the luster of her house.

The duke, now the emperor, was at Heidelberg, with an army of sixty thousand men. The queen hastened to him with her congratulations. The emperor, no longer a submissive subject, received his queenly spouse with great dignity at the head of his army. The whole host was drawn up in two lines, and the queen rode between, bowing to the regiments on the right hand and the left, with majesty and grace which all admired.

Though the queen's treasury was so exhausted that she had been compelled to melt the church plate to pay her troops, she was now so elated that, regardless of the storms of winter, she resolved to send an army to Berlin, to chastise Frederic in his own capital, and there recover long lost Silesia. But Frederic was not thus to be caught napping. Informed of the plan, he succeeded in surprising the Austrian army, and dispersed them after the slaughter of five thousand men. The queen's troops, who had entered Silesia, were thus driven pell-mell back to Bohemia. The Prussian king then invaded Saxony, driving all before him. He took possession of the whole electorate, and entered Dresden, its capital, in triumph. This was a terrible defeat for the queen. Though she had often said that she would part with her last garment before she would consent to the surrender of Silesia, she felt now compelled to yield. Accepting the proffered mediation of England, on the 25th of December, 1745, she signed the treaty of Dresden, by which she left Silesia in the hands of Frederic. He agreed to withdraw his troops from Saxony, and to acknowledge the imperial title of Francis I.

England, in consequence of rebellion at home, had been compelled to withdraw her troops from the Netherlands; and France, advancing with great vigor, took fortress after fortress, until nearly all of the Low Countries had fallen into her hands. In Italy, however, the Austrians were successful, and

Maria Theresa, having dispatched thirty thousand troops to their aid, cherished sanguine hopes that she might recover Milan and Naples. All the belligerent powers, excepting Maria Theresa, weary of the long war, were anxious for peace. She, however, still clung, with deathless tenacity, to her determination to recover Silesia, and to win provinces in Italy. England and France were equally desirous to sheathe the sword. France could only attack England in the Netherlands; England could only assail France in her marine. They were both successful. France drove England from the continent; England drove France from the ocean.

Notwithstanding the most earnest endeavors of the allies, Maria Theresa refused to listen to any terms of peace, and succeeded in preventing the other powers from coming to any accommodation. All parties, consequently, prepared for another campaign. Prussia entered into an alliance with Austria, by which she agreed to furnish her with thirty thousand troops. The queen made gigantic efforts to drive the French from the Netherlands. England and Holland voted an army of forty thousand each. The queen furnished sixty thousand; making an army of one hundred and forty thousand to operate in the Netherlands. At the same time the queen sent sixty thousand men to Italy, to be joined by forty-five thousand Sardinians. All the energies of the English fleet were also combined with these formidable preparations. Though never before during the war had such forces been brought into the field, the campaign was quite disastrous to Austria and her allies. Many bloody battles were fought, and many thousands perished in agony; but nothing of any importance was gained by either party. When winter separated the combatants, they retired exhausted and bleeding.

Again France made overtures for a general pacification, on terms which were eminently honorable. England was disposed to listen to those terms. But the queen had not yet accomplished her purposes, and she succeeded in securing the

rejection of the proposals. Again the belligerents gathered their resources, with still increasing vigor, for another campaign. The British cabinet seemed now to be out of all patience with Maria Theresa. They accused her of not supplying the contingents she had promised, they threatened to withhold their subsidies, many bitter recriminations passed, but still the queen, undismayed by the contentions, urged forward her preparations for the new campaign, till she was thunderstruck with the tidings that the preliminaries of peace were already signed by England, France and Holland.

Maria Theresa received the first formal notification of the terms agreed to by the three contracting powers, from the English minister, Sir Thomas Robinson, who urged her concurrence in the treaty. The indignant queen could not refrain from giving free vent to her displeasure. Listening for a moment impatiently to his words, she overwhelmed him with a torrent of reproaches.

"You, sir," she exclaimed, "who had such a share in the sacrifice of Silesia; you, who contributed more than any one in procuring the cessions to Sardinia, do you still think to persuade me? No! I am neither a child nor a fool! If you will have an instant peace, make it. I can negotiate for myself. Why am I always to be excluded from transacting my own business? My enemies will give me better conditions than my friends. Place me where I was in Italy before the war; but *your King of Sardinia* must have all, without one thought for me. This treaty was not made for me, but for him, for him singly. Great God, how have I been used by that court! There is *your King of Prussia!* Indeed these circumstances tear open too many old wounds and create too many new ones. Agree to such a treaty as this!" she exclaimed indignantly. "No, no, I will rather lose my head"

CHAPTER XXIX.

MARIA THERESA.

FROM 1748 TO 1759.

TREATY OF PEACE.—DISSATISFACTION OF MARIA THERESA.—PREPARATION FOR WAR.—RUPTURE BETWEEN ENGLAND AND AUSTRIA.—MARIA THERESA.—ALLIANCE WITH FRANCE.—INFLUENCE OF MARCHIONESS OF POMPADOUR.—BITTER REPROACHES BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND ENGLAND.—COMMENCEMENT OF THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR.—ENERGY OF FREDERIC OF PRUSSIA.—SANGUINARY BATTLES.—VICISSITUDES OF WAR.—DESPERATE SITUATION OF FREDERIC.—ELATION OF MARIA THERESA.—HER AMBITIOUS PLANS.—AWFUL DEFEAT OF THE PRUSSIAN AT BERLIN.

NOTWITHSTANDING the bitter opposition of Maria Theresa to peace, the definitive treaty was signed at Aix-la-Chapelle on the 18th of October, 1748, by France, England and Holland. Spain and Sardinia soon also gave in their adhesion. The queen, finding it impossible to resist the determination of the other powers, at length reluctantly yielded, and accepted the terms, which they were ready unitedly to enforce should she refuse to accede to them. By this treaty all the contracting powers gave their assent to the Pragmatic Sanction. The queen was required to surrender her conquests in Italy, and to confirm her cessions of Silesia to Prussia. Thus terminated this long and cruel war. Though at the commencement the queen was threatened with utter destruction, and she had come out from the contests with signal honor, retaining all her vast possessions, excepting Silesia and the Italian provinces, still she could not repress her chagrin. Her complaints were loud and reiterated. When the British minister requested an audience to congratulate her upon the return of peace, she snappishly replied,