

nounced through his minister at Vienna his intention of sending auxiliaries for the defence and support of the emperor. He entered Bohemia with an army of nearly a hundred thousand men, which he commanded in person. On the 4th of September, 1744, he appeared before the city of Prague; on the 16th, the battered and blood-stained old city surrendered. In various operations which followed, Frederick was outwitted by Austria, his army falling back on Silesia and abandoning Prague. Frederick expressed great admiration for Trann, the Austrian general, and said in his "History of My Times," that he regarded this campaign as his school in the art of war, and Trann as his teacher.

The death of Charles VII. put an end to Frederick's pretext of acting in defense of his sovereign, and he endeavored to make peace with Maria Theresa. But Saxony, uniting with Austria, both armies, 75,000 strong, descended upon Silesia, and Frederick with 70,000 men waited their approach. They met at Hohenfriedberg, and the Prussians were completely victorious. After the battle of Hohenfriedberg, when 5,000 of his brave men lay upon the ground weltering in their blood, Frederick exclaimed to the French ambassador, throwing his arms around him: "My friend, God has helped me wonderfully this day!" "There was, after all," says Mr. Valoir, "at times a kind of devout feeling in this prince, who possessed such a combination of qualities, good and bad, that I know not which preponderates."

Frederick followed the Austrians into Bohemia, not to renew the attack, but to lay waste the country, that it might not afford sustenance to the enemy in the



FREDERICK AND HIS ARMY.

winter. Frederick then attacked Saxony, and after several battles entered Dresden, where he surprised every one by the moderation of his terms and the graciousness of his conduct. Peace was concluded on Christmas day, 1745, and Frederick, on his return to Berlin, was hailed with universal acclamation as Frederick the Great. Ten years of peace followed, during which Frederick built his beautiful palace of Sans Souci, near Pottsdam, and set himself to repair the ravages of war.

Maria Theresa, still unreconciled to the loss of Silesia, the brightest jewel of her crown, determined to recover it. Frederick becoming aware that Russia and Saxony were leagued with Austria to divide his dominions so soon as opportunity offered, made haste to form an alliance with England, and they bound themselves to prevent the passage of any foreign troops through Germany during the expected war with France. Believing he was about to be attacked by a coalition, Frederick determined to anticipate his foes, and in August, 1756, advanced into Saxony at the head of 75,000 men. This was the beginning of the Seven Years' War. Maria Theresa, believing Frederick to be her most dangerous enemy, resolved to crush him if possible, but this was not to be attempted without such an alliance as would render failure impossible. After some delay, and England refusing, such an alliance was made with France. Russia, too, proposed to join the contemplated partition of Prussia.

Frederick gave Austria no pretext for attacking him; but he saw that the American quarrel between England and France might be fought at his very

doors, and that he might be compelled to take part in it. He resolved to fight while he had only Austria to deal with. At the end of the first campaign he took possession of Saxony, and treated it as a conquered country. The war then became general. All the great powers of Europe were allied against him except England, and such was the state of her affairs she was more likely to need help from Prussia than to give it.

The year 1757 was a very brilliant one for Frederick. Austrians, French, Russians, Swedes and Imperialists all fell on him at once; but in two great victories he scattered his foes like chaff before the wind. At Prague he won a glorious victory. The battle of Kolin followed, when the Prussians were defeated, though Frederick himself led his troops and fought splendidly. His personal influence with his army was very great, and their enthusiasm for him was unbounded.

Three years passed, and Frederick's enemies showed no signs of yielding. The Prussian battalions were greatly reduced and exhausted, and the king was at his wit's end. He got together an army of 125,000 men, and hazarded a battle at Kunnesdorf. He was at first victorious, but being bent on destroying the Russians, they turned upon him and completely routed him.

For the first time he gave way to despair. "I have no resources left," he wrote, "and to tell the truth, I hold all for lost. I shall not survive the ruin of my country. Farewell forever!" That night he resigned the command of the army and contemplated suicide. But his prospects brightened, and resuming his command, he soon recovered from his defeat.

His constitution was broken down by disease, his army was growing discontented, and to add to his disasters, England threatened defection. As usual with men of his stamp, Frederick's genius asserted itself in his direst need. After many intricate manœuvres, he got into Silesia and gained a victory at Leignitz. At the end of 1761 the king was perhaps the only man in the army that had any hope. At this critical juncture, Peter, the grandson of Peter the Great, came to the throne of Russia, and he immediately sent assurances of friendship to Frederick, who, with wonderful tact, sent home to the czar all the Russian prisoners. The czar made peace with Prussia, and restored to her all her conquered territories.

This peace gave Sweden a chance to retire from the conflict. A truce was made with Austria in October, 1762, and thus ended the Seven Years' War.

Frederick again applied himself to the restoration of his impoverished country. He spent 25,000,000 thalers which had been accumulated for another campaign for the relief of the poor. He distributed seed-corn where most needed, and got the land as quickly as possible under cultivation. In 1772 came the iniquitous partition of Poland, to which Frederick consented with shameless readiness, and which stain will ever rest upon his memory.

His constitution was ruined, and he had now grown old, yet he did not relax his efforts for the public good. His secretaries came to him every morning at half-past four, and again in the evening for his instructions. They came as usual on the 15th of August, 1786, but the king did not waken till 11 o'clock. The next

day at noon he tried to rouse himself sufficiently to give the parole for the commandant of Pottsdam, but he was unequal to the effort, and died the following day.

He was seventy-four years old, and had reigned forty-six years. He came to the throne when Prussia was the weakest of the great European powers. At his death she was the acknowledged equal of any.

## CHAPTER XI.

### GILBERT MOTIER LAFAYETTE.

Where Born—Date of Marriage and to whom—His Interview with Silas Deane—Visit to England—Sailed for America—His Service at Brandywine—At Monmouth—Return to France—Again in America—In France at the Assembly of the Notables—Meeting of the French Congress in 1789—Lafayette Rescues the King from the Palace—Decline of Lafayette's Popularity—In Command of a French Army—Visit to the Assembly—Return to his Army—Crossing the Frontier and Arrested by Austrians—Five Years in Prison—Liberated through the Influence of Napoleon—Grant of Pensions—Death in 1834.

ONE of the most interesting characters brought into prominence during the stormy period of the French and American Revolutions, and who played a distinguished part in both, was Gilbert Motier de Lafayette. Born in the highest ranks of the nobility, he became a champion and soldier of freedom. His name was an honored one in the annals of France as early as the fifteenth century. The Chateau de Chavagnac, which was his birthplace, was in the province of Auvergne, a region famous for its magnificent mountain scenery. He was born in 1757, and passed the first eight years of his life in Chavagnac, under the sole care of his mother, his father having been killed at the battle of Minden, a few months previous to the birth of Lafayette. At the age of twelve, the boy entered a