# THE

# BALANCE OF POWER

## 1715–1789

BY

ARTHUR HASSALL, M.A.

STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD

AUTHOR OF "BOLINGBROKE"

"LOUIS XIV. AND THE ZENITH OF THE FRENCH MONARCHY," ETC

*PERIOD VI*

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.

1900

*All rights reserved*

# PREFACE

In attempting to write the history of Europe in the eighteenth century, I have been compelled for want of space to omit to a great extent the history of the Papacy and Portugal, and to touch upon the internal history of France only so far as it reacted upon the foreign policy of Louis XV. and XVI. I have, however, endeavoured to give full prominence to the foreign policy of Dubois, Fleury, Choiseul, and Vergennes, to emphasise the full meaning of the diplomatic revolutions of 1717 and 1756, and to bring out clearly the disastrous effects upon France of her entry into the war between England and the revolted American colonies.

I have also devoted much attention to showing the close interdependence of Northern, Eastern, and Western politics, and have in consequence endeavoured to bring into clear light the first beginnings of the Eastern Question, the rise of Russia and Prussia, and the decay of Sweden, Poland, and Turkey.

For the valuable Appendices A, B, and C — the results of very careful investigations — I am indebted to the courtesy of the Rev. A. H. Johnson; while to Mr. H. O. Wakeman and Mr. A. N. Moberley I ven-

ture to express my thanks for their kindness in reading through the proof-sheets.

It is impossible to give a complete list of the authorities which have either been consulted, or which should be consulted by students of this Period. Monod's *Bibliographie de l'histoire de France* gives a most useful list of the best French works, while the results of the labours of Martin, Sorel, Arneth, Carlyle, Vandal, Jobez, Cherest, Rocquain, Sybel, Weber, Broglie, Geffroy, Baudrillard, Coxe, Taine, de Tocqueville, and Armstrong will be found easily accessible.

The valuable set of *Instructions aux Ambassadeurs*, and the admirable volumes in the Oncken Series, are in themselves a mine of information as interesting as they are accurate. I have in the text made frequent references to various authorities, including often monographs with which the general reader may not be well acquainted.

The difficulties which have presented themselves to me will be appreciated by every one who has endeavoured to unravel the tangled skein of Continental politics during the eighteenth century; but I trust that my attempt to sketch the condition of Europe during the period previous to the French Revolution will not prove without interest to students of modern history.

A. H.

OXFORD, February 1896.

# CONTENTS


| CHAPTER | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| I. | EUROPE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY | 1 |
| II. | ALBERONI AND DUBOIS, 1715–1723 | 25 |
| III. | THE INTRIGUES OF ELIZABETH FARNESE, 1723–1733 | 64 |
| IV. | THE WAR OF THE POLISH SUCCESSION, 1733–1735 | 87 |
| V. | THE NORTH AND EAST OF EUROPE, 1715–1740 | 107 |
| VI. | PRUSSIA AND THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION, 1740–1742 | 128 |
| VII. | THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION WAR AFTER THE PEACE OF BRESLAU, 1742–1748 | 156 |
| VIII. | THE DIPLOMATIC REVOLUTION, 1748–1756 | 206 |
| IX. | THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR, 1756–1763 | 241 |
| X. | THE FALL OF THE JESUITS, 1759–1773 | 280 |
| XI. | THE PARTITION OF POLAND AND THE TREATY OF KUTCHUK-KAINARDJI | 298 |
| XII. | EUROPE AND THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, 1774–1783 | 332 |
| XIII. | CATHERINE II. AND JOSEPH II., 1783–1789 | 350 |
| XIV. | FRANCE BEFORE THE REVOLUTION, 1774–1789 | 394 |

## APPENDICES

PAGE

APPENDIX A. — The Territories of the House of Hapsburg, and their Government . . . . . 419

APPENDIX B. — Dominions of the Kings of Prussia, and their Government after the Reforms of Frederick William I. . . . . 420

APPENDIX C. — Constitution of the Empire in the Eighteenth Century 422

APPENDIX D. — Genealogies of the Russian and Swedish Royal Houses 423

Genealogy of the House of Wittelsbach, to illustrate the Bavarian Succession Question . . . . . 424

APPENDIX E. — Table of Contemporary Sovereigns . . . . . 425

INDEX . . . . . 427

## MAPS

1. Europe in 1740 . . . . . *to face* 130

2. Italy in 1748 . . . . . 201

3. North and East Germany, 1756–1763 . . . . . 244

4. West Germany, 1756–1763 . . . . . 258

5. The North and East of Europe . . . . . *to face* 351

6. Prussia in 1786 . . . . . *to face* 373

# CHAPTER I

## EUROPE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The Balance of Power — The Enlightened Governments — Commerce and the Colonies — The Growth of the Middle Class — The Causes of the European Revolution — The Settlement of 1713 and 1714 — Position of the Leading European Powers in 1715 — The Empire — Austria — Prussia — Bavaria — The Palatinate — Hanover — Saxony — Poland — Italy — Spain and Portugal — The North of Europe — The Eastern Question — Sweden and France in 1715.

On the 1st of September 1715 Louis XIV. died. With his death the eighteenth century may be said to begin, just as with the meeting of the States-General on May the 5th, 1789, it may be said to close. The years from 1715 to 1789 were preparatory to a period extending from 1789 to 1815, when a revolution was carried out not only in France but in other countries, and the reconstruction of the map of Europe was effected. The causes of this revolution, which has so profoundly influenced modern Europe, are very plainly indicated in the history of the preceding years. During the period from 1715–1789 certain leading ideas were accepted which differ in many respects from those propounded during the revolutionary epoch. Of these perhaps the best known is that of the balance of power. After the Peace of Westphalia, it became recognised that a number of independent states of various sizes and resources must find a *modus vivendi*, and that the security of all must be ensured. But the 'Christian Republic' was an ideal of philosophers, and was ignored by Louis XIV.; it was not till 1688 that William III. headed a successful opposition to the predominance of France. The balance of power in the eighteenth century has been described

**The Balance of Power.**

as 'merely a temporary immobility produced by exhaustion after long wars.' Diplomacy was corrupt, and international immorality was universal. The principles of Frederick the Great and of Catherine II. were practised by other governments which had not the audacity to avow them. The invasion of Silesia, the partition of Poland, the attempted dismemberments of Turkey and Sweden, and the suggested dismemberment of Prussia, are well-known illustrations of the contempt for established rights, and the determination of powerful states to enrich themselves at the expense of their weaker neighbours. No consideration was paid to race limits or to national boundaries. Large portions of Italy were, at the Peace of Utrecht, taken from Spain and given to Austria; while the Spanish Netherlands was handed over to the care of the distant House of Hapsburg. Till 1789 the supremacy of dynastic interests remained practically unquestioned, and it was not till the nineteenth century that the idea of nationality became generally recognised. 'They cut and pare states and kingdoms,' wrote Alberoni of the ministers of his day, 'as if they were Dutch cheeses.' And this statement accurately describes the policy pursued with a brutal consistency by all the great Powers from the Treaty of Utrecht to that of Vienna in 1815.

Nevertheless, the idea of a balance of power is founded on reason, has been a living force in European politics since the struggles of the Italian towns with each other in the Middle Ages, and exists in the minds of all European statesmen at the present day. In 1717 Lord Stair, the English envoy, explained to the Regent that Stanhope's foreign policy was based on the principle of a balance of forces; that it was England's object to make Austria as far as possible equal in power to France, and to prevent either country from becoming superior in strength and influence to the other. And he frankly stated that if France endeavoured to become more powerful than the Emperor she would lose her allies. Alberoni, too, was, from the beginning of his career in Spain, firmly resolved to annul the Treaties of Utrecht and Rastadt, as being subversive to the

balance of power, and disastrous to Spain and Italy. Though this principle was often enunciated, its mere existence could not prevent acts of aggression on the part of the great states; and Europe has been described as committing suicide by allowing the War of the Austrian Succession and the Partition of Poland. 'These iniquitous acts,' says Albert Sorel, 'are the testament of old Europe, having signed which it could not but die.' Anarchic principles were abroad, morality and religion were at a low ebb, treaties were lightly broken, most European states were, at the time of the French Revolution, either ruined or worn out; and the system of the balance of power was grossly perverted by the cynical and immoral policy of the rulers of Austria, Russia, and Prussia. In 1788 the wisdom of maintaining within certain limits a balance of power was appreciated by English statesmen. By their efforts Turkey and Sweden were saved from dismemberment, and Europe from a serious territorial readjustment.[1]

Side by side with this disregard of the rights of nationalities, it must be observed that the responsibilities of rulers within their own territories were fully grasped. The modern idea of the state begins to appear. During the century, the conception that governments exist for the promotion of the security and prosperity of the governed was adequately appreciated. The eighteenth century was an age of enlightenment; it has been termed the age of reason. But the idea of the sovereignty of the people was not recognised. It was held from England to Russia that a government, while it existed for the good of the people, must not be administered by them. The eighteenth century was the period of administrative despotism. The state was everything, the people nothing. Benevolent despots governed their countries on humanitarian principles. Though, theoretically, freedom of individual thought and action was allowed to be a good thing, in practice the principle of personal liberty was not recognised.

**The Enlightened Governments.**

[1] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i. chap. i. Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. pp. 229, 230.

Feudalism still existed in many parts of Europe, and the poorer classes were kept in bondage.

Another characteristic, the importance of which cannot be over-estimated, was the immense interest taken in commercial and colonial questions. Commerce was recognised as being the road to wealth and power, and it became the policy of every European prince to increase the wealth of his country by advancing its trade. The study of political economy had definitely arisen in the seventeenth century, though it had only reached a very rudimentary stage — the prevalent belief being that the wealth of a nation consisted in the amount of specie which it possessed, and that the prosperity of one country was only attained at the expense of others. Consequently, each nation endeavoured to prohibit the exportation of coin, and commercial jealousy grew apace. 'One man's gain is another's loss' became a recognised principle, and the mercantile theory, as it was called, established itself firmly in Europe.

**Commerce and the Colonies.**

During the latter half of the seventeenth century the great value of colonial trade was almost universally recognised. The unpopularity, in England, of the Partition Treaties of 1698 and 1700 was largely due to the fact that, had they been carried out, the western basin of the Mediterranean would have become a French lake, and the English trade there and in the Levant would have been endangered. The coolness which existed after the conclusion of the Spanish Succession War between England and Peter the Great was caused in great measure by the apprehension that the appearance in the Baltic of a Russian fleet would endanger the interests of British commerce in the north. This lively appreciation — shared with England by Spain, France, and Austria — of the value of trade brought with it important results. The possession of strong navies became necessary for the work of colonial expansion and the development of commerce; and already, in the later years of the seventeenth century, the fleets of Holland, England, and France had been engaged in a brill-

iant rivalry, not only in European waters, but in the distant American and Indian seas. By the beginning of the eighteenth century Holland had dropped out of the race, but the struggle was continued between England and the navies of France and Spain. Already the contests for supremacy in America and India had begun, and it was not till the century was more than half over that it was decided that England, not France, should be supreme in India, and that the Teutonic and not the Latin element was to control the destinies and development of North America. This growth of the commercial and colonial interests of European states brought with it the increased importance, more particularly in France, in England, and in western Germany, of the middle class. The eighteenth century was the age of great civilians — the age of Walpole and of Pitt, of Alberoni and of Turgot. Wherever trade developed, the condition of the agricultural classes improved, and an independent, wealthy, and intelligent middle class grew up, which supplied to the various countries many admirable financiers, administrators, and soldiers. The increased interest taken in commerce tended to break down barriers between nations, and Europe became more united. Insulation was, indeed, impossible when Spain had an Italian government, England a German, Italy an Austrian, Russia everything but a Russian government. That the eighteenth century was the age of political adventurers is evident from a very cursory acquaintance with the history of the various states. Scepticism increased, and the religious sentiment was weakened. Bossuet and Pascal were succeeded by Voltaire and Diderot; and the influence of Catholicism steadily declined.

**Growth of the Middle Class.**

**Insulation impossible.**

These characteristics of the European history in the eighteenth century which have been briefly touched upon do not form a pleasant picture. Territorial aggrandisement was the principal object of the greater Powers, and any means were considered justifiable in order to secure their aims. Diplomacy, which had taken the place of religion

**Conclusion.**

in the councils of Europe, was unscrupulous; while the *secret diplomacy* of the middle of the eighteenth century marks the lowest depths arrived at in the history of the relations of European states to each other.

Two principal facts sum up in themselves the character of the period:—The War of the Austrian Succession, and the Partition of Poland. The one showed the amount of faith which could be put in the solemn engagements of European Powers, the other illustrated the amount of respect which states, if weak, could expect from their stronger neighbours. When Napoleon overran and conquered the greater part of Europe, he was merely carrying out fully and successfully the policy pursued by the great European Powers before 1789. In this respect Napoleon belongs to the same category as Frederick the Great, Catherine II., and Joseph II., and may be classed with the despots of the eighteenth century.

**The European Revolution breaks out in France.**

As the century advanced, it became evident that the overthrow of the old European system was at hand. The middle classes, richer and better educated than before, felt themselves to be fit for the exercise of political functions which the theory of benevolent despotism denied them. The people who provided from their own ranks the soldiers who were the instruments of the royal tyranny, were driven to desperation by feudal exaction and social privilege. On the other hand, monarchy had lost its dignity and leadership, the nobility was extravagant, the Church corrupt, politicians unblushingly selfish. The old props of society were giving way. A catastrophe was inevitable. But from what quarter the first shock of the earthquake would make itself felt no one could say.

**The Causes of the Revolutionary Epoch.**

What then were the causes of the revolution which burst out almost simultaneously in Belgium, Poland, and France, and found the rest of Europe in a condition of weakness and collapse? The answer to the question may partly be found in the political condition of Europe as settled by the terms of the Treaties of Utrecht and

Nystad, partly in the struggle between England and France for colonial supremacy.

While the Treaty of Utrecht introduced the principle of partition, intensified the colonial rivalry between England and France in North America, and opened an unappeasable controversy by assigning Belgium to Austria on conditions intolerable to the Hapsburg House, the Treaty of Nystad (1721) marks the definite beginning of the prodigious growth of Russia, which henceforward took advantage of the weakness of Sweden, Poland, and Turkey to advance her boundaries, and to enter into the politics of Europe. A revolution was thus being effected in north-eastern Europe of unexampled magnitude and importance. The rise of Prussia, apparent to Europe from 1740, constituted a no less startling revolution. And the union of the Bourbon Powers in the west found after 1763 that it had to reckon with a no less powerful league in the north-east of Europe. Till 1789 England and France struggled for colonial empire and for supremacy in India; Austria never ceased in her endeavours to exchange the Netherlands for Bavaria, and Russia and Prussia advanced rapidly to take their place with Austria and France as leading European Powers.

**Summary.**

The Treaties of Utrecht, Rastadt, and Baden, with the Barrier Treaty of 1715, registered and sanctioned accomplished facts, and completed the settlement of the affairs of Europe. Though France retained part of her conquests, great care was taken to check her power of aggression. With the grouping together of states under fresh conditions new problems arose, which found their settlement in 1815. By the Peace of Utrecht, France, though reserving Cape Breton and her share in the fisheries of the coast of Newfoundland, lost to England Acadia or Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Hudson's Bay, and promised to dismantle Dunkirk. While she regained Lille, Aire, Bethune, and Saint-Venant, she agreed to the cession of the Spanish Netherlands to Austria, and to the establishment of a barrier

**The Settlement of 1713 and 1714.**

on the Belgian frontier. She further undertook to restore Savoy and Nice to Victor Amadeus of Savoy, acquiesced in the arrangement by which that astute duke, reserving his rights to the Spanish Crown, received Sicily with the title of king; recognised the royal title of Frederick William of Prussia, and his rights over Neufchâtel; and, while retaining her claims on Orange, restored Upper Guelderland to Prussia. Spain at the same time made treaties with England, Savoy, and Holland. To the former she yielded Gibraltar and Minorca, and by the Assiento agreement she granted the right of importing for thirty years into South America 4000 negroes, and of sending a ship annually to the fair of Porto Bello. With regard to Savoy and Holland the terms of the treaties arranged by France were simply repeated. It was not till the next year that peace between France and Austria was concluded at Rastadt, followed by a treaty between the Empire and France at Baden.

By the Treaty of Rastadt (March 6, 1714) France agreed that Austria should possess Naples, Sardinia, the Tuscan ports (Piombino, Porto Ercole, Porto San Stefano, Orbitello, Telamone, and Porto Longone in Elba), and Milan. Further, while recognising the ninth electorate of Hanover, she secured the restoration of the Electors of Bavaria and Cologne to their respective territories and rights. In September of the same year at Baden, the Empire accepted the *status quo ante bellum*, and the condition of things as established at the Peace of Ryswick. France retained Alsace and Strasburg, and restored the places held by her on the right bank of the Rhine. In November the Barrier Treaty (1715) carried out the arrangements agreed to between the great Powers. The United Provinces handed over the Spanish Netherlands to Charles VI., and it was definitely settled that Namur, Tournai, Menin, Furnes, Warneton, Ypres, and the Fort of Knocque, were to be garrisoned by the Dutch, while Dendermonde was to be held by a mixed garrison of Dutch and Austrians. It was further laid down that no part of the Spanish Netherlands was ever to be ceded to France.

This settlement of Utrecht, though it closed a period of wars, opened new controversies and led to fresh complications. It was impossible that a settlement of the magnitude of that carried out at Utrecht, Rastadt, and Baden, leading as it did to the reconstruction of the map of Europe, could be effected without leaving behind it many heart-burnings, and much irritation and discontent. Spain never acquiesced in the Austrian predominance in Italy, and never rested till the arrangements made at Utrecht were overthrown; Philip, moreover, had no intention of adhering to his renunciation of the French throne, and only awaited a favourable opportunity for asserting his claim. The Hapsburgs regarded the conditions on which the Spanish Netherlands had been assigned to them as intolerable, and, after vain attempts to modify those conditions, endeavoured with great persistency to exchange Belgium for Bavaria. France, though compelled to give England a foothold in Canada, was resolved to contest her supremacy in North America, and a struggle ensued which resulted in 1763 in the loss of the French possessions on the American Continent.

Nor were the Dutch satisfied with the Barrier Treaty, and they felt indignant at the position held by Austria, and at the conduct of England. Though Europe was too exhausted in 1715 to embark upon another general war, it was evident that the renewal of hostilities could only be averted by wise counsels and a firm attitude on the part of the leading powers. The fixed resolve of various states to get rid of the restraints imposed and the terms laid down at Utrecht, together with the rise of the Russian monarchy made apparent by the Treaty of Nystad, tended to indicate sources of future complications in the north and east, as well as in the south and west of Europe.

For nearly a generation Europe was, on the whole, tranquil; it was not till 1733 that another general war took place; it was not till the accession of Frederick the Great to the Prussian throne that a new age in European politics definitely began; it was not till the end of the century that, through the

destruction of the European states-system, the outbursts of the militant democracy of France threatened the liberties of Europe.

The necessity of peace was perhaps more vital to Germany than to any other state in Europe. Before she had recovered from the disastrous Thirty Years' War, she had been exposed to the aggressions of Louis XIV. Her weakness was in great measure due to internal divisions, themselves the result of her constitution, which had been made permanent by the Peace of Westphalia. All chance of the establishment of a united monarchy had been lost at the time of the Peace of Westphalia, and the Empire, finally dismembered, had become a nominal federation of independent princes. Germany was divided into some three hundred petty states, the rulers of each of which had the right not only to tax, to impose custom duties, to coin money and to debase the coinage, but also to make treaties, and to decide upon the form of religion to be professed within their respective dominions. Each prince was absolute master within his own state, and many of them were despots of the most despicable kind. The Empire had become a nominal federation of independent princes, and the victory in the long struggle between the centrifugal and centripetal tendencies, between monarchy and aristocracy, rested with the centrifugal principle. The German kingdom was, after 1648, a republic of princes presided over by the Emperor. Germany, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, had lost all national feeling, a degradation of manners had set in, and the dominant tone in the small states was fatal to the domestic life which, previous to the Thirty Years' War, had proved the strength of the country.[1]

**Position of the leading European Powers in 1715. The Empire.**

Tyrannical oppression was almost universal in these small states, many of which were hotbeds of corruption. In 1715 Germany presented a picture of hopeless dismemberment. 'What specially enhanced the administrative and economic

[1] *See* Karl Hillebrand, *Lectures on German Thought*, i. and ii.

disadvantages of such a multiplicity of states was this' — writes Biedermann — 'that even those territories which constituted a political whole were geographically severed, and consequently disunited in respect of administrative and commercial intercourse.' At the head of the Germanic body was the Emperor, who represented the executive, and who lived at Vienna.[1] His power since 1648 had become purely nominal, and though the prestige of the Imperial title still carried some weight, the Austrian instincts of the Emperors had tended to render their position in the Empire a purely ornamental one. At Ratisbon sat the Diet which wielded the legislative power. The Diet was composed of three Colleges: that of the Electors, that of the Princes, and that of the Imperial towns. The College of Electors was presided over by the Archbishop of Mainz, who, with the Archbishops of Trèves and Cologne, formed the ecclesiastical elements in the College; while the five lay Electors included the Electors of Hanover, Brandenburg, Bohemia, Saxony, and either Bavaria or the Palatinate. The College of Princes consisted of 36 ecclesiastical, and 64 lay members; and the third College consisted of the representatives of 52 Imperial Free Cities. In each of the two Upper Colleges a majority was required to agree to a resolution, but any opposition on the part of the College of Free Cities could prevent the resolution from being presented to the Emperor for his assent as a *Conclusum* for the Empire. In the eighteenth century delegates represented the members of the three Colleges, but the knights not being represented, refused to accept the decisions of the Diet, formed themselves into separate circles, and dealt directly with the Emperor. The Diet had thus no real influence, and beyond declaring war had no means of making its power felt. It had become merely an assembly of envoys from the states, and their action carried little weight. The Imperial Chamber, or Tribunal, sat at Wetzlar on the Lahn; its weakness was but a sign of the weakness of the German federation. It was

[1] *See* Appendix C.

intended to decide disputes between the German sovereigns, but only very trifling cases were laid before it, and it was powerless to prevent all important matters being settled by arms. Moreover, it possessed no effective force or machinery to carry out any decision at which it might arrive. The Imperial administration still existed, and Germany was divided into ten circles which formed units in the military, judicial, and financial organisation. On them, moreover, devolved the duty of carrying out the decisions of the Emperor. These circles did not correspond to any political divisions, and often the states of the same sovereign were distributed through different circles. The Imperial army was itself formed from contingents sent by the circles, but was absolutely useless and inefficient. 'Not only each regiment but each company was formed of the contingent of several states, and each kept its own uniform and armament. There were states whose entire contingent consisted of two men equipped at their own expense, but also in their own fashion.' The Imperial military system was a failure, and Germany was still powerless to defend itself from attacks. In addition, Germany was rent by religious divisions. Each prince, since the Peace of Westphalia, was supreme in his own dominion in religion no less than in political matters; and religious dissensions, so far from being settled in 1648, had been perpetuated, destroyed all chance of unity in Germany, and paralysed all attempts to place the Empire in a condition suitable for offence or defence. The elaborate federative system had proved a failure. All sense of German unity was lost; the French had taken Strasburg and Alsace; they were about to take Lorraine. The Imperial army could not defend Germany from attack, nor could the Imperial forces put down internal disorder. The Seven Years' War exemplified the weakness of the Germanic body, the utter decay of the Holy Roman Empire, and the general confusion prevalent among all the Imperial institutions. The only chance of arriving at a better state of things lay in the rise from among the numerous German potentates of a prince who could inspire

his countrymen with that desire for union which the ancient and decaying system had failed to supply.

National unity and national policy having disappeared from Germany as a whole, the smaller princes tended for purposes of defence to group themselves round Austria or Prussia.

Of the German states, Austria held the foremost place. Since the accession of Albert II. in 1437 the Hapsburgs had held the Imperial dignity. Vienna was consequently not merely the chief town of the Austrian dominions: it was also the capital of the Empire. Strengthened by all the *éclat* which belonged to the Imperial position, the Emperors of the House of Austria had used their power for the benefit of their own dominions, and for the curtailment of the rights of the Empire. They had established at Vienna an Aulic Council — a purely Austrian creation — which not unfrequently trenched upon the prerogatives of the Imperial Chamber; but they had failed in their endeavour to crush out Protestantism, and to impose a strict despotism upon the whole of Germany. **Austria.**

Since the Peace of Westphalia the tendency of the Emperors was more and more to neglect Imperial for purely Austrian interests. Charles VI. might have recovered Alsace and Strasburg for the Empire during the Spanish Succession War, but his anxiety to increase his own Italian possessions, to secure Sicily as well as Naples, led him to refuse to make peace at Utrecht, with the result that Alsace and Strasburg remained in French hands till 1870. Again, in 1735 Charles, in order to gain Tuscany as compensation for the loss of Naples, gave up Lorraine without even consulting the Empire. Always jealous of any attempt to curtail their privileges, the German princes had, during the seventeenth century, looked to France to protect them, until the reunion policy of Louis XIV., the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the devastation of the Palatinate, had forced them to rally round the Emperor. But Joseph I.'s employment of the ban of the Empire against the Electors of Cologne and Bavaria, his occupation of their territories — foreshadowing the

policy of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. — and his annexations in Italy, had again roused their alarm. On Joseph's death his successor, Charles VI., was compelled to agree to the perpetual capitulation by which the powers of the Emperor were still further curtailed, and the privileges and rights of the princes still further safeguarded. In spite, however, of the perpetual capitulation, in spite of the growing influence of several of the princes, in spite of the fact that the Electors of Prussia, Hanover, and Saxony had become kings, in spite of the suspicious, if not menacing, attitude of Bavaria, Austria held a very influential position in Western Christendom. Her connection with Germany was very intimate owing to the possession by her rulers of the Imperial sceptre, and to the fact that, by reason of her territories in the Netherlands and in Swabia, she was regarded as the shield and defender of the Empire against France. As long, too, as there was a steady Catholic majority in the Diet, Austria's predominance in Germany was secure.

The rulers of the House of Hapsburg indeed occupied a unique position in Europe.[1] In addition to Austria proper they had acquired Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, Görz, and the Tyrol. They held Bohemia with its dependent provinces of Moravia, Silesia, and Lausitz; and in 1711, at the Peace of Szathmar, they finally secured Hungary, Croatia, and Transylvania. By the Treaty of Utrecht they had obtained a considerable addition to their possessions in Italy, which now included Naples, Sardinia, the Tuscan ports, and most of Lombardy — *i.e.* the Duchy of Mantua, and part of the Duchy of Milan; they had also received the Spanish Netherlands. Their territories in Swabia and the Breisgau had belonged to their house for several centuries. The history of the Hapsburgs in the second half of the seventeenth century clearly demonstrated that the true policy of Austria was, by taking advantage of the weakness of Turkey, to extend and develop in the direction of Constantinople, and to strengthen its hold

[1] *See* Appendix A.

upon southern Germany. In 1715 Charles VI. was not only Emperor; he was also King of Bohemia and Hungary, and Archduke of Austria. The government of his dominions, which contained many different nationalities — Belgians, Italians, Germans, Czechs, Magyars, and various branches of the Slav family — taxed all the resources and abilities of the ablest of the Hapsburg rulers. There was no natural centre, many of the territories were scattered and isolated, and the Austrian Netherlands was little more than a continental colony. It was impossible to form thus scattered populations into one centralised state: it was equally difficult to group them into a federation.[1]

Prussia consisted of several states almost more divided than the hereditary provinces of Charles VI. In the west, Frederick William I. possessed Cleves, Mark, and Ravensburg; in the east Prussia, united to the Electorate in 1618; and in the centre the Electorate of Brandenburg, composed of the Kur-Mark and the Neu-Mark. To these dominions of the kings of Prussia, Farther Pomerania, Halberstadt, and Minden had been added in 1648, Magdeburg in 1680, and Guelders in 1713. To unite these scattered possessions was the consistent aim of Prussian monarchs during the century. Between Brandenburg and Cleves lay Hanover. Poland thrust herself between Brandenburg and Prussia, while in the north the occupation by Sweden of the greater part of Pomerania was a constant menace and source of irritation. To increase their dominions Rhinewards by securing Jülich and Berg, to drive the Swedes from Pomerania, and to unite Brandenburg and Prussia at the expense of Poland, became the natural objects of the Prussian rulers.[2]

**Prussia.**

Consolidation, centralisation, and expansion express the results of the long reigns of Frederick William I. and of his successor, the great Frederick. In this work Frederick William played a most important part, and he succeeded in founding a centralised and administrative system, which, to a great extent, lasted till the Peace of Tilsit. Prussia, in spite

[1] *See* Appendix A. [2] *See* Appendix B.

of the geographical difficulties, became gradually united, gained a strength which Austria never acquired, and, after the Seven Years' War, was recognised as the rival of Austria, and her equal in power. This extraordinary development of a small German electorate into a prominent European kingdom was due, in the first place, to the fact that Prussia was regarded as the leader of the Protestant states in Germany; in the second place, to the formation of the magnificent Prussian army; and thirdly, to the growth of a national feeling itself inspired by Prussian victories. 'The two springs round which the new life in Germany gathered and grew up were the Prussian State and the Protestant religion.' Frederick the Great succeeded in arousing all that makes a nation proud of itself: heroism, a national spirit, and a love of religious liberty; and consequently Prussia became in time the recognised representative of the German race. From 1715 to 1740, in anticipation of a struggle which Prince Eugene had foreseen, the relations of Prussia and Austria became more and more strained; from 1740 to 1763 the Austrian supremacy in Germany was definitely challenged, and on the conclusion of the Seven Years' War Prussia was recognised as the equal of Austria, and as the defender of the liberties of the German states against the encroachments of the Hapsburg House.

**Bavaria.**

Bavaria was ruled by a branch of the House of Wittelsbach, and its Duke had, during the Spanish Succession War, supported the French cause. In February 1714 a close alliance had been formed between France and Bavaria, France undertaking to support the Elector in his claims on the Hapsburg possessions, and, if occasion required, on the eventual succession to the Empire. In March of the same year France forced the Emperor at the Peace of Rastadt to restore the Elector to his dominions, from which he had been expelled after the battle of Blenheim. The relations between the Hapsburgs and Bavaria had never been cordial. Even during the Thirty Years' War, when the Elector fought on the side of the Emperor, he fought mainly for his own

hand. For a long period his successor wavered between allegiance to the Emperor and alliance with Louis XIV. At last, at the beginning of the Spanish Succession War, he definitely threw himself on the side of Louis XIV., and Bavaria remained allied to France till success attended the policy of both Elector and King, and Charles Albert became Emperor in 1742 as Charles VII. He had always refused to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, asserting that his marriage with a niece of Charles VI. gave him, with the Elector of Saxony, a claim upon the Austrian inheritance.

The Lower Palatinate, the capital of which was Heidelberg, belonged to the elder branch of the Wittelsbachs, and the Elector had received back part of his territory at the Treaty of Westphalia. On the extinction of the reigning branch Louis XIV. had claimed the Lower Palatinate on behalf of his daughter-in-law, the Duchess of Orleans. Eventually, in 1702, the matter was settled by arbitration, and the Elector, John William, paid 300,000 crowns to the Duchess. On the conclusion of the Treaty of Rastadt he was compelled to give up the Upper Palatinate, which had been handed over to him in 1708, when Bavaria was put to the ban of the Empire. After Louis XIV.'s death Charles Philip, the Elector Palatine, wavered between France and Austria. Irritated at some remonstrances which Charles VI. made in consequence of his persecutions of the Protestants in his territory, Charles Philip drew closer to the Elector of Bavaria, and, in 1724, formed a sort of Family Compact with him, an arrangement favoured by France. In 1726, in order to secure his alliance, the Emperor guaranteed the succession to Berg and Jülich to the Sulzbach branch, the presumptive heirs to the Lower Palatinate, while almost simultaneously he made similar promises to Prussia. The Emperor's duplicity so alienated the Elector that, in 1732, he refused to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction; during the Polish Succession War he remained neutral, and on his death, in 1743, he was succeeded by Charles Theodore of Sulzbach, who definitely accepted the French alliance.

**The Palatinate.**

Hanover, a Protestant state, which had at first come into prominence through its erection into an Electorate, and later through its Elector having become King of England, was closely connected with Austria, to whom it had given pledges on being raised to the electoral dignity. But though supporting Maria Theresa in the Austrian Succession War, George II. viewed the position of affairs in Germany from the point of view of a German prince, and was not averse to the coronation of Charles VII. (of Bavaria) as Emperor. On the other hand, though allied to Prussia by marriage and by religious sympathies, the relations of both George I. and George II. with the Prussian kings were seldom friendly. It was not till the Seven Years' War that the exigencies of the political situation compelled George II. and Frederick the Great to form a close alliance.

**Hanover.**

Saxony owed much of its importance to its close connection with Poland. Augustus II., Elector of Saxony, was also the elected King of Poland. His son, afterwards Augustus III., married Maria Josepha, daughter of the Emperor Joseph I., and in spite of her renunciations raised a claim on the death of Charles VI. to part of the Austrian inheritance.

**Saxony.**

The connection of Saxony and Poland brought the Elector into great European prominence. For centuries Poland had maintained an anarchical government in the centre of monarchical Europe. Its constitution, though nominally monarchical, was in reality republican. Its kings were elected, and were obliged to accept a contract styled *Pacta Conventa*, the provisions of which they swore to observe. They presided at the National Assembly, and if they wished they could lead the army. The Senate, which was the real executive, was practically free from the control of the king, but was carefully supervised by the Diet. This body, which formerly had included the whole adult nobility, was now composed of 400 deputies, elected by the provincial assemblies, and given full instructions as to their line of conduct at the

**Poland.**

Diet. Every resolution of the Diet had to be unanimous, and, consequently, a single deputy could by his veto stop all business. When the state machinery was seriously interfered with by the exercise of the veto, or by obstruction, recourse was had to a 'Confederation,' an extraordinary assembly in which the veto was not allowed. Thus the Polish constitution with its *liberum veto*, its right of private confederation, and its *Pacta Conventa*, was little more than anarchy indifferently organised. The king had practically no power amid the strife of parties and the struggles of factions.

During the eighteenth century Poland attracted the attention of Europe, just as Spain had been the centre of interest during the latter half of the seventeenth century. The question of the partition of the Spanish Empire had occupied the minds of the sovereigns of Christendom during Louis XIV.'s long reign; the question of the partition of Poland was destined, even early in the eighteenth century, to be of vital interest and importance to the greater part of Europe. A kingdom in area larger than France, whose people were all soldiers, and which was placed in the centre of Europe, between Prussia, Austria, and Russia, was certain to become the centre of rivalry between these three Powers, a rivalry complicated by the interest always taken by France in Polish affairs. The Polish Succession War, the diplomatic struggle which raged in Poland during the years immediately preceding the Seven Years' War, and the history of the East of Europe, from 1764 to 1774, bring out clearly the inherent defects of the Polish constitution, and the recognition by Europe of the importance of Poland, as well as the designs of Russia upon her independence, and the inability of France to carry into effect her extravagant pretensions.

In Italy Austrian interests were of vast importance. The Treaty of Utrecht had temporarily destroyed French and Spanish influence in the Peninsula. Naples, Sardinia, the Milanese, Mantua, and the Tuscan Presidencies were given to Austria. The House of Savoy, now firmly established in Piedmont, and in possession of Sicily, was Italy's one

Italy.

hope. The House of Savoy was to Italy what the Electors of Brandenberg were to Germany. It only required time for the Milanese to be absorbed by that astute House — like an artichoke, leaf by leaf. Northern Italy was, in 1715, divided between Savoy, Austria, Venice, and the republic of Genoa. In the centre were Modena ruled by the Estes, Tuscany ruled by the Medici, Parma and Piacenza ruled by the Farnese, the Tuscan Presidencies in the hands of Austria, the Papal dominions and the republic of Lucca. In the south, Austria held Naples, and Savoy held Sicily for a few years. Spain, though ousted for the moment, was only watching for an opportunity of restoring her influence in the Italian Peninsula.

**Spain and Portugal.**

To the astonishment of Europe, Spain, so far from accepting defeat and allowing herself to be numbered with Portugal, Venice, and indeed Holland, showed unexpected vitality, and prepared with renewed vigour to take her place among the leading European nations. The loss of her outlying possessions in Italy, and of the Spanish Netherlands, was in reality a gain to Spain. The expenses connected with these possessions had been enormous, and men and money were frequently wasted in defending them. The establishment of Philip v. upon the throne had been followed by many necessary reforms, carried out by means of foreign statesmen, who for some seventy years play an important part in the regeneration of Spain. French ideas and methods of administration were introduced, the obsolete policy of the Hapsburg line was thrown to the winds, the government became more centralised and better organised, obstacles to free trade between the various provinces were removed, the army was reorganised on the French model, and even the privileges of the clergy were viewed with jealousy and suspicion. Of the ministers under whose guidance Spanish regeneration was attempted, Alberoni was an Italian, Ripperdá came from Holland, Patiño's family, though of Spanish origin, had long been settled in Milan, while Squillacci, the Finance Minister during the early years of Charles III.'s reign, was an Italian.

From 1713, too, the relations between Spain and France tend towards a distinct improvement. As long as Spain held the Netherlands a constant source of friction existed. France since the days of Philip Valois has aimed at expansion on the side of Flanders, and during the latter half of the seventeenth century Louis XIV. had made consistent attempts to extend the French frontier to the Rhine and the Scheldt. From 1713 the Netherlands ceased to be a bone of contention between Spain and France. The Spanish power was rendered more compact by the loss of Flanders, one great obstacle to close and friendly relations with France was removed, and another step taken towards the establishment of a state of things summed up in the famous sentence, 'Henceforth there are no Pyrenees.' As soon as the dynastic rivalry between the House of Orleans and the Spanish Bourbons ceased, Spain and France having no colonial rivalries and no jarring interests in Europe to separate them, naturally tended to draw together and to oppose the aggressive policy of England in the colonies as well as her maritime supremacy. The years between 1713 and 1733 are those in which friendly relations between Spain and France are at times interrupted by the dynastic ambitions of Philip V. and the impatience of Elizabeth Farnese, but from 1733 the necessity of a union between Spain and France was gradually realised by French and Spanish statesmen.

Between Spain and Portugal hostilities had ceased in 1713; and the latter country, under John V., remained at peace and under English protection for many years, during which her army, navy, and administration decayed. It was not till the accession of Joseph I. in 1750 that Portugal, owing to the ability and energy of Pombal, awoke from its lethargy and entered upon one of the most flourishing periods in her history.

The Treaty of Utrecht brought no tranquillity to northern Europe. There the final scene in the fall of Sweden was being enacted, and it was not till 1721 that the Peace of Nystad pacified the north, closed one epoch, and opened another. With the death of Charles XII. the Swedish

The North of Europe.

Government passed into the hands of an oligarchy; the rise of Prussia rendered the question of the entire loss of the Swedish possessions in Germany a mere matter of time; and the rise of Russia substituted for Sweden — henceforth a third-rate Power — a Slav state which has produced a succession of rulers as able as those of the Vasa dynasty, and has resources and possibilities of expansion and development on all sides denied to the Scandinavian kingdom.

Under Peter the Great, who had become Tsar in 1682, Russia had made enormous strides in civilisation. Her domestic policy and institutions had been revolutionised. St. Petersburg took the place of Moscow, western ideas and habits had been introduced, the power of the nobles curbed, and the Church and army, now trained in the European model under foreign officers, brought definitely under the control of the Tsar. The firm establishment of his despotic rule at home was coincident with an equally marked revolution in foreign policy. Peter saw with clearness that for the development of Russia into a commercial nation the first essential was to obtain a footing upon the Baltic and Black Seas. As time went on he became no less anxious to extend the frontiers of Russia at the expense of Poland.

In 1709, at the battle of Poltava, Sweden's efforts for a century to obtain permanent mastery over the Baltic ended in failure, and the work of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles X. was undone. After eleven years, mainly occupied in Charles XII.'s fruitless struggles, the Treaty of Nystad recognised the substitution of Russia for Sweden as the leading Power in the Baltic and the north of Europe.

Against the Turks Peter the Great was not so successful. In 1696 the capture of Azov marked the entrance of Russia into the politics of south-eastern Europe; and with the simultaneous extension of the Russian and Austrian possessions at the expense of Turkey by the Treaty of Carlowitz, in 1699, eastern politics entered upon a new phase. The further expansion of Russia southwards was temporarily

**The Eastern Question.**

checked by the capitulation of the Pruth in 1711, but henceforward Russia and Turkey stand face to face. As the century proceeds, the steady decline of Turkey brings forward new questions and raises serious complications. While Russia endeavours to establish herself on the Black Sea, Austria simultaneously attempts to push her way down the Danube. These movements, together with the united action of the Courts of St. Petersburg and Vienna, during the greater part of the century, in south-eastern Europe, rouse the alarm of France. From Dubois to Vergennes French statesmen are forced to realise the significance of the new developments, and to consider the advisability of opposing them by vigorous action in conjunction with Turkey, or of aiding them by a Russian alliance. The Treaty of Kainardji, in 1774, marks the beginning of a new period in the Eastern Question. The objects of Russia were openly avowed, and ten years later England became alive to the aims of Russian ambition, and apprehensive of the results of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire. Europe was henceforward compelled to interest itself in the Eastern Question, and to endeavour to decide whether the continued presence of the Turks in Europe was a lesser evil than the aggrandisement of Russia.

The history of northern, eastern, and south-eastern Europe is thus of vast importance during the eighteenth century, and the vicissitudes of the various nations inhabiting these portions of Europe have far-reaching effects upon the balance of power.

The decline of Turkey, Poland, and Sweden — countries which had played considerable parts in the seventeenth century — gave an opportunity for the rise of younger nations with greater natural advantages, or provided with a form of government more suitable for an age which was characterised by the growth of large states and the establishment of so-called benevolent despotisms.

The rise of Russia constitutes, with that of Prussia, one of the most remarkable features of the history of northern and eastern Europe in the eighteenth century. In 1721, at the

Peace of Nystad, she became the leading Baltic power, and a standing menace to the independence of Sweden; with the Treaty of Carlowitz (1699), and the campaign of the Pruth in 1711, the Eastern Question may be said to have been opened; with the outbreak of the Polish Succession War in 1733 the idea of a partition of Poland begins to take definite shape.

**Sweden and France in 1715.**

In December 1715 Charles XII. returned to Stockholm after an absence of sixteen years, and the final struggle between Sweden and the Northern League, of which Russia was a leading member, seriously began.

The year 1715 found France at peace with her neighbours, but torn by religious divisions and with her provinces permanently impoverished. The Treaty of Utrecht had left her with her frontiers strengthened and her position secure. She had brought the art of war to a high pitch of perfection, and her diplomatic service was the best in Europe. She had dissevered the Empire from Spain; she had advanced her own boundaries, and still held Strasburg and Alsace. She had placed her own candidate on the Spanish throne, and she had emerged from the late war with her reputation still high and her alliance still courted. Though probably incapable of successful colonisation, and torn by internal divisions, France could boast of a unity and a concentration of resources which enabled her, till the close of the Seven Years' War, to exercise very great influence in Europe, and at times to inspire alarm by her apparently successful efforts in the direction of universal empire.

# CHAPTER II

## ALBERONI AND DUBOIS

### 1715–1723

The Regency — The Regent Orleans — The Religious Controversy — The Reaction in Home Affairs — The *Parlement* of Paris — The Struggle between the Jesuits and Jansenists — Law and the Finances — His Economic Views — The Mississippi Scheme — Close of the Reaction in Home Affairs — Dubois and French Foreign Policy — Charles VI. and Spain — Alberoni's Reforms — His Foreign Policy — George I. — Hanover — The Treaty of Westminster and The Triple Alliance — George I.'s Policy — Dubois at The Hague and in Hanover — The Northern War — The Triple Alliance — The Invasion of Sardinia — Its Justification — Triumph of Dubois — Alberoni's Difficulties — The Quadruple Alliance — Fall of Alberoni — Spain joins the Quadruple Alliance — Marriage Alliances between France and Spain — Charles XII. and his Foes — Peter the Great and the League — His Visit to Paris — The Conference of Åland — Death of Charles XII. — Revolution in Sweden — Treaties between Sweden and the Members of the League — The Treaty of Nystad — Success of the Policy of Stanhope and Dubois — Alberoni, Goertz, and Dubois.

THE death of Louis XIV. was an event of importance to Europe no less than to France. Louis XV. was not expected to live, and in consequence the relations of France and Spain were at once modified. Philip V. was set upon securing the French crown, and regarded Orleans with unconcealed dislike. But Spain was far from ready to take any hostile action, and Orleans was left to carry on the government of France on principles diametrically opposed to those adopted by Louis XIV. France had emerged from the Spanish Succession War exhausted but intact. The great need of the country was peace, and a change in the character of the

**The Regency.**

governmental system was earnestly desired. The Regency of Orleans endeavoured to satisfy the country on both these points.

The nephew of Louis XIV. and first prince of the blood, Philip, Duke of Orleans, had been a prominent factor in French politics during the Spanish Succession War. He had been accused of poisoning the Dukes of Burgundy, Berry, and Brittany, and of aiming at the Spanish throne. Louis XIV. disliked him; and though he had shown bravery and ability as a general during the late war, with the French nation he was never popular. At the beginning of 1715 Louis had signed a will making Orleans regent, but giving the real power to a Council of Regency composed of fifteen supporters of the old *régime*, including Maine, Toulouse, Villeroy, Voysin, Tallard, and Pontchartrain. To the Duke of Maine, son of Madame de Montespan, was given the guardianship of the Dauphin, with the charge of the *Maison du Roi*, or royal guards; to Villeroy was intrusted the execution of the arrangements. The history of the attempts of Henry IV. and Louis XIII. to bind their successors might have warned Louis XIV. that his efforts would be futile. The whole country since the close of the war had impatiently desired a complete change from the ideas of the later years of Louis XIV.'s reign; and Orleans found himself the centre of the aspirations of a generation weary of the narrowness and rigidity of a court dominated by Jesuits, and ready to make the Regency as notorious as the English restoration of 1660 by the wild excesses which marked its establishment.

Two days after the death of Louis XIV. the *Parlement* of Paris revoked the king's will and declared Orleans Regent with full powers. Freed from the restraint which Louis had endeavoured to impose upon his actions, Orleans at once recast the government and formed an administration on aristocratic lines. He nominated the members of the Regency Council, who were, in addition to himself, the Dukes of Bourbon and Maine, the Count of Toulouse, Chancellor d'Aguesseau, Saint-Simon, the Marshals Villeroy, Harcourt, and Bezons, and the

Bishop of Troyes; and following the principles ascribed to Fénelon and the late Duke of Burgundy, he appointed, with the full approval of Saint-Simon, seven Councils: Finance, Foreign Affairs, War, the Navy, Conscience, Commerce, and Home Affairs — each composed of ten persons mainly selected from the ranks of the noblesse. In other respects Orleans showed himself equally willing and anxious to shake himself clear from the traditions of the late *régime*. He was himself remarkably intelligent; in the liberality of his views he belonged essentially to the eighteenth century; he was interested in the new ideas, and open to new influences; he had scientific instincts, and was especially devoted to the study of chemistry, besides being an accomplished musician and painter. He at once broke with the principles and system of the late reign: and in considering the possibility of the recall of the Protestants, of the suppression of the Jesuits, and of the Convocation of the States-General, he showed himself at least alive to the real needs of France. But his indolence, frivolity, and vicious life, in which he had not been checked by his tutor the Abbé Dubois, made him indifferent to reforms for their own sake, and hindered the realisation of his well-meant projects, and he left to his successors the duty of carrying out his liberal programme. In forming an estimate of the government of the Regency, the difficulties experienced by Orleans must always be borne in mind. Till 1718 he was not a free agent. His home policy was hampered by the jealousies and intrigues of the nobles, by the quarrels of the Jesuits and Jansenists, and by the obstinacy of the *Parlement* of Paris; while his foreign policy was vigorously attacked by all the ministers, headed by d'Huxelles and Torcy, who were supported in France by public opinion, and elsewhere by Alberoni, the Pope, and Philip v.

**The Regent.**

Not the least of the difficulties which met Orleans at the outset was to be found in the hostile relations subsisting between the Jesuits and Jansenists. The late king had left France torn by a religious conflict, which was not appeased till the outbreak of the

**The Religious Controversy in France.**

Revolution. From a mistaken sense of duty, Louis XIV. had endeavoured shortly before his death to force upon France absolute uniformity in religious matters.

In 1709 Port Royal, the home of the Jansenists, was destroyed, and in 1713 the publication of the Bull Unigenitus astonished and alarmed all moderate men. By this Bull a hundred and one propositions in a work by the Jansenist Quesnel — entitled, *Moral Reflections upon the New Testament* — were condemned. The volume written in 1671 had been very generally read, and a new edition published in 1699, and dedicated to the Cardinal de Noailles, the Archbishop of Paris, was regarded with favour by Père la Chaise, Louis' confessor, and even received praise from Clement XI. himself. But Le Tellier determined to use the book as a ground for a general attack on all who were not Jesuits. The Jesuit Society had met with reverses in China, and Le Tellier hated both De Noailles and the Jansenists. By uniting the Pope and the society closely together in a crusade against Quesnel's book, he would be satisfying his personal feelings of hate while raising the reputation of his own Order. It was only after repeated efforts that the weak and undecided Pope could be persuaded to launch the Bull Unigenitus — which was destined to plunge France into a struggle which had hardly died out in 1789. Forty French bishops accepted the Bull, while De Noailles and fourteen others refused; and this division of opinion was reproduced in all classes of French society, lay and ecclesiastical. Louis XIV. having with difficulty compelled the *Parlement* of Paris to register the Bull, proceeded to order the suppression not only of the *Moral Reflections*, but of all books written in its defence. But in this matter the *Grand Monarque* found that his authority was by no means accepted. Neither imprisonment nor banishment could restrain the fierce opposition — the first encountered since the end of the Fronde — to all his attempts to repress discussion. The Regent, with his easy-going nature and lax principles, had no hesitation in undoing his predecessor's work, and the first half of the Regency saw a thorough reaction. The Court was transferred

to Paris, the Jansenist prisoners were released, the Cardinal de Noailles, leader of the opposition to the Bull Unigenitus, was placed at the head of the Council of Conscience, into which the Abbé Pucelle, a well-known Jansenist, was introduced, and Père le Tellier was driven into exile. The recall of the Huguenots was mooted, while the suppression of the Jesuits, and even the summoning of the States-General, was discussed in the secret councils of the Regent. The finances were taken in hand; literature, freed from the numbing influence of the last reign, showed signs of revival; it seemed as if an honest attempt was to be made to grapple with the difficulties of the situation as left by Louis XIV. Even the *Parlement* of Paris recovered its rights of registration and remonstrance.[1]

**The Reaction.**

The *Parlement* of Paris, and the twelve provincial *Parlements*, were law courts, and in no sense legislative or representative assemblies. They were judicial and magisterial bodies, High Courts of Justice, consisting of the most eminent lawyers nominated by the Crown. Of these the *Parlement* of Paris was the most important, its members holding their offices, which were hereditary, by purchase. In addition to its judicial duties the *Parlement* of Paris claimed the right to exercise two functions of a political nature — the right of remonstrating against the edicts of the king, and the power of veto upon legislation. In ordinary times a royal edict was sent to the *Parlement*, as being the highest court of the realm for registration; but the *Parlement*, not content with merely performing its duty, claimed the right of withholding or delaying its sanction. The French kings had never acquiesced in this claim, and at times annihilated the power of the *Parlement* by holding a *Lit de Justice* and enforcing registration. During the greater part of Louis XIV.'s reign the *Parlement* was confined entirely to its judicial functions; but with the accession of Louis XV. it at once regained its full

**The Parlement of Paris.**

[1] *See* Aubertin, *L'Esprit Public au XVIII^me^ Siècle;* and Rocquain, *L'Esprit Révolutionnaire avant la Révolution.*

authority. Composed for the most part of men who belonged to the richest families in France, the members of the *Parlement* were enabled, owing to the permanent and hereditary character of their posts, to adopt a bold attitude, to act independently of the royal power. With the growth of industry and commerce the legal profession in France was growing in importance; and as no States-General was summoned, the *Parlement* was given an admirable opportunity of posing as the representative of public opinion in such questions as those connected with the Bull Unigenitus and the Jansenists. The *Parlement* wisely took up the popular cause, performed the useful function of giving expression to the general discontent, and throughout the century headed an open, direct, and serious opposition to the Crown. In 1718–20, in 1729–32, in 1752–56, in 1763–71, and in 1787–88 the *Parlement* is found stoutly contesting the policy of Louis XV. and his advisers. Some 40,000 persons were employed in the various Courts of Judicature which composed the *Parlement*, and formed a population distinct from the rest of the nation. Puffed up with self-importance, and renowned for its gravity, its severity, its formality, the narrowness of its views, and its pride, the Parliamentary society stood apart from all other classes — an isolated corporation which owed its temporary popularity to adventitious causes. Though at times acting as a constitutional check upon misgovernment, it was equally ready to enter upon a quarrel with the Crown on a question of etiquette; and having successfully opposed the numerous attempts at reform in the early years of Louis XVI.'s reign, met its well-deserved fate at the hands of the revolutionists.

**The Struggle between the Jesuits and Jansenists.**

At the outset of Orleans' government, however, no signs of opposition appeared. The nobles, the *Parlement* of Paris, the Jansenists, and the Philosophers, as yet but a small body, all had reason to support the Regency and to look for further and important changes. Into the arms of these sections, which had been regarded during the later years of Louis' reign with suspicion, Orleans

threw himself. He had not only reversed the system of his predecessors; he had practically recognised the right of the nation to fill a vacancy to the throne in an edict which had for its primary object the exclusion of the bastard princes. He had thus deserted the old Bourbon principle that the state was the property of the king, and had advanced a novel and a popular theory.

The nation as a whole had eagerly welcomed the Regency, as marking the beginning of a new era. Orleans had become the representative of the reaction, and had by his acts expressed the national sentiment. But his well-meant attempts were not destined to meet with that success which he anticipated. The nobles, for the most part unaccustomed to administrative work, occupied themselves with intriguing against the Regent. The *Parlement* showed an almost less statesmanlike spirit, allowed itself to be involved in petty religious and political squabbles, and made no attempt to aid Orleans in his difficult task of governing France.

Nor did the religious parties show more capacity or moderation in their conduct.

Orleans had on becoming Regent imagined that religious peace could easily be restored, and made honest attempts to adopt a policy of conciliation. Though both the Jesuits and the Pope refused to hear of any compromise, their determination was shaken by the action of four Jansenist Bishops who, on March 5, 1717, appealed to a general council. These Bishops, De la Broue of Mirepoix, Soanen of Seney, Colbert of Montpellier, and Langle of Boulogne, were supported by the Faculty of Theology, and their well-drawn appeal afforded a rallying point to the widespread opposition to the Bull, and brought about negotiations between the Pope and Noailles. The consistent opposition of the Pope and Jesuits to the Regent, and their connection with the Cellamare conspiracy, weighed against Dubois' desire of a Cardinalate, and his influence in favour of the Jesuits. At length Orleans, wearied with the endless discussions and interminable disputes over

the Bull, ordered silence upon all parties. In 1720 a temporary agreement was come to, Noailles ordered the acceptance of a certain exposition of the Bull Unigenitus, and Dubois induced the *Parlement* of Paris to accept it. But the four Bishops, supported by the clergy and Paris, refused to accept the Bull; and a Council of Conscience, composed of Cardinals Dubois, Rohan, Bissy, and the future Cardinal Fleury, was unable to secure adhesion to the proposed accommodation. Seven Bishops forwarded to the new Pope Innocent XIII. an appeal to a general Council, with the only result that the French Government, under the influence of Dubois, threw all its influence on the side of the Pope, and numbers of Jansenists were evicted or imprisoned.

In endeavouring to give religious peace to the country the *Parlement* had supported the Regent so long as his efforts were directed against the Jesuits. But as soon as he endeavoured to relieve the lot of the Protestants, Orleans found himself opposed by the Jansenists no less than by the Jesuits, and by the whole force of public opinion in France. His own position was, moreover, by no means unassailable; for, owing to the suspicions directed against him during the latter years of Louis XIV.'s reign, he was far from being popular with the nation, and was even the object of hatred to many of the nobles.

In the early years of his rule, however, the difficulties in the way of carrying out his enlightened views did not appear on the surface, and so long as Philip V. did not place himself at the head of the opposition Orleans was secure.

During the first half of the Regency, when the reaction in both home and foreign policy proceeded apace, the two men who were mainly instrumental in carrying out the changes were Law and Dubois. John Law was intrusted with the reorganisation of the finances, while Dubois was allowed to reverse the foreign policy of France. For the success of the schemes of both Dubois and Law the support of the Regent was indispensable, and the triumph of their views

**Law and the Finances.**

— in the one case a short-lived one — is seen in the second half of the Regency, when the work of the first half was undone, and the reaction came to an end. Both men agreed in excluding the nobles from the control of affairs, in humiliating the *Parlement*, and generally in reviving the system of absolutism. The finances were, during the early years of the Regency, intrusted to the Duc de Noailles, whose first measures were the depreciation of the coinage, and the revision of the floating debt, by means of a Commission headed by the brothers Paris. The report of this Commission led to the appointment of a Chamber of Justice, known as the *Chambre Ardente*, to inquire into the conduct of the farmers of taxes. This chamber did not restore the public confidence, and was dissolved in 1717, an edict being issued to reassure the farmers of taxes in the future. Noailles' attempts to diminish expenditure and to enforce rigid economy were equally doomed to failure. Though he reduced the floating debt and the rate of interest, and was allowed to cut down the expenses of the Navy, he found himself unable to touch the Court expenditure. France required twenty years of peace and retrenchment under an administration like that of Walpole.

In 1718 D'Argenson was given the presidency of the Financial Council, but John Law was the real manager of the finances. The year 1718 in various ways marks the close of the reaction; for it was on August 26 of that year that the *Parlement*, having opposed Law's schemes, having seized the control of the finances, and having, moreover, for several months suspended the administration of justice, was punished by Orleans, who, supported by Dubois, D'Argenson, Saint-Simon, and Bourbon, declared his intentions to the Council of Regency, held a *Lit de Justice*, and enforced the registration of an edict forbidding the magistrates to meddle with finances or with the administration. It was, too, on September 24, of the same year that the Councils of the Nobles were dissolved, and the old system of a single minister for each department was restored. In 1720 the *Parlement* was exiled, the Jansenists,

who had never been active supporters of the Regent, were again attacked, and the Jesuits were favoured.

In thus bringing to an end the reaction of the early years of the Regency John Law played an important part. In spite of the collapse of his famous Mississippi scheme, and of the contempt which has been poured upon the financial policy of the Regency, John Law was no mere charlatan, nor was he indeed the master of the Government. Many of the acts attributed to him were carried out in spite of his objections. Law was a firm, if not fanatical, believer in the power of credit, and he was keenly alive to the value and use of paper money. The wealth of England and Holland was in his opinion simply the result of the good credit enjoyed by both these countries; and he saw no reason why France, with all its natural advantages, should not, by a proper use of credit, extricate herself from her financial embarrassments. He fully comprehended that credit must rest on confidence, and that paper money issued without proper guarantees would fail; but in his anxiety to increase the supply of money so as to stimulate commerce, to lower the high rate of interest, and generally to relieve the state of a large burden of its debt, he overlooked some elementary economical truths. Law was a Socialist, that is to say, he worked to place the whole direction of finance and commerce under the direction of the state. The Government was to take in hand the management of a huge national bank and of a great commercial company. By these means the state would be able not only to extinguish the national debt, but even to dispense with taxes. Law never seems to have realised how impossible it was for that confidence, the existence of which was absolutely necessary for the success of his scheme, to subsist under the government of the Regency. Credit must rest on confidence, which is itself a very slow-growing plant, and which amid the extravagance and corruption of Orleans' Court could not be expected to thrive. Moreover, being under the influence of the Mississippi system, Law's views on the value of a large currency were full of errors, while his belief in

**His Economic Views.**

the advantages to be derived from the state acting as bankers was contrary to all experience. Ignoring agriculture and manufactures, he looked mainly to commerce as a source of wealth, and believed that the actual exchange of commodities was far more important than the production of wealth. Many of his theories undoubtedly contained valuable truths, but the general public seized upon those points which were fallacious and Utopian, such as the scheme for paying off the national debt and for abolishing taxes. The collapse of his projects was due not so much to the existence of fallacies in his theories as to the rotten state of the French Government and to the over-confidence of the ignorant multitude.

**The Mississippi Scheme.**

In 1716 Law obtained leave to establish a private bank in imitation of the Bank of England; and in spite of the restrictions imposed, it proved very successful, and secured the patronage of the Government. In 1717 he was allowed to start his famous 'Compagnie de l'Occident,' better known as the Mississippi Company, with its capital of two hundred thousand shares of five hundred *livres* each. His object was to unite all the existing trading concerns into one vast company, and to get control of the foreign markets. For a time he was enabled to carry out his aims. In 1717 the company secured the monopoly of commerce with Louisiana, and trade in beaver skins with Canada. In 1718 it undertook the tobacco monopoly and absorbed the Senegal Company, while in 1719 it bought up the East India Company. It thus gradually monopolised nearly all the trade of France. Meanwhile Law's bank, which was quite distinct from the company of the west, or the Great India Company as it was at last known, had become the state bank, which began at once to pour forth paper money, Law thinking that wealth could be increased by increasing the currency, and not realising that paper money must be redeemable.

Heedless of the teaching of experience, Law proceeded to undertake the most gigantic operations. He took up the funding of the national debt, and all coining, as well as the farming

of the taxes. To extend the use of paper money, an edict was issued in December 1718 ordering that, in Paris and other towns where the bank had branches, payment in silver should be limited to 600 francs, all larger sums to be paid in gold or notes.

The Company, which now monopolised the trade of France, in order to meet the expenses incident upon buying up all the non-trading companies, issued shares which were eagerly absorbed. In July 1718 the Company bought the control of the mint for five years, and the shares doubled in value. The Government then offered to the Company — (1) extension of its privileges for fifty years; (2) the right of farming all indirect taxes. In return the Company lent the Government 1500 millions at 3 per cent. to pay off the funded debt. The Government creditors were forced to take their payment in shares at the current price (the shares being ten times their original value). Though this proved beneficial to the state it was ruinous to private speculators. A rage for speculation followed, and the original shareholders made enormous fortunes. In 1719 Law was the most courted man in France. But a reaction soon followed the speculative craze, and in the collapse which took place in 1721 he was ruined and forced to leave the country.

**Close of the Reaction in Home Affairs.**

Thus the reaction in home affairs had not proved successful. The Councils of the Nobles had not shown any aptitude for business, and in 1718 had been dissolved; the *Parlement* of Paris had rapidly fallen into disfavour with the Regent on account of its opposition to Law, and had been exiled to Pontoise in 1720. The Jansenists were again persecuted, and while Dubois was able to secure the assent of the *Parlement* of Paris to a temporary and unsatisfactory compromise, he himself definitely supported the Jesuits.

In appearance the Government at the close of Orleans' regency had returned to the principles and methods of the previous reign. The Bull Unigenitus had been registered;

the *Parlement* of Paris had lost its right of remonstrance. The changes effected by the Regent had been superficial. Though the liberalism of the time was concentrated in Orleans, there was no element of popular life in the reaction. But though the reaction may at first sight be described as a 'temporary oscillation from monarchy to aristocracy,' it will be found on closer examination that, in spite of its follies, recklessness, and apparent retrograde tendencies in its later years, the regency of Orleans was not without valuable results. The ancient monarchical system had been shaken, and the Regent had definitely broken with the ideas of Louis XIV.'s reign. Henceforward a spirit of unrest and inquiry pervades all ranks of French society, new doctrines are openly discussed, philosophy becomes popular. The eight years of Orleans' ministry had opened a new world to Frenchmen.[1]

**Dubois and the Foreign Policy of the Regency.**

But though the reaction in home affairs seemed to have come to a disastrous conclusion with the collapse of Law's schemes and the disappearance of Law himself, the Regent could congratulate himself on the success of his foreign policy, which, directed by the Abbé Dubois, established a new system based upon the Triple Alliance of 1717.

The son of an apothecary, Dubois was born in 1656 at Brive-la-Gaillarde, and took the tonsure at the age of thirteen, being known as the Little Abbé. In 1672 he began to study philosophy and theology in Paris, and in 1683 was appointed to assist his friend M. de Saint-Laurent in the education of the Duke of Chartres. On the death of Saint-Laurent in 1687 he became the duke's tutor, and was with him in the campaigns of the war of the League of Augsburg. In 1698 he accompanied Tallard to London and made the acquaintance of James Stanhope. In 1701 the Duke of Chartres, having become Duke of Orleans, appointed Dubois his secretary. During the Spanish Succession War, the Abbé gave ample testimony of his ability and trustworthiness. Once only in 1713 were his enemies

[1] *See* Michelet, *Histoire de la Régence.*

able to secure his temporary retirement; but in 1714, after the deaths of the Dukes of Burgundy, Brittany, and Berry, Orleans recalled him to the Palais Royal, and in 1715, on the death of Louis XIV., his influence over his former pupil was as great as ever. Hated by Saint-Simon, and regarded with the utmost jealousy, if not detestation, by the nobles, Dubois has suffered unduly at the hands of historians. Though deficient in character, and a far from admirable example of a Catholic priest, Dubois' influence over the Regent was not necessarily bad; he had no hand in the death of any of the royal family, he was not bought by England. Without being possessed of any special political genius, and always ready to carry out the views of his master, Philip of Orleans, Dubois remains an eminent Frenchman who showed a remarkable aptitude for foreign affairs. And it is beyond question that the policy, the success of which he aided to assure, proved of the greatest advantage to France.[1]

On succeeding to the supreme power, Orleans had preserved a neutral attitude during the Jacobite rising in 1715. But he was accused in England of having connived at James Edward's attempt, he was on bad terms with the Court of Vienna, his power was threatened at home by the faction of the Duke of Maine, and he was regarded with feelings of undisguised hostility at Madrid. The success of the Whigs impelled him to seek, in conjunction with England, efficacious means to preserve the Peace of Utrecht, to prevent its terms from being rashly and hastily revised or even modified, and thus to secure his own position at the head of the French Government in the teeth of the opposition of Philip V. and his partisans within France.

In 1715 there seemed every possibility of a renewal of the European struggle. The Emperor had never recognised the title of Philip V. to the Spanish crown, and he had formed ambitious schemes for the further extension of his territory in Italy, which he regarded as his

**Charles VI. and Spain.**

[1] Wiessener, *Le Régent, l'Abbé Dubois, et les Anglais*, vol. i. chap. xiv.

own by right; he had assigned to his son the title of Prince of the Asturias; he had established in Vienna a Spanish Council formed of Spanish exiles; at his Court the King of Spain was known as the Duke of Anjou. Though the Treaty of Utrecht had assigned him, in addition to the Low Countries, the Milanese, the Tuscan Presidencies, with Mantua, Naples, and Sardinia, he remained dissatisfied. He was furious at the recognition of Victor Amadeus II. of Savoy as heir to the Spanish throne in default of heirs to the House of Bourbon, and he was determined to secure Sicily by giving Victor Amadeus Sardinia in exchange.

He was now involved in a war with the Turks, and it was not till two years later that he was able to direct his undivided attention to his interests in the west and south. **Alberoni's Reforms.** To Philip V. and his queen, the death of Louis XIV., followed by the quiet assumption of the Regency by Orleans, came as a staggering blow to all their hopes. French influence in Madrid, already on the wane, rapidly declined; Giudice gave way to the energetic Alberoni. Before the end of 1715 this ambitious son of an Italian gardener, born in 1664, was given the real authority in the state. He became independent of the departmental secretaries, and was allowed to begin valuable administrative reforms. The financial department was reorganised, large reductions made, and the revenue increased. Agriculture and manufacture were encouraged; Spanish commerce revived; and most of the reforms inaugurated by Orri were continued and expanded. The army was reorganised, but the greatest attention was paid to the navy, for Alberoni was convinced that Spain should be a naval and not a military power. In his belief in the value of Spain's natural resources, the Spanish minister showed remarkable acuteness. The decline of Spain was due, in his opinion, to maladministration and mismanagement caused by the growth of an oligarchical form of government, which, by the establishment of a multiplicity of useless councils, had well-nigh ruined the empire. With the encouragement of agriculture, the foundation of

vigorous colonies, and the reorganisation of the Spanish marine, Alberoni might with reason look forward to a revival which should restore his adopted country to its former prosperity. Under Alberoni's administration Spain advanced with rapid strides. The population ceased to decline, and the successful initiation of domestic reforms attested at once the vitality of Spain as well as Alberoni's capacity for government.

Not only was Alberoni intrusted with the work of internal reorganisation, he was also given the direction of foreign affairs. But throughout his short and brilliant career his plans were continually hampered by the personal predilections of Philip and his queen, to whose will he was constantly obliged to defer, since he held office only by the royal favour. Though he recognised that friendship with France was impossible so long as Philip persisted in aspiring to the Regency, Alberoni, during the period immediately following Louis XIV.'s death, avoided all hostile demonstrations against Orleans' government, and turned his attention to resisting the imperial encroachments in Italy, and to cultivating the friendship of England. In pursuing this policy he was sure of the support of Elizabeth Farnese, whose Italian ambitions coincided with the general wish in Spain for a restoration of the Spanish influence in Italy. Charles VI. had already begun to negotiate secretly for the exchange of Sardinia for Sicily, and for the eventual succession to Tuscany, Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla. In resisting these encroachments, Alberoni was no rash breaker of the Peace of Utrecht on behalf of Elizabeth's dynastic aspirations; he was, on the contrary, taking all justifiable means to defend and preserve the settlement of Utrecht and Rastadt from the aggressive action of the Emperor. The defence of Italy against the imperial attack was a task of enormous import to the whole of Europe not less than to Spain. The Turkish war, which for the moment occupied the attention of the Imperialists, might at any time lead to the occupation of Italy by Austrian troops, on the pretence that the peninsula was liable to an invasion by the Porte.

**His Foreign Policy.**

But until the King of Sicily and the Italian princes had decided to join with Spain in defending the nascent liberties of Italy, Alberoni felt that active Spanish intervention was inadvisable. Not yet supreme in Madrid, he was obliged to defer to Philip's unconquerable hostility to the Regent Orleans, though he found it impossible to encourage the hopes of the king with regard to the French crown. For success in Italy, however, an alliance with either France or England was a necessity, and, supported by Elizabeth and by Philip, who hoped to isolate Orleans, Alberoni determined to approach England and assure himself of her friendship. In December 1715 a commercial treaty was concluded between the two countries, and the English were assured of the trading privileges granted them at Utrecht; in 1716 the Assiento Treaty was finally concluded, the close union between France and Spain, the aim of Louis XIV., was broken, and the Queen of Spain could look forward to seeing her children in Italian principalities. But Alberoni's hopes of a close English alliance were destined to be disappointed. Stanhope, indeed, agreed with the Spanish minister that the encroachments of the Emperor in Italy necessitated fresh safeguards, but he trusted by means of negotiations to check the imperial aggressiveness without having recourse to arms. As a matter of fact neither England nor Holland were willing to undertake any action or to adopt an attitude hostile either to the Emperor or to the French Regent.

The Hanoverian interests of George I., and his hope of permanently securing Bremen and Verden out of the northern conflagration, rendered a breach with the Emperor well-nigh impossible, while the necessity of keeping the Pretender at a distance gave fresh force to the advances already made by Dubois, and a new importance to a secret understanding already arrived at between George I. and Orleans.[1]

By a treaty made with Denmark on May 17, 1715, George had received Bremen and Verden, which Frederick IV. had

[1] Wiessener, *Le Régent, l'Abbé Dubois, et les Anglais*, vol. i. chap. i.

seized. In order to obtain the imperial sanction, negotiations were opened with Charles VI., and until these negotiations came to a satisfactory conclusion the Hanoverian government was more anxious for an imperial than a French alliance.

**Treaty of George I. with Denmark.**

On May 25, 1716, the Treaty of Westminster was concluded between England and the Emperor for the defence of their existing possessions and of those which might be acquired by mutual consent; and in November a treaty was signed between England and France which, with the adhesion of Holland on January the 4th, 1717, became the celebrated Triple Alliance. Various circumstances had contributed to bring about this famous treaty between England and France, which established a political system directly at variance with that pursued by Louis XIV. since 1688. The English and French Governments were both threatened by rival pretenders, and both countries, exhausted by the late war, desired a period of peace. The resumption of war would interfere with trade, and, moreover, would afford the opponents of the ruling dynasties an opportunity of raising their heads. The safety of George I.'s throne depended on the expulsion of James Edward from France, while Orleans' position could only be rendered secure by decisive measures against Philip V. The Whig ministers were as much interested in the stability of Orleans in Paris as they were in the firm establishment of George I. on the English throne.

**The Causes of the Treaty of Westminster, May, 1716; the Triple Alliance, Jan. 4, 1717.**

If Philip V. succeeded in ousting Orleans, the interests of France and Spain would be closely united, and the fears of the Whig statesmen of Queen Anne's reign realised. Even if Orleans succeeded unaided in holding his position against the machinations of his opponents in France, and the intrigues of the Spanish Court, it was probable that he might be driven to make an alliance with Peter the Great, the mere possibility of which was repugnant to George I., whose eyes were as usual fixed upon his northern possessions. Literary relations, which

were to lead to important results in France, had already been opened between the two countries, and the revolution in foreign policy, so far as England was concerned, was effected quietly and with little difficulty. In France, though the opposition of d'Huxelles, the President of the Council of Foreign Affairs, was outspoken, the new departure in foreign policy was accepted, though not without some murmuring.

Dubois' ready and astute mind had early in 1716 conceived this plan of an alliance between England and France as the best means of thwarting Philip v. and his ministers. The dynastic interests of Orleans were at stake. France, of all countries in Europe, needed peace, which the accession of Philip to the French throne would terminate. Though the opponents of the Regency then, and many French historical writers since, have condemned Dubois' policy as revolutionary and antagonistic to the true interests of France, the wily minister of the Regent might plead, not only that he was merely continuing the policy of Richelieu and Mazarin, but that the circumstances of the time fully justified the English alliance, which was, in fact, maintained by his successors, the Duke of Bourbon, and Fleury. Dubois realised how important to England was the continuance of the Regent in power. The accession of Philip to the French throne would bring on a European war, while a union between England and France would checkmate both the Spanish King and the English Pretender. All danger of a close connection between Orleans and Peter the Great would be removed, the fears of George I. would be allayed, and the government of the Regent rendered more stable.

**Dubois' Policy.**

But it was only after the exercise of a considerable amount of tact on the part of Dubois that George I., still indignant at the equivocal conduct of Orleans during the Jacobite rising, could be induced to consider seriously the prospect of a French alliance. And had not northern complications intervened, even the skill of the French agents might have proved unavailing to effect a durable arrangement be-

**George I.'s Policy.**

tween the two countries. The essence of George's foreign policy was friendship with Holland and Austria, and his views were in strict accordance with those of the Whig party, in whose eyes a close union with Holland, and the re-establishment of friendly relations with Austria, were essential for the safety of the Hanoverian succession.

But a return to the system of the Grand Alliance was rendered difficult, if not impossible, owing to the discontent felt by the Court of Vienna at the Treaty of Utrecht, and the proposed Barrier Treaty.

George I.'s attempt, on his accession to the English throne, to conciliate the Emperor, had only provoked an outburst of wrath at the conditions attached to the Austrian possession of the Low Countries, and already the possibility of an exchange of Bavaria for the distant Belgian provinces was hinted at in Vienna. The actual conclusion of the Barrier Treaty on November 15, 1715, so far from pacifying the Austrian Court, only increased its hostile attitude towards the Dutch, which was fully reciprocated by the Government of the Hague, and which augured ill for the renewal of the system of the Grand Alliance. Numerous incidents tended to still further intensify the ill-feeling between the Hague and Vienna, which, while it rendered George I.'s attempts at a renewal of friendly relations between England, Holland, and Austria for a time hopeless, offered an admirable opportunity for Châteauneuf, the French envoy at the Hague, to make a not unsuccessful effort to regain for France her influence in Europe.

Louis XIV. had bequeathed to his successor a diplomatic service far superior to that of any European country, as well as traditions of foreign policy which have varied but slightly during the many vicissitudes through which France has passed since his days. The names of Campredon, Villeneuve, and Vergennes are sufficient to show that the diplomatists of Louis XV.'s reign were not inferior to the Gremonvilles, the Barrillons, and the Harcourts of the previous century. In Châteauneuf Orleans found a

**Dubois at the Hague and in Hanover.**

man who was capable of taking advantage of the divisions existing between the Dutch and the Austrians, and of forming a French party at the Hague.

Irritated by the dilatoriness of the Dutch in acceding to his views of a Triple Alliance between England, Holland, and Austria, and suspicious of the French intrigues, George hastily concluded the Treaty of Westminster with Austria on May 25, 1716, and on July 20, accompanied by Stanhope, he started on his journey for Hanover. Orleans had by this time recognised that no alliance with England was possible, so long as the Pretender could find a refuge in France. His correspondence with the English ministers having proved resultless, he decided to send Dubois, now Archbishop of Sens, and a councillor of state, to meet Stanhope at the Hague. On July 21 Dubois had his first secret meeting with the English minister, and two days later he departed for Paris, where on the 31st, he gave the Regent an account of his interview. The first step had been taken in a revolution which, like that of 1756, was to give Europe for some thirty years a new political system. On August 10 Dubois was sent to Hanover to resume his negotiations, which, though hopeful, had not as yet, owing to George I.'s deep-rooted suspicions of the Regent's Jacobite leanings, resulted in any definite propositions. Before his arrival, however, on August 19, a complete change had been effected in the attitude of the English king, who, fearful of the consequences to Hanover of the threatened occupation of Mecklenburg by the Russians, had suddenly realised the possibility of an alliance between the Tsar and the Regent.

The contest round the Baltic had developed in a manner little anticipated by the opponents of Charles XII. Wismar had fallen in April 1716, and the Russian troops, already the objects of suspicion to their Hanoverian allies, had encamped in Mecklenburg. In June a convention, signed between the Tsar and Frederick IV. of Denmark, was followed by a quarrel between the contracting parties, and by the retirement of the Russian troops from the neighbourhood

**The Struggle in the North.**

of Copenhagen to Mecklenburg. The continued presence of the Russian forces in or near Mecklenburg was disquieting to George, and extremely distasteful to Bernsdorf and the other Hanoverian ministers. A coolness sprang up between the English king and the Tsar, and the former, haunted by the prospect of a Franco-Russian understanding, saw in a French alliance the only means of combating the new danger to Hanover. The desire to secure Bremen and Verden had led to the retention of the Austrian connection; anxiety for the safety of his German possessions now made George an eager advocate of an alliance with France.

**The Triple Alliance, Jan. 4, 1717.**

The suspicious movements of the Russians in Denmark and Mecklenburg, the continued activity of the Jacobites in England, the possibility of a league between the Tsar and the Regent, directed at once against his kingdom and his electorate, had thus, by the time of Dubois' arrival in Hanover, worked such a change in George's feelings, that he not only desired a prompt reconciliation with Orleans, but ordered Stanhope to agree to a treaty with France. A preliminary convention was signed at Hanover on October 9 by Stanhope and Dubois; and on November 28, Lord Cadogan and Dubois signed at the Hague a defensive alliance between France and England, which was accepted by Holland on January 4, 1717. The treaty consisted of eight articles. France undertook to dismantle Dunkirk, to destroy the works of Mardyck, to expel the Pretender from Avignon, and not to allow him to return to French territory. All three Powers engaged to carry out in its main features the Treaty of Utrecht, especially those articles referring to the Protestant succession in England and the separation of the crowns of France and Spain. George I. was allowed to retain the title of King of ~~France~~, while Louis XV. was termed Most Christian King.

Almost simultaneously with the return of George I. to England, at the end of January 1717, the famous conspiracy of Goertz, Charles XII.'s ambassador in Holland, was discovered,

and the arrest of Gyllenborg, the Swedish envoy in London, confirmed the English king in his suspicions of the danger to his dynasty from the northern Powers, and more than ever justified the wisdom of establishing close relations between England and France.

The alliance between England and France may be termed a dynastic one, but dynastic and national interests in both countries were for the time inseparable. To the Whig Government the Triple Alliance meant the checkmating of the Pretender and the protection of the Hanover electorate. The establishment of George I. on the English throne was rendered more secure, and with it the fortunes of the Whig party. To Orleans the Triple Alliance came at an opportune moment, and dealt not only a telling blow at the schemes of his numerous enemies at home, but also upset the plans of his opponents abroad.

**Its Importance.**

While the individual interests of George and Orleans were furthered, their respective countries benefited in no less degree from their alliance. The Peace of Utrecht was definitely accepted, and the new order of succession in England and France was recognised. To France the alliance brought enormous advantages. After Louis XIV.'s death she remained exhausted and isolated, and in danger, owing to the accession of the Elector of Hanover to the English throne, of being confronted by a revival of the Grand Alliance. Aided by the skill of Dubois and Châteauneuf, and by the events in the north, the Regent had succeeded in securing for France valuable alliances, and in establishing a new political system, which was in itself the best guarantee to Europe of the preservation of peace. His success was in no small measure due to the skill of Dubois, who had, by anticipating the policy of Talleyrand in 1815, rescued France from a dangerous position of isolation, and given her an influential voice in the Councils of Europe. It was seen that France had found in Dubois a statesman, and the skill with which he guided French policy to the hour of his death fully justified the confidence imposed

in him by Orleans, and explains the hostility with which his incapable aristocratic contemporaries regarded him, and which, like the hatred felt by Whig historians for Bolingbroke, has till the present day been perpetuated by numerous writers on the period. In his diplomatic labours he had been vigorously supported by the Regent, and that in the teeth of an outspoken opposition of the greater part of the ministers and nobles.

Though the Treaty was never popular in France, and though the maintenance of friendly relations with England depended entirely upon the influence and goodwill of Orleans and Dubois, and later upon that of Fleury, the Triple Alliance gave the law to Europe, and largely contributed to maintain peace for sixteen years. Relations between English and French writers became closer, and both countries, especially the former, benefited from a period of rest from foreign wars. In spite of the popular dislike of the alliance in France, Dubois' first essay in foreign politics had proved an unqualified success.

At first the Emperor and the Court of Vienna were openly indignant at the conduct of England in allying with France. The Jacobites driven from France were warmly supported by the Emperor's mother, while Charles VI. himself allowed them to find a refuge in Belgium. To meet this difficulty, George I. offered, in consideration of the introduction into the Treaty of Westminster of a secret additional article, by which the Emperor bound himself not to give asylum to rebellious subjects, to pay to the imperial treasury the sum of 3,250,000 francs. This transaction was completed in January 1718, and the adhesion of the Emperor to the Triple Alliance was assured at a critical moment in the history of southern Europe.

**The Invasion of Sardinia by Spain.**

To Alberoni the news of the Triple Alliance came as a surprise. Dubois had won a great diplomatic victory, and had scored a point in his struggle against the influences of which Alberoni was the representative. But the Spanish minister went on quietly with his work of reorganisation, and only asked for a few years of peace in order

to perfect his preparations. He brought about a reconciliation between Spain and the Pope, Clement XI., who was equally interested with Philip and Elizabeth in checking the growth of the imperial power, and in opposing the Triple Alliance; and he was giving ample proof of his real capacity for government, when an event occurred which forced his hand, drove him into war, and brought his administration to a close. The arrest of the octogenarian Molinés, the newly appointed inquisitor-general, a pompous old fool according to Alberoni, by the Austrians in the Milanese territory at the end of May 1717, precipitated the rupture which it was the interest of the Austrians to provoke and that of Alberoni to avert. The insult to Spain was, however, one which Philip was unwilling to brook; the Duke of Parma was furious, and it was due more to the pressure which he brought to bear than to Philip's indignation that the war was prematurely begun.[1] In spite of Alberoni's hatred of the Germans, and his desire to expel them from Italy, his primary interest at that time was the reorganisation of Spanish commerce and finance, and he bitterly resented this disappointing interruption to his labours. At the end of July 1717, a Spanish fleet sailed from Barcelona, anchored before Cagliari on August 22, six days after Eugene's victory at Belgrade, and Sardinia was subdued by the end of November. The conquest of Sardinia by Spain has usually been regarded as a breach of the Treaty of Utrecht, and an act of aggression which justified the severest measures. But as a matter of fact, Spain had ample reasons for her occupation of Sardinia. It was well known that Charles VI. aimed at the acquisition of Sicily, and as early as September 1716 Stanhope had drawn up a scheme for the satisfaction of the Emperor, Philip V. and Victor Amadeus. By it the Emperor was to accept the Treaty of Utrecht, to guarantee the succession of the House of Orleans to the French throne in the case of the death of Louis XV. without heirs, and to recognise Philip V. as King of Spain. In return he was to receive Sicily in exchange

Its Justification.

[1] *See* Armstrong, *Elizabeth Farnese.*

for Sardinia, while Parma and Piacenza were eventually to be set aside for Don Carlos, the son of Elizabeth Farnese. This plan had been discussed at a secret conference at Hanover between Stanhope, Sutherland, M. de Pentenriedter, one of Charles VI.'s agents, and Saint-Saphorin, the English Minister at the Court of Vienna.

The terms of the Treaty of Westminster had contained allusions to the surrender of Sicily to the Emperor, while, in the negotiations for the Triple Alliance, its transference to Charles VI. had been openly considered. Had a sovereign and ministers of different temperaments to Philip and Alberoni ruled Spain, it is quite possible that the arrangements come to at the Second Treaty of Vienna in 1731 might have been anticipated in 1717. As it was, Spain contemptuously declined to accept Parma and Piacenza assigned to her by Stanhope, and was only acting within her rights in taking all possible steps to prevent the Austrian seizure of Sicily, and an unwarrantable modification in the arrangements of the settlement of Utrecht. But the English Government, which was bent on securing the Hanoverian succession, was as blind to the general advantage of Europe as it was alive to its own dynastic interests. It was willing to connive at the Emperor's aggrandisement in Italy, provided it could bring about peace in southern Europe, which would enable it to deal with the dangers arising in the north. By the Treaty of Utrecht Sicily was granted to the House of Savoy, to revert to Spain in the event of failure of the line of Victor Amadeus, and as long as it remained in the hands of the Savoy line its trade was practically in the hands of the English. The northern and dynastic interests of the Whig Government, however, seem to have blinded it to the real points at issue, and on the occupation of Sardinia by Spain, England at once called upon the members of the Triple Alliance to resist the Spanish aggression.[1]

The events in the Mediterranean placed the Regent Orleans in a difficult position. By no means popular in Paris, he was aware

[1] *Vide* Armstrong, *Elizabeth Farnese.*

that public opinion in France regarded Philip v. as the lawful heir to the French crown, and would resent any interference with Spanish action, especially when directed against the House of Hapsburg. He determined to send Dubois to London, and in October the French statesman had many conferences with the English ministers. The uncompromising tone adopted by Zinzendorf in Vienna and Pentenreidter in London in consequence of the victory of Belgrade only tended to draw Dubois and Stanhope together, and by the end of November a joint project for the settlement of the difficulties in southern Europe was drawn up and presented to the Austrian envoy. On November 29 Dubois arrived in Paris, and having strengthened the Regent in his loyalty to the English and Dutch alliance, returned on December 31 to London, where the details of the proposed plan of pacification were discussed. While the English were inclined to favour the Austrian claims in Italy, the Regent insisted that the eventual succession to Tuscany should, in addition to that of Parma and Piacenza, be reserved for the young Don Carlos. This point being gained, Dubois and Stanhope easily settled remaining difficulties, and the Emperor agreed to the proposals. Fresh difficulties, however, soon arose; a strong party in France, headed by the Marshal d'Huxelles, and supported by such men as Torcy, the influential superintendent of the posts, being opposed to any understanding with Austria, while the Regent himself, in the absence of Dubois, was, as usual, unable to come to any definite resolution. Lord Stanhope therefore decided to go to Paris in July to win over the Regent to his views. It was not till August 17, after the Quadruple Alliance had been finally agreed to, that Dubois returned to Paris, having arranged a treaty which was contrary to the wishes of the Spanish party at the French Court, and which confirmed the former policy already adopted in 1716. This fresh diplomatic success, while it added to the reputation already gained by Dubois, only intensified the hatred and increased the attacks of the French nobles headed by Maine,

**Dubois in London, 1717-18.**

**Triumph of Dubois, 1718.**

and of the ministers led by d'Huxelles, against a minister who represented both at home and abroad the principles to which they were steadily opposed. His return to France was followed by important governmental changes. The *Parlement* of Paris had arrogated to itself the right of interfering in the political and financial administration, and obstructed the course of justice. The whole system of Councils had proved a failure, and the Council of Foreign Affairs, presided over by d'Huxelles, had adopted a line of policy which was distinctly detrimental to the true interests of France. Encouraged by the return of Dubois triumphant in the matter of the Quadruple Alliance, Orleans, having forced his will upon the *Parlement* on August 26, determined to regain absolute power in the government, and to carry out certain necessary changes. D'Huxelles had opposed the policy of the Triple and Quadruple Alliances. It was natural that the control of foreign affairs should pass into the hands of those who had initiated and carried out the new foreign policy. No confidence could be unreservedly placed in Orleans so long as d'Huxelles was at the head of foreign affairs. On September 24, with the aid of Dubois, Orleans carried out a ministerial revolution. The Councils were suppressed, and replaced by Secretaries of State; Dubois was appointed Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and though his foreign policy was hampered and his influence over the Regent shared by his enemy Torcy, till the latter's disgrace in October 1721 he was enabled at any rate to carry out, in conjunction with Stanhope, the terms of the Quadruple Alliance.

**Alberoni's Difficulties.**

In spite then of the attempts of Alberoni to gain over the Regent by offering him the Austrian Netherlands, and in spite of a natural inclination, encouraged by d'Huxelles and the nobles generally, to support Philip v. against the Emperor, Orleans, after much hesitation, decided in March 1718, and after a period of uncertainty again in July, to remain loyal to the Triple Alliance, and to oppose the Spanish Bourbons by force of arms. In March he did indeed make a last effort at conciliation by sending to Spain

the Marquis de Nancré, but the attempt ended in failure. Victor Amadeus had already entered into negotiations with the Emperor, who had on April 4 accepted the Anglo-French proposals, and Spain was practically isolated. Nevertheless Alberoni acted with his accustomed vigour. Finding that Victor Amadeus would not admit the Spanish forces into Sicily, the Spanish fleet was ordered to occupy the island; in June 1718 the fleets left Barcelona, and on July 5 Sicily was taken.

Though the seizure of Sardinia can be defended, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the attack upon Sicily was a mistake. In making it, Spain was prematurely running counter to the aims of France, England, and Austria, and thereby courting certain failure. The responsibility for the Sicilian expedition must rest to a great extent on Alberoni. He had never believed in the possibility of a close union between England and France against Spain. He had convinced himself that English commercial interests would be opposed to the occupation of Sicily by Austria. Disillusion came with the united action of the members of the Triple Alliance, and the acceptance by Austria of its terms. Till his fall, however, vigour and determination characterised Spanish counsels.

Though without allies, Alberoni had endeavoured to occupy his enemies at home. For some months he had attempted to reconcile Peter the Great and Charles XII., and between them and Prussia to form a league which should attack the Emperor and George I. As early as 1714 he had appreciated the value of a Swedish alliance, and there is no doubt that in 1718, even after the disaster of Cape Passaro, he relied much upon a Swedish-Muscovite diversion in Germany and in England. The Åland conferences had been opened in May, and there was every reason to expect that the hostility felt by the Tsar and King of Sweden to England would be of signal advantage to Spain. He had negotiated with Ragotsky, Prince of Transylvania, and had good ground for hoping that the Turks would continue the war; he had incited Cellamare to support the anti-Orleanist party in France, and for a long time his emissaries

in Paris had intrigued against Dubois. He had stirred up the Protestants in Languedoc, the Cévennes, Poitou, and Dauphiné to rebellion, and had entered into communications with the discontented Bretons. The Pretender had been invited to Spain and an expedition organised against England.

All Alberoni's schemes failed. The attack on Sicily led to the conclusion of the Quadruple Alliance on August 2,— Stanhope's great work. By this Alliance, which consisted of several treaties — (1) A treaty between the Emperor and the King of Spain, (2) a treaty between the Emperor and the King of Sicily, (3) treaties between the Emperor and the Kings of England, France, and the States-General,— the terms of the Peace of Utrecht were modified. Charles VI. exchanged Sardinia for Sicily, and the King of Sicily received the title of King of Sardinia with the reversion to the crown of Spain. It was further arranged that Charles should renounce his claims on the Spanish monarchy and recognise Philip as the King of Spain. With regard to the succession to the Italian Duchies of Parma, Piacenza, and Tuscany, the claims of Elizabeth Farnese were recognised. The Peace of Passarowitz had already been made (July 1718), and Austrian troops poured into Italy, prepared to drive the Spaniards from Sicily. On August 11, the overthrow of the Spanish fleet by Admiral Byng off Cape Passaro attested the complete triumph of the Quadruple Alliance, and the success of the policy of Stanhope and Dubois.

**The Quadruple Alliance, 1718.**

Earnest efforts had been made by the English Government to induce Spain to agree to the Quadruple Alliance. Stanhope himself went to Spain in August, arriving at Madrid on the 12th, but though he offered to restore Gibraltar he was no more successful than Nancré had been in inducing Philip v. and Alberoni to agree to his pacific views. On August 27, he left the Spanish capital; Nancré followed his example on November 3, and Spain continued her struggle against the allied Powers.

All hope, however, of a diversion from the north in favour

of Spain disappeared with the death of Charles XII. in December, followed by the overthrow of Goertz and the outbreak of hostilities between Sweden and Russia. In France the conspiracy of Cellamare, the existence of which had long been known to Dubois, was suppressed in December, Cellamare being arrested, like Gyllenborg the preceding year; the rising in Brittany had failed; and the only results of the discovery of the plot were that Spanish policy was discredited, the opposition of Clement XI. and the Jesuits, who encouraged the conspirators, to the French Government, was laid bare, the position of the Regent was strengthened, and his opposition to Spain supported even by Torcy. The Duke and Duchess of Maine, the Duke of Richelieu, the Cardinals Polignac and Rohan, and the Marquis of Pompadour were arrested, and either imprisoned or exiled; four of the Breton leaders were executed, and on January 9, 1719, after long-continued hesitation, France declared war on Spain. England, threatened by a new Jacobite invasion from the coasts of Spain, had already on December 28, 1718, declared war. Spain could make little resistance against the combined attack. A French army crossed the frontier in March 1719, and besieged Fuentarabia, while an English squadron sacked several towns and damaged the Spanish shipping. The Jacobite expedition had ended in failure, and before the close of the autumn the Austrian conquest of Sicily was assured.

**France and England at War with Spain.**

Alberoni had recognised that with the death of Charles XII. all hopes of success had disappeared, and he was anxious to make peace with the allies at the end of 1718. Had not the arrest of Molinés forced his hand, the development of the resources of Spain might not have been interrupted till the country was ready for an attempt to restore the balance of power in the Mediterranean which, in Alberoni's opinion, had been destroyed by the Treaties of Utrecht and Rastadt. His career was now ended, but his influence on the history of Spain cannot be overestimated. Patiño and the great Spanish administrators worked on the lines laid down by Alberoni, and in 1748

the establishment of Don Philip in Parma and Piacenza, and Don Carlos in the kingdom of the two Sicilies, is sufficient proof that his foreign policy was by no means a failure. The development of Italian nationality, no less than the revival of Spain, was in no small measure due to the sagacity of the Italian statesman.

**Philip V. dismisses Alberoni, and joins the Quadruple Alliance, 1720.**

The fall of Alberoni was insisted upon by the allies as the preliminary to negotiations, and in the middle of December 1719, he received orders to leave Spain. At the beginning of 1720, Philip, yielding to the firm attitude of England and France, acceded to the terms of the Quadruple Alliance by the Treaty of London, though several important matters were the subject of negotiations during the whole year, and the irritation of Philip and Elizabeth was so great that a resumption of hostilities was regarded as possible at any moment. It was not till June 1721 that matters were finally and satisfactorily arranged by a defensive alliance between Spain, England, and France. All the disputed points between Spain and Austria touching the investiture of the Italian duchies, the disputed title to the crown of Spain, and the right to confer the Golden Fleece, were to be settled at a Congress which was to meet at Cambrai. Fearful of a possible alliance between Spain, England, and Austria, Dubois hastened to open negotiations with Spain with a view to sealing the present friendship between the two countries by a family compact, and in September 1721 it was openly announced that the Infanta — then five years old — would marry Louis XV., and Orleans' eldest daughter Don Luis, the heir-apparent to the Spanish throne.

**Marriage Alliances between France and Spain, 1721-2.**

In January 1722, the marriage of Mademoiselle de Montpensier was celebrated, while the Infanta took up her residence in France. This extension of French influence at Madrid caused alarm in English ministerial circles. In endeavouring to unite with Spain, while preserving the English alliance, Dubois, while in a manner returning to Louis XIV.'s policy, anticipated the policy

of Fleury in 1729. In February 1723, on the attainment by Louis XV. of his majority, he became First Minister, and held that office till his death, when Orleans succeeded him in the post for three months. But the revival of the union between France and Spain was premature, and came to a sudden end with the deaths of Dubois in August, and Orleans in December, 1723.

Though the high-handed action of Stanhope in the Mediterranean had checked the danger to European peace in the south from a collision between Spain and Austria, the affairs in the north remained a constant source of anxiety to England, and an ever-increasing menace to the tranquillity of Europe. There is little doubt that the policy of the ministers of Hanover had tended in the direction of the enlargement of the area of the struggle. Throughout the eighteenth century the northern Courts, owing to the rise of Russia and Prussia, and the decline of Sweden and Poland, played a very important part in European history. When George I. succeeded to the English throne in August 1714, the northern war was at its height. Russia and Prussia had just made a secret treaty (July), which was itself necessitated by the prospect of the speedy return of Charles XII. from Bender. By this treaty Russia undertook not to make peace till Prussia had secured Stettin with its dependencies up to the river Peene, together with Wolgast, Wollin, and Usedom, while Prussia engaged to aid Russia to annex the Swedish provinces of Livonia, Esthonia, and Ingria. In November Charles appeared before Stralsund. The effect of his arrival was at once felt. His enemies drew together. Prussia made an offensive alliance with Denmark, Hanover, Saxony, and Poland, and declared war upon Sweden. Denmark handed Bremen and Verden to George I., while Goertz, the Swedish minister, determined to break up the League, and to restore Sweden to a leading position in northern Europe. Stralsund was besieged by Frederick William, and on its fall in December 1715, Charles XII. with difficulty escaped to Sweden, and it seemed likely that the war would become European. An English fleet

**The North of Europe, 1714–21.**

was stationed in the Baltic to protect English commerce — an 'oblique way,' says Mr. Carlyle, 'for paying for Bremen and Verden' — and the various opponents of Charles XII. prepared for a serious struggle. In appearance the League was powerful, but no sooner was it made than it showed signs of breaking up, owing to the coolness which arose between Peter the Great and the Hanoverian ministers. In April 1716 the Duke of Mecklenburg had married Catherine, niece of Peter, who at once interfered on behalf of his nephew against the Mecklenburg nobles, who were constantly at feud with their ruler, and against the Danes and Prussians, whose ravages were ruining the country. On the fall of Wismar, the last Swedish possession in Pomerania, on April 16, the Hanoverians refused to admit Russian troops into the town, and accused Peter of carrying on secret relations with Sweden, and of wishing to occupy Mecklenburg permanently. Charles VI., alarmed at the progress of Russian influence, supported the intrigues of the Hanoverian Bernsdorf against the Russians, though Townshend and Frederick William refused to believe in the accusations levelled against the Russian monarch. Frederick William approved of the presence of Russian troops in Mecklenburg on the ground that they would defend both Denmark and Prussia against a Swedish attack. He agreed to hand over Wismar to the Duke of Mecklenburg, after having razed its walls to the ground, but declined to aid the Hanoverians in expelling the Russians from Mecklenburg and with them to occupy the duchy. Having strengthened his position by a secret defensive alliance with France made in September 1716, he gave his full approval to the policy of Peter the Great, who found himself an object of suspicion not only to the Emperor but to the rest of the allies. The arrest in London of Gyllenborg, the Swedish envoy, in January 1717, and the discovery in his papers of a plot, arranged by Goertz, for the invasion of Scotland by 12,000 Swedes on behalf of the Pretender, rendered the crisis more acute. Peter, who hoped

**The War between Charles XII. and the League.**

**Quarrel between Hanover and Peter the Great.**

to secure the friendship of England, was accused by the Hanoverians of being implicated in Gyllenborg's intrigues, and finding an English alliance was impossible, made his celebrated journey to France in the summer of 1717, hoping by means of French assistance to force from Sweden compliance with his terms. He urged the French Government to accept Russia in place of Sweden as its northern ally, to form with Russia and Prussia a close friendship which should not necessarily interfere with the existing Triple Alliance between England, France, and Holland. But though Orleans, it is said, was in favour of accepting the Russian overtures, Dubois saw that the stability of the Triple Alliance would be endangered.

**Peter the Great's visit to Paris, 1717.**

There is little room for doubting that Dubois' decision was the right one. The Russian Power as yet rested on no sure foundation; its sudden rise to a prominent position was due in great measure to the collapse of the Swedish arms. An extraordinary series of circumstances had led to the arrival of Russian troops at the Elbe, and it was unlikely that they could be maintained in Germany for any considerable period. Moreover, the future development of Russia depended upon the ability of her rulers. It would have been the height of rashness to have substituted for the Triple Alliance the distant and possibly unstable Russian Power, and France, again isolated in western Europe, would have deservedly brought upon her the hostility of England and Holland, aided by the forces of the Empire and probably by those of Spain.

In August a simple treaty of amity was made between France, Russia, and Prussia, known as the Treaty of Amsterdam.[1] By this treaty France engaged to use her good offices to end the northern war. But this treaty, followed by a supplementary convention with Prussia in August 1718, did not prevent Peter from

**Sweden and Russia draw together.**

[1] This treaty, the first of many made between France and Russia, was followed by the establishment of regular diplomatic relations between the two countries.

negotiating directly with Sweden. Goertz, who at the time of Gyllenborg's arrest had for a short period been imprisoned in Holland, never ceased intriguing for a Russian alliance, and in May 1718 he and Gyllenborg met Bruce and Ostermann, the two Russian envoys in Losoe, one of the Åland Islands, at what is known as the Åland Conference. Goertz advocated a close alliance with Russia, the price of which was to be the provinces of Ingria, Carelia, Livonia, and Esthonia. United with Russia, Sweden could then disregard her other foes, preserve her German possessions, and remain the predominant Power in the Baltic.

Goertz' views, admirable as they were in many respects, were not destined to be carried out. The death of Charles XII. at Friedrichshall on December 11, 1718, at the age of thirty-six, was followed by a revolution in Sweden. In January 1719 the Diet met, and elected Ulrica Eleanora, the sister of Charles XII., queen, and imposed upon her such stringent conditions that the despotism of the Swedish kings was transformed into a limited monarchy. All chance of the accession of the Duke of Holstein, who had married Ulrica's sister, disappeared; Goertz, the advocate of the Holstein party, was executed; and in 1720 Ulrica abdicated in favour of her husband, who was elected king as Frederick I.

**Death of Charles XII., and a Revolution in Sweden.**

Sweden remained in a most critical condition. She was attacked by a powerful league, while a party in the Diet, strengthened by public opinion and hoping for the aid of Prussia, were disposed to further the claims of the Holstein branch to the throne. A decided policy at home and abroad was demanded. The party in power determined to reverse the foreign policy of Charles XII. and Goertz, and to adopt a line of conduct fraught with disastrous consequences to Sweden. Upon the election of Ulrica negotiations were broken off with Russia, and steps were at once taken to conclude treaties with the various members of the League.

Through the mediation of Carteret, treaties were signed in

November 1719 with Hanover, and in February 1720 with Prussia. By the former, Hanover, in consideration of a sum of money, was to retain Bremen and Verden; by the latter, Prussia, having paid to Sweden two millions of dollars, was to retain Stettin, the islands of Wollin and Usedom, and Pomerania as far as the Peene. Treaties were also made with Poland and Denmark in January and July 1720, the latter Power being secured in the possession of Sleswig, and thus Sweden was free to devote all her energies to the war against Peter the Great. But this attempt of the Swedish Government to isolate Russia and avoid further concessions failed hopelessly. An English fleet in the Baltic proved of little value; Peter pursued his victorious career unchecked, and in 1721 the Swedes were glad to accept the mediation of Campredon, the French ambassador, and make an inglorious peace with Russia. By the Treaty of Nystad, signed on September 10, 1721, Sweden relinquished to Russia Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, and Carelia, part of Wiborg, with the islands Ossel, Dagoe, and Moen, and all others from the boundary of Courland to Wiborg. Russia on her part paid two millions of dollars and restored Finland. With the signature of the Peace of Nystad a chapter in European history is closed. The place of Sweden is henceforward taken by Russia and Prussia. Sweden retired from the commanding position in Europe to which she had been raised by the House of Vasa. Henceforward, till the accession of Gustavus III., she was alternately the ally of Russia and France, and the prey to internal faction. By the Act of May 2, 1720, the Swedish monarchy had ceased to be absolute and had become elective. Weak and disunited, Sweden became the prey to factions, one of which not only supported the claims of Charles Frederick, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, the son of Hedwiga Sophia, and in 1725 the son-in-law of Peter the Great and Catherine, but also advocated a close Russian alliance. The other party supported Ulrica and her husband,

**Treaties between Sweden and the members of the League.**

**The Treaty of Nystad with Russia, 1721.**

and pressed for a French connection. Under the titles of the Hats and the Caps these two parties struggled for supremacy, the miserable years of their dissensions being characteristically styled the period of liberty.

While Sweden declined, Russia and Prussia advanced, and both Powers became important factors in the European state-system. For the moment, however, the Treaty of Nystad gave peace to the north, just as the Quadruple Alliance had secured tranquillity in the south, and the foreign policy of Stanhope and Dubois, so far as the preservation of peace was concerned, was crowned with success. The Anglo-French alliance remained intact, all fear of a Jacobite invasion was removed, the French Government was in no danger from the intrigues of Philip and Elizabeth Farnese, Alberoni had fallen, and Goertz had been executed. In February 1723 Louis XV. attained his legal majority, and the Regency came to an end. No change of government took place, and Dubois remained at the head of affairs till his death in August. With regard to the future, a congress was to meet and settle outstanding questions, which mainly concerned the Italian Peninsula.

The years from 1715 to 1725 had seen the councils of Europe dominated by three adventurers—Alberoni, Goertz, and Dubois. Of these three the first two worked definitely for the well-being of their respective countries, and their policy was dictated by national rather than by personal considerations. Both failed to carry out the work they had set themselves to do, the one through the death of Charles XII. and the inherent weakness of Sweden, the other because the dynastic interests of Elizabeth Farnese placed Spain in a false position and hampered the work of reform. With the death of Goertz Sweden retired to the position of a third-rate Power, from which she has never emerged. Alberoni's fall, on the other hand, proved only a temporary check in the regeneration of Spain; his work was continued by his successors, and the eighteenth century saw his policy in great measure realised. Dubois stands in striking contrast to

**Dubois, Goertz, and Alberoni.**

both his contemporaries. His views were not so statesmanlike as those of Alberoni, he was not in the desperate position of Goertz, nor was he so single-minded in his views as the Spanish minister. His foreign policy, though beneficial to France, was dictated by personal considerations, and his domestic policy was selfish and opportunist. His ability, however, was undoubted, and he carried France with success through a dangerous period. But his want of high principle, his cynical contempt for religion and morality, and his unblushing ambition, rendered the Abbé Dubois, successful politician as he was, a far less interesting figure than Alberoni.

Before the end of his career Dubois had no rival at home or abroad. Law had fled, Alberoni was in exile, Goertz was dead. All efforts to remedy the internal evils from which France was suffering had ceased, and the Regency closed with all the promise of its early years unfulfilled.

Abroad, the Quadruple Alliance already showed signs of breaking up, and as long as the interests of Elizabeth Farnese dominated Spanish politics, and Charles VI. persisted in his ambitious schemes, Europe could not hope for any lengthened period of tranquillity.

# CHAPTER III

## THE INTRIGUES OF ELIZABETH FARNESE

### 1723–1733

The Period from 1723 to 1733 — The Government of the Duke of Bourbon — The Congress of Cambrai — The Idea of an Austro-Spanish Alliance — Elizabeth Farnese's Reasons for allying with Austria — Charles VI.'s Reasons for allying with Spain — Ripperdá's Instructions — His Career — The Dismissal of the Infanta by Bourbon — Russian Overtures to France — Conferences in Vienna — The Treaty of Vienna, 1725 — The League of Hanover — The Secret Articles in the Treaty of Vienna — Prussia and the Treaty of Wüsterhausen — Parties in France — Fall of Ripperdá — The Break-up of the Austro-Spanish Alliance — Danger of a General War in 1727–28 — The Treaty of Seville — England and Spain — The Second Treaty of Vienna, 1731.

The Period from 1723 to 1733.

THE years from the deaths of Dubois and Orleans to the outbreak of the Polish Succession War (1723–33) form a troubled and complicated period, characterised by a perfect network of diplomacy. The alliance between England and France held good under both Bourbon and Fleury, but the existence and increasing importance of a strong opposition party at the French Court to the English connection foreshadowed complications in the future. The growing coolness between Austria and England, and between Austria and Prussia, tended to weaken the position of Charles VI., who, intent upon the pursuit of such shadows as the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction and the establishment of an Ostend East India Company, neglected the real interests of his country.

In France for the next three years the Duke of Bourbon held the reins of office, and continued the policy of Orleans

and Dubois. Louis Henry, Duke of Bourbon, known as Monsieur le Duc, the lineal heir of the great Condé, had hitherto not occupied a prominent position in the state, being more interested in hunting than in political matters. He had, however, stoutly opposed the claims of the *légitimés*, had supported the schemes of Law, and had viewed with displeasure the rapid rise of Dubois. He had never shown any conspicuous ability, and was a dull man, dominated by his mistress, the intriguing Marchioness of Prie, and by the financier Paris-Duverney, who, an enemy of Law, had come prominently forward on the collapse of the latter's system. On the death of Orleans, Fleury, the astute bishop of Frejus, still in charge of Louis' education, had secured his appointment as First Minister, and remained in the background till 1726, when he himself supplanted the Duke, whose government had become intensely unpopular. The internal administration of France suffered under the ministry of Bourbon, in spite of the attempts of Paris-Duverney to force the noble class to contribute its share in the taxation of the country, and to organise a national army by a system of conscription. Though excellent in conception, the former of those measures was abrogated in 1727, and the latter was never carried out. The re-establishment of the *droit de joyeux avènement*, an obsolete tax, paid on the accession of a king for the confirmation of privileges by high and low alike, was very unpopular, and was never levied again. In religious matters, which since the death of Orleans had been under the direction of Fleury, Bourbon had little difficulty in making his influence felt. One severe edict (May 24, 1724) was levelled at those Protestants who still lived in France, and who had taken the opportunity of the reaction under Orleans to meet together for common worship; and another supported, if not originated, by Fleury, was directed against the Jansenists. A fresh emigration of the Protestants followed the edict, and public opinion ridiculed the continued attempts to force the Bull Unigenitus, in a philosophic and sceptical age, upon the French nation.

**The Government of the Duke of Bourbon, 1723–26.**

In his foreign policy Bourbon was bent on the preservation of peace, and was at first inclined to follow the lines of policy laid down by Dubois in his later years. He alone of all the Bourbon princes had in 1713 protested against Philip v.'s compulsory renunciations,[1] and to the Spanish Court the accession of the Duke to power was an event of no small significance. Philip v. and Alberoni had, by the temporary estrangement of France, paid the penalty for their impatience and rashness in 1717 and 1718. But before he died Dubois could boast that not only had he maintained the peace of Europe when a general war seemed imminent, but that he had taken measures to ensure the gradual re-establishment of the Spanish influence in Italy, and had reunited the Courts of Versailles and Madrid without breaking the Anglo-French alliance. On Dubois' death the Comte de Morville, who had been appointed plenipotentiary at the Congress of Cambrai, took charge of foreign affairs, and remained Secretary of State till 1727. No change in the relations of France with other nations followed the accession of the Duke of Bourbon to power, and any intentions that he might have harboured for returning to a close offensive and defensive alliance with Spain, to the detriment of the good relations subsisting between France and England, were cut short by the sudden abdication of Philip v. on June 14, 1724; and later in the year the impatience of the Spanish queen again tended to postpone indefinitely any real reconciliation between France and Spain, and to unite England and France in a firm endeavour to preserve the peace of Europe. Elizabeth Farnese's irritation at the dilatory conduct of France and Spain coincided with a growing dislike on the part of Bourbon to the Duke of Chartres, the son of Orleans, who in the event of Louis' death would succeed to the French throne. It was the dread of this contingency which led in 1725 to the dismissal of the Infanta.

During the ten years from 1723 to 1733 Elizabeth Farnese 'was the pivot upon which the diplomacy of Europe turned.'

[1] *Philippe V. et la cour de France*, par A. Baudrillard, vol. ii. 540–1.

The principal aim of her efforts was as ever the aggrandisement of her children, while, in spite of all renunciations and treaties, Philip showed that he remained firmly resolved to secure, in the event of Louis xv.'s death, the succession to the French Crown. On his adhesion to the Quadruple Alliance, the King of Spain had received full assurance that on the extinction of the lines of Farnese and Medici, Don Carlos should succeed at Parma and Florence. It had been arranged that certain points with regard to the Italian duchies, and other questions still under dispute between Spain and Austria, should be settled at a European Congress, which, after two years spent in preliminaries, met for business at Cambrai on January 26, 1724. 'A more inane congress,' says Carlyle, 'never met in this world, and never will meet.' At the Congress the rival claims of Austria and Spain were listened to, and Charles VI., throwing every possible difficulty in the way of a satisfactory settlement of the questions awaiting solution, demanded the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction from all the assembled Powers. 'There at Cambrai, for about four years were the poor delegates busied baling out water with sieves.' While the Congress was thus sitting engaged in futile deliberations, an event occurred which roused the attention of Europe, and puzzled the diplomatists of every Court.

**The Congress of Cambrai.**

Without any previous warning Philip v. had suddenly on January 14, 1724, abdicated his throne in favour of Don Luis. Religious motives appear to have been the immediate cause of this unexpected abdication, which, however, proved to be of short duration, as Don Luis only enjoyed his new dignity eight months, and on his death in August Philip v. reascended the Spanish throne, placing the control of foreign affairs in the hands of Grimaldo, who had been Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs since Alberoni's fall. Finding that the Congress proceeded very deliberately, and being convinced that England and France had not bestirred themselves to advance her aims with regard to the Italian

**Abdication of Philip V.**

duchies, the Queen of Spain determined to follow Ripperdá's advice, which was in agreement with her own views, and to negotiate directly with Charles VI. The idea of making an alliance with Austria was no new one. Alberoni at one period in his career had suggested it; Philip and Elizabeth Farnese had in 1721 seriously considered it; and during the short reign of Don Luis, Ripperdá, in full accord with the old Spanish party which detested a French alliance, had dwelt upon the advisability of bringing about friendly relations between the two Courts. In September 1724 Elizabeth was, from various reasons, ready to entertain the idea, and Francis Farnese, the Duke of Parma, threw himself eagerly into the project. To secure the eventual succession to the duchies, and to recover Gibraltar and Minorca, were the definite objects of the Spanish Court. In 1724 Elizabeth was forced to acknowledge that the French alliance of 1721 had been of little use to Spain, and that no efforts had been made by either Orleans or Bourbon to hasten the retirement of the English from Gibraltar. As long as England held Gibraltar, supported by the Spanish nobles, who urged a marriage between Don Ferdinand and the new Princess of the Asturias and an Austrian Archduchess, she was ready to oppose English policy in Europe, and to hamper English trade in South America and the West Indies.

**The Idea of an Austro-Spanish Alliance.**

The French were equally detested at Madrid, and the old Spanish party incited the mob against France and Tessé, the French envoy. It was recognised at Madrid that the promise of George I. to yield Gibraltar was not likely to be carried out, and this conviction was forced upon Elizabeth and Philip at the very time that the Spanish commercial classes were beginning to feel the effects of the English trading competition. Since the Regent's death, too, the reconciliation with France, which had been premature and never really sincere, seemed less likely than ever to result in the recovery of Gibraltar, or in the establishment of Don Carlos in Italy by French aid. Grimaldo and

**Elizabeth's Reasons for allying with Austria.**

the other Spanish ministers had been practically superseded by John Baptiste Orendayn, formerly a clerk in the Foreign Office, and who, having received the confidence of Elizabeth, was made Secretary of State for Finance, and consulted in matters of foreign policy. While Elizabeth, with no fear of opposition from the Spanish ministers, was thus coming to the conclusion that the best means for the successful attainment of her wishes were to be found in an Austrian alliance, Charles VI. had almost decided to open negotiations with Spain. He was, as always, bent upon securing the adhesion of all the great Powers to the Pragmatic Sanction. But England and Holland no less than France showed no inclination to guarantee it, and he hoped to secure the Spanish support, if only he was able to satisfy the aims of Elizabeth. The Congress of Cambrai had disappointed his expectations. Not only was he unable to obtain the adhesion of the assembled Powers to the Pragmatic Sanction, but his wishes on other points had met with opposition. England and Holland had run counter to his fixed determination of establishing an Ostend East India Company. Determined to secure a share of the Indian trade, and recognising the force of Eugene's contention that the Indian Company might form the nucleus of a German fleet, he had actually founded the Company in 1722, and given it a charter in 1723, fixing the capital at one million. Between 1717 and 1722 a number of experimental voyages had been made, and their success had roused the complaints of the French, Dutch, and English Companies. The Maritime Powers, however, would have none of it, and their hatred of its German settlements in India was shared by the French, who at Pondicherry and Chandernagore assumed a threatening attitude. Ships were sent out, and two settlements — one at Covelong, on the south-east coast, and the other at Bankipur on the Hooghly — were founded in India, which entered into competition with the older European Companies. As Charles was equally resolved to persevere in his scheme, he

**Charles VI.'s Reasons for allying with Spain.**

naturally drew near to Spain, the now almost avowed enemy of England and France. In firm alliance with Spain, Charles felt that Ostend would be to the north German commerce what Trieste would be to his Mediterranean trade, and hoped to make it into a first-class naval station. The possession of a fleet would render Germany independent of the Maritime Powers, and give the Empire a commercial influence in northern Europe. The recognition of the Company by Spain thus became a matter of very serious importance to both England and Holland. Charles, moreover, had vast imperial schemes. He hoped to reassert the old claims on Italy, to make Italy a province of the Empire, and to use her resources for the consolidation of his power in Germany. For the realisation of these schemes Spanish friendship was absolutely necessary. It would free him from dependence on England and Holland, and it would give a considerable impetus to the growth of Catholicism in Europe, which itself might be used on behalf of a Stuart restoration, and in favour of imperial policy in Poland and Saxony.

At Vienna, it is true, the idea of an alliance with Spain met with serious opposition. Both Maria Theresa and the Empress, who wished her daughter to marry the Duke of Lorraine, were hostile to the Spanish scheme, and were supported in their dislike of the project by Eugene, the Commander-in-chief and President of the Council of War, and Stahremberg, the Director of the Finances, while Charles VI. was aided by the advice of his Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zinzendorf. Independent circumstances, coinciding in point of time, were thus tending to draw together the Courts of Vienna and Madrid, when two events brought matters to a head, and hastened the conclusion of an alliance.

In November 1724 Ripperdá arrived at Vienna, armed with elaborate instructions, and early in March of the following year the Infanta, Maria Anna Victoria, was sent back to Spain from France. The instructions of Ripperdá, who had long been in favour of the establishment of close relations between Austria and Spain, were dated

**Ripperdá's Instructions.**

November 22, 1724. He was ordered to keep his negotiations secret, and if he found that Charles VI. was disposed to entertain the idea of an alliance with Spain, he was to propose that Don Carlos should marry Maria Theresa, become king of the Romans, and on the death of Charles VI. inherit all the hereditary lands of the Hapsburgs, while Don Philip should marry the Archduchess Maria Anna, and after Charles VI.'s death inherit the Hapsburg possessions in Italy, the Milanese and the two Sicilies, to which should be added Tuscany and the duchies of Parma and Piacenza. Other proposals with regard to the Netherlands, Gibraltar, and Minorca were to be made, but modifications might be allowed so long as the intermarriages were carried out.

This proposed union between the Courts of Vienna and Madrid was intended by Elizabeth Farnese to have a religious significance. An offensive and defensive alliance was to be concluded against the Turks, against the German Protestant princes, and against England. It was also to have an equally distinct effect upon commercial matters. England's maritime and mercantile interests were to be attacked, Gibraltar and Minorca captured, and the Ostend East India Company supported. These instructions were drawn up while the Congress of Cambrai was sitting, and while Monteleone was negotiating at Paris with Morville against Austria.

John William, Baron de Ripperdá, was a Dutchman by birth, but a Spaniard by origin. He had represented his native province, Groningen, in the States-General, and during the Spanish Succession War had become acquainted with Prince Eugene and Zinzendorf. His knowledge of commercial matters was keenly appreciated in Holland, and in 1715 he was sent to Madrid as ambassador, for which post his command of several European languages well fitted him. In Spain he became a warm supporter of Alberoni's schemes, and his knowledge of commerce was most useful to the Spanish minister. Having openly supported Alberoni's foreign policy and acted with considerable indiscretion, he was recalled, but

**Ripperdá's Career.**

before Alberoni's fall returned to Spain and became a Catholic, and offered his services to Philip v., who gave him a pension and often consulted him. During Don Luis' short reign he had come prominently forward, and for a short period played an important part in Spanish history. Though talkative and liable to be carried away by exaggerated hopes, he had many excellent qualities, and both Alberoni and Eugene recognised his merits. He had considerable organising powers; he had a real knowledge of the commercial needs of Spain, and, like Alberoni, determined to revive her trade and encourage her manufactures. He urged upon Elizabeth Farnese the desirability of an alliance with Austria, and suggested the idea of double marriages.[1]

**The Dismissal of the Infanta by Bourbon.**

The first overtures, indeed, came to Spain from Austria through the mediation of the Pope, but Elizabeth, with her usual impetuosity, had already thrown herself eagerly into Ripperdá's plans, and his visit to Vienna coincided with a change in the attitude of the French Government, which afforded Spain ample justification for its adoption of a new policy. The second event which was the immediate cause of the Treaty of Vienna was the dismissal of the Infanta, Maria Anna Victoria, by the Duke of Bourbon. The object of Bourbon and Madame de Prie, with the full acquiescence of Villars, Fleury, and Morville, and the support of French public opinion, was to arrange a marriage for Louis xv. as soon as possible, for if Louis died without an heir the Orleanist House would succeed, and Bourbon's influence in the Government would cease. Moreover, it was advisable to secure a docile bride for Louis, and one who, owing her position to Bourbon, would not attempt to remove him from his office. Had it not been for the personal interest of Bourbon, it is possible that the wishes of Catherine i., the Tsarina, who was anxious that her daughter Elizabeth should marry the French king, and that a closer alliance should be made between Russia and France, might have been seriously considered.

[1] *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique*, Nos. 2, 3, 4.

Peter the Great had left Russia practically isolated on his death in February 1725, and the growing hostility of Spain and Austria to the Triple Alliance seemed to offer an excellent opportunity for renewing negotiations with France. Catherine, inheriting Peter's policy, brought forward strong arguments to overcome the hesitation of Bourbon. Russian arms should aid French enterprises in any part of Europe; a French prince, upon the next vacancy, should be placed upon the throne of Poland, which should be controlled by the united action of France and Russia. But Bourbon and Madame de Prie, fearing that the young Princess Elizabeth might develop an independence of spirit and oust them from power, refused to entertain the idea of a Russian match. Princesses of Modena and Lorraine were also discarded on account of their connection with the House of Orleans. At length they decided upon Marie Leszczynski, daughter of Stanislas, the ex-King of Poland, who was then living at Wissenburg, and who had no relations with any French faction. On September 4, 1725, the marriage took place, Bourbon hoping that a princess who owed her elevation to the house of Bourbon-Condé would use her influence on its behalf. Bourbon's decision had important results. France found herself bound to support the claims of Stanislas in Poland, all relations with Russia were broken off, and the way was prepared for that close connection between Russia and Austria which had such an important bearing upon European history.

**Russian Overtures to France.**

While, however, the Duke of Bourbon was playing into the hands of Elizabeth Farnese, Ripperdá's mission was meeting with unexpected success. On February 9, 1725, Prince Eugene, Stahremberg, and Zinzendorf, the three members of the Secret Conference, which controlled all important matters in the Austrian monarchy, met together to discuss Ripperdá's proposals. Prince Eugene and Count Gundakar of Stahremberg were old, cautious, and conservative in temperament. They were fully cognisant of the condition of the army and the finances, they were strong advocates of the

**Conferences in Vienna.**

connection with the Maritime Powers, and regarded the English alliance as the pivot of Austrian foreign policy. Count Louis of Zinzendorf stood in striking contrast to his two colleagues. Steeped in the scepticism and dilettantism of the century, he was hampered by no principles beyond the necessity of pleasing the Emperor. The three ministers, however, on this occasion were equally willing to consider carefully the Spanish proposals, and were at one with Charles VI. in recognising that Austria stood in a perilous position. They were aware of the partiality of the Maritime Powers for the Italian scheme of Elizabeth Farnese; they suspected that the mysterious negotiations of Monteleone at Paris would be followed by a combined Bourbon attack upon Italy. They, moreover, feared the aggression of the English and Dutch in the Netherlands, they resented the continual demands by the Maritime Powers for the abolition of the Ostend East India Company, and they were resolved not to yield to the insolent outcry of the London and Amsterdam merchants. At the same time, they agreed with the Emperor in opposing the marriage scheme, which seemed likely to result in awkward complications in the near future. They therefore, on February 11, advised Charles to negotiate for a treaty with Spain on the basis of the Quadruple Alliance, but to decline the marriage proposals, on the ground of the youth of the Archduchesses and of the engagement of Don Carlos to a French princess. After negotiations had taken place between Ripperdá and Zinzendorf, the draft of a treaty was sent to Madrid on March 9. Already, however, on March 1, couriers had left Paris for Madrid, Turin, Rome, and London to announce the decision of the Duke of Bourbon to send back the Infanta to Spain.

**The Treaty of Vienna, 1725.**

The rupture of the marriage scheme between France and Spain, the announcement of which reached Madrid in the first week of March, precipitated a crisis in the policy of Europe. A plausible pretext had been afforded to Spain; the Spanish ambassador was recalled from Paris and the Spanish representatives from the Congress.

An Austro-Spanish alliance was at once made. The Treaty of Vienna included a sheaf of treaties, — public ones signed on April 30, 1725, and May 1, and a secret one signed in November. By the public treaties Charles renounced his claim to Philip's dominions, agreed to cede the reversion of the Italian duchies to Don Carlos, and promised to do all in his power to aid in the recovery of Gibraltar. Philip, on the other hand, recognised the Ostend East India Company, and an offensive and defensive alliance was signed.

The conclusion of this unnatural alliance between the two rivals of the War of the Spanish Succession shocked the diplomatic conscience of Europe, and was shortly afterwards followed by a demand on the part of Spain for the cession of Gibraltar. The warlike enthusiasm of the Spaniards was roused, and preparations made for hostilities. Threatened by this new combination, France, England, and Prussia, taking advantage of the widespread alarm in Germany at the prospect of a revival of Charles v.'s empire, formed a league at Herrenhausen, which, known as the alliance of Hanover, was joined later by Sweden and Denmark, and by Holland somewhat unwillingly. The Treaty of Hanover, while directed against the establishment of the Ostend East India Company, was mainly defensive, but the very formation of the alliance tended to unite the Courts of Spain and Austria still more closely together.

The League of Hanover, 1725.

Since May, Elizabeth Farnese had arranged marriages between Don Ferdinand, the Prince of the Asturias, and a Portuguese princess, and between the Spanish Infanta and the Portuguese heir-apparent. She was more than ever determined to secure the two Austrian Archduchesses for her two sons, Don Carlos and Don Philip. In Vienna Zinzendorf was supported by the Marquis de Rialp, a Spaniard, who had great influence with the Emperor, and who was the leader of the crowd of Spanish refugees, always favoured by Charles VI. but hated by the Austrians. Prince Eugene and Stahremberg, the leaders of the German party, which regarded with deep suspi-

cion Rialp and the Spanish section, and which preserved a traditional regard for the English alliance, were opposed to the marriage project. But Eugene and Stahremberg had already agreed to the treaties of April 30, and the menacing attitude of England with regard to the Ostend Company weakened their opposition to the proposals of Ripperdá and Zinzendorf.

The Treaty of Hanover was a powerful argument in the hands of the supporters of the Spanish alliance, and in November the secret portion of the Treaty of Vienna was signed by Ripperdá, Eugene, Stahremberg, and Zinzendorf. Marriages were to be concluded between the Archduchesses and Don Carlos and Don Philip, and both Powers were to act conjointly in supporting the claims of the Hapsburgs to the Imperial throne, in Polish succession questions, and in questions relating to the succession to Jülich and Berg; while in case of a French defeat, France was to be partitioned, Spain taking Cerdagne, Roussillon, and Lower Navarre, and Austria Alsace and the Belgian provinces. Gibraltar and Minorca were to be speedily restored to Spain, and the Ostend East India Company was to be supported. The treaties of Vienna were a great triumph for Elizabeth Farnese, and her schemes seemed likely to be successfully carried out. A diplomatic revolution had been effected, which however, unlike those of 1717 and 1756, led to no permanent alteration in the relations of the various Powers to one another, and was followed by no European war. The news of this secret treaty, contemplating very considerable changes in the map of Europe, was received with alarm, and a general war seemed likely to ensue. All Europe was divided into two camps. On the side of Spain and Austria, Russia ranged herself in August 1726, and the alliance of Vienna was also joined by the ecclesiastical Electors, by Bavaria and the Palatinate. On the other hand, the alliance of Hanover included, besides England, France, and Prussia, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, and Hesse-Cassel. To the rulers of Spain, as of Austria, religious and commercial motives struggled for

**The Secret Articles in the Treaty of Vienna, Nov. 1725.**

precedence. The extermination of Protestantism was kept in view at Madrid as well as Vienna, and it was regarded as not improbable that France might be induced to join a system which had as its basis the extension of Catholicism. The overthrow of the House of Hanover, and the establishment of the Pretender upon the English throne, would be followed by the extermination of Protestantism in North Germany, and by the restoration of England to its rank among Catholic Powers. In Madrid the news of the alliance between Austria and Russia was received with enthusiasm, and it was expected that Alberoni's scheme for the restoration of the Pretender by the aid of the Russian fleet would be revived. The Duke of Liria was sent in March 1727 to St. Petersburg to make an alliance with the Muscovite Court, and to arrange for a diversion against England in the interests of the Pretender and the Catholic religion.

The outbreak of war seemed imminent, and of the two European leagues that of Vienna was the more united and the more powerful. Not only were the rulers of Austria, Spain, and Russia actuated by fierce hostility to France or England, but while both Holland and Sweden were lukewarm allies, Prussia in characteristic fashion deserted the alliance of Hanover, and in October 1726 made the Treaty of Wüsterhausen with the Emperor, and in consequence Hanover lay open to an attack by the Imperialists.[1] Spain, under the direction of Ripperdá, had entered upon a fresh period of commercial development and industrial activity. All she required was freedom from foreign wars and internal disturbances to enable her to stimulate colonial trade, to build a good navy, and to restore the finances of the country. While Spain held firmly to her engagements with Austria, and seemed in a fair way to advance along the path of industrial progress, the policy of the French Government was hesitating and uncertain. In France, as in Holland, there was always to be found a powerful Spanish party,

**Prussia joins the Emperor by the Treaty of Wüsterhausen, 1726.**

**Parties in France.**

[1] *See* Carlyle, *History of Frederick the Great.*

and at the very time of the conclusion of the Treaty of Hanover there was in Paris an influential section of Frenchmen who aimed at a return to the policy of Louis XIV.'s later years — a close union with Spain, the restoration of the Stuarts, and a definite anti-Protestant attitude. The Government of Bourbon was weak, divided, and incompetent, while the anti-English and war party was strong, united, and possessed of capable leaders. Bourbon's policy was a feeble continuance of that of the Regent, and, in face of the rapid expansion of English trade, seemed to far-sighted Frenchmen highly detrimental to French interests. In 1726 an English fleet under Hosier blockaded the Spanish treasure fleet at Porto Bello, while another fleet held the Baltic and overawed Russia; in February 1727 the Spaniards besieged Gibraltar, and this outbreak of hostilities between Spain and England seemed the prelude to a general European war. A variety of circumstances, however, combined to preserve Europe from a great struggle for some six years.

**The Fall of Ripperdá.**

Though Spain allied with Austria was in a stronger position than in the days of Alberoni, she was far from being prepared to enter upon prolonged and costly military and naval operations. To her more than any other of the principal European states peace was absolutely essential. In May 1726 Ripperdá was dismissed. A powerful opposition had been formed against him; the Imperial ambassador, Königsegg, threw his influence on the side of Spanish public opinion; and Elizabeth, on whose favour he had entirely depended, suddenly decided upon his overthrow. Though an opportunist and an adventurer, Ripperdá had considerable talents. His schemes for the regeneration of Spain were in many respects admirable, and were carried out to a great extent by the famous administrators who succeeded him. That he had not a single friend in Spain is itself ample testimony of the thoroughness of those reforms which, during his short period of office, he was able to initiate. He fully recognised the folly of plunging into war, but, like Alberoni, was forced to adapt his views to suit those of the queen. Elizabeth alone

desired war. The alliance of Vienna was as unpopular in Spain as the Austrian alliance was in France some thirty years later. National feeling in Spain might be gratified, but national interest would hardly be furthered by making the aggrandisement of Elizabeth's children the principal aim of Spanish policy. It was felt that Spain's true ally was France, that Ripperdá had sacrificed the interests of Spain to those of the queen, while the attitude of the Emperor and the general relations between Madrid and Vienna only tended to confirm this conviction.

**The Break-up of the Austro-Spanish Alliance.**

Charles VI. discovered before Ripperdá's fall that he could not hope to obtain large supplies of money from Spain, and during the siege of Gibraltar had taken no steps to aid his allies. The Emperor was not in a position to enter upon a war; he was involved in disputes with his new ally, Prussia; while Catherine I., who died in May 1727, had been succeeded by Peter II., a mere child, and Russia for the time ceased to be ranked among his active supporters. Charles had never liked the idea of the establishment of the Spaniards in Italy; he recognised that a Spanish match was impossible; he was opposed to the siege of Gibraltar. With the opening of 1727 peaceful counsels began to prevail in Vienna, and the Austro-Spanish alliance became sensibly weakened. The influence of Fleury and Walpole was also used to bring about a general pacification. In June 1726 Fleury had overthrown Bourbon, who had endeavoured to exile him, and though seventy-three years old, he governed France with ability till his death in 1743. Within France he endeavoured with some success to preserve tranquillity, and by economy and good administration to temper the despotic *régime* and to improve the condition of the country. His foreign policy was peaceful. Till 1733 he managed, though with difficulty, to continue the Orleanist system of peace and friendship with England. After 1733 the war party proved too powerful for the pacific minister. The system of Louis XIV. was adopted. Fleury was forced

**Fleury.**

into the Polish and Austrian Succession Wars, and before his death saw the renewal of the ancient hostility between England and France. The almost simultaneous disappearance from the political stage of Ripperdá and Bourbon in 1726 had paved the way for the resumption of friendly relations between France and Spain. While Fleury, whose knowledge of the politics of Europe was considerable, and whose appreciation of the true needs of France was accurate and complete, had convinced himself that the continuance of the English alliance was the right policy, he remained honestly anxious to bring about a reconciliation with Spain. The secret mission of Montgon, in consequence of Louis XV.'s dangerous illness, like the embassy of Cellamare, bore witness not only to the existence of a powerful opposition in France to the policy of the Government, but also to the continued determination of Philip to secure the French succession in the event of Louis' death.

France held the key of the situation, and Fleury's position as First Minister added strength to his argument in favour of peace. But though he was sufficiently strong to prevent the formation of a close alliance between France and Spain to the detriment of England, he was unable, in the teeth of a fierce opposition, to use French forces to aid the English Power against the Court of Madrid. Though he entered into a secret correspondence with Elizabeth, he refused to desert the English alliance, and in May 1727 the French, Spanish, Dutch, and Imperial ministers signed preliminaries of peace at Vienna.

It was agreed that the Ostend East India Company should be suspended for seven years, that the siege of Gibraltar should be raised, and that these and other matters should be referred to a general congress for a definite settlement. Elizabeth herself was opposed to peace; she still hoped to detach England from France, and on the death of George I. in June anticipated a successful Jacobite invasion of England. But Walpole was fully alive to the danger from the adherents of the exiled Stuarts. English policy remained unchanged, and the English and French ministers devoted all their efforts to preserve peace,

and to separate the Courts of Vienna and Madrid. But the difficulties of Walpole and Fleury were enormous. In England, as in France, the national desire for war was stimulated by a powerful party among the opposition. The negotiations between England and Spain would have failed had not Fleury and Königsegg used all their influence with Elizabeth in favour of peace, and in March 1728 Spain signed the Convention of the Pardo, accepted the Preliminaries of Vienna, and thus the short war between England and Spain came to an end.

**Danger of a General War in 1727-28.**

The alliance between Spain and Austria had been rudely shaken, and Elizabeth found herself isolated in Europe. It only required the Congress of Soissons to complete the breach between the two countries. That Congress, which opened on June 14, 1728, proved as useless as its predecessor at Cambrai. It acted with the greatest deliberation, and Patiño, Ripperdá's successor, took advantage of the slowness of its proceedings to hasten the Spanish preparations for war. Chauvelin, an active supporter of the anti-English and the anti-Austrian parties in France, became Keeper of the Seals, and succeeded Morville as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the autumn of 1727, and a family alliance between the Bourbons seemed to be within measurable distance. The year 1728 was a critical one in the history of Europe. But the Austro-Spanish alliance was fast breaking down, and Fleury proved strong enough to resist the pressure of Chauvelin and his supporters. Elizabeth had now realised that the marriage schemes arranged by the secret treaty of 1725 would never be carried out, and Patiño attacked the Austrian alliance with vigour. In December 1728 Elizabeth, on receiving formal notification that the marriages could not at present take place, recognised at once that her aims in Italy could not be attained by the help of the Emperor, and with characteristic impetuosity turned to France and England to aid her in securing the Italian duchies for Don Carlos. The birth of a Dauphin removed the last obstacle to a renewal of friendly relations with France, all real causes of dispute between the

two countries were removed, and dynastic interests and dynastic jealousies no longer stood in the way of an alliance.

In England Walpole was ready to consider favourably the direct application for assistance from Elizabeth, who, irritated at Fleury's slowness, had placed all her hopes upon England. Patiño, too, was willing to accept an English alliance till Spain was thoroughly prepared to contest British encroachments in South America.

To obtain the settlement of Don Carlos in Italy, and to revenge herself on Charles VI., was the fixed resolution of Elizabeth in 1729. Walpole, in spite of the clamour of the opposition, was as ready as Patiño to cultivate friendship between England and Spain. The great colonial questions had not as yet reached a very acute phase, and he persuaded the French minister to insist upon the introduction of Spanish troops into Parma and Piacenza. On November 9 the negotiations between the three Courts culminated in the Treaty of Seville, — joined a few days later by Holland. By this treaty the privileges granted to the Ostend East India Company in 1725 were revoked, the English trade to the Indies as well as to the Assiento were placed on their former footing, the Spaniards virtually resigned all claim to Gibraltar and Minorca, the succession of Don Carlos to the Italian duchies was guaranteed, and the occupation of Leghorn, Porto Ferrajo, Parma, and Piacenza by 6000 Spanish troops was arranged for. Elizabeth Farnese had apparently triumphed, and the succession of Don Carlos was assured. And though her satisfaction was modified by a delay of some years before the execution of the terms of the treaty, the importance of that treaty is undoubted. The unnatural Austro-Spanish alliance came to an end, and its place was taken by an arrangement far more in consonance with Spanish interests. For, though differences might arise, the relations of France and Spain were henceforward more cordial, and the saying of the Spanish ambassador in 1700 — henceforward there are no Pyrenees — seemed likely to be realised. The interests of the Courts of

**The Treaty of Seville, 1729.**

Paris and Madrid were in many respects identical; in the New World their claims did not clash, and both were united in hostility to the encroachments of England. The treaty, moreover, was a triumph of Fleury's policy, which since 1726 had aimed at enlarging the Anglo-French alliance by the introduction of Spain. He had now succeeded in returning to the later Orleanist policy, he had come to a better understanding with Spain, while keeping France firm to the alliance of Hanover. France again stood before Europe as the leading Bourbon Power, with Spain in due subordination. Peace had been preserved, and the credit of averting a European war could be equally shared by him and by Walpole. But for two years it did not seem at all improbable that the Treaty of Seville would be followed by a struggle in Italy between the forces of Austria and Spain. The treaty left Charles VI. isolated and furious at the conduct of Spain; in France the anti-Hapsburg party clamoured for war; in England the ministry was far from harmonious. Both Fleury and Walpole had difficult tasks to perform. The former was not yet prepared for a close offensive and defensive alliance with Spain; though resolved not to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, he was by no means anxious for war with Austria; at the same time he was jealous of England's influence at Madrid, and showed no desire to carry out the Treaty of Seville. Walpole, like Fleury, was hampered by a powerful opposition. Though prepared to fulfil, if necessary, his engagements with Spain, he had no sympathy with the views of Townshend, who, like Villars, desired an immediate attack on the Emperor. The English Government feared that the outbreak of a general European war would be followed by an attack on Hanover, and by the occupation of the Austrian Netherlands by the French. It desired that all military operations should be confined to the bone of contention, — the Emperor's Italian dominions, — and that at all hazards no French invasion of the Austrian Netherlands should take place. But the English opposition, led by Wyndham and Pulteney, hampered the Government by attacks

**England and Spain.**

on the close connection subsisting between England and France, and it became evident that there was a strong feeling in the country that Austria, a country without colonies or a fleet, and since 1688 closely connected with Great Britain, was England's true ally, and that France and Spain, with their enormous colonial possessions and their weak navies, were her real foes.[1] The continued outrages of the Spanish *guardacostas* upon English traders and sailors in Spain and in Spanish America in 1730 and 1731, together with disputes about the boundaries of Georgia and the cutting of logwood, afforded justification for the attitude of the opposition. English trade was harassed, and not altogether unjustly, for the smuggling carried on by Englishmen had reached very considerable lengths. As long as the provisions of the Treaty of Seville remained a dead letter, the Spanish Government paid no attention to the English grievances. But neither Elizabeth nor Patiño were prepared to break with England. Philip, whose views were far more national than those of his wife, was always anxious for a close union with France, but Elizabeth was only intent upon carrying out her Italian projects, while Patiño, like Alberoni and Ripperdá, though realising the full import of English trading rivalry, was as anxious as Walpole to solve the present difficulties without recourse to arms. In January 1731 the death of the Duke of Parma brought matters to a crisis. Imperial troops occupied the duchies, while Elizabeth demanded that England and France should fulfil their engagements.

**The Second Treaty of Vienna, 1731.**

A European war seemed inevitable if Spanish soldiers landed in Italy. It was, however, averted by the offer of England to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction. Though Fleury was determined to give Charles no guarantee, Walpole had no such objection. For the sake of a direct guarantee of his family arrangement by the Maritime Powers, Charles agreed to withdraw his troops, and to allow Don Carlos to take possession of Parma, and to sign a treaty to that effect with England, Holland, and Spain. This settlement, known as

[1] *See* Jobez, *La France sous Louis XV.*

the second Treaty of Vienna, consisted of two treaties, the first made with England and Holland in March 1731, the second with Spain in July. By the former England and Holland recognised the Pragmatic Sanction, while the Emperor granted George II. formal investiture of Bremen and Verden, agreed to suspend the Ostend East India Company, and to permit 6000 Spanish troops to enter the Italian duchies. In the latter treaty no direct guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction was insisted upon. In December 1731 Don Carlos and Spanish troops, escorted by an English fleet, landed in Italy, and early in 1732 entered into quiet possession of Parma. Elizabeth had won a great triumph. Don Carlos was secure in Parma and Piacenza, and, by an arrangement with the Grand Duke, his succession to Tuscany had been assured. The arrangements made at Utrecht had been modified through the pertinacity of the queen, the Austrian hold on Italy had been weakened, and a Spanish dynasty introduced into Parma. Her success had been secured in the face of overwhelming difficulties both at home and abroad. In 1713 Spain was weak and divided, and of little account in Europe. In 1731 she had become a powerful nation, whose policy was independent, and whose alliance was valuable.

The second Treaty of Vienna is important, not only in the history of Spain, but also in reference to the attitude and policy of the other European Powers. The establishment of a young Spanish dynasty in Italy was fraught with important consequences to Austria, as well as to Italy itself. Charles VI. had again illustrated his willingness to retire from strong positions for the sake of phantoms, and had withdrawn his support from the Ostend Company. In 1733 the Mohammedan Government, incited by the rival European Companies, destroyed Bankipur. The shareholders endeavoured in vain to transfer the centre of their European trade to Hamburg or to Trieste, but, after a long struggle against adverse fortune, the Company became bankrupt in 1784, and was finally extinguished in 1793.

In 1731 the conclusion of the Treaty was thought to assure to Europe some years of tranquillity. The dreaded union of

France and Spain did not appear likely to take place, for France and Spain were not on good terms. The settlement of the question of the Italian duchies had been effected without the co-operation of France, whose influence was for the moment lessened, while the dreaded growth of Bourbonism, which since 1729 had been a source of alarm at Vienna no less than at London and the Hague, seemed to have received a decided check. The friendship between England and Spain and between Spain and the Emperor appeared likely to continue. Colonial disputes had been peacefully adjusted, and the affairs in the Italian Peninsula offered no opening for hostile manifestations.

But the calm of 1732 was the calm which preceded a storm.

# CHAPTER IV

## THE WAR OF THE POLISH SUCCESSION

### 1733–1735

Austria from 1720 to 1733 — The Views of Fleury, Walpole, and Patiño — Europe in 1732 — Growth of Hostility between England and Spain — The Death of the Polish King, 1733 — Sardinia under Victor Amadeus I., 1715–1730 — France makes Treaties with Sardinia and Spain — Opening of the War — France attempts to gain the Co-operation of Turkey — Fleury fails to grasp the Situation — Success of the Russian and Austrian Policy in Poland — Success of the French in Italy and on the Rhine — Divergent Interests of Spain and Sardinia — The Third Treaty of Vienna, 1735 — Death of Eugene — Fall of Chauvelin — Death of Patiño — The European Importance of the War of the Polish Succession.

THE happiest years of Charles VI.'s reign were probably those which fell between 1720 and 1733. The Hungarians were tranquil, and no troubles on the eastern frontier disturbed the Court of Vienna. His territorial gains at the expense of the Turks were still intact, and Prince Eugene was at the height of his fame. Though the terms of the Barrier Treaty and the opposition of the Maritime Powers to the Ostend East India Company had caused a certain amount of friction, and though the treaty of 1725 had alarmed Europe, Charles had allowed his desire to secure the guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction to overmaster all questions of higher policy. His army was weak, his treasury was empty, and in case of war Austria was in a peculiarly defenceless position. Charles had every reason to desire peace. The second Treaty of Vienna seemed to bring with it the certainty of the preservation of the European *status quo* for many years to come. The advantages

Austria from 1720 to 1733.

of peace were no less clearly appreciated by the English and Spanish ministers, while in France Fleury's pacific views were well known. He had no taste for adventurous schemes, and, moreover, he was engaged in a bitter struggle with the *Parlement* of Paris. France, thus engaged at home, and without any allies on whom she could depend in the event of the outbreak of hostilities, seemed unlikely to disturb the harmony of Europe. England, fully occupied with the development of her trade and the expansion of her colonies, was governed by a minister who, in spite of the attacks and denunciations of a formidable opposition and the warlike ideas of George II., was resolved to maintain peace, and, if possible, friendly relations with France. Like Fleury and Walpole, Patiño held pacific views; Spain and England appeared to be on friendly terms, and the relations of both countries with France were outwardly satisfactory. In spite, however, of this reassuring outlook, the year 1732, though undisturbed by actual war, saw the gathering together of a storm which burst upon Europe in 1733, and was followed by a long period of conflict.

**The Views of Fleury, Walpole, and Patiño.**

In reality the political situation after the second Treaty of Vienna was, if examined closely, far from reassuring. In France the existence of a powerful war party, which each year became more bellicose in its views and more popular with the nation, was a distinct menace to the peace of Europe, while Louis XV.'s determination to place Stanislas Leszczynski on the Polish throne whenever a vacancy occurred, was a warning to Europe that France was ready to return to the policy of Louis XIV. This war party, headed by Villars in the French Council, advocated union with Spain and alliance with the small German states and with Sardinia. The union with Spain would bring about the ruin of England's commerce, while the friendship of the lesser German Powers would prevent the outbreak of hostilities on the part of the Emperor.

**Europe in 1732.**

These views acquired fresh importance owing to the growing irritation between Spain and the Emperor, and the increasing

commercial and colonial rivalry between England and France, and between England and Spain.

The presence of Don Carlos in Parma, and the occupation of the Duchy of Tuscany by 6000 Spanish troops, naturally gave rise to constant friction between the Courts of Madrid and Vienna. The dynastic aims of Elizabeth Farnese in Italy had by no means been entirely fulfilled, and she was watching for an opportunity to make fresh acquisitions. She and Philip soon realised that for the furtherance of their aggressive schemes a French alliance was eminently desirable. The French Government on its part was equally anxious to make a treaty with Spain which should unite the Bourbons against England. The commercial and colonial rivalry between France and England rendered a collision between the two Powers in the not very distant future inevitable; it became the object of both nations to secure the Spanish alliance; and at Madrid Keene and Rothenburg, the rival ambassadors, engaged in a great diplomatic duel. Walpole and Patiño were both bent on the preservation of peace, — the former in order to maintain the House of Brunswick on the English throne, the latter in order that Spain should have time to gain strength and to improve her navy. Philip was, as usual, inclined towards a French alliance, while Elizabeth, who hated Fleury, desired with Patiño to preserve friendship with England. But as the year proceeded the Spanish Court changed its policy, and declared boldly against England and in favour of France. For this sudden change dynastic interests and national considerations were equally responsible. English ministers gave no encouragement to the extensive designs of Elizabeth Farnese, while the French Government, holding out hopes of further acquisitions in Italy, incited the queen against the Emperor. At the same time commercial disputes with England had entered an acute phase. A state of things existed in South America somewhat similar to the position of affairs in North America during the years immedi-

**Growth of Hostility between England and Spain.**

ately preceding the Seven Years' War. In 1732 England and Spain were practically at war in the Pacific, just as in 1754, two years before the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, hostilities had definitely broken out between the English and French colonists in North America. The Assiento Treaty had never been popular in Spain; while the English right to send annually a ship to South America was the cause of a vast amount of smuggling.[1] Additional circumstances combined to increase the irritation between the two countries. The English and Dutch objected to a proposed new Philippine Company. English men-of-war, often on the flimsiest pretexts, seized *guardacostas*, while the Spaniards replied by capturing English merchantmen. In 1731 the famous Jenkins had lost his famous ear, and the only explanation given by the Spaniards was that such outrages were the work of pirates, and not of Spanish *guardacostas*.

Spanish susceptibilities throughout these trying years received scant recognition from the English merchants, furious at the right of search claimed by the *guardacostas*, while the whole influence of the English press, backed up by a powerful and unscrupulous opposition, was employed to force England into a war with Spain.

Had it not been for Philip's illness in August, war with England would have broken out in September 1732.[1] The efforts of the English ministers to bring about a satisfactory reconciliation between the Courts of Vienna and Seville never ceased, but they were now opposed by the French Government anxious to conclude a treaty with Spain, and to embroil that country with Austria. In spite of all the efforts of Patiño, it became clear at the beginning of 1733 that a European war was near at hand. In February, Augustus II., King of Poland, died; his death gave the signal for the outbreak. France at once took the initiative. Though occupied with a religious struggle with the *Parlement* of Paris, though financial disorders remained unchecked, the French

**The Death of the Polish King, Feb. 1733.**

[1] *See* Armstrong, *Elisabeth Farnese*.

Government only expressed the national feeling when it decided, in pursuance of the traditional policy of France, to defend the independence of Poland, and to support by force of arms the candidature of Stanislas Leszczynski, the father-in-law of Louis XV.

In face of the certain opposition of Russia, Austria, and the probable opposition of Prussia, the problem before the French Government was not how to get Stanislas elected, but how to maintain him on the throne when elected. Since the beginning of the century Russia and Austria had taken a deep interest in Polish affairs, they were prepared vigorously to resist French interference in Poland, and they could easily find means to nullify the election of a French candidate. Saxony, moreover, lent itself to the furtherance of Russian and Austrian designs, and Poland, with no clear policy, and the prey to internal divisions, was totally unable to resist the forces of the two Imperial Powers. 'The Poles,' said Stanislas, 'will nominate but will not support me.' Stanislas could not hope to retain Poland unless France supported him, not only by her alliance, but also by force of arms. In spite, however, of the pacific assertions of Fleury, the French Government adopted the views of Chauvelin and Villars, and determined to place, and if possible to maintain, Louis' father-in-law on the Polish throne, and at the same time to deal a telling blow at the House of Hapsburg.

Preparations were made to attack Philipsburg in the summer of 1733, while negotiations were hurried on with Spain and Sardinia. In the former country, the warlike aspirations of Philip carried the day against Elizabeth and Patiño; in the latter, to the surprise of Charles VI., Charles Emanuel, the young king of Sardinia, consented to admit the French into Italy.

**Sardinia under Victor Amadeus, 1715–30.**

But the young king of Sardinia was wise in his generation. His father, Victor Amadeus, with consummate skill had placed the young kingdom of Sardinia in a fairly strong position. By the Treaty of Utrecht, he was authorised to build strong places in his states wherever he pleased, and with the addition of Sicily and the title of

king he might hope for the rapid development of his kingdom. The forced exchange of Sicily for Sardinia was in reality not a loss, for the latter island was close to his Italian lands, and the royal position enabled him to keep envoys at the principal European capitals, watch his interests, and take part in the diplomacy and intrigues of the time. From 1718 to 1730 he had devoted himself to the work of legislation and administration, and carried out important reforms, which a tedious quarrel with the Papacy over his undoubted right to nominate to vacant benefices — which was finally recognised by Benedict XIV. — did not interrupt. Financial reforms were boldly dealt with; the exemption from taxation enjoyed by the nobles was removed; the revenue was augmented; venality was checked; agriculture and sheep-farming were encouraged. All owners of land were compelled to exhibit their titles, and the slightest irregularity resulted in the confiscation of the property. By these and similar measures feudalism in his dominions was in great measure destroyed, and Victor Amadeus succeeded in enforcing equality before the law, and that without any revolt, conspiracy, or civil war. In many other ways the new Italian kingdom profited from the wise rule of Victor Amadeus. An Hôtel des Invalides for old soldiers was established. Public archives were organised, and the study of Italian literature was encouraged. On September 30, 1730, the abdication of the king removed from the councils of Sardinia that serious and practical spirit which had been mainly instrumental in laying firmly the foundations of the rising Italian kingdom and gave a distinct impetus towards the growth of the sentiment of Italian nationality. His son and successor, Charles Emanuel I., who occupied the throne till 1773, had hitherto been regarded as frivolous and unlikely to guide his affairs with discretion. He showed, however, from the first a keen sense of the real interests of his country, which he guided through a stormy period with consummate success; and after 1748 emulated his father in his desire to carry out measures for the improvement and well-being of his people.

On September 1 Stanislas was elected King of Poland; on September 26 the League of Turin was concluded between France and Sardinia. Chauvelin's general policy at this moment recalls that of Richelieu during the Thirty Years' War. Austria was to be driven out of Italy; the King of Sardinia was to occupy the Milanese and Mantua; Don Carlos was to have Naples, Sicily, and the Tuscan ports; Don Philip, Parma, Piacenza, and Tuscany; while France, as a reward for her assistance, should receive Savoy. But Charles Emanuel's views were not strictly identical with those of Chauvelin. Aware of the desire of the Spanish Court to become supreme in Italy, he was opposed to the introduction of the Spaniards into northern Italy; they should, he declared, occupy themselves in conquering the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and the Tuscan ports. With French aid he proposed to conquer Lombardy and Mantua for himself. On November 7 the secret treaty of the Escurial was signed between France and Spain. It was nothing less than a solemn family compact between the two branches of the House of Bourbon. United, France and Spain were to present a firm opposition to the colonial extension and the commercial aggressions of Great Britain, and at the same time to act together against the Emperor. Each Power guaranteed the possessions of the other. Gibraltar was to be recovered, the exclusive privileges granted by Spain to English merchants were to be revoked, and the combined Bourbon fleets were to repel any attack of the English navy.

**France makes Treaties with Sardinia and Spain.**

The secret treaty of November 7, 1733, resembles in many points the family compact of 1721 made by Dubois. It is important as indicating the natural tendency of the Bourbon Powers to resist not only the expansion of the trade of England, which was thrusting itself into South America, but also the rapid development of the Anglo-Saxon race in North America. The commercial interests of England had definitely clashed with those of Spain even before 1588, and with those of France since 1688. But during the Polish Succession War

the Bourbon arms were mainly directed against the Emperor, and the open hostility of Spain to England was not declared to the world before 1739.

To the surprise of all the combatants, England remained neutral.[1] The opposition, declaring that the Treaty of Utrecht had been too favourable to France, demanded that another Grand Alliance should be formed against the aggressions of the House of Bourbon. But France had carefully guaranteed the neutrality of the Austrian Netherlands now denuded of Austrian troops, and the States-General, realising their inability to defend the Barrier towns, decided to remain neutral. Without the co-operation of the Dutch, Walpole resolutely refused to move. Fleury had already, however, been forced to take action, and on October 23 war was declared against the Emperor. But though Fleury could boast of having organised a league of Powers against the union of Austria and Russia, and though the Emperor could be attacked in Italy and on the Rhine, France had so far done nothing for Stanislas, and had been helpless to prevent 50,000 Russian troops from invading Poland. Louis' unfortunate father-in-law and his French auxiliaries had already been driven from his kingdom, and had taken refuge in Danzig, while Augustus of Saxony was in October, by Russian and Saxon arms, forced upon the unwilling Poles. It was impossible for a French army to march through Germany; a fleet sent to the Baltic would arouse the hostility of England. If France really meant to stand by her candidate, an alliance must at once be made with Prussia, Sweden, or Turkey. Of these three Powers Frederick William had the best army, he was jealous of Russia, he distrusted Charles VI. But he had already decided that the mission of the Hohenzollerns was to unite the detached portions of the Prussian monarchy by seizing Polish Prussia, and he was unwilling to take any step to hinder the inevitable progress of Poland towards dismember-

**Opening of the War, Oct. 1733.**

[1] *See* Heeren, *Historical Treatises*. Ranke, *History of England, principally in the Seventeenth Century*, vol. v.

ment. Sweden, torn by internal dissensions, was for the time incapable of offering an adequate resistance to Russian schemes, and Fleury recognised that though diplomacy might in time convert Sweden into an effective ally, the French Government could not expect efficient aid from any of the Baltic Powers. Turkey, however, remained, and Turkey, owing to its geographical position and its large army, its natural hostility to Russia, and its fears of the advance eastwards of Austria, had every reason to join France in protecting Polish independence. Russia had in 1721 partially dismembered Sweden; she was preparing the downfall of Poland, and that accomplished she proposed to concentrate her attention upon the continuance of Peter the Great's policy with regard to Turkey. Whenever the Russian attack took place the Porte would find itself quite unable to withstand 200,000 disciplined Russian troops, unless it could obtain the support of one of the great European Powers. Poland and Turkey stood and fell together. At the time of the capitulation of the Pruth, Peter the Great had solemnly promised that Russia should not interfere in the internal affairs of Poland. In 1733 Turkey had every reason for apprehension and every inducement to take active measures. In the Tartar tribes, Turkey possessed an immense if somewhat undisciplined army. The prestige of France was high among these tribes, and in 1730 the Khan had assured the French ambassador Villeneuve of his readiness to aid France in placing Stanislas on the Polish throne.

**France attempts to secure the Co-operation of Turkey.**

The neutrality of England was bitterly resented by the Court of Vienna, and especially by Prince Eugene. He was convinced that the House of Austria, without the assistance of the Maritime Powers, could not resist the combination brought against it, and, in letters which were laid before George II., he graphically described the result upon the empire and Europe of England's non-intervention. It had been for many years a fixed principle with the English parliament to maintain an equilibrium between Austria and France, and though Walpole

might say with truth that the succession to Poland did not affect England, it could not be denied that England was interested in the fate of Italy and the aggrandisement of France. Walpole's policy at this juncture may have been consistent with the momentary advantage of Hanoverian dynasty, but it is open to the charge of being detrimental to the general interests of England and Europe. It is a tenable view that had Austria been vigorously supported by the Maritime Powers, Europe might have been spared the War of the Austrian Succession.[1] The Emperor was thus left to combat the forces of France, Spain, and Sardinia in Italy and on the Rhine — a combination seemingly due to the aged and pacific French minister.

In 1733 Villeneuve urged the Turks to move. But though Fleury had issued a manifesto declaring that any interference in Poland would be regarded by France as a menace to the general peace, and had secretly despatched Stanislas to Poland, the Porte refused to take action till France declared war against Austria and made a defensive league with Turkey. But Fleury, a prince of the Church, was, like Louis XIV., unwilling to make an alliance with the Infidel; and the Turks, fearful of being attacked by Russia and Austria simultaneously — as indeed happened a few years later — absolutely refused to move unless France would at least engage not to make peace with Austria so long as Russia was at war with the Porte. The renegade Pacha Bonneval, then in the Turkish service, urged a close alliance between France and Turkey. Sweden would join it, while England, he said, will soon recognise that in Russia she has a dangerous rival in the distant regions of Asia, for Russia, having crossed the Caucasus and the Caspian, will try and seize the trade of India and will spread all over the far east. Thus, with the adhesion of England, Holland, and Spain, a great western coalition will assure the integrity of the Sultan's dominions.

[1] **Ranke**, *History of England, principally in the Seventeenth Century*, **vol. v. p. 238**; Coxe, *House of Austria*, vol. iii. p. 133; Heeren, *Historical Treatises*, p. 299.

But the colonial and Italian interests of France and Spain seemed of greater moment to those Powers than the integrity of the Turkish empire, and Fleury but slowly realised the immense importance to France of an alliance with the Porte. Russia, however, quickly perceived that her plans in Poland would be seriously interfered with by a flank attack from the south-east, and accordingly sent an embassy to Nadir Shah in order to foment a war between Persia and Turkey which should occupy the latter Power till the Polish Succession question was settled. Officers, engineers, soldiers, and ammunition were forwarded to Persia, and till 1741 Nadir Shah remained the close friend and ally of Russia. The election of Augustus III. in October under Russian and Austrian influence was followed by the siege of Danzig by Russian troops. It is round this siege, which continued from October 1733 to June 1734, that the interest of the war in the north centres. Had the Turks entered Poland from the south during the siege, a general rising in favour of Stanislas would have resulted, and Danzig would have been saved. A few lines written by Fleury agreeing to the Turkish demands would have given Stanislas 200,000 soldiers. But the French minister refused to act decisively, and contented himself with an ineffectual attempt to induce Sweden to send aid to the beleaguered town. But Sweden, menaced by Denmark, refused to move. The despatch, however, of a few ships and three battalions into the Baltic to succour Danzig, though unproductive of good results, led to one of the few interesting episodes in the war. The ships having retired to Copenhagen, Count Plélo, the French representative there, took command, sailed back to Danzig, and on May 21 he attacked the Russians and was killed. French troops had for the first time in modern history met the Russians in battle. At length it was decided to send the written declaration demanded by the Turks, to the effect that 'France would not make peace until assured of the safety of the Ottoman Empire.' But Fleury very characteristically,

**Fleury fails to grasp the situation.**

**The Siege of Danzig.**

instead of sending it overland with all possible despatch, preferred to send it by sea. For forty-six days the ship was tossed about in the Mediterranean, and only arrived at Constantinople on July 10. On July 2 Danzig had capitulated, and Stanislas had fled into Prussian territory.[1]

**Success of the Russian and Austrian Policy in Poland.**

It is doubtful if Fleury ever really cared much for the cause of the ex-king of Poland, and during these critical months in the history of Poland he was busy diverting the mind of Louis XV. from the failure in Poland to the French successes in Italy. The Turks, who were occupied during the last months of 1734 in bringing the Persian war to a conclusion, proposed at the beginning of 1735 to enter Poland, and Sweden appeared ready to join in armed intervention. But Fleury, irritated at the slowness of the Porte, and not at all sure of its sincerity, opened direct negotiations with Russia in favour of Stanislas. France thus in 1735 refused to profit from the readiness of the Turks to attack Russia, and six months were occupied in useless negotiations. During these six months the cause of Stanislas was irrevocably lost, and the Russians carried out successfully their policy in Poland. The policy of Charles VI. was no less successful. Augustus III. was not only firmly established on the Polish throne; he had guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction, and handed over Courland to Russia to be formed into a dukedom for Anne's favourite Biren, and all this had been accomplished without a single Austrian soldier being sent into Poland.

The War of the Polish Succession, so far as the interests of France in the east of Europe were concerned, was a serious blow to French prestige; it was at the same time a solemn warning to the rulers of Turkey. The vacillating and contradictory action of Fleury, accompanied by the slowness of the Turks, in the latter part of 1734, had decided the fate of Stanislas, and the ancient policy of France in the east sustained a defeat from which it never recovered. Henceforward

[1] Vandal, *Une Ambassade Française en Orient sous Louis XV.*, pp. 223–5.

the partition of Poland was assured, and all French efforts to prevent it useless. The irresolution and short-sightedness of the Porte likewise recoiled upon its own head, for no sooner was the Polish Succession War ended, than it became the object of an attack by the combined forces of Russia and Austria, and was forced to realise in a very unmistakable manner the close connection between the fortunes of Poland and Turkey.

In the west, however, matters were reversed. There the successes of the French, Sardinians, and Spaniards at the expense of Charles VI. and the empire, indicated considerable changes in the balance of power in Italy. In Italy the Austrian ruler had never been popular. The Italian regiments had been disbanded, and the interests of Italy had in various ways been subordinated to those of Austria. The discontent in Lombardy and in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies augured ill for Austrian operations against Sardinia or Spain. The Emperor, too, contrary to the advice of Eugene, had moved the greater part of his troops from Tuscany and the Two Sicilies in order to place them on the Polish frontier. Hardly 12,000 Austrians remained in the Mincio. In the autumn of 1733 Charles Emanuel took Milan; and reinforced by Villars, who now bore like Turenne the title of marshal-general, and a French army, he occupied all the Milanese territory and invaded that of Mantua. In the south the Spaniards showed no less activity. Under the leadership of Don Carlos they marched, in the spring of 1734, from the Tuscan coast through the Papal States to Naples, and, like Charles VIII., conquered Italy 'with a piece of chalk.' Montemar defeated the Austrians at Bitonto on May 27, 1734; in May 1735 the Spaniards invaded Sicily, and in July of that year Don Carlos was crowned king at Palermo. The kingdom of the Two Sicilies had been conquered, and Don Carlos had founded a dynasty which was to last till our own days.

**Success of the French in Italy and on the Rhine.**

In the north of Italy the Spaniards were not so successful, and the opposition of the King of Sardinia proved disastrous to

their hopes. Spain wished to recover her supremacy in Italy, and Elizabeth Farnese hoped to appropriate Mantua. Charles Emanuel desired Mantua for himself or for the Elector of Bavaria; he was determined that it should not fall into the hands of Spain. He had no wish to see the sons of Elizabeth Farnese established in Italy. He preferred the continuance of the Austrians in Lombardy to the formation of an independent Tuscan state. Not receiving satisfactory assurance on this point from Fleury, he refused to undertake the siege of Mantua, and Villars threw up his command and retired, only to die in June 1734 at Turin, five days after Berwick, at the age of ninety-two.

**Divergent Interests of Spain and Sardinia.**

In the same month the battle of Parma was fought; the Gallo-Sardinian army under Coigny, Villars' successor, held its own, and Merci was killed; in September, Königsegg was defeated at Guastalla. Early in 1735 a temporary reconciliation was brought about between Spain, Sardinia, and France, owing to the arrogant attitude of the English and Dutch; a Spanish force marched northwards, and the siege of Mantua was begun. But the Spaniards had now reached the limit of their successes. At the siege of Mantua, though they were aided by the French under Noailles, who had succeeded Coigny in the command, they received no assistance from the King of Sardinia. Charles Emanuel was fully alive to the undesirability of being enclosed between two strong Bourbon Powers like France and Spain. He had already adopted the accepted policy of his House, and had made secret overtures to the Emperor behind the backs of his allies. He refused to lend the Spaniards the artillery necessary for the siege of Mantua, and the siege artillery had to be dragged from Leghorn and Naples. All hope of the fall of Mantua was finally destroyed by the action of Fleury, who, in consequence of the general outlook, without consulting his allies, had suddenly signed preliminaries of peace with the Emperor.

The French campaign on the Rhine in 1733 and 1734 had been successful. Berwick, now an old man, occupied Lorraine

and the electorate of Trèves, took Kehl, and besieged Philipsburg, where he was killed five days before the death of Villars. Philipsburg fell in spite of the presence of Eugene, and 100,000 imperial troops. But the French won no further striking success in Germany, and Fleury was wise in coming to terms with Charles VI. The Protestant electors were bringing up reinforcements for the imperial army, and fresh troops were being sent to Königsegg in Italy; 16,000 Russians had, by order of the Tsarina Anne, marched across Germany, and joined the Austrians, while Seckendorf, one of Eugene's lieutenants, had defeated the French at Klaussen. The fear of a diversion on the part of England and Denmark in favour of the Emperor was constantly before his eyes. He was aware that negotiations had been carried on for some time past between the Emperor and Patiño, who, representing Elizabeth Farnese, had endeavoured to obtain the hand of Maria Theresa for Don Carlos; Sardinia could never be trusted, and had already divulged the terms of the Treaty of the Escurial to the English Government. On October 5 the preliminaries of the third Treaty of Vienna, between France and the Emperor, were signed, though the definitive treaty was not concluded till November 18, 1738. Stanislas renounced his claim to Poland, and received the Duchy of Bar with the promise of Lorraine for his life, as soon as the death of the Duke of Tuscany enabled that Grand Duchy to be given to the Duke of Lorraine. To Don Carlos in exchange for Tuscany were given the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Tuscan ports and the island of Elba. He further gave up the Duchies of Parma and Piacenza, which were restored to the Emperor, who also received back the Milanese, with the exception of Novara and Tortona, which were handed over to Charles Emanuel. France engaged to guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, and on the death of Stanislas was to take possession of Bar and Lorraine.

**The Treaty of Vienna, 1735–38.**

On the 12th February 1736 Maria Theresa married Francis Stephen, Duke of Lorraine, who, on the death of Gian Gas-

ton, Grand Duke of Tuscany, in June 1737, exchanged Lorraine for the Grand Duchy; and on April 21, 1736, Prince Eugene died at the age of seventy-two. His moral, physical, and intellectual gifts had marked him out for many years as the most distinguished figure in Vienna. He was probably the greatest statesman of his time, and his career coincided with the most glorious period of Austrian history. With remarkable foresight he had urged Charles VI. to devote his energies to crushing the Turks, and extending the Austrian power still further down the Danube. He had no confidence in the Pragmatic Sanction, though by his skill he gained for it whatever success it met with.

**Death of Eugene, 1736.**

Though, owing to the hostility of England to the Ostend East India Company, he had been drawn into an unwilling and half-hearted support of Ripperdá's schemes, he did not approve of the Spanish alliance, and firmly believed in the value of the English connection.

He was convinced that Austria had erred in going to war over the Polish Succession question, foreseeing that the French and Spanish schemes in the west would be furthered; he was, as we have seen, indignant at England's desertion of her ally. He was of opinion that Maria Theresa should have married the Bavarian prince, and that Lorraine should never have been yielded to France. Had such a marriage been carried out, Austria would have been immensely strengthened in Germany, and the Austrian Succession War in all probability averted.[1] In Eugene, Austria lost a soldier and a statesman of the first order, and the collapse that followed his death speaks volumes for his wisdom and prudence. It was not till the rise of Kaunitz that the Hapsburgs again found a statesman capable of guiding the destinies of Austria. Eugene was succeeded by Bartenstein, who was a diplomatist and jurist rather than a statesman.

Important changes also took place in the French Government. Chauvelin, who above all others had been mainly

[1] *Vide* Von Arneth, *Prinz Eugen von Savoyen.*

instrumental in inducing the French Government to enter upon the war, who, like d'Argenson, desired the freedom of Italy from the Germans, who opposed the Cardinal's peace policy, and to whose representations was due the arrangement with regard to Lorraine, was, on February 20, 1737, dismissed and exiled to his estates through the instrumentality of Fleury himself, who accused him of carrying on secret negotiations with Spain and England. He was succeeded by Amelot de Chaillou, who held office till June 1744. With the fall of Chauvelin the influence of the war party in France for some years declined, and it did not raise its head again till the death of the Emperor Charles VI. In Spain the news of the signature of the preliminaries had been received with the utmost indignation. Elizabeth had always hated the French; she now contemplated a close alliance with England. Bitterly disappointed at her failure to bring about the marriage of Don Carlos and Maria Theresa, and at the postponement of her schemes with regard to North Italy, she declared that Spain had been duped by France. Charles Emanuel was no less indignant, and refused to accept Fleury's explanation of what he called the French perfidy. Throughout 1736 affairs in Italy had remained in a very unsettled condition. There was no harmony between the French, Spanish, and imperial generals, and a collision leading to a fresh conflict was thought to be not at all unlikely. On May 18 Spain assented to the preliminaries of Vienna; on November 3 Patiño died. His loss was for the time being irreparable. Clear-sighted, disinterested, hard-working, and full of resource, Patiño had laid Spain under a great debt. Under his ministry the country had made rapid progress. Possessed of a remarkable power of mastering detail, he also held statesmanlike views of the requirements of Spain, and a clear conception of the lines on which her foreign and colonial policy ought to march. His influence over Elizabeth Farnese had been again and again used for the benefit of Spain. He must be classed with Walpole and Fleury as one of the great peace

**Fall of Chauvelin, 1737.**

**Death of Patiño, 1736.**

ministers of the day. Like Fleury he was forced into the Polish Succession War, and like him he brought his country out of it with her prestige heightened, and her territories increased. He was succeeded by La Quadra, afterwards Marquis of Villarias, and the government of Spain was placed almost entirely in the hands of Spaniards.

The Polish Succession War was over, and Europe might hope to enjoy a period of peace. Charles VI., though his armies had suffered defeat, had not been unsuccessful. His candidate sat on the Polish throne, and he had received guarantees of the Pragmatic Sanction from Louis XV. no less than from Augustus III. Though the empire had lost Lorraine, its Duke, the husband of Maria Theresa, had obtained Tuscany, which was now united to the Austrian possessions. Charles VI. had certainly been forced to relinquish the kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Tuscan ports, but he had regained Parma and Piacenza, and his dominions in Italy were consolidated. The Bourbon Powers of France and Spain had the greatest cause for congratulation. Fleury had, in securing the reversion of Lorraine, gained for France an acquisition of enormous value; while Spain had not only conquered a kingdom and founded a dynasty in Italy, but had shown Europe that her soldiers, when well led by generals like Montemar, had not lost their ancient courage and skill in war. Though various circumstances had caused a temporary coolness between France and Spain, the union of the French and Spanish Bourbons was patent to the world, and till the French Revolution the possibility of their domination in Europe haunted the minds of English statesmen.

**The European Importance of the War of the Polish Succession.**

During the war the alliance of Russia and Austria was seen to be of first-rate importance. These two Powers had successfully carried out their policy in Poland, and the presence of Russian troops on the Rhine, for the first time in European history, revealed to startled Europe the value of the Russian alliance, and undoubtedly hastened the conclusion of peace.

Henceforward Poland enters upon the first stage of the period of the Partition Treaties. Owing to the decline of Sweden, the rise of Russia and Prussia, and the alliance between the Courts of St. Petersburg and Vienna, the fall of Poland becomes merely a question of time. Austria has to find that her interests in Poland and Silesia are as important as those in Italy, while it is henceforth a cardinal point in the policy of Prussia to neglect no means whereby her scattered dominions may be united. During the war Savoy had acted with characteristic treachery, and had secured fresh leaves of the north Italian artichoke.

The war had also illustrated the growing coolness between the Courts of Vienna and Berlin. Frederick William had, in accordance with his treaty obligations, sent 10,000 men to the imperial army. But he was much irritated at the course of events in Poland, throughout the peace negotiations he had been entirely ignored, and he declared that he had been deserted by Russia and Austria. He was very suspicious of Charles VI.'s policy in respect of the Jülich-Berg succession, and the end of the war found his relations with the Emperor considerably strained.

With the close of the seventeenth century far-sighted Austrian ministers had seen in the rising Brandenburg Electorate the rival of the Hapsburg state. The Polish Succession War, while justifying their apprehensions, forms a definite epoch in the history of the growth of that rivalry. Before many years were over the conflict between Prussia and Austria opened a new period in the history of Europe.

The Polish Succession War thus affected in various degrees every important European state. The union of Naples and Sicily under one king, and the growth of the power of Sardinia, rendered the war peculiarly important for Italy. The rising influence of Russia had been demonstrated, the importance of the Bourbon House fully vindicated, while the Eastern Question was rapidly becoming a factor demanding the consideration of every European cabinet.

Though the third Treaty of Vienna seemed likely to give Europe a period of peace, it was evident before 1736 had run its course that hostilities in the east were on the verge of breaking out, while in 1738 it was equally apparent that England and Spain were drifting into war.

# CHAPTER V

## THE NORTH AND EAST OF EUROPE

### 1715–1740

**The Eastern Question — Turkey at War with Venice and Austria — The Peace of Passarowitz — Turkey and Persia — Nadir Shah — War between Turkey and Persia — European Importance of the War — The Treaty of 1726 between Russia and Austria — The Reigns of Catherine I., Peter II., and Anne Ivanovna — Causes of the Turkish War of 1736–39 — Marshal Münich — The Opening of the Turkish War, 1736 — Austria joins Russia, 1737 — The Campaign of 1739 — The Diplomacy of Villeneuve — The Political Condition of Sweden — The Diet of 1738 and the French Alliance — Austria deserts Russia — The Peace of Belgrade — Success of French Diplomacy.**

THE war between Turkey on the one hand and Russia and Austria on the other, which began in 1736 and continued till 1739, affords striking indications of the character of the political forces at work in the east and north of Europe. During its continuance the value of the French connection with Turkey was tested, and ample illustrations were afforded of the decadence of Sweden and the corruption of its government. The close interdependence of eastern and western Europe is clearly seen, while the prominent position of Russia and its close alliance with Austria foreshadow their union against Prussia in the Seven Years' War, and their combined action against Turkey in 1787. But above all, the war forced upon the attention of Europe the growing importance of what since the Treaty of Kainardji in 1774 became gradually known as the Eastern Question. From the close of the seventeenth century Russia and Austria had definitely come forward

**The Eastern Question.**

as claimants for portions of Turkish territory. The possibility of a partition of the Sultan's dominions was openly discussed, and the Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699 inaugurated that systematic dismemberment of the Turkish empire which has been consistently pursued down to the present day. But Austria was neither strong nor united, and Russia was not as yet a consolidated state. Peter the Great, indeed, attempted in 1711, with insufficient resources, to destroy the Ottoman power at one blow. He paid the penalty for his audacity, and the Treaty of the Pruth, which alone saved him and his army from complete destruction, relegated the Russians to their northern steppes, and averted all danger to the Turks from St. Petersburg for upwards of twenty-five years.

Since the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 Turkey had been at peace in Europe. That treaty had ended a war declared by Turkey against Venice in December 1714 in order to recover the territory lost in the previous century to the Italian Republic. By the Treaty of the Pruth (July 1711) Turkey under Achmet III. (1703–30) had humiliated Peter the Great and regained Azov. In 1715 she was equally successful against Venice, and her armies under Ali Cumurgi, 'the dauntless Vizier,' easily conquered the Morea and expelled the Venetians from Crete.

**Turkey at War with Venice and Austria.**

The Venetian appeal to Austria was supported by Prince Eugene, and Charles VI. early in 1716 formed an offensive and defensive alliance with the Republic. In spite of the opposition of many of the Turkish statesmen and generals, the Grand Vizier carried the day, and war was declared against Austria. But the confidence of the Grand Vizier was not justified, and the Turks failed in all their enterprises. Corfu, attacked by a Turkish fleet and army, was defended by the Austrian Schulenberg, and in August 1716 the siege was raised. 'It was,' it is said, 'the last glorious military exploit in the annals of the Republic, and it was achieved by a German soldier.'

Against Austria an army was assembled in July 1716, and marched to besiege Peterwardein. In the first encounter with

the enemy's troops, under General Pfalfy, the Turks were successful. On August 13 the battle of Peterwardein was fought, and Prince Eugene won a decisive victory over the Porte. After five hours' fighting the Grand Vizier was killed, and a general rout took place. Twenty days later Eugene besieged Temesvar, which, after the failure of a Turkish attempt to save it, capitulated on November 28, 1716, — its fall being followed by a rising of Servia in favour of the Austrians. But the principal event of the war was the capture of Belgrade. Invested in June by Eugene and 80,000 men, Belgrade, with a garrison of 30,000 Turks, held out till August 18. Two days previously Eugene had totally defeated a large army which, under the new Grand Vizier Ibrahim, had attempted to save the beleaguered city, the fall of which attracted the attention of Europe. With this splendid triumph the war closed. The Porte was anxious to treat, and England, alarmed at the aggressive attitude of the Spanish Court, desired to mediate a peace between Turkey and Austria.

Charles VI. had already determined to exchange Sardinia for Sicily, and wished to have his hands free in view of impending complications consequent on the occupation of Sardinia by Alberoni. In July 1718 the Peace of Passarowitz was signed. Venice yielded the Morea, and the districts of Zarine, Ottovo, and Zubzi. All that remained to her of her former possessions were the Ionian Islands, while on the Albanian coast she kept Corfu and a few cities and districts enclosed in a strip of land four leagues broad and twenty in length. Austria not only completed her conquest of Hungary by obtaining the city and Banat of Temesvar, she also secured Belgrade, two-thirds of Servia, and portions of Wallachia and Bosnia.

**The Peace of Passarowitz, 1718.**

In Belgrade Austria held a well-nigh impregnable position on the Danube, the conquest of the greater part of Servia was a menace at once to Salonica and Constantinople, while her occupation of both banks of the Save placed Bosnia at her mercy. The increase of her influence in the Roumanian lands still

further strengthened her hold on the Danube, and placed her in close proximity to the Black Sea.

The skilful generalship of Eugene had given Charles VI. a dominant position in eastern Europe, and afforded Austria a magnificent opportunity of extending and consolidating her conquests.

Had Charles VI. foregone his western ambitions and continued the war, the Austrian kingdom, freed from any fear of French intervention, would have gained an enormous advantage over Russia in the race to Constantinople, and might have reached the Ægean and Black Seas. But Charles VI.'s mistake was as valuable to the Ottomans as their success at the Pruth, and the Austrian attack was not renewed for twenty years, and then under peculiarly unfavourable circumstances. An admirable opportunity to extend Austrian interests on the Danube and in the Balkan states was lost, and henceforward any Austrian advance eastwards was made in conjunction with Russia.

After the Peace of Passarowitz the Turks, refusing all proposals to attack Russia, turned their attention to the Persian empire, which, in consequence of misgovernment, was in a state of anarchy and the prey to the attacks of the Afghans. In 1722–23 Russia and Turkey, appealed to by Shah Tahmas for aid against his rival Mahmud, had little difficulty in occupying portions of the Persian territories, for in addition to the disputed succession, the Armenians had risen against Shah Tahmas and looked to the Turks for aid.

**Turkey and Persia.**

The death of Mahmud and the succession of his cousin Ashraf to all his claims was followed, in June 1724, by a Partition Treaty between Turkey and Russia, according to which the Tsar was to take the provinces lying near the Caspian Sea, and the Turks the provinces of Georgia and Azarbijan.[1]

Till 1727 the cause of the Sunnite Ashraf gained ground,

[1] Turkey, alarmed at the successes of the Russians, who had taken Baku, etc., had only been prevented from attacking them by Bonnac, the French envoy, who mediated a treaty.

and in that year the Porte, in deference to popular opinion in Constantinople, decided to recognise his claim to the Persian throne as against that of the Shiite Tahmas. This decision, however, proved ineffectual to settle the succession question, for the sudden rise of the famous Nadir Shah restored the fortunes of Tahmas, and brought about the overthrow of Ashraf in 1729, and the expulsion of the Turks in 1735.

**Nadir Shah.**

The famous adventurer was endowed with an indomitable courage and energy which carried all before it. With an unhesitating belief in his own future, he possessed a keen insight into the dispositions of those with whom he was brought into contact. From 1727 he had obtained a firm ascendancy over the weak Shah Tahmas, and laid the foundation of his future greatness. Whatever his personal aims at this epoch may have been, his patriotic determination to rid Persia of the foreigners, whether Afghan or Turk, to put down all rebellion, and to form Persia into a strong consolidated state, admit of no doubt. In the battles of Damaghan and Mourchakor in 1729 the Afghans, under Ashraf, were completely overthrown. In 1730 a further defeat of Ashraf at Istaker was followed by his death in Beloochistan. The Afghan power being destroyed and Persian independence assured, Nadir, still nominally acting in behalf of Shah Tahmas, was able to turn his arms against the Turks, and to regain the lost provinces of the empire. After the capture of Herat in 1728, Nadir had sent to Constantinople an embassy, which proved a failure, owing to the strength of the war party in the Turkish capital.

**War between Persia and Turkey.**

The Sultan Ahmed, though himself anxious for peace, was forced by the Janissaries to seek new opportunities for Turkish aggression in Persia, while Nadir, recognising that the hostility of the Porte was unappeasable, attacked and defeated the aged Topal Osman at Nehavend, and, having overthrown two armies under Timur and Mustapha Pacha at Azarbijan, occupied Tabriz. Ahmed, seeing the hopelessness of continuing the struggle, was preparing to

make peace on Nadir's terms, when, in September 1730, he was forced by the discontented Janissaries to abdicate. During the first year of the reign of Mahmud I. (1730–54) some transient successes were gained by the Porte. Tabriz, during Nadir's absence at the siege of Herat, was again occupied by the Turks, and Shah Tahmas in 1731 agreed to a treaty which provided that, in return for a Turkish contingent against the Russians, a great portion of Azarbijan, and all the territory north of the Ara, should be handed over to the Porte. On hearing of these events Nadir was furious. He at once repudiated the treaty and deposed Shah Tahmas in 1732, replacing him by his son Abbas, an infant eight months old, and resumed the war against Turkey with the utmost vigour. In the spring of 1733 he besieged Bagdad, but in consequence of his rashness was, on July 19, defeated at Sumera by Topal Osman, who again defeated the Persians at Leitan the same year.

Regarding their victories as decisive, the Turks took no necessary precautions, and in the end of the year were totally defeated at Mendeli, the gallant Topal Osman being killed. The war party was still predominant in Constantinople, and after a short interval the struggle was renewed, and became one of great European interest. Fleury was anxious to bring about peace between Turkey and Persia, in order to use the former as a check to the Russian designs in Poland. The Tsarina Anne was equally desirous to see the Turks occupied in Persia until the end of the Polish Succession War; she therefore allied with Nadir Shah, yielding the Persian provinces assigned to Russia by the treaty of 1724 between Peter the Great and Ahmed III., and supplied him with siege material. In 1734 and 1735 Nadir succeeded, after several severe battles, in expelling the Turks from Georgia. These reverses, coupled with the menacing attitude of Russia and Austria, decided the Porte, at the close of 1735, to make peace, and a treaty with Nadir was signed at Erzerum, by which Turkey yielded the provinces of Georgia

**European Importance of the War.**

and Azarbijan. In the following year Nadir Shah, the restorer of Persian independence and the integrity of the empire, was elected king.[1]

It would have been far better for Turkey if she had made peace with Persia in 1729. Her policy since the Peace of Passarowitz had been short-sighted and suicidal. The treaty with Russia in 1724 for the partition of Persia failed entirely to avert the danger from the north, and the Persian war not only occupied her when she might have attacked Russia during the Polish Succession War, but left her weakened in face of the impending attack from the combined Russian and Austrian forces. The aims of Ahmed III. and his vizier, Ibrahim Pacha, had lain in the direction of peaceful relations with the European Powers. Failing to appreciate the imminence of a Russian attack, Ibrahim contented himself with a policy of conciliation, if not of submission, to both Austria and Russia, which brought with it a series of attacks upon the French religious and commercial interests in the Levant. This policy was obviously short-sighted, for Russian hostility never slept. On August 25, 1726, was signed that treaty between Russia and Austria which gives the keynote of the eastern policy of those Powers throughout the century. By the terms of this agreement, each Power was to aid the other, in case of attack, with 30,000 men. In the event of a Turkish war all available forces were to be used. Turkey had henceforward to fear the simultaneous onslaught of the Austrian and Russian empires, to both of which the partition of the Ottoman dominions was a matter of vital interest. But while Austria, involved in German affairs, was unable to devote her full attention to her eastern development, the Russian rulers continued to seize every opportunity of advancing their territory and interests at the expense of the Porte.

**The Treaty of 1726 between Russia and Austria.**

The treaty of 1726 with Austria was the most important event in the reign of Catherine I., who had succeeded her

[1] The treaty between Nadir Shah and the Turks was finally concluded in September 1736.

husband, Peter the Great, upon his death on January 28, 1725. During her reign she made no attempt to check the power of the oligarchy of nobles headed by Menshikov, Apraksin, Tolstoi, Golitsin, Golovkin, and Ostermann, who composed the Upper Secret Council. In 1727 she died, and Peter II., grandson of Peter the Great, succeeded to the throne. During his short reign, in which he showed an excellent understanding though a lack of resolution, first Menshikov and then Alexis and Ivan Dolgoruki ruled in his name. The latter's *régime* marked the triumph of the old Russian party who were opposed to the introduction of western civilisation, and regarded Moscow and not St. Petersburg as the true capital of Russia. On Peter's death on January 30, 1730, the nobles found in the absence of any male representative of the line of Peter the Great an opportunity of still further increasing their influence. After a rule of 118 years the main line of the House of Romanov had come to an end.[1] Peter's eldest daughter Anne had married the Duke of Holstein and had died in 1728 leaving a son — afterwards Peter III.; the youngest, Elizabeth, was popular with the nation and the army. But the Dolgoruki and Golitsin families determined to change the order of succession, and accordingly in 1730 proclaimed Empress Anne Ivanovna, the widowed Duchess of Courland and daughter of Ivan, the elder brother of Peter the Great. A document was drawn up which, while introducing important constitutional changes, would have placed all the power in the hands of the greater nobility. Opposed to the Golitsin and the two Dolgoruki were the Chancellor Golovkin and the Vice-Chancellor Ostermann, who favoured the lesser nobility. Had she, on her arrival at Moscow, been forced to place all the powers of state in the hands of a high council composed of members of the nobility, Anne's position would have been similar to that of the ruler of Sweden, and the fate of Russia might have been that of Poland. On February 26 Anne entered Moscow, and on March 8, having secured the

**The Reigns of Catherine I., Peter II., and Anne Ivanovna.**

[1] *See* Appendix D.

support of the clergy and the army, and being, moreover, popular with the nation, she successfully carried out a *coup d'état*, suppressing the council of nobles, and securing her position as absolute sovereign. All chance of the establishment of an oligarchical republic was over, and the autocratic rule of the Tsars was resumed. The Dolgorukis were ruined, and Anne threw herself into the hands of German favourites of whom the Courlander Biren is the best known. Her foreign policy, guided by Ostermann, himself the son of a Westphalian clergyman, was a continuance and expansion of that of Catherine I.

While the Austrian alliance was preserved intact, friendly relations were opened with Prussia, and a treaty of commerce was made with England in 1732. By the treaties of 1726 and 1732 the foreign policy of Peter the Great was completely reversed, and the influence of France at St. Petersburg had received a palpable check. Fleury cared little for northern politics, and after the recall of Campredon at the end of 1726, a secretary, Magnan, acted as *chargé d'affaires*. Gradually, however, a party headed by Marshal Münich, a distinguished German soldier, was formed at St. Petersburg opposed to the Austrian alliance and in favour of a renewal of the French connection. In 1732, without the knowledge of the Russian minister, Münich and the Tsarina entered upon secret negotiations with France, the Tsarina demanding as the price of the Russian alliance and of the maintenance of Stanislas in Poland, a free hand in rectifying the Polish frontier to the advantage of Russia, a recognition of Russian sovereignty over Courland,[1] and the assistance of French influence in obtaining from the Turks the restoration of Azov. Fleury had thus before him the problem which throughout the century puzzled French statesmen. France was again offered the choice of an alliance with

[1] In 1727 Maurice de Saxe, son of Augustus II. of Saxony and Aurora de Königsmark, was expelled by the Russians from Courland when he had been elected Duke, and the country, though under Poland, became dependent on Russia. In 1737 Biren was made Duke of Courland.

Russia or the continuance of her ancient policy in the north and east. As might have been expected, Fleury was unable to decide between the alternative proposals. He refused to make any definite engagement. The negotiations dragged on, with the result that Russia became more firmly allied than ever to Austria, and the Polish Succession War formed an admirable illustration of the effects of the procrastinating and uncertain policy of France in the east.

**Causes of the Turkish War, 1736-39.**

The Courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg having succeeded in the establishment of a prince of their choice at Warsaw — the first act in the enslavement and partition of Poland — there was nothing after the conclusion of the Treaty of Vienna in 1735 to prevent them from carrying out the second portion of their political schemes, an attack on the Sultan, with the ultimate intention of dismembering his empire. Poland, the plank along which Peter the Great had hoped to march against the Turks, was now submissive, and its submission, combined with the difficulties of the Turks in Persia, seemed to Anne and her advisers to offer an admirable opportunity for wiping out the disgrace of the Pruth and returning to the policy of Peter the Great. In attacking Turkey, Russia could rely on the fulfilment by Austria of the terms of the Treaty of 1726. During the late war Russia, by occupying Warsaw and Danzig, and by taking upon herself the task of repressing all hostile movements in Poland, had left Austria free to combat her enemies on the Rhine and in Italy. She was therefore justified in expecting Austrian co-operation in the east.

Charles VI. himself was by no means opposed to the idea of a Turkish war, and the whole train of events since 1648 tended to impel Austria to look for expansion eastwards. To recompense herself for her loss of power and influence in Germany in the years following the Peace of Westphalia, Austria, by the Peace of Utrecht and by the terms of the Quadruple Alliance, had succeeded in securing a firm hold upon Italy. But in 1735 the House of Bourbon had obtained the kingdom of the

Two Sicilies and the Tuscan ports, while the young kingdom of Sardinia had also asserted its claim to a share of northern Italy. A Turkish war seemed to Charles VI. to afford a sure means for restoring the Austrian prestige and securing territorial compensation for losses in Europe and in Italy. The Peace of Passarowitz had left Austria in a position well adapted for a further advance down the Danube; and Russia, after the close of the Polish Succession War, could, in 1737, rely with confidence upon the hearty co-operation of Charles VI. Indirect assistance might be expected from Nadir Shah. That successful adventurer had not as yet made peace with the Turks, and in 1735 he assured a Russian agent at Tiflis that he would never act against the Tsarina. Within the Turkish empire itself Russia could look for allies.

Russian emissaries had, in the time of Peter the Great, been found among the Bulgarians, Servians, and Roumanians, and when in 1735 rumours of the coming war reached even the distant Montenegrins and Greeks, all the subject Christian population of the Turkish empire were stirred with the prospect of freedom from their oppressors. Russian appeals to the patriotic and religious aspirations of the subject races in the Balkan Peninsula continued from this time to be used as a powerful and successful lever in every attempt to dismember the Turkish empire.

It was not difficult to find plausible reasons for an attack upon Turkey. The Polish troubles had merely postponed the war which had been arranged on the accession of Anne in 1730. To the ambiguous conduct of the Porte during the Polish Succession War Russia had taken exception, for Turkey, outwardly a friendly Power, had sent munitions of war to the opponents of Augustus III.

The periodical invasions of the Tartars across the frontiers of the Ukraine furnished in itself a *casus belli* which, in default of a better reason, could always be used by the ruler of Russia. But there was a more serious dispute with regard to the unsettled claims of Russia to Daghestan and the Kabartas provinces

situated to the north of the Caucasus. During the war with Nadir Shah, Tartar troops had marched through these Caucasian provinces, and collisions had taken place with the Russian forces. In 1735 Russia, freed from the Polish war, opposed the march of a large Tartar army through the Caucasian provinces to Armenia, attacked the Tartar territory, and prepared for the outbreak of hostilities.

**Marshal Münich.**

Münich was made commander-in-chief, and commands were given to Lacy, an Irishman, to Lowendal, a Swede, to two Scotsmen, Douglas and Leslie, to Brigny, a Frenchman, and to Spiegel, a German. Negotiations were at once opened with Austria to secure the aid promised in 1726. Of the cosmopolitan list of Russian generals, Marshal Münich was the most remarkable. He was an excellent example of the eighteenth-century adventurer. Born a German, he had served under the Austrian, Polish, and Russian flags, and had attracted the notice of Peter the Great by his military qualities. The capture of Danzig in the Polish Succession War had added to his reputation as a good tactician and a leader of men. His boldness, amounting often to rashness, endeared him to his soldiers, who had the fullest confidence in their impetuous giant general. With a thorough belief in his own powers, he ignored all difficulties, and was determined to succeed where Peter the Great had failed, to cross the Danube and to rouse the Bulgarians, but above all to capture Azov.

Azov, situated near the mouth of the Don, commanded one of the river routes which seemed to the Muscovite imagination to be the pathway of Russia to the Mediterranean. Secured by Peter the Great in 1699, Azov had been lost in 1711; its recapture was one of the dearest wishes of the Tsarina Anne Ivanovna.

During the winter of 1735–36, Münich made all his preparations, and in the spring of 1736 burst suddenly upon the Crimea, leaving Lacy to besiege Azov. In May the news of the Russian invasion reached Constantinople, and war was

declared on May 28, the very day on which Münich stormed the lines of Perekop, following up this success by the capture of the city itself. He then plunged rashly into the heart of the Crimea, taking the rich city of Koslof on June 17. Lacy had already captured Azov, Kinburn had fallen to Leontiew, and the warlike Tartars of the Kuban had been defeated. The invasion of the Crimea proved costly to the Russians, for they lost by disease and privation nearly 30,000 men, and after destroying libraries and schools, public buildings and monuments of antiquity, and after committing atrocious cruelties, Münich was compelled to evacuate the Crimea on August 25, 1736. In their extremity the Turks appealed to Fleury, the Dutch, and Prince Eugene as President of the Aulic Council. Austria at once offered its mediation, and, in spite of the opposition of the famous Pacha Bonneval, a French renegade of considerable astuteness, who exercised at various times great influence in the Turkish councils, the offer was accepted. The retirement of the exhausted Russian army from the Crimea, and the conclusion of peace with Nadir Shah (September 1736) had placed the Porte in a more hopeful position; but indecision prevailed in the councils of the Sultan, and his advisers blindly trusted the Austrian assurances. They were soon to be undeceived. On January 9, 1737, a secret treaty of alliance was signed between Russia and Austria confirming the engagements entered into in 1726. By this treaty Charles VI. agreed to join in the war against Turkey, and not to make peace without the knowledge of his ally. Austria continued throughout the year 1737 to profess anxiety for a pacific termination of the war, and a congress was opened at Nimirof in Polish Ukraine, and sat till November in a vain endeavour to bring about peace. The terms demanded by Russia and Austria would, if granted, have destroyed the Ottoman Empire and left Constantinople defenceless, and the Turks acted wisely in refusing to discuss them. This attempt at a peaceful settlement did not check the warlike operations. While Lacy ravaged the Crimea

**The Opening of the Turkish War, 1736.**

**Austria joins Russia, 1737.**

in July, Münich in August besieged and took Ochákov, and the Austrians began a treacherous attack upon Servia, Bosnia, and Wallachia. In this campaign the Turks, headed by a new Grand Vizier, and aided by the advice of Bonneval, retook Nissa and drove the Austrians out of Bosnia.

The Turks had found their best security in offering a firm resistance to their enemies, and at the close of 1736 Münich with his shattered forces had been compelled to withdraw to the Ukraine, while Seckendorf, the defeated Austrian general, was recalled and imprisoned. The resistance of the Turks astonished Europe, and cut short the numerous prophecies of the impending partition and ruin of the Ottoman Empire. With the rejection of the extravagant terms of peace, a sudden change had come over the Turks. Bonneval's advice was sought and followed, Villeneuve's council was taken. A new spirit pervaded all classes, and the Porte resolved not to entertain the idea of opening the Black Sea to Russian ships.

In order to raise Hungary against the Emperor, the Sultan recognised the young Joseph Ragotsky as Prince of Transylvania and ruler of Hungary. The year 1738 saw in some respects a repetition of the events of the previous year. The new Grand Vizier, Yegan Mohammed Pacha, attacked the Austrians and captured Meadia in Hungary. Though the Austrians, under Königsegg, won a small success at Kornia, in July the Grand Vizier captured Semendria, and, after an attack of eighteen days, Orsova on August 15, and drove back the enemy to Belgrade. Several encounters took place during the year between the Turks and Russians, in which neither side gained any signal advantage, and Münich retired to the Ukraine in the autumn without having accomplished anything of importance. Lacy indeed succeeded in again invading the Crimea, but failed in his object of capturing Kaffa, the strongest place in the peninsula.

Undeterred by the failure of the campaign of 1738, Münich was strongly in favour of a continuance of the war, confident that Russia could succeed in her designs against the Ottoman

Empire. Anticipating the schemes of Potemkin and Catherine II., he laid before Anne an 'Oriental project,' which implied the rising of the Greeks against the Turks, and the triumphal march of the Russians to Constantinople itself. On August 12, 1739, he entered Moldavia with largely increased forces, defeated a Turkish army at Khoczim on August 18, and proclaimed a descendant of the ancient rulers of the province, Prince of Moldavia. But before he was able to proceed further with his plans for the dismemberment of the Turkish empire he was checked by the news of the Austrian disasters and the opening of peace negotiations. Königsegg's failure in 1737 had been followed by his disgrace, and the appointment of Count Wallis to the command of the Austrian forces. But he was as unsuccessful as both of his predecessors. On July 27 the Austrian army was totally defeated at the battle of Crocyka, and the Turks followed up their victory by besieging Belgrade.

The Campaign of 1739.

At this moment negotiations of peace were resumed under the mediation of Villeneuve, the French ambassador, and resulted in a brilliant diplomatic triumph for France. In 1728 Villeneuve had been despatched by Fleury to Constantinople, charged to procure the re-establishment of the French privileges with regard to religion and commerce, and generally to restore French credit, which had suffered owing to the *rapprochement* of the Turkish and Russian Courts. With the opening of the Russo-Turkish war, followed by the rapid successes of Münich and Lacy, European interests in the Levant seemed likely to be affected. The Tsarina had made no secret of her intention of securing the right of navigation from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean both for ships of war and for merchantmen. The French susceptibilities were at once aroused, and Villeneuve was instructed to oppose such demands by every means in his power. The Court of Vienna refused to see that the extension of Russian influence over the Turkish empire was detrimental to the interests of Austria in the east. It was not, however, till July 1737

The Diplomacy of Villeneuve.

that the Turks, in face of the conditions of peace offered by Russia and Austria at the Congress of Nimirof, demanded the mediation of France. In spite of the fall of Chauvelin, the Court of Versailles acted with vigour, and accepted the *rôle* of mediator, though it remained as determined as ever to strengthen the opposition of the Turks to the opening of the Black Sea to Russian ships.

The close of 1737 found the Turks triumphant at their successes over the Austrians. Villeneuve's duty was to urge moderation and the necessity of making peace. But the Grand Vizier felt that his reputation depended upon a continuance of the war, and Bonneval was equally anxious to continue the struggle. He hoped to raise Hungary against Austria, and to defeat the Emperor by means of his own subjects. The quarrel between the Grand Vizier and Bonneval made the former more willing to listen to the advice of Villeneuve, while the Court of Vienna became more and more anxious to bring the war to an end. Fleury felt no hostility to Austria, and did not regard the interests of France and Austria as irreconcilable. Charles VI., astonished at the Turkish resistance, anxious about the Pragmatic Sanction, and in want of money, was extremely desirous of peace. The campaign of 1738 had cut short all possibility of negotiation, and at the close of the year peace seemed to be indefinitely postponed. Even if Austria consented to treat, Russia might prolong the war, and Turkey, unable to force the Tsarina to conclude peace, might eventually be induced to concede to the Russian terms. What the Ottoman arms, however, could not produce was accomplished by French diplomacy. Though the Russians might remain unaffected even by Turkish successes, the French could influence the Court of St. Petersburg by means of the Swedes. No deserts separated Sweden from Russia. The Swedes, masters of Finland, were within a few days' march from St. Petersburg, and to Sweden the fate of Poland and Turkey was a matter of considerable importance.

Since the revolution of 1720 and the Peace of Nystad, Sweden had been in a state of semi-anarchy, due in great measure to her constitution. Nominally liberal and anti-monarchical, the constitution in reality was in favour of government by the aristocracy. The whole power was theoretically vested not in the Crown or Senate, but in the Diet, consisting of four orders — the nobles, the clergy, the citizens, and the peasants. Each order or estate sat and deliberated apart, and as a natural consequence, the work of legislation was rendered exceedingly difficult. The Government, however, soon lost its democratic character and became an oligarchy. During the session of the Diet the supreme executive, judicial, and legislative power was in the hands of a secret committee composed of fifty nobles, twenty-five clergy, and twenty-five citizens. During the parliamentary recess and on the dissolution of the Diet, the executive power was wielded by the Senate, which was itself dependent on the popular assembly. At first, however, the disastrous effects of the constitution of 1720 did not show themselves. The leader of the nobility and chancellor, Count Arvid Horn, who was distinguished as a soldier and as a statesman, governed wisely, and gave his country a period of twenty years' peace, during which the work of restoration proceeded apace. He deliberately made no attempt to keep up the French connection, but maintained peaceful relations with Russia and a friendly connection with England. Like Fleury and Walpole, the cautious Horn found himself in the course of years confronted by an opposition jealous of his power and bent on a more vigorous foreign policy. The leader of this opposition was Count Gyllenborg, the member of a new family, and he was supported by Count Tessin and other representatives of the younger generation. Like Belleisle, Gyllenborg was vain, was anxious for war, and was determined to exchange the cautious policy of the Government for one more adventurous, and better calculated to restore Sweden to her former position. He and his followers therefore

**The Political condition of Sweden.**

inveighed against Horn's peaceful attitude, declared that the disgraceful Treaty of Nystad must be wiped out, and openly favoured a French alliance.

Nicknaming their opponents the Night-Caps, or Caps, and taking themselves the title of Hats, the party headed by Gyllenborg, supported by French gold, definitely attacked Horn and his supporters in the Diet of 1738.

**The Diet of 1738, and the French Alliance.**

This Diet marks an epoch in Swedish history. The war between Russia and Turkey was at its height. France, alarmed at the Russian successes and fearful of any increase of Russian influence, was anxious to induce the Tsarina to make peace. The divisions and dissensions in Sweden gave her the desired opportunity, and before many months were over her influence was paramount in Stockholm, and Russia, threatened by an attack from Sweden, consented to make peace with Turkey. Where the Ottoman arms had failed French diplomacy succeeded. The Swedish nobles were poor, and venality and corruption were rampant in Sweden, where the saying that every man had his price was almost literally true. Of 700 members of the Diet only 100 refused to be bribed. Foreign ministers were not slow in finding out this weakness of the Swedish Government, and in 1738 France succeeded in practically buying the votes of the majority of the Diet, in bringing about a ministerial revolution, and in placing Count Gyllenborg at the head of the administration. The author of this *coup d'état* was the French ambassador, Saint-Severin, who showed consummate skill in the delicate task of bribing the Swedish deputies. He succeeded in procuring the election of Count Tessin to the office of Land-Marshal or Marshal of the Diet, among whose duties was that of presiding over the secret committee; he gained also the leader of the order of peasants, he procured the practical exclusion of the Caps from the secret committee, and a treaty was signed with France in October 1738.

In return for a close alliance, and as long as Swedish foreign

policy was directed from Paris, France agreed to pay an annual sum of 300,000 crowns to Sweden for the rehabilitation of her army and navy. Sweden was gained, and the influence of Russia and England had been checked. Horn retired, Gyllenborg became Chancellor, Tessin ambassador at Paris, and the Hats were supreme.

At Versailles the party of action urged the necessity of hurling the Swedes against St. Petersburg, while at Stockholm the triumphant Hats sent to Constantinople proposals for a league between Sweden and Turkey.

The beginning of the year 1739 found the Russian Court profoundly suspicious of the intentions of Sweden; and the murder, by the orders of Biren, of Major Malcolm Sinclair, an officer in the Swedish army, on his way back from Constantinople to Sweden, was at once the effect of these suspicions, and the cause of anti-Russian demonstrations in Sweden, and of Swedish preparations for war. Hoping to bring Turkey to terms before Sweden could place an army in the field, the two imperial Courts began their third campaign against the Porte. But though the audacious plan of Münich was partly successful, the Austrians failed, and the possibilities of peace were increased by the fall of the Grand Vizier and the appointment of Elviaz-Mohammed, a man of less obstinate character. The Austrian defeat at Crocyka, and the failure of the Turkish attack on Belgrade, rendered both combatants anxious for peace, and Charles VI. consented to separate his cause from that of the Tsarina. Villeneuve's mediation was demanded, and after long negotiations the Peace of Belgrade was agreed to by Austria and the Porte on September 1.

**Austria deserts Russia.**

The news of the conclusion of peace with the Turks, and of the brilliant victory of Münich at Stavoretchani or Khoten, reached Vienna almost simultaneously. Charles VI. was overwhelmed with grief at having agreed to so disastrous a peace with Turkey. The second portion of Villeneuve's task was to persuade the Russians in the midst of their triumphant course to make peace. In what seemed a well-nigh hopeless

task several circumstances unexpectedly aided him. The determination of the Swedes to attack Russia at the end of the year was undoubted, while a plot, headed by the Dolgorukis and Golitsins, for the dethronement of Anne, bore witness to the existence of grave discontent within the empire itself. The signature of peace by Austria was an additional blow to Russian hopes; and, abandoned by her ally, isolated in Europe, and threatened by a Swedish attack, the Tsarina, on September 18, accepted the mediation of Villeneuve and the terms proposed by him.

**The Peace of Belgrade, Sept. 1739.**

By the treaty signed by Charles VI. Austria yielded, with Belgrade and Orsova, all Servia and Bosnia taken in 1718, and the Danube and Save became the boundaries of the two empires. North of the Danube, Austria lost her holding in Wallachia, but kept the Banat of Temesvar. In the history of Austrian advance eastwards the Peace of Belgrade was a disastrous check to the policy so persistently advocated by Eugene.

In her treaty with Turkey, Russia obtained few advantages. Azov was handed over to her, but its fortifications were to be destroyed; the Russian troops were to retire from the Crimea; Moldavia, Crocyka, Ochákov and Kinburn, with a strip of territory between the Boug and Dnieper, was given her, but no Russian ships were to be allowed on the Black Sea.

Peace made between Russia and Turkey, the position of Sweden became one of extreme difficulty. Her Government had relied on the co-operation of Turkey, and now found itself exposed to the vengeance of the exasperated and disappointed Muscovites. All the skill and energy of Villeneuve were required to save Sweden from the impending attack. After the expenditure of infinite tact he succeeded. On July 17, 1740, a treaty of alliance between Turkey and Sweden was signed, and Sweden was for the moment safe. By the treaty of Belgrade between Austria and Turkey, Russia had been checked in her advance to Constantinople; by the treaty between Sweden and Turkey a barrier was placed in the way of Russian revenge at the expense of

**Success of French Diplomacy.**

Sweden. The Peace of Belgrade was 'the *chef-d'œuvre* of French diplomacy' in the eighteenth century, and increased the prestige of the earlier years of Louis xv. France had largely contributed to the safety of her old ally Turkey, and that Power had shown unexpected vitality and vigour during the war. As a reward for her successful efforts, Turkey was to enjoy thirty years of peace. Recognising its debt to France, the Turkish Government consolidated and extended, by capitulations signed on May 28, 1740, the religious and commercial privileges hitherto accorded to Frenchmen in the east, and thus the objects for which Villeneuve had come to Constantinople in 1728 were attained. As the influence of France on the shores of the Bosphorus grew, that of Russia and Austria declined. France reaped a further advantage from her successful diplomacy. The close union between Russia and Austria was shaken. The Court of Vienna declared that it had been deserted by Russia, and the Court of St. Petersburg complained of the conduct of Austria in making a separate peace. Though the Imperial Courts proclaimed the continuance of their alliance, each endeavoured to make a treaty with France. A secret treaty had already been made between Austria and France in January 1739, relative to the Jülich-Berg succession, while between Fleury and Bartenstein a correspondence sprang up which, if Charles vi. had not died the following year, might have reconciled Austria and France, and anticipated the Treaty of Versailles of 1756. In Russia too French influences tended to assert themselves. Münich, the hero of the last war, had always been an advocate of a French connection, and he headed the French party in St. Petersburg. Prince Cantemir came as Russian envoy to Paris, and a French ambassador, La Chétardie, was sent to the Russian capital. Fleury had succeeded beyond his expectations in his *rôle* of mediator, and France occupied in 1740 a position in Europe which she was not again to hold till the wars of the French Revolution.

# CHAPTER VI

## PRUSSIA AND THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

### 1740–1742

**The Accession of Frederick the Great — The Reforms of Frederick William I. — Foreign Policy of Frederick William I. — The Salzburg Protestants — The Youth of Frederick the Great — Rivalry of Austria and Prussia — Frederick the Great's Character — Frederick the Great and Louis XIV. — The Death of Charles VI. — The year 1740 a Landmark in German History — The years 1740–63 in America, India, and the West Indies — The Immediate Causes of the Invasion of Silesia — Maria Theresa and her Ministers — Fleury's Attitude — Decisive Action of Frederick the Great — The Invasion of Silesia — Mollwitz and its Results — Fleury's Policy — The French ally with Prussia and invade Germany — A Revolution in Russia places Elizabeth on the Throne — Maria Theresa in Hungary — The Treaty of Klein-Schnellendorf — The Election of Charles Albert to the Imperial Throne — Frederick's Invasion of Moravia — Carteret's Foreign Policy — The Failure of French Policy in Russia. The Peace of Abo — The Preliminaries of Breslau and the Treaty of Berlin.**

**The Accession of Frederick the Great.**

On May 31, 1740, Frederick the Great succeeded his father, Frederick William I., on the Prussian throne. Born on January 24, 1713, he was twenty-seven years old when he became king. Of his character little was known. His father's despotic and brutal *régime* had compelled Frederick to turn his attention to literature and music, and during the whole of his reign he delighted in the company of literary men. His first acts showed a liberal spirit. The declaration of freedom of the Press, abolition of legal torture, and religious toleration, was followed by the disbandment of the regiment of Potsdam Guards, and by a distribution of corn at low rates to the poor of certain famine-stricken districts. In the autumn his *Anti-Machiavel* was published

anonymously. Before many months were over it was seen that Frederick was possessed of business-like qualities, that he was keenly interested in political and military affairs, and that he intended that the government should be more centred in himself than it had been in his father. Frederick William I. had ruled with a strong hand; Frederick the Great intended that his power should be every whit as strong. No alteration was made in the fabric of government, which was admirably suited to a country like Prussia. Frederick William I. had carried out many essential reforms, which reflect great credit on his business-like qualities, his indomitable will, and his keen sense of what was to the advantage of his country.

**The Reforms of Frederick William I.**

The Privy Council, which stood at the head of the Prussian administrative system, had been reorganised by Joachim Frederick, and further reformed by the great Elector, who made it a national advisory board, the governors of the different territories having seats in it. Under Frederick William I. the Privy Council, while remaining first in dignity and importance, was found, like the English Privy Council of the seventeenth century, too large for its new duties; and, accordingly, a small body similar to the English Cabinet was formed within it, the members of which, in close touch with the king, supervised finance, foreign affairs, and war and justice. Of these departments those of finance and justice had subordinate chambers or councils throughout the country. Under the minister of finances came the general directory of finance, war, and domains (General-ober-Finanz-Kriegs-und-Domainen-Directorium), which had been formed in 1722 by the union of the war directory and finance commissions, which had hitherto been treated separately, each having its own accounts, officers, and revenues. This general directory became at once the most important department in the state; and with the king as president, five ministers, a number of councillors — each section of whom had special duties and responsibilities — and an elaborate code of instructions, the Prussian administrative system became at once

simplified and improved. Under it worked the Provincial Chambers for war and domains (Kriegs-und-Domainen-Kammern), and under them were arranged the county and town organisations. The landraths and the burgomasters were practically royal officials; the town councils had little real power; the royal will was felt throughout the length and breadth of the land. The king's authority was equally felt in the matter of justice. Above the manorial and city courts came the provincial courts, and from these lay an appeal to the judicial department of the Privy Council.[1]

With infinite trouble Frederick William had organised a system of government peculiar to Prussia, and dependent on the will and intelligence of a single man, which may be characterised as one of the most successful and best administered despotisms of the eighteenth century. Owing to her geographical position Prussia was forced to keep up a large army, and her government assumed a military character. Since the days of the great Elector a strong centralised state had been gradually formed by means of a military despotism, and Frederick William I. had wisely created an army which was henceforth to play so important a part in European history. The northern war of 1718–21 had shown him the necessity of a powerful force capable of defending Prussia against all attacks. In characteristic fashion he formed an admirable army, and before his death, while the peace establishment of England was 17,000 men, that of Prussia was 80,000 men. This large army was not only a great and increasing burden to the people, it created and ensured the absolute power of the government. Most of the public revenues were devoted to its maintenance, and Frederick the Great not only found on his accession a well-drilled army but also a treasure of twenty-six millions. Frederick William I. had created a remarkable army and a new form of government, which rested, like Napoleon's government, entirely on the army, and drew from it unlimited power.

To Frederick William belongs the credit of having formed

[1] *See* Appendix B.

an efficient administrative system, which was admirably adapted for the Prussia of his day. Out of existing materials and systems he had slowly, laboriously, and cautiously carried out a series of skilfully organised administrative reforms which enabled Prussia to bear the weight of her enormous army and to hold her own against a European coalition. Frederick William not only bequeathed to his son the most complete despotism to be found in Europe, — he left behind him the traditions of a foreign policy which, successfully carried out, has placed Prussia among the leading European Powers. Though himself knowing little of foreign politics or diplomacy, and though neither the Treaty of Wüsterhausen nor the Polish Succession War had raised Prussia in the estimation of Europe, he had gained valuable territorial acquisitions from Sweden after the death of Charles XII., and he had struggled hard to secure the eventual succession to Berg and the seigniory of Ravenstein. Though the rising Prussian state was regarded with envy, and opposed and hampered on every possible occasion by Austria and Hanover, the latter still aspiring to a leading position among the provinces of the empire, Frederick William remained, for the greater part of his life, imbued with a strong sense of German patriotism. It was only shortly before his death that he realised that Prussia had as yet little influence in the councils of Europe, and that Charles VI. had outwitted him in the affair of Berg. But though his diplomacy proved a failure, he had in various ways placed Prussia in a position which would enable her to make her influence felt. Not only had he formed one of the best armies in Europe, he had taken every opportunity for introducing colonists of various nations into Prussia. In 1731 a cruel persecution, instituted by Archbishop Firmian of Salzburg, was followed by the flight of thousands of Protestants from the country. Frederick William had early interested himself on behalf of the Salzburg Lutherans, whose complaints the Imperial Diet, with characteristic callousness, treated with con-

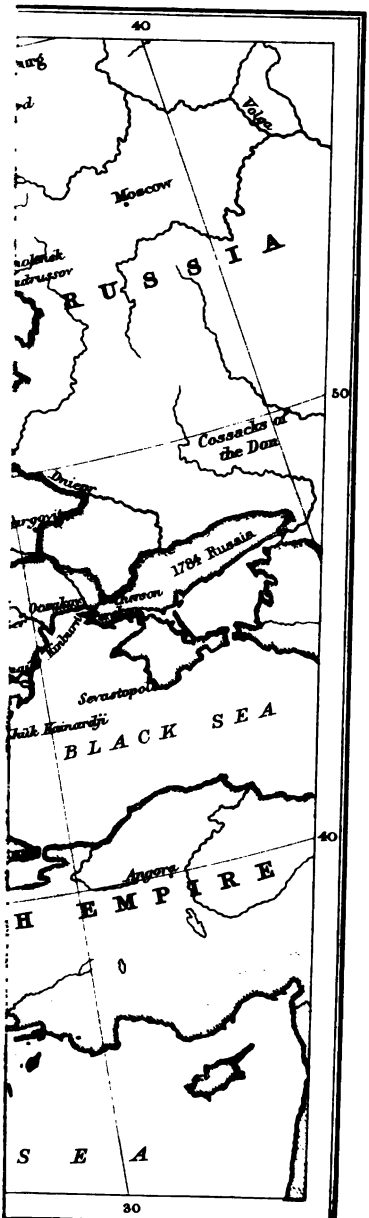
**Foreign Policy of Frederick William.**

**The Salzburg Protestants.**

tempt. His threats and appeals roused even some Catholic princes, and while the archbishop was compelled to modify his policy, some 15,000 Salzburgers were welcomed by the far-sighted king, and settled in the towns and agricultural districts of the former duchy of Prussia (Preussen). The Salzburg Pilgrimage has been immortalised by Goethe in his poem of *Hermann and Dorothea;* the repeopling of Prussia by the peasants and artisans, distinguished by intelligence, thrift, and industry, is not the least of Frederick William's acts, which, like the welcome given to the Huguenots by the great Elector, has placed the present German empire under a debt of gratitude to the father of Frederick the Great.

**The Youth of Frederick the Great.**

The social and domestic relations of the great Prussian reformer are not pleasant reading. His wife, Sophia Dorothea, bore him fourteen children, of whom ten lived to mature years. The eldest, Wilhelmina, whose memoirs give a vivid account of Frederick the Great's childhood, married the Marquess of Bayreuth; and of her four sisters, Louisa married the Marquess of Anspach, Charlotte the Duke of Brunswick, Maria the Marquess of Schwedt, and Ulrica became Queen of Sweden and mother of Gustavus III. Frederick the Great, who was two and a half years younger than Wilhelmina, was born on January 24, 1712, his brothers being Augustus William, the father of Frederick William II., Henry, and Augustus Ferdinand. Frederick William conceived an intense dislike of his eldest son, and on one celebrated occasion the young Frederick narrowly escaped the fate of Alexis, son of Peter the Great. At length, after going through an apprenticeship in the Prussian civil service, Frederick was restored to favour, and in 1732 was betrothed to Princess Elizabeth of Brunswick-Bevern. He served in the Rhine campaign during the War of the Polish Succession, and witnessed the last operations of Prince Eugene, then seventy-three years old, 'an old hero gone to a shadow of himself.' It is quite possible that if Frederick had been in command on the Rhine, a successful attempt would have been




To face Page 132

made to relieve Philipsburg. But Eugene was rendered cautious by age; having little confidence in his army, composed of contingents from various states, he was unwilling to run any risks, and with the fall of Philipsburg the first campaign of the Crown Prince lost all its interest. From the end of 1734 to 1740 Frederick pursued peaceful avocations, devoting himself mainly to literature; while his father found himself at the end of his days the dupe of Charles VI. in the Berg affair, and in 1738 confronted by a coalition which included England, France, Holland, and Austria to prevent the seizure of the duchies of Jülich and Berg by Prussian arms. On his death Frederick William bequeathed to his successor not only the duty of avenging the double-dealing of Austria, and of defeating the consistent endeavours of Hanover to oust Prussia from her leading position in north Germany, but also the task of utilising the magnificent Prussian army for the extension and consolidation of the territories of the rising state.

**Rivalry of Austria and Prussia.**

Prussia owes its greatness to Frederick William I.; it was left to Frederick the Great to develop his father's work, to strengthen the boundaries of his kingdom, and to place Prussia in the first rank of European nations. This revolution in the European states-system was not effected till 1763, after Europe had experienced two mighty wars. Frederick the Great occupies a very prominent position in the history of the eighteenth century. The importance of his reign is due to the revolution in international politics in which he took a prominent part, as well as to his administrative qualities, his statesmanship, his military talents, and his courage under misfortunes. His personal character presents few pleasant traits. The brutal and suspicious treatment of his father had soured and hardened a nature naturally gentle and high-minded, and as he grew older he became more and more hard, selfish, cynical, and sarcastic. But when he chose he could always exercise a great influence on those around him by his charm of manner, and his conversational

**Frederick the Great's Character.**

talents; while with his subjects, and especially with his soldiers, he was, during most of his reign, exceedingly popular. As a ruler he was essentially an opportunist, and a most successful one. Like Hyder Ali, whom he resembled in many respects, he preserved all his faculties to the very last, and died in a ripe and vigorous old age. Like George III. he was industrious, and capable of attending to the smallest details. Unlike George he could originate and carry out the most extensive projects. He resembled Louis XIV. in the way in which he identified himself with the welfare of his country. Till within a few years of the end of his reign there is no doubt that Louis' despotism was popular and well adapted for keeping order at home, and for carrying out ambitious schemes of foreign conquest. Similarly it is certain that the Prussian system of government, tyrannical as in many respects it was, was the only one under which Frederick the Great could have guided his country safely through the storms of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War. His absolutism was as complete as that of Louis, but it differed from it in many essential particulars.

**Frederick the Great and Louis XIV.**

In both France and Prussia popular rights were practically non-existent; in both countries the nobles and clergy were powerless to check the crown. But while the French nobility, with little or no share in the government of the country, were reduced to practical impotence by Louis XIV., the Prussian nobles, in spite of the diminution of their privileges by Frederick William I., remained powerful against all except their sovereign. Many of their privileges were preserved, they took a leading part in the administration, they held high commands in the army, and it was not until the French revolutionary epoch that the new reforming spirit effected drastic changes in the condition of the Prussian aristocracy. There was indeed nothing in common in the general point of view of the two monarchs. While Louis was possessed by a narrow intolerant spirit in religious matters which proved so disastrous to the internal peace of France under his successor, Frederick was in favour

of universal religious toleration. He was the first, and perhaps the most successful, of that generation of philosophic rulers who tried to carry out reforms founded on the precepts of the theorists of the age, and intended to benefit the peoples whom they governed.

Both kings established a bureaucratic system which broke down after they themselves had passed away. Frederick's ministers were reduced to the position of clerks, without the power of initiation, and deprived of all independence. Each department felt the effects of the increased supervision carried out unceasingly by the vigilant and energetic young king. While Frederick the Great was responsible for the prominent position attained by his young kingdom in the middle of the eighteenth century, he was, it has been said, also the cause of its fall at the beginning of the present century. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that without his clear-sightedness, his calm judgment, his relentless will, and the development of his military talents, Prussia would never have risen to a higher position than that attained by Saxony or Bavaria.

On October 20 Charles VI. died, and that event, together with the death of Frederick William, marks the beginning of a fresh period in European and colonial history. Between 1740 and 1763 questions of momentous importance were solved which profoundly affected the European balance of power. In the New World and in India the struggle of England against France was fought out. After the establishment of the maritime supremacy of the former, the loss of Canada by the latter, and the defeat of her policy in India, the rivalry between Great Britain and the Bourbons remained dormant until the outbreak of the contest between England and the American colonies. The question of the command of the sea, together with the further questions concerning the supremacy of the Teutonic or Latin race in North America, and the establishment of English or French influence in India, awaited decision in 1740. They were decided in 1763 in favour of England.

**The Death of Charles VI.**

In Europe itself the years between 1740 and 1763 were also

of supreme importance. Abundant illustrations are afforded of the leading characteristics of the eighteenth century. In Italy, Germany, France, Spain, and elsewhere the new ideas of reform, furthered by enlightened sovereigns and statesmen, were loudly proclaimed, while on the other hand the seizure of Silesia ushered in an epoch of high-handed and unblushing acts of spoliation which reached its height under Napoleon.

**The Year 1740 a Landmark in German History.**

For Germany 1740 is an important date. For with the accession of Frederick the Great may be dated the starting-point of modern Germany. The Thirty Years' War had left her dismembered, humiliated, and in a condition of material, intellectual, and moral ruin. The feeling of nationality, almost extinct, was partially awakened by the aggressive acts of Louis XIV. But Catholic Austria, busied with her own schemes of aggrandisement, and neglectful of the interests of the Empire, was unable to offer to Germans, irrespective of creed, any hope that she would recognise her imperial responsibilities. The possibility of a moral and political restoration was first afforded by the rise of the Prussian state, which, if not bound up with Protestantism, at any rate secured for all liberty of religious thought. Between 1740 and 1763, owing to the rise of Prussia, 'the German national spirit was roused to new life.' The Seven Years' War showed Germany that in Frederick the Great she possessed a national hero, and the national enthusiasm found expression in Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm*, and in Gleim's Grenadiers' Songs. It was during the Seven Years' War that the Germans began to feel themselves a nation again. From 1740 may be dated that avowed hostility between the Courts of Berlin and Vienna which continued till our own day. The early misfortunes and trials of Maria Theresa, it has been well said, form 'the opening scenes of the drama of which Sadowa was the close and Sedan the epilogue.'[1] And with the successful resistance of Prussia to Austria was swept away all the hopes entertained by George II. and his ministers of placing Hanover in the position henceforward occupied by Prussia in north Germany.

[1] Karl Hillebrand, *Lectures on German Thought*. Lecture II.

While the period from 1715 to 1740 had been a period of feverish unrest, of diplomatic activity, and of preparation for the great struggle in which Europe, America, and India were involved, the years between 1740 and 1763 form one drama in three acts. From 1740 to 1748 Frederick the Great was fully occupied with his two Silesian wars, and France was engaged in a double struggle. On the one hand she pursued her ancient policy of opposition to Austria, and in league with many of the lesser German princes made a definite attempt to end the rivalry of 221 years by partitioning the Hapsburg dominions; on the other hand she was compelled to defend her position in North America and the West Indies, her policy in India, and her claim to equality with England on the sea. The Silesian question, the rivalry of France and Austria, and the colonial and commercial struggle between England and the Bourbons of France and Spain, are all fought out simultaneously. In 1748 the combatants, exhausted, draw apart, and the years between 1748 to 1756 mark a period of peace, unrest, and intrigue preparatory to the final struggle of the Seven Years' War, which opens with France and Austria allied against England and Prussia, and which concludes in 1763 with the triumph of the latter Powers, England victorious at all points, and Prussia retaining Silesia.

**The Years 1740-63 in America, India, and the West Indies.**

On Frederick the Great's accession England and Spain were at war on the Spanish Main, and though France was making warlike preparations, there were no signs of any general European conflagration. From the first Frederick recognised the necessity of securing the friendship or neutrality of France and Russia, and negotiations were opened with both countries. In the autumn of 1740, however, two events occurred which decided Frederick to invade Silesia. On October 20, Charles VI. suddenly died, and on the 28th of the same month the Empress Anne of Russia died also. With Charles VI. the male line of the Hapsburg House came to an end, while the death of the Empress

**The Immediate Causes of the Invasion of Silesia.**

Anne left the Russian crown in the hand of a minor, the young Grand Duke Ivan. There was every reason to expect that during Ivan's long minority the Russian Government, at the head of which (after a *revolution de palais* on November 18, which resulted in the overthrow and exile of Biren, who had seized the regency on the death of Anne) was the German Münich, who had been gained over by Frederick, would not interfere on behalf of the Pragmatic Sanction, and accordingly that the King of Prussia would for a time be free to devote all his attention to carry out his deeply laid schemes, and to take advantage of the position of affairs at Vienna. The death of Charles VI. had thrown open to Europe the imperial crown and the Austrian possessions. Since 1718 Charles had made it the principal aim of his policy to obtain from all the European Powers a guaranty that his daughter Maria Theresa should, on his death, enter into quiet possession of his hereditary estates. His efforts had been crowned with success. The Pragmatic Sanction had received the guarantee of Europe, and Maria Theresa's position seemed assured. He had also attempted, though without success, to secure for his son-in-law, Francis Stephen, now Grand Duke of Tuscany, the reversion to the imperial throne. Upon Charles' death England, Russia, Prussia, and Holland at once recognised Maria Theresa's succession to the Austrian lands, while Spain, Sardinia, Saxony, and Bavaria claimed the whole or a portion of the Hapsburg territories. Of the claimants the only serious one was Charles Albert of Bavaria, who, however, failed to establish his contention that the Emperor Ferdinand I. had, on his death in 1564, settled his dominions on his daughter Anna and her descendants (of whom Charles Albert was one) in the event of the failure of male heirs. But though Elizabeth Farnese might desire a kingdom in Lombardy for Don Philip, and the King of Sardinia look forward to securing the Milanese, neither Spain nor Sardinia were ready for hostilities, and Austria would have been secure from aggression had not Prussia and France invaded her dominions and given the signal for a general attack upon the scattered estates of Maria Theresa.

Maria Theresa was, on the death of Charles VI., proclaimed Archduchess of Austria, Queen of Hungary, and Queen of Bohemia, and sovereign of all the various lands included in the Austrian possessions. She was twenty-three years old, was strikingly handsome, and had a charming manner which attracted all with whom she came in contact. Open-hearted and sincere, virtuous and patriotic, with a determination and energy almost masculine, animated by an unfailing courage, deep religious principles, and a stern sense of duty, the young queen might well expect to be treated with consideration by those European Powers which had solemnly promised to respect her rights. She at once named her husband, Francis Stephen, co-regent in all the hereditary dominions, and confirmed the ministers, most of whom were over seventy years of age, in their posts. Of these Zinzendorf, the Chancellor and nominal Chief Minister, and Stahremberg, the Chief of the Finance Department, were both men of experience. But neither they nor Count Joseph Harrach, the President of the Council of War (1738–1764), nor Kinsky, the Bohemian Chancellor, had clear views with regard to the European situation, for, habituated to routine, they were lacking in decision and enterprise, and absolutely unfit to cope with the crisis of 1740. In Bartenstein and Herberstein, the young queen placed at first her greatest confidence. The former, an Alsatian, who by his energy and devotion to Austria had risen to the position of minister, had a deep distrust of Frederick the Great. 'The queen,' he said, 'has no enemy to fear except the King of Prussia.' Zinzendorf died in 1742, Stahremberg in 1745, Kinsky in 1748. While Uhlfeld became on Zinzendorf's death nominally Chancellor, Bartenstein remained from 1740 to 1753 Minister of Foreign Affairs, and had the greatest influence in the Secret Conference of ministers. He was more of a jurist than a statesman, and on the rise of Kaunitz he was, with Uhlfeld, dismissed from the position of minister.[1]

**Maria Theresa and her Ministers.**

[1] *See* Wolf and Zwiedineck, *Oesterreich unter Maria Theresia, Josef II., und Leopold II.*, p. 27.

The late war against Turkey had left Austria weakened and humiliated by the ignominious Treaty of Belgrade. Her army was crippled, her finances were exhausted. She required, as Eugene had declared, 200,000 men and an ample treasure; in 1740 she had an inexperienced queen, an army practically disbanded, and incompetent ministers.

But if the internal condition of Austria was calculated to inspire anxiety, the relations of the Court of Vienna with foreign Powers were in no less critical position. Spain under a Bourbon was tending to a close alliance with France; Elizabeth Farnese aimed at narrowing still further the Austrian dominions in Italy; the ambition of the House of Savoy was a perpetual danger; while in the Polish Succession War the honour of the imperial arms had not been enhanced, and England had shown no readiness to assist her ancient ally.

The real and immediate danger to Austria, however, came from Prussia and France. In 1738 the latter Power had guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction in the strongest terms, and in exchange for her guarantee had secured Lorraine for Stanislas with reversion to France. The cession of Lorraine by Germany was the most successful act of the administration of Fleury, who, aware of the exhaustion of France by her late efforts, and keenly alive to the probability of war with England, desired peace on the continent. No better illustration could be found of Fleury's methods than his conduct on the death of Charles VI. He was a master in the arts of duplicity and evasion, and though in January 1740 he had promised to observe his engagements made with Charles VI., on the latter's death he refused to recognise Maria Theresa, and assured the Elector of Bavaria that France would not uphold the Pragmatic Sanction against the rights of third parties, and further, that she would not prevent him from competing for the imperial crown. He undoubtedly hoped to preserve peace, but declared in casuistical fashion that if it was proved that any third party had better claims to the Hapsburg dominions than Maria Theresa,

**Fleury's Attitude.**

the French guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction fell to the ground. Fleury's equivocal attitude is explained partly by the existence at Court of a strong war party, partly by the previous relations between France and Bavaria. In 1714 by a secret treaty the King of France had promised to support the candidature of the Elector of Bavaria to the imperial throne in the event of a vacancy. In 1727 this treaty had been renewed, and France further engaged to support the claims of the Elector to the Hapsburg inheritance. Emboldened by this alliance, Charles Albert had, at the Diet of 1732, refused his adhesion to the Pragmatic Sanction, and in 1733 France made with him another treaty promising still more explicitly her support in case he was attacked when attempting to make good his claims. In 1738 in order to justify and explain the French guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction and the apparent desertion of Bavaria, Fleury elaborated a fine distinction between a claim and a lawful possession, and introduced a reservation about the rights of third parties. It was impossible, according to Fleury's reasoning, for France to defend Maria Theresa if it could be proved that she was not legally entitled to her possessions. In 1740, not feeling sure of his ground, Fleury, after Charles VI.'s death, hesitated and equivocated. He told the Bavarian minister that the Elector could aspire to the imperial crown, as the Pragmatic Sanction contained no stipulations about the election to the Empire. Very characteristically he determined to wait the course of events before taking any decided action with regard to the hereditary possessions of Charles VI.[1]

Frederick the Great had, on the contrary, no scruples and felt no hesitation. He was not hampered by the existence of any opposition at his Court. He resolved to seize Silesia. Like Maria Theresa, in 1749 he invited from Podewils his chief adviser in diplomacy and foreign affairs, and from the field-marshal Schwerin, the expression of their views. They agreed on October 29 in advising

**Decisive Action of Frederick the Great.**

[1] *See* Tuttle, *History of Prussia*, vol. i. p. 51.

the king to open negotiations with Austria, and to offer in return for Silesia to give up all claim to Berg, and to support the Pragmatic Sanction and the candidature of the Grand Duke Francis to the imperial throne. But the death of the Empress Anne of Russia decided Frederick to act first and negotiate afterwards. If Austria refused to treat, then he would ally with Bavaria and Saxony, invoke the aid of France, support the election of Charles Albert as Emperor, and hold Russia in check by an understanding with Sweden. On December 16 the Prussian army invaded Silesia, and the War of the Austrian Succession began.

**The Invasion of Silesia.**

It is impossible to justify Frederick's action. He himself declared that the desire to make a name was one of his motives. In extenuation of the invasion it has been urged that the conduct of Charles VI. with regard to Jülich and Berg had been the reverse of straightforward. But the violation of the Treaty of 1728 is certainly not a justification for the seizure of Silesia. Austria and Prussia were united by a long series of treaties. They had fought together in the Polish Succession War, and Frederick William I. had guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction. With regard to the Prussian claims to Silesia, it cannot for a moment be asserted that Frederick's invasion had anything to do with any supposed claims which he might have had. Jägerndorf had been confiscated from the Elector of Brandenburg by Frederick II. in 1623, and in 1675 Leopold I. had seized the duchies of Liegnitz, Brieg, and Wohlau. When Frederick III. found himself compelled to restore Schwiebus to Leopold in 1694, he formally resumed his claims upon the Silesian duchies, — which shadowy claims rested upon an agreement made in 1537 between Joachim II., Elector of Brandenburg, and the Duke of Liegnitz. Frederick William I. had never upheld these suspended claims; there is no proof that they continued to survive in the traditions of the House of Hohenzollern, nor is there any evidence that the question of his right to Silesia ever entered Frederick's mind. It has also been suggested that

Saxony might have seized Silesia, and that, as a general European war was certain, Frederick showed his wisdom in seizing Silesia before the other Powers moved. Whether a general European war was inevitable is open to very serious doubt, but even in that event the seizure of Silesia would not be justified. Frederick acted on his own responsibility, and his cause never called forth any real enthusiasm in England or Germany till he stood forth in the Seven Years' War to defend his new possession against the combined efforts of France, Austria, and Russia.

The invasion of Silesia was carried out most successfully, and by the end of January all the province, including Breslau the capital, was with the exception of Glogau, Brieg, and Neisse in Prussian hands, and Frederick returned to Berlin. In spite of his remarkable success, he found himself in a most precarious position. Maria Theresa had refused to negotiate with him as long as a Prussian soldier remained in Silesia; England was negotiating with Austria for the formation of a powerful coalition against him; the Austrian preparations for the recovery of Silesia were prompt and extensive, and the fall of Münich in March 1741 seemed to threaten him with a Russo-Austrian alliance. At the beginning of April Neipperg, a brave pedantic soldier of the old school, led an Austrian army into the heart of Silesia, and on April 10 the battle of Mollwitz was fought and won by the Prussian infantry. This famous victory brought in its train many important results. The equivocal reputation of the Prussian soldiers was established, and it was recognised in Europe that in Prussia a new Power had arisen which could withstand and overthrow the Hapsburg veterans. Frederick had now secured Lower Silesia and Brieg, and it was evident to English statesmen that Maria Theresa's wisest policy would be to sacrifice Silesia and to make terms with Frederick.

**Mollwitz and its Results.**

But though defeated, Maria Theresa refused to entertain the idea of sacrificing Silesia, and prepared to face the new situation created by her defeat at Mollwitz. Spain, Bavaria, Sardinia, and Saxony determined to pursue their own ends at the

expense of Austria, and the French Government came to a momentous decision — namely, to repudiate the Pragmatic Sanction, to actively support the candidature of Bavaria for the imperial throne, and to destroy for ever the power of the Hapsburgs.

**Fleury's Policy.**

As early as December 1740 Fleury had so far yielded to the active, noisy, and influential section who were in favour of an attack upon Austria as to assure the brilliant, enterprising, and unscrupulous leader of that section, Charles Louis Fouquet, Count of Belleisle, that France, while recognising Maria Theresa as Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, would support the Elector of Bavaria in his candidature for the imperial throne; and at the same time informed him that Louis XV. had appointed him plenipotentiary to the German Diet in order to secure the support of that body for the furtherance of the French policy. Frederick's invasion of Silesia had been regarded at the French Court as doomed to failure, and Louis XV. had declared that the King of Prussia was mad. Various courses of action had suggested themselves to Fleury. France could carry out the treaty of 1735 and reserve her strength. This line of policy would have proved the best for France, then about to engage in a great struggle with England. Another course was to promote the election of Francis Stephen to the imperial throne on the understanding that Maria Theresa should give France a portion of the Low Countries or Luxemburg. A third course was to carry out the Pragmatic Sanction strictly, but in accordance with French traditions, and, in agreement with the secret treaty of 1714 with Bavaria, to support Charles Albert's candidature for the imperial throne. Such a line of action would be difficult to pursue owing to the Elector's claim to all Maria Theresa's inheritance. The last and the worst course open to France was to break through all engagements and seize the opportunity to dismember Austria.

Till the battle of Mollwitz, Fleury, as has been said, had inclined towards the third alternative, and had sent Belleisle to meet the Diet at Frankfort in order to promote the election of

the Elector of Bavaria. The objections to this course were obvious. England's jealousy would be aroused at the interference of France in Germany; she would be forced to support Austria warmly, and, if possible, to repeat her policy in the Spanish Succession War of forming a great alliance of all the states of Germany against France. Fleury's indecision had disastrous effects upon France, and, indeed, upon Germany. Maria Theresa, fully convinced of his pacific intentions, refused with scorn Frederick's attempts to treat after Mollwitz, and declined to be guided by the advice of Walpole, who urged her to accept the loss of Silesia and to unite with Prussia against France; while the Prussian king, isolated in the midst of his successes, was forced to turn definitely to France.

**The French ally with Prussia and invade Germany.**

To Belleisle Frederick's victory afforded the opportunity which he had long looked for of carrying out his elaborate policy. A league was to be formed, including France, Prussia, Spain, Bavaria, Sweden, and Saxony. Austria was to be dismembered, the Elector of Bavaria was to become Emperor, and Germany was to be divided into several equal kingdoms all incapable of resisting France. France herself, the arbiter of Europe and the protectress of German independence, was to receive the Low Countries. On April 20 he appeared in Frederick's camp, where foreign envoys had already assembled, but it was not till June 4 that Frederick agreed to sign a convention with France. The victor of Mollwitz had no desire to make the Elector of Bavaria too powerful, or to set France in the place of Austria in Germany. It was not till the efforts of English mediation had completely broken down that, with a protracted war with Austria in prospect, he consented to an alliance with France. On June 4 the treaty was signed, and Frederick agreed to vote for the election of the Elector of Bavaria and to give up her claims in Jülich and Berg. The King of France, on his part, undertook to guarantee to Frederick the possession of Lower Silesia with Breslau, to send an army into Germany to support Bavaria, and to induce Sweden to declare war on Russia in

order to prevent the latter from joining Maria Theresa against Frederick. Belleisle had already, on May 28, come to an understanding — usually termed the Treaty of Nymphenburg — with Spain and Bavaria, and had promised that France would support the Elector with men and money. France did not declare war, for she simply proposed to act as the auxiliary of the Elector of Bavaria in his attempt to secure the imperial crown and a share of the Austrian possessions in Germany. In spite of Fleury's hesitation and indecision, Belleisle succeeded in his efforts, and on August 16 a French army entered Germany as the auxiliary of Bavaria; and a month later another army under Maillebois advanced into Westphalia, ready to co-operate with Prussia and to hold Holland and Hanover in check. From Passau the Franco-Bavarian army marched into Upper Austria and took Linz on September 11. So far no difficulties had been met with. Though English feeling was enthusiastic on behalf of Maria Theresa, and though England was on the verge of a great struggle with France, neither George II. nor Walpole showed any appreciation of the necessity of checking the action of France or Germany. George II., as Elector of Hanover, was not averse to the election of Charles Albert as Emperor. Like many other German princes he was opposed to the preponderance of Hapsburgs in Germany, and, moreover, his anxiety for the safety of Hanover caused him to make, on September 7, a treaty of neutrality with France for his electorate. Walpole, too, disliked foreign politics, and devoted all his energies to mediating a peace between Prussia and Austria. This dilatory conduct of England inspired Belleisle with the hope that his plans would be successfully carried out before England and Holland moved. More definite measures were taken to secure the inaction of Russia, which Power, in accordance with the treaty of 1726, proposed to send 30,000 men to aid Maria Theresa. Frederick the Great, in the treaty lately made with France, had stipulated that she should use her influence with Sweden to bring about an attack on Russia, and, on August 4, 1741, the Swedes declared war against Russia.

The allies were now free from all danger of Russian intervention, and events in Russia tended still further to occupy the Court of St. Petersburg. On the fall of Biren on November 18, 1740, Münich took the office of first minister, while Ostermann became High Admiral. The retirement of the former in March 1741 testified to the strength of the feeling at St. Petersburg in favour of Austria. But the German influence was very unpopular in Russia, and a plot was organised by Lestocq, a French surgeon, which had the full support of Russian national feeling, and in December a palace revolution placed Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great, on the throne, and marked the triumph of French influence at St. Petersburg. The young Prince Ivan was imprisoned, and Münich, Ostermann, Golovkin, and others were exiled to Siberia; and the accession of Elizabeth marked the resumption of the work of Peter the Great, which had been in abeyance under his immediate successors.[1]

**A Revolution in Russia places Elizabeth on the Throne.**

A certain amount of difficulty was anticipated from the German states in consequence of the 'sullen and jealous irritation' felt towards France ever since the second devastation of the Palatinate under Louis XIV. 'In the minds of several of the German princes,' Frederick the Great remarked to Valori, 'the support of France would do the Elector of Bavaria more harm than good.' Belleisle was well aware of the existence of this feeling. 'The attachment to the House of Austria,' he wrote to Fleury from Germany, 'is general. It is impossible to uproot the prejudices of the country against France.' In no respect was the tact of Belleisle more signally shown than in the way in which he overcame the hostility of the German states to France. The conduct of the French troops during their march across Germany was most exemplary, while by intrigues and bribery the wily diplomatist secured the support of the Electors of Trier, Köln, and Mainz to the French policy. Of the German

**Belleisle's Success.**

[1] Vandal, *Louis XV. et Élisabeth de Russie*, pp. 134–135.

states, the alliance of Saxony was of immense importance for the allies. The tendency of the King of Poland and Elector of Saxony was to ally with Austria, and his minister Brühl was jealous of the Prussian aggression. But the Saxon court had been thunderstruck at the victory of Mollwitz, and a visit of Belleisle to Dresden, combined with the influence exerted by Maurice de Saxe, and the effect produced by the march of the Franco-Bavarian army into Upper Austria, had the desired effect; and on September 19, five days after the fall of Linz, Saxony joined the allies. Similar activity was shown by the opponents of Austria in the south of Europe. Spain had, on Charles VI.'s death, made its claim a pretext for extensive preparations for an attack upon the Austrian possessions in Italy, with the object of giving Don Philip an establishment in Italy. Fleury, as usual, hesitated, proposed to Charles Emanuel a partition of the Austrian states in Italy, and only gave Spain a half-hearted support. Though Charles Emanuel strongly objected to the increase of the Spanish power in Italy, Spanish troops were landed at Orbitello in December 1741, and in spite of the opposition of the King of Sardinia and the Austrians, formed a junction with the Neapolitan troops, and marched towards the Po. Maria Theresa was thus threatened at all points, and Belleisle had succeeded almost beyond his hopes. The election of Charles Albert of Bavaria seemed assured; Prussia and Saxony were allies of France, Spain was preparing to partition the Austrian dominions in Italy, Russia and Sweden were at war, and George II. had made a treaty of neutrality for Hanover. Moreover, the loyalty of the Viennese was shaken, and in the autumn of 1741 Maria Theresa's position seemed hopeless. But from the end of September her fortunes began to improve. She had spent the summer at Pressburg, where she had been crowned Queen of Hungary on June 25. Upon the invasion of Upper Austria she had resolved to throw herself upon the generosity of the Hungarians. On September 11 the Diet decreed the insurrection, and elected Francis

**Maria Theresa in Hungary.**

Stephen as co-regent; and on September 21 that memorable scene took place when the queen presented to the Hungarian magnates her infant son and was received with the cry, 'Moriamur pro rege nostro Mariâ Theresiâ.' The resolution of the young queen to appeal to the Magyars was worthy of a statesman, and did much to bridge over the hostility which had for ages existed between the Hungarians and the Austrians. Their devotion to her cause did not prevent the members of the Diet from securing valuable concessions from the helpless queen, who however found herself at the head of masses of undisciplined warriors, soon to become the terror of western Europe.

While Maria Theresa was gaining from her eastern subjects those promises of support which were to prove so invaluable, signs of discord were appearing in the ranks of her enemies. Frederick the Great had been unwillingly forced into an alliance with France whom he distrusted, and it soon became apparent that his aims and those of Belleisle were by no means entirely in harmony.

**The Treaty of Klein-Schnellendorf.**

After taking Linz the allies should have pushed on and occupied Vienna. But Belleisle was not desirous of making Bavaria too strong, and he distrusted Frederick, who, convinced that the capture of Vienna would end the war and ensure him Silesia, urged that the Austrian capital should be attacked. Belleisle, who was supported by the Elector of Bavaria in his objection to a march upon Vienna, carried his point, and the combined Franco-Bavarian-Saxon army, leaving a strong force in Linz, marched to Prague, which they besieged (November 19–26). While the combined army was committing this huge strategic blunder, Frederick had allowed himself to be detached from his allies. He had discovered that Fleury was opposed to his possession of Glatz, the key of the Bohemian country, and almost simultaneously with this discovery came Maria Theresa's consent to a secret treaty — brought about through the efforts of the English envoy, Lord Hyndford — in accordance with

which Neipperg, whose army, then successfully guarding Neisse, was required for the defence of Vienna, was to be allowed to retire into Moravia, while Neisse, after a sham siege, was to be given up to Frederick, and all Silesia ceded to him. This treaty was, on October 9, agreed to at Klein-Schnellendorf by Frederick, who stipulated that it should be kept secret, otherwise he declared he would disavow it. The motives which prompted Frederick to act so treacherously towards his allies will probably never be known, while Carlyle's defence of his action will hardly be considered to be adequate. The possession of Neisse was indispensable to him, and its seizure was impossible while Neipperg's army lay in front of it. The capture of Neisse enabled him to strengthen his position in Lower Silesia, recruit his exhausted troops, and to make further acquisitions. Frederick was opposed to the preponderance of the French in German politics, and he seems to have expected that the allied army would fail in its invasion of Bohemia. His treachery was soon known all over Europe, and the united forces of Neipperg and the Grand Duke Francis advanced into Bohemia and checked the successes of the allied army. Meanwhile Frederick had occupied the county of Glatz — a fief of the Bohemian crown — and on November 1 took possession of Neisse. Though the convention of Klein-Schnellendorf, on becoming generally known, was repudiated by Frederick, Maria Theresa had derived considerable benefit from the arrangement, which enabled her to employ her one Austrian army; while Frederick, having gained his end and shaken himself free from his engagements with Austria, again turned to the allies. On November 1 he agreed to a treaty with Saxony and Bavaria for the dismemberment of Austria; he made an arrangement with Charles Albert, by which the latter, who considered himself the rightful king of Bohemia, ceded to him Glatz, the conquest of which was completed in December; he effected the reorganisation of Silesia on the Prussian system; and on December 27 he advanced into Moravia and seized Olmütz.

But Frederick's successes had not alarmed Maria Theresa.

Though Prague had fallen on November 29, there was a want of vigour and decision in Fleury's policy at a time when vigour and decision were required to keep the coalition together. Frederick's conduct had aroused the deep suspicion of the French, while his futile campaign in Moravia early in 1742 owed its failure in great measure to the conduct of his French and Saxon allies. After the capture of Prague, Fleury had appointed the Marshal Broglie to take the command in Bohemia. The marshal was in his seventieth year, was disliked by his officers, and the object of Frederick's detestation. He had at once formed an entrenched camp at Pisek, where his force of some 16,000 men was held in check by an Austrian army. At the same time Khevenhuller had taken Linz, and was advancing on Munich. Charles Albert had been elected Emperor on January 24, 1742, the day of the fall of Linz.

**The Election of Charles Albert to the Imperial Throne, Jan. 24, 1742.**

It was to counteract the movements of the Austrian army in Bohemia, and to check the advance of the Hungarians upon Vienna, that Frederick proceeded to Olmütz on January 28, and opened his second campaign. But, hampered by the attacks of the Moravian peasants, and checked by the advance of an Austrian force against De Broglie, and by the conduct of the Saxons, and perhaps of the French, Frederick found himself obliged, without having fought a single battle, in April to retreat from Moravia and to give up Olmütz.

**Frederick's Invasion of Moravia, 1742.**

Meanwhile, though Belleisle had succeeded in securing the coronation of Charles Albert as Emperor on February 12, he could not prevent the capture of Munich the same day by Menzel's wild, irregular forces. The unfortunate Emperor was forced to seek refuge in Frankfort, where his appeal for men and money to support the imperial dignity was a curious commentary on Belleisle's elaborate plans.

In other directions Maria Theresa's fortunes continued to improve. Walpole's fall in February 1742 had been at once followed by the adoption of more vigorous measures. Though

Wilmington was nominally Prime Minister, Carteret directed the foreign policy of the Government. He was known to be in favour of active intervention on behalf of Maria Theresa, and his entry into office was followed by a considerable increase in both the army and navy. Sixteen thousand English troops were sent into the Low Countries, the same number of Hanoverians were employed, the States-General prepared for hostilities, and it became clear that the struggle over Silesia was about to develop into a war in which wider issues would be involved.

**Carteret's Foreign Policy.**

Carteret found on taking office that Vienna was safe, that Bavaria was occupied by Maria Theresa's cavalry, that the French in Bohemia were in a precarious position, and that Frederick's Moravian campaign was proving a failure. In his desire to prevent Maria Theresa's overthrow, he had the support of the king and nation; but he proposed to reassert England's influence on the continent, to bring about peace between Austria and Prussia, and to form a coalition of German Powers to secure the humiliation of France. Like George, he had no objection to the election of Charles Albert; the principal aim of his policy was to reduce France to the condition in which she was at the time of the Treaty of Utrecht. The effect of Carteret's energetic policy was also seen in Italy where the Austrians were opposed by the Spaniards, who received encouragement from Fleury, then as ever pursuing a policy of half measures. But Fleury was unable to secure the adhesion of Charles Emanuel to a further extension of the Spanish power in the north of Italy, and on February 1, 1742, the King of Sardinia concluded a treaty with Maria Theresa, pledging himself to aid the Austrians to defend the Milanese, Modena, Parma, and Piacenza against the Spaniards. Against the combined Spanish and Neapolitan army, Charles Emanuel and the Austrians proved successful, capturing Modena and Mirandola, while the English fleet under Admiral Matthews commanded the Mediterranean. Don Carlos was compelled by the threatened bombardment of Naples by five English ships to sign a

convention withdrawing his Neapolitan troops from the north of Italy. All chance of establishing a kingdom of Lombardy was lost; Elizabeth Farnese was forced to content herself with a less ambitious programme; Charles Emanuel had freed himself from a very real danger to his hopes of territorial aggrandisement; and, by the end of the year, Maria Theresa, though unable to induce the Sardinians or the English or the Pope to aid her in substituting Austrian for Spanish influence in southern Italy, was at least in secure possession of all her territories, and of Modena in addition.

The improvement in the outlook for Austria was not confined to central and southern Europe. In Russia the Austrian prospects were improving in consequence of a growing coolness between the Courts of St. Petersburg and Versailles. Had a close Franco-Russian alliance been made, it would have been impossible for Maria Theresa to have detached Frederick from the coalition. France had every reason to use her best endeavours to preserve her friendship with Russia. But the want of tact shown by the French Government proved disastrous to friendly relations between the two countries. The accession of Elizabeth, itself a triumph of French diplomatic skill, was a victory of the Russian as opposed to the German party; and Alexis Bestuzhev became chief minister. The position of affairs, though favourable to France, required skilful handling. Russia was at war with Sweden, and Sweden had entered upon the war at the instigation of France, and in expectation of recovering some of her lost territory.

**The Failure of French Policy in Russia. The Peace of Abo.**

On Elizabeth's accession France would have acted wisely in mediating a peace between the two countries on the basis of the *status quo*. A conference between Russia and Sweden was opened in 1742 at St. Petersburg, but the French Government adopted a most unfortunate and ill-advised policy. Chétardie backed up the Swedish claims, a treaty was concluded with Denmark in March, and an attempt was made to establish a close union between Denmark and Sweden, while the French

envoy at Constantinople exerted all his efforts to form an offensive alliance between Sweden and Turkey. A letter from Amelot, the French minister, to the envoy at Constantinople fell into the hands of the Russian Government, and the French intrigues stood revealed. Bestuzhev violently opposed Chétardie, French mediation was declined, the friendly relations between France and Russia came to an end, and Chétardie left St. Petersburg in June 1742. The peace of Abo, concluded between Russia and Sweden on August 17, 1743, gave Russia South Finland as far as the river Kiumen. Adolphus Frederick, Administrator of the Duchy of Holstein, was elected Crown Prince in preference to the Crown Prince of Denmark. Thus Russia prevented all possibility of a union of Sweden and Denmark, and assumed her influence over the former country. In December 1743 Chétardie returned to St. Petersburg, only to be ordered, on June 12, 1744, to leave Russia within twenty-four hours. With his disgrace all chance of a Franco-Russian alliance disappeared for the time; and France, deprived of Russian and Prussian support, found herself attacked by England and Austria.

**The Preliminaries of Breslau, and the Treaty of Berlin, 1742.**

After Frederick's retirement from Moravia, negotiations had, by means of Lord Hyndford, been carried on between Prussia and Austria. Frederick probably realised that with England and Holland about to enter the war the French chances of success were small, and that his best course was to make peace. Maria Theresa, however, was anxious to try again the fortunes of war, and, after some preliminary manœuvres, the two armies, commanded respectively by Frederick and Charles of Lorraine, met at Chotusitz, or Czaslau, in Bohemia, on May 17. The Prussians gained a complete victory; Maria Theresa consented to treat; on June 11, 1742, preliminaries for peace were signed at Breslau; and the definitive treaty at Berlin on July 28. By this treaty Austria yielded to Prussia the territories of Upper and Lower Silesia, with the city and county of Glatz; the principalities of Teschen, Troppau, and Jägerndorf being,

however, reserved and united to Bohemia. Frederick agreed to withdraw all Prussian troops from Bohemia within sixteen days, and to be responsible for the repayment of a loan advanced by English and Dutch capitalists upon the revenues of Silesia. The Prussian king had secured the objects for which he had embarked upon war; as the fortunes of his allies now seemed desperate, he felt justified in deserting them and providing for the safety and welfare of himself and his country.

# CHAPTER VII

## THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION WAR AFTER THE PEACE OF BRESLAU

### 1742–1748

The Defection of Prussia and Saxony from the French Cause — The Retreat from Prague — The Death of Fleury — Failure of the French Attack upon Austria — Louis XV. refuses to appoint a Successor to Fleury — The Duc de Richelieu — The Secret Diplomacy of Louis XV. — The Austrians secure Bavaria, June 1743 — The Battle of Dettingen, June 26, 1743 — The Project of Hanau, July 1743 — The Treaty of Worms, Sept. 13, 1745 — The Treaty of Fontainebleau, Oct. 25, 1743 — The War enters upon a New Phase — France declares War upon England, March 15, and upon Austria, April 4, 1744 — The War in Italy, in the Netherlands, and on the Rhine — The Causes of the Second Silesian War — The Union of Frankfort — Treaty between Prussia, France, and the Emperor — Marriage of the Russian Grand Duke Peter and the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst — Marriage of Ulrica of Prussia to the Heir-Apparent of Sweden —The Second Silesian War — The Death of the Emperor — The Treaty of Füssen — Isolation of Frederick the Great — The Battle of Fontenoy — The Convention of Hanover — The Election of Francis Stephen as Emperor — The Treaty of Dresden — D'Argenson's Failure in Italy — The Battle of Bassignano — D'Argenson's Italian Project — The Expulsion of the French and Spaniards from North Italy — Death of Philip V., July 9, 1746 — The French Campaign in Flanders — Fall of D'Argenson — The War in 1747 — Revolution in Holland — Close of the War — The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle — Relative Position of the Great Powers in 1748 — The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle only a Truce.

**The Defection of Prussia and Saxony from the French Cause.**

THE Treaty of Berlin, signed July 28, 1742, was quickly followed by a treaty signed on September 7, between Saxony and Austria. Belleisle's schemes for the dismemberment of Austria were ruined, and the Spanish prospects in Italy seemed likely to be seriously affected. The defection of Prussia and Saxony from the French cause enabled Maria Theresa to reinforce the Austrian forces in Lombardy, and

left the French troops in Bohemia in a precarious position. Fleury, realising the danger, endeavoured to bring about an arrangement between Elizabeth Farnese and Charles Emanuel, and made an undignified and unsuccessful attempt to conclude peace with Austria. Maria Theresa having unwisely refused to listen to Fleury's proposals, and having published his letters, nothing remained for the French Government but to extricate the Prague garrison by means of energetic measures in Bavaria, and by an advance on the part of Maillebois from the Lower Rhine. Encouraged by Bartenstein and Stahremberg, Maria Theresa showed her usual spirit, and England determined upon a more active participation in the war. The advance by Maillebois' corps to the borders of Bohemia forced the Grand Duke Francis to raise the siege of Prague, and enabled Broglie, with eight or ten thousand men, to escape.

**The Retreat from Prague.**

After Maurice de Saxe captured Eger, Maillebois left Prague to its fate, and joined Broglie in Bavaria, where the Emperor, owing to the temporary success of his general, Seckendorf, against the Austrians, had been again enabled to occupy Munich on October 7, and to recover all Bavaria except Schärding and Passau. The situation of Prague, defended by 18,000 men under Belleisle, seemed desperate, especially when Lobkowitz with reinforcements was sent to strengthen Festetics, who was observing the city with 12,000 men. Taking advantage of the carelessness of Lobkowitz, Belleisle, on the night of December 16, skilfully retired from the city with all his troops, save 5000 who were left behind under Chevert. After suffering terrible hardships from the intense cold and the attacks of the enemy's light cavalry, Belleisle, who showed conspicuous courage during this famous retreat, succeeded, after losing 1500 men, in reaching Eger on December 27. Early in February he and his troops safely crossed the Rhine, while in the meantime the firm attitude taken by Chevert had secured from Lobkowitz honourable terms, and on

December 25 Austria regained possession of Prague, Chevert and his garrison retiring to Eger, which the French continued to hold.

The Austrians had thus by the end of 1742 practically recovered Bohemia, though they had been compelled to relinquish most of their conquests in Bavaria. After this disaster to the French arms, Broglie, who had superseded Maillebois in the command, made an unsuccessful attempt to recover Passau, while the Austrians on their part failed to win any striking success.

Before the campaign of 1743 opened, two events occurred which had considerable bearing on the future operations. In November 1742 Frederick the Great signed a defensive alliance with England, it being understood that the advance of the English army into Germany was directed not against the Emperor but against the French. On January 29, 1743, Fleury died at the age of ninety-three, after a ministry of seventeen years. Though the principal aim of his policy was peace at home and abroad, he had with difficulty allayed for the time the ever-recurring struggle between the *Parlement* of Paris and the clergy; and he left France involved in a bitter struggle on the continent, in the colonies, in India, and on the sea.

**The Death of Fleury.**

By strict economy he had endeavoured to relieve France, still suffering from the disastrous financial policy of Louis XIV. and the Regent, and aided by Orry, who was controller-general from 1730 to 1745, he took in hand the work of financial reorganisation. But he failed to remove any of the most pressing evils, or the more flagrant inequalities in the system of taxation, and, by having recourse to the *corvée royale* — or system of forced labour by the peasants — for the improvement of the roads, threw an additional burden on the agricultural districts, and added one more to the many grievances of which the lower orders complained.

His most successful diplomatic achievements were the Treaty of Seville, the establishment of Stanislas Leszczynski

in Lorraine, with the reversion of the duchy to France, and the Treaty of Belgrade. He had placed Spain in her former position of dependence on France, and, though allied with her, Louis XV. had not supported the Court of Madrid energetically either against England, or in its Italian enterprises. Cautious and half-hearted, French policy during Fleury's ministry is devoid of clearness and consistency. Militant Bourbonism was viewed by him with suspicion; intricate negotiations were his delight; half measures were the result of his deliberations.

He had continued the policy of Dubois and Bourbon with regard to England, and as long as he lived open hostilities did not break out between the two countries. He had even succeeded where Dubois and Bourbon had failed, in bringing Spain into friendly relations with both England and France. But though he never cared for the Spanish alliance, the outbreak of war between England and Spain in 1739 was the beginning of the end of a political system which had been created in 1717 by the dynastic exigencies of the Houses of Hanover and Orleans.

To the war party at the French Court the continuance of the English alliance was as distasteful as Fleury's refusal to return to the policy of Henry IV., Richelieu, Mazarin, and Louis XIV. towards Austria. Even the action of France in the Polish Succession War did not satisfy them. In their opinion, when Charles VI. established the Ostend East India Company, Fleury should have encouraged Spain and the Maritime Powers to force the Emperor into active hostilities, and then have aided in his destruction. In their opinion Fleury had missed an admirable opportunity of inflicting a telling blow upon Austria in 1734, when the French, successful in Italy, had captured Philipsburg. Contented with the reversion of Lorraine, he had, instead of finally overthrowing the ancient foe of France, guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction.

His conduct four years later was also bitterly criticised. According to the militant party, the Cardinal, instead of mediating the Peace of Belgrade, ought to have united with Spain

and Sardinia to co-operate with the Turks, and once and for all to have destroyed the Austrian power.

Fleury's whole line of policy, therefore, ran counter to the views of Villars, Chauvelin, Belleisle, and their supporters. So far from aiming at the destruction of the Hapsburg monarchy, he had shown in 1739, and again in 1742, signs of not being averse to drawing together the French Bourbons and the Hapsburgs, and to anticipate the work of Kaunitz. But circumstances proved too strong for him, and, like Walpole, his hand was forced by the war party. He must share with that party the blame of having concentrated all the attention of the French Government upon the continental struggle, when the true policy of France was to have left the Prussians and Spaniards to protect their own interests in Germany and Italy respectively, and to have devoted all her resources to a vigorous defence of the French colonies and establishments in India, North America, and the West Indies. Though he shares with other French statesmen before and after him the charge of shortsightedness, he stands personally guilty of the grave charge of having neglected the army and navy.

Throughout his career he showed no appreciation of the important issues at stake between England and France in North America and India and in the Mediterranean. He never seems to have realised that a struggle between the two countries was inevitable, and that one of the first conditions of French success was a close alliance with Spain. Fleury stands convicted of a fatal want of foresight at a most critical epoch in French history. He made no attempt to strengthen or reconstruct the fleet, he took no steps to aid in the reorganisation of Spain, and to encourage Spanish ministers to make their navy efficient. Till his death he devoted all his energies to skilfully and successfully advancing the Bourbon interests on the continent. Had French colonial interests and aspirations been non-existent, the diplomatic skill shown by Fleury in 1729, in 1735, and in 1739, would go far to place him in the rank of great French ministers. But his subordination of

the vital interests of France to the lesser important continental ambitions of the Bourbons, his blind trust in diplomacy to postpone indefinitely a war with England, his utter incapacity to gauge national instincts or to appreciate popular forces, resulted in the break-down of his policy, in his inability to aid Spain in the war of 1739, or to prevent the supremacy of the English fleet in the Mediterranean, and the ultimate triumph of the British in India and North America. He left France unable to give the Stuarts any efficient aid, or to provide La Bourdonnais with a strong fleet, without which French success in India was impossible. In spite of his many diplomatic successes, Fleury's foreign policy in the later years of his career was totally inadequate to the needs of France. And though in 1748 the French frontiers were indeed safe, the position of France in North America and in India had been shaken. The rise of Prussia, to which Fleury and his successors contributed, was a doubtful compensation for losses at sea and in the colonies.

Such a statesman could have few friends in his own country and no admirers abroad. Up to the outbreak of the Austrian Succession War, France benefited from his knowledge of foreign politics, his sagacity, and his caution, but from 1740 his fall was almost generally desired. In Spain his half promises and half-hearted alliance incurred the contempt of Elizabeth Farnese, who recognised that the so-called Family Compact of 1733 had proved as abortive as that of 1721. He failed equally to command the respect of the English ministers or the confidence of the Sardinian king.

From the outbreak of the Austrian Succession War, the policy of Fleury and Belleisle had proved disastrous to the French interests. The failure to attack Vienna was a serious blunder; it gave Maria Theresa breathing time, and proved very disastrous to the French cause. Though France had secured the election of the Emperor, Charles VII. had no authority, and had suffered severe reverses; the attack on Lombardy had failed; Frederick the Great had

**Failure of the French Attack upon Austria.**

withdrawn from his alliance with France; Sardinia was preparing to vigorously support the Austrian cause; and, with the exception of the loss of Silesia, Maria Theresa had upheld the Pragmatic Sanction and recovered her possessions. France had suffered a diplomatic defeat in Russia, and the Swedish war had proved unsuccessful. The death of Walpole had thrown the conduct of foreign affairs in England upon Carteret, and under his direction an English army was about to take an active part in the war, which had now entirely changed its character. From being, on the part of England and Austria, a war to resist an attempt to partition the Hapsburg territories, it had become a war, from the English point of view, to free Germany from the French armies, and, from the Austrian point of view, to take vengeance for the unprovoked attacks of Louis XV., and to secure adequate compensation for the loss of Silesia by the conquest of Alsace and Lorraine and the Three Bishoprics.

Though the outlook seemed black for France, some comfort could be derived from the lack of unanimity between the English and Austrians, from the more active policy of Spain after Fleury's death, and from the attitude of Charles Emanuel, who was fully determined not to continue the war without securing definite promises of territorial compensation from Austria. In any case, a capable successor to Fleury was urgently demanded. Louis XV., not recognising the critical situation in which France was placed, declared he would take the government into his own hands, and that the Cardinal should have no successor. The results of this decision were disastrous. All unity in the administration was lost, and rival claimants contended for the chief influence over the king. The permanent ministers were the Chancellor d'Aguesseau; the Controller-General Orry; Amelot, minister of foreign affairs; Maurepas, minister of marine; Count d'Argenson, minister of war. Of these the Count d'Argenson had come into office on the death of the Marquis de Breteuil on January 7, 1743, when the failure of Belleisle,

**Louis XV. refuses to appoint a Successor to Fleury.**

Noailles, and Broglie rendered energetic measures necessary. Throughout his ministry, which continued till February 1, 1757, he showed considerable energy, carried out many excellent reforms, and by his active co-operation not a little contributed to the victories of Marshal Saxe. Till the Marquis d'Argenson was, in November 1744, appointed minister of foreign affairs, the home and foreign policy of the Government was mainly directed by the Marshal de Noailles, who held no official position.

Noailles, who had married one of Madame de Maintenon's nieces, aimed at once at being a financier and a soldier. He aimed at rousing Louis from his lethargy; and to his influence, supported by that of the Duchesse de Châteauroux, was due the king's decision to place himself, like Louis XIV., at the head of his army. Opposed to Noailles was the Duc de Richelieu, whose influence on the king proved most disastrous to the interests of France. Richelieu represented the worst type of the French noble class. A brilliant man of fashion, and the friend of Voltaire, he had in his youth seen life under the auspices of the Regent Orleans. Thoughtless, frivolous, and vicious, with no sense of responsibility, and actuated by no patriotic feelings, Richelieu, in spite of his personal bravery and military instincts, was an admirable type of those nobles who, by their neglect of their duties, by their foolish support of the so-called philosophic movement, by their general incapacity, and, above all, by their want of sympathy with the classes below them, were in a special sense answerable for the revolution which swept them away. He exercised a most pernicious influence over Louis XV., and when the temporary triumph of Noailles ended with the king's illness at Metz, he successfully encouraged the weak monarch to devote himself to a life of pleasure, and by so doing dealt a fatal blow at the stability of the royal power in France. It remains, however, true that though his popularity disappeared after his illness, and though the disgrace of Noailles in the autumn of 1744 removed a good influence from his side, Louis continued to take in international questions a personal

**The Duc de Richelieu.**

interest, which led to curious, and, for France, unfortunate developments.

**The Secret Diplomacy of Louis XV.**

From the death of Fleury began the famous secret correspondence of Louis XV., which was in great part answerable for the weakness of French foreign policy during the rest of the reign. Intelligent in many respects, the king had certain ideas of his own about foreign policy. Disliking the restraining influence of his regular ministers, he attempted to carry out his crude schemes by means of intrigue and a system of deception. Choosing confidential agents, he opened secret communications with them, and issued instructions which often ran counter to the official orders transmitted to them from the French Foreign Office. Till his illness at Metz in 1744, Louis reigned without a chief minister, transacting all business himself through the agency of clerks. The inconveniences of such a system are obvious, and it was unlikely that, with this recrudescence in a feeble form of Louis XIV.'s determination to be his own minister, the French arms could hope for successes against the Austrians and English in 1743 and 1744.

**The Austrians secure Bavaria, June 1743.**

The year 1743 witnessed three campaigns — in Bavaria, in western Germany, and in Italy. In order to save France from invasion, to effect if possible a junction with Broglie, and to prevent the Pragmatic Army from uniting with Prince Charles of Lorraine in Bavaria, Noailles led an army across the Rhine and advanced between the Neckar and the Maine. But the Bavarians under Seckendorf were surprised in May by the Austrians under Charles of Lorraine, acting in conjunction with the columns of Khevenhüller and Lobkowitz; and Broglie, refusing to give Seckendorf any assistance or to wait for reinforcements from Noailles, abandoned Ingolstadt and Donauwörth without striking a blow, and recrossed the Rhine. The Bavarian army was compelled to retire into Suabia, Munich was again occupied by the Austrians, the Emperor fled to Frankfort, and on June 27 Seckendorf signed the Convention of Niederschönfeld, by which hostilities

were suspended, the neutrality of the Bavarian army was agreed to, and all Bavaria except Ingolstadt was left in Austrian hands till the conclusion of a treaty. Broglie's irresolution and timidity had resulted in the abandonment and loss of Bavaria, and he soon afterwards fell into disfavour. In August Eger, the last relic of the French invasion of Germany in 1741, was taken by the Austrian troops.

In western Germany the French arms were equally unsuccessful. A mixed force of English, Hanoverians, and Hessians had entered Germany from the Netherlands early in 1743, and was joined in March by Neipperg, and in April by 20,000 Austrian auxiliaries under the Duke of Aremberg, the commander-in-chief in the Austrian Netherlands. These troops, known as the 'Pragmatic Army,' were commanded by Lord Stair, who had served under Marlborough. The presence of this army on the Rhine secured the election in April of an Austrian partisan to the See of Mainz.

**The Battle of Dettingen, June 26, 1743.**

Having obtained from Holland, in May, the promise of 20,000 men, Stair began his march towards Bavaria, his intention being to cut Broglie's communications with France. But Noailles frustrated this design by seizing the line of the Neckar; and Stair, on attempting to march south-east and join Charles of Lorraine, found the upper waters of the Maine in the hands of the French. On June 20 George II. took command of the 'Pragmatic Army,' on June 26 Noailles blocked the way to Hanau, and George was compelled to fight the battle of Dettingen. Though the news of the battle caused great enthusiasm in England and Austria, and corresponding depression in Bavaria and Prussia, no important result flowed from the French defeat. Charles of Lorraine prepared to occupy Alsace, but a French army under Coigny proved sufficient for the defence of that province; while Noailles and another army guarded France against an invasion by Wade, who had succeeded Lord Stair in the command of the English army. The French, however, had been driven out of Ger-

many; their ally, the Emperor, had been forced to make a treaty of neutrality with the Austrians; while in Italy Traun had, on February 8, defeated the Spaniards at Campo Santo, Don Philip had failed to penetrate into Piedmont; and there seemed every probability of an advance by the allies into the heart of France.

While, however, matters remained in this balanced condition, George II. and Carteret made a determined effort in July to bring about a reconciliation between Maria Theresa and the Emperor. Known as the Project of Hanau, this scheme of pacification, which received the full assent of the Emperor and his representative, William of Hesse-Cassel, had much to recommend it to the German princes. Between Austria and Bavaria there were to be mutual renunciations of claims and mutual restitutions of territory. While Charles VII. retained the imperial title, he was to allow the validity of the Bohemian vote[1] in all matters relating to the Empire. Bavaria was to be erected into a kingdom, and the Emperor, in return for abandoning France, would receive from England large subsidies equal to those which he was then drawing from France, to enable him to support the imperial dignity.

**The Project of Hanau, July 1743.**

As a German prince, George had no objection to seeing the imperial crown in other hands than those of the Hapsburgs, and to him, as Elector of Hanover, an admirable opportunity now presented itself for supporting the rights of the princes against Austria, of bringing about the general pacification of Germany, and of uniting the Empire against France. Though this plan might appear intelligible and even statesmanlike to the inhabitants of Germany, which had suffered during the previous two hundred years from the repeated invasions of the French, there is no doubt that George, in regarding the situation from a purely German point of view, incurred the charge

[1] At the election of Charles VII. the Bohemian vote had been expressly excluded on the ground that Maria Theresa could not, as a woman, either vote or transfer her vote to her husband.

of subordinating the interests of England to those of the Electorate of Hanover. Carteret, taking advantage of the accident which gave George II. a position in the Empire, and ignoring the immense importance to England of the colonial and maritime issues then at stake, wished not only to return to but even to expand the policy of the Whigs in Anne's reign. Germany united was to hurl itself against France, and to complete the work interrupted by the Peace of Utrecht. Had this policy been carried out, George II. would have appeared as a paramount power among the other Electors, and as one of the leading princes in Germany.

But Frederick the Great had no intention of acting as the subordinate of Hanover; Maria Theresa, in the flush of victory, was naturally reluctant to grant Charles VII. a full indemnity for the past; while the Whig ministers, under Henry Pelham, who, on the death of Wilmington in July, had become prime minister, supported by public opinion, were distrustful of the German tendencies of George II. and Carteret, disliked the idea of a Hanoverian army, and refused to assent to the proposed arrangement with Bavaria. All parties in England denounced the very idea of paying a subsidy to Charles VII., the avowed enemy of Maria Theresa and the hereditary friend of France. The real enmity of the English people was directed against France and Spain, and war at sea was far more popular than land operations in Germany. Carteret, already violently opposed in the cabinet, could not withstand the attacks on his policy, and the negotiations were broken off. In place of Carteret's proposed arrangements, the English cabinet determined to bring about a close alliance between Sardinia and Austria, to unite closely with Maria Theresa, and to carry on the war against France with vigour. In Italy all depended upon the action of Charles Emanuel. He was negotiating with the French and Spanish Governments, and refused to join the Austrians unless definite territorial compensation was assured him. He demanded Finale, Piacenza, and part of Pavia. English mediation was again called

**The Treaty of Worms, Sept. 13, 1743.**

in to adjust this difficulty, and to put pressure upon the Court of Vienna. Maria Theresa, who had bitterly resented the English attitude with regard to the cession of Silesia, was furious at this second attempt of England to force her to make unwelcome cessions to Sardinia. During the negotiations at Worms she held out firmly till Charles Emanuel threatened to accept the French proposals. Recognising most reluctantly the necessity for making the required sacrifices, Maria Theresa yielded, and on September 13 the Treaty of Worms was signed by England, Austria, Holland, Sardinia, and Saxony, all of whom agreed to uphold the Pragmatic Sanction and the balance of power in Europe. Maria Theresa ceded to Charles Emanuel the cities and part of the territories of Pavia and Piacenza, Vigevano, Anghiara, and the right of repurchasing Finale from Genoa, a right reserved by Charles VI. when he bought the marquisate from the republic. Charles Emanuel undertook, with 40,000 men, the armed defence of Maria Theresa's dominions in Italy, and the Austrian forces, numbering some 30,000, were placed under his command. He withdrew all claims on the Duchy of Milan, and by some secret articles arranged with Austria for the expulsion of the Bourbons from Italy. After Don Carlos had been driven out of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, Sicily was to be given to Sardinia and Naples, and the Tuscan ports to Austria. In order to facilitate these arrangements, England agreed to advance the money necessary for the redemption of Finale, and to furnish subsidies during the remainder of the war. Thus the lifework of Elizabeth Farnese was endangered, and southern Italy was threatened with the restoration of the unpopular German *régime*.

The Treaty of Worms was at once met by the counter Treaty of Fontainebleau — a family compact between France and Spain concluded on October 25 by the express wish of Louis XV. himself. In spite of the Treaty of 1733 no firm alliance subsisted between the Courts of Versailles and Madrid during Fleury's lifetime. But the new League of Worms, in itself a serious blow to

**The Treaty of Fontainebleau, Oct. 25, 1743.**

France and Spain, brought the two Courts together pledged to a permanent union. Both branches of the House of Bourbon agreed to mutually guarantee their possessions present or future. France recognised the somewhat extensive claims and rights of Philip and Elizabeth Farnese to portions of Italy, and undertook to aid in the conquest of the Milanese, Parma, and Piacenza for Don Philip, while Gibraltar, Port Mahon, and Georgia were to be retaken from England, and the territory given to Savoy by the Treaty of Utrecht from Charles Emanuel. France agreed to declare war formally upon Sardinia and England, and this new family compact was to remain binding on both parties till by common consent they made peace with their enemies.

With the Treaties of Worms and Fontainebleau the war entered upon a new phase, and the European contest assumed a more intelligible form. England, no longer a mere auxiliary of Austria, headed a great league against France and Spain, and it was recognised in London and at Versailles that the questions at issue involved not merely the preservation of the Pragmatic Sanction, but the supremacy of the sea, the superiority of the Latin or Teutonic element in North America, and the growth of the influence of England and France in India. Abandoning the sophisms of Fleury, France stood forth as the rival of Austria on the continent, and of England on the sea and in the colonies.

**The War enters upon a New Phase.**

A fresh impulse was now given to the war, which was vigorously prosecuted in all directions. The national feeling was roused in France by the threatened invasion of the Austrians, and by the ancient hatred of England, while Philip v., who shortly before the Treaty of Worms had contemplated the conclusion of peace with England, was stirred up to fresh exertions. In October 1743 a mixed Spanish and French force, which, under Don Philip, was assembled in southern France, occupied Savoy, and attempted without success to force its way through the Alps. Louis xv., inspired by the Duchess of Châteauroux and Noailles, determined to emulate Louis xiv., and to take an active and personal share in the campaigns;

and the year 1744 opened with many indications of the enthusiasm felt throughout France for the war.

An invasion of England by 15,000 men from Dunkirk on behalf of the Pretender was attempted by Maurice de Saxe at the beginning of 1744, while in February the combined French and Spanish fleets, which during the greater part of 1743 had been blockaded in Toulon, attacked the English fleet under Matthews, and gained the open sea. The Brest fleet approached the English coast; Kent was unguarded, and England only owed its immunity from attack to a violent storm. War was formally declared against England on March 15, and against Austria on April 4. France had definitely challenged England's naval and commercial supremacy, and Austria's claim to the leadership in Europe. Till the middle of the year when Frederick the Great began the second Silesian War, the principal military operations took place in Italy, in Flanders, and on the Rhine. In Italy great vigour was shown by both sides in the north as well as in the south. In the south Lobkowitz, the Austrian general, made an attempt to gain Naples, but was foiled by the efforts of Don Carlos aided by a Spanish army, and was defeated at Velletri. In the north, where Gages had superseded Montemar in the command of the Spanish troops, the fighting was more severe. Gages, however, failed to cut off the retreat of Lobkowitz to the Adriatic, and Don Philip, after a desperate attempt to conquer Piedmont, was forced to retreat into Dauphiné.

**France declares War upon England, March 15, and Austria, April 4, 1744.**

**The War in Italy, in the Netherlands, and on the Rhine, 1744.**

But though the results of the year's warfare were more or less balanced in Italy, in the Netherlands and on the Rhine the French had the advantage. In May a large and formidable army, commanded by Maurice de Saxe, though nominally headed by Louis XV., who was still under the influence of Madame de Châteauroux, set out to combat the allied forces. Want of unanimity between Wade, Aremberg, and Louis of Nassau, the commanders of the English, Austrians, and Dutch

respectively, coupled with the withdrawal of several English regiments to defend England, the indecision of the Dutch, and the lack of ability among the generals, favoured the advance of the French army, and Courtrai, Ypres, Menin, Furnes, and other fortified places, fell easily into its hands. The whole country would have been conquered had not the Austrian invasion of Alsace, an event which Frederick the Great had predicted, recalled the main portion of the French army under Louis XV. While the Netherlands were being invaded by the French king, Prince Charles of Lorraine, advised by that cautious strategist Marshal Traun, and with an army of nearly 70,000 men, had determined to conquer Alsace. Deceiving a Bavarian force under Seckendorf, and a French army under Coigni, the Austrians, by a series of skilful and rapid movements, which won the admiration of Frederick the Great, successfully crossed the Rhine on the 30th of June, overran Alsace, threatened Luneville, and were only prevented from seizing Lorraine by the advance of Louis XV. himself, who had left Maurice de Saxe in the Netherlands with 45,000 men. At Metz, on August 4, Louis was seized with a dangerous illness, Madame de Châteauroux was forced to fly, and the king's recovery was the signal for the wildest rejoicing. He received the name of *Bien aimé*, and in spite of the return of Madame de Châteauroux to favour, which, however, was followed immediately by her death, enjoyed for a short time the greatest popularity. But before the French armies under Noailles and Coigni had effected a junction to oppose Prince Charles of Lorraine, the Austrians had been called away to defend Bohemia from an attack by Frederick the Great, while Noailles, who had in an attack upon the Prince shown great incompetence, was temporarily disgraced.

A number of circumstances had concurred in deciding Frederick to again attack Austria. The continued successes of Maria Theresa during 1743 had made him anxious. The Treaty of Worms amounted in his opinion almost to a menace. While guaranteeing various treaties, it omitted all mention

of the Treaty of Berlin, by which he held Silesia. In December of the same year the Treaty of Vienna, between Saxony and Austria, increased his suspicions, for in that document the Austrian territories had been guaranteed without exception. There was no doubt that Maria Theresa's ambitious projects were developing in a manner dangerous to Prussian interests. She almost alone of all European rulers had no wish for peace, and thirsted for further triumphs and additional compensations for her losses. Not satisfied with the reconquest of Bohemia and the occupation of Bavaria, she hoped to regain Alsace and Lorraine, to incorporate Bavaria in the Austrian territories, to set aside the late imperial election, and to depose the Emperor. Frederick, moreover, had every reason to believe, from information from Vienna, that she was determined to reconquer Silesia. Fears for the safety of his newly acquired possessions undoubtedly had a large share in forcing upon Frederick the necessity of making preparations for a fresh struggle, but his well-grounded uneasiness at the Austrian attitude towards the imperial constitution must also be taken into account.

**The Causes of the Second Silesian War, 1744.**

As a supporter of the Emperor Charles VII., Frederick bitterly resented the Austrian occupation of Bavaria and Maria Theresa's treatment of the Empire as if it were an hereditary possession of the Hapsburgs. Nothing would have suited the Court of Vienna better than the inclusion of Bavaria within the Austrian territories, and the policy of Maria Theresa towards the House of Wittelsbach anticipated that of Joseph II. in 1778 and 1785, and of Francis II. in 1793 and 1794. A compact Austrian state in South Germany would have enormously increased the Hapsburg influence, and in a corresponding degree diminished that of the Hohenzollerns. To Frederick, however, the permanent occupation of Bavaria would have constituted an act of usurpation upon the rights of the princes, a deliberate attack on the imperial institutions, and a serious danger to his own kingdom of Prussia.

From the beginning of 1744 Frederick the Great contem-

plated the near approach of war with Austria, and with its outbreak the possibility of gaining new acquisitions of territory for Prussia. On May 22 he formed, with the co-operation of Chavigny, the French ambassador at Munich, and one of the ablest and most experienced diplomatists of the eighteenth century, the Union of Frankfort, which was joined by the Emperor, Charles Philip of Sulzbach, the Elector Palatine, the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, and by France in a secret article. The nominal objects of this league were the pacification of Germany, the restoration of Bavaria, and the recognition of the Emperor.

**The Union of Frankfort, May 1744.**

Though not accepted by many German princes, and though its terms did not contain Frederick's real objects, the Union of Frankfort is a clear indication of the attitude henceforth adopted by Frederick with regard to German affairs, and enabled him to take up a strong position, and to gain considerable sympathy and support as a defender of the rights of the princes and of the imperial constitution. Earlier in the year Frederick had sent Count Rothenburg on a secret mission to the Court of Versailles; his object was to induce France to consent to a treaty with Prussia, in accordance with which Frederick, in return for rescuing and restoring Charles VII., was to receive all Silesia that remained in Austrian hands, and in addition part of Bohemia. Rothenburg gained the support of the Duchess of Châteauroux, of Tencin, and of Richelieu, and in June assisted in the overthrow of Amelot, who was hostile to this scheme. After the fall of Amelot, who had been secretary for foreign affairs since the dismissal of Chauvelin in 1737, foreign affairs were managed, till the appointment of the Marquis d'Argenson in November, by an informal committee, which included the Count of Chavigny, Marshal Noailles, and Du Teil, the chief clerk. The declaration of war against England and Austria by France in March and April was in accordance with Frederick's wishes, and was followed by the conclusion of a treaty between Prussia, France, and the Emperor, for the division of the conquests made from Austria. France was to receive several strong

places in the Netherlands, Charles VII. Upper Austria and all Bohemia, except the circles of Königgrätz, Leitmeritz, Pardubitz, and Bunzlau, which, with that portion of Silesia which was not yielded to Prussia by the Treaty of Berlin, were to be handed over to Frederick. The arrangements with France were completed by a military convention concluded at Paris on June 5. The French king agreed to invade the Netherlands and Hanover, and to follow Prince Charles of Lorraine should he return to Austria to resist Frederick, who on his part undertook, on the conclusion of treaties by France with Russia and Sweden, to invade Bohemia in August with an immense army. A secret treaty with the Emperor on July 24 completed Frederick's arrangements, Charles VII. undertaking to assign the four Bohemian counties to Prussia as soon as Bohemia had been conquered and handed over to him. The failure of the Union of Frankfort to arouse any enthusiasm in Germany for the Emperor, or to attract many members, and its subsequent decline, more than justified Frederick's policy in turning to France, where public opinion was running strongly against the Austrian cause.

**Treaty between Prussia, France, and the Emperor, June 5.**

Besides securing the alliance of France, the King of Prussia had found means to strengthen his position in various other ways. The death of Charles Edward, Prince of East Friesland, on May 25, enabled Frederick to rapidly occupy that province in right of claims recognised by the Emperor in 1686. Emden the capital was taken, the administration of the fief was reorganised on a Prussian basis, and the claims of Holland and Hanover were ignored. But it was from the side of Russia that Frederick was most anxious to avert the possibility of attack. His continued distrust of Russia, so completely justified during the Seven Years' War, had, among other considerations, led him to augment his army very considerably, and to increase his war fund during the years succeeding the Peace of Breslau. A Russian invasion of Prussia in 1741 would have been disas-

**Marriage of the Russian Grand Duke Peter and the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst.**

trous to Frederick's schemes, and was only prevented by the Swedish war. To avert the possibility of such an invasion in the future became the subject of the king's most anxious thoughts. The Russian Chancellor Bestuzhev headed an influential party opposed to Prussia, and it was not till the end of the year — November 12, 1742 — that Russia acceded to the Treaty of Berlin. With infinite skill Frederick's diplomatic agents succeeded in assuaging the Russian hostility, and in bringing about better relations between the two countries, by securing for the heir to the Russian throne, the Grand Duke Peter of Holstein-Gottorp, a bride in the person of Sophia, Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, who, on entering the Greek Church, took the name of Catherine, and became one of the most famous rulers of Russia. The betrothal took place in February 1744; the anti-Prussian influence of Bestuzhev was temporarily checked; and Frederick hoped that no danger was to be apprehended from Russia during the ensuing compaign against Austria.

With Sweden Frederick had long been desirous of establishing close relations, hoping, if occasion required, to use that country as a restraint upon Russia. Negotiations were opened with the Court of Stockholm for a marriage and political alliance, and met with success. In June 1744 Frederick's sister Ulrica was married to the heir-apparent of Sweden, and the Court of Stockholm entered cordially into friendly relations with Prussia.

**Marriage of Ulrica of Prussia to the Heir-Apparent of Sweden.**

A friendly understanding with Sweden was all the more important since Frederick found, by the summer of 1744, that he could not hope for a Russian alliance. The French envoy Chétardie, who had lately returned to Russia, was ordered to leave the country in June, and Bestuzhev's influence was restored. France found herself unable to carry out the terms of the treaty of June 5, and the Prussian king had the technical right of declining to fulfil his engagements.

Realising, however, the unappeasable hostility of Maria Theresa, and her fixed resolve to reconquer Silesia, sensible

of the latent jealousy of George II. as Elector of Hanover, and, above all, profoundly convinced of the immense importance to Prussia and to Germany of recovering Bavaria from the Hapsburg grasp, and reinstating the Elector to his position among the independent princes of the Empire, Frederick the Great, in spite of the possibility of Russian opposition, and in spite of the inability of France to carry out the terms of her engagement, decided to execute the treaty of June 5, and prepared to invade Bohemia in order to relieve France from the presence of Charles of Lorraine and his enormous army. He was resolved, while curbing the ambitious and revolutionary policy of Maria Theresa within the Empire, to establish his hold firmly upon the whole of Silesia, and to win a portion of Bohemia.

**Summary of Frederick's Motives in entering upon the Second Silesian War.**

Frederick's plan of operations was very simple. One French army was to operate in the Netherlands, and as soon as his attack on Bohemia had led to the retirement of Charles of Lorraine from Alsace, a second French army was to pursue the retreating Austrians. On August 7 the Prussian envoy Dohna declared to the Chancellor at Vienna Frederick's intention of supporting the Emperor and the constitution of the Empire; on August 15 the Prussian army began its march upon Prague. Avoiding Dresden, so as not to rouse open hostility from that quarter, Frederick's army, in four columns, advanced through Saxony into Bohemia, and, in spite of numerous difficulties, besieged and took Prague on September 16. By the advice of Belleisle, who had recovered some of his influence and was in the Prussian camp, Frederick, against his own judgment, decided to advance southwards, conquer the whole of Bohemia, and threaten Vienna. This decision proved disastrous. Batthyani, with his irregulars, cut the Prussian communications; Augustus of Saxony carried out the Treaty of Vienna of December 1743, and sent 20,000 men to Maria Theresa's assistance; while the return of the Austrian forces, under Charles of Lorraine and Traun, from Alsace, and

**The Second Silesian War.**

their junction with Batthyani at Mirotitz on October 2, placed the Prussian army in great peril. The Austrians had recrossed the Rhine on August 13, in face of the armies of Noailles and Coigny, and on September 10 had reached Donauwörth. The French had made no serious attempt, in accordance with the terms of their treaty with Frederick, to follow them and to harass their retreat. Noailles contented himself with sending reinforcements under Ségur into Bavaria, and in besieging Freiburg; while Seckendorf, aided by Ségur and troops from Hesse and the Palatinate, busied himself with reconquering Bavaria and in restoring Charles VII. to his dominions. Frederick was left to his fate. Traun, placing himself between the Prussian king and Prague, outmanœuvred the Prussians, and, with admirable strategy, forced Frederick to give up Prague, and, discomfited and discredited, to evacuate Bohemia, and to retire into Silesia. Thither the Austrians penetrated in the winter of 1744–45, after Frederick had returned to Berlin, but only to be driven out in January by Leopold of Dessau. At the close of 1744 Frederick found himself attacked by the full force of the Hapsburg monarchy, and had learnt too late how little his French allies could be depended upon. He had deserted them in 1742; they deserted him in 1744.

The campaign had not been disastrous to Frederick alone: though the Austrians had regained Bohemia, they had lost all Bavaria except Ingolstadt, Schärding, and Braunau, and on the 23d of October the Emperor had returned to Munich. The French had taken Freiburg; Marshal Saxe kept possession of his conquests in the Netherlands; the Marquis d'Argenson had, on November 18, become minister of foreign affairs. Still, at the beginning of 1745 the Austrian fortunes looked brighter than did those of the Prussian king, who was weary of the war and ready to accept any terms which would leave him in possession of Silesia. On January 20, 1745, two months after the capture and imprisonment of his supporter Belleisle by the English, the Emperor Charles VII. died in his forty-eighth year, over-

**The Death of the Emperor, Jan. 20, 1745.**

whelmed with anxiety, disappointment, and disease. His death dealt a serious blow to French policy, and brought to an end the Union of Frankfort. Frederick the Great could no longer pose as the defender of the rights of the Emperor; he was more exposed than ever to the hostility of Austria; while France, like Prussia, having lost that moral basis of its cause which was derived from the support given to Charles VII., could only see in a vigorous prosecution of the war any chance of an honourable peace. The effects of the death of the Emperor seemed likely to be far-reaching. In France public opinion began to declare against entanglements in central Europe, since experience had shown the folly of engaging in the quarrels of Germany. In England the fall of Carteret, one of the most brilliant foreign ministers of the eighteenth century, was followed by the reunion of the Whig party and by the adoption and extension of the policy advocated by the fallen minister. Though the Hanoverian troops were dismissed, the system of subsidising the German states was largely developed. The Governments of England and France found themselves unable to shake themselves free from political engagements, and the war continued on its former lines. The Marquis d'Argenson, who had in November 1744 become minister of foreign affairs in France, indulged in vast schemes of foreign policy, and looked forward to the time when France should again have a commanding influence in Europe. He put forward Augustus III., the Saxon King of Poland, as a candidate for the imperial throne, and at the same time an attempt was made to preserve French influence in Bavaria. The efforts of Chavigny, who was still the French ambassador at Munich, were neutralised by d'Argenson's refusal to supply the destitute young Elector with money, and by Maria Theresa's insight and energy. With the instinct of a statesman she at once recognised the advantages of her position, showed herself as determined to secure her husband's election to the imperial dignity as she was to regain Silesia, and resolved as a preliminary step to these ends to force upon the young

**The Treaty of Füssen, April 22, 1745.**

Elector a reconciliation. Maximilian Joseph was only eighteen years old; his mother was a Hapsburg, and, with Seckendorf, was in favour of peace with Austria. While he hesitated to accept the terms offered by Colleredo, the Austrian representative, which amounted to a *status quo ante*, Maria Theresa poured her troops, under Batthyani, into Bavaria. On March 24 they crossed the Inn, drove the French contingent out of Bavaria, and threatened Munich, while the Elector fled to Augsburg. Deserted by the French, with his country in Austrian hands, and threatened by an advance on the part of Aremberg southwards, he was obliged to submit.

On the 22d of April the Treaty of Füssen was signed between the young Elector and Maria Theresa. By it Bavaria was gained to the Hapsburg interest, and the Bavarian vote was secured for Francis Stephen on the ensuing imperial election. Maximilian, while recognising the Pragmatic Sanction, was not compelled to ally with Austria against Prussia and France, though by a secret article he engaged, in return for a subsidy equal to that granted formerly by France to his father, to supply 12,000 troops to the Maritime Powers.

The effects of the subjugation of Bavaria and the Treaty of Füssen were at once seen. The German sentiment, always susceptible on the score of French interference, expressed itself in rejoicings in Bavaria at the expulsion of Ségur and his contingent, while throughout the small states of Germany a general reaction in favour of Austria set in. At the Hague the enthusiasm for the continuance of the war increased; while the Elector of Saxony, yielding to the persuasions of Maria Theresa's minister, allowed his hatred of the King of Prussia full play, and hastily promised to ratify the Treaty of Warsaw, to support the election of Francis Stephen, and to send troops to aid Austria in the ensuing campaign. In consideration of these services he was to receive Schwiebus from Austria, and further territorial compensation at the Prussian expense.

On the 18th of May the Treaty of Warsaw, which had been

arranged in January, was ratified. Austria and Saxony were united on a permanent basis. Both Powers agreed to partition Prussia and to reduce Frederick's kingdom to the limits of the ancient Margraviate of Brandenburg. Maria Theresa had thus succeeded in securing the Bavarian and Saxon votes, and in isolating Frederick. The loss of the Bavarian alliance had been a serious blow to the King of Prussia; the policy of aggression and spoliation agreed upon by Austria and Saxony constituted a grave danger. Though d'Argenson continued his hopeless attempts till the eve of the election in September to induce Augustus to become a candidate for the imperial dignity, Frederick the Great saw clearly the hopelessness of such a project, and the impossibility of gaining the adhesion of Augustus, who was himself dependent on Austria, while his ministers were, like the Electors of Köln and Mainz, in the pay of England. He was surprised when he heard of the French determination to continue the war; he had hoped for the intervention of England in favour of a general pacification. No assistance or friendly mediation could be obtained from Russia, for the Tsarina had in April declared she would no longer be a guarantor of the Treaty of Berlin; while England's attempt to induce Austria to consider the question of peace failed utterly. Frederick was left to his own resources and to the valour of his soldiers. The fate of Silesia hung in the balance.

**Isolation of Frederick the Great.**

Before the Austrian attack was made, France had won the battle of Fontenoy on May 11, and had to some extent restored the military reputation of the French soldiers. Maillebois had been sent into Italy with one army; Conti with a second defended Alsace; while Maurice de Saxe with a third, accompanied by Louis XV., set forth to the Netherlands. In making his principal effort in Flanders, Louis and his ministry were acting in full accord with the popular wish. In abstaining from interference in the Empire, and in profiting by the quarrel in Germany to extend her frontiers, France was pursuing, if not an honour-

**The Battle of Fontenoy, May 11, 1745.**

able, at least an intelligible, policy. In spite of Frederick's sarcasm that the capture of Tournay would be as useful to him as the siege of Babylon by Thamas-Chouli-Khan, Saxe, on April 30, besieged Tournay. The allied forces were under Cumberland, who was ably seconded by the Austrian Königsegg, while the Dutch troops were under the Prince of Waldeck. Cumberland and Königsegg made a desperate attempt to raise the siege of Tournay, and fought on May 11 the battle of Fontenoy, which, owing to the inaction of the Dutch, ended, in spite of the heroism of the English and Hanoverians, in a partial victory for Marshal Saxe. Cumberland was compelled shortly afterwards to return to England on account of the Jacobite rising, and the French, under Löwendahl, fortunate in the withdrawal of English troops, found little difficulty in capturing Tournay, Ghent, Bruges, Oudenarde, Dendermonde, Ostend, Nieuport, and Ath.[1]

Frederick had been himself opposed to campaigns in the Netherlands which could not be of any service to him in Bohemia, and had consistently advocated the winning of victories in Germany. But the news of the victory of Fontenoy encouraged him to hope that possibly the English might now be induced to make peace. Fontenoy had, however, hardly been fought before the combined Austrian and Saxon armies, 75,000 strong and commanded by Prince Charles, entered Silesia. With 70,000 men Frederick defeated the Prince at Hohenfriedberg on June 5, and, following the enemy into Bohemia, remained encamped near Königgrätz for three months, hoping France would declare war on Saxony and send Conti into Germany. He was still anxious for peace. His resources were exhausted; he could get no adequate money grant from the French; while, upon the retirement of Conti and his army across the Rhine shortly after Fontenoy, there was not a French soldier

**The Convention of Hanover, Aug. 26, and the Election of Francis Stephen to the Imperial Throne, Sept. 13, 1745.**

[1] For much of the later portion of the war in Germany see Duc de Broglie, *Marie Thérèse, Imperatrice.* 2 vols.

left in Germany, and Saxony had no longer to fear the possibility of French intervention. On the other hand, Maria Theresa's forces dominated Frankfort, where the election of the Emperor was to be held, and the Austrian Government was well supplied with English subsidies.

From his desperate position Frederick was partially relieved by George II. England was in the throes of the Jacobite rebellion, and the English troops in Germany were required to defeat Charles Edward, who had landed in England on August 4. Fearing to leave Hanover exposed to the attacks of the Prussian king, George II. on August 26 signed the Convention of Hanover, guaranteeing for himself and his allies the maintenance of Frederick in Silesia, and confirming the Treaty of Berlin. But the pacific tendencies of the English king were not seconded by his allies. The attempted mediation on the part of England in favour of peace by Robinson, the English envoy at Vienna, begun a month previously, met with no success at the hands of Uhlfeld; and on September 13 the Grand Duke Francis Stephen was elected Emperor as Francis I.

Maria Theresa had secured one of her two great aims. It remained for her to regain Silesia. The Convention of Hanover had infuriated her against her treacherous friend England, from whose alliance she felt released, and while Brühl suggested to the Marquis de Vaulgrenant the establishment of friendly relations between Austria and France, Chavigny was writing on the 13th of September from Munich that Chotek, the Austrian minister in that city, had said to the Saxon ambassador that 'it was the first time the Courts of Vienna and Versailles should draw together.' The opposition of Louis XV. and d'Argenson, however, rendered the Austrian overtures fruitless, and the Franco-Prussian alliance remained intact.

**The End of the Second Silesian War, and the Treaty of Dresden, Dec. 25, 1745.**

On the 30th of September Frederick, while retiring from Königgrätz, again defeated the Austrians at Sohr, and con-

tinued his retreat into Silesia. The Austrians, however, ignoring the approach of winter, to the surprise of Frederick, who had returned to Berlin, where he received a declaration that Russia would not permit any attack on the dominions of Augustus III., proposed, in conjunction with the Saxons, an invasion of Brandenburg. Hearing, through the indiscretion of Count Brühl, of this daring design of Maria Theresa against him, Frederick determined to brave the danger of a Russian onslaught and to attack Saxony. Suddenly falling on Prince Charles' army in Saxon Lusatia, he overthrew it on November 23 in the battle of Gross Hennersdorf, and drove it into Bohemia; while, on December 15, the Prince of Dessau, having taken Leipsic, defeated a combined Austrian and Saxon army under Count Rutowski, a half-brother of Marshal Saxe, at Kesselsdorf, near Dresden; and, three days later, Frederick entered the Saxon capital, where he charmed all by his moderation and affability. At this crisis Harrach, the Austrian minister in Dresden, who hated Frederick, made a definite offer to Vaulgrenant for a French alliance. But neither Louis XV. nor d'Argenson was as yet prepared to revolutionise French foreign policy, and on December 25, 1745, the Treaty of Dresden ended the second Silesian War. The Convention of Hanover was confirmed, and the cession of Silesia was secured to Frederick, who agreed to recognise the new Emperor.

The second Silesian War is of enormous importance in the history of Prussia, which was only saved from a serious disaster by the audacity of Frederick himself. At its close he was again recognised as sovereign of Silesia, and the influence of Prussia in Germany was secured. To France the Treaty of Dresden was an unpleasant surprise. The Prussian king had again broken with France, and Louis XV.'s policy had suffered a severe blow, more severe than the previous disasters of the year 1745, the loss of Bavaria, the Convention of Hanover, the election of Francis I. It was only in Flanders and in Italy that France could look for successes, and in the latter country a serious calamity was awaiting her in 1746.

Maria Theresa's acquiescence in the Treaty of Dresden, as unexpected as that of Louis XIV. in the Treaty of Ryswick, had been caused by the arrival of the news of the loss of Milan and the threatened loss of the Italian provinces of Austria. The year 1745 was disastrous to the Hapsburg cause in Italy. France, closely united to Spain by the Treaty of Fontainebleau, had sent Maillebois with a French army to co-operate with the Spanish forces under Don Philip. Genoa, anxious to save Finale from Sardinia, had allied with Spain, and Gages in February 1745 forced Lobkowitz to retire from Papal territory to Modena. There Lobkowitz was superseded by Schulenberg, while Gages was ordered to march to Genoa to join the combined French and Spanish armies under Maillebois and Don Philip. Elizabeth Farnese was intent on the conquest of the Milanese, but though nominally supported by the French, her aims met with no sympathy from the Marquis d'Argenson. The new French minister of foreign affairs did not approve of the Treaty of Fontainebleau, and wished to break off the close connection between France and Spain. But the impetuosity of Elizabeth carried all before it. In August Schulenberg and Victor Emanuel stationed themselves at Bassignano, while the Spaniards, aided by a strong Genoese force, took Tortona, Parma, Piacenza, and Pavia before the end of September, and threatened Milan. Schulenberg, alarmed for the safety of the Milanese, left Victor Emanuel, who cared only to protect his territories, and hurried to defend the capital of Lombardy. Gages thereupon attacked the King of Sardinia, now deprived of Austrian help, won the battle of Bassignano on September 27, and began the conquest of Lombardy, in opposition to the wish of the French commanders, who urged the reduction of Piedmont. While Maillebois and Lasci blockaded Alessandria, Gages, having taken Casale, entered Milan on December 16, though the citadel still held out. Prince Lichtenstein, who had superseded Schulenberg, finding it necessary to remain with Victor Emanuel in Piedmont, in order to keep him true to the

**D'Argenson's Failure in Italy.**

**The Battle of Bassignano, Sept. 27, 1745.**

Austrian alliance, was unable to oppose the Spanish advance, and the campaign proved calamitous to the Hapsburgs. These disasters to the Austrian and Sardinian cause had a twofold effect. Maria Theresa recognised the necessity of making peace with Prussia in order to strengthen the Austrian forces in Italy, while Victor Emanuel, not altogether without reason, attributed his losses to the engrossing interest shown by Maria Theresa in her contest with Prussia, to the desire of the Hapsburgs to defend the Milanese, and to the insufficient number of Austrian troops in Italy. Feeling that Austria had treated him unfairly, he began to listen to d'Argenson's proposals, and considered the advisability of deserting his alliance with the Hapsburgs and making peace with France. As long as Sardinia was allied with Austria and subsidised by England, she remained the great barrier to Bourbon extension in Italy. The defeat at Bassignano, and the fall of the town of Alessandria on the 12th of October, forced upon Charles Emanuel the necessity of reconsidering his position. The traditions of Piedmontese policy demanded the maintenance of a balance between the Hapsburgs and the Bourbons. In the autumn of 1745 he could no longer rely on effective Austrian assistance, and when d'Argenson opened negotiations with him in the hope of destroying the Austro-Sardinian alliance, Charles Emanuel felt bound to give them his consideration.

D'Argenson's Italian Project, and its Failure.

D'Argenson had already carefully drawn up, to his own satisfaction, a 'Project for forming a republic and a lasting association of Italian Powers' on the model of Germany, Switzerland, and the United Provinces, and to drive back 'beyond the Alps all foreign rule in order to establish a federal bond among the sovereigns of Italian nationality.' This scheme for the regeneration of Italy is interesting in the history of Italian independence; but was impracticable at that time, and was recognised as such by Charles Emanuel and his advisers. Don Carlos could not be expected to retire from Naples, nor Don Philip to resign his claims on Parma and Piacenza. There was no demand in Italy for national union,

and Charles Emanuel preferred the shadowy imperial suzerainty to the risk of being exposed to French dictation. D'Argenson's earlier proposals in September that France, Spain, and Sardinia should unite to expel the Austrians, were cordially received; but after Bassignano, the fall of the town of Alessandria, and the startling progress of the Bourbon arms, Charles Emanuel allowed the negotiations to be resumed. On December 26 Gorzegno, the Sardinian minister for foreign affairs, recognising the necessity for making terms with the victorious Bourbons, signed at Turin a memorandum which set out the conditions to which France and Sardinia could agree. These merely touched upon the division of the Austrian possessions in Italy between Sardinia, Don Philip, Venice, Modena, and Genoa. Champeaux, the French agent, who had been sent to Turin to detach Charles Emanuel from the Austrian alliance and offer him the Milanese, returned to Paris with the document. Montgardino, the Sardinian ambassador at the French capital, declined, however, to discuss the terms of peace, and Champeaux was, on January 20, again sent to Turin to obtain a final settlement and to convert the preliminaries of peace into a definite treaty, while d'Argenson wrote to Maillebois, telling him that seeret negotiations were on foot, and that he must simply stand on the defensive. The Spanish Government was at the same time informed of the negotiations which were proceeding. In Spain the utmost indignation prevailed, and negotiations were opened with Austria; while in France the policy of d'Argenson was subjected to the most scathing criticism. At Turin the Sardinian ministers were convinced that d'Argenson's object was not so much the freedom of Italy as the aggrandisement of France, and that in view of the establishment of Don Carlos in the south, and the probable establishment of Don Philip in the north of Italy, the expulsion of the Austrians would be a serious calamity for the rulers of Piedmont. In these views they were strengthened by events in England and Germany. The reverses of Charles Edward freed the English Government from its pressing embarrassments; while, on the very day that

the preliminaries of Turin were signed, the Treaty of Dresden was being concluded.

On January 4, 1746, news of the close of the second Silesian War reached Turin; on January 13 the Sardinian Court was informed that 30,000 Austrian troops were marching to Italy. The best policy for Charles Emanuel was obviously to prolong the negotiations for a few weeks. He had insisted on a suspension of arms, and d'Argenson, completely overreached by the Court of Turin, signed, on February 17, 1746, the famous armistice, 'without making a single condition or reservation, and allowing the insertion of a special stipulation for the immediate raising of the siege of Alessandria.' The suspension of arms was to last till the end of February.

On February 28 the younger Maillebois, appointed plenipotentiary at Turin, arrived at Briançon with orders to publish the armistice at Turin. But the Sardinian king was by this time master of the situation. The Austrian troops under Browne were approaching, and on March 4 the Count de Maillebois, then at Rivoli, having been hoodwinked, and his father the Marshal completely bewildered, the Sardinian troops, under the Baron de Leutrum, captured Asti on March 8, and a few days later the siege of Alessandria was raised, and the Spanish besieging force, under Lasci, retired to Tortona. For a second time since the opening of the Polish Succession War, the House of Savoy had declined the French offer to make the King of Sardinia the leading Power in an independent Italy.

**The Expulsion of the French and Spaniards from North Italy.**

The Spanish Court, which with difficulty had been persuaded to sign the armistice on the 8th of March, was furious, and the feeling in Paris stirred up by the fall of Asti ran strongly against d'Argenson. Louis XV., carried away by the general feeling, reversed the policy of d'Argenson, sent Noailles to conciliate the Spanish Court, and Maillebois was ordered to act in subordination to the Spanish generals. But these attempts to propitiate Spain failed. The ill-feeling and suspicions roused by

d'Argenson's policy rendered united action between the French and Spanish forces impossible, and the Sardinians and Austrians, with few exceptions, carried all before them. The evacuation of Milan on March 19, and of Parma and other places by the Spaniards, was followed by the blockade of Don Philip and Gages in Piacenza by the Austrians. On June 14 Maillebois came to Don Philip's assistance, and the next day the battle of Piacenza was fought, the advantage being on the side of the Austrians, who were only prevented by dissensions with the Piedmontese from cutting off the retreat of the allied army. The Austrian Court gave up the negotiations with Spain into which it had entered secretly the previous year; before the end of 1746 the French and Spaniards were driven into France; and, while Charles Emanuel took Finale and Savona, the Austrians entered Genoa in September.

These disasters to the Bourbon cause were in great measure the result of Philip v.'s death, which took place on July 9. His son, by his first marriage, Ferdinand vi., replaced the capable Gages by the incompetent Las Minas, who insisted on retreating into Savoy, though the quarrels between Botta — who had succeeded Lichtenstein in the command of the Austrian army — and Victor Emanuel offered an excellent opportunity for retrieving the late disasters to the Bourbon cause. After the capture of Genoa the Austrians and Sardinians differed as to the future course of the campaign. The Austrian Court wished to take advantage of its splendid position in North Italy in order to drive the Spaniards out of South Italy, and to recover the Two Sicilies; Charles Emanuel was strongly opposed to any further aggrandisement of the Hapsburgs. The weight of English influence, however, in view of the victories of Marshal Saxe in the Low Countries, which rendered a diversion of the utmost importance, was cast in favour of an invasion of Provence and the capture of Toulon, the great French naval arsenal.

**Death of Philip V., July 9, 1746.**

The skill of Belleisle, who commanded the French army, the rising of the Genoese, the misconduct of the Marquis du

Botta, the Austrian commander-in-chief, and the recurrence of dissensions between the Austrians and Piedmontese, ruined the success of the invasion into Provence, which took place in November, and the allies in February 1747 were forced to retreat. Though the French had failed in Germany and in Italy in 1746, they could congratulate themselves on the collapse of the invasion of Provence, and on their successes in Flanders.

In January 1746 a proposed invasion of England or Scotland by the Duc de Richelieu and 11,000 men, on behalf of Charles Edward, though it caused a certain amount of anxiety in England, had come to nothing; but before the end of the month Marshal Saxe had invested Brussels, and on February 20 the Governor, Count Kaunitz, surrendered, and Saxe returned in triumph to Paris. The political importance of the fall of Brussels was great. Holland was apparently at the mercy of the French, and d'Argenson had it in his power to force the States-General either to remain neutral or to make a separate peace with France. The success of his policy depended upon immediate action before England had time to send an effective force to the aid of Holland. Instead of showing any energy, d'Argenson, occupied in his complicated negotiations in Italy, contented himself in discussing with the Dutch envoy, Wassenaer, the bases of a general peace, and the campaign was resumed in the Netherlands. The siege of Antwerp was witnessed by Louis XV., and after the capture of the town the citadel surrendered on June 3, while Mons and Charleroi fell shortly afterwards. The serious nature of the situation was now appreciated by the Austrian Court; while the victory of Culloden, on April 16, enabled the English to turn their attention to the Netherlands, and in view of the French successes in the Low Countries, to send an expedition to Brittany in September. An attempt to take L'Orient failed, and Marshal Saxe continued his victorious career. Commanded by the incapable Charles of Lorraine, the allied army suffered a series of disasters. Namur was lost; and on October 11 Saxe won the battle of Raucoux, and the campaign ended with

**The French Campaign in Flanders, 1746.**

the whole of the Austrian Netherlands, except Limburg and Luxemburg, in the hands of Austria.

Though successful in the Netherlands, the French policy in Italy had failed; and the relations between France and Spain had become, since the death of Philip v. in July 1746, more strained than ever.

Deprived of her Bavarian ally by the Treaty of Füssen, deserted by Prussia, and unable to hold her own against England on the sea and in the colonies, France might well recognise the desirability of bringing the war to a conclusion. The fall of the Marquis d'Argenson, on the 11th of January 1747, removed one of the greatest obstacles to peace.

The blame of the Bourbon failure in the north of Italy had been universally attributed to the minister, and his conduct during the negotiations with Charles Emanuel had justified the severest criticisms of his enemies. His Spanish policy had made him many foes, while he had been unfortunate in incurring the dislike of Marshal Saxe, through opposition to the latter's schemes in the Netherlands. Saxe wished to carry the war into Dutch territory, and to force from the Government of the Hague a special and separate peace. The appointment of the Prince of Conti to be generalissimo, though it was none of d'Argenson's doing, had still further alienated the Marshal, who united with Madame de Pompadour and Conti himself, and supported by the influence of Spain and Saxony, and the council of ministers, made a successful attempt to overthrow the unsuspecting statesman. It only required a memoir, drawn up by Noailles and presented to the king on December 15, 1746, to put the finishing touch to the long series of intrigues against d'Argenson. In the memoir he was accused of having thrown himself into the arms of the Dutch, of having offended Spain, and of having humiliated France. He was charged with 'ignorance, presumption, indiscretion, and gross neglect,' and the whole blame of the political situation of France was laid upon his shoulders. Frederick the Great regarded him with contempt, and having

**The Fall of d'Argenson. His Policy.**

made many foes and no friends, d'Argenson's ministry came to an end on January 11, 1747.

The basis of his policy was the Prussian alliance. 'The alliance of France and Prussia,' he said, 'is a system whose foundations ought to be immovable.' This conviction caused the failure of the negotiations with Austria in 1745, which, had they been successfully carried out, would have anticipated, much to the advantage of France, the revision of alliances in 1756. His plan for the regeneration and emancipation of Italy by means of the establishment of an Italian federation — admirable in its conception — would have, if carried out at that time, simply reduced Italy to a province of France. But while to Chauvelin the independence of the Italian peninsula was simply a means for the expulsion and consequent abasement of the Hapsburgs, to d'Argenson it was an end desirable in itself. The failure of his attempt, which itself reflects honour on his memory, placed a weapon in the hands of the friends of Spain in the French Court, and paved the way for his downfall.

In his relations with Spain d'Argenson represented the lack of enthusiasm felt in France for the aims of Elizabeth Farnese, while that absence of cordiality in the relations between the two countries, which he had inherited from Fleury, was continued by his successor. He had acted with reference to the Treaty of Fontainebleau as Fleury had acted towards the Treaty of the Escurial, and like his predecessor he was regarded with detestation by the Spanish Court.

Though his adherence to the policy of antagonism to Austria and England was intelligible, d'Argenson's general views were not such as commended themselves to men like Marshal Saxe and the majority of Frenchmen. He held that increase of territory would be a source of weakness to France, and desired to see Louis xv. in the position of 'arbiter and paternal protector of all Europe.' As long as Prussia was confirmed in its possession of Silesia, and Austria correspondingly weakened, France ought in his opinion to be satisfied. On these grounds he was willing, in a general pacification, to restore all the French

conquests in return for Cape Breton Island. 'D'Argenson's incontestable superiority,' writes the Duc de Broglie, 'lay in an intelligence wide enough to seize on grand general ideas; but, unfortunately, it was of little use in politics for want of other, less elevated qualities; practical common-sense, power of gauging possibilities, knowledge of men.'

An honest minister, he was no statesman, and was, moreover, unable to cope with the diplomacy and intrigues of the day. His unmistakable opposition to the secret efforts of Conti to secure the Polish throne on the death of Augustus, brought on him the hostility of that prince, while his devotion to the King of Prussia arrayed against him the powerful influence of Brühl, who recognized that the fall of d'Argenson was a necessary preliminary to an alliance between France and Saxony, which should lead to peace with Austria. After the death of Philip v. of Spain and his daughter, the Dauphiness of France, Saxony had occupied a large place in French diplomacy. The Spanish party at the French Court, headed by Noailles and Maurepas, and supported by Ferdinand vi. the King of Spain, desired that the sister of the late Dauphiness should marry the Dauphin. But the opposition of Louis xv. and d'Argenson to this scheme was successful, and it was decided that negotiations should be entered upon for the marriage of the Dauphin to the daughter of Augustus iii. of Saxony.

On January 11, 1747, the marriage was celebrated at Dresden; and on that day d'Argenson fell, and Saxony remained the ally of Austria. During the marriage negotiations d'Argenson had aimed at replacing the connection between Saxony and Austria by a close understanding between Saxony and Prussia. The combined influence of Prussia and France were then to be employed in making the crown of Poland hereditary in the Saxon house. A blow would thus be dealt at the power of Russia and Austria, and the prestige of France increased in the east of Europe.

This policy was opposed by Conti, who aimed at the crown of Poland on the death of Augustus iii., and by Brühl, who was

decidedly opposed to any idea of a Prussian alliance. The Marquis des Issarts had been appointed ambassador at Dresden at the request of Conti, in whose intrigues at this period are to be found the first definite beginnings of the secret diplomacy of the reign of Louis XV.

D'Argenson, ignorant of the Court intrigues, ordered his envoy 'to abstain from anything which might give the least offence to the Elector of Saxony'; and Conti, finding his intrigues checked by d'Argenson, threw himself vigorously into the conspiracy against the minister; while Brühl found another powerful supporter in Maurice de Saxe, who, though chiefly interested in the proposal to make his niece Dauphiness, was opposed to d'Argenson, and ready to support the Saxon minister's policy. Having secured the assistance of Madame de Pompadour and Noailles, Saxe decided the duel between Brühl and d'Argenson in favour of the former. D'Argenson's bold and not unstatesmanlike schemes were defeated. Saxony remained the ally of Russia and Austria, and an admirable opportunity was lost of making Poland an hereditary monarchy, and saving it from its impending fate.[1]

Thus various influences united in the same direction, and 'ministers, mistress, marshals, princes, courtiers, foreign ambassadors, all were unanimous in accusing d'Argenson of being the one only obstacle to peace,' and in urging his downfall.

His famous fiasco in Italy, his blunder in not enforcing on Holland a strict neutrality at the beginning of 1746, his blind belief in the fidelity of the King of Prussia, his want of tact in his dealings with Saxe and Conti, justify, and to a great extent explain, his fall. A more skilful minister, and one who was less an idealist, would not only have been aware of the coalition formed against him, but would have taken steps to defeat it.

He was succeeded by the incompetent Louis Brulart de Sillery, Marquis de Puisieux; while his brother, the Comte d'Argenson, was confirmed in his office as Minister of War, and

[1] *See* Duc de Broglie, *Maurice de Saxe et Marquis d'Argenson*, vol. ii.

for a time the military operations continued. The proposed conference at Breda, in the autumn of 1746, had proved a failure owing to the determination of Maria Theresa to continue the war till she gained compensation for the loss of Silesia and for the territories ceded to Charles Emanuel by the Treaty of Worms. In Italy the Austrians under Schulenberg failed in June to take Genoa, after a siege of two months; while the Sardinians, on July 19, engaged a French force under the Chevalier Belleisle at Exilles, on the Col d'Assietto, with the result that the Chevalier was killed, and the French retreated into Dauphiné, where Marshal Belleisle and Las Minas, in command of the French and Spanish armies respectively, remained inactive. It was not till 1796, the year of Napoleon's first Italian campaign, that French troops again invaded Italy.

**The War in 1747.**

In the Netherlands, where France could strike at the Sea Powers as well as at Austria, Puisieux attempted to carry out the policy to which d'Argenson had been opposed, and to compel the Dutch to make peace. Under Saxe and Löwendahl the French armies met with a series of successes. On July 2, the Duke of Cumberland was defeated by Marshal Saxe at Laufeld, and though Maestricht did not fall, Löwendahl proceeded with his capture of towns, and on September 16 took the great fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom.

Though the English were unsuccessful in the Netherlands, at sea the advantage was entirely on their side. Two crushing defeats completed the ruin of the French navy, and the destruction of the French commerce. The maritime supremacy of England at the beginning of 1748 was unquestioned.

The invasion of the Netherlands in 1747 and the English successes at sea had two results. A popular revolution in Holland broke out against the republican government. The aristocratic party was overthrown; William IV. of Orange, a son-in-law of George II. of England, was declared Stadtholder; and after an interval of a few months the office was made hereditary in his family both for males and females.

**Revolution in Holland, 1747.**

A second result was that fresh attempts were made to bring about a general pacification. On November 10, 1747, George II., in opening Parliament, had announced that a congress would shortly meet at Aix-la-Chapelle to consider the conditions of peace. Close of the War.

Of the principal combatants, neither England, Spain, Holland, nor France had any reasons for continuing the war. The French treasury was empty, the Pretender's cause was dead, the French flag had practically disappeared from the sea, the Government had asserted that it desired no increase of territory, and there was no enthusiasm in France for the Spanish demands. In Holland, the safety of which was threatened by Marshal Saxe and his victorious troops, there was no serious opposition to the peace proposals. The revolution had not been followed by military successes, and the finances of the country were unable to stand the continued military expenditure. Spain, under Ferdinand VI., had already given unmistakable signs that Elizabeth Farnese's aggressive policy was no longer being pursued, and that peace would be welcome. Between England and Austria relations were becoming more and more strained. As in the Spanish Succession War, England had paid large subsidies to Austria, and Austria had employed that money in the maintenance of her armies in Italy.

Since 1715 it had been recognised at Vienna that the defence of the Netherlands might be left to the Maritime Powers, England's well-known jealousy of French supremacy in that quarter being considered a sufficient guarantee for their security. The burden of the war had as usual fallen mainly upon England, and the English Government was not prepared to make further sacrifices on behalf of a lukewarm ally. The Pelhams, no longer supporters of the policy initiated by Carteret, were ready to adopt the more pacific views formerly held by Walpole. English public opinion was satisfied with the destruction of the French marine. The certainty of the fall of Maestricht, the refusal of the Dutch to pay a share

of the expenses connected with the transport of 30,000 Russian troops which the Tsarina had placed at the disposal of the allies, and the non-arrival of the troops themselves brought matters to a crisis, and decided the English Government to hasten the signature of the preliminaries of peace.

Austria had no real desire for peace. Maria Theresa attributed to England, in no small part, her losses at the Treaties of Berlin, Worms, and Dresden, and suspected that Power of a readiness to acquiesce in further sacrifices on the part of Austria to the Sardinian king. On May 22, 1746, the Treaty of 1726 between Austria and Russia had been renewed, with the addition of certain secret articles. Early in February 1748 the Russians entered Poland, and, meeting with no opposition from Augustus III., proceeded on their march. It seemed that the arrival at the seat of war of these savage auxiliaries of Maria Theresa and her allies would counteract the effect of the successes of Marshal Saxe in the Netherlands. But, in spite of these warlike appearances, peace was near at hand. England had made overtures of peace to the French Government, while Maria Theresa, suspecting treachery on the part of Sardinia and England, had already, through Count Loos, the Saxon Ambassador at Versailles, approached Puisieux when she heard of the pacific intentions of England and Holland.[1]

**Opposition of Maria Theresa to Peace.**

Once, after the Peace of Dresden, and a second time on the occasion of the marriage of the Saxon princess to the Dauphin, an attempt had been made to bring about an understanding between Austria and France, which had failed owing to the firmness of d'Argenson and the indecision of his successor. Undeterred by the failure of these attempts, the Saxon Minister, Brühl, now for the third time threw himself into the project of effecting a diplomatic revolution which should checkmate England and Sardinia, and redound to the advantage of Austria and France. But his efforts were again doomed to failure. While Maurice

**Maria Theresa attempts to ally with France.**

[1] *See* Duc de Broglie, *La Paix d'Aix-la-Chapelle.*

de Saxe besieged Maestricht, on which the safety of Holland entirely depended, the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle met in April 1748. In addition to the representatives of Spain, Sardinia, Holland, Modena, and Genoa, Austria was represented by Kaunitz, France by the Comte de Saint-Séverin and M. de Laporte du Theil, England by the capable and industrious Earl of Sandwich and by Sir Thomas Robinson. Maria Theresa desired to recover the territory which she had ceded to Sardinia by the Treaty of Worms; she was equally anxious that France should not continue to guarantee the possession of Silesia to Prussia. Saint-Séverin at first appeared to agree to her wishes; but he suddenly changed his attitude, and closed with the English proposals. Maria Theresa was forced to recognise that without the aid of the Sardinians in Italy, or that of the Dutch or English in Flanders, she was unable to continue the war. The weakness of her position rendered her acceptance of the terms agreed upon by France and England absolutely necessary.

Before Austria and Spain had finally given in their adhesion to the proposals for a general pacification, the preliminaries of peace were hastily signed by the plenipotentiaries of England, France, and Holland on April 30, 1748, but it was not till the 18th of October that these preliminaries were converted into a definite peace. The acquisition of Silesia and Glatz by Prussia was recognised and guaranteed; Savoy and Nice were handed over to Charles Emanuel, who, though he had to give up Finale, was confirmed in the possession of the territory in Lombardy which he had received by the Treaty of Worms; Genoa and the Duke of Modena recovered their lost lands. France acknowledged Francis as Emperor, and George II. as King of England; she also restored the Barrier fortresses to Holland, undertook to destroy the walls on the sea-side of Dunkirk, retired from the Austrian Netherlands, and promised to exclude the Pretender from French soil. In India, Madras was restored to England, while Louisburg and Cape Breton Island were handed back to

**The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748.**

France. Spain acknowledged the Emperor, and confirmed to England the Assiento Treaty and the right of sending the annual ship to South America. She, however, secured for Don Philip Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla as an hereditary principality, which was to revert to Austria in the event of failure of heirs-male. With the above exceptions, the Pragmatic Sanction was formally accepted, the election of the Emperor was recognised, and all conquests made during the war were restored.

With the exception of Prussia, the continental Powers saw little reason to be pleased with the results of the war. Charles Emanuel was bitterly disappointed at losing the Marquisate of Finale, and with it a direct communication between his Italian dominions and the sea. It was with the greatest reluctance that he relinquished Piacenza, which was a part of his gains at the Treaty of Worms. But he was compelled to recognise the necessity for submission, for Spain still held Savoy and Nice, and Austria regarded with open dissatisfaction his continued possession of a portion of the Milanese. Declaring that he had been grossly deceived by England, he accepted the terms offered by France and the Maritime Powers.

Spain had similar feelings of resentment towards France. But the days of Philip v. and Elizabeth Farnese were over, and Ferdinand vi., though furious with France, agreed to give up Savoy and Nice; and in exchange to receive the principality of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla for his half-brother, Don Philip. The English supremacy of the sea rendered all resistance impossible, and Ferdinand accepted the inevitable. But while Spain and Sardinia had good ground of complaint, the indignation of Maria Theresa was still more justified. The Treaties of Berlin, Dresden, and Worms had been concluded by the advice of England, and now for a fourth time England proposed to impose upon her fresh sacrifices. She resented the definite loss of Silesia, she wished to recall the cessions made to Sardinia at the Treaty of Worms, she was opposed to any further extension of the power of Charles Emanuel, and to the establishment of Don Philip in Parma. Furthermore,

the Austrian Court was resolved to cancel the hateful Barrier Treaty. The inability of the Dutch to defend themselves against France, and the uselessness of the Barrier towns as an obstacle to French invasion, had been so forcibly demonstrated in the late war, that Austria, so Kaunitz declared, found herself unable to acquiesce in the restoration of the former arrangement. The real reason, however, for this declaration was to be found in Maria Theresa's conviction that Holland was a mere satellite of England, and in her fixed resolution to shake herself free from dependence on the Court of St. James'. With infinite skill Kaunitz endeavoured to break up the agreement come to by England, France, and Holland, and to gain over Saint-Séverin to his views.

But England and Holland, though the latter Power had practically disappeared from the rank of great nations, presented a united front, and Puisieux refused to give the Austrian Court any encouragement, or to extend the guarantee granted to Prussia for Silesia to Maria Theresa's remaining possessions. With the Russians in Germany, delay in completing the pacification became dangerous, and the English Government, with the full support of Madame de Pompadour, insisted with vigour upon the conclusion of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. After further vain attempts to win over France, Maria Theresa, without allies, and with the possibility in view of a fresh desertion on the part of Charles Emanuel to the side of France, was forced, like Charles VI. in 1714, to accept the terms arranged by the Courts of St. James', Versailles, and the Government of the Hague. No other course was open to her. England, if 'abandoned by Austria, could continue the war with her fleets. Austria, deprived of the Piedmontese contingents in Italy, of the Dutch and English in Flanders, could not carry it on for a single day.'

On the 16th of October 1748 the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed by England, France, and Holland. Spain agreed to it on October 20, Austria on the 8th and Sardinia on the 20th of November.

In spite of her territorial losses, Austria was in 1748 far

stronger than in 1741. In the latter year it was said with some appearance of truth that 'the house of Austria had ceased to exist'; in 1748 the Hapsburgs were of greater account in Europe than the Bourbons. Hungary was more closely united to Austria than ever before, and the military resources of its eastern provinces were for the first time appreciated at Vienna; Bavaria and Saxony were mere satellites of the Hapsburg monarchy; the Russian alliance of 1746 was a source of strength and safety. A distinct step had been taken in the direction of a French alliance, and the question of forming a league of Catholic as opposed to Protestant Powers began to find favour with certain politicians both in Vienna and Paris.

**Relative Position of the Great Powers in 1748. Austria.**

While the gains of Austria thus outweighed her losses, and while the war left her not only strengthened but prepared by drastic reforms to carry out the work of centralisation and consolidation, and to reconsider her system of foreign policy, the new states of Prussia, Sardinia, and Russia had made a distinct step forward. Prussia had suddenly developed into a first-rate Power, whose army was the best fighting machine in Europe, whose alliance had become of immense value, and whose territorial ambitions had roused the deep-seated hostility of Austria and Russia; Sardinia, pursuing by different methods a similar policy of centralisation and territorial expansion, had also come out of the war with its possessions increased. Though d'Argenson had failed, the efforts of Elizabeth Farnese had been successful, and the Polish and Austrian Succession Wars left Italy in an improved position. Two Spanish Bourbon dynasties had been introduced, the Sardinian territories extended, and though a Hapsburg-Lorraine prince was to hold Tuscany, the decision of the Treaty of Utrecht had been reversed, and Italy was in great part freed from the German element.[1]

**Prussia and Italy.**

[1] For an estimate of the influence of Elizabeth Farnese upon Italy and Europe see Armstrong, *Elizabeth Farnese*, p. 398.

Under the Tsarina Elizabeth, Russia was ready to advance along the lines laid down by Peter the Great, and her alliance was courted by the leading European Powers. French statesmen regarded with undisguised hostility the rising influence of the kingdom of the Tsars. The close alliance of 1746 between the Courts of Vienna and St. **Russia.**




Petersburg was a great triumph for Maria Theresa, and a corresponding danger for Frederick the Great; and the whole of Europe was affected by the growing importance of the Russian state.

The advance of a Russian army in 1747 across Germany, and the demand of Elizabeth to take part in the pacification of Aix-la-Chapelle, were striking symptoms of the intention of the Tsarina not only to extend the influence of Russia in the East, but also to take an increasing share in the politics of western Europe. The rise of Russia and Prussia coincided with the growing weakness of France. To counteract the plans of Russia, always a difficult task for French statesmen, became doubly so after 1748. Though France emerged from the war without any territorial losses, her colonial ambitions were, owing to Fleury's neglect, threatened with extinction, her commerce had suffered severely, and her navy had been practically annihilated. By the influence of Madame de Pompadour the peace had been hurried on, and its conclusion was received in France with the most profound dissatisfaction. It was felt that, after the conquest of Belgium, France should have retained some territory, and it was realised that, after the sacrifice of 100,000 men, the French efforts had merely resulted in an enormous increase to her debt, in the acquisition of Silesia by Frederick the Great, of a principality by Don Philip, and of the imperial crown by Charles VII. for three years.

**France.**

In India, however, the French fortunes flourished, principally owing to the ability of Dupleix, and in spite of the neglect of the Government at home. The spirit of enterprise had received a considerable impetus from Law's operations, and the French Company, originally founded by Colbert, became a formidable competitor with England for the trade of the Indies. Holland, formerly the rival of England, had become so weakened by the long wars in which she had played a part, that she took little share in the competition between the English and the French. While the headquarters of English trade were at Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, or Fort William, the French had planted settlements at Surat, Masulipatam, Chandernagore, and Pondicherry; they also held the Isles of France and Bourbon in the

**French Fortunes in India during the War.**

Indian Ocean.[1] Previous to the appointment of Dupleix — who since 1730 had been Governor of Chandernagore — as Governor of Pondicherry in 1741, his predecessors, François Martin and Dumas, had, with consummate ability, developed the trade and extended the influence of the French Company. Dupleix was, however, not content with being the head of a successful trading corporation; he aimed at expelling the English and founding a great continental empire. As a means to this end, Dupleix, aided by Bussy, plunged into the vortex of native intrigues, and began to organise and drill native troops in the European fashion. On the outbreak of the war between England and France in 1744, French commerce, owing to the inadequacy of the navy, suffered severely. But Labourdonnais, the Governor of the Mauritius, whose military skill was superior to that of Dupleix, recognised the vital importance of the possession of a fleet. Hastily collecting a number of ships, he sailed to the assistance of Dupleix on September 21, 1746, and captured Madras — the inhabitants surrendering on the understanding that the town was to be repurchased for £440,000. Between Labourdonnais, who, it is said, was bribed by the members of the Council of Madras, and Dupleix, who, anxious to expel the English from India, refused to accept the terms of the capitulation, a fierce dispute arose. Eventually, Dupleix having promised to restore Madras, Labourdonnais returned to France to justify himself. From 1748 to 1751 he was imprisoned in the Bastille, and, though acquitted of the charge brought against him, died in 1753 from the effects of the treatment which he had received. In the meantime Dupleix, who had defeated the Nawab of the Carnatic, raised the prestige of the French arms, and retained Madras, proceeded in 1747 to attempt the capture of Fort St. David. Boscawen and the English fleet saved the fortress, but failed in an attack on Pondicherry. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle led to a mutual restitution of conquests,

**Schemes of Dupleix.**

[1] These islands, known as the Mauritius, occupy an important position between India and the Cape of Good Hope.

but the prestige of France remained superior to that of England in India till the recall of Dupleix in 1754 put an end to all hope of a French empire in the East.

In America the French had been unable to prevent the loss of Louisburg, the capital of Cape Breton Island and the key to their possessions in Canada. The loss of Cape Breton Island laid open the St. Lawrence and Canada, and the French disasters at sea rendered them unable to help the colonists. By the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle Louisburg was exchanged for Madras, and it was decided that commissioners should define the limits of the English and French territories in North America. The course of the struggles both in India and America had exemplified the disastrous results of Fleury's neglect of the navy, and had given many proofs of the mistaken policy consistently pursued by France towards her distant settlements and their governors during the middle portion of the eighteenth century.

**The French in North America.**

The maritime supremacy of Great Britain was now assured; and though France had been successful in Flanders and held her own in India, her growing weakness had been conspicuously exhibited at home and abroad. The efforts of her wisest ministers had failed to hide from the world the fact that good government and able administration, the characteristics of the reign of Louis XIV., no longer were to be found in France. The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, resulting as it did from the exhaustion of the various combatants, was no satisfactory pacification. It left undecided the disputes between the French and English colonists in North America; it postponed, by Article 18, the settlement of the claims of the Elector Palatine against the Maritime Powers and Austria. The treaty, concluded with such regrettable precipitation, merely put off the conflict between Austria and Prussia for Silesia, and the inevitable struggle between England, France, and Spain in the colonies and India, for eight years, during which Europe enjoyed a period of uneasy rest.

**The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle only a Truce.**

'Never perhaps did any war, after so many great events and so large a loss of blood and treasure, end in replacing the nations engaged in it so nearly in the same situation as they held at first.' The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was merely a truce.

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE DIPLOMATIC REVOLUTION

### 1748–1756

The Years 1748–56 a Period of Transition — Reforms in Austria — The Aims of Maria Theresa — The Policy of Kaunitz — Growing Irritation at Vienna against England — The Question of the Election of the Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans — The Embassy of Kaunitz to France — Machault's Attempts at Reforms — Struggle of the *Parlement* of Paris with the Court and Clergy — Louis XV. — Influence of Madame de Pompadour — Decline of the French Monarchy — Diplomatic Relations between France and Austria and between Austria and Russia — England's Relations with Russia and Prussia — Likelihood of War in 1753 — England and France in America and India — The Franco-Prussian Alliance — French Policy in Eastern Europe — Position of Frederick the Great — His Relations with France — England prepares for War — The Convention of Westminster — Negotiations between France and Austria, 1755–56 — The First Treaty of Versailles, May 1, 1756 — The Diplomatic Revolution, 1756.

THE year 1756 saw the break-up of an old system and the substitution of a new one. Austria and France laid aside the enmity of 200 years, ceased to be rivals, and formed an alliance which continued till the French Revolution; Austria broke off her long-standing connection with the Maritime Powers, while England found an ally in Prussia.

**1748–56 a Period of Transition.**

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle had pleased no one. France had gained nothing from the war, England had been compelled to restore her conquests, Prussia was far from being satisfied with the safety of Silesia, and Austria was furious at its loss and at the conduct of England throughout the war. In addition to Silesia, Austria had suffered losses in Italy, while

the cost of the struggle had been enormous. To Maria Theresa's complaints the English minister could point to the battles of Dettingen and Fontenoy, fought on behalf of Austria without Austrian troops; while, to the French complaints of Prussian desertion at the Treaties of Berlin and Dresden, Frederick could reply that France had at least on one occasion left him to the mercy of his foes.

The diplomatic revolution was not the result of an accident, or of the injured pride of Madame de Pompadour, or of an intrigue. It was due to general causes which had been long at work.

The transformation in the relations of the great European Powers, which resulted in the formation of a new balance of forces, though not effected till 1756, was working itself out during the eight years succeeding the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. When completed, it constituted a diplomatic revolution more far-reaching in its effects than the Triple Alliance of 1717, and was in the main caused by the sudden rise of Prussia and the implacable hostility which existed, after Frederick the Great's seizure of Silesia, between the Courts of Berlin and Vienna. Maria Theresa was not inclined to accept as final the terms of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. That treaty had left unsettled the great questions at issue between England and France in America and in India. It was merely a truce in the rivalry between Austria and Prussia; in no respect did it afford any reasonable hopes of inaugurating a period of peace. Europe, till the actual consummation of the diplomatic revolution in 1756, was divided into two groups: England, Austria, Russia, and Portugal formed roughly one league; France, Prussia, Spain, Denmark, Poland, Turkey, and Sweden formed the other. Spain was, however, during the reign of Ferdinand inclined to neutrality, and to the cultivation of peaceful relations with England and Austria, while England's alliance with Russia never carried with it adhesion to the secret schemes of the Courts of St. Petersburg and Vienna with regard to Prussia. With Austria and Russia, closely

allied since 1746, the all-absorbing question was the reduction of the power of the King of Prussia and the partition of his dominions; to England and France commercial and colonial rivalry was of paramount importance, and the continued disputes between the two nations in America and India might lead to open hostilities at any moment. The outbreak of war would test the stability and reality of the existing alliances.

**Reforms in Austria.**

The rise of Prussia had in itself revolutionised the European states-system, and had impressed upon ministers of every nationality the necessity of military and other reforms within their respective dominions. Though Austria had not only escaped annihilation, but had in a sense profited by the late war, the personal enmity between Maria Theresa and Frederick the Great, intensified by the former's determination to regain Silesia, had become the central point of European politics, and led to a complete reorganisation of the Hapsburg states. The Austrian institutions were too aristocratic, and power tended to fall into the hands of a few great families. The weakness of the central executive system, the conflicting interests of the various provinces, the selfishness of the nobles and their excessive influence in the provincial estates, had clearly demonstrated the necessity of greater centralisation, together with the better organisation of the central government itself. Financial, judicial, and social reforms were required. Henceforward each province paid a lump sum for the maintenance of the army, and a tax for this purpose was levied on all classes. Similar reforms were carried out in the administration of justice. During the late war the contrast between the loosely connected Hapsburg dominions and the centralised Prussian state had been very striking; and on the conclusion of peace, Prince George of Haugwitz, the son of a Saxon general, who had already had considerable experience as governor of what was left of Silesia, became chancellor, and introduced reforms which were warmly supported by Maria Theresa; while Rudolf Chotek, the new chief of the finance department, inspired by a feeling of rivalry towards

Haugwitz, entered with vigour upon his new duties. Haugwitz at once began the reorganisation of the central government, his aim being to introduce greater unity into the administration, to check corruption, and to reduce the powers enjoyed by the various estates, especially those which touched upon financial and military matters. The laws required codification; the judicial power of the nobles was too great; the influence of the clergy demanded supervision; and primary education in Austria was far behind that of Prussia and France.

In spite of opposition from most of the older ministers, from the nobles, and from the clergy, Haugwitz succeeded in carrying out valuable reforms which led the way for those of Joseph II. Hitherto much of the political and judicial work was under the chanceries of Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary. Each chancery was interested in escaping from the burden of taxation, in subordinating the interests of the monarchy to those of its own country, and in checking the power of the Exchequer (Hofkammer) and that of the Emperor. During the Austrian Succession War, Kinsky, the Chief Chancellor of Bohemia, had deliberately starved the army in order to lessen the burdens of Bohemia. By an edict of May 14, 1749, justice was separated from administration, and the Austrian and Bohemian chanceries were united, and called at first *Directorium in internis*, later 'Kaiserliche Königliche vereinigte Hofkanzlei.' It was simply a ministry of the interior for financial and executive work, and over it was placed Haugwitz as president. Most of the judicial work was transferred to a High Court of Justice (Hofrath). Later on this Directorium was divided into the Exchequer (Hofkammer) and the Chancery (Hofkanzlei) for executive work. Above all was placed in 1760 a Council of State (Staatsrath) to exercise control over the Chancery, the Exchequer, the Aulic Council of War, and the High Court of Justice. It was settled that, instead of annual contributions of men and money, the provincial estates should in the future vote a fixed sum for ten years, and that the administration of military affairs should be taken out of their hands. The political powers of

the estates were reduced and handed over to representatives of the central authority, and local government, no longer exclusively in the hands of the nobles, was in many cases practically destroyed. Drastic changes were made, all in the direction of strengthening the power of the central government throughout the dominions of the Hapsburgs, of lessening the influence of the nobles, and of protecting the peasants against the oppressions of their masters.[1]

Many of Maria Theresa's reforms had thus for their object the amelioration of the lot of the peasants, and the diminution of the power of the nobles by suppressing the right to exemption from taxation which many of their lands enjoyed, and by attracting them to Vienna. All these reforms tended to the centralisation of the Austrian monarchy, and the consolidation of all the powers of the state. They illustrated the ideas of humanity then coming into favour; they show that Maria Theresa was bent on unifying the monarchy, and establishing a benevolent despotism; they owed their introduction to the conviction that in the next struggle with Prussia greater efficiency in all departments of the state produced by the practical reconstruction of all branches of the civil administration would enormously increase the chances of success. 'Haugwitz,' wrote Maria Theresa after the Chancellor's death, 'brought the government from confusion into order'; and there is no doubt that the central authority owed a debt of gratitude to the determination with which the reforms were carried out.

No less drastic were her educational, commercial, industrial, and financial reforms, carried out with the object of increasing the revenue and reducing expenditure. In February 1746 the nomination of the professors of the University of Vienna was placed in the hands of the Crown, — the first of a series of measures to bring all education under the control of the state. Consulates were established in the Mediterranean and Adriatic, merchant ships were built, the development of Trieste was encouraged. Under Chotek's able supervision roads and canals

[1] *See* Appendix A.

were vastly improved, internal custom-houses either abolished, or carefully restrained, and the postal system reformed. An income-tax was imposed, and a graduated poll-tax decreed. By these methods the revenues were augmented, and Austrian credit was greatly enhanced.

In view of Maria Theresa's determination to recover Silesia, military reforms were imperatively demanded. Conscription after the Prussian model was introduced throughout the Austrian dominions, except in Hungary, the Tyrol, the Milanese, and the Netherlands. The number of soldiers was increased, incompetent officers were removed, military schools were created. Certain reforms in drill were borrowed from the Prussian army, and order and economy carefully enforced. Efforts were taken to improve the general *morale* of the army, and to increase the comfort of the men. The peace establishment, which was fixed at 100,000 men, could be in time of war so largely increased by the irregular Hungarian troops and the reserves, that in 1753 it was estimated that the total fighting strength of Austria was 195,000. When the Seven Years' War broke out Maria Theresa was able to put into the field an admirable army, and to say with truth that the Austrian artillery was the best in Europe.

**The Aims of Maria Theresa.**

Dissatisfied with the results of the late war, Maria Theresa was bent on regaining Silesia. Being one of the principal German-speaking provinces of the Austrian monarchy, its loss, while a serious blow to the prestige of the Hapsburgs, tended to give additional weight to the Slav elements, always a source of difficulty to the Government of Vienna.

Determined to try again the chances of war, the choice of foreign allies was of the first importance. The alliance with the Maritime Powers formed the basis of the Austrian system of foreign policy, but the neutrality of England during the Polish Succession War, and her dictatorial conduct throughout the Silesian Wars, had roused a strong feeling of resentment in Maria Theresa's breast. She felt that the late loss of territory was due rather to the pressure of a selfish and insincere ally than to

the victories of the French or the Prussians. On the 7th of March 1749 she directed each of the ministers to submit, within a fortnight, a written opinion on the system of foreign policy which Austria ought henceforward to pursue.

She found opinions were divided. The Emperor Francis, who cared principally for finance and chemistry, agreed with the older ministers in advising adherence to the ancient system. Austria, they pointed out, had three enemies — France, Prussia, and Turkey, and in a less degree Sardinia and Parma. To combat these she needed the assistance of the Maritime Powers and the alliance of Russia and Saxony. They further advised that Prussia should be given no excuse for renewing hostilities, and that Austria should carefully reorganise her finances and the army. Their views were combated with ability and boldness by Kaunitz, the youngest member of the Cabinet or Conference.

**The Policy of Kaunitz.**

Anton Wengel von Kaunitz was born in 1711 in Vienna, and was destined for the Church. The death of his four elder brothers, however, changed the course of his life, and after a careful education for a diplomatic career at the universities of Vienna, Leipsic, and Leyden, completed by visits to England, France, Italy, and North Germany, he entered the service of Charles VI. as Aulic Councillor. During the Austrian Succession War he was successively ambassador at Rome, Turin, and Brussels, and represented Austria at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. Though accused of frivolity and foppishness, and suffering from bad health, he had already proved himself a successful diplomatist. He was, in spite of appearances, a sagacious thinker and a careful observer in political matters, and he proved himself to be one of the most acute statesmen of his day. His ability was unquestioned; his remarkable energy never developed into rashness; surrounded by jealous critics, he showed calmness, foresight, and resource. His dexterous diplomacy was the result of cool and calculating reason, and its strength lay in a patriotic regard for his country, which made him resent the position in which Frederick's seiz-

ure of Silesia had left her. It was this patriotism which secured for him the full and necessary confidence of Maria Theresa, and forced Frederick to realise that in him he had found his most dangerous opponent.

Kaunitz was now thirty-eight years old, was about to carry out a great diplomatic revolution, and to take upon himself the direction of Austria's policy for upwards of forty years. In his famous State Paper, which in itself was twice as long as the united 'notes' of the other ministers, he pointed out that Austria's position was materially affected by the rise of Prussia, that Prussia was the chief of the enemies of Austria, and that the latter Power would never be secure till she had recovered Silesia. Though France and the Porte could also be included in the list of Austria's enemies, Prussia's hostility was undoubted, and might declare itself any day. Austria must therefore regain Silesia without delay; but in carrying out this policy she could not rely for support upon existing alliances. Though George II. and Frederick were not on good terms, the King of Prussia was popular in England, and moreover the increasing interest taken in colonial and commercial matters rendered the English people more than ever indifferent to purely German questions. Holland, busy with internal troubles, and with her resources each year becoming more straitened, would follow England's lead; while upon Russia, whose foreign policy depended on the caprice of the reigning despot, no reliance could be placed. The conclusions arrived at by the audacious minister were two. In the task of recovering Silesia no help could be expected from any of Austria's allies, and consequently friendship with France should be assiduously cultivated, France being the only great Power likely to aid Austria in her enterprise against Prussia. Kaunitz pointed out that the relations between France and Prussia were far from friendly, and he anticipated that Louis XV. could be easily won over to his views. Prussia was the only foe which Austria desired to attack, and the reconquest of Silesia the one object of her foreign policy. But Prussia,

while possessing a formidable army, had also gained considerable prestige. The formation of a European confederacy was required to crush the power and to humble the pride of Frederick the Great, and of that confederacy France should be a leading member. The salient points in the policy of Kaunitz are therefore three: (1) the determination to recover Silesia; (2) the conviction that the English alliance was useless against Prussia in a war for the recovery of Silesia; (3) the absolute necessity of a French alliance.

The views of Kaunitz were in the main correct. He cared little for the Austrian Netherlands, or for the outlying Italian provinces. Unlike Metternich, he was bent on consolidating, at the expense, if necessary, of the Milanese and of the Netherlands, the German provinces of the Hapsburgs. In pursuance of these views he and Joseph II. in 1778 and in 1785 attempted to include within the Austrian monarchy the Electorate of Bavaria, and to form a strong, compact German kingdom in South Germany. He wished, in a word, to restore that Austrian preponderance in Germany which had been lost at the Peace of Westphalia, and to check those influences which were tending to make her an Eastern rather than a Western Power. The plan of a French alliance was not new. In 1726 one of Ripperdá's agents had suggested that France should join the alliance of Vienna, and Fleury himself had not been unwilling to entertain the idea of cultivating friendly relations with Austria. During the later phases of the Austrian Succession War Bartenstein had recognised the advisability of detaching France from the Prussian alliance, and the policy of a definite *rapprochement* between the Hapsburgs and the French Bourbons had been openly discussed. Brühl in September 1745 had indicated to the Marquis de Vaulgrenant the advantages of an alliance between France and Austria for the punishment of the treacherous King of Prussia, and about the same time Chotek, then Austrian minister at Munich, was reported to have said to the same ambassador, that 'it was quite time that the Courts of Vienna and Versailles should

draw together.' And there seems little doubt that Maria Theresa was at that time willing to receive overtures from France. The French Cabinet decided to open negotiations through Vaulgrenant, but as they refused to entertain the idea of wresting Silesia from Frederick, it is not surprising that the negotiation proved fruitless.

The views of Kaunitz were at first strongly opposed by the Emperor, by Harrach, and by Uhlfeld, and as strongly supported by Maria Theresa, who at once, with characteristic impetuosity, accepted a scheme which seemed to afford the best means for carrying out the principal object of her thoughts — the recovery of Silesia.

**Growing Irritation in Vienna against England.**

It was owing to her influence, coupled with the growing coolness between Austria and the Maritime Powers, that the opposition to the policy of Kaunitz gradually disappeared. England had, in Maria Theresa's opinion, played her false with regard to Silesia, and further, had forced her to make the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. In the peculiarly sensitive state of feeling at Vienna towards England, it required little to increase the want of cordiality between the two nations. Maria Theresa had deeply resented the conduct of the English Cabinet during the late war, and when, on the conclusion of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, the English Parliament demurred to her demand of £100,000 which she declared was due to her, she vented her irritation upon Keith, the English ambassador at Vienna. She was not satisfied with the general adhesion given by the English Government in 1750 to the alliance of 1746 between Austria and Russia, nor did George II.'s attempt to conciliate her wounded feelings, by proposing to support at the Diet the election of the Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans, meet with any success. For two years the negotiations on this subject continued, absorbing the attention of the Electors, and affording France and even Russia an opportunity of asserting their interest in the affairs of Germany. In July and

**The Question of the Election of the Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans, 1750-52.**

August 1750 conferences were held in Hanover, by the authority of George II., to consider the best means of securing the election of the Archduke. As the Electors of Mainz and Trier were devoted to the Austrian interest, and those of Bavaria, Köln, and Saxony were supposed to be influenced by England, no difficulty was anticipated in securing the necessary majority in the Electoral College. From Vienna itself George received little support, for Maria Theresa, while already hoping to detach France from the Prussian alliance, not only disliked the tone adopted by the English Court, but foresaw that the Electors would demand from Austria sums of money and territorial concessions. And she was justified in her apprehensions. While the Elector of Bavaria demanded a large annual subsidy, and the Elector of Köln the remission of some payments known as the *Mois Romains*, levied in the Middle Ages to defray the expenses of the Emperor's coronation journey to Rome, the Elector Palatine claimed from England and Holland £50,000 due since the Spanish Succession War, and from Austria considerable territorial concessions and a large indemnity for his losses in the late war. Charles Theodore, the Elector Palatine, born on the 11th of December 1724, was the son of John Christian, Prince Palatine of Sulzbach, and in 1742 succeeded Charles Philip, the last Elector of the branch of Neuburg, in his titles and estates. As he had been a French partisan during the war of the Austrian Succession, his claims for compensation from the Court of Vienna naturally were received by Maria Theresa with ill-concealed contempt. In the wearisome complications and negotiations which filled the years 1751 and 1752, Puisieux, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Saint-Contest, who succeeded him in September 1751, contented themselves with sending Vergennes to Coblentz and Hanover to watch French interests, with advocating the execution of Article 18 of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, on which the pretensions of the Elector Palatine were based, and with professing a readiness to support whatever policy Frederick the Great decided to adopt. After lengthy discussions at Hanover

among the ambassadors of the various Courts, including Grimaldi, the Spanish envoy to Sweden, who arrived to support Vergennes and the French policy, the attempt of George II. to increase the prestige and power of his electorate failed. The King of England had found himself compelled to support the pretensions of the Elector Palatine in the face of the outspoken indignation of Maria Theresa, and an acrimonious correspondence took place between the Courts of Vienna and St. James'. While the question of Joseph's election was under discussion, Frederick the Great had asserted that a mere majority of Electors was insufficient to choose a king of the Romans, and the English Cabinet had taken the same view. Throughout the negotiations the English diplomatists undoubtedly showed a want of tact, the irritation felt at Vienna towards its peremptory ally became intense, and it was not till the 27th of March 1764 that the election took place. Thus George II.'s well-meant efforts to calm the irritation of the Empress against her allies only resulted in infuriating her more than ever against the English Government.

**Austrian Irritation.**

The question of the Barrier of the Netherlands had also increased the want of cordiality between the two Courts. The Austrian Netherlands — a continental colony of the Hapsburgs — was always a source of difficulty. The closing of the Scheldt to commerce, the terms of the Barrier Treaty, and the interest of England and Holland in the defence of the country against France practically destroyed the sovereignty of the Emperor, and justified the Austrian ministers in regarding the strengthening of the defences of the province with indifference. To Maria Theresa this political and commercial bondage to England and Holland was peculiarly exasperating, and she only accepted in 1748 the renewal of the arrangement of 1713 with intense irritation and impatience. To England and Holland the matter was one of vital importance, and in 1753 Sir Charles Hanbury Williams arrived at Vienna as special envoy. Unfortunately, like other English diplomatists of the time, he damaged his cause by his want

**The Barrier Fortresses.**

of tact when conferring with Maria Theresa, and only strengthened the Court of Vienna in its determination not to yield to the impatient demands of the English ministers.

**The Embassy of Kaunitz to France, 1750.**

In 1750 Kaunitz went as Austrian Ambassador to Versailles, determined to convert the hereditary enmity of France into active friendship. His plan was to bring before the French ministers the possibility of an alliance between the Courts of Vienna and Versailles, and as a means to this end to foment their suspicions of the King of Prussia. But though he remained in France till 1753, his embassy was not marked by success. On arriving at Paris he found affairs in terrible confusion. Louis XV.'s popularity was gone, and Madame de Pompadour was supreme. Foreign envoys paid their court to her, and the French ministers looked to her for advancement. The extravagance of the court was unchecked, and the heavy and unequal taxation ruined all enterprise. The Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle remained intensely unpopular, and it seemed as though discontent in Paris would develop into a revolution. The *Parlement* of Paris had with difficulty been persuaded to sanction a war-tax of a 'tenth,' and shortly after the conclusion of the war it found itself again the champion of the Jansenist cause against the Government, and the leader of the opposition to an attempt of Machault, the Controller-General, to impose a permanent tax of a twentieth on all classes. Machault d'Ernouville, the rival of the Comte d'Argenson, had succeeded Orry as Controller-General in December 1745. Formerly an intendant in Hainault, he owed his position not a little to Madame de Pompadour, who recognised the merits of the stern and high-principled magistrate. By strict economy Machault made an honest attempt to improve the condition of the finances; but, after the end of the Austrian Succession War, the edict which imposed a tax of a 'twentieth' was received with almost universal disapprobation. Riots broke out in Brittany, the provincial Estates offered resistance, the *Parlement* of Paris refused to register the edict, the clergy were loud in their com-

**Machault's Attempts at Reforms.**

plaints. The same forces which successfully resisted the later attempts of Turgot to carry out reforms were able to offer to the edict an insurmountable opposition. Machault also attacked the clergy directly. He wished to close many of the convents, and to check the growth of new religious establishments; he hoped to pass a mortmain law, and to place obstacles in the way of the acquisition by the Church of legacies of land or money. He also proposed to establish free trade within the length and breadth of France, in order to improve agriculture. These admirable proposals were doomed to failure. The clergy accused him of impiety, the speculators in grain violently attacked him. Machault's programme, if carried, might have inaugurated a series of reforms which would have averted the Revolution and saved the French throne for the Bourbons. But Louis XV. was unable to withstand the outcry raised against the minister, and in July 1754 Machault was transferred to the Ministry of Marine.

**Struggle of the Parlement of Paris with the Clergy and Louis XV.**

The *Parlement* of Paris, unlike the king, showed no weakness in its attitude towards the clergy, who were indeed supported by Louis himself. De Beaumont, the fanatical though honest Archbishop of Paris, had issued an order that no one should receive the Sacrament without showing a ticket of confession to prove that he had accepted the Bull *Unigenitus*, and he had further attempted to control the Paris hospitals. The *Parlement* of Paris, supported by the provincial *Parlements*, strenuously opposed the Archbishop; formally condemned, in 1752, the tickets of confession, and took severe measures against refractory priests. In 1753 the Government came to the rescue of the Archbishop, and on May 8 and 9 all the members of the Paris *Parlement* were exiled, with the exception of the 'Grand Chamber,' which, however, was sent to Pontoise, and later to Soissons. Supported by the provincial *Parlements*, by the University of Paris, and by public opinion generally, the *Parlement* continued the struggle.

Its members protested against the invasion of the rights of

the civil power by ecclesiastics and the interference by the Court in the affairs of the *Parlement*. The Paris streets were patrolled by cavalry, riots broke out in various places, seditious placards were posted on the walls. 'All orders,' wrote d'Argenson, 'are at once discontented. Everything is combustible. A riot may pass into a revolt, and a revolt into a complete revolution. It was expected that the *Parlement* would demand the meeting of the States-General. 'Everything,' wrote d'Argenson in March 1754, 'is preparing the way for civil war.' Louis xv., however, by the advice of Madame de Pompadour, checked the continuance of the crisis by recalling the *Parlement*, releasing the imprisoned magistrates, and exiling the Archbishops of Paris and Aix and the Bishops of Orleans and Troyes, because they declined to reverse their policy and abandon their attacks on Jansenism.

In 1756 de Beaumont reopened the struggle, which increased daily in fury. The *Parlement* refused a compromise obtained at the suggestion of the Government from Benedict xiv., and, supported by the public, suppressed the Papal brief. Alarmed at the pretensions of the *Parlement*, and furious at its conduct with regard to the Bull, the king, in December 1756, held a bed of justice, and declared he would enforce the acceptance of the Bull and would curtail the judicial powers of the *Parlement* in ecclesiastical cases. But the *Parlement*, in the absence of the States-General, was looked upon as the only check upon the royal despotism, and its claim that no edict had the force of law unless it was registered by the magistrates received universal acceptance. The weakness of its position lay in its dislike of any financial reform, and its conservative attitude with regard to the preservation of antiquated privileges.[1]

Nevertheless the *Parlement*, in attacking a monarchy so unconscious of its duties and responsibilities as was that over which Louis xv. presided, occupied a strong position. Till the

[1] Rocquain, *L'Esprit Révolutionnaire avant la Révolution*, pp. 54–72; Aubertin, *L'Esprit Public au XVIII^e. Siècle*, pp. 260–272; Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. pp. 325–333.

Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle Louis was popular. He had undoubtedly many excellent qualities, and he could on occasion show activity and energy; he was interested in questions of foreign policy; he was extremely desirous of imitating and emulating Louis XIV., for whose memory he had the deepest veneration. Though he was considerably younger than his wife, whom the Duke of Bourbon had made Queen of France, he lived happily with her for some ten years, and had one son and six daughters. The Dauphin, who married first Maria Theresa of Spain, and on her death Maria Josepha of Saxony, died in 1765. Of the daughters, Louise Elizabeth married Don Philip in 1739, and from 1748 to 1759 was known as the Duchess of Parma; none of her sisters were married. Unfortunately Louis, who had naturally an easy-going, indolent, effeminate nature, was brought up either by men like Villeroy, who inculcated the most extreme views of the divine and absolute power of kings, or like Fleury, who taught the narrowest theological dogmas. As soon as he had escaped from the domination of Bourbon, he encouraged Fleury to reproduce, as far as possible, in the Court the spirit and usages of the age of Louis XIV. From 1735 he began to fall under the influence of the four sisters of the House of Nesle, of whom the Duchess de Châteauroux is the best known. But on her death, shortly after Louis' illness at Metz, when his popularity reached its culminating point, the star of Jeanne Poisson, who had married one Lenormand d'Etiolles, a financier, and who became in 1745 Madame de Pompadour, began to rise. With her appearance at the French Court all hope of any reformation of abuses, of any thorough reorganisation of the army, navy, and finances, or of any statesmanlike foreign policy, at once disappeared. To her influence was mainly due the precipitation with which the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed, and after the end of the war ministers were appointed and dismissed in accordance with her personal wishes. Between 1748 and 1756 the French Government should have come to a clear understanding with

**Louis XV., 1715-48.**

**Influence of Madame de Pompadour.**

England with regard to the colonial disputes; a school of generals should have been trained to take the place of Marshal Saxe, who died in 1750, and of Löwendahl, who died in 1755; the efforts of the Comte d'Argenson, of Rouillé, and of Machault to reorganise the army and navy and to reform the finances ought to have been energetically supported. But the Government, hampered by the constant interference of Madame de Pompadour, was unable to carry out to any satisfactory extent this most essential policy. It became evident that the king, sunk in dissipation, was unable to appreciate the responsibilities of his position, and the prospects of the Bourbon monarchy darkened with each succeeding year.

**Decline of the French Monarchy, 1748-74.**

The attack of Damiens on Louis xv. in January 1757, and the opening of the Seven Years' War, prevented any general outbreak; but the discontent and sedition smouldered on, religious scepticism grew, discussions about the fundamental laws of the state increased, and the prestige of the monarchy declined rapidly. 'With no firmness, no resolution, no decision of any kind,' the Government might well deserve the name of 'an extravagant weathercock.'

But though its internal policy was vacillating and unstable, the French Government showed no signs of wishing to change the foreign policy pursued by France for well-nigh 250 years. In October 1750 the Marquis d'Hautefort was sent as ambassador to succeed Blondel, the Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna, and in 1753 he was succeeded by the Sieur d'Aubeterre. The reception accorded to these envoys proved conclusively the desire of the Austrian Government to secure the alliance of France, and Keith, the English representative, at once realised the drift of the policy of the Court of Vienna. The instructions to these ambassadors show that the French Government desired to be on terms of friendship with Maria Theresa, but that as long as England, 'the natural foe' of France, was the ally of Austria, France was compelled to find in Prussia a counter-

**Diplomatic Relations between France and Austria, 1748-56.**

poise to Austria. Though Kaunitz failed to detach France from Prussia, he cultivated the friendship of the king and of Madame de Pompadour, acquired some influence over the latter, and realised that France had no special feelings of hostility towards Austria. In 1753 he returned to Vienna, was made Chancellor of State, while Bartenstein, who could not work with him, was dismissed, and Uhlfeld retired. In 1752 the Treaty of Aranjuez, a faint reproduction of the famous Treaty of Vienna of 1725, had been made between Austria and Spain, the latter under Ferdinand VI., to guarantee each other's European possessions. To this treaty, Sardinia, Naples, and Parma acceded, so far as the Italian provinces of Austria were concerned. But the coolness between Spain and France, and the continued existence of the Anglo-Austrian connection, seemed to preclude all chance of a close alliance between Austria, France, and Spain. Circumstances, however, before long aided Kaunitz, and brought about not only the Treaty of Versailles between Austria and France, but also the renewal of the Family Compact between France and Spain. The mission of Kaunitz, though devoid at the moment of any tangible result, in reality paved the way for the future alliance between France and Austria. Like the mission of Harcourt to Spain at the close of the preceding century, it proved to be of vast international importance.

**Diplomatic Relations between Austria and Russia.**

In 1753 Austria's principal continental ally was Russia. Arranged by Charles VI. in 1726, the alliance between the two Courts had only been interrupted for a few years on the death of that Emperor. In 1744 French influence in St. Petersburg, which since the Treaty of Belgrade had become of some importance, disappeared with the departure of La Chétardie, and the Tsarina Elizabeth, realising the necessity of checking the ambition of Frederick the Great, willingly received friendly overtures from Maria Theresa. On the 30th of May 1745 Elizabeth declared her consent to the renewal of the alliance of 1726, and on the 22d of May 1746 a treaty between the two Powers was signed

containing secret articles for the recovery of Silesia and for the partition of the Prussian kingdom. From the date of the signature of the treaty to the death of Elizabeth, in spite of a dispute over a religious persecution of some Servians and other Slavs by the Hungarians, Russia and Austria remained firm allies, and an article was added to the Treaty of 1746 binding both Powers, in view of French influence at Constantinople, to resist any Turkish attack. From this Russian alliance Maria Theresa hoped to derive no small benefit. Her hatred of the King of Prussia was, if possible, surpassed by that of Elizabeth, encouraged by her Chancellor Bestuzhev. Russia had for some time past aimed at changing the succession in Sweden, and in 1749, taking advantage of the illness of the king, a Russian army was assembled on the Finland frontier. The heir-apparent of Sweden was a brother-in-law of Frederick, who had signed, on the 29th of May 1747, a defensive alliance with Sweden, which, in 1748, had been joined by France. Preparing for war, he issued a protest in May 1750 to the Russian Court. Bestuzhev, finding that England was unwilling to support him, withdrew from his position; Elizabeth contented herself with breaking off diplomatic relations with Prussia; and in 1753, at a Council held at Moscow, a solemn resolution was come to that Russian policy should aim at the prevention of further aggrandisement on the part of Prussia, and at co-operation with Austria, Saxony, and England in reducing it to its original limits. England's friendly relations with Russia and her strained relations with Prussia seemed still further to strengthen the position of Austria.

**England's Relations with Russia and Prussia.**

A Russian, like a Swedish alliance, had to be bought, but English statesmen, partly for commercial reasons, partly in order to secure Elizabeth's co-operation in overawing Frederick, and so securing Hanover from all danger from Prussia, were content to pay considerable sums for the continuance of friendly relations with Russia. For keeping troops in readiness in time of peace Russia demanded at least £200,000 a year, and a much larger

sum in time of war. So unfriendly were the relations between England and Prussia in 1750 and the years immediately following, that there seemed little chance of a union between the two Powers. Frederick distrusted English statesmen before the Seven Years' War almost as much as he did after it. He opposed George's scheme for making the Archduke Joseph King of the Romans; he quarrelled with England about certain Prussian ships captured, while trading with France, by English men-of-war; he sent a Jacobite envoy to Paris, and for a time no English ambassador was at Berlin, and only a Prussian Secretary of Legation in London.

In 1753 it seemed as though a European war would break out. In January, a Saxon clerk, Menzel, whom Frederick had bribed, sent him a copy of the secret articles of the Austro-Russian Treaty of 1746, and continued to send copies of secret documents from the archives at Dresden. In Weingarten, an attaché of the Austrian Embassy at Berlin, Frederick found another official who for gold was ready to supply him with information. The king now knew the worst. Russia and Austria had planned his destruction, and were endeavouring to secure the adhesion of Saxony. Austria was collecting forces in Bohemia, and Russian troops were moving towards Prussia. But the Russian attack on Prussia was again postponed. England was unwilling to pay the subsidies demanded by the Court of St. Petersburg, Frederick showed his usual readiness to repel invasion, and France intimated to England that if Prussia was attacked she would send troops to his assistance. The fear of an invasion of Hanover might have indefinitely postponed the inevitable struggle had not the quarrels between England and France in India and in America led to the outbreak of war between the two countries. In 1753 Duquesne, Governor of Canada, attempted to seize the Ohio Valley, and by means of the French claims to the valleys of the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, to unite the provinces of Canada and Louisiana. In India Clive had

**Likelihood of War in 1753.**

**The Franco-Prussian Alliance.**

foiled the schemes of Dupleix, who in 1754 was recalled. In America, however, the quarrel was more serious. In 1754 Washington and the Virginian militia, after winning a decided success, were defeated, and the following year General Braddock, at the head of some English regular troops, was defeated and killed. Though war was not formally declared between England and France, it was obvious in 1755 that it was inevitable. At this crisis Frederick the Great was forced to consider carefully his relations with France, while the English Cabinet had to decide upon the best means of defending Hanover, which lay exposed to the hostility of France and Prussia.

**Position of Frederick the Great in 1754-55.**

Frederick was closely connected with France. The Treaty of 1741 bound him to aid Louis xv. if attacked, while in 1753 France had come to his support with a distinct declaration that she would assist him if England declared war. Though neither Power had much confidence in the sincerity of the other, though Frederick despised French statesmen, and though Madame de Pompadour and the Court of Versailles disliked and distrusted Frederick, common interests seemed to render the close alliance of France and Prussia absolutely necessary. And for a Power situated as was Prussia both geographically and financially, alliance with France seemed to be of incalculable value.

**French Policy in Eastern Europe.**

France occupied an influential position in Europe. Her relations with Poland, Turkey, Sweden, and the smaller German princes rendered her a valuable ally, and though Louis xv.'s secret diplomacy, combined with frequent changes in the department of foreign affairs, made a firm and consistent policy impossible, the military and political position of the French nation was incontestably strong. On the conclusion of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle it was clear that in Russia a strong and successful Power had risen, while the violation of Polish territory by Russian troops in 1747–48 not only rendered apparent the weakness of Poland itself, but demonstrated the fixed determination of the Tsarina

to make that country subservient to herself. Any idea that Louis or his ministers might have of allying with Russia was prevented by the union of the Imperial Courts in the Treaty of 1746, by Louis' distaste of Russian aggressiveness, and his personal dislike of Elizabeth. In his own feeble way he was inclined to draw closer his relations with Poland, Turkey, and Sweden, realising the truth of the saying that the road from Moscow to Constantinople passed through Stockholm and Warsaw. Like Bonneval, he dimly appreciated the advantage to France of a union of Poland, Turkey, and Sweden under the direction of France. But French credit had sensibly diminished in the north and east, and the three countries in question were each in various degrees of decadence. It would have required a statesman of superhuman energy to rouse them from their torpor, to induce them to carry out the required reforms, and to make them appreciate the imminence of the danger from Russia. Louis was not a statesman; he was timid, he loved secrecy and circuitous courses, his health was entirely broken. He resolved to carry out his schemes by means of secret agents. He decided to use the services of the Prince of Conti, the great nephew of the famous Condé, and a cousin of his own. A popular man, Conti was active and energetic, but he was the prey to an overmastering ambition, and overfond of building castles in the air. Numerous schemes had floated through his brain. He had hoped at one time to marry Elizabeth of Russia, at another to be the generalissimo of the troops of some great European Power, at another to be a Cardinal. A field for his ambition was now found in Poland, where Augustus III., the king, was not expected to live long.

As Poland was in size as large as France, and barred the advance of Russia into western Europe, it was obvious that she would become the centre of diplomatic activities directly a fresh European war came within sight. Austria and Russia, aided by England, were busy trying to secure the adhesion of Augustus to the Treaty of 1746, while France, realising the

importance of the position, endeavoured at any rate to secure the neutrality of Poland.[1]

Louis determined, therefore, to put forward the claim of Conti to the Polish succession, hoping thereby to advance his own design with regard to a general opposition to Russia. In Poland two parties henceforward struggled for pre-eminence. The Saxon party was anxious for the Russian alliance; and the Russian policy, which had the support of England, was to support the Czartoryskis, to keep the Poles and Saxons in due submission, to eventually raise a Czartoryski to the throne, using him as a Russian tool, and thus to secure the right of passage through Poland. The national party, on the other hand, was opposed to the establishment of Russian influence in Poland. To compass the triumph of the national party was the object of the French ministers, while Louis XV. went still further, and hoped and intrigued to secure the election of the Prince of Conti. As the Dauphiness was the daughter of Augustus, and as Maurice de Saxe was still alive, Louis found it necessary to keep secret the objects of his policy in Poland. He therefore set to work with great mystery, intending to secure Conti's election, and thus to give the coalition of Poland, Turkey, and Sweden a natural leader. To Turkey the Comte des Alleurs, one of Conti's partisans, had been sent with two sets of instructions — one official, one secret. With great difficulty he restored French influence in Constantinople, and by 1750 the Turks willingly entered into the French plan of checking Russian influence in Poland and Sweden. To the latter country d'Havrencourt, another of Conti's agents, had been sent in 1749, and there he remained till 1753. In 1748 France had joined Prussia in guaranteeing the defence of Sweden in case of attack, and in 1750 it seemed likely that Russia, then in occupation of Finland, would march on Stockholm. But the protests and preparations of Frederick, combined with the interests of France in Sweden, checked Russia, while the accession of Adolphus Frederick at the end of 1750 to the Swedish throne, and his decla-

[1] *See* Duc de Broglie, *The King's Secret.*

ration that he would not attempt any constitutional reforms, gave Russia an excuse for evacuating Finland.

From 1752 to 1756 the chief theatres of French diplomacy were Constantinople and Warsaw. In 1752 the Comte de Broglie, the second son of the Marshal, who had taken a considerable part in the early stages of the Austrian Succession War, was, through Conti's influence, appointed envoy to Poland. He carried with him, like des Alleurs, two sets of instructions. Saint-Contest, the Foreign Minister, ordered him simply to bring about a close union between Poland and Saxony, to oppose their alliance with Russia and Austria, and to support the national party in Poland; Louis, on the other hand, instructed him, while re-establishing French influence, to forward Conti's candidature, and to correspond with Conti himself. De Broglie had a difficult task to perform, and, in spite of his total want of experience in diplomacy, seems to have shown considerable tact and skill. Like Hertzberg, de Broglie evolved a policy which, if not practicable, was at any rate ingenious. He aimed at making Poland and Saxony an impassable barrier to Russia, and at inducing Turkey, when occasion required, to attack Russia by land, while Sweden and Denmark were to attack her by sea. He further looked forward to the occupation of Holland by Prussia. In the event of a continental war, France would thus only have Austria to deal with. Though his principal efforts were devoted to securing the alliance of Poland and Saxony, and to prevent armed interference in the affairs of Poland, de Broglie made some attempts, with, however, little success, to further the candidature of Conti.

By the beginning of 1755 a certain measure of success rewarded de Broglie's energy and diplomacy. A strong party hostile to the Czartoryskis had been formed among the Polish *noblesse*, and Augustus III. was ready to promise to oppose the entrance of Russian troops into Poland, and give France armed assistance. He was further ready to authorise his subjects to rise *en masse* should the Russians invade Poland. France,

supported by Prussia, Poland, Sweden, and Turkey, seemed prepared, by dint of the vigorous action of de Broglie, des Alleurs, and, on his death in 1754, of Vergennes, not only to completely detach Saxony from an alliance with the two Imperial Courts, but also defend herself and her allies successfully against the hostility of Russia, Austria, and England.

**Position of Frederick the Great.**

With the shadow of an inevitable conflict hanging over his country, and with full knowledge of the schemes of Austrian diplomacy of which Dresden was the centre, Frederick might well hesitate before he sacrificed an alliance with a Power which was as equally interested as he was in checking the growth of the Hapsburg supremacy in the Empire. The influence and prestige of the Court of Vienna were increasing, and the undoubted tendency of Austrian policy was to transform the princes of the Empire into subservient instruments of its own. It was then of the utmost importance to prevent the union of France and Austria against the House of Brandenburg. The action of England only tended to confirm his anxieties, and to force him to a decision with regard to his alliance with France.

From 1749 he had consistently endeavoured to counteract the diplomacy of Maria Theresa in the French capital, and had urged upon his representatives constant watchfulness and caution. Against his numerous foes a continuance of his close alliance with France seemed his best chance of safety. But in France opinion was divided. Though officialdom, as represented by Louis' ministers, continued to regard the continuance of the Prussian alliance as necessary, and had no wish to desert the ancient system of hostility to the Hapsburgs, a different spirit was apparent among many members of the Court, among financiers, diplomatists, and others. It was asserted openly that the King of Prussia had proved an unfaithful ally in the late war, that his policy was selfish, that he desired a fresh outbreak of hostilities, that his alliance was dangerous to the interests of France.

The appearance of Kaunitz in Paris gave force to the arguments of the enemies of Frederick, who found that none of his successive representatives at the French capital — Chambrier, Lord Keith, and Knyphausen — could weaken the favourable impression which the Austrian ambassador had made at the French Court. Kaunitz reigned supreme in the good graces of Madame de Pompadour, but though Louis XV. was gratified at the friendship of Maria Theresa, the ancient system of alliance was not overthrown. That Louis chafed at the dictatorial tone of Frederick, just as Maria Theresa resented the blunt advice of the English diplomatists, is undoubted. From Berlin emanated attacks by French refugees upon religion and the monarchy. In France and in Prussia were a number of literary men, pensioners of Frederick. But Louis' character, and his love of secret diplomacy, rendered a decision which involved a complete change of French policy peculiarly difficult to make, and when in 1753 Kaunitz returned to Vienna, and Hautefort was replaced by Aubeterre, there was nothing in the political situation to lead Europe to expect a reshuffling of the alliances of the great Powers.

**His Relations with France.**

But the increasing hostility between England and France rendered Frederick's position one of extreme anxiety. France was unprepared for war, and her government was conducted upon no intelligible principle. A popular outcry against the Controller-General, Machault, had resulted in his appointment to the Ministry of Marine, while Rouillé, an intendant seventy years old, was made Minister of Foreign Affairs on the death of Saint-Contest. The French navy was far inferior to that of England, and the inability of France to cope with Great Britain on the sea rendered it absolutely certain that she would endeavour to attack England on the continent. In presence of this crisis French foreign policy wavered. If the war was confined to a struggle between England and France, and Austria and Holland remained neutral, England could only be attacked in Hanover, and only there if the Franco-Prussian alliance re-

mained intact. The French Government would certainly demand Frederick's co-operation in an invasion of Hanover, and his entry into the war would, he saw, be at once followed by a combined Austro-Russian attack on his dominions. With his usual clear-sightedness the Prussian king perceived that if France was beaten at sea he could not hope to oppose successfully the attacks of England, Hanover, Austria, Russia, and Saxony. His perplexity during the year 1755, as shown in his instructions to his ambassadors and in his conversations with the French envoy, La Touche, was only natural. In April d'Argenson, the Minister of War, suggested that the Prussians should occupy Hanover. But Frederick, aware of the designs of his enemies at St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Dresden, dared not weaken himself by attacking the Electorate. Hoping to preserve neutrality in the coming war between England and France, he in July urged the French to occupy the Austrian Netherlands. In France the news of the capture of the Alcide and the Lys had caused intense excitement. The Council was itself divided, and the prey to irresolution and weakness. Questions of foreign policy were discussed in the streets, and while the majority of the ministers agreed with the majority of the nation in demanding immediate war, a small number urged that reparation should first be demanded from England.

Though Frederick, through Knyphausen, continued to urge upon the distracted French ministers an immediate and overwhelming attack upon the Austrian Netherlands, he was careful not to make any offer of an active alliance. His treaty made with France in 1741 would expire in June 1756, and he declared that on its expiry he would be ready to consider the whole question of a new alliance. The French Government, though involved in negotiations with Austria, was desirous, if possible, of obtaining some more definite declarations of policy from Frederick, and decided to send the Duc de Nivernais to Berlin. But though every moment was of importance, a long and disastrous delay took place between the appointment of Nivernais and his arrival at Berlin. During that interval events

had occurred which enabled Frederick to see that his safest policy was to ally with England.

It had been recognised early in 1755 by English statesmen that war with France was inevitable, and that the French would attack the Austrian Netherlands and invade Hanover. A treaty with Hesse for a supply of 12,000 troops was concluded, and Austria was invited to renew her alliance with England. Early in 1755 the English Government had made a definite offer respecting the defence of the Austrian Netherlands. England would employ Hessians, and would conclude an alliance with Russia, if Austria on her part would send an army of some 25,000 men to strengthen the garrisons in the Barrier towns. Kaunitz met this proposal in May with a polite refusal. There was no danger, he asserted, of hostilities breaking out; such preparations as the British Government suggested might lead to the invasion which it dreaded, and should war be declared by France, the reinforcements demanded would arrive too late. Holderness, the English Secretary of State, at once recognised the meaning of Kaunitz' attitude, and the fact that the Anglo-Austrian alliance had come to an end. Austria, with no colonies and no navy, had ostensibly as little interest in the war between England and France as had Prussia. Maria Theresa's object being to reconquer Silesia, all her preparations were directed to that end, and of this Frederick was well aware. The Austrian Government was resolved to recover Silesia. It was willing on certain terms to ally with England against Prussia as well as against France, but the English ministers had no intention of attacking Prussia or of supporting the Austrian schemes in Silesia. The evasive and unsatisfactory reply of Austria to Holderness' ultimatum showed that Kaunitz was not anxious for the English alliance on the English terms, and Hanbury Williams was sent to St. Petersburg. There he was cordially received by the Chancellor, Bestuzhev, who hated Prussia, and was convinced that the true allies of Russia were England, Austria, Sweden, and Saxony. On the 30th of Sep-

**England prepares for War.**

tember a subsidy treaty was concluded, and England took into her pay 55,000 Russian troops, who, if Hanover was attacked, should at once march to its assistance.

Meanwhile the Austrian Cabinet had taken a decisive step, and negotiations had been opened by England with Prussia. In August the Austrian ministers had decided to leave the Netherlands to their fate — a decision which implied that the English alliance, which had existed since the revolution of 1688, was at an end. Almost simultaneously overtures had been made by England to Frederick, who declared that he was anxious for peace, and hoped to see the differences between France and England amicably arranged. But war was inevitable; the news of Boscawen's capture of the Alcide and the Lys reached France in July, and by the end of 1755 some 300 French merchant ships had been seized. Frederick was unwilling to guarantee the French colonies; he held that the dispute between England and France was essentially a colonial one, and that his engagements with France applied only to Europe. He distrusted the French ministers and Madame de Pompadour, and he resented the tone of the Court of Versailles. He had, early in 1755, urged upon France vigorous measures, but could not get any satisfactory assurances. In supporting France he would be increasing her influence in Germany; he would also run the risk of being deserted by her in revenge for his double desertion of the French cause during the Austrian Succession War; he was exposing himself to an attack from England, Russia, and Austria. In December he saw a copy of the treaty between Russia and England. He at once came to a decision. He would have none of French half-measures and French hesitation. On the 16th of January 1756 the Convention of Westminster was signed, by which England and Prussia agreed not to allow foreign troops of any nation to enter or pass through Germany. England no longer wished to use Russian troops in Germany; Frederick agreed, to the great satisfaction of George II., to defend Hanover if attacked by French troops.

**The Convention of Westminster.**

Both Powers 'guaranteed the neutrality of Germany,' but by a secret article expressly excluded the Austrian Netherlands. Hitherto though English statesmen had felt no special animosity to Prussia, George II., as Elector of Hanover, had always regarded Frederick William and Frederick the Great as his rivals in Germany. In the face, however, of a great struggle, the petty jealousy between the two Electors was swept away, and Prussia was recognised as England's strongest ally on the continent. By this treaty Frederick had converted one enemy, England, into an ally, had rid himself of another, Russia, had preserved the neutrality of Germany, and kept out of Germany Russian and French troops. The first step in the great diplomatic revolution had been taken.

The effect of the news of the Treaty of Westminster was immediate and stupendous. Broglie's diplomatic edifice, so carefully reared, fell to the ground like a pack of cards. All his plans were upset, the anti-Russian party became powerless, and Poland was used as a basis of operations throughout the ensuing war. In Turkey the skill of Vergennes had so arranged matters that as soon as the Russians had begun their march westwards, the Turkish army would have attacked Russia on her flank. He had roused the Tartars and sown disaffection among the Cossacks. All was ready, and Vergennes was waiting for the signal. But the signal never came; and instead of France and Turkey acting together against Austria and Russia, France was found a year later in close alliance with the two Imperial Courts.

At Vienna great indignation was expressed at a treaty, which, without consultation with the Emperor, provided for the neutrality of Germany, while at St. Petersburg Elizabeth was furious. She hated Frederick the Great, and in October 1755 the Russian Council had solemnly declared that Russia would aid any Power which should attack Prussia. She had regarded the subsidy treaty of St. Petersburg, made with England in September 1755, as directed against Prussia, and she now felt that by the Convention of Westminster she had been balked of her prey.

In France the news of Frederick's desertion aroused a feeling of irritation which furthered the schemes of Kaunitz. In August 1755 when the English negotiations with the Court of Vienna had fallen to the ground, the Austrian Chancellor had again brought forward his old plan of 1749, and secured for it the support of Maria Theresa. He aimed definitely at the partition of the greater part of the Prussian state between Saxony, the Palatinate, Sweden, and Austria. But first of all France was to be won over by the cession of Mons to herself, and by the creation of a principality in the Netherlands for Don Philip, Louis' son-in-law; the Polish throne was to be given to Conti, and an alliance to be made with Russia. By means of the French assistance, Austria would be enabled to reduce Prussia to the condition of a fourth-rate Power, and to recover Silesia.

**Negotiations between France and Austria, 1755-56.**

The scheme implied a complete change in French foreign policy. All the traditions of France were opposed to the plan of Kaunitz. For generations France had aimed at the reduction of the power of Austria, and in the contests of the last 250 years she had gained important territorial acquisitions on the side of Germany. But though the War of the Austrian Succession had been fought in accordance with the traditions of the foreign policy of Louis XIV., the results of that war, so far as they had affected France, were distinctly unsatisfactory, and a widespread feeling of discontent at the failure of Louis XV.'s foreign policy pervaded all classes. Kaunitz was himself well aware of the difficulties attendant on the realisation of his aims. 'A great Power was to be convinced that the whole political system which it had hitherto pursued was in direct opposition to its true interests. It was to be persuaded that what it regarded as the only means for overcoming the difficulties with England were really unsuited for the purpose, and that it was pursuing a radically false policy when it made the support of Prussia the central object of all its alliances.' To Stahremberg, then Austrian Ambassador in Paris, was intrusted, in the latter days of August 1755, the task of bringing about this revolution

in the classical system of French foreign policy, and of ending the old rivalry with Austria. On September 3 he opened negotiations with Bernis.

France had much to gain by a change in her policy. In a war with England the Austrian alliance or neutrality would be valuable, while Prussia had hitherto proved but a treacherous ally. In the late contest she had risked the loss of Canada in order to assist Frederick to conquer Silesia. Her efforts against Austria, her expenditure of men and money, and her exhaustion and impoverishment at the end of the war, had only resulted in the aggrandisement of a treacherous Power, which had grown into a formidable military state. For centuries, too, France had coveted the Austrian Netherlands. An alliance with Austria would make her supreme in that quarter, might lead to an entire or partial annexation of the Low Countries, and enable her to deal a serious blow at the Maritime Powers. In reality, the interests of Austria and France were very dissimilar. France wished to attack England, Austria to attack Prussia. For France peace on the continent would be of enormous advantage; Austria, on the other hand, desired to begin a European war. The negotiations proceeded slowly, for Louis refused to believe without full and adequate proof that Frederick had a secret understanding with England or was plotting against the Catholic religion. Austria, while matters were in this state of uncertainty, definitely proposed to unite with Spain and France for the support of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle against any state that should begin war. Stahremberg on these terms renewed secret negotiations with Rouillé, Machault, Séchelles, and St. Florentin, as well as with Bernis. But the French ministers were suspicious of Austrian sincerity; in a naval war with England the Austrian alliance would be of little use; and it was practically impossible for an Austrian force to operate in Hanover. In the meantime, while the negotiations hung fire, Nivernais, who, in consequence of Bernis' suspicions of Frederick's conduct, had been appointed to succeed La Touche, at last arrived at Berlin on January 12,

1756. He was instructed to find out what the king was thinking about, and to endeavour to bribe him to join an anti-English alliance. He arrived in time to receive a copy of the treaty between England and Prussia. Frederick's policy was unveiled, and Kaunitz at once saw that his efforts would be crowned with success. Negotiations were resumed on the old basis between Bernis and Stahremberg. But France, though willing to abandon her old alliance with Prussia, was not prepared to throw herself unconditionally into the arms of Austria. The negotiations advanced slowly, for France demanded that the engagements between the two countries should be reciprocal, and that Austria should do as much against England as France would do against Prussia. Moreover, France, though prepared to recognise the recovery of Silesia by Austria, would not consent to the practical extinction of Prussia as proposed by Kaunitz.

Maria Theresa on her part was unwilling to take any decided action against England until she knew what course Russia intended to adopt in consequence of the Convention of Westminster. Early in April 1756, however, Elizabeth declared to Esterhazy that she was prepared to attack Frederick that year with 80,000 men; that she would not make peace till Maria Theresa had recovered Silesia; and that she would agree to the proposed alliance between France and Austria.

This report was indeed, as Kaunitz asserted, 'a message of comfort and encouragement' for the anxious Austrian Court. Kaunitz saw that delay would be ruinous. On the 19th of April a meeting of the French ministers to consider the Austrian proposals took place. Louis XV. had been in favour of an Austrian alliance during a great part of his life; Madame de Pompadour now strongly supported it. The ministers, with the exception of Machault and the Comte d'Argenson, declared their approval; and as Kaunitz only asked for the conclusion of a general alliance, the details to be settled later, the 1st of May saw the Treaty

**The Treaty of Versailles, May 1, 1756.**

of Versailles signed. The treaty really consisted of three treaties — two public and one secret. By the first, which was an act of neutrality, Austria agreed to take no part in the hostilities between England and France, and France engaged not to attack the Netherlands or any Austrian possession. The second was a defensive alliance and treaty of friendship. Each Power agreed to defend the possessions of the other if attacked — the existing war between England and France being expressly excepted. By the third treaty, which included five secret articles, it was settled that Austria would aid France if attacked by any ally of England; that the Kings of Spain and Naples, Philip of Parma, and other princes as might be agreed upon subsequently, should be invited to join the defensive alliance, and that neither Power should make any new alliance without mutual agreement. The Treaties of Westphalia formed the basis of the new system which was now adopted.

In January of the following year, Russia, by the Convention of St. Petersburg, accepted the defensive alliance between Austria and France, and on May 1, 1757, a second Treaty of Versailles, in which France agreed upon the partition of Prussia, and undertook to pay Austria an annual subsidy, to place a large army in the field, and to receive in return a portion of the Netherlands, completed the diplomatic revolution.

All traditional French policy was thus reversed. Sweden and Poland were practically given up to Russia, Turkey was neglected. The system of supporting a *clientèle* of small states for the purpose of restraining Austria and Russia was abandoned. The French alliance with the German Protestants came to an end. Historians take very different views with regard to the wisdom of French policy during these years. 'France,' says Henri Martin, 'committed an act of madness, of imbecile treason against herself, the like of which hardly exists in history.' The Duc de Broglie takes the opposite view. 'The Austrian alliance,' he says, 'was a condition of safety if not of existence

The Diplomatic Revolution, 1756.

to France.' In 1756 France had probably no intention of carrying out a complete revolution in her traditional policy, but simply to adapt herself to the new conditions of Europe, which had itself been revolutionised by the rise of Prussia and Russia. But the feeble Government of Louis xv. failed to see that France ought to have concentrated her strength upon the struggle in India and America and on the sea, and that in plunging into a continental war for the recovery of Silesia and the partition of Prussia, she was playing the game of England and Austria.

The Austrian alliance proved to be disastrous to France, because that country was governed by a king sunk in sloth, and contemptible for his vices; and French policy, during the early stages of the Seven Years' War, was guided by incompetent ministers. Through their incapacity and mismanagement, France became the cat'spaw of Russia and Austria, and her influence in Europe was ruined. The Treaty of Westminster and the Treaties of Versailles introduced a new system into Europe; England and Prussia, the two vigorous advancing Powers, allied together against France and Austria, aided by the young pushing Russian nation. This revolution, due in great measure to the rise of the Hohenzollern kingdom, owes no small measure of its success to the foresight, skill, and determination of Kaunitz. He had brought into being a powerful coalition against the small military state of Prussia, which, having restored Silesia to Austria, was to be itself partitioned. It remained to be seen how far his policy would prove successful. On the 29th of August 1756 Frederick the Great, unable to obtain satisfactory assurances from Austria, invaded Saxony, and thus began the Seven Years' War.

# CHAPTER IX

## THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR

### 1756–1763

**The Invasion of Saxony — The Saxon Resistance and the Battle of Lobositz — The Convention of St. Petersburg and the Second Treaty of Versailles — Failure of France to secure the Co-operation of Spain — French Policy in Poland — The Battles of Prague, Kolin, and Gross-Jägersdorf — The Battles of Rossbach and Leuthen — Pitt and Frederick the Great — The Siege of Olmütz — Loudon raises the Siege of Olmütz — The Battle of Zorndorf — The Defeat of Frederick at Hochkirchen — Ferdinand of Brunswick in Western Germany — Frederick the Great at the Close of 1758 — Fall of Bernis and Rise of Choiseul — Choiseul's Vigorous Policy — The Disasters of France in 1759 — The Battles of Minden and Kunersdorf — Finck's Capitulation at Maxen — Louis XV.'s Secret Diplomacy — The War in 1760 and 1761 — The Accession of Charles III. of Spain — The Family Compact of 1761 — Fall of Pitt, and War between England and Spain — Death of Elizabeth of Russia and its Results — The Peace of Paris — The Treaty of Hubertsburg — Results of the War.**

THE wisdom of the step taken by Frederick the Great in opening the war is not likely to be questioned. There is no doubt that Austria and Russia, probably in conjunction with Saxony, intended to attack him the following year after full preparations had been made. In anticipating the onslaught of his enemies lay Frederick's one chance of safety. While this invasion of Saxony would bring upon his country all the horrors of war, delay meant absolute destruction. The justification of Frederick's attack will be found in the Russian and Austrian, no less than in the Saxon, archives. In selecting Saxony as the object of his invasion the Prussian king's motives were military and political. While desirous of crushing Austria in a single campaign, he recog- **The Invasion of Saxony.**

nised the impossibility of having a hostile Saxony in his rear. And at the same time he hoped to find and publish the Menzel documents which lay in Dresden, and so to give Europe an adequate justification of his conduct.

As events turned out, Frederick would probably have acted more wisely in limiting his attack to Austria. For to his own surprise, his intention of marching through Saxony into Bohemia and falling upon the unprepared Austrians, was frustrated by the Saxons themselves.

**The Saxon Resistance and the Battle of Lobositz.**

Though Augustus III. only possessed an army of 17,000, as compared with the 65,000 Prussians who were marching southwards, he acted with decision and success, and entrenched himself and his army on the hills — the Misnian Highlands — a few miles above Dresden, his right and left wings resting respectively upon the impregnable mountain fortresses of Pirna and Königstein. For upwards of a month the Saxons held the hilly country, and, by checking the Prussian advance into the Austrian dominions, rendered an invaluable service to the Emperor. The importance of the Saxon resistance can be fully appreciated when it is remembered that the Austrian army was far from being ready for the struggle which had so suddenly been forced upon its rulers, and that the interval afforded by the Saxon resistance was utilised by the Austrian general, Browne, in remedying the many deficiencies in the army and in organising every branch of the service. Though the Court of Vienna disapproved of the defence of Saxon Switzerland, and suspected the fidelity of Augustus, it was compelled to take measures to relieve the Saxon army, then in great danger of being starved into surrender. Marshal Browne was ordered to march to the relief of the Saxons without delay. His carefully conceived plans, however, received a rude check. Frederick, leaving half his army to watch the Saxons, advanced into Bohemia with the other half, met Browne, and fought the indecisive battle of Lobositz. The Prussians remained in possession of the battle-field, and Browne had for the moment to renounce the idea

of relieving the Saxons. When on the 11th of October he managed to advance within a few miles of Schandau he found that the Saxons, outmanœuvred by the Prussians, half-starved, and badly led, were in no condition to form a junction with his troops and to fight the Prussians. He was compelled to retreat; and on the 16th of October the capitulation of Pirna took place. Saxony was conquered; her king had to retire to Warsaw; her soldiers were forced to join the Prussian army; and the papers in the Dresden archives furnishing a justification of Frederick's invasion were published. But the Saxon resistance had saved Austria, and though the possession of Saxony was important from a military point of view, Frederick gained little from the publication of his *mémoire raisonné*, which he sent to all the European Courts. During the winter and spring his enemies left no stone unturned to compass his ruin. In September 1756 he had been condemned by the Emperor Francis as a disturber of the peace, and the Diet on the 17th of January 1757 declared war against Prussia, and put her king to the ban of the Empire. But the hostility of the Empire was no great danger to Frederick, nor any source of strength to the Emperor Francis. The Protestant states were opposed to the action of the Diet, and the imperial army was of little practical use. In her struggle against Prussia Austria had mainly to rely upon the assistance and co-operation of the Tsarina of Russia and the King of France. Of these Powers the Tsarina Elizabeth had, for upwards of ten years, been bitterly hostile to Frederick, partly, it is said, on account of some sarcastic remarks; while Bestuzhev, the Russian Chancellor, consistently opposed Prussia, affecting to see in it a dangerous neighbour to Russia.

Supported by Woronzov and all the ministers with the exception of Bestuzhev, Elizabeth, on the 21st of January 1757, by the Convention of St. Petersburg, accepted the Treaty of Versailles concluded the previous May between Austria and France, and in February made a new treaty with Austria, the latter Power agreeing to pay Russia about £100,000 a year during the war, and both Powers undertaking not to end




Typo. Etching Co. Sc.

NORTH & EAST GERMANY 1756-1763.

the war till Frederick had yielded Silesia and Glatz, and the Prussian state was reduced to the position of Bavaria or Hesse-Cassel. Sweden, Denmark, and Saxony were to be induced to join the alliance by the offer of territorial compensation.

The Convention of St. Petersburg, Jan. 21, and the Second Treaty of Versailles, May 1, 1757.

Secure of the aid of Russia, it only remained for Austria to clinch her alliance with France. On the 1st of May 1757 the second Treaty of Versailles was signed by Austria and France for the partition of Prussia. As soon as Silesia was in Austrian hands, France was to obtain a portion of the Netherlands, including the ports and towns of Mons, Ostend, Nieuport, Ypres, Furnes, the sovereignty of Beaumont and Chimay, and the fortress of Knocque, while the remainder was to be given to Don Philip of Parma, Louis' son-in-law, in exchange for Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla, which were to go to Austria; Prussia was to be conquered, and partitioned between Austria, Saxony, Sweden, the Elector Palatine, and Holland, Frederick being permitted to retain the lands which were included in the Hohenzollern territory at the time of the Great Elector's accession. France agreed to pay an annual subsidy of about a million sterling so long as the war should last, and to set on foot an army of 100,000 men. She further contracted treaties with Bavaria, the Elector Palatine, and the Duke of Würtemberg, agreeing to pay large subsidies in return for the employment of troops against Frederick the Great. In March and September 1757 conventions were signed between France and Sweden, in which Austria was included. By these treaties Sweden, still ruled by the aristocratic faction of the Hats, in spite of the efforts of Ulrica in 1756 to restore the royal power, engaged, in consideration for subsidies, to employ an army of 20,000 men in Pomerania against the King of Prussia. Her rival Denmark, governed by Frederick v. and his minister Count Bernsdorf, refused to join the league.

The first Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1756, was conceived in a statesmanlike spirit; the second Treaty, from the French

point of view, was a serious blunder. As Austria was unable to strike a blow at England, France should have concentrated all her energies upon the maritime and colonial war, and refused to take an active part in the European struggle. The French, under the Duc de Richelieu, had captured Minorca in May 1756, and their success in the Mediterranean should have been followed by a determined attack upon the naval power of England, whose conduct in laying a nominal blockade on all the French ports had excited the indignation of Europe. Machault, since he became Minister of Marine, had taken up the policy of Rouillé, his predecessor from 1749 to 1754, and made strenuous endeavours to remedy the neglect of Maurepas, Minister of Marine from 1723 to 1749, and of Fleury; and the seizure of Minorca bears witness to the success of his efforts. Neglecting, unfortunately for France, the advice of old Marshal Noailles and that of men like Machault and Comte d'Argenson, Louis XV. from the conclusion of the second Treaty of Versailles, the terms of which were unduly favourable to the Emperor, adopted a fatal line of policy. Satisfied with the hope of uniting to France a portion of the Austrian Netherlands, and of hampering the English by the occupation of Hanover, the French king allowed himself to be dragged into a struggle for the annihilation of Prussia for the benefit of Austria, and plunged into the continental war without receiving any *quid pro quo* from the astute Hapsburg Government. Apart from the enormous blunder of neglecting the struggle in America, Louis XV., before signing the treaty of 1757, should have entered into possession of the Austrian Netherlands. France would then have been in a position to secure compensation for her losses in the colonies, and, if necessary, to dictate terms to Austria and Prussia. In spite of the efforts of Bernis, Minister of Foreign Affairs from June 1757 to November 1758, the interests of France were subordinated to those of Austria, and French armies fought to regain Silesia for Maria Theresa. Louis XV. was not destined to add any portion of the Netherlands to his kingdom, and when at the end of the war Frederick the Great still held Silesia, and France was forced

to acquiesce in her losses in North America and the West Indies and the overthrow of her influence in India, the real significance of the fatal policy adopted in 1757 was fully realised.[1]

In spite, however, of the unfortunate decision of the French Government to aid in the defence and extension of the Hapsburg provinces in Germany instead of making vigorous efforts to preserve the colonies of France, the treaty of 1757 need not necessarily have led to such overwhelmingly disastrous results had a close union between the Courts of Versailles and Madrid been effected, and had France, Austria, and Russia acted energetically and harmoniously in Germany. The interests of Spain and France were closely connected and were opposed to those of England. In March 1755 Knyphausen, Frederick the Great's representative at Paris, in answer to his master's letter expressing surprise that no close alliance subsisted between Ferdinand VI. and Louis XV., declared that the languid interest taken by the French Government with regard to Spain was inconceivable. With the near approach of the Seven Years' War even the pacific Rouillé, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs in France from July 1754 to June 1757, saw the necessity of endeavouring to secure the Spanish alliance. Ferdinand VI. of Spain had in 1729 married Barbara, daughter of John V. of Portugal, a princess who exercised considerable influence over her husband, and who, accustomed to regard England as the ally of Portugal, was opposed to the outbreak of hostilities between the Courts of London and Madrid. Ferdinand himself, a weak prince, influenced by his confessor Ravergo, the singer Farinelli, and the queen, was inclined to maintain peace, and, since the hasty conclusion of the preliminaries of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, had been opposed to any French alliance. In April 1754 Caravajal, who had been the first minister of Spain for twenty years, died, and though French influence was

**Failure of France to secure the Co-operation of Spain, 1757-58.**

[1] For the history of the Diplomatic Revolution see Duc de Broglie, *L'Alliance Autrichienne.*

used to secure for the Marquis de la Ensenada the highest post in the Government, the efforts of Keene, the English ambassador, succeeded in securing the appointment of General Wall, an Irishman by extraction and a friend of England, as Foreign —and practically first — Minister. Ensenada, who had endeavoured to plunge Spain into a war with Great Britain, was exiled, and the French envoy, Duras, was replaced by Bernis, who shortly afterwards returned to France. All efforts on the part of Austria as well as of France failed to shake the determination of the Spanish Court to observe a policy of neutrality during the Seven Years' War. The value of a Spanish alliance was appreciated by all the leading Powers. While Pitt seriously considered the advisability of offering the Spaniards Gibraltar and other concessions in return for their assistance in retaking Minorca, Maria Theresa appealed to the religious sentiments of Ferdinand and to the necessity of defending the orthodox faith against the attacks of heretics. Early in 1758 the Marquis d'Aubeterre, a diplomatist of some experience, was sent by Bernis, now Minister of Foreign Affairs, to second the appeal of Maria Theresa, to point out the dangers to the Catholic religion which would result from the supremacy of the King of Prussia, to play upon Wall's well-known attachment to the Stuarts, and finally to demand a close offensive and defensive alliance, considerable subsidies, and the adhesion of Spain to a maritime league, including France, Sweden, and Denmark. In return for the accession of Spain to the Treaty of Versailles, France offered the Isle of Minorca. These efforts of Bernis throughout the year 1758 were not, however, crowned with success. The English sympathies of the queen and her influence over Ferdinand proved strong enough to maintain the neutrality of Spain, though the successes of the English in America roused the fears of the Spanish Government. Though during Ferdinand's reign the agriculture, manufactures, and commerce of Spain had improved, Wall declared to d'Aubeterre that Spain was not in a position to advance the millions demanded, that a maritime union with Sweden and Denmark had little to recom-

mend it, and that Spain would confine herself to endeavouring to mediate a peace between France and England.

Unable to secure an alliance with Spain, the success of Louis xv.'s policy in Europe, and that of Austria and Russia, depended upon the hearty union and mutual good faith of the allies. Louis xv., however, was unable to appreciate the vital necessity of eliminating all cause of suspicion and jealousy from the minds of Maria Theresa and Elizabeth of Russia, and his intrigues in Poland proved fatal to the successful prosecution of the war in Europe. The objects of Austria, Russia, and France in the contest with Frederick the Great could only be carried out by the loyal co-operation of each of these Powers. Mutual confidence and united action were absolutely necessary for success. It was necessary that France should renounce her policy of intervention in Poland, that her agents should cease to intrigue at Warsaw against Russian influence, and that, in view of the wide issues at stake, every means should be taken to secure the confidence of the Tsarina Elizabeth. Unfortunately, Louis xv. never realised the real import of the struggle in which France was engaged with England. The Treaty of Westminster, followed by the disgrace of Conti, had for a time overthrown his carefully prepared plans in Poland. But with the opening of the Seven Years' War Louis' interest in Poland revived, and he again began a series of attempts, by means of his secret diplomacy, to support the anti-Russian party at Warsaw, and by so doing sacrificed the real interests of France to a futile attempt to maintain French influence in Poland. Bernis, bent on loyally supporting Russia and Austria in the attack on Prussia, struggled in vain to compel Broglie, who was still the French representative at Warsaw, to offer no opposition to Russia; but, in consequence of a secret intimation from Louis, Broglie ignored the official instructions, his house became the rendezvous of the Polish malcontents, and his opposition to the march of the Russian troops through Poland grew so violent that the Russian general, fearing an insurrection, advanced very cau-

**French Policy in Poland.**

tiously, and thus enabled Frederick the Great to gain time for organising the defence of his kingdom.

**The Battles of Prague, Kolin, and Gross-Jägersdorf.**

The year 1757, the most brilliant of Frederick the Great's life was not only an epoch in the history of the relations between France and Austria, it had momentous consequences for the kingdom of Prussia. Preparations were made by Frederick's enemies for a concerted attack upon his dominions by Austrian, French, Russian, Swedish, and imperial armies. But the King of Prussia, imitating his tactics of the previous year, determined to adopt the offensive, and invade Bohemia. Browne and his troops retired before the advancing Prussians; and at Prague accepted battle. After a fierce engagement, in which Schwerin was killed, the main portion of the Austrian army was besieged in Prague. As at Pirna, Frederick's plans were again foiled by the stubborn resistance of the besieged army. The approach of Daun with reinforcements decided Frederick to meet his new foe before he could approach Prague. With ordinary prudence on his own part and that of his generals, he might have defeated Daun and forced his enemies to submission.

On the 18th of June Frederick was defeated at Kolin, principally owing to mistakes on the part of the Prussian generals which might easily have been prevented. Nearly 14,000 out of 32,000 Prussians were killed, the siege of Prague was raised, and Frederick was forced to retire from Bohemia. His plans were all shattered, and he learnt that he was not invincible. Before the end of the year, however, he had broken up the hostile combination formed against him, and had avenged Kolin. The immediate consequences of his defeat had been serious for Prussia. The imperial army hastened to make arrangements for a combined movement in North Germany with a French force, which, under d'Estrées, marched against the Duke of Cumberland, won the battle of Hastenbeck, and, under the Duc de Richelieu, the successor of d'Estrées, extracted from the Duke of Cumberland the Convention of

Klosterseven. On the 30th of June the Russians, under Apraksin, crossed the border, took Memel, and on the 30th of August defeated Lewald at Gross-Jägersdorf, while the Swedes declared war, and, using Stralsund as a base of operations, invaded Pomerania. Had it not been for Apraksin's connection with the party of the Russian heir Peter, and his wife Catherine, who were opposed to the overthrow of Frederick the Great, and had it not been for the extreme caution of the victorious Daun, the battles of Gross-Jägersdorf and Kolin would have proved fatal to the Prussian cause. Apraksin remained on the defensive in his camp, and in spite of the advice of Loudon, the excessive prudence and over-confidence of Daun and Prince Charles, threw away an opportunity of striking a decisive blow at the weakened Prussian army. Though on the 16th of October an Austrian force entered Berlin, and though Austrian troops occupied Silesia, no combined movement was arranged by the allies. Apraksin, hearing that the Tsarina was seriously ill, and being, moreover, with Bestuzhev, the Russian Chancellor, a member of the party of which the Grand Duchess was a leading spirit, retired into winter quarters in Courland with his Cossacks; the English Government repudiated the Convention of Klosterseven, and requested Frederick to make Ferdinand of Brunswick general of an army which Pitt was prepared to place in the field. Encouraged by these favourable circumstances Frederick advanced to meet the united French and imperial forces which, under Soubise and the Prince of Hildburghausen, were threatening Saxony. Early in 1757 two of Louis' ablest ministers, the Comte d'Argenson and Machault, had been dismissed. Both had opposed French intervention in Germany, and were desirous of saving the colonies. The former's experience and administrative capacity would have proved valuable during the Seven Years' War. His fall was due to an attempt to bring about the dismissal of Madame de Pompadour, and thus France was served during these eventful years by a succession of incapable ministers of war and marine.

On the 5th of November Frederick the Great won a decisive victory at Rossbach, inflicting heavy loss on the enemy, breaking up the imperial army, and forcing the French to recross the Rhine

**The Victory of Rossbach, Nov. 5, 1757.**

The victory of Rossbach had far-reaching effects. While in England the enthusiasm for the Prussian cause showed itself in bonfires and the despatch of reinforcements, in Germany the battle was regarded as a national triumph over the French. The German people henceforward looked upon Frederick the Great as a national hero. Rossbach, like Mollwitz, revealed to Europe the strength and vigour of the young Prussian kingdom. It was, in Napoleon's opinion, the cause of the overthrow of the French Bourbons in 1792. To Frederick Rossbach was important simply as enabling him to attempt to drive the Austrians out of Silesia. Schweidnitz had fallen, and Charles of Lorraine, having defeated Bevern, had captured Breslau and Liegnitz. Without a decisive victory Silesia was as good as lost. With characteristic appreciation of the position of affairs Frederick resolved to stake all upon a battle. On the 5th of December, just a month after Rossbach, the memorable battle of Leuthen was fought, which was in itself sufficient to place Frederick in the rank of the greatest generals. The Prussian movements had been entirely misunderstood by Prince Charles and Daun, and the battle proved to be an admirable illustration of Frederick's 'oblique order' of attack. In three hours the Prussian army of some 30,000 had totally defeated 80,000 Austrians. Silesia was recovered with the exception of Schweidnitz, and the year 1757 closed with a remarkable page of military history added to the annals of Germany.

**The Battle of Leuthen, Dec. 5, 1757.**

The opening of 1758, a year which affords excellent illustrations of Frederick's skill in marches and manœuvres, saw several important modifications in the plans and attitudes of the various combatants. Rossbach and Leuthen had indeed saved Frederick from destruction, but his position was still very precarious. He could at

**Pitt and Frederick the Great, 1758.**

any rate count on English assistance. With unhesitating decision Pitt expressed the enthusiasm of his countrymen when in April he made a new subsidy treaty with Prussia by which the Hanoverian army was taken into English pay and a treaty of alliance signed which provided for the payment of £670,000 a year to the Prussian king. Though recognising the errors made by the French in not directing all their energies to the colonial and maritime war with England, Pitt thus resolved, while concentrating his principal efforts on the extension of England's colonial empire, to subsidise foreign troops for the defence of Hanover and the support of Frederick. America was to be won for England in Germany. Maria Theresa's hope of a neutral Hanover was destroyed, and the French hopes of wringing concessions from George II. in the colonies in exchange for the security of Hanover were doomed to disappointment. By the end of March Ferdinand of Brunswick had cleared Germany of the French, and Hanover was safe.

**Ferdinand of Brunswick and Fermor.**

Ferdinand of Brunswick, who had already proved himself a capable general in the Austrian Succession War, was the brother of Charles, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel from 1735 to 1780, who had married Philippa Charlotte, sister of Frederick the Great; while of his own sisters, one, Elizabeth Christine, had married the Prussian king; another, the latter's brother Augustus William; and a third, Frederick v., King of Denmark. Charles fought for Prussia during the Seven Years' War, and on his death was succeeded by his son, Charles William Ferdinand, who was defeated at Jena.

Though England remained at peace with Russia and sent no fleet to the Baltic, there is little doubt that the English alliance, following the failure of the French at Rossbach, proved of incalculable value to the Prussian king. He had not only broken through the ring of his foes, but had destroyed all danger for the time from France and from the imperial army. Though Belleisle became, in July 1758, war minister in France, and remained in office till his death in January 1761, successful military operations were impossible owing to the in-

capacity of the French generals and the disorganisation of the armies.

During 1758 Frederick had only two enemies to deal with, Austria and Russia. Elizabeth, as hostile as ever, was roused by the battles of Rossbach and Leuthen, superseded Apraksin in favour of Fermor, a Russian general of English origin, who had distinguished himself in the Turkish war of 1736–39, and the Chancellor Bestuzhev in favour of Woronzov, an Austrian partisan, and the Russian army was set in motion in the depth of the winter. In January East Prussia was occupied by 31,000 men. Königsberg, Thorn, and Elbing having been captured and Küstrin besieged, no attack on Frederick's forces could take place before the summer, when the main Russian army was expected. Though the French and Austrian arms had failed, their diplomacy at St. Petersburg had succeeded; the Grand Duke Peter and his wife, Catherine, ceased for a time to exercise any influence in Russian politics, a close correspondence between Louis xv. and Elizabeth was opened, and a direct alliance between France and Russia was discussed.

**The Siege of Olmütz.**

In the spring of 1758, Frederick, in opposition to the opinion of several of his advisers, determined again to take the offensive and attack Austria before the Russians arrived. Leaving in Bohemia Daun, who, Prince Charles having retired, was now supreme, he retook Schweidnitz and boldly advanced into Moravia, intending to take Olmütz and threaten Vienna. The capture of Olmütz would at once be followed by the withdrawal of Austrian troops from Bohemia. The siege began on the 27th of May, and was conducted with great vigour. As time went on the situation developed many points of similarity with the situation before Prague in 1757. On each occasion a powerful army was hard by threatening Frederick's communications. In 1758, however, Loudon, by his military qualities, had acquired a certain amount of influence; on July 26, 1757, he had been promoted to the rank of major-general, and was in a position to interfere seriously

with Frederick's plans. Belonging to an old Scottish family, Loudon had seen service in Russia with Münich. Having been refused a commission by Frederick the Great, he entered the Austrian service, and proved to be, in all the qualities necessary for a successful general, only second to Eugene.

Had he, and not Prince Charles or Daun commanded, the fortunes of Austria in the Seven Years' War might have had very different results. As it was, he remained the most formidable enemy Frederick had ever met, and the failure of the siege of Olmütz was due to his energy and resource. Seven weeks after the opening of the siege he captured, in spite of the bravery of the Prussian troops, an important convoy of 3000 wagons, and compelled Frederick on the 1st of July to raise the siege. With the Prussian king's failure Loudon's reputation was made, and he was promoted to the rank of field-marshal-lieutenant.

**Loudon raises the Siege of Olmütz.**

The rest of the year was no less remarkable in the history of the military operations of the war. Frederick's retreat from Olmütz through Bohemia into Silesia was a masterpiece; his defence of Brandenburg from a Russian invasion illustrated his energy and resolution. The Russians had occupied East Prussia and Poland, and, ravaging and murdering as they went, were threatening northern Germany. Frederick advanced to Frankfort-on-the-Oder, formed a junction with Count Dohna, and fought the battle of Zorndorf on the 25th of August. Never had so bloody a battle been seen between Teuton and Slav. No quarter was given, and with savage fury and stubborn determination the struggle raged for some ten hours. The brilliant conduct of the Prussian cavalry under Zeidlitz, and the dogged courage of the Russians, are the only interesting features of a battle which, as the day wore on, resolved itself into a hand-to-hand encounter between opposing forces in utter and hopeless confusion.

**The Battle of Zorndorf, Aug. 25, 1758.**

Though in itself indecisive, Zorndorf proved to be a victory for the Prussians. While 11,500 Prussians were killed, the

Russian losses amounted to 21,000 men, 100 cannons, and 30 flags, and after a few days Fermor retired in good order into Poland, and gave up all idea of co-operating with the Swedes. Though Brandenburg was safe, a fresh attack had been arranged at Vienna. Daun, assisted by the army of the Empire under the Duke of Zweibrücken, was to crush Prince Henry and retake Dresden, while another Austrian army under Deville and Harsch was to enter Silesia and besiege Neisse. The chief efforts of the Austrians were directed against Saxony, and on the 5th of September General Maguire seized Sonnenstein, overlooking Pirna. With extraordinary rapidity the Prussian king returned to Dresden, in time to disconcert Daun's combination and to force the Austrians to adopt defensive tactics. Frederick's position was a strong one; but he threw away his advantage by advancing against Daun, who commanded an army of twice his strength, and, with headstrong obstinacy and overweening confidence, by encamping in a position inferior to the Austrian position, and completely commanded by the Austrian army.

**The Defeat of Frederick at Hochkirchen, Oct. 14, 1758.**

On the 14th of October Daun, realising his opportunity, attacked and defeated the Prussians at Hochkirchen, but, owing to his extraordinary cautiousness, gained no advantages from his victory. With surprising boldness Frederick, by forced marches, compelled Harsch to raise the sieges of Neisse and Kosel and to retire into Bohemia, and then returning with equal rapidity into Saxony, saved Dresden from all danger from Daun, and forced him to cross the frontier. Elsewhere fortune favoured the Prussian cause. Though Cleves and Hesse remained in the hands of the French, and East Prussia was within the Russian grasp, England had gained colonial successes against the French. Fermor's invasion of Brandenburg had been prevented, Daun had retired into Bohemia, leaving Saxony and Silesia in Frederick's hands, and a Swedish attack on Pomerania had been repulsed.

In western Germany Ferdinand of Brunswick had cleared

Hanover, and at Krefeld, on the 23d of June, had defeated and driven across the Rhine one French army under the command of the Comte de Clermont, who had superseded the Duc de Richelieu. Ruremonde and Dendermonde were lost, Ferdinand held the Westphalian bishoprics, and Clermont, whose defeat, in spite of his own incapacity, had been mainly due to the undisciplined and miserable condition in which Richelieu had left his forces, was replaced by the Marquis de Contades.

**Ferdinand of Brunswick in Western Germany in 1758.**

The efforts of Madame de Pompadour were forthwith directed to strengthening the army of the Maine, which under her friend Soubise took Cassel, while the advanced guard under de Broglie defeated a German contingent at Sondershausen on the 23d of July. To check this advance of the French, Ferdinand of Brunswick, reinforced by 12,000 English troops, abandoned his pursuit of Contades, and met the army of Soubise at Lutterberg, near Cassel. There on the 7th of October, owing to the vigour of Chevert, who had in the previous war distinguished himself at Prague, Soubise won a small success, which, however, proved of little benefit to the French.

In spite of the French occupation of Cassel, of the failure of the English expedition to St. Malo and Cherbourg, and notwithstanding the Russian occupation of eastern Prussia, Frederick the Great had so far successfully resisted the attacks of his numerous foes. It was obvious at the close of 1758 that only by a close and harmonious union between Russia, Austria, and France could the overthrow of the King of Prussia be effected. In 1758 such a close union seemed impossible; for France, defeated on the continent and at sea, with her coasts blockaded, and her communications with her colonies destroyed, and having, moreover, lost Louisburg and Fort Duquesne — the line of junction between Canada and the Mississippi being effectually cut — was powerless to give any effective aid to the Courts of St. Petersburg and Vienna. The disorganisation of her administration, the incapacity of her Government, and her utter

**Prussia and France at the close of 1758.**




*The shaded portions represent Prussian territory.*

feebleness were displayed before Europe, and Bernis, recognising her inability to continue the struggle with any hope of success, had already attempted to bring about peace on the continent. Frederick had nothing to fear on the side of France, and for the moment it seemed as though his three principal foes would be compelled to confess their powerlessness to conquer his kingdom.

A general pacification in the autumn of 1758 seemed a far from improbable event. Such a pacification was the desire of Bernis, who fully realised the weakness of the French Government, the general confusion in the administration, and the difficulties attendant on a continuance of the war. Powerless before the British fleet, France was compelled to see her merchant marine destroyed, and her communications with India, Canada, and the Antilles cut off.

Dupleix in 1754, in response to the complaints of England, had been recalled from India, and his successor, Godeheu, at once made a treaty with the English in which Dupleix' conquests were sacrificed. In America hostilities between the English and French colonists had never ceased, and though Montcalm made brilliant efforts to defend the French position, he was unable to receive adequate assistance from France. The overthrow of Braddock's force had been followed by Montcalm's capture of Oswego in Lake Ontario and by his repulse of the English at Ticonderoga, though he was unable to save Louisburg or Fort Duquesne. To Montcalm's demand for assistance, Bernis, minister of foreign affairs, replied that when one's house was on fire one could not think of the stables; and Belleisle, the minister of war, wrote that he could see no prospect of being able to send reinforcements.

Though clever and clear-sighted, the astute Bernis was no match for Frederick the Great or Pitt; he lacked the strength required to bear up against misfortunes or to carry through any definite line of policy. In the face of defeat he became discouraged, and incapable of devising fresh plans of resistance. In his eyes peace was the

**Fall of Bernis and Rise of Choiseul.**

only remedy for the plight in which France, tied by unequal and onerous conditions to Austria, found herself. He succeeded in obtaining the assent of Maria Theresa to the opening of negotiations, but before Elizabeth of Russia had been consulted he had fallen the victim of a ministerial revolution, itself the work of Madame de Pompadour, who blamed his conciliatory tendencies, insisted on a continuance of the war, and still hoped to gain some advantage over Prussia. On the 13th of December Bernis, who had received the cardinal's hat on November 30, was exiled, and his fall marks the beginning of a period of activity in French policy under the direction of Choiseul.[1] Before Bernis' disgrace the Count of Choiseul-Stainville had been recalled from Vienna, created Duc de Choiseul, and appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs.[2] He now became the leading minister, and for some years held the chief authority in the French Court. By birth a Lorrainer, Choiseul had in his early days served in the army; he had then entered upon a diplomatic career, and was popular at the Court of Vienna. He had secured the favour of Madame de Pompadour, and by his marriage with Mlle. Crozat du Chatel had acquired an immense fortune. There is no doubt that during the later phases of the Seven Years' War his influence was highly beneficial to his country, that he gave decision to her policy and that his failure to save her from further losses was due to the mistakes of his predecessors and to the interference of Louis XV. with his plans.

**Choiseul's Vigorous Policy in 1759.**

Choiseul was not a great statesman, but he was a man of considerable ability, and was vastly superior in political sagacity, in energy, and in determination, to any of his fellow-ministers. He worked eight or ten hours a day, and on his accession to power effected a revolution in the French Foreign Office. A clever courtier, he

[1] See *Memoires de Bernis*, edited by Frederic Masson.

[2] Choiseul was from 1758–1761, Minister of Foreign Affairs; from 1761–1766, Minister of War and Marine; from 1766–1770, Minister of War and Foreign Affairs.

could hold his own among the literary and scientific spirits of the day. A man of many interests, the final judgment on his career has yet to be passed. He hoped at first to ally with Spain, and to use the mediation of that Power to bring about peace with England, so as to leave France free to devote her energies to the war on the continent. Finding the execution of this policy impossible, he determined to carry on the war with vigour, both against England and against Prussia, and at the same time resolved to revise the Treaty of Versailles of 1757, in a sense more favourable to France. Accordingly, while declaring for a continuance of the war, he concluded on the 30th of December 1758 two new treaties — ratified in March 1759 — with Austria, one public and the other secret.[1] Family alliances were arranged; the Archduke Joseph was to marry Isabella, Princess of Parma and granddaughter of Louis XV., and his brother Leopold was to marry a Princess of Naples.[2] Neither country could conclude a separate peace without the other, and France was to do all in her power to aid Austria in the conquest of Silesia and Glatz. Though France was no longer bound to continue the war till Silesia and Glatz were recovered, and though no further partition of Prussia was suggested, Austria had still the advantage over France in these treaties. France bound herself to increase the number of her troops in Germany, and was compelled to continue a ruinous and exhausting war in order that Austria should gain territorial concessions. It was no wonder that the French people hated the war, detested the Austrian connection, and suspected Choiseul of being favourable to its continuance.

Though unable to free France to any great extent from her Austrian alliance, Choiseul made a determined and ambitious effort to restore French credit on the continent and on the sea. French troops were to conquer Hanover, and the colonies

[1] This arrangement between France and Austria is sometimes called the Third Treaty of Versailles.

[2] See *Une Fille de France et sa correspondance inédite*, par L. de Beauriez.

were to be recovered by means of an invasion of England. The task of overthrowing Frederick was to be left mainly to the Russians and Austrians, and the largest portion of the French troops were to be used to strike a telling blow at England. Canada and Pondicherry were to be regained by an armed occupation of London. Fleets were prepared at Toulon and Brest, and Choiseul proposed to Woronzov that a portion of the Russian army should embark at Stettin in Swedish ships, and, after having received at Gothenburg an additional force of 12,000 Swedes, should land in Scotland.

The army for the invasion of England was intrusted to Soubise, that for the invasion of Scotland to the equally incapable d'Aiguillon, the fleet to the incompetent de la Clue, Conflans, and Thurot.

**The Disasters of France in 1759.**

These ambitious projects ended in failure, and the year 1759 proved signally disastrous to France.

In January, news of the capture of the island of Gorée, on the west coast of Africa, arrived in England, and in June the capture of Guadaloupe was announced. An attempt of the French to unite the three squadrons of de la Clue, Conflans, and Thurot, which lay respectively at Toulon, Brest, and Dunkirk, watched by English ships, led to a series of overwhelming defeats. Boscawen won a great victory over de la Clue on the 17th of August at Lagos; and, on the 20th of November, Hawke gained a brilliant success in Quiberon Bay over Conflans and the Brest fleet, while Rodney bombarded Havre. Thurot was equally unsuccessful, and his squadron, which had sailed to Ireland, was completely destroyed. The French fleet was practically annihilated, and the scheme of an invasion of England was ruined. To add to these disasters, Wolfe, on the 18th of September, had captured Quebec, and the fate of Canada was sealed. Equally successful were the English arms in India, where the battle of Plassey, won by Clive on the 27th of June 1757, had re-established the English position in Calcutta, and was followed by the steady decline of French influence in India, till it received its death-blow in December 1760 at the battle of Wandewash.

On the continent failure also attended all Choiseul's schemes, in spite of the strong reinforcements sent to the armies in Germany. De Broglie, the commander of the southern French army, had indeed defeated Ferdinand of Brunswick, who had attempted to regain Frankfort, at Bergen on the 13th of April, had effected a junction with the northern French army under Marshal Contades, and had taken Cassel and Minden. Hanover, however, was saved by the generalship of Ferdinand, who, on the 1st of August, won the decisive battle of Minden, which resulted in the expulsion of the French from Hesse, and the disgrace of Contades, and the appointment of de Broglie to the supreme command of the army. Nor was Choiseul more successful in securing the active co-operation of Peter Saltikov, the incapable Russian commander, who had succeeded Fermor. Saltikov had no wish to enter upon the siege of Stettin, which might prove a lengthy business. Moreover, the Russian Court had no intention of breaking with England. No war existed between the Courts of St. James and St. Petersburg, and though Russia remained the ally of France, she was never the enemy of England. Instead of co-operating with France in an attack upon the throne of George II., Elizabeth contented herself with making a convention with Sweden on the 8th of March, to which France and Denmark were invited to join, to exclude from the Baltic all foreign ships. Asserting principles which in 1780 were accepted by the Northern League, the Russian and Swedish Governments united to preserve peace in the Baltic. Before the year had run its course, Choiseul had forced upon him the desirability of a return to Bernis' policy, and he began to think of using the mediation of Russia in order to bring about peace. He had already made a determined effort to counteract Louis XV.'s secret correspondence with the ambassadors at foreign Courts, and had, in March 1759, procured the dismissal of Tercier, who acted as Louis' confidential secretary. Durand, another of Louis' creatures, was superseded in 1760 by Paulmy, who was sent to Warsaw

**The Battle of Minden, Aug. 1, 1759. Peace Projects.**

with orders to support the Russian Government and to give no encouragement to the national party. Choiseul, however, soon realised that some occult influence interfered with the execution of his orders to Paulmy, and when he began to take measures to secure the Russian mediation, he was confronted by fresh difficulties. He instructed l'Hôpital, the French representative at St. Petersburg, in a despatch dated July 8th, 1759, to indicate to the Russian Chancellor the advisability of employing Russian mediation in order to bring about peace between Austria and Prussia, Choiseul hoping that Russian mediation would be extended later in favour of negotiations for a settlement between France and England. Had his statesmanlike recognition of the necessity of peace been accepted in 1759, Choiseul might have saved France from a portion of the losses and humiliation which she had to undergo in 1763. But he again found his policy hampered by the secret diplomacy of Louis xv. L'Hôpital, prompted by his secretary, d'Eon, who was acquainted with the views of the French king, found it advisable to pay no attention to his official instructions, and Choiseul's well-meant efforts fell to the ground.

Louis xv., who preferred to treat directly with England, disapproved of the idea of Russian mediation, and secretly threw all the weight of his influence against Choiseul. Pitt had declined to consider the question of a separate peace with France; while the Russian Court, jubilant over Saltikov's victory at Kunersdorf on the 13th of August 1759, was resolved to continue the war, to definitely annex eastern Prussia, and to obtain the acquiescence of France and Austria to this increase of her territory.

**The Battle of Kunersdorf, Aug. 13, 1759.**

The battle of Kunersdorf seemed for the moment likely to put the final touch to the overthrow of Prussia. Though Frederick had held his own in 1758, his country was exhausted, his expenses largely exceeded his means, the English subsidies were far from being sufficient to outweigh the drain on the Prussian resources. While the Austrian armies were improving in experience, and

the Austrian generals in knowledge of the art of war, Frederick's position was somewhat similar to that of Napoleon after the Wagram campaign. His opponents were learning from him; and while their armies were drawn from a wide area, his own recruits, raised from the small population of Prussia, were poor substitutes for the veterans who had composed the magnificent army with which he had begun the war. Opposed to him were the improved Austrian forces and the Russian troops, whose fighting qualities had come upon him as a sudden revelation, while the hostile cordon was completed by the imperial army under the Duke of Zweibrücken, which had occupied Leipsic, Wittenberg, and Torgau, and the French army under de Broglie. Offensive operations on a large scale were impossible, though Prince Henry successfully destroyed the Austrian magazines in Bohemia, and drove back the imperial army to Bamberg and Würzburg. During the early part of the year 1759, Frederick had no aggressive action on the part of his foes to ward off, for the cautiousness of Daun kept the Austrians inactive till the Russians had advanced as far as the Oder, and, after defeating a Prussian corps under General Wedel at Züllichau on the 23d of July, taken Frankfort.

Loudon and 18,000 Austrians then joined Saltikov, and Frederick with 50,000 men found himself confronted by at least 80,000 Austrian and Russian troops. In the battle which was fought on the 13th of August the Prussians were at first brilliantly successful, but the advance of Loudon at a critical moment, coupled with Frederick's over-confidence and obstinacy, altered the fate of the day, and the conflict ended in his complete overthrow. A Russian advance upon Berlin would have been followed by the annihilation of the Prussian monarchy, and Kunersdorf would have ranked among the decisive battles of the world's history.

But the inactivity of the Austrians and Russians saved Frederick. Though the former, with the aid of the Imperialist army which had taken Leipsic and Torgau, captured Dresden on the 14th September, Daun's habitual sluggishness and lack

of military genius rendered him a poor match in the face of the active operations of Prince Henry. The Russians showed no anxiety to march into Brandenburg; their losses had been considerable, and Saltikov, either angry at the supineness of Daun or anxious about the state of politics in St. Petersburg, refused to follow up the victory. None the less, after three years of conflict which had exhausted Austria, France, and Prussia, the Tsarina held in her hands the fate of Poland and that of the continent. The life of Elizabeth, however, was not likely to be of long duration; the party of the heir Peter, and his wife Catherine, was increasing in importance; and the accession of Peter would, it was well known, be followed by a change of policy. After marching into Silesia, the Russians retired into Poland, and the Austrians were left to continue the campaign. The obstinacy of Frederick again brought disaster on the Prussian cause. Anxious to hasten the retreat of Daun into Bohemia before the masterly manœuvres of Prince Henry, Frederick ordered General Finck to circle round in rear of Daun, so as to bring about the destruction of the Austrian army. On the 23d of November Finck was forced to capitulate at Maxen with some 12,000 Prussian soldiers, and Dresden remained in Austrian hands. The year 1759 closed gloomily for Prussia no less than for France. But the personality and iron will of Frederick upheld his country through its period of misfortunes, while in France the weakness and incapacity of Louis XV. gave no hope to his subjects of a satisfactory escape from their calamities.

**Capitulation of Finck. The Treaty of Schuwalov.**

The chances of peace at the opening of 1760 seemed indeed small. The note of England and Prussia on the 25th of November 1759, suggesting that a European congress should be held, had been rejected by Russia and Austria, and the accession of Charles of Naples — the famous Don Carlos — to the Spanish throne in August 1759 rendered it probable that, in spite of the new king's dislike of the Treaty of Versailles, Spanish aid would be given to France. But though the war might continue, various circumstances tended to destroy still

more all chance of united action on the part of the allies. In March 1760 the Tsarina Elizabeth forced from Maria Theresa the Treaty of Schuwalov, guaranteeing to Russia the possession of eastern Prussia and Danzig. Whilst being extremely distasteful to the Austrian Court, the treaty roused the utmost irritation in France. The efforts of Peter the Great, of Catherine I., and Elizabeth to secure a French alliance had so far proved unavailing, and France still adhered to her traditional policy with regard to Poland, Sweden, and Turkey. To preserve a balance of power in the Baltic was one of the aims of French diplomacy, and the Treaty of Schuwalov was a direct menace to such a balance of power, endangering as it did the independence and prosperity of Sweden and Denmark. Though the ties that bound France to her allies were becoming sensibly weakened, Choiseul made, in March 1760, an attempt to induce Russia and Austria to agree to the conclusion of a treaty, and the Baron de Breteuil was sent to St. Petersburg with that object. L'Hôpital had demonstrated his untrustworthiness, and Choiseul hoped that the new ambassador would carry out his wishes. But before he set out, Louis XV. himself intimated to him that he was to obey the royal orders in preference to those of the minister. While Choiseul's instructions related to the necessity of inducing Russia to act as mediator of a general peace, Breteuil also received another set of instructions from the king, which are valuable as showing that the principal object of the secret diplomacy of Louis XV. was the preservation of the anarchical independence of Poland and the establishment of French influence over the fortunes of the republic. The document proves incontestably that Louis was prepared to sacrifice the most important interests of his kingdom to the one object of saving Poland from the Russian occupation. At this time he hoped to procure for Xavier de Saxe, third son of Augustus III. and the favourite brother of the Dauphiness, the crown of Poland on the king's death. He was averse to any territorial or other increase of the power of Russia, and ordered

**Louis XV.'s Secret Diplomacy.**

Breteuil to do all in his power to retard the movements of the Russian troops against Frederick, fearing that some signal success would increase the influence of the Tsarina and cause her to adopt a high tone. Thus Louis XV.'s secret policy was at variance with his engagements made in the Treaty of Versailles in 1757; it was fraught with pernicious results for France; it was dishonourable to his allies; it paralysed the efforts of men like Choiseul, who were working for the real interests of France. Louis was no doubt correct in his view that a peace such as Choiseul desired would inevitably involve the increase of Russian influence in Poland. But, disregarding the whole tendency of events, he decided, when Russia in 1760 demanded the Ukraine, to continue the hopeless task of preserving the integrity of Poland, though his misguided policy involved the loss of the French colonies, and in the end failed to benefit Poland. Breteuil's mission to St. Petersburg failed to bring about the object desired by Choiseul.[1]

Peace was not made, and the year 1760 proved to be a year of battles. Finck's capitulation at Maxen had enabled the Austrians to establish themselves firmly in Saxony, and General Maguire defeated Frederick's determined attempts to dislodge them.

**The Closing Scenes of the War in Germany.**

On the 23d of June 1760 Fouquet, one of Frederick's generals, was overwhelmed at Landshut by Loudon, who took several thousand Prussian soldiers prisoners, and on July 26 captured Glatz. A Russian army under Czernitcheff crossed the Oder, and Silesia became the chief theatre of the war. Followed by two Austrian armies under Daun and Lacy, Frederick, who on hearing of Fouquet's danger had immediately bestirred himself, threw himself into the province, but after hearing of his general's surrender he turned and attempted to take Dresden. Baffled, he rushed again into Silesia, and before the Austrian armies could unite he defeated Loudon at the battle of Liegnitz on the 15th of August. The slowness, caution, and incapacity of

[1] Albert Vandal, *Louis XV. et Elisabeth de Russie.*

Daun and Lacy had saved Frederick from destruction. But in spite of the unwillingness of Maria Theresa and the Aulic Council to recognise the futility of directing military operations from Vienna, and the necessity of placing Loudon in the chief command, the Austrian armies, if well led, were still capable of winning victories. Though Czernitcheff recrossed the Oder, and the Austrians in Silesia were checked, Frederick remained in a very precarious position. A corps of Austrians and Russians under Lacy and Totleben raided Berlin, while the Austrian troops occupied Saxony. Frederick's return from Silesia was followed by his attack on Daun at Torgau on the 3d of November. After a fierce struggle, in which Daun was wounded, the Austrians were defeated, and having, it is said, lost 20,000 men, retired upon Dresden; while Frederick, having regained the greater part of Saxony, though at the cost of 14,000 men, wintered at Leipsic. The last pitched battle of the war had been fought; Saxony, with the exception of Dresden, which was still held by Maguire, was left in the possession of the Prussians; the Austrians had, owing to the genius of Frederick and the caution of Daun, merely conquered Landshut and the country of Glatz; and the remaining military operations were, in Carlyle's words, 'like a race between spent horses.' In western Germany and in the colonies the French had gained no signal advantage. The Duc de Broglie, who, aided by the Comte de Saint-Germain, had introduced reforms into the army, had indeed won a success at Corbach, and had reoccupied Hesse-Cassel, while the hereditary Prince of Brunswick had been defeated at Kloster-Campen by the Marquis de Castries; but Ferdinand of Brunswick's strategy proved sufficient for the defence of Westphalia and Hanover, and by the battle of Warburg, which was won mainly by the English cavalry, he checked the French advance. In America, after some small successes, the capitulation of Montreal on the 8th of September completed the loss of Canada, and Louisiana alone remained to France of all her American possessions. In India Eyre Coote had defeated the French at

the battle of Wandewash on the 22d of January 1760, and, after capturing the smaller French forts, besieged Pondicherry in September. On the 26th of January 1761 Pondicherry fell, and the French dominion in India came to an end.

The year 1761 was marked by the failure of renewed efforts to bring about peace, by the exhaustion of the combatants in Germany, by the fall of Pitt, and by a last attempt of Choiseul to restore the French fortunes. Finding that his efforts to bring about peace were not successful, he had resigned the direction of foreign affairs early in 1761, and became Minister of War and Marine. In this capacity he made strenuous efforts to improve the condition of the French fleet. All classes united to aid Choiseul in his attempts to defend the country, and new ships were ordered to be built, these efforts being an earnest of the minister's work of reorganisation from 1763 onwards. Choiseul had indeed induced Austria and Russia to consent to negotiations at Augsburg, but his wishes met with little support from the former Power; the congress led to no result, and the war continued in a desultory manner. Loudon and Buturlin respectively commanded the Austrian and Russian forces in Silesia, but their quarrels enabled Frederick to hold his own till the 1st of October, when Loudon, by a sudden and unexpected movement, captured Schweidnitz, and Silesia and Glatz were occupied by Austrian and Russian armies. In eastern Pomerania Russian troops, under Rumiantsov, reduced Kolberg on the 1st of December, and though they failed to take Stettin, they remained in occupation of the surrounding country. Only in western Europe was the Prussian cause successful. There Ferdinand of Brunswick successfully repulsed at Villingshausen an attempt of the incapable Soubise and the jealous de Broglie, at the head of 16,000, to advance into Westphalia and Hanover. D'Estrées replaced de Broglie, while Conti succeeded Soubise, with little advantage to the French cause. The capture of Dominica, Belleisle, and Pondicherry were further blows to the French cause, and Choiseul realised that the complete annihilation of the French naval power could alone satisfy Pitt.

Conscious that the Austrian alliance was of little use to France, and finding that the separate negotiations which had been opened between England and France in June were opposed by Pitt, he naturally turned to Spain, whose king, Charles III., inspired by a deep resentment of long standing against England, was burning with indignation at certain high-handed acts of the English.

On the 27th of August 1758 Queen Barbara died; her inconsolable husband shut himself up, became seriously ill, and a period of governmental anarchy supervened, during which the possibility of making Elizabeth Farnese regent was at one time discussed. The death of Ferdinand VI., on the 24th of August 1759, put an end to the confusion in Spain, and his half-brother, the famous Don Carlos, king of the Two Sicilies, ascended the Spanish throne as Charles III. The new king, the eldest son of Elizabeth Farnese and Philip V., was born in 1716, and in 1739 had married Maria Amelia, sister of Maria Josepha, the Dauphiness, and daughter of Augustus III., King of Poland and Saxony. Endowed with natural advantages both of mind and body, Charles III., after receiving an excellent education, had developed the qualities most necessary for a king. Imbued with the love of justice and with a sense of his royal responsibilities, he had during his reign in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies devoted himself with assiduity to the amelioration of the lot of his subjects. Aided by his able minister Tanucci, brigandage was severely repressed, the privileges of the barons were curtailed, many ecclesiastical rights were abolished and others were carefully restrained, industry and manufactures were encouraged. By the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle it had been provided that if Don Carlos became King of Spain, and Don Philip King of Naples, Parma and Guastalla should revert to Austria, and the greater part of the Duchy of Piacenza to the King of Sardinia. After much negotiation, it was settled that Charles III. should be allowed to leave his kingdom of the Two Sicilies to his son Ferdinand IV., and that Don Philip should remain in his duchy,

**The Accession of Charles III. of Spain, 1759.**

and that the claims of the King of Sardinia should be compensated for by a sum of money. The Austrian Court, still bent on strengthening its friendship with the Bourbons, consolidated the Austro-Spanish alliance by the marriages of the Archdukes Joseph and Leopold to the daughters of Don Philip and Charles III. respectively.

After leaving his son Ferdinand IV. in possession of the Two Sicilies, Charles had, on his arrival in Spain, found that kingdom in a state of disorganisation, and completely unprepared to take part in any warlike operations. The realisation of the true position of Spain, together with the representations of Wall, then as ever opposed to war, and the influence of the Queen, checked the anti-English tendencies of Charles.

**The Family Compact of Aug. 15, 1761.**

But on the death of Maria Amelia Charles changed his attitude, determined to exclude the English from the commerce of central America, and to recover Gibraltar. He accordingly listened to the French proposals for united action against the House of Braganza, in order to withdraw the attention of the English from Germany, and to strike a blow at England's commerce with Portugal. The Marquis of Grimaldi, a Genoese by birth, and whose rise had been due to the influence of Ensenada, was sent to Paris, and on August 15, 1761, a Family Compact between Spain and France was signed, Choiseul hoping, with some plausibility, to form within the Franco-Austrian alliance a union of all the Bourbon Powers which should be capable of holding its own against England.

This agreement, to which the Bourbon Princes of Parma and Naples were to be admitted, consisted (1) of a Family Compact which established in a general manner and on a permanent basis the relations of the two monarchies; and (2) of a special convention relating to the Seven Years' War, in accordance with which Charles III. engaged to declare war upon England on May 1, 1762, if at that date peace was not already concluded, and France promised to hand over Minorca to the Spaniards on the day that Spain declared war.

Choiseul's name will ever be connected with the Family Compact. The necessity of united action on the part of the Bourbons of France and Spain against the predominance of England in America and her naval supremacy had been realised by Louis XIV. The dynastic exigencies of the Regent Orleans, followed by the timorous and short-sighted policy of Fleury and his successors, had relegated commercial and colonial matters to the background, with the result that the navy was neglected and starved, and the ruin of the French commerce and colonies rendered certain in the event of a war with England. Choiseul recognised clearly the defects of the policy of his predecessors, and the value of the Spanish alliance was strikingly evidenced during the war between England and her American colonies.

At first, however, no beneficial results attended the statesmanlike action of Choiseul. The union of France and Spain, coming as it did when France was exhausted and Spain unprepared, ended in fresh disasters to the former and serious losses to the latter Power.[1]

Pitt, suspecting with reason the existence of this treaty, was anxious for an immediate declaration of war against Spain. But a change had come over the aspect of affairs in England. George II. had died on the 25th of October 1760, and his successor George III. made Bute one of the Secretaries of State.

Bute headed a party desirous of making peace, mainly in order to get rid of Pitt and to break up the Whig party. Finding his policy was not approved of by the Cabinet, Pitt resigned on the 5th of October, and thus ended the splendid administration which raised England to a position of first-rate importance in Europe, and firmly established her colonial empire. Under the influence of Bute, who named himself Prime Minister on the retirement of Newcastle, Parliament did not renew the annual

**Fall of Pitt, and War between England and Spain.**

[1] See *La Diplomatie de Louis XV. et Le Pacte de Famille*, par André Soulange-Boden.

subsidy to Prussia, and though Bute found himself compelled to declare war on Spain in January 1762, and to repel the invasion of Portugal, he continued to endeavour to abandon all continental connections, and to procure peace at any price.

The fall of Pitt had dealt what seemed to be a very serious blow to the fortunes of Frederick the Great, who found himself at the end of 1761 in a weakened and exhausted condition, exposed to the fierce hostility of the Tsarina, and deprived of the support of England. Though the efforts of the allies to crush Frederick had so far failed in their object, Prussia at the close of 1761 seemed to all but her king in a well-nigh hopeless position.

**Death of Elizabeth of Russia, Jan. 5, 1762.**

But if Frederick had only 60,000 men left, his enemies were also in an exhausted condition. The Tsarina's end was fast approaching. Each day the situation in France became more serious. At Vienna the want of money necessitated the discharge of some 20,000 soldiers; while the absence of harmony among the generals, the quarrels of the ministers, the weak health of the Emperor, and the feeling of general discouragement at the failure of the last campaign, rendered Maria Theresa willing to consider peace proposals. It is doubtful, even if the war had dragged on its course for another year, if the exhausted coalition, in face of his extraordinary exertions, could have crushed the Prussian king. The death of the Tsarina on the 5th of January 1762, however, at once turned the scale in favour of Prussia, and Peter III., whose admiration of Frederick was of long standing, not only on the 5th of May made peace with Frederick and restored all the conquered territories, but a month later made, on the 8th of June, an offensive and defensive alliance with Prussia, and ordered Czernitcheff to lead his troops against the Austrians in Silesia. Some justification for the violent change of policy is to be found in the fact that, though Russia seemed to be renouncing the fruits of her endurance and victories, the war from which she was gaining little was a constant drain to her in men and money.

The Swedes followed suit, and on the 22d of May made the Peace of Hamburg and withdrew from the war. Frederick's hands were freed to attack the Austrians in Silesia, and the imperial army which was united to an Austrian contingent under Serbelloni and Stollberg in Saxony. In Silesia Daun, who resumed the command in May, attempted to defend Schweidnitz, and a lengthy series of manœuvres began. Before any engagement took place, a revolution took place at St. Petersburg. Peter's first measures on attaining the throne had been calculated to increase his popularity. The state prisons were opened, and Münich, Biren, Lestocq, and many others returned from Siberia. The Secret Chancery of the late Tsarina was abolished, and the law of Peter the Great, compelling all members of the aristocracy to take some civil employment, was repealed. But the Tsar's attempt to interfere with the property of the Church by a measure of confiscation was premature, and his endeavour to introduce into the army, and especially among the guards, a severe system of discipline, roused the discontent of the soldiers. His German propensities did not commend themselves to the Russian people, and a proposed expedition against Denmark for the conquest of Schleswig met with general disapproval. His wife Catherine headed a party which included the Orlovs and Potemkin, and a plot was formed for the overthrow of the Tsar. On the 8th of July the revolution, which was bloodless and over in two hours, took place. Peter III., who abdicated on the 9th of July, died on July 19, and his successor, his wife Catherine, though confirming the peace with Frederick, withdrew Czernitcheff and his forces. Before, however, the Russians actually retired, Frederick defeated the Austrians at Burkersdorf on the 21st of July, but it was not till the 9th of October that he succeeded in taking Schweidnitz. He then returned to Saxony, where Prince Henry, whom Frederick declared was the only general who made no mistake in the war, had defeated the combined imperial and Austrian army at Freiburg — the last engagement

**Revolution in Russia. Death of Peter III. Accession of Catherine II.**

of the Seven Years' War — had taken Bamberg and Nuremberg, and forced the Diet of Ratisbon to declare its neutrality. The siege of Dresden was not attempted, and the last campaign of the Seven Years' War ended in truces with Daun and Serbelloni.

**English Successes.** Meanwhile England was throughout 1762 winning signal successes against France and Spain. Martinique was taken in February 1762, followed by the submission of the lesser French islands, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and the abandonment of Louisiana; on the 13th of August, Havannah, the key of the Spanish West Indian possessions, capitulated after a gallant defence, while in the East Indies, Manilla, the capital of the Philippines, was seized. In the west of Germany English interests were no less secure; for Ferdinand of Brunswick, showing as usual his high qualities as a general, took the aggressive against d'Estrées and Soubise, and regained Cassel. Equally successful was the English defence of its old ally Portugal against the attack of the Spanish Bourbons, who hoped to force it into hostilities with Great Britain. Though the Portuguese lost their colony of Sacramento, the invasion of Portugal by the Franco-Spanish army was checked by the despatch in 1762 of 8000 English troops to Lisbon.

As in 1713, the exigencies of the party in power interfered with the general interests of England. Bute determined to

**The Peace of Paris.** end the war, hastened on the negotiations, took little account of the late successes, and on November 3, 1762, the preliminaries of peace were signed at Fontainebleau. North America passed into the hands of England; the French retaining fishing rights round Newfoundland and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, at a distance of three leagues from the shore, as well as the two small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon off Newfoundland. England restored the islands of Guadaloupe, Marie-Galante, de la Desirade, Martinique, and St. Lucia; but kept St. Vincent, Tobago, Dominica, and Grenada. Goree was restored to France (the English keeping Senegal), and Minorca and Belleisle were exchanged; the

French evacuated their conquests in Germany, and the English army was withdrawn from the continent, both Powers agreeing to retire from the continental war. In India the French received back their factories, but they were not allowed to have any military establishments. They also undertook to restore Dunkirk to its condition before the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748. Spain was forced to make considerable concessions. She acknowledged the right of the English to cut logwood in Honduras Bay, provided the English destroyed their fortifications erected there. All claim to the Newfoundland fishing was renounced, and Florida was ceded to England. In return for these losses, and for the inability of the French to restore Minorca, she received from France New Orleans and all Louisiana west of the Mississippi, and from England Havannah and the ports of Cuba, which had been conquered. After the preliminaries had been signed, the Philippines and Manilla, captured during the peace negotiations, were restored, the latter on the understanding that a ransom of half a million sterling, arranged by the inhabitants of Manilla to save their property from plunder, should be paid by the Spanish Government. With regard to Portugal, all conquests in the Portuguese colonies were to be restored by Spain, and the Spanish and French troops withdrawn from Portuguese territories.

Though England came triumphantly out of the war, Bute's anxiety to hurry on the peace, and his carelessness when drawing up its provisions, proved detrimental to English interests, and deprived England of many advantages due to her brilliant and successful efforts. Though, in view of the accession of Peter III., and of the outbreak of the Spanish war, Bute may have been justified in withdrawing the English subsidies from Frederick the Great, there is no room for doubt that during the negotiations he attempted to favour Austria at the expense of the Prussian king. Bute's foreign policy was very unpopular at home, roused a deep hatred on the part of Frederick towards the Court of St. James, and left England without allies and isolated in Europe.

On the 10th of February 1763 the definitive treaty between England, France, Spain, and Portugal, was signed at Paris; and the Peace of Hubertsburg, between Austria, Prussia, and Saxony, on the 15th of the same month. By this treaty matters were restored to their position before the war. Maria Theresa renounced her pretensions to the territory ceded to Prussia after the first Silesian war; she agreed to restore the county and town of Glatz, and the fortresses of Wesel and Gelders, which had been held by France. By two secret articles Frederick promised to give his vote for the election of the Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans, and undertook to forward the marriage of one of the Archdukes to a Princess of Modena. To Augustus III. Frederick promised to evacuate the Electorate, to restore the archives, and to renew the Treaty of Dresden.

**The Treaty of Hubertsburg.**

The political results of the Seven Years' War were considerable. The territorial increase of the possessions and the maritime preponderance of England placed her in the front rank of European nations, and at the head of colonising Powers. Prussia and Russia had established their claims to be considered as the equals of France, Austria, and Spain: and Germany was destined to be, till the present day, the field of a struggle between the Courts of Berlin and Vienna for the leadership in Germany. Austria, though exhausted by the war, had proved herself a worthy antagonist of Frederick. Had Austrian generals not been hampered by the necessity of consulting the Council of War at Vienna before undertaking any serious enterprise, and had Loudon and not the incapable Charles of Lorraine or Daun commanded, the struggle between Frederick and Maria Theresa might have resulted in the restoration of Silesia to Austria. For France and Spain the war had brought disasters. The alliance between France and Austria remained hateful to the French nation, till the Girondists, backed by public opinion, overthrew it in 1792. To the fatal policy of which the Treaty of Versailles of 1757 is an illustration, and to the influence of Madame de Pompadour

**Results of the War.**

and the secret diplomacy of Louis XV., was due the humiliation of France which the efforts of Choiseul had been unable to avert. While Frederick the Great, Loudon, Wolfe, Hawke, and Montcalm had among others distinguished themselves by their achievements by land or by sea, William Pitt, and in a lesser degree Choiseul, had exhibited statesmanlike qualities for the benefit of their respective countries. To Pitt's energy, foresight, and determination, and skill in the selection of subordinates, England owed much of her success; while owing to Choiseul's appreciation of the disastrous nature of the Treaty of 1757, and to his conclusion of the Family Compact, France was given, after 1763, a last opportunity of setting her house in order, and, by salutary reforms, of averting a revolutionary crisis. After the close of the Seven Years' War, the union of the Bourbon Powers was confirmed and strengthened by the necessity not only of opposing England, but also of offering a united resistance to the pretensions of the Jesuit Order.

# CHAPTER X

## THE FALL OF THE JESUITS

### 1759–1773

Europe in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century — Catherine II. — Frederick the Great — Other Enlightened Princes — France and Spain — Charles III. and his Ministers — Enlightened Statesmen — Struensee in Denmark — Pombal in Portugal — Italian Reformers — Many of the Reforms Ephemeral — The Jesuit Order — Attacks on the Jesuits in Portugal — The Expulsion of the Jesuits from France — Charles III. and the Jesuits — The Papal Resistance — The Conclave of 1769. Election of Clement XIV. — The Suppression of the Jesuit Order.

**Europe in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century.**

THE Seven Years' War was an attempt on the part of Austria and Russia to destroy Prussia; it was the turning-point in the great colonial struggle between England and France. The policy of Russia and Austria was characteristic of the eighteenth century, and closely resembled that of Prussia and France at the opening of the Austrian Succession War, and that of Russia, Prussia, and Austria in the partition of Poland. Solemn treaties carried no weight; national boundaries and race limits were held to be of no importance; the condition of the labouring classes was little considered. Jealousy and suspicion marked the dealings of states with each other; corruption and venality characterised the official relations of countries; secret diplomacy was widespread. Adventurers were found in every Court; spies inundated each European capital. Atheism was rampant, the financial condition of every country was rotten, and self-interest was the only guiding motive.

Europe in 1763 seemed to be in a state of decadence, with no fixed religious beliefs, no sound principles. But though the idea of nationality was absent from the councils of Europe, and though the hope of sharing in a partition of a country was the only incentive potent enough to bring countries into alliance, there were in the middle of the century some signs of better things. Europe was governed by a number of benevolent despots, who, either in person or by means of their ministers, worked for the benefit of the people over whom they ruled. While with them the omnipotence of the state was everything, it was recognised that government existed for the good of the people. Reforms were good in themselves, but all reforms were to come from the king, and no interference with his power was allowed. Many of the rulers of European countries between 1740 and 1789 were actuated by benevolent ideas, and many of their ministers proved unselfish administrators. Catherine II. and Frederick the Great were, before the reforming days of Joseph II., the most prominent of the enlightened despots. Both were tyrannical, both prided themselves on their liberal tendencies. In the early years of her reign Catherine posed as a reformer. She called an assembly in 1767, in order to secure its assistance in dealing with national grievances, and with the codification of the Russian law. Affected by the French liberal doctrines professed by Montesquieu and Voltaire, she attempted to combine despotism with a care for her subjects. She checked torture, she studied sympathetically the condition of the peasants. The Church became entirely subordinate to the state, and the policy of Peter the Great and Peter III. was thus carried out. But though undoubtedly full of grand aspirations, and in the earlier years of her reign anxious to carry out beneficial reforms, she was unable to effect much. In the first place, like Joseph II., she interfered in every department of national life, and persistently attempted to force modern civilisation upon a country backward, half Asiatic, and corrupt. It was sought, says Ségur, 'to create at the same

**Catherine II.**

time a third estate, to attract foreign commerce, to establish all kinds of manufactures, to extend agriculture, to increase paper money, to raise the exchanges, to reduce the rate of interest, to found cities, to people deserts, to cover the Black Sea with a new navy, to conquer one neighbour and circumvent another, and finally to extend Russian influence all over Europe.' And a further cause of her failure as a reformer is to be found in her autocratic instincts, which made her impatient of opposition and rapidly converted her government into a cruel tyranny. She found that on the corrupt Russian soil her schools, her system of justice, and her press could not flourish. The partition of Poland, and the rising of the serfs under Pougatchef, had the effect of encouraging her absolutist ideas and checking her liberal tendencies. Though it has been said that 'before the death of Catherine, the great mass of the monuments of her reign were mere ruins,' it remains true that Russia under her rule was established as a great European Power, and that the material and intellectual progress of the country made rapid strides.

**Frederick the Great.**

With Frederick the Great, similarly, his benevolent intentions were outweighed by his despotic tendencies. Like Catherine he affected to be influenced by French ideas, and like Catherine he admitted the Jesuits when they were suppressed by Clement XIV. But his ruling motive was expediency, and he had little regard for international law or for the maxims of justice. While anxious for the welfare of his people, who were for the greater part as backward in civilisation as the Russian lower orders, he maintained the authority of the nobles at the expense of the peasants and the citizens. The administration of justice was carefully reformed, and corruption was not allowed to invade the civil service. Equality of all, whether noble or workman, before the law, was insisted upon, and in all departments he at any rate secured unity of purpose and outward harmony of action. But as he was compelled to make the army his first care, the people were practically helpless, and the governmental

machine derived all its power from him alone. 'The basis of his Prussian majesty's conduct,' wrote Sir James Harris, 'from the time he mounted the throne to this day, seems to have been the considering mankind in general, and particularly those over whom he was destined to reign, as beings created merely to be subservient to his will. . . . Proceeding on these grounds, he has all along been guided by his own judgment alone, without ever consulting any of his ministers or superior officers; not so much from the low opinion he entertains of their abilities, as from a conviction from his own feelings that, if he employed them otherwise than as simple instruments, they would in time assume a will of their own.'[1] Though his government may have been the most efficient in Europe, it lacked organic vitality, and his system was certain to decline, if not to collapse, as soon as his hand was withdrawn. Other *princes éclairés* could be found during this period in Germany and Italy, such as Maria Theresa, whose reforms are described elsewhere; Leopold, Duke of Tuscany, the ablest of the benevolent despots, whose duchy was the best-governed state in Italy, and whose reforms were distinguished by the wisdom in which they were conceived, and the thoroughness with which they were carried out; Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick, Charles Augustus, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, and Charles Frederick of Baden; while the careers of Joseph Emmanuel, Archbishop-Elector of Mainz, and of Clement Wenceslaus, Archbishop-Elector of Trier, showed the existence, even in the ecclesiastical states, of a tendency to promote the prosperity of the people.

**Other Enlightened Princes.**

The Bourbon states of France and Spain followed in like manner the movement of the century. Though Louis XV. cannot be numbered among the enlightened despots, France was the centre of a philosophical and literary movement which influenced all civilised Europe; and Choiseul, and after him Turgot, distinctly belonged to the band of ministers who represented the tendencies of the age in

**France and Spain.**

[1] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. i. p. 142.

which they lived. In Spain, Charles III., who had already as Don Carlos supported Tanucci in bringing about many admirable changes in Naples, continued with vigour the work of reform begun under Philip V. and Ferdinand VI. Fully alive to the duties of monarchy, he carried out a number of beneficent measures which conferred great benefits on Spain, and entitled Charles to be numbered among the greatest of the Spanish rulers. In spite of his strong religious instincts, many admirable ecclesiastical reforms were initiated. The amount of land to be held in mortmain was restricted, the number of monasteries was diminished, the power of the Inquisition was regulated, and, in place of the papal jurisdiction, a national court was set up in Madrid.[1] Wise measures were also taken for the development of commerce. Colonial trade was freed from vexatious restrictions, national manufactures were encouraged, and, by the ordinance of 1773, it was declared that engaging in trade was no longer to be considered as derogatory to a noble, and should not involve loss of rank or its privileges. The construction of canals was entered upon, and agriculture was still further encouraged by the removal of the fatuous prohibition of enclosures, and by the planting of trees in the hitherto arid deserts of central Spain. In this meritorious work for the regeneration of Spain Charles III. was aided successively by Squillacci, d'Aranda, Campomanes, and Florida Blanca. D'Aranda, who succeeded Squillacci in 1766 as Finance Minister, was an Arragonese noble who, like Choiseul, had imbibed the philosophic and secular spirit of the times. His liberal and anti-clerical tendencies were not congenial to Charles III., and after the expulsion of the Jesuits he was sent as ambassador to Paris — his post in the Government being taken by Campomanes, one of the most enlightened Spanish statesmen of the century. Like the younger Pitt he was a student of political economy, and moreover was a leading

**Charles III. and his Ministers.**

[1] *Vide* Coxe, *The Bourbons in Spain;* and the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. 'Spain.'

representative of Spanish literature. Without the sceptical tendencies of d'Aranda, he bent his attention to measures for the relief of trade, and, with a liberalism in advance of the times, and altogether foreign to the opinions of the king, aimed at educating the people for a share in political life. He gave valuable assistance to Florida Blanca, who, in 1774, had succeeded Grimaldi as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and who, while promoting the well-being of the Spanish people, was always careful not to wound the king's monarchical or religious susceptibilities. The subordination of the Church to the state being secured, the relations between the Government and the clergy became again harmonious. The economic reforms of Campomanes were continued after the latter's fall; but the progress of Spain was checked by the decision of Charles III. to support the American colonists against England. Spain required peace and good administration; the outbreak of war interrupted the work of reform; and the death of Charles III., a few years after the conclusion of peace, still further checked the growth of prosperity.

A great advance was undoubtedly made during the reign of Charles III.; but the Spanish population was sunk in sloth and superstition, the lower officials were corrupt and ignorant, no efficient machinery existed to carry out the reforms, and the state took too much upon itself.

In spite, however, of Charles III.'s death in 1788 and the accession of the incapable Charles IV., many of the reforms proved permanent, and Florida Blanca remained in power till 1792.

**The Enlightened Statesmen.**

In other parts of Europe the same tendency was visible. In some cases, as in that of Sweden after the revolution of 1772, the king himself took the lead in devising measures for the welfare of his subjects; in other cases, enlightened ministers either ably seconded the efforts of their masters, or actually initiated reforms themselves. Montgelas in Bavaria, Stadion at Mainz, Abel at Stuttgart, Struensee in Denmark, Pombal in Portugal, Tanucci, du Tillot, and

others in Italy and Germany, all devoted themselves in various degrees to increasing the prosperity of the states which they administered.

**Struensee in Denmark.**

In Denmark Struensee developed the work of Frederick v., who patronised literature and science till his death on the 14th of January 1766, when he was succeeded by his son, Christian VII., whose wife, Caroline Matilda, was a sister of George III. Weak in body and mind, Christian speedily fell under the influence of Struensee, who, originally a physician at Altona in Holstein, became the favourite of the young queen. Count Bernsdorf and the former ministers having been removed, Struensee, in alliance with the commander-in-chief, ruled Denmark from 1770 to 1772. Though ambitious, unprincipled, avaricious, insolent, and vain, Struensee's ability was undoubted, and his attempts to modernise Denmark stamp him as one of the boldest of the autocratic reformers of the age. Honorary titles, monopolies, and the censorship of the press were abolished, and the universities, the law courts, and the municipal corporations were reformed. The lot of the peasants was lightened, and the nobles were brought under the law. Reforms in the Church were attempted, and economies in the military service were effected. These reforms were, however, carried out hastily and without due precaution, and before long Struensee found himself confronted by the opposition of the entire Danish nation. The introduction of foreign teachers, and his interference with the Church, roused general discontent, while his influence over the young queen and his attempt to arrogate to himself royal powers, alienated men of all classes. A 'Danish' party was formed, and a conspiracy was organised by Guldberg, the former tutor of the young Prince Frederick, and by Juliana, the Queen-Dowager, which, owing to the minister's cowardice, was completely successful. On April 18, 1772, Struensee was executed, and shortly afterwards Caroline Matilda was divorced. For twelve years Guldberg and Queen Juliana ruled Denmark, reversing the policy of Struensee and restoring all the former

abuses. In 1784, taking advantage of the unpopularity of Guldberg, the Crown Prince overthrew him and Queen Juliana, obtained possession of Christian VII., and appointed Peter Andrew von Bernsdorf, nephew of the former minister, and a man of ability and integrity, to the post of first minister. The Danish people had learnt before Guldberg's fall to regret Struensee, who, though autocratic like Pombal, had at any rate attempted to reform the relations between the peasants and the nobles, and to enforce equality before the law.

In Portugal, which, under John V. (1706–50), the slave of the Jesuits, had sunk into insignificance, Pombal, the chief minister of Joseph I. from 1750 to 1777, carried out in a very remarkable manner a series of admirable reforms, all of which illustrated the liberal tendencies of the times. But here, as in Spain, the movement of reform made little progress among the mass of the people. Sebastian Joseph de Carvalho e Mello, Marquis of Pombal, was the son of a country gentleman, who from 1739 to 1750 served in the Portuguese diplomatic service. From 1739 to 1745 he was in England, where he studied English, history, law, and finance. From 1745 to 1750 he was at Vienna, where he married, as his second wife, the daughter of Marshal Daun, and by his abilities attracted the attention of Maria Theresa and Joseph. With no army worthy of the name; with pirates infesting her shores, and brigands her roads; with her commerce for the most part in the hands of England, and her trade in the East well-nigh destroyed; with an idle and licentious nobility, and a corrupt and vicious civil service, Portugal had never recovered from the days of her dependence on Spain. Pombal's reforms in Portugal were interrupted by the earthquake of 1755, which, however, only served to illustrate his energy and determination. 'The genius of Pombal rose out of the ashes of Lisbon,' and the very prostration of Portugal enabled him to regenerate his country. His commercial policy, though protectionist, was patriotic. He wished to relieve Portugal from its dependence upon England, and, by fostering her

**Pombal in Portugal.**

industries and trade, to make her self-supporting. Like Sully he believed that agriculture was the only foundation of commerce, and in various ways he attempted to improve the condition of agriculture in Portugal. To further private enterprise he founded several trading companies, made a commercial treaty with Morocco, and allowed the nobles to take part in trade. In 1775 he reformed the Government of Goa and the other East Indian islands, and he introduced various important changes in the army and navy. Economies were effected in the Court and in all departments, and peculation was checked in the collection of taxes. His educational and social reforms were equally drastic. A Royal College for the better education of the nobility was established; the University of Coimbra, which hitherto had been in the hands of the Jesuits, was remodelled, and, in fact, refounded; professors, who received the privileges of nobility, were established in Lisbon and in the provinces to teach Latin, Greek, rhetoric, and logic gratuitously, and a commercial school — the first technical school in Europe — was opened at Lisbon. His social reforms were no less interesting. All slaves landing in Portugal were declared free, and many privileges attached to nobility were wisely abolished. He endeavoured with success to preserve harmony between the nobility and the middle classes, and between both and the lower orders. Throughout his public career, which lasted till the death of Joseph I. in 1777, Pombal showed remarkable courage, activity, and energy. Always busy with numberless plans and reforms, his period of office may be regarded as the golden age of Portuguese industry in every branch of commerce. He possessed the entire confidence of his sovereign, the effect of a strong will upon a feeble character, and under Pombal Portugal enjoyed a strong, though despotic, Government.

**Italian Reformers.**

In Italy similar reforms were effected by Tanucci in Naples, and du Tillot in Parma. Tanucci till 1759 had served with Squillacci under Don Carlos, who, though a devoted adherent of the Church, was firmly imbued with monarchical sentiments and fully alive to the

responsibilities of kingship. Under him and his successor, Ferdinand IV., valuable educational, financial, and judicial reforms were carried out in Naples. The judicial powers of the nobles were abolished, the pretentions of the clergy were checked, and the rights of the Pope were reduced. Many convents were suppressed, titles were abolished, and the introduction of Papal Bulls was regulated. He thus increased the influence of the crown and advanced the well-being of the people. In 1776, eight years after the marriage of Ferdinand to Maria Caroline, daughter of Maria Theresa, the great Neapolitan minister fell, and the queen attempted, with the aid of incompetent advisers, to govern the kingdom. In Parma Ferdinand, the son of Don Philip, succeeded his father in 1765, and du Tillot, Marquis of Felino, and a Frenchman, was continued in office. Like Pombal and Tanucci, he encouraged education, and did much to aid the advancement of the University of Parma. In 1771, two years after the marriage of Ferdinand to the Austrian Archduchess, Maria Amelia, du Tillot was dismissed. Llanos, a Spaniard, and his successor Mauprat, a Frenchman, though not continuing the work of reform, administered Parma well, and it continued to rank among the well-governed Italian states.

In the Sardinian kingdom Charles Emmanuel vied with his contemporaries in his eagerness to benefit his subjects. Like Joseph II., he had a passion for equality, concentration, and uniformity in the administration. After the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle the army was placed on a peace footing, and the lot of the soldiers improved. Fortresses were rebuilt and strengthened, public works were undertaken, and the provinces were brought under one *régime*. Père Beccaria was recalled from Rome to assist in the foundation of a society for the study of natural science; and the Abbé Nollet, a distinguished physician, lectured on medicine in Piedmont. In 1771 feudal rights and many ancient privileges were reclaimed.[1] Similar reforms were carried out in Lombardy during Joseph II.'s

[1] *Histoire de la Maison de Savoie*, par Madame la Princesse Christine Trivulce.

reign under the direction of Count Firmian, who supported the Universities of Milan and Pavia, and generally patronised literature and art.

In spite of the admirable motives which, as a rule, prompted these efforts for the welfare of mankind, it has to be confessed that the benefits conferred on the people had little permanent effect. In the majority of those countries in which the liberal tendencies of the rulers showed themselves in measures of reform, the same causes of failure existed. The state took too much upon itself, and left little or nothing to local enterprise; and, moreover, the reforming impulse was, as a rule, confined to the educated classes and hardly touched the mass of the people, where corruption and ignorance reigned supreme. The methods employed, too, were often faulty, and the most enlightened measures remained inoperative for want of proper machinery to carry them out. In Russia, in Spain, and elsewhere, the most promising reforms in many cases remained mere paper schemes, and the inevitable reaction was found to be easier than progress.

**Many of these Reforms Ephemeral.**

There was one reform upon which all the Bourbon Powers were united — a reform, too, which secured the sympathy and support of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. Many of these benevolent despots had found that their work was retarded, and their reforms checked, by the influence of the Jesuits. Within a period of fifteen years, consequently, many of the leading European Powers agreed to unite in destroying the power of the Society to interfere with their policy. In most European states the nobles had been to a great extent deprived of their political privileges, while popular assemblies either did not exist, or had been reduced to harmlessness. It was not likely that the sovereigns of Europe would allow unquestioned the existence in their countries of a rich, powerful, disciplined body looking to the Pope as their chief, who himself considered that he, the spiritual head of Christendom, was all-powerful over temporal monarchs.

**The Jesuit Order.**

Louis XIV. had not revoked the Edict of Nantes in order to hand France over to the Ultramontanes. His policy was 'no parties, no dissidents, no masters.' In Spain, similarly, from the accession of Philip V., attempts had been made to regulate and lessen the jurisdiction of the Church. A strong feeling existed in many parts of Europe about the beginning of the eighteenth century that ecclesiastical institutions should be subject to the civil power. The attacks on the Jesuits, which culminated in 1773 with their suppression, were due partly to this feeling, partly to the growth of enlightenment, partly to special causes. There is no doubt that before the Order was a hundred years old it had begun to decline. A succession of incapable generals after the death of Acquaviva had caused the development of a secular tendency among the priests; recruits of rank and wealth were admitted, strict discipline was relaxed, the system of free education was abandoned, and by becoming attached to courts and the nobility, the Jesuits lost their popularity among the middle and lower orders. Moreover, the conviction was growing that their presence was not conducive to public order or to domestic peace. It was quite evident that to the corporate interests of the Society were subordinated all other feelings, and hence, when these interests ceased to be purely religious and spiritual, the Jesuits found themselves the objects of hatred in most of the capitals of Europe. This lack of spirituality in no small way contributed to the views adopted by the Encyclopedists, and received a striking illustration in their devotion during the eighteenth century to commercial pursuits. The Jesuits had, by the middle of the century, developed into a rich, active, and important trading firm, with branch houses in many parts of the world. Possessed of enormous wealth, the Order had become the object of general envy, when, by a succession of mistakes, and by the adoption of a shortsighted policy, it provoked a series of attacks against which it could not prevail.

The Society had been too successful. As confessors of kings, as instructors of the young, as the conquerors of empires, and

the founders of colonies, the Jesuits thought the world belonged to them, and that their supremacy would last for ever. Victorious over the Jansenists, they had failed to adapt themselves to the new ideas of the eighteenth century. They believed that they were necessary to the Papacy, for were they not more papal than the Pope himself? One Pope, however, the wise and capable Benedict XIV. (1740–58), recognised the signs of his time, and attempted to reform the Papal Court as well as the Jesuits. In 1741 he issued a Bull in which he disowned the Order, as consisting of 'disobedient, contumacious, captious, and reprobate persons,' and enacted stringent regulations for their better government. In 1742 and 1744 Bulls were published with the object of checking their insubordination and bringing about reforms. Unfortunately on the death of Benedict in 1758 Clement XIII. was elected, a Pope who reversed the far-seeing policy of his predecessor; and consequently the determination of the European Courts 'to bring all ecclesiastical institutions under the control of the civil power,' found expression in a number of violent attacks on the Jesuit Order.

**Attacks on the Jesuits, Portugal.**

The first blow was dealt by Pombal, and was caused by the Jesuit opposition to his policy in South America, and to his domestic reforms, together with their connection with a plot for the assassination of the king. In 1751 a long dispute between Spain and Portugal was ended by a treaty arranging the exchange of the town and district of Tuy, in Galicia, and Paraguay, for San Sacramento, a colony on the river Plate assigned to Portugal by the Treaty of Utrecht. The Jesuits, who had established in Paraguay a sort of independent republic, incited the natives to resist, and it was not till 1756 that Pombal overcame their opposition. Finding that his domestic reforms were similarly resisted by the Order, and being attacked from the pulpits at the time of the earthquake, Pombal dismissed Moreira, Joseph's confessor, on September 19, 1757, forbade any Jesuit to approach the Court without the king's permission, and published a manifesto against the Society. Complaints were also sent to the

Pope, and Benedict appointed Cardinal Saldanha, a friend of Pombal, to examine into the malpractices of the Order, and on the 15th of May 1758 published a decree forbidding the Portuguese Jesuits to carry on illegal trade — *i.e.* the purchase or sale of converted Indians — and suspending them 'from the power of confessing or preaching.'

In September of the same year Joseph was attacked and wounded. After an inquiry of three months, all members of the families of Tavaro and Aviero were seized. It was asserted, though no proof was ever produced, that their papers proved the complicity of the Jesuits in a plot for the assassination of the king. The nobles were executed, and as Clement XIII. refused to allow Pombal to try the accused ecclesiastics, that minister, having with difficulty obtained the consent of the weak and superstitious Joseph, who only consented through terror of his life, on September 1, 1759, ordered the immediate deportation of the Jesuits from Portugal and its dependencies, and their supersession by the bishops in the schools and universities. Those in Portugal, to the number of 6000, were shipped to Civita Vecchia in September 1759, and those in the colonies were expelled. The Pope having ordered all Portuguese to leave the Papal estates, Pombal replied, in February 1761, by confiscating the property of the Jesuits in Portugal, and appealing to other European Courts to suppress the Society within their dominions.

At first Pombal's high-handed and cruel measures were not received by Europe with enthusiasm, but before long other countries, sharing in the general dissatisfaction at the conduct of the Jesuits, adopted similar measures. In France the growth of religious scepticism, and the general hatred of the Jesuits, had by 1756 made considerable progress, and in attacking the Order the French Government was making a distinct concession to public opinion. Madame de Pompadour disliked them on account of their close relations with Louis, and because they refused her absolution. In this matter she and the *Parlements* were agreed in

**Expulsion of the Jesuits from France**

desiring their destruction. An opportunity was given the *Parlement* of Paris of interfering with them by the bankruptcy of Lavalette, the Jesuit administrator of Martinique, a speculator who had become involved in mercantile undertakings, and had failed for 2,400,000 francs, involving in his own ruin several French commercial houses. Ricci, the General of the Jesuits, repudiated the debt, and was sued by the creditors. Having lost his case, he unwisely appealed to the *Parlement* of Paris. That body, having required the constitutions of the Jesuits to be laid before it, affirmed the judgment of the lower court.

Great indignation being aroused at the character of the Jesuit constitutions, Choiseul appointed a commission to revise them. It was resolved that the unlimited authority of the General of the Jesuits was incompatible with the laws of France, and that a resident Vicar should be appointed. Ricci, however, refused to entertain the idea of the Society being regulated by the civil power. '*Sint ut sunt, aut non sint*,' was his famous reply. In spite of the support given to the Order by the Queen and Dauphin, Choiseul and Madame de Pompadour triumphed, with the aid of the judicial bodies. After various decrees had been published against them by the *Parlement* of Paris and the provincial *Parlements*, the Society was suppressed in France in November 1764 by royal authority. For three years they were allowed to remain as secular priests, but in May 1767 they were expelled, Clement, who had, in 1765, published a Bull containing a formal apology for the Order, declaring that their expulsion was a grievous injury inflicted at once upon the Church and the Holy See. In Spain, now almost the sole refuge of the Jesuits, Charles III. was at first unwilling to proceed to great lengths. Like Joseph of Portugal, he was superstitious, and a devoted adherent of the Church. But while not imbued with the new philosophical ideas, he was determined to advance the royal power and to overcome all opposition to his authority, whether from nobles or from the Church. But in 1766 the Jesuits united in a revolt against a tax imposed

**Charles III. and the Jesuits.**

by the Italian Squillacci, whom Charles felt compelled to dismiss. Enraged at this affront to his prerogative, and convinced that they were plotting against his authority, if not against his life, Charles, with the full concurrence of his liberal-minded minister d'Aranda, drew up a decree for the suppression of the Order in Spain. Sealed despatches were sent to all the Spanish colonies, to be opened the same day on which the decree was to take effect in Spain. On the 2d of April 1767 nearly 6000 Jesuits were deported to the Italian coast; but, repulsed by the Pope and Ricci, they eventually found an asylum in Corsica.

Encouraged by the news from Spain, the opponents of the Jesuits in France had secured their expulsion in May, and now Choiseul and Pombal urged Charles III. to unite with them in demanding from the Pope the entire suppression of the Society.

Naples and Parma had imitated France and Spain, and the Jesuits were expelled from their dominions. But Charles III. was, as has been said, no philosophic reformer, and he hesitated. The Pope's action, however, decided him to throw in his lot with the other Bourbon countries. In an unwise moment Clement decided to attack the Duke of Parma, who was the nephew of Charles III., the grandson of Louis XV., and the cousin of Ferdinand of Naples. By a decree, in January 1768, he pronounced the duke's rank and title forfeit, re-established in Parma the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and declared war against the duke. The reply of the Bourbons was decisive. Louis XV. took possession of Avignon and the county of Venaissin, the King of the Two Sicilies seized Beneventum and Ponte Corvo, Charles III. resolved upon the abolition of the Order, and all the Bourbon Powers threatened the Pope with war. On the 10th of December 1768 a joint note, demanding the abolition of the Jesuits, was presented to Clement. The feeling against the Order had now spread. Its members were expelled from Venice, Modena, and even from Bavaria, while in the Austrian dominions, still

**Papal Resistance.**

under the influence of the pious, though vigorous, Maria Theresa, they were removed from the chairs of theology and philosophy.

The Pope, now eighty-two years old, was unequal to the crisis. An attack of apoplexy, brought on by the late events, proved fatal on February 3, 1769. On his death arose the serious question of the election of his successor. In consequence of the gravity of the situation, the conclave of 1769 had an unusual importance: the election of a Pope able to recognise the signs of the times, and willing to conciliate public opinion, might appease the storm, while no one could foresee the results of the election of a Pope who had Jesuit sympathies. During the conclave the cardinals fell into two clearly defined parties. On the one hand, the Zelanti or the Zèlés, who had been all-powerful during Clement XIII.'s pontificate, aimed at securing a Pope of like opinions, one who would defend the Order against Bourbon interference and the atheistical tendencies of the day. To them the Papacy stood at the head of a movement opposed to the rising flood of sceptical philosophy. Each day, attacked by writers like Voltaire and the Encyclopedists, or by sovereigns like Frederick the Great and Catherine II., the Papacy, uncertain of the fidelity of its own disciples, required, in the eyes of this party, a strong Pope who would support the Jesuits. Opposed to the Zelanti were the Regalisti, or supporters of the crowned heads — *les cardinaux des couronnes* — whose aim was to secure the suppression of an arrogant and pestilent society. After lengthy negotiations among the cardinals, the influence of Bernis was successful in securing, on the 18th of May, the election of Cardinal Lorenzo Garganelli, a Franciscan of considerable abilities, and, like Benedict XIV., enlightened and tolerant. At first he showed some hesitation, and tried to avoid making a decision, while the Jesuit hopes were raised by the fall of their enemy Choiseul. But before the determination of Grimaldi, backed by France and Portugal,

**The Conclave of 1769. Election of Clement XIV.**

**The Suppression of the Jesuit Order.**

and even by Maria Theresa, Clement was forced to yield. On the 16th of August 1773 he issued the Bull *Dominus et Redemptor*, abolishing the Society of Jesuits. After this decisive act, which was not revoked until August 7, 1814, when Pius VII. published the Bull *Solicitudo omnium ecclesiarium*, Clement appointed a number of cardinals to take possession of the temporalities of the Society, and imprisoned Ricci in the castle of St. Angelo, where he died in 1775. At the time of its suppression the Order had 41 provinces and 22,589 members, of whom 11,295 were priests. Avignon was restored to the Papacy, and the Jesuits found refuge in the dominions of Catherine II. and Frederick the Great. The proscribed Order had not to wait long for revenge. In the Holy Week of 1774 Clement XIV. was taken ill; on the 22d of September he died.

# CHAPTER XI

## THE PARTITION OF POLAND AND THE TREATY OF KUTCHUK-KAINARDJI

Europe after the Seven Years' War — Austria — Italy — Prussia, the Empire and Russia — Alliance between Prussia and Russia, 1764 — Poland — The Policy of Frederick the Great and Catherine II. — Polish Politics — Russian Intervention in Poland — France and Turkey — The Outbreak of War between Russia and Turkey, 1768 — The Views of Frederick the Great and Kaunitz — War and Diplomacy. The Interview at Neisse — Proposals for a Partition of Poland — The Partition of Poland — The Causes of the Fall of Poland — The Non-Intervention of England — The Policy of France — The Russo-Turkish War — The Treaty of Kainardji — Choiseul's Foreign Policy — The Affair of the Falkland Islands — War between England and the Bourbon Powers averted — The Suppression of the *Parlement* of Paris and the Provincial *Parlements* — The Fall of Choiseul — The Triumvirate — Gustavus III. and the Swedish Revolution — Its Effects — Attitude of France.

FROM 1763 to 1792 western and central Europe were at peace. It is true that France, Spain, and Holland combated England at sea or in America during the War of American Independence, and that the Russo-Turkish war of 1768–74 was, in 1787, followed by the Russo-Austrian attack on the Porte. But during these years the greater part of Europe enjoyed an unaccustomed period of repose. These thirty years constitute a very complicated period of European history. They include the last years of the eighteenth century; they form an introduction to the new period ushered in by the French Revolution. With the widespread desire of aggrandisement, and the universal longing for compactness of territory, the idea of the balance of power continues to be a living force, though in a

**Europe after the Seven Years' War.**

perverted form. The greed of acquisition becomes strong, and the smaller are threatened by the greater Powers with extinction.

The fall of the Jesuit Order, affecting as it did the general history of Europe, was the one circumstance which, in the eighteenth century, united the Bourbon states of France, Spain, Naples, and Parma in a close alliance. The hope of partitioning the two ancient kingdoms of Poland and Sweden proved strong enough to bind closely together in a powerful league the northern states of Prussia and Russia, and with this alliance Austria and Denmark connected themselves, in order to share in the spoil.

During these years Austria and Prussia occupy a leading position in Europe, while the Slav Power of Russia advances, and is universally recognised as an integral portion of the European states-system. The influence, however, of the Latin nations of Spain, France, and indeed of the Papacy, in central Europe and Italy declines, and, with the temporary retirement of France, important developments take place in the north and east of Europe. In 1763 many of these changes were already presaged. England's maritime power had definitely triumphed during the Seven Years' War. The Teutonic, and not the Latin, element was henceforward to control the destinies of the New World; while in India, the English and not the French, were to become the dominating influence. France had not only suffered defeat in America, in India, and on the seas, but her prestige in Europe had sensibly declined, and she resigned to Prussia the military leadership in Europe. Her ally Spain had also suffered, and, like France, was bent on securing revenge on the first opportunity. In spite of the failure of Maria Theresa to recover Silesia, and to ruin Prussia, Austria, with its marvellous elasticity and inexhaustible resources, remained one of the most powerful states in Europe. Reforms in every department were pressed on, and with the impetus given to commerce and improved military and civil organisation, the Court of Vienna hoped to reduce the power and territories of Frederick the Great. In

**Austria.**

1765, Joseph II., who the previous year had been elected king of the Romans, became Emperor, and inherited from his father, who had never forgiven the French seizure of Lorraine, a hatred of France. His succession thus gave a new bias to Austrian politics, which was in harmony with the dislike felt in Vienna by the educated classes, as well as by the military authorities, for the French alliance. Kaunitz, however, who still remained in power, clung to France from hatred to Prussia, and continued his efforts to unite Austria still more closely with the Bourbons. The marriages of the Archdukes Joseph and Leopold to the daughters of Don Philip and Don Carlos respectively had indicated the line of policy which Kaunitz continued after the Peace of Paris in the case of the Austrian Archduchesses. In 1768, Maria Caroline married Ferdinand IV. of Naples; in 1769, Maria Amelia married Ferdinand of Prussia; and the following year Marie Antoinette married the Dauphin.[1]

*Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube.*

Till the fall of Choiseul, the Franco-Austrian alliance showed no outward signs of weakness, and the decision of Maria Theresa to support the action of the Bourbons in the suppression of the Jesuits still further strengthened the union of the Courts of Vienna and Versailles.

**Italy.**

One result of the diplomatic revolution of 1756 was to check French interference in Italy. The new Italian dynasties, the outcome of the Polish and Austrian Succession Wars, unable to secure independent support from France, fell under Austrian influence, and the Hapsburg rule, through the skill of Kaunitz, again became paramount in Italy. The Franco-Austrian alliance conferred undoubted benefits upon that country. The Seven Years' War had left Italy undisturbed, and the tranquillity of the Peninsula, assured by the alliance between the Hapsburgs and the Bourbons, continued till the wars of the French Revolution.

[1] **Von Arneth**, *Geschichte von Maria Theresia*, iv. p. 336, v. p. 449.

The Bourbon states in the west and south of Europe, bound together in one great league, and connected with Austria by marriage alliances, were, shortly after the close of the Seven Years' War, confronted by a league in the north of Europe consisting of Russia, Prussia, and Denmark, supported by England. Frederick the Great had brought his country out of the war without loss of territory, but terribly exhausted. Prussia, however, possessed great vitality: she had established her military reputation; she was regarded as the defender of German Protestantism, and the protector of the ancient constitution of the Empire. The Germanic body had indeed cause to rejoice at the success of Prussia. After the Peace of Hubertsburg it 'entered upon the happiest days of its existence.' For some thirty years, owing to the Franco-Austrian system, Germany escaped the horrors of a French invasion, while all attempts on the part of Joseph II. to interfere with the ancient constitution of the Empire, or the rights of any of its members, were sternly and successfully repressed by the Prussian king. Though the Empire continued its course of gradual and unobserved decay, the Germans began to realise that they possessed a language and a literature.

**Prussia, the Empire, and Russia.**

Of the other Powers engaged in the Seven Years' War, Russia had given unmistakable proof of the possession of enormous strength. Henceforward she became an important factor in European politics. No sooner was the Treaty of Paris signed, than Europe found in the close union of Russia and Prussia a menace to the peace of eastern Europe. The defection of Peter III. from the coalition had saved Frederick, and his alliance with Prussia laid the foundations of a friendship between the two countries which has lasted till our own day.

The death of Peter in the summer of 1762, and the accession of Catherine II., did not interfere with this friendship, which ripened into an alliance formally concluded on April 11, 1764, and which was a necessary condition of success for the realisation of the great designs then being prepared at St. Petersburg and Berlin. Catherine II., one of the chief founders of

the Russian empire, had, like Maria Theresa, many of the characteristics of a true statesman. Though often capricious and reckless, though at times influenced by unworthy favourites, though vice had great charms for her, and terrible crimes were imputed to her fierce wrath, the Semiramis of the North was a capable and strong-willed ruler. She believed in the national destinies of the Muscovite race; she was alive to the advantages of her position as head of the Slavonic race; she possessed to an extraordinary degree the genius of government; she could choose able subordinates; she was prepared to advance along the lines laid down by Peter the Great. Like Frederick the Great Catherine was infected by the liberalism of the eighteenth century, and under her influence the Court of St. Petersburg imitated the habits of western civilisation, though the nation at large was little, if at all, affected by her real desire to introduce reforms. She and Frederick the Great are the most conspicuous figures among the sovereigns of the age, and the success of their vast designs demanded a close union. An inevitable antipathy existed between France and Prussia; Austria was still bent on reconquering Silesia; England, under Bute, had completely broken with Frederick. The Prussian king, isolated in Europe, saw in a Russian alliance the best, if not the sole, means of placing his kingdom in a safe position. Neither France nor Austria was well disposed towards Russia. Austria was the natural foe of Russia, and her true policy was to support and strengthen the Polish kingdom. France had always regarded herself as the defender of Poland, and, according to Choiseul, distance alone prevented the outbreak of hostilities between Russia and France. From the Seven Years' War Russia had emerged triumphant, and the European states, which hitherto had treated her successes with indifference, now realised the significance of the rise of the powerful Slavonic nation. But the selfishness of England, the exhaustion of France, the blindness of Austria, and the isolation of Prussia were facts of which Catherine was prepared to take full advantage. She thus

**Alliance between Russia and Prussia, 1764.**

found herself on her accession in a strong position, and able to choose the methods and allies best suited for carrying out her clearly defined plans. With England, Catherine's relations varied. English ships had for ages been the carriers of Russian commerce; during the Seven Years' War the peace between the two countries had been unbroken; the friendship of England and Russia, Chatham declared, was the corner-stone of his foreign policy, and in 1766 he endeavoured, though without success, to form a close alliance with Russia and Prussia. England, however, continued to give admirals and captains to Russian fleets, and the victory of Tchesmé was due to the skill of an Englishman. After that battle the Russians received no open support from the English Government, which, though it closed its eyes to the Partition of Poland, resolutely refused to aid Russia in 1772 against Sweden. It was not, however, till the time of the younger Pitt that England became an obstacle to Russian aggrandisement in Turkey. France, as the ally of Poland and Turkey, Catherine disliked, and showed no hesitation in expressing her views with regard to Louis XV. and his ministers. Austria showed as yet no desire that Poland should become a vassal state of Russia, and viewed with hostility the possibility of the mouths of the Danube coming under the control of Catherine. But she took no steps to oppose the schemes of the Russian Court, and gradually drifted into the position of a partner in the Partition of Poland. The Tsarina thus naturally turned to Prussia as the one continental Power with which she could form a satisfactory alliance. Frederick had no objection to Russian extension in the East, while he was as anxious as Catherine to destroy Austrian influence in Poland, and he was equally ready to join in the dismemberment of Sweden.

The continued anarchy in Poland, and the inability of the Poles, by means of drastic reforms, to lead their country along the path of national progress, gave Catherine and Frederick some apparent justification for intervention. An elective kingship, a senate, and a diet composed of delegates from the provincial assemblies of nobles, in which

**Poland.**

any member might, by the *liberum veto*, or by simply withdrawing altogether, or by obstructing progress for six weeks, impede all business, formed a constitution which was not only an anachronism, but rendered Poland a centre of turmoil in the centre of Europe.

'Poland had no ambassadors at foreign courts, the land had no fortresses, no navy, no roads, no arsenals, no treasury, no fixed revenue. The army was small, undisciplined, often unpaid, so that the troops were forced to unite and to encamp before the place of assembly of the Diet, and to add an unlawful weight to their lawful demands.'[1]

**The Policy of Frederick the Great and Catherine II.**

To keep Poland in a state of anarchy had been the object of Russian rulers from the days of Peter the Great, so as to obtain a decisive voice over her destinies. The events of the Polish Succession War and the Seven Years' War had practically secured the predominance of Russia in Poland, and shortly after her accession, Catherine, overruling the decision of the Polish Senate (who had given Courland to Charles, son of Augustus III.), and the wishes of Augustus himself, replaced Biren in the government of that province. To overawe the Poles, Russian troops were moved towards Poland, and Augustus, alarmed, forced his son Charles to resign, and took refuge in Saxony, where he died on the 5th of October 1763. Though during the early years of her reign Catherine was guided by the Orlovs, the real influence in foreign affairs was wielded by Nikolai Ivanovich Panin, the Russian Chancellor, the basis of whose policy was the Prussian alliance, and the complete subordination of Poland to Russian influence.[2]

The death of Augustus III. of Poland was followed by a treaty signed on April 11, 1764, between Russia and Prussia. Besides promising mutual assistance in case of war, the contracting Powers agreed to place Stanislas Augustus Poniatowski

[1] *Poland*, by Field-Marshal Count von Moltke (translated), p. 74.

[2] The leading members of the Orlov family were — Gregory, the chief of the artillery; Alexis, the admiral; Theodore, the *procureur-general* of the Senate; and Vladimir, director of the Academy of Science.

on the Polish throne, and not to permit the abolition of the *liberum veto*, nor the transformation of the elective into an hereditary monarchy.

They were both determined to ward off all foreign interference in the affairs of Poland, and the Tsarina in placing her vassal Poniatowski on the throne, indicated her resolution to govern the Poles through him. Catherine had set out in 1763 with the intention of conquering Poland, of extending Muscovite influence over Sweden, if not of actually dismembering that country, and of gradually advancing to Constantinople. To carry out this policy was in her eyes the mission of the Russian rulers. By the treaty of 1764 the way was prepared for the establishment of Russian influence in Poland: in 1769, Russia, Prussia, and Denmark guaranteed the integrity of the existing Swedish Constitution. The ground seemed quite clear for the successful attainment of her aims in Poland and Turkey no less than in Sweden. All these countries were distracted by internal troubles and weakened by a long period of disorder. In Sweden the dominion of the Hats was shaken, and the Caps, encouraged by Russia, were ready to betray their country. Turkey was decaying rapidly, and the designs of Russia upon the Ottoman Empire seemed likely to be realised. In Poland the election of Poniatowski had been effected by intimidation on the part of Russia and Prussia. That kingdom was hopelessly divided; the Government, while ignoring the rise of Russia and Prussia, had taken no advantage of the improvements in warfare. The Constitution ensured the continuance of anarchy, and the relations between the upper and lower orders proved fatal to any consistent policy.

The nobles upheld the feudal system, and the Polish peasantry, who were mere slaves, felt a most implacable hatred towards their masters. The family of Czartoriski, however, aimed at thorough reforms, which should change completely the system of government and bring Poland into line with other countries. They wished to abolish the *liberum veto*, to make the crown hereditary, and to increase its powers.

**Polish Politics.**

Unable to hope for assistance from France or even from Austria, the Czartoriskis boldly determined to use the forces of Russia for the regeneration of Poland, and having reformed and reorganised their country, to shake off their semi-barbarous ally. But the task was beyond their strength. If they had not aimed at the crown for their own family, and applied to Russia for aid, their influence might possibly have benefited their unhappy country. Opposed to them were the Potockis, who aimed at limiting the power of the crown by the establishment of a permanent council of nobles. Before the election of Poniatowski, the Czartoriskis, with Russian support, had overthrown the opposition of their enemies, and had carried their reforms in an Interregnum Diet. After the election of the king, who was the nephew of the Czartoriskis, the Confederation, or Irregular Diet, remained sitting, the reforms were ratified, and Poland seemed at last to have a chance of securing some real improvements. But neither Catherine nor Frederick really cared for reforms, and the former opened negotiations with the national party, which under Potocki had sworn allegiance to the king. Repnin, the Russian representative in Poland, opposed Michael Czartoriski, and supported by Frederick, found a further opportunity of interference in the matter of the Dissidents. These were chiefly Greek and Protestant, whose religious rights had been guaranteed since 1562 by every Polish king. During the eighteenth century, these rights had been in various ways attacked. Repnin now proposed that the Dissidents should be made eligible for all offices in the Diet and in the Senate. They were to take part in the making and administration of the laws.

**Russian Intervention in Poland.**

The Diet was strongly Catholic; and in 1766, when the question of the Dissidents was brought before it, stirred up by the Bishop of Cracow, and suspecting Poniatowski and the Czartoriskis of a tendency to toleration, it refused the claims of the Dissidents, and united with Russia to demand the abolition of reforms. Henceforth Catherine and Frederick intervened in the affairs of Poland in the

name of religious toleration. When the Diet refused to grant religious liberty and political equality to the Dissidents, the latter, supported by many of the patriot party who wished to leave things as they were, formed Confederations which finally combined in the Confederation of Radom, in June 1767, and received the support of Russian troops. The question whether Poland should continue free under a reformed government, or become entirely dependent on Russia, was to be decided without further delay. In October 1767 the king called a Diet; Warsaw was surrounded by Russian troops; and while Catherine demanded equal rights for the Dissidents, and the privilege of keeping troops in Poland, a proposal was made at Russia's instigation to delegate the powers of the Diet to certain Commissioners. The prospect of being ruled by Commissioners under Russian influence provoked great indignation; but Catherine seized and sent to Siberia the chief leaders of the opposition; the Diet, terrorised, yielded on the 19th of November 1767; and on the 24th of February 1768 a treaty between Poland and Russia completed the subjection of the Republic. The constitution agreed to by Catherine provided that the monarchy should remain elective and that the *liberum veto* should be continued, except in such matters as voting of supplies. The Dissidents were to be assured in their rights, and a mixed tribunal was to decide religious questions. In February 1768 Russia compelled the Diet to ratify the constitution. Poland, however, was not to enjoy tranquillity for long. The nobles who were Catholic in religion were attached to independence, and detested the laws of 1767 and the treaty of 1768. In southern Poland the nobles formed the Confederation of Bar for the maintenance of their independence and religion, and this was the signal for the outbreak of serious disturbances. The peasants rose and perpetrated terrible atrocities; the Catholics appealed to France, the Dissidents to Russia and Prussia. While the Poles massacred in the name of the Catholic religion, the Russians massacred in the name of tolerance.

The increase of Russian influence in Poland had roused

Choiseul to the significance of the crisis. Not only were officers and money sent to support the Confederation, but diplomacy was employed to stir up the enemies of Catherine. Of these, Turkey was the only one whose interference was likely to be of much service. The Porte had always in theory opposed the introduction of a Russian army into Poland. Up to 1767, however, the Turks, perhaps owing to the bribery of influential members of the Divan by Catherine, had appeared indifferent to the fate of Poland. But by the beginning of 1768 various circumstances tended towards a rupture of the long-continued peace between Russia and Turkey. Mustapha III., an accomplished, energetic prince, devoted to his own religion, was anxious for war, and with many of his subjects had viewed the progress of the Russian arms in Poland with jealousy and alarm. Moreover, ever since 1765, Russian agents had been stirring up the Greeks, Montenegrins, and Bosnians against the Turkish rule. In July 1768 Russian troops, pursuing fugitive Polish Confederates into Turkish territory, had burnt Balta, a town belonging to the Tartar Khan.

**France and Turkey.**

The Sultan's position, however, remained technically weak, especially as Catherine offered a full explanation of the conduct of the troops, and probably war would not have broken out but for the intervention of Vergennes, the French ambassador at Constantinople. Taking advantage of the irritation felt in Turkey at the Russian intrigues in Montenegro, he incited the Turks to demand the evacuation of Poland by Russian troops, and sent the Baron de Tott to stir up the Khan of the Crimea to support the Sultan. The violation of the Turkish frontier and the seizure of Cracow added force to Vergennes' arguments, and on the 6th of October the Porte declared war upon Russia, declaring that it was simply on behalf of the liberties of the Poles that the Turks took up arms. If Russia, in her dealings with Poland, had flattered herself that she was acting as the defender of religious liberty, Turkey could at any rate assert that she was fighting in defence of political liberty.

**The Outbreak of War between Russia and Turkey, 1768.**

The declaration of war by Turkey took Europe by surprise, and the Austrian envoy at Constantinople, Brognard, used all possible means to preserve peace. Neither Frederick nor Kaunitz looked with favour upon the outbreak of hostilities. Both were resolved not to allow their respective allies, Russia and France, to involve them in a fresh war; both desired to maintain the tranquillity of Germany; both felt that the peace of Europe depended on the good understanding between Prussia and Austria. 'We are Germans,' said Frederick; 'what does it matter to us if the English and French fight for Canada and the American islands, or if Paoli gives the French plenty to do in Corsica, or if Turks and Russians seize one another by the hair?' Had these admirable sentiments been acted upon throughout the reigns of Frederick and Joseph, Germany would have been the gainer. Notwithstanding his alliance with Russia, Frederick was resolved not to allow himself to be drawn into a war in which Prussia had no concern. In spite, however, of his protestations, Frederick was as anxious to secure Prussian Poland as Kaunitz was to recover Silesia or to obtain an equivalent. Already before his eyes floated the prospect of a partition of Poland. It was arranged at Vienna in January 1769 that an interview between Frederick and Joseph should take place the following August, and the same month Frederick, in consideration of the succession to Anspach and Bayreuth being guaranteed him by Catherine, agreed to make common cause with Russia against Sweden and Turkey. The Prussian king was fully alive to the steady development of the terrible Russian state; he was equally conscious that the war between Russia and Turkey might enable him to secure a valuable accession to his kingdom; he was deeply anxious to prevent the war from spreading and involving the German Powers. The preservation of the peace of Europe could not, however, be hoped for without the co-operation of Austria. If Austria adhered loyally to the French alliance, she could aid the Turks and the Poles; and Frederick,

**The Views of Frederick and Kaunitz.**

allied with Russia, would find himself again at war with France and Austria. If the latter Power, however, agreed to join with Russia in a partial partition of Turkish territories, Frederick would find himself in a dangerous isolation.

Already Frederick had determined to prevent a great European war by indemnifying Austria and Russia and Prussia in Poland. If his plan could be carried out, he would receive Polish Prussia without firing a shot; Russia would be satisfied, and the Franco-Austrian alliance would be sensibly weakened. In February 1769 he had written to Count Solms, the Prussian minister at St. Petersburg, a description of a project of Count Lynar for the Partition of Poland, with the expectation that Solms would use it for eliciting from Count Panin the views of the Russian Court. Panin, in the course of a conversation with the Prussian ambassador, declared that Austria should indemnify herself for the loss of Silesia by acquisitions in the East, that Prussia should take Polish Prussia, while Russia would be satisfied with the overthrow of the Turkish empire and the formation of a Turkish republic with Constantinople as the capital.[1]

While the Prussian and Russian diplomatists were discussing projects of aggrandisement, and before diplomacy could produce any decided results, Kaunitz had showed a readiness to profit from the outbreak of the Turkish War which might have provoked the envy of Frederick. In February 1769 an Austrian force, under pretence of asserting ancient Hungarian rights, occupied the county of Zips at the very time that Frederick was planning that system of compensations which led to the Partition of Poland.

In July hostilities broke out seriously between the Russians and Turks on the Dniester. In September 1769 the Turks were defeated and the Russians occupied Moldavia and Wallachia, took possession of the three fortresses of Khotin, Azov, and Taganrog, and seized Bucharest in November. While the campaign was proceeding, Joseph and Frederick had met at Neisse in

**War and Diplomacy, 1764-70. The Interview at Neisse.**

[1] *See* Sorel, *La Question d'Orient au XVIII^me Siècle.*

Silesia in August. It was most important to discover the views of the 'Ogre of Potsdam,' but at this famous meeting neither potentate seems to have committed himself to any declaration of policy. The news of this interview disquieted Catherine, and she agreed to all Frederick's demands. In October the alliance between Russia and Prussia was extended till 1780, Catherine guaranteed the succession of Anspach and Bayreuth to Frederick, while he agreed to invade Pomerania if the Swedish Constitution was modified. Choiseul had also felt alarm at the possible results of the interview, and feared a Prusso-Austrian understanding to the detriment of the Franco-Austrian alliance. Choiseul declared that a long war between Russia and Turkey would best suit French interests; Kaunitz, on the other hand, wished for peace, and was ready to mediate between the belligerents, in order that Austria should gain some territorial advantages. The war in 1770 proved disastrous to the Turks. A Russian fleet, under the direction of English officers, sailed from the Baltic to the Ægean Sea, and though Alexis Orlov failed to bring about a revolution in Greece, the Russian admiral, aided by Elphinstone, defeated and destroyed the Turkish fleet at Tchesmé on July 5, 1770; while on August 1, Rumiantzov, with a small Russian force, overthrew the Turkish forces at Kagoul. It seemed as if the last hour of the Ottoman Empire had come, that its territories were about to be partitioned, and that the Russians would be firmly established on the Danube. The Sultan in alarm appealed to France for help, but Choiseul was only able to send money, 1500 men, and a few officers, among whom was Dumouriez, to aid the Confederation of Bar. England, alarmed to some extent at the Russian successes, recalled the officers who were serving in the Russian fleet, while her envoy, Murray, at Constantinople, suggested English mediation to the Porte. While Frederick the Great renewed with vigour his attempts to bring about peace between the belligerents, Austria, not content with Zips, occupied a larger extent of Polish territory. In August Turkey decided to

appeal to Prussia and Austria to use their mediation to bring the war to a conclusion.

The second interview between Frederick and Joseph, which was held at Neustadt on September 3, 1770, took place under circumstances of extreme gravity. On this occasion Kaunitz accompanied Joseph and took a prominent part in the proceedings. Frederick saw clearly that Austria was the pivot of all negotiations. If the Muscovite troops crossed the Danube, Austria would attack Russia, and a European war would be the result. Kaunitz stated that if Catherine insisted on making Poland a Russian province, or on dismembering Turkey to any large extent, Austria would go to war.

On the 12th of October Prince Henry arrived at St. Petersburg, and his mission proved to be an event of European importance. By the end of the year Russia had taken Bender, Akermann, and Braila. The Turks only held Giurgevo, on the left bank of the Danube. Catherine, triumphant, declared her readiness to entertain the idea of peace. Prince Henry declares that in an interview with Catherine in January 1771 he proposed the Partition of Poland. At that moment the situation in the east of Europe was peculiarly threatening. The Russians had completed their conquests of Moldavia and Wallachia; Austria had occupied Zips and Sandecz, including in her grasp some 500 Polish villages; and while the King of Prussia had sent troops into Polish Prussia, the Polish Confederates had no money and small hopes of success. The Confederation relied entirely on cavalry, which numbered about 17,000, divided into five or six squadrons, under the command of as many independent chiefs. In 1771 Dumouriez was defeated at Landskron, and though Viomesnil, Dussaillans, and Choisy seized the castle of Cracow the following year, they were unable to hold it against Suvoróv, and Poland lay at the mercy of the three allies.

**Proposals for a Partition of Poland.**

On the 24th of December 1770, Choiseul had fallen, and France had become for the moment a cipher in European politics. It was at that very time, when Van Swieten, the

Austrian envoy, was negotiating with Frederick at Berlin, and Prince Henry was negotiating with Catherine in St. Petersburg, that a peaceful solution of the Turkish question was found in the suggestion of a partition of Poland.

The idea of a partition was no new one. Maximilian II. had suggested it in 1573, Charles X. of Sweden nearly a century later returned to it, and his successor proposed that the Emperor, Brandenburg, and Sweden should divide the Polish territories between them. In the eighteenth century, the question of a partition was often discussed. Peter the Great seriously considered it, and Augustus II. thought of making the crown hereditary in his own House. Prussia had long desired the possession of Polish Prussia, and Frederick the Great had himself demonstrated to his father the necessity of uniting Brandenburg and the Prussian Duchy. The advantage which Prussia would derive from such a seizure was so obvious that in 1764 it was firmly believed, in spite of the Tsarina's denial that a partition had been agreed upon between Frederick and Catherine. From the time of Prince Henry's visit (October 1770–January 1771), the Tsarina began seriously to entertain the idea of taking Polish territory in lieu of her Turkish conquests, and of pacifying Austria and Prussia by consenting to their seizure of portions of the doomed country. Meanwhile, Kaunitz was busily engaged in opposing the Russian designs on Turkey. The Turks themselves had hoped to secure, if not the alliance, at any rate the assistance of France. Such a project was distasteful to Austria. A united Franco-Austrian intervention on behalf of Turkey implied a complete breach with Russia, and rendered impossible any indemnification for Austria at the expense of either Turkey or Poland. Events aided Austrian diplomacy. The fall of Choiseul removed all danger of French intervention, and the continued successes of the Russians on the left bank of the Danube and against the Tartars of the Crimea compelled the Turks to turn to Austria. On July 6, 1771, a secret treaty was signed by the Porte with Austria, in which the latter, in consideration of a large sum of

The Partition of Poland.

money, agreed to take up arms against Russia, and to aid Turkey to recover her lost possessions. Adopting a strong attitude, Kaunitz sent a declaration to St. Petersburg and Berlin that Austria would assume the offensive if the Russians crossed the Danube, and that she would have nothing to do with the Partition of Poland. For a few months a general European war seemed inevitable. The Russians were unable to suppress the Confederates in Poland without Prussian aid, and at the same time were not desirous to hasten a partition which would enormously strengthen their powerful neighbour. Frederick's plans were for the moment completely upset. He had resolved on the Partition as a means of ensuring peace. If the dismemberment was to be followed by a war he would prefer to defer the Partition. From this diplomatic tangle he suddenly found a means of extricating himself, when he learnt that Maria Theresa, opposed to war, was simply determined not to permit the occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia by the Russians. Armed with this information, Frederick resumed his intrigues. Though Maria Theresa abhorred the policy of plunder, Joseph II. and Kaunitz listened to Frederick's advice; and Austria, Russia, and Prussia agreed to the principle of partition on February 19, February 28, and March 5, 1772, respectively. The Partition was the result of a compromise, by which Catherine II. relinquished her conquests on the Danube, Austria averted a serious peril to herself, and Frederick gained his long-coveted territory. Suvorόv had defeated the Confederation; Dumouriez had retired, and his successor, Viomesnil, though he effected the capture of Cracow by French volunteers, was unable to carry out any operation of importance. On the 25th of July the definitive Treaty of Partition was finally signed, and, under threats of the conquest of the whole country, the Diet agreed to the demands of the allies. Poland accepted a constitution which perpetuated many of the old evils, and she remained for some twenty years in an anarchic condition, weakened, and awaiting her final dismemberment. By the Treaty of Partition Russia

secured White Russia, with all that part of Poland which lay between the Dwina, the Dnieper, and the Drusch; Austria took almost all Red Russia and Galicia, with part of Podolia, Sandomir, and Cracow; and Prussia received Polish Prussia, except Danzig and Thorn, and part of Great Poland.

By this partition Poland lost one-third of its territory and about one-half of its inhabitants. Of the three Powers, Prussia was the greatest gainer. Her portion, though the smallest, was the most populous, and proved of great value as a connecting link between the outlying parts of the Prussian monarchy.

**The Causes of the Fall of Poland.**

Weakened by her internal divisions and jealousies, Poland could offer but a feeble resistance to the Russian national movement in favour of the annexation of White, Black, and Little Russia,[1] or to the fixed determination of Frederick the Great to secure Polish Prussia. Whatever chance she might have had of maintaining her independence by the aid of France had been lost during the Seven Years' War, when Poland became the base of operations for the Russian armies.

Poland had fallen, but her fall was not entirely due to the political exigencies of the moment, or to the rapacity of her three neighbours. Her fall was in no small measure brought about by her own shortcomings. It is true that the incessant feuds of the Polish *noblesse* made Poland an intolerable neighbour for the three countries on which she bordered, and as long as that *noblesse* continued to perpetuate the medieval relations between their own order and the peasants, Poland was doomed. The Polish peasantry were still slaves. By each partition an additional number of this peasantry gained by a change of masters. 'To the peasant, who had nothing to lose, it was a matter of indifference whether he was subject to his territorial lord or to a foreign foe.'[2] The key of the so-called misfortunes of Poland, and the explanation of the failure of the Poles to save their country, is to be found in the implacable

[1] Rambaud, *Histoire de la Russie*, p. 460.

[2] *Poland*, by Field-Marshal Count von Moltke (translated), p. 75.

hatred felt towards the *noblesse* by the great body of the people. None the less, the First Partition of Poland remains 'a vast national crime,' and a striking illustration of the political temper of the times. It constitutes a great revolution in the history of Europe, and is a remarkable proof of the desire of aggrandisement, and of that tendency to round off territories, without any consideration of nationality, which is so characteristic of the eighteenth century.

It is very doubtful if Russia did wisely in agreeing to the Partition. Poland, like Russia, was a Slav Power. In the Seven Years' War, Poland lay under the influence of Russia; and, with Poniatowski on the throne, Catherine could have ruled the Poles through him, and have gradually absorbed Poland. The Partition strengthened both Prussia and Austria against Russia; it turned the Poles into deadly enemies of the Muscovite state; it has checked the advance of the Russians westwards; it has put serious obstacles in the road from St. Petersburg to Constantinople. By agreeing with Prussia and Austria to divide Poland, Catherine gave away that supremacy over the Poles which was nearly equivalent to annexation. In doing so she acted contrary to the advice of her astute minister Panin, who opposed the idea of partition on the ground that it would be to Russia's advantage to make Poland a vassal state. But, supported by her favourites, the Tsarina overruled Panin's counsel, and the policy of partition was entered upon.

The reforms instituted by Frederick the Great in his new territory go far to justify the Partition in the eyes of some German historians. He connected the Oder and the Vistula by a canal; he encouraged the growth of cities; he reclaimed land which has become one of the richest agricultural districts in Germany. Throughout the newly acquired territory the lot of the peasantry was ameliorated, and trade was improved. Nevertheless, the verdict of history must be given against the three Powers, who by their action definitely introduced into European politics a principle which Napoleon in later years

put into practice, with results so serious to both Austria and Prussia. The policy which led to this dismemberment of Poland developed naturally into a system of universal conquest, and thus the First Partition marks the beginning of the European revolution.

Neither England nor France interfered to save the unhappy country. England was fully occupied with the American difficulty, and moreover her statesmen looked with favour upon the policy of establishing a close connection with Russia. Her commercial interests, threatened by the Bourbons, would, it was felt, be furthered by a good understanding between the Courts of London and St. Petersburg. English policy in India and in the colonies was not interfered with by Russia; there was no danger of Russian domination in the Mediterranean, or indeed in the Black Sea. France was still to be reckoned with in India, and Russia, like England, was not on friendly terms with the French Bourbons. Moreover, while English and French interests clashed in the Levant, England, in agreement with Russia, held an uncontested commercial supremacy in the Baltic. English ministers might not approve the principle of partition, but they had neither the wish nor the power to intervene. Lord Suffolk, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, alluded to the Partition as a 'curious transaction,' and contented himself with prophesying that the three Powers were 'sowing the seeds of future disturbances, instead of rest and tranquillity, to that part of Europe.' The continental monarchs regarded the possible interference of England with their schemes with indifference. It was thought that England, owing to the parliamentary struggles and to the colonial troubles, was in a state of decadence. At Neisse, Frederick spoke of England with contempt, and said he would prefer to be a small German prince to being king of England. Catherine was herself convinced that a war alone would bring about internal unity in England. Kaunitz, indeed, seems to have recognised that England differed from the continental Powers,

**The Non-Intervention of England.**

that 'one must not be deceived by appearances,' and that it was necessary to be circumspect in dealing with such a curious and singular government.

**The Policy of France.**

Nor did France give any effective assistance to Poland. As long as Choiseul was in power Austria hesitated to join Prussia and Russia in the policy of partition. Beyond sending, in reply to the appeal of the members of the Confederation of Bar, whose success would have resulted in the postponement of all attempts to alter the Polish Constitution, arms, money, and 1500 men under Choisy de Taulés and Dumouriez, Choiseul trusted to the intervention of the Turks, to the resistance of the Poles, and to the neutrality of Austria, to defeat the aims of Russia. Though willing to use diplomatic means to hamper Russia, Prussia, and Austria, he had no intention of involving Europe in a war for the preservation of Poland, and never seems to have realised the possibility of Russia, Prussia, and Austria acting in union. The marriage of Marie Antoinette to the Dauphin, in 1770, seemed to justify his expectations. His sudden fall, however, in December 1770, destroyed all possibility of active French intervention, and removed a stumbling-block in the way of Joseph II. and Kaunitz.

**The Russo-Turkish War.**

The Partition of Poland and the revolution in Sweden[1] accomplished, the main interest of the three Powers was concentrated on the Turkish war. Attempts had already been made to bring about peace, but the Porte, recognising that the aim of the Russians was the occupation of Constantinople, refused the terms offered at a congress held at Bucharest in the spring of 1773, and the war continued. Meanwhile the Austrian Court was bent upon rectifying the terms of the Partition Treaty, and securing the line of the Sbrucz and, if possible, Bukovina. Catherine at first refused to entertain the idea of any Austrian extension, but events in the autumn of the year rendered her more amenable. Not only had the Russian troops suffered reverses, but

[1] *See* page 328.

a formidable insurrection had broken out among the Cossacks of the Don, headed by Pugachev. The movement was in part national and in part social. The introduction of foreign influences in the seventeenth century, affecting even the liturgy, had been very unpopular, and Peter the Great had been compelled to sternly repress the discontent. The old Muscovite traditions lived on in the reign of Catherine II., and Pugachev belonged to the party that upheld them. His real strength, however, lay with the peasants. Originally the peasant was free, but gradually he had become a serf attached to the soil, and by the end of the seventeenth century could even be sold apart from the land, though by law he was distinguished from a mere slave. When Peter III., in 1762, excused the noble class from enforced service, the peasants, remembering their ancient freedom, expected the extension of the same principle to themselves, declared that the upper orders had kept back the edict, and attributed Peter's death to their enemies the nobles. Many believed that Peter was still alive, and that Pugachev, a Cossack, was the Tsar. The Cossacks, Slavs by birth, attached to the orthodox religion, and disliking the Turkish war, which disturbed their ordinary avocations, were joined by numbers of fugitive serfs, and by Calmuck and Khirgis Tartars. At first Pugachev met with some successes in the Ural, and divided the property of all the nobles who fell into his hands among the serfs. Eventually the insurgents were defeated, Pugachev was captured and executed, and the independence of the Cossacks considerably curtailed.[1]

Hampered by this rising, Catherine could not prevent Kaunitz from placing troops along the Sbrucz, nor Frederick from rounding off his new possessions in Poland by the acquisition of fresh territory. The Turks alone failed to take advantage of the embarrassments of Russia. Though Abdul Hamid, who had succeeded Mustapha as Sultan in 1774, was determined to carry on the war, he was even less successful than his predecessor. Rumiantsov

**The Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji.**

[1] *See* Sorel, *La Question d'Orient au XVIII^me^ Siècle.*

routed the Turkish forces in June, and in July the Grand Vizier sent plenipotentiaries to demand peace. On July 19, 1774, the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji was concluded. Russia restored to Turkey Georgia, Bessarabia, Wallachia, and Moldavia, and the islands of the Archipelago. She retained, however, Kinburn, Jenikale, Kertsch, and Azov, with their adjacent districts. The Tartars were brought under Russian influence, certain privileges for Christians in Turkey were demanded, better government of the Principalities was insisted upon, and a Russian embassy was to be established at Constantinople. The Treaty of Kainardji marks the definite beginning of the Eastern Question. Russia had obtained a firm footing on the north coasts of the Black Sea, the Turkish frontier being the river Boug, and she had obtained a declaration of her right of free commercial navigation in Turkish waters.[1] Before the treaty was ratified, the Turks had hoped for the intervention of Prussia and Austria. But Frederick confined himself to a protest, while Joseph, satisfied with the extension of the Austrian portion of Podolia to the Sbrucz, and resolved upon the seizure of Bukovina, was already inclining to a Russian alliance. In September the Austrian forces occupied Bukovina, and its cession was ratified by the helpless Turks by the treaty of May 8, 1775. The Treaty of Kainardji, and the First Partition of Poland, are both signal examples of the methods of the Russian Government. The one was a step in the liberation of the Christian subjects of Turkey, the other a step in the enslavement of an ancient and brave nation. The Partition itself was not only a crime, it was a mistake. The necessity of maintaining peace between the three Imperial Courts was its excuse, the anarchy in Poland was the opportunity. But though the rivalry between Russia, Austria, and Prussia led to their alliance, the Polish question henceforward served as an additional cause of their mutual hostility. It did not check the struggle beween Austria and Prussia for the head-

[1] See *The Treaty Relations between Russia and Turkey.* By T. E. Holland, D.C.L.

ship in Germany, nor has it rendered Russia less dangerous to German unity.

During these years France had been unable to defend either Poland or Turkey from defeat and territorial loss. Exhausted by the losses in the Seven Years' War, and busy with the work of reorganisation, with the expulsion of the Jesuits, and with the disputes between the Crown and the *Parlement* of Paris, it was impossible for the Government to do more than exercise diplomacy in the east and south-east of Europe. The history of France from 1763 to 1770 is the history of the ministry of Choiseul.

**Choiseul's Home and Foreign Policy.**

That energetic minister, after an interval of five years, had again in 1766 assumed control of foreign affairs. He had always opposed the idea of a partition of Poland, but, absorbed in his preparations for regaining naval supremacy, he neglected the affairs of eastern Europe; his interference came too late, and France in 1772 was not in a position to do more than remonstrate. 'Though history enumerates a number of factions which French intrigue stirred up and supported in Poland, yet at the decisive moment we see them constantly deserted and abandoned.'[1] After the close of the Seven Years' War, Choiseul, bent on avenging the losses suffered by France at the hands of England, began a great work of reorganisation. 'England,' he declared to the king, 'is the avowed enemy of your power, of your state, and so she will ever remain. Her grasping commercial instincts, her arrogance, her jealousy of your power, ought to warn you that many years must elapse before we can make a lasting peace with such a country.' And Choiseul was right. Though wanting at times in firmness, he showed a proper appreciation of the nature of the rivalry between France and England. He ardently desired the complete regeneration of France, and spared no pains to carry out his vast projects. He encouraged colonisation; he devoted much attention to the Antilles, fortifying Martinique with great care; he endeavoured to restore the finances. Between 1763 and 1766

[1] *Poland*, by Field-Marshal von Moltke (trans.), p. 88.

he introduced considerable reforms in the army, and he completely reorganised the navy. With the eye of a statesman, he recognised that for a successful war with Great Britain a powerful navy was indispensable, and that the Spanish alliance would be invaluable. He weakened England's influence in Portugal and Holland, and hoped by means of alliances with these countries to set up an effective counterpoise to the power of Great Britain. Considerable success attended his efforts. His example was followed by Grimaldi, the joint author with Choiseul of the Family Compact of 1761, and Spain began the work of reorganising her navy and her colonial system. In 1759 the French navy had been practically annihilated, only forty ships of the line remaining. In 1770 Choiseul could boast that not only were there afloat sixty-four ships of the line and fifty frigates, but that the efficiency of the officers and crews had greatly improved; that the artillery of the fleet had been renewed, and that the arsenals and storehouses were filled with war material. Choiseul had never accepted the Peace of Paris as definitive and final, and till his fall the main object of his policy was, in close alliance with Spain, to prepare for the inevitable war with England. In 1766 Lorraine and Bar, on the death of Stanislas Leszczynski, became definitely a portion of France, and in 1768 the French purchased the island of Corsica from Genoa. England, however, occupied with internal commotions and with the colonial controversy, was not ready for war; in spite of the efforts of Paoli, the Corsicans were overthrown by the Comte de Vaux at the battle of Ponte Nuovo. Choiseul secured for France a valuable acquisition, and Napoleon Bonaparte was born a French subject. In 1770 a dispute between England and Spain over the Falkland Islands brought these two countries to the verge of war. In 1766 a British force had taken possession of the islands, but in June 1770 a Spanish expedition appeared before Port Egmont and expelled the small English garrison. The attack on Port Egmont roused the English nation, and war seemed inevitable.

**The Affair of the Falkland Islands.**

Grimaldi, who had already on behalf of Spain negotiated the Family Compact and the Peace of Paris, had, on his return to Madrid from his embassy to the French capital, succeeded Wall as Secretary of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Marquis Jeronymo Grimaldi was a Genoese by birth, and was declared by the English envoy to have 'no very extraordinary talents nor extensive notions.' 'He is,' wrote Harris in 1770, 'dexterous in chicanery, and in confounding an argument.'[1] In 1766 a popular rising in Madrid had been followed by the dismissal of the Finance Minister, Squillacci, an Italian; but Grimaldi had ingratiated himself in the favour of Charles III., was not actually unpopular, and remained in office. Though Spanish public opinion relied on the Family Compact, Grimaldi was indisposed to support Choiseul against England, and, with Charles III., was in favour of an accommodation; while d'Aranda, the successor of Squillacci, and an admirer of Choiseul, was anxious for the outbreak of hostilities. Matters assumed a very threatening aspect, and Harris left Madrid. The fall of Choiseul, however, destroyed all chance of aid from France, and Charles III. agreed to restore the garrison, reserving, however, his claims to the rights of sovereignty.

Naval reorganisation and a Spanish alliance had been the chief features of Choiseul's policy, and later events justified his wisdom. The importance to France of a strong navy was proved over and over again before 1815. Spain under Charles III. was progressing rapidly along the path of reform. With good administration, Spain was marked by her geographical position, by the family connection existing between her rulers and those of France, and by her fear of England's sea power, as the most valuable ally that Choiseul could possibly have found in his proposed crusade against Great Britain. His sudden fall had been caused partly owing to the conviction of Louis XV. that France was on the verge of war with England, and partly because his tenure of office was an obstacle to the overthrow of the *Parlements* by the Crown.

[1] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. i. p. 56.

**The Suppression of the Parlement of Paris and the Provincial Parlements.**

Since the Seven Years' War the power of that corporation had steadily grown. The disastrous Peace of Paris had shaken the royal authority, and the expulsion of the Jesuits from France had still further increased the pretensions of the magistrates. Confident in the strength of their position, they had not hesitated to continue their attacks upon both the royal and the ecclesiastical authorities. The expulsion of the Jesuits, the growth of sceptical writings, the demand on the part of the *Parlement* for the entire independence of the civil from the ecclesiastical power, roused the indignation of the clergy, and necessitated the interference of the Government.[1] In 1766 the Council ordered the Gallican maxims of 1682 to be observed, and endeavoured to enforce silence upon the combatants. But the attitude of the *Parlement* towards the Crown was as aggressive as that adopted towards the clergy. The king's right to impose taxes without its consent was openly questioned, as was his right to hold a bed of justice, or to arrest and exile members of the *Parlement* if they refused to carry out his wishes. In 1763 the *Parlement* of Paris had protested against some edicts which had been registered by the royal consent at a bed of justice, and had received the support of the provincial *Parlements*. Emboldened by the weak attitude of the Government, the *Parlement* of Paris proceeded in 1766 to protest against the arrest of some members of the *Parlement* of Brittany. This audacity was at once met by a declaration made by Louis in person that the legislative power sprang alone from him; but the magistrates, undaunted, gave up none of their pretensions, and the quarrel smouldered on till a series of intrigues overthrew their supporter, Choiseul, and left them at the mercy of the king. At the beginning of 1770 these intrigues had developed into a formidable conspiracy against the minister. The Chancellor, Maupeou, and the Abbé Terray, Comptroller of the Finances, had formed with the Duc d'Aiguillon a secret cabal, which received valuable support from Madame du Barry.

[1] Rocquain, *L'esprit révolutionnaire avant la Révolution*, pp. 252–5.

In April 1770 d'Aiguillon, accused of grave abuses in his government of Brittany, was, by his own and the king's wish, tried before the *Parlement* of Paris. After an interval of two months Louis declared him exonerated from every charge, but the *Parlement* added that until he was formally acquitted he was not to exercise any of the functions of the peerage. Furious at this fresh act of insubordination, Louis carried away the registers of the *Parlement;* while the magistrates on their part refused to perform their duties, and the administration of justice was suspended. On December 7 Maupeou, the Chancellor, denounced the conduct of the *Parlement* as seditious. On December 24 Choiseul (who had steadily refused to pay any court to Madame du Barry) fell, his place being given to d'Aiguillon, the supporter of the Jesuits and the enemy of the *Parlement.* On January 20, 1771, the *Parlement* of Paris was suppressed, its fall being shortly afterwards followed by that of the provincial *Parlements* and of the *Cour des Aides*, while the Châtelet was reorganised and made subservient to the Crown. The energetic action of the Government was crowned with success.[1] All talk about revolution ceased, while Voltaire, hating the opposition of the *Parlement* to toleration and reform, gave a vigorous support to the Government, and found himself at one with the priests. In spite of the success which attended this *coup d'état*, the royal authority, though unquestioned as long as Louis XV. lived, was unpopular and contemptible. 'The policy of Louis XV. towards his Parliaments,' Mr. Lecky writes, 'was of a kind which beyond all others discredits and weakens governments. Either resistance or concession, if consistently carried out and skilfully conducted, might have succeeded; but a policy of alternate resistance and concession, of bold acts of authority repeatedly and ignominiously reversed, could have no other effect than to uproot all feeling of reverence for the Crown.'[2]

[1] The *Parlement* of Paris had many enemies, including not only the priests, but also men like Voltaire, who resented the judicial murder of Calas in 1762, and other cruel and intolerant acts.

[2] Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. chap. xx.

Choiseul's fall in December had as momentous results on the course of events beyond the borders of France as it had on internal politics. Occupied with vast schemes, he, like Nicholas Fouquet, underrated the influence of his enemies, and paid little heed to their intrigues. For upwards of a year before his fall his position had been undermined by Terray and Maupeou, no less than by Madame du Barry. While Choiseul desired to secure, by a policy of conciliation, peace within France and to embark upon an adventurous foreign policy, his opponents, caring little for the honour of France abroad, were resolved on the suppression of the *Parlement* of Paris. In consequence of their representations, Louis xv. suddenly realised that the dispute between England and Spain over the Falkland Islands was, in consequence of the existence of the Family Compact, likely to involve France in war. Choiseul fell, like d'Argenson, the victim of a series of intrigues and of the incapacity of Louis xv. to appreciate the value of an able minister. The policy of Choiseul was based upon considerations for the welfare of France. His alliance with Spain was statesmanlike; his endeavours to lessen the influence of Austria in French politics requires no defence. It is doubtful if France under any circumstances would have acted wisely in interfering energetically in the East of Europe.[1] A memoir on the true policy of France, presented by him in February 1763 to Louis xv., is marked by keen political insight and a thorough knowledge of European politics. In it he appreciates the Austrian connection at its real value, and though he sees that the union of France and Austria ensures tranquillity in Italy, he is careful to point out that Spain is the true ally of France, and that if France loses the Spanish alliance she will be isolated in Europe.

**The Fall of Choiseul.**

His attitude with regard to the expulsion of the Jesuits and the annexation of Corsica, and the dignity with which, when exiled, he retired to Chanteloup, confirms the view that in Choiseul France had a minister not unworthy of her best

[1] Sorel, *La Question d'Orient au XVIII^me^ Siècle.*

traditions. His fall affected not only the foreign and home policy of France, it excited deep interest in Vienna and Berlin.

At the same time it must be remembered that Louis xv., whose knowledge of foreign politics was considerable, was probably acting in the best interests of France in removing a minister who was bent on immediate war with England. It was also in the interests of the Crown and nation that the *Parlements* — obstacles to all real reform — should be abolished. Choiseul's friendly relations with the *Parlement* of Paris rendered his fall a necessary preliminary to any energetic movement against the rebellious and reactionary corporation of lawyers.

The Government was carried on by d'Aiguillon, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Terray, and Maupeou, and numerous judicial reforms were made. Six new Tribunals called *Conseils Superieurs* were instituted at Arras, Blois, Châlons-sur-Marne, Clermont, Lyons, and Poitiers, and a central court of justice was set up in Paris, composed of seventy-five nominees of the Crown.

The Triumvirate.

This Assembly was known as the *Parlement Maupeou*, or the 'Great Council,' and justice was administered gratuitously. In spite of its magnitude the revolution excited no serious opposition. Malesherbes, the President of the *Cour des Aides*, protested, as did several members of the provincial *Parlements*, but the discontent was mainly confined to some pamphlets and a few witty sayings. To these feeble protests Louis xv. paid little attention. To all appearance the royal power had won a signal victory; the Chancellor was confident and triumphant, and the only organ of liberty by which the nation could make itself heard was destroyed.

From 1771 to 1774 the French Government was carried on by the Triumvirate. While Maupeou and Terray mismanaged internal affairs, the latter's desperate remedies to improve the state of the finances only increasing the general dislocation, d'Aiguillon was called upon to deal with important events abroad. Though French agents remained in Poland, he made

no attempt to avert the partition of that kingdom which took place in 1773. With regard to Sweden, however, he was more successful. Towards that country he continued Choiseul's policy of giving encouragement to Gustavus III., who on the 19th of August 1772, aided by the subsidies, and encouraged by the support of the French Government, carried out one of the most audacious and successful revolutions of the eighteenth century.

**Gustavus III. and the Swedish Revolution.**

On February 12, 1771, Adolphus Frederick, King of Sweden, had died, and with the accession of his son, Gustavus III., it was evident that a critical period in Swedish history had been reached. Since the death of Charles XII. Sweden had been the prey to aristocratic anarchy, and after the disastrous peace of Abo, Russian influence had steadily increased among the governing faction. In 1766, after some thirty years of government by the Hats, the party of the Caps came into power, and, in order to counteract the influence of France, drew near to Russia, and arranged a marriage between the Crown Prince, Gustavus, and Sophia Magdalena, a Danish princess. Though the economical policy of the Caps was in many respects commendable, their foreign policy was disastrous. Instead of observing a careful neutrality, they, under the leadership of Ostermann, the Russian ambassador, threw themselves on the side of Russia, ignoring the fact that the Tsarina's policy implied the ultimate destruction of Swedish independence.

The elections of 1769 resulted in the defeat of the Caps, and though the Crown Prince, supported by the French ambassador, endeavoured, but in vain, to carry out necessary reforms in the Constitution, the success of the Hats or French party encouraged Gustavus to visit Paris, and to discuss with Choiseul the political situation in Sweden. Gustavus arrived in Paris on February 4, 1771, and on his father's death Louis XV. undertook to pay large subsidies to Sweden annually, and sent Vergennes, the leading French diplomatist, to Stockholm. On June 6, 1771, Gustavus arrived at his capital. The overthrow

of the anarchical constitution of Sweden was absolutely necessary if the country was not to become the prey of Russia. Gustavus, already an adept in the arts of dissimulation, conscious of the possession of great powers, and animated by a patriotic ambition to save his country, realised that the postponement of a revolution would destroy all hopes of securing the independence of his country. In an interview with Frederick the Great on his way from Paris, he had discovered that Russia, Prussia, and Denmark were leagued together to uphold the existing Swedish constitution.

The Partition of Poland was already agreed upon, and Catherine's success against the Turks was assured. Unless a revolution had been speedily effected, Sweden would undoubtedly have shared the fate of Poland, and would have been gradually dismembered. From that fate the determination of Gustavus saved her. Supported by the democracy, he engaged in a successful struggle with the privileged orders, and the *coup d'état* of August 19 proved an inestimable benefit to Sweden. A new constitution was drawn up, in which the king was given extraordinary prerogatives. Many of the abuses hitherto rampant in Sweden were abolished, and an attempt was made to introduce justice and order into the kingdom. It would probably have been better for Sweden if Gustavus had established a despotism, instead of attempting to govern constitutionally a people as yet unable to appreciate the meaning of constitutional liberties.[1]

**The Effects of the Swedish Revolution.**

Very striking were the immediate consequences of the Swedish revolution. Owing to the *coup d'état* of Gustavus III., Sweden had suddenly emerged from the comparative obscurity in which she had remained since the death of Charles XII. The plans of Russia, Prussia, and Denmark had received a rude shock, and a general European war seemed imminent. Catherine II., who had hoped to form a 'Grand Northern Alliance' of all the states dependent upon Russia, prepared for hostilities against Sweden, and

[1] *See* Geffroy, *Gustave III. et la Cour de France.*

Denmark hastily armed. No war, however, took place; the immunity of Sweden from attack, and the preservation of tranquillity in the north, being as much due to the influence of the Courts of Berlin and St. James as the difficulties in which Catherine found herself involved in Turkey. Frederick the Great had already succeeded, by means of the Partition of Poland, in averting a war between Russia and Austria; he now exerted all his influence to preserve peace between Russia and Sweden, fearing for his gains from Poland if a general European war broke out. His efforts to prevent an outbreak in the north were vigorously seconded by the English Government, which determined to maintain the balance of power in the Baltic, refused to co-operate with Russia, and, anticipating the views of Canning, discountenanced any interference in the domestic affairs of Sweden, and adopted a policy of neutrality and non-intervention.

**Attitude of France.**

The hostile preparations of Catherine, however, continued, and an attack by the joint forces of Russia, Prussia, and Denmark upon Sweden was expected in the spring. In the autumn of 1772 Gustavus had, by his warlike attitude, induced the Danish Court to disarm, but matters at the close of the year assumed so threatening an aspect that France decided to aid Sweden by diplomacy, and with money and men. At Paris the news of the Swedish Revolution had been received with enthusiasm, and Gustavus III., who during his short visit had made himself extremely popular, found that even the degraded French Government, to some of the members of which the traditions of a brilliant foreign policy still appealed, was ready to enter upon a European war on his behalf. Till the death of Louis XV. French foreign policy, guided by d'Aiguillon, regained some of its former prestige by its advocacy of the Swedish cause. United with Spain, and having sent Durrand, an experienced diplomatist, to St. Petersburg, the French Government warned the Courts of Vienna and Copenhagen of its intention to support Sweden, and endeavoured to secure England's co-operation in maintaining the

balance of power in the Baltic. But the English Government refused to allow a French fleet either to enter the Baltic or to act in the Mediterranean on behalf of Turkey. The fear, however, of a European war passed away, owing to the unexpected obstinacy of the Turks, who in 1773 gained a brilliant victory over the Russians. Catherine, unable to deal adequately with the northern complications so long as she had the Turkish war on her hands, listened to the pacific views of her Chancellor, Panin. Contenting herself with the Treaty of Tsarkoe-Selo, by which the Grand Duke Paul exchanged with the King of Denmark his Holstein possessions for Oldenburg and Delmanhorst, and with a fresh secret alliance with Denmark signed on August 12, 1774, Catherine decided to wait for a favourable opportunity for carrying out that policy towards Sweden on which she had set her heart. To some extent the French Government had atoned for its apathy with regard to Poland by the readiness with which it was prepared to defend the action of Gustavus. The influence of Vergennes at Stockholm became paramount. D'Aiguillon, in addition to large subsidies, negotiated a loan to enable Sweden to reorganise and strengthen its army; and the enhanced prestige of France in the north stands out in relief against the dark background of Louis XV.'s declining years. On May 10, 1774, Louis XV. died, leaving to his successor the task of rescuing the country from the financial and administrative chaos which was the result of his long reign, and the duty of adopting a foreign policy which should restore to France her position among the great European Powers.

# CHAPTER XII

## EUROPE AND THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

### 1774-1783

After the Partition of Poland — Outbreak of the American War — Vergennes — His Policy in 1774 — The American War — The American Declaration of Independence — Vergennes' Views — The Value of French Assistance to the Colonists — The Effect of the Capitulation of Saratoga — England and France at War, 1778 — European Politics in 1778 — The Bavarian Succession Question — The Decline of the House of Wittelsbach — The War of the Bavarian Succession — Mediation of France and Russia — The Treaty of Teschen — The Armed Neutrality of the North — England's Position in 1780 — Events in 1781 — Attempts at Peace — Rodney's Victory, and the Defence of Gibraltar — Peace Negotiations — The Treaty of Versailles — Results of the American War upon Western Europe and upon Russia and Austria.

**After the Partition of Poland.**

THE Partition of Poland, followed by the Treaty of Kainardji, forced upon Europe the recognition of the growing influence of Russia in Europe. The rise of this new Power found Austria and Prussia mutually distrustful, the Bourbon kingdoms weak, and England occupied with her own affairs at home and in the colonies. During the ten years succeeding the Partition of Poland, the strained relations between Prussia and Austria, the outbreak of the American war, and Joseph II.'s attempt to seize Bavaria, afforded Catherine II. admirable opportunities for establishing Russia as a great European state. Europe remained in a state of tension, aggravated by the uneasy activity of Joseph II., the ambition of Catherine, and the dislike felt by Frederick the Great for England. In April 1775 the first blood in the American struggle

was shed at Lexington, and the following year the seizure of Bukovina by Austria almost produced a war with Russia, while at the same time Frederick the Great was endeavouring to excite fresh troubles in Poland, in order to make a second partition necessary, and French agents were busy in the East attempting to induce the Turks to enter upon fresh hostilities with Russia.

**Outbreak of the American War.**

The Declaration of American Independence on July 4, 1776, led to an alliance between France and the revolted colonists, which deeply affected the course of events in central Europe, and was productive of several unexpected developments. Ever since the Peace of Paris Choiseul had ardently desired to obtain from England reparation for the losses which France had sustained; it was left to Vergennes to carry out his aims, and to inflict a series of severe blows on the maritime and colonial power of Great Britain. On May 10, 1774, Louis XV. had died, leaving the monarchy weakened in reputation abroad, and suffering terribly from financial embarrassments. In the balance of power in the east of Europe France had little weight, while in the west court intrigues had lessened her influence, and so far rendered the Family Compact with Spain of little practical value. No sooner had Louis XVI. ascended the throne than Vergennes, who was then in Sweden, was nominated the successor of d'Aiguillon at the Foreign Office. Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes, descended from an ancient Burgundian family, was born on the 28th of December 1719, at Dijon. An ancestor, Philibert Gravier, an *avocat* in the *Parlement* of Dijon, had married, in 1652, Rose Perrault, who brought with her the property of Vergennes, which lay near Autun. After studying law, the young Vergennes had, under the supervision of his uncle, Chavigny, seen something of diplomatic life in Portugal, and in Germany, during the Austrian Succession War. After the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle the young diplomatist was appointed French representative at the Court of the Elector of Trier, and during the years 1750, 1751, and 1752 took an active part in supporting the claims of the Elector

**Vergennes.**

Palatine for compensation from England and Austria. In 1754, on the death of Des Alleurs, he was sent to Constantinople, and till the diplomatic revolution of 1756 exerted himself with success to organise an attack of the Turkish forces upon the Russians whenever the latter marched westwards. The united action of France, Austria, and Russia in the Seven Years' War upset all his preparations, and it was not till 1768 that an opportunity was given him of inciting the Turks to declare war against Russia. He had crowned his diplomatic services to France by his action at Stockholm, during and after the *coup d'état* of Gustavus III. Russian influence received a severe blow, and the appointment of Vergennes to the Foreign Office was a wise recognition of his admirable services and undoubted abilities. Though not a statesman, Vergennes was an experienced diplomatist, possessed of a considerable knowledge of European politics. Throughout his career he showed great sagacity and acuteness in furthering the interests of France. He never allowed his patriotism to lead him into attempting what was impracticable, and during his ministry France recovered much of the prestige which she lost during the Seven Years' War. His policy was a continuance and expansion of that of Choiseul. To avenge the losses sustained by France at the hands of England, and to slacken the ties which bound France to Austria, were objects worthy of a French Foreign Minister, and entirely consonant with the views of the French nation.

**His Policy in 1774.**

On his accession to office France, in spite of the efforts of Choiseul, held the position of a second-rate Power. The Peace of Paris, followed by the First Partition of Poland and the Treaty of Kainardji, had demonstrated the weakness of France, and the failure of her diplomacy. In Poland her influence was destroyed, at Constantinople her credit had declined. Before, however, Louis XVI. had been on the throne many years, circumstances enabled Vergennes to place France again in a leading position in Europe, to deal a severe blow at England's maritime supremacy, and to still further weaken the unpopular Austrian connection. The out-

break of the war between the American colonies and the mother country afforded France the opportunity, long desired by Choiseul, of avenging the losses incurred during the Seven Years' War. The apathy, divisions, and exhaustion of the Americans during the early phases of the war had weakened their resistance, and it became evident that without foreign assistance the success of the revolution would be seriously endangered. It was obvious to the American leaders that no French alliance was possible unless accompanied by a complete severance from Great Britain; and, taking advantage of the indignation roused among the colonists by England's action in hiring German mercenaries, Congress voted, on July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence. The importance of this step cannot be overestimated. The political unity of the English race was for the first time in its history broken up; the rise of a new nation was proclaimed to the world; an independent foreign policy was rendered possible; and Congress determined to seek a French alliance. Before Silas Deane, the American representative, had arrived in Paris, in July 1776, Vergennes, probably influenced by Choiseul, had written a memorial on American affairs. In the document the importance of maintaining a close alliance between the different branches of the House of Bourbon, and of opposing on all occasions the interests of Great Britain, was clearly demonstrated, and especial stress was laid upon the necessity of aiding the Americans in their struggle for independence. The defeat and submission of the colonists would, Vergennes declared, be followed by disastrous consequences for the French and Spanish possessions in the West Indies. If, however, the Americans won by their own exertions, they would be themselves disposed to conquer the French and Spanish West Indies, so as to provide fresh outlets for their productions. Hence it was of supreme importance that France should at once lay the colonists under a debt of gratitude, and at the same time avenge upon England 'the evils which since

**The American War.**

**The American Declaration of Independence.**

**Vergennes' Views.**

the commencement of the century she has inflicted upon her neighbours and rivals.' He ended by urging that the intentions of the French Government should be kept secret, and that while the Americans should be prevented from making peace by 'secret favours and vague hopes,' the English Ministry should be dexterously tranquillised 'as to the intentions of France and Spain.'[1] Thus, though England was at peace with both France and Spain, the insurgents were to be aided with money and military stores, and the Bourbon forces were to be rapidly strengthened with a view to open hostilities with England. In spite of the pacific views of Maurepas, Malesherbes, and Turgot, who realised the pressing necessity of peace for France, and notwithstanding the risks which an absolute monarchy ran in supporting rebels against their lawful king, Vergennes' policy prevailed; a large sum of money was secretly furnished to the Americans; Grimaldi, the Spanish minister, was induced to send a similar amount, and, till the end of the war, the colonists were aided by loans and supplies of military material. Whatever may be thought of Vergennes' underhand methods, there is no doubt that, between 1774 and 1778, the French assistance proved invaluable, while the Bourbons in Spain and Tuscany, no less than Frederick the Great, Joseph II., and the Dutch, aided and encouraged in various degrees the American resistance to England. 'Every nation in Europe,' wrote Franklin and Deane, the American commissioners at Paris, 'wishes to see Britain humbled, having all in their turn been offended by her insolence, which in prosperity she is apt to discover on all occasions.' Vergennes' views on the situation, and on the true policy of France, were supported by the majority of Frenchmen, who were inspired either by resentment for former defeats at the hands of England, or, like Voltaire and Rousseau, by feelings of sympathy for religious and political liberty. In spite of the incongruity of a despotic government supporting

**The Value of French Assistance to the Colonists.**

[1] See Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vols. iv. and v.

the rise of a great republic in the West founded upon rebellion, the French enthusiasm for the colonists was sincere, and showed itself in the eagerness with which multitudes of soldiers crossed the Atlantic to reinforce the armies of the insurgents. It only required the disastrous capitulation of Saratoga, on October 17, 1777, to convince the French ministers that England's greatness was over, and to decide them to openly join the colonists. On February 6, 1778, treaties, in which the Americans engaged to make no peace with England unless their independence was recognised, were signed in Paris. Even Vergennes had hesitated to take this decisive action till he was assured that a reconciliation between England and her colonists was impossible. He was well aware of the miserable state of the French finances, while many of his colleagues dreaded war and were inclined to follow the wise policy indicated by Turgot. But the overwhelming disaster of Saratoga carried all before it, and Vergennes seized the opportunity of still further humiliating Great Britain. In March 1778 England and France were at war, and the isolation of Great Britain seemed complete. The German Powers were hostile, Frederick the Great being an avowed enemy, and while Spain was preparing to aid France, the attitude of Russia and Holland was doubtful. The capitulation of Saratoga had rendered the success of the revolution a certainty. During the remaining months of 1778, however, England's chances of success seemed more hopeful, and both Washington and Vergennes recognised with apprehension the possibility of the failure of the revolution. Before the end of the year nearly all the French possessions in India had been lost; the indecisive battle of Ushant was fought on July 27; while, in the West Indies, the gains and losses of the English and French were fairly equalised. But with the beginning of 1779 the prospects of the colonial cause gradually improved. In April Spain signed a convention with France, while in June she declared war against England and besieged Gibraltar.

**The Effect of the Capitulation of Saratoga.**

**England and France at War, 1778.**

While aiding the American colonists, Vergennes was careful to exert all his influence in favour of the preservation of the peace of Europe. It was equally England's interest to secure if possible the alliance of Russia, and, as in the Seven Years' War, to involve France in continental complications. In 1778 there seemed every reason to expect the outbreak of hostilities in Europe. The relations between Russia and Turkey had become so strained that on the 27th of February Sir James Harris, the English ambassador at St. Petersburg, wrote that 'war between the Russian Court and the Porte appears inevitable.' The naval and military preparations of the Turks proceeded on a considerable scale, and it was believed in England that France, in order to draw off the attention of Russia from the politics of western Europe, was inducing the Turks to violate the Treaty of Kainardji. Nikolai Ivanovich, Count Panin, who still presided over the Russian Foreign Office, was unwilling to take any step which might endanger the close alliance between Russia and Prussia. He still hoped to carry into effect his northern system which, uniting Russia, Prussia, Denmark, and Sweden, should counteract the effects of the Family Compact. In 1778 Catherine, still irritated with the Austrian Government, which had hampered her in the late peace negotiations with the Turks, was approached by the English Government through the medium of Sir James Harris, and invited to make an offensive and defensive alliance. But the opposition of Panin, influenced by Frederick the Great, who was still furious at the conduct of Bute, prevented any close *rapprochement* between England and Russia; and Catherine declared her inability to join England against France, unless the English Government bound itself to support her against the Turks.

**European Politics in 1778.**

'Turkey,' she declared, 'was her national enemy as France was ours. . . . A war between Russia and Turkey was almost certain, and she would find herself thus with two enemies upon her hands, and no corresponding advantage accruing to her from her English alliance, which would be a dead letter with

respect to the Northern Powers, who were never likely to be at war with Russia.'[1]

While England, without an ally in the world, was at war with France, and engaged in a desperate attempt to reduce the American colonists to submission, while Russia was occupied in preparing for a fresh struggle against Turkey, while Spain was about to join France in giving aid to the Americans, central Europe seemed likely to be involved in a great contest over the question of the Bavarian Succession.

**The Bavarian Succession Question.**

On the 30th of December 1777, Maximilian Joseph, Elector of Bavaria, died, and the younger branch of the House of Wittelsbach became extinct.[2] Austrian troops occupied Bavaria. Frederick the Great prepared to contest the Hapsburg claims; and it was not till the Peace of Teschen, in May 1779, that a serious danger to the peace of Europe was removed.

**The Decline of the House of Wittelsbach.**

The death of the Elector, and the subsequent events, revealed to Europe the feeble condition of the House of Wittelsbach. During the Thirty Years' War the Bavarian Duke had played a very important part; and till the close of the Spanish Succession War Bavaria, from various causes, was regarded as one of the most powerful of the secondary states in the Empire. From the Treaty of Utrecht, however, Bavaria ceased to be looked upon as the principal supporter of the Catholics in Germany. In spite of its close connection with France, and in spite of the election of the Elector Charles Albert to the imperial throne in 1742, Bavaria, after his death in 1745, continued to decline in the consideration of Europe. With the conclusion of the Franco-Austrian alliance of 1756, the French Government had no longer any reason to support Bavaria against Austria, while the Elector himself had not the ability and enterprise requisite to elevate his country into the position which it held in the estimation of Europe during the seventeenth century.

[1] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. i. p. 193, *note*.

[2] *See* Appendix D.

The decadence of Bavaria was a serious matter for Germany, and especially so at a time when the Lorraine policy of the House of Hapsburg, under Joseph II., was beginning to make itself felt in consistent efforts at consolidation and concentration. Such a policy could not be adopted without meeting with opposition from France and Prussia. The former hoped to regain her ancient influence at the Courts of the smaller German princes, the latter was jealous of any interference with the ministers or constitution of the Empire.

Eastern and central Europe was thus in a state of tension, while western Europe was on the verge of becoming deeply involved in the great contest in America and in attempts to destroy England's maritime supremacy.

**The War of the Bavarian Succession.**

It was at this moment that Maximilian Joseph, Elector of Bavaria, died (December 30, 1777), and his heir, Charles Theodore, the Elector Palatine, who represented the elder branch of the Wittelsbach House, signed a treaty on January 3, 1778, recognising the Austrian claims. Kaunitz at once took advantage of the fact of France being occupied in the American struggle; Austrian troops occupied Bavaria; and Frederick the Great was face to face with a state of things most prejudicial to his interests. He therefore turned to Charles Augustus, the Duke of Zweibrücken, or Deux-Ponts, head of the Birkenfeld branch and heir to the childless Charles Theodore. Before the Austrians could legally take possession of Bavaria, the ratification of Charles Augustus to the convention of January 3, 1778, was necessary. That ratification the Duke was not prepared to give, and in May 1778 protested at the Diet against the convention, and invoked the aid of France and Prussia. Frederick, thereupon, undertook to defend the Duke's claims; he and Joseph II. entered into a long correspondence in which the latter set forth his claims, and Prussian and Austrian armies marched into Bohemia.

War seemed inevitable, and likely to spread over the north of Europe. In the quarrel between Russia and Turkey, no less than in the Bavarian Succession question, Gustavus III. had an

interest. Against Russia Turkey was his natural ally, while, as Duke of Pomerania, he had a voice in German affairs. Had war broken out in the east and centre of Europe, Sweden would have seized the opportunity of attacking Denmark. No war, however, took place. The Partition of Poland was so recent an event that Catherine feared the reopening of the question might result from the outbreak of hostilities. She therefore contented herself with profiting by the French diplomatic efforts, which, at the instigation of Frederick the Great, who wished to keep Russia unhampered by Eastern troubles, had been employed in 1777 to avert a Russo-Turkish war, and continued to gradually extend Russian influence over the Crimea by means of intrigues. Like Frederick the Great, she was anxious to preserve the peace of Europe, and watched with some anxiety the development of the ambitious, though by no means unstatesmanlike, design of Joseph II. to strengthen Austria by the incorporation of Bavaria.

In the summer of 1778 two Prussian armies, one under Frederick himself and the other under Prince Henry, were set in motion, the king's intention being to march on Vienna by way of Bohemia and Moravia. But he found the Austrians ready to meet him. One army of 15,000 men, commanded by Joseph II., who was supported by Lacy and Haddik, opposed the advance of Frederick to Glatz; while 50,000 men under Loudon were detached to watch Prince Henry and prevent his junction with the king. Loudon's movements were masterly and successful; and though no serious action was fought, Frederick lost, mainly through want of forage and food, and the autumnal rains, more than 20,000 men.

Both the Prussian and Austrian armies were probably inadequate for an extended campaign, and hostilities closed in the spring of 1779 by the Treaty of Teschen. The principal cause of this unexpected result was Maria Theresa's repugnance to war. Aware that Austria was ill prepared for the resumption of the struggle against Prussia, that the mass of the people were impoverished and heavily taxed, and that the Hungarians

were discontented at Joseph's unconstitutional attempt to employ the Hungarian cavalry, she attempted to gain over Frederick by negotiations, and sent Thugut, an Austrian diplomatist, secretly to Frederick on two separate occasions, offering to assure him the succession of Anspach and Baireuth if he would consent to the incorporation of Bavaria with Austria. Frederick and his minister, Hertzberg, refused to entertain such propositions, while Joseph, on hearing of his mother's action, was furious. Maria Theresa, supported by Kaunitz, was, however, resolved on peace, and appealed to France and Russia to use their mediation. Joseph II., at the same time, demanded from France 24,000 men, basing his demand on the terms of the treaty of 1756. But Vergennes replied that the possessions of Austria were not threatened, and that the present trouble was caused by unheard-of claims on the part of the Emperor. Joseph then secretly proposed an exchange of the Low Countries for Bavaria. But Vergennes, realising the importance of not repeating the blunders of the Seven Years' War, steadily refused to be drawn into any European war, and declared that he would only interfere to preserve peace. Maria Theresa had been equally unsuccessful in her negotiations with Russia. In the spring of 1778 she had written to Catherine asking her to use her influence to induce Frederick the Great to withdraw from his position. But Catherine, closely allied with Prussia, showed no desire to aid Maria Theresa, and the Austrian Court found its proposals declined by Prussia, France, and Russia. Eventually, Russia and France having agreed to mediate between the contending Powers, Catherine moved a force of 30,000 Russians to the frontier of Galicia, and, determined to support Prussia, notified to Austria that she had appointed Prince Repnin to mediate, and to prevent, if necessary by force of arms, the absorption of Bavaria by the Hapsburgs. Vergennes, braving the wrath of Marie Antoinette and the Austrian party, declined to support the proposed exchange of Bavaria and the Netherlands, and insisted on the maintenance of the Treaty of Westphalia.

**Mediation of France and Russia.**

The prudent and moderate policy of the French minister and the resolute attitude of Catherine, proved successful, and conferences were held at Teschen between Prussia and Austria, and under the joint mediation of Russia and France. On the 13th of May 1779 peace was signed. Austria paid off the claims of Saxony, restored the lands seized from Bavaria, annulled the renunciation of Charles Theodore, and withdrew its opposition to the reunion of Anspach and Baireuth to the Electorate of Brandenburg on the extinction of the reigning House. On the other hand, Charles Theodore ceded to Austria the 'quarter of the Inn,'—that is, the country between the Danube, the Inn, and the Salza, comprising about 200 miles of territory, and inhabited by some 60,000 people.

**The Treaty of Teschen.**

The War of the Bavarian Succession and the Peace of Teschen have a distinct importance both in throwing light upon the political condition of Europe, and in affording indications of future developments. Had France not been engaged in assisting the American colonists and in combating England, the temptation to seize the opportunity of strengthening her north-eastern frontier would have proved irresistibly strong. The policy pursued by France is as creditable to the foresight and resolution of Vergennes as it is to Louis XVI.'s wisdom in supporting his minister against the party of Marie Antoinette. The Peace of Teschen afforded Russia that opportunity of interfering in the affairs of Germany which had been refused to her in 1748. Russia was admitted as a guarantor of the great Westphalian settlement; the growth of her influence in Europe was recognised, and future events tended to increase her preponderance. Sir James Harris had no hesitation in declaring that Russia had become a leading Power in Europe, and that the concerns of Europe were the concerns of Russia.[1]

To Austria the conduct of Vergennes came as a surprise. In Vienna the treaty of 1756 was as unpopular as in Paris, and Joseph II. himself disliked it. Though Maria Theresa and Kaunitz were disinclined to take any step which should in any

[1] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. i. p. 253.

way weaken the connection with the Bourbons, the attitude of France plainly indicated that the Court of Versailles would afford Austria no assistance in any schemes of aggrandisement. The ties which bound the two Courts became sensibly weakened, and Austrian policy began to incline towards a *rapprochement* with England and Russia.[1]

To Prussia and the lesser German provinces the Treaty of Teschen was eminently satisfactory. Though the war had cost Frederick £4,350,000, in addition to the loss of men, the Prussian intervention had been successful. Austrian aggrandisement had been checked, and the reputation of Frederick as the defender of the rights and liberties of the Empire was considerably enhanced. By the union of Bavaria and the Palatinate a new and more powerful House of Bavaria was established, which, in spite of the persistent efforts of Joseph II. and some of his successors, has remained independent of Austria. Joseph II.'s scheme had been foiled, and the imperial laws and constitution had been protected by Frederick the Great.

The wisdom of the policy of Vergennes during the Bavarian complications was undoubted. At St. Petersburg, Sir James Harris had established a personal and political friendship with Potemkin, the rival of Panin, and, on the 22nd of July 1779, had a private interview with the Tsarina, the result of which was seen in an order that each member of the Council should *separately* give his opinion on the affairs of Great Britain to Catherine.[2] Instead, however, of making an alliance, Catherine, though never really hostile to England, placed herself at the head of the armed neutrality of the North, formed in consequence of England's claim to search neutral vessels for contraband of war. In February 1780 the Tsarina issued a manifesto which laid down the principle that a blockade, to be effectual, must be real; that neutral ships may sail from port to port, and along the coasts of belligerents; and that all goods, except contraband of war,

**The Armed Neutrality of the North.**

[1] Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, p. 326.

[2] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. i. p. 255.

belonging to the belligerent Powers shall be free from seizure in neutral vessels. Russia immediately received support from Sweden and Denmark, the king of the former country having already, in December 1778, protested against the high-handed manner in which England exercised her right of search. In July and August 1780, Sweden and Denmark respectively united with Russia; Prussia and Austria joined the alliance in May and October 1781, Portugal in July 1782, and the kingdom of the Two Sicilies in February 1783. Though no war resulted from the armed neutrality, the chances of an expansion of hostilities were very much increased. England found herself opposed by northern Europe; the preponderance of Russia in European affairs was greatly enhanced; the Prussian party, headed by Panin at the Court of St. Petersburg, had won its last triumph; and all chance of an Anglo-Russian alliance had for the moment disappeared. On December 20, 1780, England was compelled, by the constant infractions of treaty stipulations, to declare war against Holland, which did not join the armed neutrality of the North till January 1781, and thus found arrayed against her almost the whole of Europe. 'The aspect of affairs at the close of 1780,' writes Mr. Lecky, 'might indeed well have appalled an English statesman. Perfectly isolated in the world, England was confronted by the united arms of France, Spain, Holland, and America; while the Northern League threatened her, if not with another war, at least with the annihilation of her most powerful weapon of offence. At the same time, in Hindostan, Hyder Ali was desolating the Carnatic and menacing Madras; and in Ireland the connection was strained to its utmost limit.'[1]

**Position of England in 1780.**

In 1781 a French attack on Jersey was repulsed; and in April Gibraltar, which had already been besieged since July 1780, was relieved. The capture of St. Eustatius by Rodney and Vaughan, on February 3, proved a terrible disaster for the Dutch, and was followed by the loss of Negapatam and other settlements on the Coromandel Coast,

**Events in 1781.**

[1] Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. iv. p. 163.

as well as by those in Sumatra. At sea, while a drawn battle was fought between the English and Dutch on the Dogger Bank, success attended the efforts of the French and Spanish fleets. De Grasse established the naval ascendency of the French in the West Indies, and, after capturing Tobago, landed a strong force of soldiers in America. The Spaniards were no less successful; they not only reconquered West Florida, in May, but, together with a French contingent, landed a force in Minorca, while a combined French and Spanish fleet was for some weeks supreme in the English Channel. It was only the energy of Warren Hastings, and the skill and courage of Sir Eyre Coote, who overthrew Hyder in the battle of Porto Novo, on July 1, 1781, that prevented the temporary extinction of the English power in the Carnatic.

**Attempts at Peace.**

The continuance of the war gave an increased importance to a Russian alliance, and while the Dutch appealed to Catherine on the ground that Great Britain had broken with Holland solely on account of the armed neutrality, the English Government offered to hand over Minorca as the price of a convention. Catherine, however, refused the appeals of both England and Holland, declaring to Sir James Harris that 'nothing could be stronger than her friendship for England,' and that she would 'be most happy to contribute to obtain for Great Britain a just and honourable peace.'[1] Both Russia and Austria had already attempted to mediate between the belligerent Powers, but it was not till after the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, due in great part to the landing of French troops by De Grasse at the Chesapeake, on October 19, 1781, that proposals for peace were definitely entertained.

**The Victory of Rodney, April 12, 1782; and the Defence of Gibraltar.**

Hostilities, however, continued through a great part of 1782. Rodney's great victory on April 12, 1782, near Dominica, over the French fleet, was followed by the famous defence of Gibraltar, in September, by Sir George Elliot. Though the siege continued till February 1783, Gibraltar was never again

[1] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. i. pp. 401, 402.

in any danger from the French or Spaniards. Spain had long been desirous of retiring from the war, which she had entered mainly in order to recover Gibraltar. The hope of doing so had now vanished, and, with bankruptcy imminent, the Spanish Court, which had always disliked the idea of American independence, was ready to open negotiations.

Rodney's victory had destroyed the French hopes of the capture of Jamaica; France, like Spain, was rapidly drifting towards bankruptcy; Maurepas and Necker were extremely desirous of peace; and Vergennes, though determined to obtain terms satisfactory to France and her American allies, was weary of the war, disillusioned with the Americans, and anxious to have his hands free to deal with the Eastern Question, which he foresaw was being skilfully reopened by the Tsarina and her ministers. He was resolved not to support the desire of the colonists to conquer Canada; he was equally willing, provided the independence of America was recognised, to take all possible steps to prevent the complete alienation of England. Though his views met with little response from George III., who was opposed to any recognition of American independence, public feeling in England declared itself in favour of peace, and recognised the necessity of acquiescing in the loss of the revolted States. The fall of the North Ministry cleared the way for peace negotiations, which were at once taken in hand by Rockingham, through the medium of his two Secretaries of State, Fox and Shelburne, in the spring of 1782. On the death of Rockingham, on July 1, Shelburne became Prime Minister, and found the task of carrying on the peace negotiations simplified through the victory of Rodney and the defence of Gibraltar. On November 30, 1782, the preliminaries between England and the United States were signed, those between England and France and Spain on January 20, 1783; while a truce between England and Holland ended the hostilities between those Powers. The Peace of Versailles, which included treaties between England and the United States, France, Spain, and Holland, and which

**Peace Negotiations.**

confirmed the preliminaries, was signed in September 1783. England ceded to France St. Lucia and Tobago, Senegal and Goree, and restored the French establishments at Surat and in Orissa and Bengal, Pondicherry, together with Calicut, and the fort of Mahé; she received back, however, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Christopher, Nevis, and Montserrat, while Spain retained West Florida, and received East Florida and Minorca. England secured the right to cut logwood in Honduras Bay, and recovered Providence and the Bahama Isles. The negotiations between England and America revealed considerable differences of opinion between Vergennes and his allies. Neither he nor Florida Blanca wished to secure the complete ascendency of the United States; the latter indeed detested the idea of American independence. The war had been to a great extent non-European, but its effects were felt over the whole civilised world. Western Europe had no reason to look back on the American war with satisfaction. England came out of the struggle with her prestige diminished, and her empire cut short. She had seen the northern Powers form the armed neutrality to contest her right to the sovereignty of the sea; hostile fleets had twice sailed supreme in the English Channel. It was generally believed in Europe that England's decadence had set in.

**The Peace of Versailles. Sept. 1783.**

**The Results of the American War upon Western Europe**

The war had dealt an almost fatal blow at the declining power of Holland. The half-hearted conduct of William v. during the struggle, and the disasters which befell the Dutch, had excited the so-called 'patriot' party to oppose the Stadtholder, and a period of internal turmoil only made more apparent the weakness of the Government of the Hague. Spain, which had entered the war in order to regain Gibraltar, had indeed acquired Minorca and Florida. But, as Florida Blanca had anticipated, the example of America was soon after followed by the Spanish colonies. For France the effects of the struggle proved still more disastrous. Though she could boast of having revenged herself upon England, and though, in 1783,

she appeared to have secured a complete preponderance in Europe, she had in reality suffered far more than her ancient rival. Financial ruin and bankruptcy were rendered inevitable, and revolution was brought within measurable distance. The American war had been genuinely popular in France, and the people were becoming inoculated with republican and revolutionary ideas. The predictions of Turgot and Gustavus III. were amply fulfilled. The former had warned Louis XVI. that bankruptcy must result from war; the latter realised clearly the inconsistency and risk involved in an absolute monarch supporting rebels. 'Such an example' (as that of the American colonies), he wrote, 'will find only too many imitators in an age when it is the fashion to overthrow every bulwark of authority.' [1]

But if the War of American Independence had such disastrous results upon the countries of western Europe which engaged in it, far different were the indirect effects upon Russia and Austria. The death of Maria Theresa, on the 29th of November 1780, had freed Joseph II. from the restraining influence of the great Empress-Queen, and Catherine II., now weary of the Prussian alliance and secure from all interference by France or England, was preparing for the annexation of the Crimea. In May 1780 the Tsarina and Joseph II. had met at Mohilev, and Vergennes' alarm at the growing power and schemes of Russia was fully justified. He had hastened on the Peace of Versailles, and had been careful not to make harsh demands on England, in order to secure for France the co-operation of Great Britain in opposing the policy of Russia in eastern Europe.

**and upon Russia and Austria.**

[1] Nisbet Bain, *Gustavus III. and his Contemporaries*, vol. i. 209.

# CHAPTER XIII

## CATHERINE II. AND JOSEPH II.

### 1783–1789

The Rûsso-Austrian Alliance — The Reforms of Joseph II. — Maria Theresa's Reforms — Joseph's Administrative Reforms — Commercial Reforms — Judicial Reforms — Religious Reforms — Criticism of these Reforms — Reforms in the Austrian Netherlands followed by an Insurrection, 1787 — The Aims of Joseph II.'s Foreign Policy — Austrian Influence in Italy — Treaty between Joseph II. and Catherine II., 1781 — The Fall of Panin, and the End of the Alliance between Russia and Prussia — Schemes for the Partition of Turkey — The Annexation of the Crimea, 1784 — The Attitude of England and France — The Treaty of Constantinople, 1784 — Condition of Holland: Aggressions of Joseph II. in the Netherlands — The Treaty of Fontainebleau, 1785 — Alliance between France and Holland, 1785 — The Designs of Joseph II. on Bavaria, 1785 — Frederick the Great and the League of Princes — Death of Frederick the Great, 1786 — Frederick William II. and Holland — Death of Vergennes, 1787 — Treaty of Commerce between England and France, 1786 — Vergennes is succeeded by Montmorin — The Triple Alliance of 1788 — The Journey of Catherine II. and Joseph II. to the Crimea, 1787 — War between Russia and Turkey — Joseph II. declares War with Turkey — The Capture of Ochákov — Sweden declares War with Russia — The Danes attack Sweden — The Intervention of the Triple Alliance — Revolution in Sweden — The Continuance of the Russo-Turkish War — Revolutionary Movements in the Austrian Netherlands — The Foreign Policy of Prussia in 1789 — Death of Joseph II. — How far his Reign a Failure? — Hostile Attitude of Prussia — Hertzberg's Schemes — The Convention of Reichenbach — Leopold II. and the Re-establishment of the Imperial Authority — The Peace of Sistova — The Treaties of Verela and Jassy — Europe on the Verge of the Wars of the French Revolution.

THE meeting of the Emperor and the Tsarina at Mohilev was followed by a visit of the former to St. Petersburg and the establishment of friendly relations between the Austrian and Russian Courts. The efforts of Frederick the Great, who

sent his nephew, Prince Henry, to St. Petersburg to preserve his alliance with Catherine, were of no avail, and the Tsarina testified her regard for the Emperor by using her influence to ensure the election of the Archduke Maximilian as coadjutor of Munster. On November 29, 1780, shortly after Joseph's return to Vienna, Maria Theresa died, and the Emperor was free to carry out on an extended scale his reforming schemes and his ambitious projects.[1]

**The Austro-Russian Alliance.**

The character of the sovereign who now attempted to introduce sweeping reforms into the Austrian dominions is a curious study. With abilities above those of the average European ruler, and imbued with a passion for ideal justice, Joseph II. is by far the most interesting of the enlightened reformers of the century. Previous to his mother's death his energies had been confined to Imperial matters, and he had attempted to reform the Imperial Chamber, which sat at Wetzlar, and the Aulic Council, which met in Vienna. His want of success in this endeavour, followed by his failure to annex Bavaria, had disgusted him with the Imperial institutions; and after 1780 he confined his reforming energies to the Hapsburg states. His policy, both domestic and foreign, was often statesmanlike in conception, but marred by a recklessness and impatience which characterised his whole career. He undertook tasks beyond human strength, and 'his history is therefore only the long and sorrowful story of a prince animated by the best intentions,' who failed in much that he attempted. He was permeated with the ideas of the century, and fascinated with the prospect of carrying out large, comprehensive, and beneficent projects for the good of his subjects. His scheme of domestic policy was 'no less than to consolidate all his dominions into one homogeneous whole; to abolish all privileges and exclusive rights; to obliterate the boundaries of nations, and substitute for them a mere administrative division of his whole

**The Reforms of Joseph II.**

[1] Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, p. 332.

Empire; to merge all nationalities, and establish a uniform code of justice; to raise the mass of the community to legal equality with their former masters; to constitute a uniform level of democratic simplicity under his own absolute sway.'[1]

These drastic changes, which amounted to a revolution, Joseph resolved to carry out with the utmost haste, and to 'alter the administrative government, education, religious constitution, legislation, and legal procedure of his states,' without any regard for the prejudices and traditions of the people for whose benefit these changes were to be made. While with Frederick the Great the practical statesman was always uppermost, with Joseph political considerations were subordinated to a desire to carry out the new ideas of the century. Generous, conscientious, and well-meaning, there was nothing profound in the Emperor's character. His ambitions were often admirable, but he entirely failed in his estimate of the limits of his powers. His desire to emulate and excel Frederick the Great animated him all his life, and coloured much of his policy. Into his mind, which lacked a sound educational training, ideas borrowed hastily from French philosophers had sunk. 'Since I mounted the throne,' he wrote in 1781, 'I have made philosophy the legislator of my Empire.' Influenced by the ideas of the century, and his desire, in imitation of Frederick the Great, to form a well-organized central state, Joseph attempted within five years to check the influence of all foreign Powers, including that of the Roman Church, on the internal affairs of Austria, and to abolish all old institutions and usages in the assemblage of dominions which constituted his kingdom. Administrative, judicial, economic, and religious reforms were set on foot simultaneously. History, tradition, race, counted for nothing. Anticipating the spirit in which the French National Assembly acted, the Emperor, in the interests of unity, desired to make a clean sweep of all obstacles which impeded the realisation of his aims. But unlike the French

[1] Herman Merivale, *Historical Studies*, p. 12.

Revolutionists, he had to exercise his policy in a state composed of the most diverse and heterogeneous elements in Europe. His dominions were only held together by the personal tie of sovereignty, and by the influence of the Church. 'He was resolved,' writes von Sybel, 'that Austria should gain well-rounded, and, if possible, extended frontiers on every side, and thus come forth from the centre of Europe as the first of European Powers. He was therefore in a state of continual aggression against his privileged orders, his people, and his neighbours.'[1]

In Galicia and Lombardy Joseph was regarded as a conqueror attempting to impose his rule on an unwilling people; in Hungary he was opposed by the dominant nobility; in the Netherlands his influence was checked by the independent tone of a number of self-governing commonwealths; in Bohemia and Moravia he was regarded as a foreigner; in the Tyrol his power was modified by the existence of a free though loyal peasantry.

**Maria Theresa's Reforms.**

The work of reform had already been taken in hand by his energetic mother. Maria Theresa had swept away a mass of antiquated customs, and had destroyed the privileges of the Provincial Diets. They could no longer impose indirect taxation, the control of the administration of the provinces was placed in the hands of lieutenants and intendants sent from Vienna, and thus their functions were confined to voting the taxes demanded by the Government, and which were paid into the Imperial Exchequer at Vienna. A body of magistrates, whose headquarters were also at Vienna, had taken the place of the old local Courts of Justice. This policy had received the full support of Joseph, who was equally bent on destroying the privileges of the towns and placing them under Imperial bailiffs.[2]

**Joseph's Administrative Reforms.**

In spite of the difficulties in his path, Joseph boldly attempted

[1] Heinrich von Sybel, *History of the French Revolution*, vol. i. p. 186 (trans.).

[2] *See* Appendix A.

to form out of these discordant elements a united Empire. He abolished serfdom in Bohemia, Moravia, Galicia, and Hungary, putting the peasants into possession of the lands which they cultivated on the payment of a fair rent. He destroyed whatever remained of the rights of the Diets, and introduced further reforms into the laws of land tenure. The Austrian dominions were formed into one single state, composed of the thirteen districts of Galicia, Bohemia, Moravia, Lower Austria, Austria Proper (Styria, Carinthia, Carniola), the Tyrol, the Austrian possessions in Suabia, Transylvania, Hungary, Croatia, Lombardy, the Austrian Netherlands; lastly, the counties of Görz and Gradisca, with Trieste. These were subdivided into circles, over each of which was placed a governor (Kreishauptmann).

All these different nationalities were to be merged into one people, and the German language[1] was established and was alone recognised throughout his dominions. The Diets were no longer convoked, and the privileges of the royal towns were suppressed. Joseph was no less active in his efforts to improve the trade of the country and to enrich the state. Two commissions were appointed for the revision of taxation, and the exemptions of the nobles and the clergy were destroyed. His attempts to open the Scheldt to the Austrian trade are well known. Roads were made and improved; and, with the assistance of Zinzendorf, the late governor of Trieste, Austrian commerce received a great stimulus. The ports of the Adriatic coast, especially that of Fiume, were improved; treaties of friendship were made with the Emperor of Morocco, with Turkey, and with Russia. The Austrian trade in the Levant was extended. Factories were established in China and the Indies, and manufactories were built in Vienna. In August 1784 a strict system of protection was established, and which, carried on in a manner worthy of Napoleon, proved very disastrous to the welfare of Austrian trade.

**Commercial Reforms.**

[1] *See* Wolf und Zwiedineck-Südenhorst, *Oesterreich unter Maria Theresia, Josef II., und Leopold II.* (Oncken Series), p. 293.

Joseph's legislative and judicial work was a continuation and development of that of Maria Theresa. His civil and criminal codes were in accordance with the ideas of the time, and conferred great benefits on Austria. The penalty of death was reserved for cases of rebellion, and torture was abolished. Under a Supreme Court, six Courts of Appeal were established at Vienna, Prague, Klagenfurth, Freiburg in Breisgau, Brünn, and Lemberg. In religious matters he showed no less activity. The Jesuits had been condemned by Maria Theresa, and both Joseph and his brother Leopold were in the habit of giving ecclesiastical appointments to men of Jansenist opinions. His Toleration Edict, published on October 13, 1781, 'the Magna Carta of Austrian religious liberty,' checked the proselytising tendencies of the Catholic clergy, which, under Maria Theresa, were allowed full play, permitted Protestants to erect churches and schools, allowed various sects to acquire property, and improved the condition of the Jews. The power of the hitherto dominant religion was abrogated, the idea of episcopal independence in opposition to the pretensions of Papal supremacy was fostered, and the legal freedom of the Dissidents was rendered secure.

**Judicial Reforms.**

**Religious Reforms.**

The beneficent results of this measure were but slightly interfered with by certain freaks of absolutism which not infrequently accompanied Joseph's acts. In Bohemia a sect of 'Deists' had been formed, and against them Joseph issued an ordinance exempting them from his Toleration Edict, and ordering immediate punishment upon all avowed holders of Deistic opinions. The interference, too, of the Government with some of the Jewish customs tended to detract from the efforts of the Emperor to improve their condition and to satisfy their aspirations.

Alarmed at these sweeping reforms, no less than at the doctrine preached by Joseph's clerical supporters, 'that the successor of St. Peter has no right to temporal power,' Pius VI. paid a visit to Vienna in order to win over the Emperor, to

encourage the Catholics, and generally to avert the dangers which threatened the Church in Austria. The powers which the Pope had hitherto claimed over the Austrian clergy had been strictly limited, and the connection between the religious houses in Austria and their superiors in Rome had been severed. It was Joseph's avowed intention to destroy the influence of the Pontiff over his subjects, to make the Church the subservient tool of the state, and to diminish the power of the clergy over the laity.

The appearance of Pius VI. caused great excitement, and roused much enthusiasm among the people. But Joseph II. refused to open negotiations with the Pope, and Kaunitz treated him with contempt. Though the Papal visit was, to all appearance, a failure, and though Pius gained no immediate advantage, it remains true that the presence of the Pope inaugurated a South German religious revival, which grew in intensity, and against which Joseph could not prevail.

Edicts were published in 1781, 1784, and 1785 which forbade the Bishops to appeal to Rome, or to publish any Bull without the Imperial sanction; and exempted all monastic institutions from obedience to any foreign authority. Furthermore, the two Bulls, *In Cœna Domini* and *Unigenitus*, which defined the Pope's prerogatives, were not allowed to be taught, no money was to be sent to the Papal Court, no one was to study at the German college in Rome, and no titles conferred by the Papal chancery were to be recognised. Joseph next attacked the convents, first dissolving over six hundred of the monastic Orders which, having contemplative religion as their sole object, were, in his opinion, of no practical use to the state. Many abbeys, nunneries, and canonries were also abolished; the number of monks was reduced to about two thousand, and the revenues of the suppressed monasteries were devoted to works of charity. The Orders left untouched were placed under the strictest surveillance, and compelled to carry out the Emperor's wishes in every detail of their religious observances. By these measures Joseph alienated the Universities,

# NORTH & EAST OF EUROPE IN 1780




PERIOD VI.

John Bartholomew & Co., Edinr.

To face Page 357

the Bishops, and the regular and secular clergy no less than the whole body of the people, who were irritated at his interference with religious processions and pilgrimages.

Many of these reforms were most beneficial in their effects, and continued to be operative after the Emperor's death. The suppression of feudal vassalage, which existed in all the Imperial dominions except Austria Proper, the Netherlands, and the Tyrol, was in itself an immense benefit; much land that had been shut up in mortmain was restored to circulation; the administration of justice in the provinces by royal officials, and the establishment of facilities for a regular course of appeal to the Supreme Court at Vienna, was a check to the power of the nobles. But many of Joseph's wisest measures were nullified by his irritating attacks upon the national sentiment of his subjects. The use of German in the Courts of Bohemia and Croatia was very unpopular; his refusal to be crowned King of Hungary, and his removal of the Hungarian regalia from Presburg, alienated his Magyar subjects; his abolition of the provincial Estates was a blunder; his endeavours to eradicate by edict all national distinctions of race, language, and religion had never any chance of success. The proclamation of the equality of all men before the law failed to compensate those of his subjects who were threatened with the substitution of German for their national tongue, and who disliked the prohibition of many religious ceremonies and services.

**Criticism of these Reforms.**

His ecclesiastical policy was especially ill-judged. The Austrian monarchy possessed a peculiarly incoherent character, and was held together mainly by the influence of the Church. Without the support of the Church no means existed for treating the various nationalities over which Joseph ruled, and it became impossible for the Imperial authority to carry out its edicts. At the head of the Ultramontane opposition was Cardinal Migrazzi, Archbishop of Vienna, and his views found an echo in the Netherlands, where the University of Louvain declared that 'Toleration is the parent of dissension.'

In January 1787 Joseph promulgated edicts constituting the Netherlands a province of the Austrian monarchy, and dividing it into nine circles governed by intendants, and sub-divided into districts which were ruled by commissioners appointed by the intendants. The ancient courts of justice were abolished, and new tribunals with new forms of procedure were substituted.

**Reforms in the Austrian Netherlands followed by an Insurrection, 1787.**

This flagrant violation of the charters roused general discontent; and van der Noot, a lawyer, headed the opposition of the state of Brabant. The inhabitants of the Austrian Netherlands armed, some wishing to imitate America, and, while forming a republic, to apply for French aid. Joseph, though he believed the opposition was due, not to national aspirations, but to French intrigues, was forced to give way, and revoked the edicts in the summer of 1787. Finding, however, after the death of Vergennes that financial embarrassments assured the neutrality of France, he again foolishly reimposed the edicts relative to the Church, and quartered troops all over the country. In November 1788 the Estates of Brabant and Hainault refused to pay subsidies. In January 1789 the Estates of Hainault were abolished, and in June the whole constitution of Brabant was annulled. A large emigration to Holland, in November 1788, was followed by a revolution which forced the Austrian soldiers to abandon the country, with the exception of Luxemburg and Limburg. The revolted provinces declared their independence, and on January 10, 1790, formed themselves into a Federal Republic.

Since the visit of Pius VI. Joseph had begun to experience continued opposition to his plans. He became impatient, violent, and suspicious; and it is said that his co-operation with Russia in the Turkish war in 1787 was mainly due to his disappointment in not being able to carry out his extensive schemes for the centralisation and improvement of his dominions.

The eventual failure of most of Joseph II.'s projects was due,

in great measure, to his attempts to carry out far-reaching schemes of foreign policy simultaneously with domestic reforms. The main design of his policy was the consolidation of the Hapsburg dominions, and the restoration of the Hapsburg supremacy in Germany. For the successful execution of this policy the recovery of Silesia, and the consequent abasement of the House of Hohenzollern, was necessary. It was also requisite that the Austrian territory in the south and east of Europe should be rendered more compact, and Joseph purposed to occupy Venice and her Italian possessions, Istria, and Dalmatia, as well as Wallachia as far as the Aluta, Widdin, Orsova, and Belgrade, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and a portion of Servia. Realising the impossibility of defending the distant Netherlands, he continued to scheme to exchange them for Bavaria, on the possession of which depended the continued influence of Austria in Germany.

**The Aims of Joseph II.'s Foreign Policy.**

These extensive plans were certain to be opposed by France and Prussia, and it was only when circumstances forced the former Power to adopt a neutral position that Joseph was able to attempt to carry them out with any chance of success. Maria Theresa had been attached to the French alliance; Joseph II. detested it, and his journey to Paris in 1777 only confirmed him in his views.[1]

The whole tendency of his policy, subsequent to his mother's death, was to strengthen his friendship with Russia; and after his successive failures in 1784 in the Netherlands, and in 1785 in respect of Bavaria, Joseph deliberately adopted a policy fraught with enormous danger to Austrian interests in south-eastern Europe, and decided to aid Russia in her policy of dismembering Turkey. He failed to recognise that the true policy of Austria was to oppose Russian aggressions upon Turkey, to accept the loss of Silesia, and united with Prussia to offer a vigorous resistance to the advance of the great Slav Power westwards. It was not till after Joseph's death that Austrian statesmen, realising that Russian and Austrian inter-

[1] **Arneth**, *Maria Theresia und Joseph II.*, vol. ii. p. 132.

ests of necessity conflicted in the East, began to take measures to check the growing influence of the Tsars. Joseph II. had accepted the Peace of Teschen with great reluctance, but the continuance of the American war, the outbreak of hostilities between England and Holland, the increasing age of Frederick the Great, the schemes of Catherine II. in the Crimea, and the strong position held by the Hapsburgs in Italy, afforded favourable opportunities for the attempted realisation of many of his favourite schemes. The Italian peninsula was already dominated by Austrian influences. The Archduke Leopold reigned in Tuscany; Ferdinand, another of Joseph's brothers, had married the heiress of Modena; the Duke of Parma was the husband of one of Joseph's sisters, while another, the famous Caroline, had married Ferdinand, King of Naples. It was not, however, till 1815 that Metternich realised in great part Joseph's projects, and Venice fell under Austrian rule.

**Austrian Influence in Italy.**

Fully appreciative of the commanding position occupied by Catherine II. in the late negotiations at Teschen, and furious at the policy of Vergennes, Joseph had already determined to act independently of France, and to seriously modify the traditions of Austrian foreign policy. In June 1781 the friendship of the Emperor and Catherine II. was cemented by a close personal alliance. The treaty, which was drawn up in the form of a letter, was ostensibly defensive, and guaranteed in general terms the possessions of the two Powers.[1] Reciprocal support was to be given when either of the contracting parties was in want of assistance.[2] In case the Porte proceeded to actual war and invaded Russian territory, Joseph undertook to march to Catherine's aid. In return for Austrian connivance at the Russian designs against Turkey, and for the promise of Austrian aid in case the Porte invaded Russian territory, Joseph II. hoped to involve

**Treaty between Joseph II. and Catherine II., 1781.**

[1] Arneth, *Joseph II. und Catharina von Russland.*

[2] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, p. 426; Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, p. 401.

Russia in his scheme for the annexation of Bavaria. The Turkish question now absorbed all Catherine's attention, and before her eyes floated the project of establishing a Greek empire dependent on Russia. Though the expulsion of the Turks from Europe had long been the dream of Christendom, though the extension of the Russian dominion to the Mediterranean had been, since the days of Peter the Great, one of the objects of Russian foreign policy, to Catherine II. belongs the credit of having definitely opened the Eastern Question in its modern form, and of having installed as a national object that system of an unremitting Slav crusade against Turkey which has so profoundly affected the balance of power in the east of Europe. In place of the latent aims of the houses of Rurik and Romanov, Russian foreign policy, from the days of Catherine, has been animated by a conscious and systematic determination to destroy the Turkish empire and to conquer Constantinople. Catherine's policy, when robbed of its chimerical and fantastical elements, aimed simply at the destruction of the Turkish empire and the advancement of the solid interests of Russia, and was calculated to rouse the susceptibilities of France and England and to revolutionise the balance of power in the Mediterranean. Vergennes, however, being fully occupied in the West, and English statesmen continuing to view with complacency the extension of Russia at the expense of Turkey, Catherine was enabled to annex the Crimea.

**The Fall of Panin, and End of the Alliance between Russia and Prussia.**

This new development of the Eastern Question had not only led to the Austro-Russian Alliance, but had caused a ministerial revolution in St. Petersburg. Since 1764 Count Panin had been the head of the Prussian party at the Russian capital, and the Prussian alliance had been the keystone of Catherine's policy. After the First Partition of Poland, which was itself a result of this alliance, Frederick the Great, partly by the aid of immense bribes to Panin, had kept Catherine true to the existing political system, and had contributed to prevent Russian assistance from being given

to England during the American struggle. He had, however, as early as 1769, decided that he would not be a party to the partition of Turkey, recognising that in any future war with Russia or Austria the alliance of the Porte might be of inestimable value to Prussia. For the furtherance of her schemes against Turkey, Catherine could therefore derive no benefit from the Prussian alliance, and little encouragement from Panin, who, as early as 1779, had become an object of her aversion, and whose influence was being rapidly undermined by that of Prince Potemkin, who had succeeded Alexis Orlov as favourite. Potemkin, who was deficient in statesmanlike qualities, had thrown himself with enthusiasm into Catherine's eastern projects, and his administration was marked by the definite manifestation of hostility against Turkey. The interview of Mohilev had overthrown the union subsisting between the Courts of Berlin and St. Petersburg; the alliance of May 18, 1781, completed the destruction of the old political system; on September 2 Panin was removed from the Foreign Office; on the 20th he was formally dismissed, and in 1783 he and Alexis Orlov died.

**Schemes for the Partition of Turkey.**

Bent on the annexation of the Crimea, and freed from the Prussian connection, the Tsarina hastened to test the value of her treaty with the Emperor, who was desirous, in return for his acquiescence in her anti-Turkish policy, to involve her in his own German schemes, and, by means of an alliance between Russia, France, and Austria, to carry out his plan of exchanging part of the Netherlands for acquisitions in Bavaria, and of bribing France with an extension of her north-eastern frontier. In a letter, dated September 10, 1782, Catherine, while her troops were annexing the Crimea, unfolded her schemes to Joseph II. She proposed that Moldavia, Wallachia, and Bessarabia should form an independent Dacian state, under a hereditary sovereign, who should profess the principles of the Greek religion. Russia would be satisfied with Ochákov, the district between the Boug and the Dniester, and an island or two in the Archipelago. In the event of the

Russian operations in the Crimea proving overwhelmingly successful, Catherine expressed a hope that Joseph would aid her in freeing Europe from the Turk and driving him from Constantinople. The expulsion of the infidel would be followed by the re-establishment of the ancient Byzantine Empire, with her grandson, Constantine, at its head. She probably intended in that case to place Potemkin upon the Dacian throne. To satisfy Joseph, she was now willing that certain modifications in the Austrian frontier should be carried out, and some establishments in the Mediterranean secured. Joseph II. did not receive this plan of partition with enthusiasm. He replied, requiring for himself Moldavia, Wallachia to the Aluta, Choczim, Nicopolis, Orsova, Widdin, and Belgrade; and proposed that, while Venice resumed her sway over the Morea, Candia, Cyprus, and other Greek islands, he should occupy Dalmatia, Istria, and other Venetian possessions on the mainland, with the adjacent islands. Realising that the traditional alliance between France and Turkey would lead the former to oppose the annihilation of her old ally, he proposed that French interests in the east of Europe should be compensated by Egypt. Potemkin was never an enthusiastic admirer of the Austrian alliance, and Catherine, dissatisfied with Joseph's *idées d'arrondissement*, and opposed to the possibility of an Austrian occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia, was determined to keep the Morea and the Archipelago for her Hellenic kingdom. Eventually Joseph, who, according to Ségur, was in reality opposed to the idea of a Russian occupation of Constantinople,[1] and who, with Kaunitz, was convinced that the conquest of Turkey would be no easy matter, wrote to Catherine, pointing out that his original promises referred only to the case of a war forced upon her by Turkey, of which there was then no question.

Catherine, disappointed at Joseph's refusal to entertain her plans, did not, however, confine her attention to extensive schemes which were at that time impossible of realisation.

[1] **Paganel**, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, p. 329, note.

On April 8, 1783, she issued a manifesto announcing and excusing the annexation of the Crimea. Kaunitz had declared, in 1770, that Catherine's mind was irreversibly set on the retention of Azov, Ochákov, certain districts bordering on the Black Sea, and the independence of the Crimea. By the Treaty of Kainardji, Catherine had secured some of the objects of her policy. By a clause in that treaty the Tartars were released from allegiance to Turkey, the Crimea being established as an independent state. In the Crimea itself two parties had arisen among the Tartars — one desirous of preserving the independence of the country, the other anxious for Russian intervention. The opportunity thus given for the exercise of Muscovite influence was at once seized upon. Schahin, the Russian nominee, was made Khan, and was supported by Russian troops, who butchered the inhabitants wholesale, and transplanted thousands of Greeks and Armenians to the territory between the Don and the Boug, where most of them perished miserably. By the advice of Vergennes and Frederick the Great, the Turks contented themselves with making a *Convention explicative*, defining the supremacy over the Tartars as being of a purely spiritual character,[1] and Schahin was formally recognised by the Porte. Fresh confusion ensued. Schahin, after being again restored, was compelled by the Russians to abdicate, and the final annexation of the Tauric Chersonese was accompanied by further wholesale butcheries of Tartar prisoners, the destruction of towns and villages, and the assumption, later, by Potemkin, of the title of 'The Taurian.'

**The Annexation of the Crimea, 1784.**

In offering no resistance to the acquisition of the Crimea by Russia, and in sending an army to the frontier to intimidate the Porte, Joseph II. was deliberately acting in opposition to the interests of Austria. As sovereign of Austria and Hungary, he was bound to check Russian ascendency in eastern Europe. Ever since Charles VI. had, in an unfortunate moment for his dynasty — refusing to carry out the views of Eugene and seize

[1] Holland, *The Treaty Relations of Russia and Turkey*, p. 11.

Moldavia, Wallachia, and other Turkish territory on the right bank of the Save and the Danube—agreed to the Peace of Passarowitz, Russian and Austrian interests conflicted in the East. During the Russo-Turkish war, from 1768 to 1774, and again in 1775, negotiations between Russia and Austria on the subject of the partition of Turkey had indeed taken place, but Maria Theresa had persisted in the statesmanlike policy of setting her face resolutely against the permanent occupation by Russia of the Danubian Principalities. It was equally the interest of Joseph II., after Maria Theresa's death, to give Russia no assistance in her projects against Turkey.

The two other Powers most directly interested were England and France. But England, then ruled by the Coalition, showed no intention of reversing that policy of friendship with Russia which had prevailed during the greater part of the century. Fox, who directed foreign affairs, was, like Chatham, in favour of a league of England, Prussia, Denmark, and Russia, and the inclusion of Austria, if Frederick the Great declined to join. In spite of the refusal of Catherine to aid England during the late war, and in spite of the conduct of Russia in the matter of the armed neutrality, it seemed as though English statesmen, blinded by their hostility to France, were ready to treat the dismemberment of Turkey as lightly as they had treated the First Partition of Poland. For the immoral and indefensible seizure of the Crimea in time of peace, and for the occupation of the northern shores of the Black Sea by Russia, the Coalition Government was equally responsible with the Austrian Court.[1] Vergennes, keenly alive to the dangers impending in eastern Europe, and aware how important to France was the preservation of the Turkish empire, showed great anxiety to secure the co-operation of England in maintaining the existing European system and the balance of power. Realising that the break-up of the Turkish empire would lead to an attempt on the part of Austria to secure unquestioned suprem-

**The Attitude of England and France.**

[1] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. ii. p. 48.

acy in Italy, and to the total change of the existing balance, he had hurried on the Peace of Versailles, and striven to avoid permanently alienating England, so as to have his hands free to deal — if possible, in conjunction with Great Britain — with the new and perplexing developments in the East. Disappointed of English co-operation, Vergennes adopted the best possible course. The Marquis de Noailles was sent, in October 1783, to Vienna to warn Joseph that, unless he relinquished his eastern projects, he could no longer count upon the French alliance; while Saint Priest, the French envoy at Constantinople, advised the Sultan to yield to the inevitable. On January 6, 1784, by the Treaty of Constantinople, the Porte recognised the loss of the Crimea and the Kuban.[1] Still desirous to check the power of Russia, Vergennes, aware that Gustavus III. had been coquetting with Catherine before his journey to Rome, in 1783, invited that monarch to Versailles; and, on July 19, 1784, an alliance was concluded between France and Sweden. France ceded the isle of St. Bartholomew, and agreed to give Gustavus an annual subsidy, and assistance in case of war. The attempted realisation of Catherine's great schemes in south-eastern Europe was postponed till 1787, when Turkey, seizing a favourable opportunity for renewing the inevitable struggle, declared war on Russia. The Eastern Question ceasing for the moment to occupy the attention of Europe, Joseph threw himself with ardour into extensive schemes in the Netherlands and Germany, which, if carried out, would have had a marked influence on the future history of Europe. As early as 1781, taking advantage of the war then raging between England and Holland, and fortified by his alliance with Russia, he attempted to realise to their fullest extent the aims of Charles VI. and Maria Theresa, and to tear up the Barrier Treaty. In 1784 he insisted upon throwing open the navigation of the Scheldt, and revived an ancient claim upon Maestricht.[2]

**The Treaty of Constantinople, 1784.**

**Joseph II.'s Projects in the West.**

[1] Rambaud, *Histoire de la Russie*, p. 491.

[2] Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, p. 391.

Holland, torn by intestine divisions and weakened by her conflict with England, was unable to offer any adequate resistance to Joseph's schemes. Throughout the greater part of the century the connection between the Dutch and the English had been so close that the lesser state was regarded as a satellite of its more powerful neighbour. This state of things was changed through the skill of a French diplomatist, M. de la Vauguyon, who came to the Hague in 1776. With a consistency unparalleled in the history of any country, the people of Holland had for centuries been divided into an oligarchical party of the wealthy burghers, who, styled the 'patriots,' relied upon France for support, and regarded the power of the House of Orange with jealousy, and the popular party, which, principally composed of the nobles and the lower orders, and often supported by the six provinces and the 'generality,' out of jealousy of Holland, idolised the Princes of Orange as the founders of their liberties, and their defenders against the burghers, and preferred the friendship to the hostility of England. The arrangement by which the Stadtholdership had been restored, in 1747, and made hereditary, both for males and females, had been confirmed in 1766. The Stadtholder, William v., had, in October 1747, married Sophia Wilhelmina, niece of Frederick the Great, who had assured her, on her departure from Prussia, that she was about to settle in a country which enjoyed all the advantages, and none of the inconveniences, usually attached to royalty.[1] In Holland Vauguyon had speedily reorganised the oligarchical party, the commercial interests of which urged them into friendship with France, and, in 1779, the Dutch became involved in hostilities with England. Taking advantage of the English sympathies of William v.,[2] and the disasters to the Dutch arms during the war, the patriot party proposed to abolish the office of Stadtholder, or to deprive it of many of its prerogatives, so as to render William v. powerless.

**Condition of Holland.**

[1] De Witt, *Une Invasion Prussienne en Hollande*, p. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Vergennes, who aimed at the establishment of French influence in Holland on a permanent basis, favoured these projects, and the aggressions of Joseph II. gave him an admirable opportunity for carrying out his schemes. In January 1782 the Dutch garrisons, unable to appeal to England for assistance, or to offer any resistance to the Imperial commands, had evacuated the Barrier fortresses, and Joseph, emboldened by his success, proceeded, at the close of 1783 and the beginning of 1784, to besiege several Dutch fortresses, one of which, Lillo, commanded the entrance to the Scheldt,[1] while an Austrian army was ordered to march to the Netherlands. The Dutch being then at peace with England, offered resistance to these new aggressions, seized an Imperial vessel in the Scheldt, and broke down the dykes round Lillo.

**Aggressions of Joseph II. in the Netherlands.**

In April 1784 conferences were opened at Brussels, but Joseph's pretensions were so extravagant that the Dutch demanded the mediation of France, sent troops to Maestricht, and endeavoured to raise an adequate army. In August Joseph reduced his claims to a demand for the free navigation of the Scheldt, so that his subjects might trade directly with India, and relying on the weakness of the Dutch, declared that any opposition to the opening of the river would be regarded by him as a declaration of war. Undeterred by this ultimatum, the Dutch appealed to Article 14 of the Peace of Westphalia, ordering the closure of the Scheldt, and on October 5 seized an Imperial vessel. Joseph, who was in Hungary, received the news of the Dutch action with astonishment and indignation; the conferences at Brussels came to an end, and Austrian troops marched to the Netherlands. As Catherine had declared her readiness to support the Emperor, and on September 20 had sent a threatening note to the States-General, and as France prepared to support the Dutch, a European war seemed inevitable.

Kaunitz, however, was strongly opposed to a rupture of the

[1] Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, p. 392.

Franco-Austrian Alliance, and he persuaded Joseph to accept the mediation of France. England disapproved of the Emperor's policy, and even the attitude of the Russian Court had changed. Catherine, in spite of her previous declaration, advised the Emperor, 'de ne pas aller trop loin et d'accepter la conciliation,'[1] and, influenced by the French envoy, the Comte de Ségur, confined herself, in a second note to the States-General on December 2, 1784, to urging moderation. Though Vergennes was aware that peace was a vital necessity for France, the French Government strongly supported the Dutch, and Joseph II. agreed to the Treaty of Fontainebleau, signed on November 8, 1785. While the Emperor renounced his right to the free navigation of the Scheldt outside his dominions, the States recognised his sovereignty over that portion of the river which flowed from Antwerp to the limits of Saftigen. Joseph also renounced his claims upon Maestricht and the surrounding country, but received the forts of Lillo and Liefkenshöek. Indian trade was thrown open to the Flemings, a few unifications of territory took place, and some small fortresses were dismantled. The Imperial demand for ten millions of guilders was refused by the Dutch, and eventually Vergennes undertook to be answerable for a portion of the sum. Frederick the Great's prophecy came true. 'Vous verrez,' he wrote to the Marquis de Bouillé, 'que Vergennes finira pas forcer la sérénissime République à s'accomoder avec mon frère Joseph, en lui donnant pour boire.'[2]

**The Treaty of Fontainebleau, Nov. 8, 1785.**

The Treaty of Fontainebleau, to which Spain gave its adhesion in 1786, was itself a triumph of French diplomacy, and in spite of the efforts of Sir James Harris, who had been in 1784 transferred from St. Petersburg to the Hague, was followed, on the 10th of November, by a close military and commercial alliance between France and the States-General. French influence became

**Alliance between France and Holland, 1785.**

[1] Quoted by De Witt, *Une Invasion Prussienne en Hollande*, p. 23.

[2] Quoted by Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, p. 400.

supreme in Holland, and the prestige of England suffered a severe blow.

It is impossible to overrate the significance to England and Europe of these events in the Netherlands and in Holland. The Barrier Treaty had been expressly made in order that Austria might be brought into close union with the Maritime Powers, and that both Austria and the Dutch Provinces might unite in checking French encroachments. The long line of Barrier fortresses were now either dismantled or inadequately garrisoned, the Emperor showed no interest in opposing French aggression, and Holland, one of the Maritime Powers, was itself closely allied with France. The system so carefully established at the time of the Peace of Utrecht had always been a source of discord between England and Austria, and between Austria and Holland; it had now broken down. The Austrian Netherlands lay defenceless before any French invasion, and England, like Prussia, was practically isolated in Europe. In the words of Mr. Lecky: 'One of her (England's) oldest and closest allies, one of the chief Maritime Powers of the world, had thus detached herself from the English connection, thrown her influence into the scale of France, and virtually became a party of the Bourbon Family Compact.'[1] For upwards of a century England and Holland had been closely united in support of the balance of power, and though William v. remained friendly to the English alliance, he and his party were powerless against the triumphant 'patriot' faction, which, encouraged by success, continued its attacks on the House of Orange, and in September 1786 deprived the Stadtholder of the command of the garrison of the Hague, and the office of Captain-General, and brought on a crisis which led to the Triple Alliance of 1788.

**The Designs of Joseph II. on Bavaria, 1785.**

Before, however, that event took place, Joseph II., with a creditable pertinacity, returned to the policy of 1778, and endeavoured to carry out the wise and statesmanlike, though premature, design of consolidating the Austrian possessions in southern Germany, and

[1] Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. p. 78.

erecting the greater part of the Austrian Netherlands into a kingdom of Burgundy. Had this plan been effected, South Germany would have been united into one powerful consolidated state, and the foundation of the modern kingdom of Belgium would have been anticipated by some fifty years. What the Eastern Question was to Catherine, the Bavarian Question was to Joseph. He wished to establish the Austrian supremacy in Germany; he was determined that Austria should become, like Prussia, a centralised state; he was fully alive to the danger of being gradually edged out of Germany by the growth of the Hohenzollern Power. Later events have fully justified his farsightedness, his wisdom, and his patriotic regard for the interests of Austria.

In January 1785 the Duke of Zweibrücken, the heir of Charles Theodore, informed Frederick the Great that the Count Rumientzov, a Russian envoy, had laid before him Joseph II.'s new scheme for the annexation of Bavaria. In exchange for Bavaria, the Upper Palatinate, the principalities of Neuburg and Sulzbach, the Landgraviate of Leuchtenberg, the Elector Palatine was to receive the greater part of the Austrian Netherlands with the title of king, France being bribed with Luxemburg and Namur.[1] The same proposal was made to the Elector Charles Theodore, at Munich, by an Imperial envoy. Frederick, who was now isolated in Europe, and who had already considered a project for forming a League of German Princes, at once sent protests to St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Versailles, accusing the French Court of being influenced by the hope of securing Luxemburg and Namur, and the Emperor of proposing to infringe the Imperial Constitution. The Duke of Zweibrücken also appealed to France, Prussia, and Russia as the guarantors of the Peace of Teschen. Charles Theodore, alarmed at the attitude of the Estates of Bavaria, professed to have no knowledge of Joseph's projects; and the Emperor, astonished at the fierce opposition to his scheme, yielded, declaring that he only had in view an

[1] Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, p. 406.

arrangement suitable for all parties, but that as the Duke of Zweibrücken objected, no further step would be taken. Catherine II. made similar explanations, and showed no desire to involve herself in German politics. Successful in this his last contest with the House of Hapsburg, Frederick determined to secure Germany against any further attacks on the part of the Emperor upon its Constitution. In March 1785 he informed the Princes of Saxony and Brunswick-Lüneburg of his plan of forming a Confederation of Princes, and representatives of the three Powers drew up the terms of Union, Frederick being represented by Baron von Stein. The league was rapidly joined by the Dukes of Saxe-Weimar and Gotha, Zweibrücken and Mecklenburg, the Princes of Anhalt, the Margrave of Baden, the Archbishop-Elector of Mainz, who was President of the Electoral College and Arch-Chancellor of Germany, the Bishop of Osnabrück, the Archbishop-Elector of Trier, and the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. Thus was established the famous *Fürstenbund*, which owed its existence to Frederick's success in alarming the Princes of Germany, by setting before them Joseph's manifest intention of destroying the privileges of the Empire, as well as his betrayal of German interests by his proposed cession of Luxemburg to France. The avowed object of the Union of Princes was to maintain the Constitution of the Empire as settled by the Treaty of Westphalia, and to protect individual princes against aggression. Secret articles were introduced to prevent the incorporation of Bavaria into the Austrian monarchy, and all schemes for partition. The league was not regarded with favour by any of the great Powers, was the last great achievement of Frederick the Great, and, after his death and the outbreak of the French Revolution, ceased to have any importance. The annexation of Bavaria continued to be the favourite dream of Joseph and his successors, till the adoption of Metternich's views in 1813 changed the whole drift of Austrian policy in Germany.

**Frederick the Great and the League of Princes.**

On the 17th of August 1786 Frederick the Great died after a reign of forty-six years. He had made Prussia one of the leading Powers in Europe, and the first of purely German states. Like Joseph II. his aim was to consolidate the monarchy by uniting his scattered dominions, to champion the national interests of the German people against the aggression of the Hapsburgs and Bourbons, and to assume the leadership of the Empire.

**Death of Frederick the Great, Aug. 17, 1786.**

The progress of the Prussian kingdom during Frederick's reign had been marvellous. Silesia and the portions of Poland acquired by Prussia in 1772 were rapidly assimilated with the rest of the monarchy, and in spite of the long and exhausting Seven Years' War, Frederick left his country with its resources developed, with its population increased from two to six millions, and its revenue from twelve to twenty-four millions, the army numbering 200,000 men, and the treasury containing some 70,000 thalers.

This extraordinary progress was due to, and its continuance depended upon the presence of the king himself at the head of affairs. Though he had developed a wonderful administrative system, Frederick, during his long reign, had concentrated all the powers of government in himself. No sovereign could say with more truth, 'L'état c'est moi.'[1] Of his activity, energy, determination, and foresight it is impossible to speak too highly. He stands pre-eminent among the great rulers of the century. But his cynicism, his selfishness, his utter disregard for the maxims of justice and international law, were conspicuous even in an age when respect for treaty obligations and dynastic rights sat lightly upon the princes of Europe.

His foreign, like his domestic policy, was subordinated to expediency, and the seizure of Silesia and the First Partition of Poland were fatal blows to the old order of things in Europe.

His death almost at once revealed the weakness of his military and administrative system. The army, a third of which was formed of foreigners, stood apart from the nation, and it

[1] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i. p. 471.

was not till its overthrow at Jena that the necessary sweeping changes were carried out by Schernhorst. From being a cosmopolitan force, 'an entity independent of the people,' it became a national army. The administrative system, deprived of the guiding genius of Frederick, showed similar weakness. He left behind him clerks instead of ministers, instruments in place of administrators. He had always regarded his subjects as 'beings created merely to be subservient to his will, and conducive to the carrying into execution whatever might tend to augment his power and extend his dominions.' [1]

By the aid of his marvellous administrative system, and the measures taken after the Seven Years' War to encourage agriculture and manufactures, to rebuild and repeople towns, and to re-establish the finances, Prussia had risen to her high position in Europe; but it was owing to the absence of capable administrators that, on the king's death, the faults inherent in that system hastened the temporary decline of Prussia. 'Tout ira, et presque de soi-même, tant que la politique extérieure sera calme et uniforme, écrivait Mirabeau après la mort du Roi. Mais au premier coup de canon ou à la première circonstance orageuse, tout ce petit échafaudage de médiocrité croulerait.' [2]

In spite of the truth of this dictum the fact remains that the Seven Years' War proved to be an important step in the making of Germany. Unconsciously Frederick had steadily pursued what seems to have been the mission of the Hohenzollern princes. 'Austria,' writes Carlyle, 'lost Silesia. Yes: and Deutschland found Prussia; a solid and living State round which the Teutonic people should consolidate itself.' [3] Though the military power built up by Frederick collapsed before the Napoleonic invasion, the Prussian monarchy owes everything to that devotion to duty which animated the king during his long reign. Like Stein, he was dominated by a keen sense of responsibility to the State. This conception of the royal office

[1] *Diaries and Correspondence of the Earl of Malmesbury*, vol. i. p. 142.
[2] Quoted by Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i. p. 478.
[3] Carlyle, *History of Frederick the Great*, Book xx. c. 13.

was shared with Frederick by other enlightened despots; no monarch in the century, however, can compare with him in the consistent manner in which he unswervingly and unsparingly devoted himself to serving the State, of which he said he was but the first servant.

From 1781 Prussia had remained isolated in Europe. Frederick had regarded the Austro-Russian alliance with grave mistrust; and though, since the fall of the North Ministry, he was not unwilling to modify his hostility to England, the tendency of his policy was towards the establishment of friendly relations with Louis XVI. Till his death he confined his active operations to the formation of the *Fürstenbund*, and he was probably ready to sacrifice the Stadtholder to his desire to secure the alliance of France. So far from showing any disposition to aid the Prince of Orange in his struggle against French influence and the 'patriot' party in Holland, he advised William V. to make no opposition to France. The accession of Frederick William II., the brother of the Princess of Orange, to the throne of Prussia at once changed the situation, which had entered a very critical phase. The deprivation of the incapable Prince of Orange, in September, of his command of the army had been followed by renewed French intrigues, and the fidelity of several of the Provinces to William V. was shaken. The movement for the abolition of the office of hereditary Stadtholder, and for the reversal of the measures adopted in 1747, was, however, checked by the death of Frederick the Great, followed by that of Vergennes.

**Frederick William II. and Holland.**

Sir James Harris had already organised resistance to the French party, and under very difficult circumstances had maintained English interests in Holland. Pitt and his Government had so far refused to pledge the honour of England to support any active measures taken by the Orange party. The permanent establishment of French influence in Holland, and with it the complete isolation of England in Europe, seemed likely to be speedily accomplished. The accession of Frederick William II., however, followed five months later

by the death of Vergennes, put a new complexion upon the political situation. The new king, in spite of the existence of a strong French party in Berlin, was favourably inclined towards an English alliance; he was not unwilling to support the cause of his sister in Holland. For a time, however, he pursued a waiting policy, attempting to bring about a pacific settlement of the differences between parties in Holland. On February 13, 1787, Vergennes died, and the control of foreign affairs passed into the feeble hands of Louis XVI. and Montmorin.

**Death of Vergennes, Feb. 13, 1787.**

The administration of Vergennes had been eminently successful. He had restored France to the position which she held in Europe previous to the Seven Years' War, and though unable to crush England, he had, by favouring the revolt of the American colonies, taken ample vengeance upon Great Britain, though at a heavy cost. The Franco-Austrian Alliance still held good, but Vergennes had curbed the ambitious projects of Joseph II. in central, eastern, and north-western Europe, and had pursued the ancient French policy of supporting the lesser German states, and of renewing friendly relations with Prussia. He had before his death indirectly inflicted a severe blow on English prestige in Europe by his successful support of the French aristocratic party in Holland, and by the conclusion of a treaty with the States-General. But the alliance between Russia and Austria filled him with mistrust, and recognising that English and French interests in the eastern basin of the Mediterranean were threatened by schemes for the overthrow of the Turkish empire, he endeavoured, after the conclusion of the Peace of Versailles, to bring about a close understanding between the two countries. Though English foreign policy between 1783 and 1787 lacked clearness, and though Carmarthen, the Foreign Minister, and other members of the Cabinet, agreed with Fox in regarding France as England's chief enemy, the wisdom of Pitt, who like Vergennes aimed at peace and retrenchment, was seen in the

**Treaty of Commerce between England and France, 1786.**

conclusion of a treaty of commerce with France in September 1786. Like Shelburne and Vergennes, Pitt held that France and England, so far from being natural and inevitable enemies, were 'from their circumstances peculiarly fitted for friendly connection.' Vergennes, like Pitt, strongly favoured a policy of free trade, and the commercial treaty does infinite credit to both statesmen.[1]

Though Vergennes cannot be compared with Richelieu, he stands high among the French foreign ministers of the eighteenth century. The policy of aiding the Americans, though successful, was, considering the circumstances of France, a mistaken one, and enormously increased the financial difficulties of the country, besides introducing a revolutionary spirit which proved disastrous to the monarchy. But after the conclusion of the American war, Vergennes realised as clearly as Turgot had done that the condition of France necessitated a peace policy. All adventurous schemes were steadily eschewed, and he merits the distinction of never attempting projects that were not feasible. The prestige of France in Europe at the time of his death stood high. Holland, Spain, and Austria were her allies; Catherine II. was anxious for her friendship, and early in 1787 concluded a commercial treaty with Louis XVI. It is not improbable that, had Vergennes lived a few years more, his influence might have prevailed with the Assembly of Notables, and that the grant of adequate reforms, combined with a continuance of a peaceful but dignified foreign policy, might have prevented the fall of the monarchy. A French writer has said of him: — 'M. de Vergennes n'était pas un grand ministre mais c'était un ministre et un bon ministre.'[2] The effects of his death on the foreign policy of France were immediately felt, and are an ample testimony to his European influence.

His successor, Montmorin, was a loyal, honest servant of the Crown, but utterly unfit for his post by reason of his indecision,

[1] For arguments for and against the Treaty see Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. pp. 37–46.

[2] De Witt, *Une Invasion Prussienne en Hollande en 1787*.

timidity, and deference to the king's judgment. Admitted into favour at the time of the accession of Louis XVI., he had in 1777 been appointed an ambassador at Madrid. On his return to France in 1784 he was given a military command in Brittany, in which turbulent province he seems, by dint of infinite tact, to have preserved order.

**Vergennes is succeeded by Montmorin.**

The most pressing question with which, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, he had to deal was connected with the United Provinces. The missions of Rayneval and Goertz, sent by Vergennes and the King of Prussia respectively to try and effect a reconciliation between the contending parties in Holland, had proved a failure; the opposition of Sir James Harris to French influence was unremitting; the attitude of the Prussian king was daily becoming less friendly to France. Instead of boldly deposing the Stadtholder and substituting a government under French protection, Montmorin and Louis, alarmed at the increase of the revolutionary spirit in the United Provinces, allowed matters to drift, and contented themselves with watching events. An attempt, in April, to effect a satisfactory arrangement between the Prince and his opponents at Nimeguen having failed, it became apparent to Sir James Harris that the immediate intervention of England was absolutely necessary. In May he returned to London, was consulted by the Cabinet, and £20,000 was advanced to the Stadtholder. Encouraged by the definite action of England, the King of Prussia prepared to abandon his uncertain attitude. On the evening of June 28 the Princess Wilhelmina was arrested on her way to the Hague by some insurgents near Gouda, and treated as a prisoner for a day.

**The Triple Alliance of 1788.**

She appealed to her brother, Frederick William, and his decision to march troops into Holland, which was partly due to English influence, was coincident with vigorous protests on the part of the English envoy, Eden, to the French Government. Pitt was now determined to support the Stadtholder's cause by force of arms; warlike preparations were made; and,


4
6
8
10
12
14
16
18
20
22
54
52
50
NORTH SEA
DENMARK
SWEDEN
BALTIC SEA
Pomerania
West Prussia
East Prussia
Königsberg
Russia
Lübeck
Wismar
Rügen
Stettin
Netze
Hanover
Brandenburg
Berlin
Great Poland
Warsaw
POLAND
Little Poland
Silesia
Breslau
Glogau
Posen
Magdeburg
Leipzig
Dresden
Prussia
Münster
Cologne
Aachen
Jülich
Cleves
Mayence
Treves
Metz
Saarbrücken
Austrian Netherlands
THE EMPIRE
FRANCE
Bavaria
Bohemia
Galicia
HUNGARY
Longitude East 14 of Greenwich
John Bartholomew & Co. Edinr.
PERIOD VI.
To face Page 379

on September 19, Prussian troops entered Holland. Hostilities with France seemed on the verge of breaking out; but war was averted by the vigorous action of England and Prussia, the internal condition of France, and the weakness of Montmorin, who, on October 27, signed a declaration agreeing to a general disarmament, and asserting that the King of France had never any intention of interfering in the affairs of the Dutch Republic.[1] 'France has just fallen,' said the Emperor Joseph, on hearing the news, 'I doubt if she will ever recover.'

The efforts of Harris had been crowned with success. England was no longer isolated in Europe, but, united with Prussia and Holland, was able to throw the weight of her influence in favour of peace. In Holland the Dutch 'patriots' had been overthrown, and the Stadtholder restored to his former position, his power being based upon the friendship of England. In place of the alliance between France and Holland, a treaty for mutual defence was signed between Prussia and the States-General, on April 15, 1788.[2] In July an alliance between England and Prussia completed the defeat of French policy, and consolidated the Triple Alliance of 1788, between Great Britain, Prussia, and the Netherlands, for 'preserving the public tranquillity and security, for maintaining their common interests, and for their mutual defence and guarantee against every hostile attack.' During the ensuing five years this defensive alliance exercised an immense influence on European politics, and did much to preserve the existing balance of power. While, however, the Triple Alliance strengthened Pitt's endeavours to prevent the outbreak of a general European war, and to maintain the existing balance of power, it inspired Frederick William II. and Hertzberg with undue confidence in the power of Prussia, and it moreover tended to bring about a friendship between Russia and France, to the detriment of British interests in the Levant. In 1788 the

[1] Quoted by the Marquis de Barral-Montferrat, *Dix Ans de Paix Armée entre la France et l'Angleterre*, 1783–93, vol. i. p. 54.

[2] De Witt, *Une Invasion Prussienne en Hollande en 1787*, p. 299.

tranquillity of the east of Europe was threatened by the Russo-Austrian Alliance. True to her policy of increasing the territory of Russia at the expense of Turkey, Catherine had, as early as 1786, actively resumed her intrigues throughout the dominions of the Sultan. In Egypt, Greece, and Moldavia the efforts of the Russian agents were especially successful, and in 1786 the Porte began definitely to prepare to resist the Muscovite aggressions. To draw still more closely the ties which bound her to Joseph II., to secure France as an ally, and to force the Turks into hostilities, became the immediate object of Catherine. In January 1787 she undertook her famous journey to the Crimea. After interviewing the King of Poland on the route, she was joined by Joseph II., travelling incognito under the title of Count Falkenstein. The history of this picturesque journey is important as exemplifying the determination of Catherine to carry out the project — which, according to Sir James Harris, originated with Potemkin — of reviving a Greek empire at Constantinople, and as demonstrating the reality of the Austro-Russian Alliance. Nurses for Catherine's grandson, Constantine, had already been procured from the Archipelago; the child had been baptized with special Greek rites; a Greek alphabet and primer had been printed and distributed in the Russian military schools; and medals had been struck designating Catherine 'Propugnatrix Fidei,' and representing the destruction of the chief mosque of Constantinople by lightning. Notwithstanding Frederick the Great's sarcasm, that 'the execution of a project as chimerical and difficult as that of the Greek empire will not be facilitated by means of medals,' the same policy was continued in 1787. At Kherson, the capital of the new Greek kingdom, one of the gates bore the inscription, 'The way to Byzantium,' and Greek were substituted for the Turkish names throughout the newly acquired territory. From Kherson Catherine continued her progress through the Crimea, or Taurida, and at Sevastópol 'viewed with pride and exultation a powerful navy,

**The Journey of Catherine II. and Joseph II. to the Crimea, 1787.**

her own creation, riding in the finest harbour of the Black Sea.'[1] Though the Tsarina and the Emperor discussed future projects, neither sovereign seems to have desired immediate war. The Austrian Netherlands were in a state bordering on rebellion; while, in the event of hostilities between Catherine and the Porte, an anti-Russian diversion on the part of Prussia and Sweden was to be expected. The indignation of the Mussulman population at the Russian aggressions had, however, been roused; new demands on the part of Catherine were immediately refused; and, on August 10, the Russian ambassador was imprisoned in the Seven Towers, and the Sultan, relying on the support of England and Prussia, declared war. The Eastern Question, thus reopened, involved half Europe in hostilities; and the early scenes of the war recalled in some measure those of the year 1737, when Russia and Austria simultaneously attacked the Turks. Since 1737, however, the Eastern Question had passed through several important phases, and England and France were now alive to the serious issues involved in the attitude of Russia and Austria. Catherine herself had not failed to recognise that Russian interests were threatened, and the Russian advance to the Mediterranean checked, by the sea power of England. She had already profited by the occupation of western Europe in the American war; she now cleverly attempted to turn into account the somewhat strained relations between England and France. Paul, her son and heir, had been sent, in 1782, to Versailles on a visit to Marie Antoinette; a commercial treaty was made with France early in 1787; and, in 1788, the Tsarina endeavoured to form a quadruple alliance of France, Spain, Austria, and Russia, to oppose British interests. The death of Vergennes, however, had deprived French foreign policy of any clearness or consistency. Though anxious to maintain friendship with Russia, the ideas of Vergennes on the necessity of preserving the Turkish empire still carried weight; and eventually the French Government, the prey to

**Outbreak of War between Turkey and Russia, 1787.**

[1] Coxe, *House of Austria*, vol. ii. p. 612.

indecision and divisions, declared its determination to be neutral. During the remainder of the year 1787 Suvórov successfully defended Kinburn against the attacks of the Turkish fleet; while the Emperor, without any previous declaration of war, attempted to surprise Belgrade. In the winter the French failed to mediate a peace, and the Turks in vain reminded Joseph of the loyal manner in which they had observed the Treaty of Belgrade, and how they had never attempted to take advantage of the weak condition of Austria on the death of Charles VI.

On February 9, 1788, Joseph II., no longer apprehensive of French opposition, and hoping to secure Moldavia, Wallachia, Servia, and Bosnia, and to avenge the disastrous Peace of Belgrade of 1739, declared war against the Porte, and the Turks found themselves attacked simultaneously by the Austrian and Russian armies. Though Loudon took Dubitza on August 26, and reduced Novi on October 2, and Coburg, in conjunction with Saltikov, occupied a large part of Moldavia, taking Choczim on September 20, the campaign was unfavourable to the Austrians. The Emperor had failed to capture Belgrade, and a Turkish army, under the Grand Vizier Yussuf, carried devastation as far as Temesvar. In September a Turkish attack on the Austrian camp near Slatina was followed by the return of Joseph to Vienna, disillusioned and broken down in health.[1] The failure of the campaign was due to a variety of causes. English and Dutch seamen had been forbidden by their respective Governments to enter the Russian service; Venice declined to desert her neutral attitude; and the Pacha of Scutari refused to revolt against the Sultan. Moreover, the Russians, exposed to an attack by Sweden, were unable to support Coburg with more than 10,000 men under Saltikov.

**Joseph II. declares War against Turkey, Feb. 1788.**

During the year 1788 the Russian operations against the Turks had been crowned with success. The Turkish fleet was

[1] Wolf und Zwiedineck-Südenhorst, *Oesterreich unter Maria Theresia, Joseph II., und Leopold II.* (Oncken Series), book iii. chap. iv.

defeated and destroyed on June 26 in the Liman, and after a long siege, begun in June, Potemkin, by means of the skill and bravery of Suvórov and Repnin, succeeded, in spite of the furious resistance of the Turks, in taking Ochákov on December 17. These successes, however, were to some extent neutralised by the hostile attitude of almost every European Power. To Gustavus III. the possibility of a complete Russian triumph over the Turks was a serious consideration. His position at home was by no means secure, and he was aware that Catherine would seize the first favourable opportunity of destroying the independence, if not of absorbing a large portion of the territory, of Sweden. Russia and Denmark had agreed to overthrow the Constitution of 1772, and Gustavus resolved to attack Catherine without delay, and by means of successes in the field to attain absolutism at home.

**The Capture of Ochákov, Dec. 17, 1788.**

**Sweden declares War on Russia, 1788.**

Ever since his return to Sweden, after the conclusion of the Treaty of 1784 with France, Sweden had remained in a disturbed condition. Bad harvests, and excessive taxation, rendered necessary by the extravagance of the king and Court, plunged the lower orders into destitution, and led to dangerous outbreaks. Many of the privileges enjoyed by the Orders and the Diet had been infringed, and in 1786 a deadlock between the king and the Diet brought matters to a crisis. A war with Russia seemed the best way to escape from the difficulties of the so-called Constitutional Government, and to regain some of the lost provinces of Sweden. A secret treaty was made with Turkey, and the cession of Carelia and Livonia to Sweden, and of the Crimea to Turkey, was demanded from Catherine. On July 2, 1788, Gustavus arrived in Finland, and war between Russia and Sweden by sea and by land at once broke out. St. Petersburg was defenceless, and a single decisive success would have placed the Russian capital at the mercy of the Swedish king. But Greig, the Scottish admiral of the Russian fleet, held his own in the naval battle of Hogland, on July 17, and a mutiny — due to the intrigues of Catherine II. — in

Finland of the Swedish officers who refused to take part in a war not sanctioned by the Diet, and who signed an armistice with the Tsarina, completely reversed the position of affairs.

**The Danes attack Sweden.**

From his desperate plight Gustavus was extricated by the Danish invasion of Sweden. Denmark, the traditional foe of Sweden, and closely bound to Russia by treaties, no sooner saw her ally attacked by Gustavus than she prepared to come to her assistance; and in September 1788 Sweden was invaded by a Danish army under Prince Charles of Hesse-Cassel. Not even during the latter years of the reign of Adolphus Frederick had the independence of Sweden been in similar danger. 'The army was in open mutiny; the fleet was blockaded in Sveaborg; a Russian squadron occupied the Gulf of Bothnia; a combined Russo-Danish squadron swept the Cattegat; a Danish army . . . was advancing upon Gothenburg. . . . Confusion reigned in the capital, panic in the provinces. A perplexed Senate, a treacherous nobility, a stupefied population, were anxiously watching every movement of a defenceless king.'[1] From this desperate position Sweden was rescued by the efforts of her king, supported by the Triple Alliance. Early in September Gustavus hastened to Dalecarlia, and roused the peasants of that warlike district to march to the aid of Gothenburg, which the Danes were preparing to besiege.

**The Intervention of the Triple Alliance.**

The loyalty of the Dalesmen and the energy of Gustavus saved Gothenburg for the moment; while the members of the Triple Alliance, all of whom were interested in maintaining the balance of power in the north, and preventing the Baltic from becoming a Russian lake, intervened actively and decisively on behalf of Sweden. Denmark, threatened by the Prussian army and the English fleet, was forced to yield, and an armistice was signed between Sweden and Denmark in October 1788. Before the end of November the entire Danish army had left Sweden, and Gustavus took advantage of his popularity to

[1] R. Nisbet Bain, *Gustavus III. and his Contemporaries*, vol. ii. pp. 31–2.

summon the Diet in February 1789, and, supported by the army and the lower orders, drew up the 'Act of Unity and Security,' which, largely augmenting the royal prerogative, conferred on the king the right of declaring peace and war, of contracting alliances, and of summoning the Diet. Though the Estates still had control over the purse, the Diet was restricted from debating on any measures not introduced by the king's permission, and the Senate was practically deprived of all power. The *coup d'état* of 1789 was the complement of that of 1772. From a limited monarchy the Swedish Government had become a despotism. Both revolutions can be justified on the ground that they saved Sweden from becoming a Russian province.

**Revolution in Sweden, 1789.**

Though Gustavus, having overcome his domestic opponents, continued the war with Russia, all immediate danger of absorption by the Muscovite Power had passed away. The Triple Alliance had exhibited its determination to preserve the balance in the Baltic, and, as far as possible, to set limits to the northern war. It now endeavoured to emulate the successful diplomacy of Villeneuve in 1739, and to bring about a separate peace between Austria and Turkey. The year 1789 proved disastrous to the Turkish cause. On the 7th of April Abdul Hamid died, and though his successor, Selim III., showed energy and determination, the Russians and Austrians won a series of successes. Russian troops marched through Moldavia; Prince Repnin defeated the Turks, on September 20, at Ismail; and Potemkin, after winning the battle of Tobac in Bessarabia, captured Bender on November 14. The Austrians had been equally successful. The united forces of Coburg and Suvórov overthrew the Turks at Foksany on July 31, and in a most overwhelming manner on the Rymnik on September 22, while Clerfait drove them from the Banat, and the veteran Loudon, the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief, at the head of the Austrian main army, on October 9 carried Belgrade by storm

**The Continuance of the Russo-Turkish War in 1789.**

and occupied Servia. Following up these successes Loudon besieged Orsova, while Coburg took Bucharest, and the Prince of Hohenlohe forced the passes into Wallachia. The whole line of fortresses which defended the Turkish frontier was in the hands of the allies, and another campaign seemed likely to be followed by the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. Turkey was, however, saved by the confusion into which Joseph's policy had plunged his own dominions, and by the interposition of the Triple Alliance.

Of the disturbances in the Austrian territories those in the Netherlands were the most serious. There, by a reckless indifference to ancient rights and liberties, Joseph had given an opportunity for the outbreak of a revolutionary movement which the events of the late War of American Independence had fostered, and the success of the French revolutionists encouraged. By the end of the year 1789 Flanders had shaken itself free from the Austrian domination, and in January 1790 an Act of Union of the United Belgian Provinces was drawn up. Hungary had already entered upon the revolutionary stage; Bohemia and Galicia were ripe for revolt; it seemed that the Austrian dominions were on the verge of dissolution. These revolutionary movements, unlike the national revolt then proceeding in France, were religious and conservative, the discontent being caused by the Emperor's persistent disregard of the rights and privileges of the nobles and clergy, and his infraction of the local charters. The deposition of Joseph from the sovereignty of the Austrian Netherlands was occasioned by his violation of the ancient rights of the Belgian people, and was followed by the restoration of those customs which he had rashly abolished. The gravity of this state of things in the Netherlands cannot be over-estimated. The Austrian successes in Turkey were compromised, and an opportunity was given to the enemies of the Hapsburgs to attack the weakened Emperor.

**Revolutionary Movements in the Austrian Netherlands.**

During the year 1789 the Prussian king and his advisers had

rapidly matured their plans for taking advantage of the critical position of Joseph II. Frederick William II. was resolved to obtain Danzig and Thorn, and hoped by forcing Austria to restore Galicia to Poland to secure the coveted towns from the Poles in return for the cession of the province. By aiding the Turks in their campaign against the Austrians, and by supporting the revolt in the Netherlands, he anticipated that there would be little difficulty in compelling Joseph II. to agree to his wishes. Without consulting his allies England and Holland, the Prussian king opened negotiations with the Sultan, and at the same time suggested to England that Austrian Flanders and Holland should be formed into one republic. The English Government, which regarded the Triple Alliance as a means for pacifying Europe, refused to agree to the policy of the Prussian king, which, if carried out, seemed likely to lead to war with both Austria and France, and attempted to induce the Court of Berlin to desist from all enterprises in the Netherlands or in Galicia.[1]

**The Foreign Policy of Prussia in 1789.**

The Prussian king, however, persisted in his determination to deprive Austria both of the Netherlands and Galicia, and at the close of 1789, and during the early part of 1790, Europe was on the verge of a general European war. In spite of the efforts of the English Government to prevent Prussia from acknowledging the independence of the Netherlands, and from intervening in favour of Turkey, Frederick William, who was determined on war, continued his preparations. The Triple Alliance, which had been primarily formed for the maintenance of the peace of Europe, was only saved from dissolution by the energy of Pitt and the death of Joseph II. While agreeing with the Prussian king in his determination not to allow the establishment of French influence in the Netherlands, Pitt opposed any immediate recognition of the independence of the revolted Provinces as being likely to involve the Triple Alliance in hostilities with the Emperor, and refused to join in any offensive operations against Russia and Austria. On February 20,

[1] Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. p. 241.

1790, Joseph II. died in his forty-ninth year, leaving his country at war with Turkey, on the verge of war with Prussia and Poland, and honeycombed with discontent and revolution. His attempts during the last months of his life to undo the effects of some of his reckless acts came too late to secure the pacification of his dominions. His re-establishment, on December 8, 1789, of the ancient Hungarian Constitution; his endeavour to induce Pius VI. to aid him in recalling the Belgians to their allegiance; his willingness to treat with Turkey; his restoration of their privileges to his Tyrolean and Galician subjects, all implied the conviction on the part of the Emperor that his reign had been a failure. Nevertheless, his withdrawal of reforms and restoration of privileges —though a painful sacrifice to the dying monarch — did not imply that he had 'failed in everything he undertook.' His Edict of Toleration and his national system of education remained; his efforts to relieve the poor from serfdom and feudal burdens proved a permanent benefit to the Austrian people, while the value of his administrative reforms is now fully recognised. His reign had only been a failure within certain limits. In the Austrian Netherlands and in Hungary he failed, being opposed by 'men trained in the school of political resistance.' In the Austrian Crown lands his work was permanent. While in Hungary the old *régime*, on the whole, held its ground, and the era of reform was postponed till the middle of the present century, in the German portion of the dominions of the Hapsburgs the material and social condition of the people was vastly improved, though at the expense of their political liberty. Of Joseph's reforms some were premature, and others were carried out with an unfortunate precipitancy, a want of tact, and a disregard of the temper of his subjects.

**Death of Joseph II., Feb. 1790.**

**How far was Joseph's Reign a Failure?**

During the reign of the Emperor 'the public welfare had gained enormously by the extirpation of serfdom; agriculture, manufacturing industry, and trade had received a mighty impulse; the power of the state had been enormously in-

creased.'[1] He had sought the good of his people; he had ever been the champion of humanity. Of his country's prospects and requirements his judgment was sound, and later generations have appreciated his realisation of the necessity of unity. It remains, however, an undoubted fact that his attempt to carry out an ambitious foreign policy simultaneously with the promotion of drastic reforms not only brought about revolution in his own dominions, but threatened to involve Europe in a mighty war.

**Hostile Attitude of Prussia, 1790.**

In February 1790 Prussia had made an alliance with Turkey, and had promised to endeavour to induce the other members of the Triple Alliance, as well as Sweden and Poland, to ally with the Porte. On March 29, Prussia made a treaty with Poland, each country guaranteeing the territories of the other. From a great extension of the war, which these treaties seemed to render inevitable, Europe was saved by several circumstances. In the Netherlands the rise of a democratic party, which, headed by Francis Vonck, adopted French revolutionary principles, entirely upset the calculations of England and Prussia with regard to the future government of the Belgian Provinces. Opposition to the cession of Danzig and Thorn began to manifest itself in Poland, while the Emperor Leopold, though anxious to restore peace to his dominions, was determined not to sanction the addition of those towns to the Prussian kingdom. England and Holland, delighted at the firm and conciliatory attitude of Leopold, at once decided to aid him to regain his Belgian provinces, due provision being made for the restoration of the Constitution and the publication of an amnesty. In spite, however, of the change in the European situation caused by the death of Joseph, Prussia was still bent on war, and the policy of her king remained the main danger to the peace of Europe.

**Obstacles in the Way of Prussia.**

[1] Hausser, *Deutsche Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 153. Quoted by Herman Merivale, *Historical Studies*, p. 46.

In a despatch to Leopold the views of Frederick William's Minister, Hertzberg, were enumerated. Galicia was to be restored to Poland, and Prussia was to receive Danzig and Thorn. As compensation for her loss of Galicia, Austria was to receive from the Porte all the territory gained at the Peace of Passarowitz; and Russia, restoring to Sweden the limits of Finland at the time of the Peace of Nystad, was to be given the district and town of Ochákov. Undeterred by the threat of the Prussian ratification of the treaty with Turkey, or by the possible recognition by Frederick William of the independence of the Austrian Netherlands, Leopold refused to cede Galicia, and war against Turkey was pursued with vigour. In May he expressed to the British envoy at Vienna his readiness to make peace with Turkey without obtaining more than a small extension of territory, to restore the ancient constitution of the Netherlands, and to observe the Barrier Treaty. At the same time, he intimated that an unsuccessful war might drive him into purchasing the French alliance by a cession of a portion of the Belgian Provinces.[1] The King of Prussia, discovering that he was not supported by the Maritime Powers, and that Poland steadily opposed the cession of Danzig and Thorn, consented to make overtures to Leopold. Hertzberg's elaborate plan fell to the ground; and the Emperor having, with consummate diplomatic skill, isolated Prussia, opened negotiations at Reichenbach. Frederick William was induced to believe that Hertzberg had involved him in dangerous complications, and, hastily reversing the traditional policy of jealousy of Austria, agreed, on July 27, to the Convention of Reichenbach. Austria undertook to give up all her conquests, to make peace with Turkey under the mediation of the Triple Alliance, to restore to the Netherlands their ancient constitution, and to grant an amnesty; Prussia promised, while guaranteeing the Austrian rule in the Netherlands, to relinquish all attempts to secure Danzig and Thorn.

**Hertzberg's Scheme.**

**The Convention of Reichenbach, July 27, 1790.**

[1] Coxe, *House of Austria*, vol. ii. p. 671.

Hertzberg, who, like Kaunitz, had thrown serious obstacles in the way of peace, succeeded in introducing a clause that if Austria extended her frontiers on the side of Turkey, she should award a similar advantage to Prussia. Leopold and his Vice-Chancellor Cobenzl had won a great diplomatic victory over both Kaunitz and the Prussian war party, and the peace policy of England and Holland had triumphed.

On October 4 Leopold was crowned Emperor, and on November 15, King of Hungary. He at once posed as head of the Empire, protested against the action of the French Constituent Assembly with regard to the German princes in Alsace, Lorraine, and French Courts,[1] established his power firmly in Hungary, and having satisfied the envoys of England, Prussia, and Holland at the Congress of the Hague in October, rapidly reconquered Belgium, Brussels capitulating on the 2d of December.[2]

**Leopold re-establishes the Imperial Authority, 1790.**

An armistice was made with the Turks at Giurgevo on September 19, 1790, and after many delays the Treaty of Sistova was signed on August 14, 1791. Loudon, the rival of Frederick the Great, had died the previous month at the age of seventy-four, and his death and the conclusion of the Turkish war closed a period of struggles which had grown out of the Eastern ambitions of Joseph II., and the rivalry of Austria and Prussia. In spite of the terms agreed upon at Sistova, and in violation of the Treaty of Reichenbach, Austria obtained by a separate Convention the district of Orsova, with the understanding that Old Orsova was not to be fortified.[3]

**The Peace of Sistova, Aug. 14, 1791.**

Russia had already, on August 15, 1790, agreed to the Peace of Verela with Sweden, Gustavus III. being anxious to ally with Russia in order, in the interests of monarchy, to counteract the efforts of the French Revolution which had

[1] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. ii. p. 194, note.

[2] Wolf und Zwiedineck-Südenhorst, *Oesterreich unter Maria Theresia, Joseph II., und Leopold II.* (Oncken Series), book iv.

[3] Sybel, *History of the French Revolution* (translated), vol. i. p. 352.

broken out the previous year. With Turkey, Russia signed preliminaries of peace at Galatz on August 11, 1791. Though deprived of the services of her ally, Catherine had continued to win victories in 1790. On December 22, Suvórov had taken Ismail, and in the Kuban and Caucasus the Russian arms were equally successful. The anti-Russian policy of Pitt, who was now thoroughly alive to the danger to the balance of power from the continued successes of the Muscovite arms, failed to command the general support of the country, and he was compelled to desist from his attempt to force the Tsarina to restore Ochákov. Catherine, however, in spite of her two brilliant victories in July 1791, and notwithstanding the weakness of the Triple Alliance, was ready for peace. Like Gustavus III., she was anxious to observe the course of events in France, and to take advantage of the attack on the French revolutionists by Austria and Prussia, in order to carry out her policy in Poland. On January 9, 1792, rather more than two months after the death of Potemkin, peace with the Turks was signed at Jassy. The Treaty of Kainardji was confirmed, the Porte, however, recognising the annexation of the Crimea, and the cession of Ochákov and its districts to the Dniester. The triumph of Catherine was complete. England had been baffled; Sweden was no longer hostile; in 1798 Russia and Turkey signed a treaty of alliance for eight years; Prussia had ceased to be a danger. The Treaty of Reichenbach had dealt a serious blow to the position of the Hohenzollerns in Europe. 'Prussia, though she had dictated the conditions of the Treaty of Reichenbach, had been completely duped.' By consenting to that treaty, Frederick William had abandoned the clear policy of Frederick the Great. His treaties with Poland and Turkey fell to the ground, Sweden found she could no longer rely on the Triple Alliance, and Saxony refused to follow the lead of Prussia.[1] Leopold again secured the ascendency of Austria in Germany, he had estab-

**The Treaties of Verela, Aug. 15, 1790; and Jassy, Jan. 4, 1792.**

**Europe on the Verge of the Wars of the French Revolution.**

[1] *See* Seely, *Life and Times of Stein*, vol. i.

lished his hold upon Hungary, he had restored the Austrian rule in Belgium. Frederick William's confidence in Austria was entirely misplaced, and for some years Prussian foreign policy lost its independent character. Without statesmen, diplomatists, or generals; without a ruler capable of guiding the country with vigour and resolution during the stormy revolutionary period, Prussia entered upon a new era which ended with Jena and the occupation of Berlin by the French.

The years between 1789 and 1792 close one period of European History and usher in another. In 1789 the French Revolution, which coloured and directed the policy of Europe, broke out; in 1790 Austria deserted the Russian alliance and made a treaty with Prussia; in 1792 Austria and Prussia embarked on a war with France, which rapidly involved the whole of Europe.

At the beginning of 1792 Turkey was left at peace, and Russia determined to carry out the final partitions of Poland, while, before the year was over, England was preparing for that struggle with France, which affected not only her own history, but also the history of the civilised world. In that struggle Russia took a conspicuous part, and justified the efforts which Catherine had made throughout her reign, to place her country on an equality with the great western nations. With the outbreak of the French Revolution, the eighteeth century comes to an end, and with it the rule of the enlightened reformers and the philanthropic despots. For the sudden collapse of the European system, for the temporary overthrow of the balance of power, the rising of the French nation against its rulers was mainly responsible.

# CHAPTER XIV

## FRANCE BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

### 1774–1789

Louis XVI. — Marie Antoinette — Condition of France — Opening Years of the Reign — Turgot — His Reforms — Resignation of Malesherbes — Fall of Turgot — Saint-Germain's Military Reforms — Necker's First Ministry — His Fall — Social, Intellectual, and Material State of France in 1781 — Montesquieu and Voltaire — The Encyclopædists — Rosseau — The *Contrat Social* — Influence of the Queen after 1781 — The Reaction — Joly de Fleury — D'Ormesson — Calonne — Loménie de Brienne — Exile of the *Parlement* — The May Edicts, 1788 — Revolutionary Movements in Dauphiny and elsewhere — Necker's Second Ministry — The *Résultat du Conseil* — The Elections of 1789 — The States-General at Versailles, May 1, 1789.

**Louis XVI.**

Louis XVI. was twenty years old when he became King of France, having been born in 1754. His father, the eldest son of Louis XV., had died in 1765; his mother was Maria Josepha of Saxony. In 1770 he married Marie Antoinette, and had two sons and one daughter. Of the former the eldest died at the age of ten in 1789, the younger, the unfortunate Louis XVII., died in 1795; his daughter, known as Madame Royale, after experiencing the horrors of the Revolution, married the Duc d'Angoulême, the son of Charles X. Though virtuous, honest, pious, and well-meaning, and endowed with many of those qualities which in quiet times would make a ruler popular, Louis XVI. was peculiarly unsuited to guide France through a period of political agitation and financial confusion. He had no knowledge of politics; he was feeble, vacillating, and sluggish. Fully conscious of his incapacity to rule a great people in critical times, his efforts were

ruined by a want of confidence in himself and a constitutional inability to arrive at a decision. No man had better intentions or was more desirous to do his duty. He often worked twelve hours a day, and personally supervised the correspondence of his ministers. 'He was,' writes Burke, 'a prince, the acts of whose whole reign were a series of concessions to his subjects, who was willing to relax his authority, to remit his prerogatives, to call his people to a share of freedom not known, perhaps not desired, by their ancestors.' Without any power of initiation, he showed himself always ready to support measures designed to benefit the French people. During the fifteen years between his accession and the outbreak of the Revolution, many admirable reforms were carried out with the full assent of the king.[1] As soon as he recognised the necessity of summoning the States-General, he was fully prepared to accept loyally the consequences of his action. Unfortunately he was indolent, weak, and infirm of purpose; he was easily influenced by others, and his good intentions were often ruined by the subordination of his own will to that of his advisers. His refusal to include Choiseul among his ministers was mainly due to the action taken by the Duke against the Jesuits; while his decision to remove Turgot was caused in part by his uneasiness at the latter's religious opinions, in part by his reluctance to interfere with the property and the feudal rights of the nobles. Strongly impressed with his position as an absolute monarch, he seems to have recognised the mistake of entering into the American struggle, but in this as in many other matters he allowed himself to be overruled by his advisers. Good sense, benevolence, scrupulousness, and moderation availed nothing at a time when a strong Government was needed to save the French monarchy. Only of foreign politics did Louis show any real grasp. Like Louis XV., *il connaissait les affaires de l'Europe infiniment mieux que celles de la France.*[2] Marie Antoinette was not

[1] For the reign of Louis XVI. see generally Droz, *Histoire de Louis XVI.*; and Rocquain, *L'Esprit Révolutionnaire avant la Révolution.*

[2] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i. p. 299.

permitted to exercise any influence over the department of foreign affairs, and, in spite of the approach of national bankruptcy, France held, till the death of Vergennes in 1787, a brilliant position in European politics.

**Marie Antoinette.**

His wife, the celebrated Marie Antoinette, whose character has now been completely cleared from the malicious charges brought against it before and during the Revolution, played a considerable part in the politics of the reign. With a charming manner, she was well suited to preside over the brilliant Court and society of Paris. Superior to her husband in ability, she constantly interfered with ministerial appointments, and her love of political intrigues alarmed both Maria Theresa and Joseph II. Unfortunately, she made no attempt to inspire her husband with that amount of independence of judgment and firmness which would have saved France from many disasters, and her influence was used, as a rule, to support some mistaken policy or an incompetent minister. With no knowledge or experience of politics, her fate, at the hands of a mob of irresponsible fanatics who disgraced civilisation by their ferocity and vandalism, must not blind us to the fact that, previous to the Revolution, Marie Antoinette's frequent interference in affairs of state, especially after 1781, was detrimental to the interests of France; while her extravagance, and the luxury and expenditure of the French Court, largely accentuated the difficulties of the Government.

**The Necessity for a Strong Ruler in 1774.**

In 1774 France was divided into *Pays d'État* and *Pays d'Élection*. In the former, the five outlying provinces, local Estates indeed existed; but during the eighteenth century those of Languedoc and Brittany alone showed any signs of vitality. The remaining provinces were governed by intendants and their *subdélégués*. The nobles, though they possessed privileges, had no longer any governing powers, and either lived in Paris or served in the army. A very large number of small peasant proprietors were to be found all over the country, whose lives were burdened by the exactions of their lords, by the Government *Corvées*, and

by compulsory service in the militia. The cleavage between classes, caused by the absenteeism and exactions of the nobles, together with the almost entire exemption from taxation enjoyed by the privileged orders, had, by the accession of Louis XVI., become very serious. Revolution could only be averted by sweeping financial reforms and honest administration. To carry out such a programme an able and energetic ruler was required, who would appoint competent ministers and support wise measures.

**The Opening of the Reign.**

On his accession, Louis attempted to satisfy popular expectation and inaugurate a new era in French history. Before the year was closed, the Triumvirate had been replaced by a new ministry. Louis XV. had, before his death, regretted the loss of Choiseul; but the young king passed over his claims, and, after hesitating between Machault, Bernis, and Maurepas, decided, by the advice of his aunt, Madame Adelaide, who had frequently counselled his father, to place Maurepas at the head of affairs. Jean Frédéric Phélypeaux, Comte de Maurepas, who was over seventy years of age, had been, from his youth, trained to official life. From 1723 to 1744 he was Minister of Marine, and his retirement was due to the loss of the favour of Madame de Pompadour. He was wanting in administrative power, and made no honest attempt to grapple with the difficulties of the situation. His influence over Louis, which was considerable, was used to the detriment of the national interests, for he encouraged the king in his unwillingness to arrive at a decision.

The other members of the ministry were Hue de Miroménil, who succeeded Maupeou in November 1774 as Chancellor; the Maréchal Du Muy, who was soon succeeded by the Comte de Saint-Germain, Minister of War; the Comte de Vergennes, who in June took the place of d'Aiguillon as Minister of Foreign Affairs; the Duc de la Vrillière, who was given the charge of the King's Household, and who in July 1775 was succeeded by Malesherbes; and Turgot, who on July 20 was nominated to

the Ministry of Marine, which office he held till August 24, when he replaced Terray as Comptroller-General of the Finances.

Turgot's ministry lasted till May 12, 1776, and formed a noteworthy page in French history.[1] Never had the necessity for sweeping reforms been more urgent. The partial revival of enterprise under Louis xv. had come too late; France, entangled in costly campaigns in Germany during the Seven Years' War, had lost all control of the ocean highways, her possessions in Canada, and her pretensions to supremacy in India. The *coup d'état* of January 14, 1771, had not been followed by beneficial measures. Terray had abrogated the royal declaration of May 25, 1763, permitting the free circulation of corn throughout France, and, while the expenditure of the Court proceeded unchecked, his reckless measures hurried France along in the direction of bankruptcy. Turgot hoped that Louis would reform abuses by his own spontaneous acts. On May 30, 1774, Maria Theresa had written to Marie Antoinette: — 'France has immense resources; there are also enormous abuses, but these latter are themselves a resource, since by their abolition the king will obtain the blessing of his people. The prospect is indeed fair and noble.'[2] It was not too late; the traditional loyalty of the French to their king still existed; it only required a judicious course of conduct, and a firmness of will, to enable Louis xvi. to seize the opportunity that now presented itself, and to make himself as powerful as Louis xiv. But, unlike Maria Theresa, Louis xvi. did not understand the opportunity, and had no clear grasp of the situation. In Turgot, however, he possessed a minister who had a thorough knowledge of the existing abuses, and who was animated by a desire to benefit France.

**Turgot's Ministry, 1774–76.**

Turgot, who was born on May 10, 1724, was a disciple of Quesnay, the founder of the School of *Physiocrats*, who held that land was the sole source of wealth, and had been the

[1] *See* De Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime.*

[2] *Correspondence*, published by MM. d'Arneth and Geffroy, vol. ii. p. 155.

intendant of Limoges from 1761 to 1774. His administration of that province had been most successful, and he now placed the benefits of his experience at the service of the king. Steeped in the philosophic ideas of his time, Turgot was, like many of his contemporaries, determined to carry out his beneficial measures by means of the royal authority. A martyr to gout, his dictatorial conduct alienated many who otherwise might have supported him; while his disregard of the state of public opinion nullified to some extent his knowledge of the necessary remedies for the existing abuses and his desire for the public good. Prepared with a number of reforms, he was resolved to practise the most rigid economy. Had he been allowed to persevere with his designs there is no reason to doubt that revolutionary movements would have been averted, and necessary reforms gradually effected. Liberal aspirations were, at this period, widely diffused; the Society of the Economists had been founded in 1767, and the taxation of the privileged classes who themselves denounced abuses, was recognised among thinking men as imperatively demanded by the disorder into which the finances had fallen.

The first acts of Louis XVI. had encouraged the friends of progress. He had dispensed with his right to 'joyous accession,' and the queen to her right to the 'royal girdle,' while his dismissal of Maupeou and appointment of Turgot had delighted the nation. But these wise measures had been followed by the recall of the *Parlements* in August 1774, in direct opposition to the wish of Turgot and Du Muy. This reinstatement was a profound blunder, and complicated and hampered Turgot's schemes for the rearrangement of taxation and the commutation of feudal rights.

Turgot's first measures were the re-establishment of the freedom of the corn trade on September 13, 1774, the abolition of the gratuities of the Farmers-General — who were contractors for the collection of a large portion of the taxes — to the courtiers, the reform of the abuses in the assessment and collection of the town

**Turgot's First Measures.**

dues, and the removal of the disabilities of foreigners. In 1775 he relieved the small farmers and manufacturers, put down with a firm hand some bread riots, probably instigated by the nobles, and which at one time assumed dangerous proportions, and removed monopolies. Supported by Malesherbes, who, on July 19, 1775, had succeeded la Vrillière, the old minister of Louis XV., Turgot continued his work of reform. While agreeing in their belief in the possibility of regenerating France, the two ministers differed with regard to the position to be taken by the king. Malesherbes advocated the convocation of the States-General; while Turgot, imbued with the spirit of the eighteenth-century reforms, had no wish to strengthen the popular element in the Government, and was anxious that Louis should pose as a patriot king, and reorganise the nation by his own spontaneous acts. During the remainder of his administration he carried out numerous reforms, with a feverish energy worthy of Joseph II. The reform of Government contracts, the abolition of sinecures, the freedom of the wine trade (April 1776), and the suppression of the *Corvée* and the *Jurandes*, summarise the chief measures enacted during the latter months of 1775 and the early days of 1776. Of these, the abolition of the *Corvée* and the *Jurandes* was the most important. 'The institution of the *Corvée*, or the forced employment of the peasants, without payment, upon the making and repairing of the roads,'[1] was a glaring abuse which had been established by Orry in 1737. The injustice of this pernicious system, which threw the whole burden of making and repairing the roads upon the peasantry, was undeniable, and Turgot proposed to substitute a tax paid by all landowners. In spite of the opposition of the privileged orders, the king supported Turgot, and the edict was signed on January 6, 1776. He was equally successful in his attack on the *Jurandes*, or the government of privileged corporations. In France the old complicated mediæval trade laws and customs still held their ground,

**The Abolition of the Corvée and the Jurandes.**

[1] W. Walker Stephens, *Life and Writings of Turgot*, p. 41.

and on February 5 the edict abrogating the system was enacted, followed by four other edicts having for their object the repeal of obstacles in the way of the provisioning of Paris. These six edicts were strenuously opposed by the *Parlement* of Paris, and only obtained the force of law after a *Lit de Justice* on March 12. The disastrous effects of the restoration of the *Parlements* were at once seen. Round the *Parlement* of Paris gathered all opponents of reform, including the queen, the king's brother, the Comte de Provence, the financiers, the ladies of the Court, the clergy, and the merchants. Maurepas joined the ranks of the opposition, and Marie Antoinette, furious at the recall of her *protégé*, the Comte de Guines, the French Ambassador in London, and unable to secure the overthrow of Vergennes, urged the dismissal of Turgot, whose manners and economies she disliked, and who had opposed her favourite.[1] All the classes who were affected by his proposed measures of toleration, his abolition of the *Jurandes*, his attacks on privileges, conspired against him. The poorer classes themselves had not had time to appreciate the value of his reforms, and a bad harvest rendered him temporarily unpopular. A criticism of his so-called budget for 1776 was laid before Louis, who had always disliked Turgot's views on religion, and who had begun to resent the dictatorial tone adopted by his austere and somewhat pedantic minister. Governed by general maxims, Turgot, like Joseph II., failed to realise the impossibility of carrying out a vast number of reforms within a very short period. He was totally devoid of the art of managing men; and had he shown more tact, it is not improbable that, supported by Louis, he might have been allowed to continue his reforming measures.[2] The king's confidence in Turgot had been further shaken by the persistent attacks upon, and intrigues against, his policy; and the minister's position was seriously affected by the retirement, on May 10, of Malesherbes, who,

**Registration of the Six Acts, March 12, 1776.**

[1] Maxime de la Rocheterie, *Histoire de Marie Antoinette*, p. 225.

[2] Nourrisson, *Trois Révolutionnaires: Turgot, Necker, Bailly*, p. 120.

despairing of overcoming the opposition to his proposed reforms, refused to remain in office, and was succeeded by Amelot, one of Maurepas' creatures. Simultaneously with the measures of Turgot, Malesherbes had also endeavoured to remove abuses. In sympathy with the philosophers, he showed tolerance of their opinions, he improved the condition of the prisons and hospitals, he released many prisoners from the Bastille. He desired the convocation of the States-General, and he attempted, though without success, to abolish *lettres de cachets*, to prevent arbitrary imprisonment in the future, and to destroy a privilege often accorded to the courtiers and their friends, of postponing the payment of their debts (*arrêts de surséance*). In vain he urged the re-establishment of the Edict of Nantes, or at least a modification in the treatment meted out to the Protestants; in vain he pleaded for the suppression of torture. Though animated with a real wish to benefit France, Malesherbes, who wanted firmness and resolution, was not strong enough to force his views upon the Government in face of the opposition of the queen and Maurepas; and discouraged at his failure to carry out all his proposed reforms, he retired from the Government.[1]

**Retirement of Malesherbes, May 10, 1776.**

On May 12, 1776, Turgot, the only man who could have saved the French monarchy, fell. In a letter to Maria Theresa, Mercy expresses the truth when he says that 'as the Comptroller-General enjoyed a great reputation for integrity, and was beloved by the people, it was a melancholy thing that his dismissal should be in part the queen's work.'[2] And he declares that 'the king is compromised in the sight of the public, who are ignorant of none of the circumstances, and are well aware that the responsible cause of them is the will of the queen.' Turgot had not been in office long enough to submit his scheme of local self-government to the king and council. According to this scheme good administration was to be arrived at by means of a series

**Fall of Turgot, May 12, 1776.**

[1] Nourrisson, *Trois Révolutionnaires: Turgot, Necker, Bailly*, p. 130.

[2] Mercy to Maria Theresa, May 16, 1776. Arneth, ii. p. 446.

of councils, beginning with the villages and towns, from which deputies were to be sent to a larger municipality of the *arrondissement*, or district, and from these representatives were to be sent to the general assembly of the province. This series of elective assemblies, parochial, municipal, and provincial, was to culminate in a grand municipality in Paris, formed of the ministers and elected members from the provincial assemblies. While all legislative powers were to remain with the king and council, this National Assembly was to 'have the ultimate voice in administrative matters,' to inaugurate a system of national education, and to advise the Government. Like Leopold of Tuscany, Joseph II., Charles III. of Spain, and Gustavus III., Turgot belonged to that class of reformers who, while strengthening the bonds of union between the king and his people, desired that all reforms should proceed from the ruler himself. His financial measures had met with extraordinary success. He had refused to impose new taxes or to make any new loans; he had restored public confidence in the credit of the Government; and by means of the strictest economy, he left a surplus of eleven millions. Writing of Malesherbes and Turgot, Voltaire expressed the despair of the reformers when he said: — 'I shall never console myself for having seen rise and perish the golden age which these two ministers were preparing for us.'[1]

**Saint-Germain's Military Reforms, 1775-77.**

The Comte de Saint-Germain alone of the reforming ministers remained in office. From 1775 to 1777 he endeavoured, with some success, to return to the traditions of Louvois, to check abuses, and to render the army discipline efficient. He managed to carry out many valuable reforms, all in the direction of economy, education, drill, and the diminution of the privileges of the nobles. But though a man of great ability, and fully alive to the necessity of an army able to meet that of Austria or Prussia on equal terms, he alienated the soldiers by intro-

[1] Voltaire, quoted by Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. p. 389.

ducing the drill and rigid discipline of Frederick the Great, and the nobles by abolishing the Mousquetaires and other expensive bodies of household troops, and by compelling the younger officers to qualify by serving as non-commissioned officers for a time. His successors, especially the Comte de Brienne, Minister of War from September 1787 to August 1788, continued and developed his policy, which, in spite of some mistakes, was calculated to restore the prestige of the French army.

Turgot's measures met with a different fate. His fall had caused the utmost consternation among all those who hoped for reform, and was speedily followed by a reaction. Clugny, an intendant of Bordeaux, became Comptroller-General, and the credit of the French Government was sensibly lowered. On August 11 the *Corvées* were re-established, and the *Jurandes* on August 19. In the following month, free trade in corn was again suppressed. The withdrawal of Turgot's great reforms caused deep dissatisfaction. On Clugny's death in October 1776, he was succeeded by Taboureau des Réaux; but the management of the finances was intrusted to Necker, a Genevese banker, whose first term of office extended from October 1776 to May 1781. Narrow-minded and unsympathetic, Necker had little knowledge of the real needs of the French people. Like Turgot, he hoped, by administrative and financial reforms, to avert any serious disturbances. He did not belong to the advanced reforming party, nor was he in accord with the Court. During the years of Necker's first ministry, the reaction against Turgot's measures was checked, and the policy of reform was continued to a modified extent. Under the title of Director of the Finances, Necker attempted to check the extravagance of the Court, to restore the credit of the Government, to introduce economies into the public service, and to carry out a number of beneficial measures. A financier rather than a statesman, he inspired confidence among the commercial classes. He was strongly opposed to all con-

**Necker's First Ministry, Oct. 1776 to May 1781.**

stitutional changes, and did not sympathise with the principles of the *Contrat Social.* Like Turgot, he wished to revive and utilise the provincial assemblies, and proposed to give them considerable administrative and taxative powers, and to restrict the *Parlements* to judicial work.

At first his measures seemed likely to have advantageous results for the monarchy. To meet the war expenditure he lessened the number of Receivers-General and Treasurers of the army and navy, besides making large reductions in the royal household. By a series of edicts he prepared the way for the abolition of tolls on roads and rivers, and the suppression of the system of farming the taxes; and at the same time he endeavoured to prevent the increase of the taille and other direct taxes, and to create provincial assemblies, which should gradually absorb the duties of the intendants and the *subdélégués.* In January 1781, in accordance with his policy of looking to public opinion for support, he published his famous *Compte Rendu de l'État des finances,* which revealed to the nation the seriousness of the financial crisis. His *Compte Rendu* was seized upon by the opponents of the monarchy; and the privileged and official classes, who were furious at Necker's reforming ideas, demanded his downfall. The *Parlement* of Paris joined the opposition, which included Maurepas and Vergennes. In spite of the support of the queen, Necker insisted on resigning his office in May 1781. With his fall ended the period of administrative reform.

From 1781 reactionary and progressive tendencies struggled for the mastery. The popularity of the American war strengthened the Government, and all anticipations of coming evil seemed unlikely to be realised. 'No one,' writes Ségur, 'dreamed of a Revolution, though it was forming rapidly in opinions.' The king and queen were to all appearances popular, and the birth of the Dauphin was received with genuine expressions of loyalty. The French Court and society were never so brilliant, intellectual activity was never so great

**Social, Material, and Intellectual Condition of France between 1781 and 1789.**

as during the years immediately preceding the Revolution. Paris itself had never appeared richer or more prosperous. 'On my return from America,' wrote Ségur, 'I found the Court and society of Paris more flourishing than ever;' and he continues to speak of the extraordinary progress in agriculture, manufactures, commerce, literature, and science.[1] France had increased enormously in wealth after the Peace of Versailles; commerce and industry advanced by leaps and bounds. 'The French trade,' wrote Arthur Young in 1789, 'has almost doubled since the Peace of 1763.' Equally rapid was the progress in science and art. 'A spirit of innovation and speculation, a love of liberty and toleration, an immense hopefulness, and a disposition to underrate all difficulties, almost universally characterised French society.'[2]

**Montesquieu and Voltaire.**

Into this society the new spirit of enlightenment had already penetrated. During the first half of the century, while the writings of Montesquieu gave an impetus to the extraordinary intellectual development in France, the effect of the works of Voltaire, upon the habits and thoughts of his contemporaries, was immense. Influenced by the writings of English philosophers and English institutions, Montesquieu and Voltaire attempted respectively to limit the despotism of the Bourbons, and to destroy superstition and intolerance in France. Montesquieu died in 1755; but Voltaire lived through the reign of Louis XV., and did not die till 1778.

Of the many assailants of authority, tradition, and custom, Voltaire was the most famous. He opposed the French *Parlements* equally with the French Church, and rejoiced at the overthrow of the former in 1771. Monarchical in his views on government, he advocated administrative reforms, and especially the liberty of the press. His close relations with

[1] *Vide* Aubertin, *L'Esprit public au XVIII^me^ Siècle*, p. 485.

[2] Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. p. 395. 'He who did not live before 1789,' Talleyrand once said, 'had never known the charm of life.'

Frederick the Great and Catherine II. during certain periods of his life were incompatible with schemes for political equality. He had no sympathy with democratic opinions; and, while an advocate of the ideas which Turgot had attempted to realise, he looked to an enlightened despot to check ecclesiastical aggressions, to abolish barbarous laws and the remains of feudalism, and to initiate and carry out measures for the good of the people. Aiming at religious and intellectual liberty, and holding a cosmopolitan position in Europe, Voltaire stands out as one of the most representative figures of the eighteenth century.

Whilst during the first half of the century, Montesquieu, with his *Lettres Persanes* and his *Esprit des Lois*, began the attack on the ancient institutions of France, and Voltaire by his versatility made the philosophic and literary movement popular, and gave it that tone of irreligion which stamped it for so many years, the influence of Diderot, Rousseau, and their followers gradually became paramount during the second half of the period. In 1751 the famous *Encyclopédie* made its appearance, and included among is contributors Diderot, Rousseau, d'Alembert, Turgot, Buffon, and Marmontel. Though suppressed for a time, during the conflict between Louis XV. and the *Parlement* of Paris, it was allowed to appear again in 1754, and continued its attacks on all the existing institutions and beliefs, on inequalities of taxation, wars, the corruption of justice, and, above all, upon the system of thought resting on authority. The emancipation of mankind, the increase of the influence of reason, the removal of all religious and political errors, were the objects aimed at by this bold group of writers who, with energy and brilliancy, attempted to introduce sweeping economic, political, and social reforms.

**The Encyclopædists.**

Of the Encyclopædists, Diderot and d'Alembert, by their ardent efforts for the improvement of mankind, became recognised as the foremost champions of the intellectual revolution. They aimed at nothing less than the establishment of a com-

plete system of education succeeding the destruction of the monarchy and the Church, and were in sympathy with the school of thinkers known as the Physiocrats, who, led by Quesnay and Turgot, advocated free trade, free agriculture, and free industry, and laid down the maxim, *Laissez faire et laissez passer* as the only cure for the economic evils from which France was suffering. They regarded the land as the sole source of wealth, they urged equality, they insisted on the necessity of national education.

In spite of their zeal for reforms, neither the Encyclopædists nor the Physiocrats, nor Montesquieu nor Voltaire reached the masses, who, isolated and cut off from communication with the upper and middle classes, remained sunk in ignorance or despair.

It was left for Rousseau to rouse the French nation and to exercise a powerful influence, not only upon all sections of his countrymen, but also upon European society. In 1762 the *Contrat Social* was published, and the sovereignty of the people was declared to the world. 'Man was born free, and is everywhere in chains,' said Rousseau, and proceeded to trace the origin of society to a social compact between all the members of a community who thus collectively formed the sovereign power, which was inalienable, and the will of which was expressed in laws. Representative legislatures were rejected, and Rousseau's scheme of government could only be carried out in a small state in which every citizen could personally participate in the making of the laws, and in which alone true liberty could exist.

**Rousseau and the 'Contrat Social.'**

In France, as in Europe, Rousseau's writings were widely read by a society which prided itself on its education, its enlightenment, its sensibility, its philanthropy, and its taste for political speculation. It must be remembered that the enthusiasm for the author of the *Contrat Social* among all classes in France was unprecedented, due in great measure to his sympathy with the wrongs of the poor.

From the overthrow of the *Parlements* in 1771 may be dated

the great influence of the *Contrat Social*, while from 1787 the philosophy of Rousseau held unquestioned sway in France. In spite of his opposition to cosmopolitan politics, and his insistence on every act of sovereignty being assented to by all members of the state, the Jacobin party deduced the principle of the fraternity of democracies from his doctrines, and in their governmental system ran directly counter to the teaching contained in his works. Though the causes of the French Revolution were mainly economical and political, it cannot be denied that the writings of Rousseau had an enormous effect.

The death of Maria Theresa in 1780, followed by that of Maurepas in 1781, left Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette without any experienced advisers. The first period of the reign, in which the influence of Maurepas was predominant, was now succeeded by a second period during which Marie Antoinette attempted, at times with success, to decide important questions of home and foreign policy.[1] In 1778 she had, at the instigation of Maria Theresa, endeavoured to secure the intervention of France on behalf of the Bavarian scheme of Joseph II. After 1781 the popular suspicion of the queen's predilection for a close Austrian alliance at the expense of French interests, which was expressed in the term *l'Autrichienne*, found ample justification in her opposition to the foreign policy of Vergennes, and especially in her determined efforts to force the French Government to support Joseph II., in 1784, in his designs on the Low Countries.[2] Her support of schemes for the aggrandisement of the House of Hapsburg only intensified the opposition to her influence, while her interference in domestic affairs, combined with her want of firmness and sagacity, enormously increased the difficulties which the Government, after 1781, had to face.

**Influence of the Queen after 1781.**

In spite of the general disbelief in the possibility of a Revolution, in spite of the prosperity of the country, and in spite of the seemingly stable position of the French monarchy as late as

[1] Aubertin, *L'Esprit public au XVIII^me^ Siècle*, pp. 444, 445, 475.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 474.

the year 1787, the reaction which in 1781 followed the fall of Necker, led by rapid steps to the catastrophe in 1789.

The king had committed a fatal error in allowing himself to be over-persuaded to embark upon the American war. French finance, as Turgot had feared, was rendered for the first time irremediable; while the real significance of the American example, which Diderot had early perceived, soon became apparent in the increased determination of the French people to secure self-government and representation. France unfortunately adopted ideas which belonged exclusively to the war period, and not to the constitutional period which followed the war; while Lafayette and other French officers returned to their native land, inoculated with an enthusiasm for equality, and prepared to fight for liberty in France. Necker was succeeded by Joly de Fleury, whose administration increased the financial difficulties, and Louis declared that he would have no First Minister.[1] He found himself forced to consult Vergennes, who was himself unfitted to direct home affairs; and consequently the influence of the queen, who presided over the brilliant and light-hearted Court, became supreme in the internal affairs of France.

**The Reaction after the Fall of Necker.**

The period of reaction, caused by the greed and ambition of the privileged orders, and definitely begun under Maurepas and Joly de Fleury, was marked in 1781 by a regulation of unspeakable folly on the part of the Maréchal de Ségur, to the effect that, while *Roturiers* were excluded even from the rank of sub-lieutenant, any one seeking to become a captain in the army must produce proof of four degrees of nobility, not including the applicant's own. The unpopularity of this measure was great among the members of the Third Estate and the less ancient nobility, and led to the increased disorganisation of the army.

The feudal reaction was not confined to military matters but affected the Church, and extended into the provinces. After the expectations roused by the ministry of Turgot, and the

[1] Cherest, *La Chute de l'ancien Régime*, vol. i. p. 31.

promises of the king, the disappointment felt was acute, especially as the former evils seemed to be aggravated. 'The very prosperity of the early years of Louis XVI.'s reign hurried on the (revolutionary) movement, causing men to feel more keenly such vexations as remained, and driving them more ardently to rid themselves of them. France was the country wherein ideas of reform were the most widely spread, minds were most cultivated, men were the most alike, the government most centralised, the nobility most reduced to political insignificance, the corporate bodies most subjected to control, and the nation most homogeneous.'[1]

It was the cleavage between classes, the growth of ideas of political freedom, and the weakness of the Government, that ruined the monarchy. Men realised how odious were the privileges of a small minority. 'It was not against the feudal system, but against the effete survival of parts of the system, that the Revolution directed its destructive energy.'[2] Practical equality to a great extent existed between the different orders, and the middle classes had become the equals of the nobles in education, in their aims, habits of thought and tastes, and in their enlightenment. Just as the peasant resented the continuance of the rights and powers of the nobles, so the middle classes resented the existence of caste privileges. In these years of enthusiasm for liberty and equality, which were marked by a vague but widespread agitation and by an expectation of coming changes, a wise and capable Government was absolutely necessary. Without a king of strong personal character, anarchy was inevitable. 'The French,' said Cardinal Richelieu, 'are capable of anything, provided that those who command them are capable of directing them.'

While the reactionary influences were carrying all before them, the financial embarrassments of the Government rapidly increased, and Joly de Fleury found it necessary to impose new taxes. Though the *Parlement* of Paris, delighted at the

[1] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i. p. 145.
[2] Lodge, *History of Modern Europe*, p. 474.

overthrow of Necker, accepted the edict, some of the provincial courts began to resist the imposition of taxes, and that of Besançon, on February 17, 1783, demanded the convocation of the States-General and the restoration of the provincial Estates.

The idea of a confederation of the various *Parlements* in the kingdom was started, the object of the movement being the restoration of the magistracy to its former influence. The signature of the preliminaries of peace with England, however, tended to calm the agitation, and on February 26 the Government published a decree promising measures for the suppression of some of the taxes. On March 29, Joly de Fleury was dismissed, and on April 1 a successor was found in d'Ormesson, who enjoyed the reputation of being an honest and hard-working man.[1] He received the title of Controller-General of the Finances, and attempted to check the reckless expenditure of the Court. Finding himself powerless to control the expenses, he decided to virtually acknowledge the national bankruptcy by postponing the payment of the public obligations.

**D'Ormesson's Ministry, 1783.**

After a ministry of seven months, he fell in November, in consequence of the fierce attacks of the Vaudreuil, Polignac, Guiche, and Perigord families, whose credit at the Court was high, and who, with the rest of the nobles, resented d'Ormesson's attempts to lessen their demands on the Exchequer. On his fall, the influence of the Comte d'Artois and the Court ladies prevailed with the king, and Calonne was appointed Minister at the close of 1783. M. Albert Sorel has well described him: — 'Une sorte de charlatan politique, Calonne, dissipateur frivole d'argent et d'idées, qui flatte les caprices des courtisans, éblouit le grande monde de sa forfanterie, s'étourdit de sa présomption, prodigue les dernières ressources des finances, perd les derniers enjeux de la politique, et achemine, avec impertinence, la monarchie

**The Ministry of Calonne, 1783–87.**

[1] D'Ormesson's predecessors in the control of the finances in Louis XVI.'s reign were Terray, Turgot, Clugny, Taboureau, Necker, and Joly de Fleury.

vers le catastrophe.'[1] Of Calonne's abilities and character, Maurepas had a poor opinion. Louis agreed to his appointment very reluctantly. Till 1787 the new Minister maintained himself in office, and completely gained the king's confidence. The mysterious affair of the diamond necklace, which was said to have been purchased by the Cardinal de Rohan for Marie Antoinette, belongs to this period (1785), and brought upon the queen suspicion and obloquy. During these years the criminal extravagance of Calonne accentuated the financial crisis, though by dexterous management he dazzled the people with an appearance of prosperity. St. Cloud was bought for the queen, the debts of the king's brothers were paid, and enormous loans at an extravagant rate of interest were raised. The country seemed tranquil and contented; through the independence of America new markets for French commerce were opened; the harvests of 1784 and 1786 were excellent. This bubble of apparent prosperity was, however, burst in the last months of 1786, when the Minister, already attacked by the *Parlement* of Paris and the provincial *Parlements*, confessed his inability to pay the interest on the various loans contracted by the state. Since the outbreak of the American war, the deficit had grown to the enormous sum of 140 millions. Vergennes, who was chief of the Council of Finance as well as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, agreed with Calonne as to the necessity of summoning to Versailles an Assembly of Notables, composed of the chief persons of the realm, to constitute a Committee of Reform. On February 13, Vergennes died, leaving no one of ability to succeed him.[2] The Notables, consisting mainly of members of the privileged orders, met on February 22, refused to agree to Calonne's proposals, which were an imitation of those of Necker — strict economy in the Court, the taxation of the clergy and nobility, the suppression of exemptions and privileges, the establishment

[1] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i. p. 213.

[2] Frederic Masson, *Le Département des Affaires Étrangères pendant la Révolution, 1787–1804*, p. 2.

of provincial Estates, and the abolition of the *Corvée* and other unpopular taxes — insisted on an investigation of the Minister's financial proceedings, censured the proceedings of the Government, and on April 17 drove Calonne from office.

**Ministry of Brienne, 1787–88.**

On May 3, Loménie de Brienne, the ambitious and unbelieving Archbishop of Toulouse, succeeded the fallen Minister, who was exiled to Lorraine, and at once recognised the necessity of passing many of Calonne's measures. The Notables agreed to all the late Minister's proposed reforms except the general land tax, and were dismissed on May 25, Lafayette having, during the meetings of one of the committees into which the Notables were divided, demanded the convocation of the States-General. Brienne's next task was to get his edicts registered by the *Parlement* of Paris. That body consented to the registration of edicts for internal free trade and the redemption of the *Corvée*, but refused to register those for a general land tax and a new stamp tax, and solemnly demanded the convocation of the States-General. The king replied by holding, on August 6, a *Lit de Justice*, in which the decrees were registered. On August 7 the *Parlement* declared that all registrations effected in a *Lit de Justice* were null and void; on August 14 the king exiled the magistrates to Troyes. Though the *Parlement* of Paris was more concerned about maintaining and augmenting the power of the privileged classes than about the welfare of the nation, its opposition to the Government roused widespread enthusiasm in Paris and in the provinces; never had its popularity been greater, and at no previous epoch in the eighteenth century had a strong ruler in France been more necessary.

**Recall of the Parlement, followed by the Coup d'État of May 8, 1788.**

On September 24 a compromise was arrived at, and the *Parlement* was recalled amid open manifestations of joy. On November 19 the *Parlement* refused to register an edict for raising a loan for 420 millions of francs, upon which the king again resorted to a *Lit de Justice*, and on November 20 he declared that the States-General should be summoned for July

1792. Determined to destroy the opposition of the *Parlement*, Brienne, on May 8, 1788, secured the registration, in a *lit de justice*, of six edicts, suppressing all the *Parlements* in France and establishing a *Cour Plenière*, consisting of great dignitaries named by the king for life. The States-General was to be summoned for January 1791; certain reforms, based on Turgot's ideas, were propounded.

The numerous edicts passed by means of this *coup d'état* provoked universal opposition. Riots took place in different parts of France; the provincial *Parlements*, supported by public opinion, protested against their suppression; and in Brittany and Dauphiny, no less than in Béarn, Franche-Comté, Languedoc, and Provence, revolutionary movements took place. At Vizille, in Dauphiny, an irregular Assembly of 367 deputies met, and, under the guidance of Mounier, an able advocate of Grenoble, demanded the immediate summons of the States-General. The army was no less disaffected. Attempts made in 1787 and 1788 by the Comte de Brienne, the War Minister, to introduce the Prussian drill had proved most distasteful to officers and men. The young officers, headed by Charles de Lameth, whose loyalty had been affected by service in America, declared that Brienne intended, by means of Prussian discipline, to overthrow French liberty. The general discontent of the army at the new military organisation became serious, and the outbreak of the French Revolution found a large proportion of the officers and men in a very disaffected condition. Alarmed at the rebellious acts of the Assembly of Vizille, which seemed to portend civil war, Louis XVI. suspended the May edicts, and on August 8 summoned the States-General to meet on May 1, 1789. Meanwhile Brienne, whose desperate efforts to obtain money had failed, announced, on August 16, a national bankruptcy, all state obligations being suspended for six weeks; on August 25 he was dismissed, and two days later Necker was appointed his successor. Though

**Revolutionary Movements in Dauphiny and elsewhere.**

**Necker's Second Ministry, 1788-89.**

both Louis XVI. and Necker were honest and well meaning, they lacked those qualities of statesmanship required for the crisis. 'The foundations of authority were completely sapped. Concessions, which at an earlier period would have been welcomed with enthusiasm, only whetted the appetite for change. A great famine occurring at a time of great political excitement, immensely strengthened the elements of disorder. The edifice of government tottered and fell, and all Europe resounded with its fall.'[1] The extravagance of Calonne, followed by the financial incapacity of Brienne, whose Ministry destroyed the last chance of a peaceful solution of the difficulties of France, together with the famine of the winter of 1788–89, gave the 'revolutionary movement its army, and its impulse, and its character of desperate and savage earnestness.'[2] Necker, on succeeding to office, had revoked the edict announcing a national bankruptcy, restored the *Parlement*, and looked forward to a long tenure of power and the carrying out of administrative reforms. His return to office restored confidence in the Government, and the funds rose. But Necker was incapable of guiding the nation through the crisis in which France now found herself. The public interest was concentrated upon the coming Assembly of the States-General. A royal decree, ordering public bodies to send to the king all possible information as to the previous meetings of the States-General, produced a flood of historical treatises. In November 1788 the Notables, who now hoped to use the meeting of the Estates to consolidate their privileges, were again summoned to assist the king with their advice on the two great political problems awaiting solution — whether the *Tiers État* should have double representation, and whether the votes should be taken *par ordre* or *par tête*. At this crisis Necker showed clearly that he lacked the required qualities of genius and statesmanship. His timidity, irresolution, and extreme caution ruined a magnificent

**Preparations for the Meeting of the States-General.**

[1] Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. v. p. 442.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 428.

opportunity of directing and defining the course of the Revolution. He produced a report on which was based the *Résultat du Conseil*,[1] which, in opposition to the wish of the nobles, gave the *Tiers État* a double representation, but left undecided the critical question — whether the voting should be *par ordre* or *par tête*. The appearance of the *Résultat du Conseil* was followed by numerous pamphlets of a political and revolutionary character, which asserted the superiority of the *Tiers État* over the orders of the nobles and clergy. On January 2, 1789, the elections in Dauphiny were completed, but it was not till January 24, 1789, that Necker issued a *règlement* to settle the procedure of the elections in the *pays d'élection*, while subsequent *règlements* dealt with those in the *pays d'état*. On May 5 the first States-General held in France since the year 1614 met at Versailles, and inaugurated the revolutionary epoch.

**The Close of the Eighteenth Century.**

The eighteenth century, the era of the benevolent despots, was over; and with the outbreak of the French Revolution were introduced new political and social conceptions which, since 1815, have been gradually accepted by all civilised countries.

[1] Morse Stephens, *A History of the French Revolution*, vol. i. p. 51.

# APPENDIX A

## TERRITORIES OF THE HOUSE OF HAPSBURG

FIVE GROUPS, WITH SEPARATE GOVERNMENTS.

I. Austria.
- A. Lower Austria { Below Ems (Unter der Ems), capital Vienna. / Above Ems (Ober der Ems). }
- B. Inner Austria { Styria. / Carinthia. / Carniola. / Gorz. }
- C. Upper and Further Austria { Tyrol. / Breisgau. / Few territories in Swabia. }

These finally declared indivisible and hereditary, 1621.

II. Bohemia with its Dependencies — Silesia. Moravia.

III. Hungary with its Dependencies — Croatia. Transylvania.

IV. Italy.

V. Austrian Netherlands.

GOVERNMENT OF TERRITORIES OF HAPSBURGS BEFORE REFORMS OF MARIA THERESA.

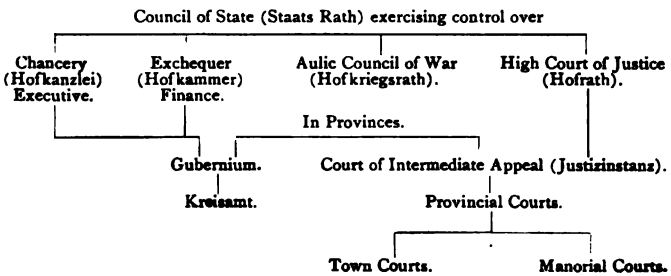
Only three Central Bodies with general control —
- A. Secret Conference (Geheime Conferenz) of Ministers.
- B. Council of War (Hofkriegsrath).
- C. Exchequer (Hofkammer).

Each of the three first Groups had its Chancery (Kanzlei), with Administrative and Judicial Powers.

Under it —
1. The Regierung or Government under Stadthalter, *or* Palatine, *or* Ban.
2. The Provincial Assemblies (Landtage).
3. The Provincial Courts (Ständische Landrechte).
4. The Towns.
5. The Manor Courts.

Hungary its separate Exchequer, under the Hofkammer.

AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT AFTER MARIA THERESA'S REFORMS.




Authorities: — Krönes, *Handbuch der Geschichte Oesterreichs.*
Von Arneth, *Maria Theresia.*
Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*

# APPENDIX B

## DOMINIONS OF KING OF PRUSSIA, 1714

I. The Kur-Mark, formed of { Alt-Mark. Mittel-Mark. Ucker-Mark. Priegnitz.

II. The Neu-Mark, finally united with Kur-Mark in 1571.

III. Cleves, Mark, Ravensburg, 1614.

IV. East Prussia, united with Electorate, 1618.

V. Further (Hinter) Pomerania, 1648.

VI. Halberstadt and Minden, 1648.
Magdeburg, 1680.

VII. Guelders, 1713.

### SUBSEQUENT ACQUISITIONS

1. Frederick I. 1720, Vor (Nearer) Pommern up to R. Peene with Pomeranian Haff.

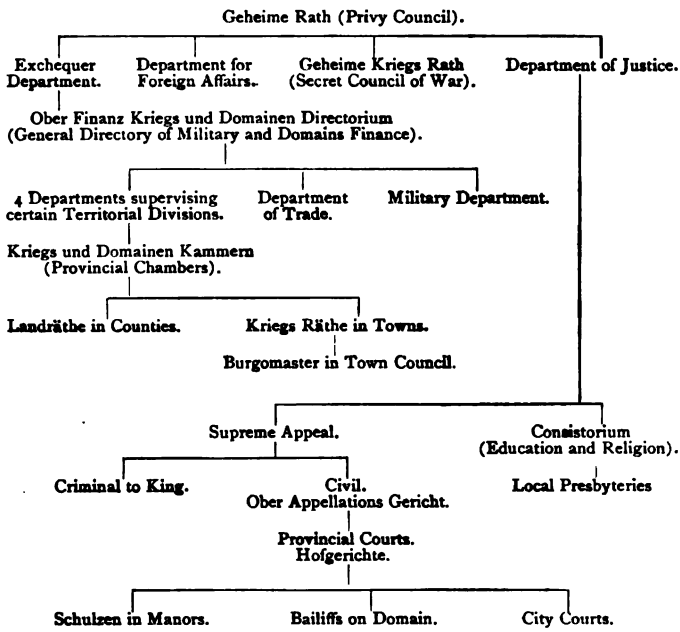
2. Frederick II. 1742, Silesia.
1744, East Friesland.
1772, West Prussia, *except* Danzig and Thorn.

3. Frederick William II. 1791, Bayreuth and Anspach.
1793, South Prussia, with Danzig and Thorn.
1795, New East Prussia.

4. Frederick William III. 1815, *Lost*— (1) New East Prussia and half South Prussia.
(2) Anspach and Bayreuth.
*Gained*— (1) Territories of Köln.
Munster.
Trier.
(2) North part of Saxony.
(3) Rest of Vor (Nearer) Pommern, with island of Rügen.

## APPENDIX B — *Continued*

## PRUSSIAN GOVERNMENT AFTER THE REFORMS OF FREDERICK WILLIAM I.




Authorities: — Isaacsohn, *Geschichte des Preussischen Beamtenthums.*
Bornhall, *Geschichte des Preussischen Verwaltungs Recht.*
Droysen, *Geschichte der Preussischen Politik.*

# APPENDIX C

## IMPERIAL CONSTITUTION IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

I. LEGISLATION.

**Imperial Diet** [Reichstag], consisting of three Colleges, sitting at Ratisbon since 1664.

A. Electors (Kurfürsten).
- Spiritual:
  - Archbishop of Mainz (Mayence), Archchancellor.
  - Archbishop of Köln (Cologne).
  - Archbishop of Trier (Treves).
- Lay:
  - Duke of Saxony (sometimes elective King of Poland).
  - Margrave of Brandenburg (King of Prussia, 1700).
  - Elector Palatine.
  - King of Bohemia (in hands of Archduke of Austria).
  - Duke of Bavaria.
  - Elector of Hanover (King of England).

B. Princes Lay and Spiritual. Some with (Reichsfürsten).
- individual vote, Virilstimme (about 40).
- collective vote, curiatstimme.
  - Dukes, Margraves.
  - Palsgraves, Graves, Barons.
  - Bishops.

C. Imperial Cities (Reichsstädte).

*N.B.*— Imperial Knights (Reichsritterschaft) not represented in Diet, but in Assembly of their own (Correspondenztag).

II. ADMINISTRATION.

**Circles** (Kreissen), 10 with Diets (Kreistage).

III. JUSTICE.

A. **Imperial Chamber**, at Wetzlar since 1689 (Reichskammer).
- 4 Presidents (2 Protestant).
- 50 Assessors (24 Protestant).

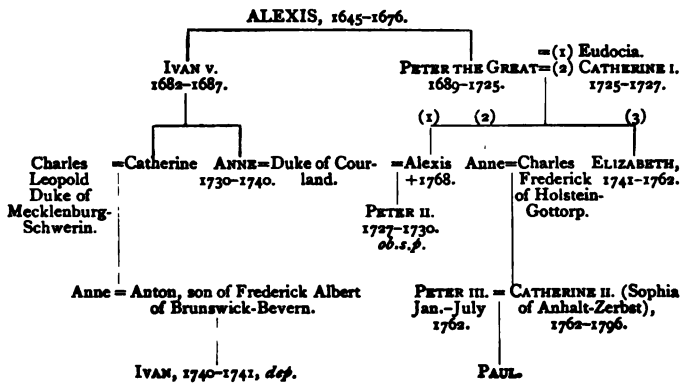
B. **Aulic Council**, at Vienna (Reichshofrath), with President and 18 Councillors.

---

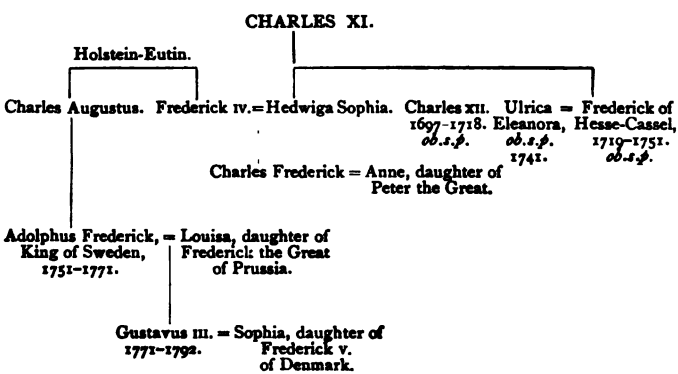
Authorities: — Paganel, *Histoire de Joseph II.*, and the authorities therein quoted.
Häüsser, *Gesch. Deutschlands von Tode Fred. II.*
Biedermann, *Deutschlands politische materielle und sociale Zustände im achtzehnten Jahrhundert.*

# APPENDIX D

## GENEALOGY OF THE HOUSE OF ROMANOV IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY




## SWEDEN.



## APPENDIX D — *Continued*

## THE BAVARIAN SUCCESSION QUESTION

### THE HOUSE OF WITTELSBACH.

(1) IN THE PALATINATE.

*Sulzbach Branch.*

Charles Theodore,
1733–1799.
Elector, 1742.
Succeeded to Bavaria, 1777.
*Ob.s.p.*

*Birkenfeld Branch.*

Charles Augustus,
Duke of Zweibrücken
(Deux Ponts),
1746–1795.
*Ob.s.p.*

Maximilian I.
1795–1825.
Elector of Bavaria, 1799.
King, 1805.

(2) IN BAVARIA.

Charles Albert, = Maria Amelia.
Emperor.
1742–1745.

Maximilian Joseph,
1745–1777.
*Ob.s.p.*

On the death of Maximilian Joseph, Bavaria revoked to the Palatinate Wittelsbachs.

---

See *Instructions aux ambassadeurs de France, Bavière, Palatinate, Deux Ponts*, p. 528, etc.

# APPENDIX E

## TABLE OF CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS

(*The years show the end of their reigns.*)

### THE EMPIRE

Charles VI., 1740, House of Hapsburg.
Charles VII., 1745, Elector of Bavaria.
Francis I., 1765 / Joseph II., 1790 / Leopold II., 1792 } House of Hapsburg Lorraine.

### ENGLAND

George I., 1727.
George II., 1760.
George III., 1820.

### FRANCE

Louis XV., 1774.
Louis XVI., 1793.

### SPAIN

Philip V., 1746.
Ferdinand VI., 1759.
Charles III., 1788.
Charles IV., 1808.

### PORTUGAL

John V., 1750.
Joseph I., 1777.
Maria Francisca, 1816.

### SARDINIA

Victor Amadeus II., 1730 (res.).
Charles Emanuel III., 1773.
Victor Amadeus III., 1796.

### RUSSIA

Peter the Great, 1725.
Catherine I., 1727.
Peter II., 1730.
Anne, 1740.
Ivan V., 1741.
Elizabeth, 1762.
Peter III., 1762.
Catherine II., 1796.

### PRUSSIA

Frederick William I., 1740.
Frederick II. (The Great), 1786.
Frederick William II., 1797.

### SWEDEN

Charles XII., 1718.
Ulrica Eleanora, 1720 (res.).
Frederick I., 1751.
Adolphus Frederick, 1771.
Gustavus III., 1792.

### DENMARK

Frederick IV., 1730.
Christian VI., 1746.
Frederick V., 1766.
Christian VII., 1808.

### TURKEY

Achmet III., 1730.
Mahmoud I., 1754.
Osman III., 1756.
Mustapha III., 1773.
Abdul Hamid, 1789.
Selim III., 1807.

### THE PAPACY

Clement XI., 1721.
Innocent XIII., 1724.
Benedict XIII., 1730.
Clement XII., 1740.
Benedict XIV., 1758.
Clement XIII., 1769.
Clement XIV., 1774.
Pius VI., 1800.

### POLAND

Augustus II. of Saxony, 1733.
Augustus III. of Saxony, 1763.
Stanislas Poniatowski, 1795 (deposed)