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Elizabeth Christine.



# ELIZABETH CHRISTINE,

WIFE OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.

(From German and Other Sources.)

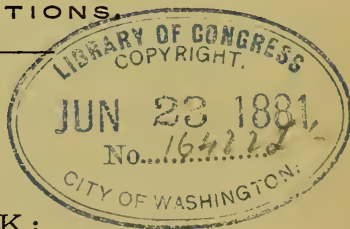
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## NOTE.

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**T**HE following volume is the fourth in the series of "Good Women of History." The chief source for information in its preparation has been Ziethe's "Elizabeth Christine Gemahlin Friedrichs des Grossen," published in Berlin in 1866. In addition we have used Carlyle's "History of Friedrich II., of Prussia, called Frederick the Great," (London ed., 10 vols. 1872;) Abbott, "Life of Frederick the Great;" and Hudson, "The Life and Times of Louisa, Queen of Prussia." (2 vols. London. 1874.)

The period covered by the career of Queen Elizabeth Christine is one of great interest in relation to the development of the Prussian



kingdom, and the present "Life" is designed to show how brightly a pure and noble character can shine, and exert an influence, amid neglect and comparative seclusion, and how the Christian life can be preserved and cultivated in the palace not less than in the cottage. While Frederick the Great had his victories, which attracted the attention of all Europe, and will continue to excite the admiration of posterity, the triumphs of his sad but trusting wife, though of a very different character, were none the less brilliant, and were the fruit of a spirit none the less heroic.

MADISON, NEW JERSEY, *May 12, 1880.*



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## ELIZABETH CHRISTINE,

WIFE OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.



### I.

#### Youth of Frederick the Great.

HE reign of Frederick the Great was one of the most important in the history of Europe. His great power over surrounding nations placed him at the head of the military commanders of his times, and laid the foundation of the present extent and grandeur of the Prussian monarchy. His object was to build up his little kingdom into a leading European nation, and he succeeded in this great undertaking.

Frederick the Great, the son of Frederick William and Sophia Dorothea, was born in

the royal palace of Berlin on January 24, 1712. The event was celebrated throughout the kingdom with every manifestation of popular joy. The public and private buildings in the cities and towns, and even villages, were brilliantly illuminated, while bonfires were built in thousands of public squares all over the land. The baptismal service was celebrated on January 31, with all the display commonly shown in monarchical countries to heirs to the throne. The Emperor of Germany, Charles VI., was present at the ceremony, and the State, the army, and the Church vied with each other in the splendor which each gave to the occasion. The name given the child was Charles Frederick, but the former was afterward dropped, and Frederick became the only name by which he was ever known, either during his brilliant career or on the page of history.

The mother of young Frederick, Sophia Dorothea, was the daughter of the Elector of Hanover, and sister of George II. of England.

Little "Fritz," as he was fondly called, was a very delicate child, but, at the same time, sprightly and attractive. He was placed early under the charge of a governess, Madame de Roucoulles, who devoted her entire time in caring for him. She was from Normandy, in France, and of noble origin, and was among the number of French refugees who fled from their country on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. She had, therefore, proved her Protestant faith, and had won the confidence of all who became acquainted with her in the Prussian capital, and her Christian influence at that time made a very beneficial impression on young Fritz.

He began to develop his military taste at a very early age. The atmosphere about him was that of the army and warfare, and he was accustomed to look through the palace windows and admire the parades and reviews of the soldiers in their bright uniforms, with their banners flying and the bands playing.

On the wall of the Charlottenburg Castle there is a picture of him when only three or four years of age, playing soldier and beating his drum. His sister, Wilhelmina, is at his side, and takes great pleasure in her little brother's enthusiasm. She is gayly dressed and decorated with ribbons and flowers, while little Fritz wears a blue velvet dress and sash crossed over his shoulder, with a star or rosette on his left breast. His cap is ornamented with a beautiful raven's feather. The king came in unexpectedly as they were playing, and was so overjoyed at seeing the two children in this brilliant array and military mood, that he ordered the court painter, Pesné, to be sent for, and to paint them exactly as he found them when he entered the room. This picture is unique, and has been copied many times. We frequently, down to the present time, meet with it in the German book and print shops. When little Fritz grew to manhood he bestowed great favor upon Pesné, the artist,



Fritz and his Sister.





The king exerted himself in every way possible to cultivate the growing military spirit in Fritz. He organized a miniature soldiers' company for him, and placed him in command of it. This consisted at first of one hundred boys, but afterward numbered three hundred, and bore the name of the "Crown Prince's Cadets." The king was very fond of these youthful heroes, and lavished much money on their equipment. Indeed, he seemed to take more pleasure in them than in his whole standing army.

When Fritz was seven years of age he was considered old enough to be taken from the charge of Madame de Roucoules and placed under the guidance of tutors, who had been selected with the utmost care. There were three of them, and each was assigned a special class of duties—Monsieur Duhan was a French gentleman, of noble birth and great accomplishments; Count von Finkenstein was a veteran general, sixty years of age; and

Colonel Kalkenstein, a thorough soldier. They very soon won the esteem and love of their pupil, and to their wise care over him must be attributed much of that inflexibility of character which afterward distinguished his entire career.

The king, however, kept a close watch over these men. He carefully observed their methods, and noted minutely the progress which his boy made from day to day. He drew up for Fritz a special code of instruction, which is expressed in a most ludicrous and confused manner. We give the most interesting part of it, as translated by Carlyle, with now and then a dash of his own comments :

“ My son must be impressed with a proper love and fear of God, as the foundation and sole pillar of our temporal and eternal welfare. No false religions, or sects of Atheists, Arian, Socinian, or whatever name the poisonous things have which can so easily corrupt a

young mind, are to be even named in his hearing; on the other hand, a proper abhorrence of Papistry, and insight into its baselessness and nonsensicality, is to be communicated to him. Papistry, which is false enough, like the others, but impossible to be ignored like them; mention that, and give him due abhorrence for it. For we are Protestant to the bone in this country, and cannot stand absurdities, least of all hypocritically religious ditto. But the grand thing will be to impress on him the true religion, which consists essentially in this, that Christ died for all men, and generally that the Almighty's justice is eternal and omnipresent, which consideration is the only means of keeping a sovereign person, or one freed from human penalties, in the right way.

“He is to learn no Latin; observe that, however it may surprise you. What has a living German man and king of the eighteenth Christian century to do with dead old heathen

Latins, Romans, and the lingo they spoke their fraction of sense and nonsense in? Frightful how the young years of the European generations have been wasted for ten centuries back; and the thinkers of the world have become mere walking sacks of marine stores. Learned, as they call themselves, and gone *lost* to the world, in that manner, as a set of confiscated pedants—babbling about said heathens and their extinct lingo and fraction of sense and nonsense for the thousand years last past! Heathen Latins, Romans, who perhaps were no great things of heathen after all, if well seen into? I have heard judges say they were inferior, in real worth and grist, to German home-growths we have had, if the confiscated pedants could have discerned it. At any rate, they are dead, buried deep, these two thousand years; well out of our way; and nonsense enough of our own left to keep sweeping into corners. Silence about their lingo and them to this new crown

prince. Let the prince learn French and German, so as to write and speak with brevity and propriety in these two languages, which may be useful to him in life. That will suffice for languages, provided he have any thing effectually rational to say of them. For the rest,

“Let him learn arithmetic, mathematics, artillery, economy to the very bottom. And, in short, useful knowledge generally; useless ditto not at all. History in particular; ancient history only slightly, but the history of the last hundred and fifty years to the exactest pitch. . . . With increasing years you will more and more, to a most especial degree, go upon fortifications, mark you! the formation of a camp and the other war-sciences, that the prince may, from youth upward, be trained to act as officer and general, and to seek all his glory in the soldier profession. Impress on him that as there is nothing in the world which can bring a prince renown and honor

like the sword, so he would be a despised creature before all men if he did not love it, and seek his sole glory therein.

“ On Sunday he is to rise at seven, and as soon as he has got his slippers on, shall kneel down at his bed-side and pray to God so all in the room may hear it (that there be no deception or short measure palmed upon us) in these words: ‘ Lord God, blessed Father, I thank thee from my heart that thou hast so graciously preserved me through this night. Fit me for what thy holy will is; and grant that I do nothing this day, nor all the days of my life, which can divide me from thee. For the Lord Jesus, my Redeemer’s sake. Amen.’ After which the Lord’s Prayer. Then rapidly and vigorously wash himself clean, dress and powder and comb himself. We forgot to say that while they are combing and queueing him he breakfasts with brevity on tea. Prayer, with washing, breakfast and the rest to be done pointedly within fifteen minutes, that is,



at a quarter past seven. This finished, and all his domestics and Monsieur Duhan shall come in and do family worship: prayer on their knees, Duhan to read a chapter in the Bible and sing some proper psalm or hymn as practiced in well-regulated families. It will then be a quarter to eight. The domestics then withdraw, and Duhan reads with my son the gospel of the Sunday, expounds it a little, adducing the main points of Christianity; questioning from Noltenius' Catechism, (which Fritz knows perfectly,) it will then be nine o'clock.

"At nine he brings my son down to me, who goes to church, and dines, along with me, (dinner at the stroke of noon;) the rest of the day is then his own, (Fritz's and Duhan's.) At half past nine in the evening he shall come in and bid me good-night. Shall then go directly to his room, very rapidly get off his clothes, wash his hands, and as soon as that is done, Duhan makes a prayer on his knees and

sings a hymn, all the servants being again there. Instantly after which my son shall get into bed; must be in bed at half-past ten o'clock.

“On Monday, as well as on all of the days of the week, he is to be called at six. You are to stand by him that he do not loiter or turn in bed, but briskly get up and say his prayers the same as on Sunday. From seven to nine Monsieur Duhan takes him on history. At nine comes Noltenius, (a sublime clerical gentleman from Berlin,) with the Christian religion. This lasts until quarter of eleven, when he comes to me and remains until two o'clock, perhaps promenading a little. From two to three his teacher must take him upon the maps and geography, giving account of all the European kingdoms, their strength, size, and weakness, and the richness and poverty of their towns. From three to four he must have a lesson on morality, and from four to five he shall write German letters so he shall

learn a good style. At five Fritz shall wash his hands, come to me, ride out, divert himself in the air, and do what he likes if it is not against God. . . .

“Saturday forenoon till half-past ten come history, writing, and ciphering, especially a repetition of what he has done through the week. And in morality, he must be examined to see whether he has profited. General Count von Finkenstein, with Colonel von Kalkstein, shall be present during the Saturday rehearsal. If Fritz has profited, the afternoon shall be his own. If he has not profited, he shall, from two to six, repeat and learn rightly what he has forgotten on the past days.

“Here, however, is one general rule, which cannot be too much impressed upon you, with which we conclude: In dressing and undressing you must accustom him to get out of and into his clothes as fast as is humanly possible. You will also look that he

learn to put on and put off his clothes himself without help from others, and that he be clean and neat, and not so dirty. Not so dirty, that is my last word; and here is my sign-manual.\* FREDERICK WILLIAM."

It was the habit of the king and his family to spend the autumn of every year at Wusterhausen, a hunting-lodge about thirty miles from Berlin. These were delightful days, for there was a freedom from the restraint of court-life. Wilhelmina, Frederick's sister, describes in her "Memoirs" the happiness of the family in this retired spot, Fritz always being the center of her descriptions, as he was of her affections and admiration. She relates his juvenile military exploits and the delight with which he used to listen to Monsieur Duhan when playing the flute, the instrument which Fritz himself became so fond of, and

\* Cf. Carlyle, "History of Friedrich II. of Prussia, called Frederick the Great." Vol. ii, pp. 13, 14, 19-21.

played with such great skill in subsequent years.

As Fritz developed into manhood his parents began to arrange a matrimonial alliance for him, according to the usage of royal parents, who have a keener eye to State policy than affection or congeniality of temperament. The queen endeavored to contract a double alliance with the royal family of England. She wished Frederick to marry the Princess Amelia, of England, and the Prince of Wales to marry her daughter Wilhelmina. This would have been a marriage of cousins, the Guelphs with the Hohenzollerns. This was no ordinary undertaking, but the queen, with the full consent of the king, used great adroitness for years to bring about her plan. She arranged visits for the English cousins, and made every effort possible to promote an attachment between them and her own children. She was in part successful. The young people became very fond of each other, but political affairs took an

unfavorable turn to the alliance, and it was broken off.

Wilhelmina would not admit, at that time, that she was at all attached to her cousin, the Prince of Wales, but in her valuable "Memoirs," which she wrote many years later, she confesses her love for him in those beautiful days which they spent together in their grandmother's house in Hanover, and describes her perfect delight when he made her little presents and called her his *kleine frau*—"little wife."

Fritz, too, was greatly attached to his cousin, the Princess Amelia. But when told that the engagement was broken off, he had no redress, and was obliged to submit. The effect on his mind was very injurious. He became reckless and cared little for the society of moral and religious people. He sought a change of scene by visiting Dresden. This was, at that time, a very corrupt city. Fritz soon became infatuated with wild and disorderly compan-



ions. He gave much of his time to playing the flute. He was a pupil of Herr Quantz, a celebrated composer, but at the same time a man of very low origin and dissolute life. His residence in Dresden proved very detrimental to his moral character, and he never wholly lost the ill effects of it.

On his return to Berlin he continued his reckless way of living, seeking out companions who were not at all elevating. Lieutenant von Katte, a young man of bad principles, was one of his favorites. One day the king entered his son's room unexpectedly, and found von Katte and Frederick in the midst of their foolish games. They tried to conceal their articles of gay theatrical dress and other forbidden implements, but were unsuccessful. The king flew into a violent passion, seized Frederick's handsome scarlet dressing-gown and threw it into the fire. He then discharged Monsieur Quantz, the flute teacher, who had removed from Dresden to instruct Frederick.


Young Frederick was very indignant at the severity of his father, and resolved upon flight. He planned an escape to England, being attracted there by his cousin, the Princess Amelia. The king intercepted the flight, and Frederick was compelled to return home. He was pardoned for this offense, but shortly afterward he, in company with his friend Lieutenant von Katte, made another attempt to escape to England. They were arrested just as they were embarking on the Rhine, were tried by court martial, and condemned to death for the crime of desertion. Lieutenant von Katte suffered the full penalty of the law. The king gave orders that his scaffold should be erected directly in front of his son's prison window. Frederick was confined for some time, but afterward pardoned. The king's views of justice were so severely strict, that had it not been for the intercession of the chief generals of the army Frederick would have suffered the same fate as his friend von Katte.

After Frederick's release from prison he was removed to a small house in Cüstrin, where he was carefully guarded and subjected to the wise instruction of professors selected by his father. After signing the oath of allegiance his sword was again returned to him. A very decisive moment had now arrived in Frederick's life. The king, his father, and the Austrian ambassador, Seckendorf, were negotiating for a marriage between him and the Brunswick princess, Elizabeth Christine.



## II.

### Youth of Elizabeth Christine.

 ELIZABETH CHRISTINE, who became the wife of Frederick the Great, was the daughter of Duke Ferdinand Albert, of Brunswick-Bevern, later the reigning Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. It was in the old castle at Wolfenbüttel that Elizabeth Christine, on the 8th of November, 1715, was born. Her father was a lineal descendant of Henry the Lion, the last of the house of Guelph who held the united duchies of Bavaria and Saxony, and who made Brunswick his residence in the twelfth century, fortifying and adorning it.

The Duchy of Brunswick embraces three detached portions of country of moderate size, inclosed between the kingdom of Hanover and the Prussian domains, together with several

smaller portions of land. The inhabitants of this duchy are mostly descended from a branch of the ancient Saxons. Personal courage and open-heartedness are the leading characteristics of the Brunswickers. They have the reputation of being the best situated, in point of comfort, of all the German duchies, and the appearance of the whole country is indicative of good order and prosperity. This is, also, one of the best governed States in Europe.

Duke Ferdinand was a very heroic man. He had fought in the "Spanish War of Succession," under the Imperial banner, and received a wound from a cannon-ball at the siege of Landau. He took part in the war against the Turks under Prince Eugene, and there won great fame. He also fought with the Imperial troops against France, in the year 1734. His large and stately form indicated the hero and brave soldier. He was an industrious man, and possessed great goodness and magnanimity. But, above all, he was a God-fear-

ing man. The man who knew how to work diligently also knew how to clasp his hands in prayer. After he became reigning Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel he relinquished military service.

Elizabeth Christine's mother, the Duchess Antoinette Amelia, was a beautiful and Christian woman. She was the daughter of Duke Ludwig Rudolph, of Brunswick-Blankenburg. The picturesque old palace where she spent her youthful days is noted for its legendry. There is a picture in it, still to be seen, of the "White Lady," whom the superstitious not only believed to haunt this old feudal palace, but that of Berlin and other royal residences in Germany. For two years Louis XVIII., of France, found refuge in it. He lived there under the name of Comte de Lille, in perpetual fear of assassination by the French republicans.

Elizabeth Christine's grandfather, Duke Rudolph, had a great love for the arts and sciences. He was the founder of the Brunswick



Museum, which now contains many rare specimens of painting and sculpture. Paintings can be seen by such artists as Raphael, Rembrandt, Cranach, Holbein, and Teniers. Among the leading antiquities are a stone carving of "St. John Preaching in the Wilderness," by Albert Dürer; Kosciusko's cup, carved in prison; Luther's marriage ring, and a large number of other interesting curiosities. It was Duke Rudolph's custom to set apart one evening in each week for conversations on different scientific subjects. On these occasions there were always present the most "learned and celebrated of the professors and ecclesiastics of the capital and of the dukedom. He required his children as well as his grandchildren always to be present during these learned conversations. If these youthful grandchildren did become thoroughly weary, and occasionally fell asleep at the entertainments, the conversations certainly made a great impression, and awakened within them a desire, when

older, to increase their knowledge on such subjects as they had heard discussed, but were too young to understand.

Lessing, the celebrated German author, spent the last ten years of his life at the court of Wolfenbüttel, as librarian to the Duke of Brunswick. Here Lessing published his "Nathan the Wise" and several theological treatises. The library, of which Lessing was the director, contained two hundred and twenty thousand volumes, besides the finest missals in Europe, manuscripts in various languages, and a large number of Bibles, among them Luther's Bible, with notes in his own handwriting. Lessing is buried in the small Magni Kirchof, and his grave is marked by a simple stone. In the Lessing's Platz is a fine statue of him by Rietschel.

When Elizabeth Christine became Queen of Prussia she remembered with the greatest pleasure those evenings spent in her grandfather's *salons*, where she met the most distin-

guished scholars of her country, and whose memory she had cherished with the greatest admiration. But one of the most delightful and sacred events of the youthful remembrances of Queen Elizabeth Christine was when her mother, at one time, lay dangerously ill, her father said to her and her sisters and brothers, "Children, your mother is very sick: let us pray to God that he may strengthen and restore her to health." He then kneeled down and prayed with them. A few hours afterward he returned joyfully and told them that God had heard their prayer, and asked them now to thank him with all their hearts. The example of such a father, and the habitual exercise of family devotion which was carried on in that ducal palace, certainly had a great influence on the lives of those children.

Elizabeth Christine was the third child of a family of fourteen. She had eight brothers. The eldest of them was Duke Carl, who was married to the Prussian Princess Philippine

Charlotte, a daughter of King Frederick William I., and sister of Frederick the Great. He had acquired a great reputation, even as a prince, by his services to his native land. The second brother, Anton Ulrich, married the Princess Anna, of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the presumptive heiress of the Russian imperial throne. But the glory which these marriages promised to the House of Brunswick soon changed to pain and sorrow. Elizabeth, the daughter of Peter the Great, regained the throne of which she believed she had been unjustly despoiled, and, in consequence of this, Anton Ulrich and his wife were exiled to Siberia, at the command of the empress, where death put an end to their sorrow and banishment. Their children, at a later period, were brought to Denmark, where they died disinherited.

The third brother, Ludwig Ernst, died as Imperial and Dutch General Fieldmarshal, in the year 1788. The three brothers, Ferdinand,

Albert, and Frederick fought under the banner of Frederick the Great. The first, Duke Ferdinand, was commander-in-chief in Westphalia, and acquired, by his victories at Crefeld and Minden, the reputation of being a brave and talented general. He died in the year 1792, at his *chateau* of Vechelde, and the poor lamented his loss as that of a father. He desired the following inscription to be placed over his tomb:

“Ferdinand, lord of the manor of Vechelde from 1746 to 1792, born at Masthofe, Brunswick, on the 12th of January, 1721, died July the 3d, 1792. A great sinner before God, but pardoned through the blood of Jesus Christ, his Saviour and Redeemer.”

The tomb of this renowned and pious hero may yet be seen at Brunswick in the crypt of the cathedral, in the ducal family vault, bearing the above inscription. Duke Albert fell at the battle of Sorr in 1744, and Duke Frederick Franz in 1758, at Hochkirch, fighting for

the honor of Prussia. The youngest brothers of Elizabeth Christine, the Princes August and Frederick William, died in childhood.

Of her five sisters, the eldest, Louisa Amelia, was married to Prince August William, of Prussia, and became the mother of King Frederick William II. The second, Sophie Antoinette, married Duke Ernst Frederick, of Saxe Coburg. The third, Christine Charlotte Louisa, died unmarried. The fourth, Therese Natalie, became abbess of Gandersheim, in Brunswick—a town lying northward of Göttingen; and Juliane Marie, the fifth sister, became queen of Denmark by her marriage with Frederick V.

In the quiet life of her parental mansion, surrounded by her joyful sisters and brothers, Elizabeth Christine grew to womanhood. Unfortunately very little information can be given of her early education and development. She was confirmed in the Lutheran faith, and partook for the first time of the holy commun-


ion in the spring of 1730. Two years later King Frederick William I., of Prussia, selected this princess, whose quiet virtues he admired, and whose father he greatly esteemed, to be the wife of his son Frederick.





### III.

#### Betrothal.

HE imperial house of Austria had selected Count von Seckendorf to use his influence in directing the attention of King Frederick toward a union between the Princess Elizabeth Christine, of Brunswick-Bevern, who was a niece of the Empress of Austria, and his son Frederick, hoping in this way to unite the royal families of Prussia and Austria.

The projected double marriage between the children of King George II. of England and his own children did not at first displease the king, provided they were consummated under certain conditions. But the indifference of the King of England offended the King of Prussia, and he finally refused to submit to the conditions imposed by the former. Consequently,

at this time, the king was easily influenced. While he was favorable to, and accepted, the proposition of Count von Seckendorf, Queen Sophia was firmly opposed to it, and allowed no opportunity to pass without trying to prejudice her son against the person who had been selected for his wife. She was aided in her opposition to the marriage by her daughter Charlotte, and they urged Frederick to speak decidedly and firmly to his father.

The crown prince was still at Cüstrin, where he had been sent after his attempt at flight to England. By permission of the king he was allowed to be present at the marriage of his sister Wilhelmina to the crown prince of Bai-reuth, which occurred in November, 1731, and on this occasion became reconciled with his father. After the marriage festivities were over he was again conveyed to Cüstrin, where he soon afterward received the following letter from the king, which exhibits a tender sympathy for the wayward boy :

“MY DEAR SON FRITZ:—It pleases me much to know that you need no more medicine. You must yet guard yourself for a few days from the severe cold, for I and all men are fearfully incommoded by rheumatism; therefore have a care of yourself. You know, my dear son, that if my children are obedient, I love them very much; and that when you were in Berlin I forgave you from my heart. Although from that time I have not seen you, I have not thought of any thing but of your welfare, and to establish you both in the army and with an orderly daughter-in-law.

“I wish to try and marry you well during my lifetime. You may well be persuaded that I have had all the princesses in the land examined, one after another, as far as possible, with reference to their conduct and education, and have chosen the eldest princess of Bevern, who is well educated, modest, and intelligent, as wives should be. You must write your sentiments to me immediately. I have purchased

the house of von Katsch for the field-marshal, who will occupy it as governor, and I will have the government-house rebuilt, and furnished properly for you ; and I will give you sufficient to enable you to establish a household of your own, and will commend you to the army in April.

“ The princess that I have chosen for you is neither homely nor beautiful. You need not say any thing to any one about it, but write to your mamma, and say I have written to you on the subject. The marriage cannot take place until the coming winter. In the meantime there will be an opportunity of your seeing the princess, and you can learn all that you wish about her. She is a God-fearing woman, and that is very necessary to your happiness.

“ May God bless you and preserve you a good Christian ! Always have the fear of God in your mind ; do not believe in any particular doctrines ; be obedient and true, so that it

may go well with you temporally and eternally; and he who wishes that from his heart says, Amen.

“Your faithful father until death,

“FREDERICK WILLIAM.”

Frederick only wished for a princess whom he could love, and who would harmonize with him in mind and sympathy, and this he did not expect from the princess who had been selected for him. He told General Grumbkow from the beginning that he was ready to marry whoever his father might select, if she were not awkward and homely; but in a letter to the king he submitted himself unconditionally to his will.

Meanwhile the princess had arrived in Berlin on a visit with her parents. General von Grumbkow, who saw her, wrote immediately to Frederick, describing her in not a very favorable light. He did this so that when Frederick came to see her he might be agreeably

surprised. This description annoyed Frederick, and threw him into an almost desperate state of mind. He could not think of uniting himself for life to a woman who must be intolerable to him. In this state of mind he wrote to the general that he thought that he had been punished enough for the errors of his youth, and he would not submit to being made unhappy for life by marrying a woman who, he believed, would be repulsive to him.

General Grumbkow, who had been especially commissioned by the Court of Vienna to persuade the crown prince to this union, made serious representations to him, on account of these over-hasty and disobedient assertions. He intimated to the prince that he feared that the king would renounce him entirely, or, at least, that he might fear the heaviest displeasure from him if he did not submit to this marriage. At the same time he tried in every way to inspire him with an admiration

for the princess, and send him the most favorable reports.

The king announced to his son the arrival of Elizabeth Christine, and gave him directions to give up his residence in Cüstrin, and repair immediately to Berlin to meet her. The prospect of perfect freedom from his former banishment had a greater effect on Frederick than all other representations and considerations. He arrived in Berlin on the appointed day, and was introduced to the princess whom his father had selected for his future wife. To his surprise, she was much more agreeable than he had any reason to expect. He wrote to his sister :

“ I do not dislike her as much as I appear to. I act displeased, in order to give more weight to the obedience of my father. She is pretty ; the hue of her face is like the lily and the rose ; her features are fine, and, indeed, her whole countenance can be called beautiful and pleasant. But she has no accomplish-



ments, and presents an awkward appearance. I think, however, when she is established here, and has access to refined society, she will develop. I commend her to you, my dear sister."

He spoke to General von Grumbkow of her as follows :

" I have no repugnance to her. I think she has a good heart, and I wish her no evil, but I shall never be able to love her."

The princess was, in truth, if not exactly beautiful, at least well developed, and of pleasant features ; besides, she was plain, sensible, well cultivated, and, above all, exceedingly gentle and kind. She only needed versatility and self-confidence.

She was more embarrassed than she was aware of when she saw that the queen did not receive her with that friendliness that she expected, and when the crown prince, to whom she gave her hand only at the bidding of her parents, met her in a cold and restrained man-

ner. When she was questioned respecting her wishes in the matter, she answered simply that she would do whatever her father and mother desired, and that the person of the crown prince was not disagreeable. She hoped in time, by her love and faithfulness, to win his heart.

As King Frederick William was at this time in poor health, and the Austrian court feared that he might die suddenly, and that the crown prince would then break the engagement, they commissioned their ambassador to persuade the king to have the marriage consummated as soon as possible. The king had a great abhorrence to any thing that was slow, and entered zealously into their wishes.

The betrothal was celebrated on March 10, 1732, in the royal palace at Berlin. On the evening of this day the king and the queen, with the crown prince, their other children, and their courtiers, repaired to the room

which had been assigned in the royal palace to the Duchess of Bevern. Besides the parents of the princess and her two eldest brothers, the Princes Carl and Anton Ulrich, Duke Franz of Lorraine, subsequently the husband of Maria Theresa, and Duke Alexander, of Wurtemberg, were present, as guests, at these festivities. The king, in the name of his son, made the proposition of marriage to the parents of the bride. After their consent the whole company repaired to the magnificent *salon* of the royal palace. There the king completed the ceremony by exchanging the rings himself. A splendid banquet concluded the day. But all this splendor and joyful demonstration could not blind the eyes of a critical observer. Even Count von Seckendorf, who had brought about this union, predicted an unhappy marriage. We can imagine the feelings of Elizabeth Christine when she discovered, by the mien and the whole behavior of the crown prince, the repugnance

with which he submitted himself to the plans of his father. On March 22 the king and the queen, with all their children, went to Potsdam, and a few days later the Duke and Duchess of Bevern, with their daughter, followed them. There the betrothed ones took leave of each other, and Elizabeth Christine and her parents returned to their own home.

The Austrian court and its ambassadors comforted themselves with the expectation that the crown prince and the Princess of Bevern would become more attached to each other as they became better acquainted.

After the betrothal the king made his son colonel and chief of one of the Goltz regiments, which afterward bore the name of the "Crown Prince's Regiment." As the first battalion of this regiment was in garrison at Neu-ruppin, he went there to live. The palace in which he resided stood near the town-wall, and was separated from it by only a gar-

den. The building had great defects, and the king was persuaded later to purchase and rebuild the beautiful castle of Rheinsberg.

In Neu-ruppin the crown prince occupied himself with the improvement of his regiment and the beautifying of the town. He sent in reports as to the condition of his regiment with great regularity, and kept it in good order, increasing it by a number of recruits, which assisted to win again the favor of his father. Frederick, in a letter to a friend, describes how he used to pass the time :

“ God knows, I live as retired as it is possible for me to do. I occupy myself principally with matters concerning the regiment, and with some other exercises—the economical commissions which my father has given me. After dinner and parole I generally enjoy myself in reading and music. At seven o’clock I assemble with the officers, and spend a pleasant hour. At eight o’clock I take my supper, and at about nine I retire, and that is the

way I spend one day after another, except when the Hamburg post comes. Then I have three or four persons in my room, and we dine together. The only exercise I have, aside from my regiment, is taking a short row in a boat, and sometimes throwing a few rockets in my garden. That is all in the world that I do, and I do not see how I can spend my time better in such an obscure place."

The king was much annoyed that Frederick did not correspond more frequently with his betrothed, and reproached him for it. Frederick excused himself on account of the slowness of the post, and assured his father that he wrote regularly every week to the princess. But to General von Grumbkow he wrote quite differently:

"MY DEAR GENERAL: This morning I received a letter from the king which quite unsettled me. The Brunswick princess is always

the agreeable object concerning which he expatiates. He wishes to make me fall in love by force, but, unfortunately, I fear he will not make much headway. He expresses himself in the following manner: 'As I have learned that you do not write to your princess with due attention, I desire that you give me the reason for your conduct. I desire that you write to her much more frequently.' I have answered him that a fortnight has passed since she has written to me, and that it is but eight days since I wrote my last letter, and that I, therefore, can give him no reason; but the truth is, that I lack matter to write about, and often I do not know how I shall fill a side of a sheet. . . . I wish my father would bear in mind how the marriage was arranged for me *volens volens*, and that my liberty was the price of it. . . .

"I am beside myself because I must marry, but I will make a virtue of necessity and do it. I will keep my word. Now judge, dear



general, if I am the stuff out of which good husbands are made. You will see that this manner of proceeding can only cause unpleasantness, and that a man gets all the more disinclination against a thing the more he imagines that he is becoming reconciled to it.

“I beg your pardon, my dear general, for troubling you with my affairs, which are as unpleasant to me as they are to you.”

This letter completely unfolded the unwillingness with which the crown prince had reconciled himself to his approaching marriage. Although Queen Sophia had really not yet abandoned her cherished plan of uniting Frederick to his Cousin Amelia, and was using every strategy to accomplish her purpose, she nevertheless told General von Grumbkow “that she would have every care for her future daughter-in-law, and although she had not had very good training, she had a good character, and the rest she would find ;

and that her interest and confidence would never fail her."

Elizabeth Christine probably little anticipated the gloomy clouds that had already begun to overcast the future of her life. She received and replied to the letters of the crown prince with all ingenuousness and in-offensiveness. She occasionally made him a small present of the productions of her own country, and comforted herself with the hope, which her good and loving heart unfolded to her, that they would finally be happy together.

Her future father-in-law, the king, the only one in the court of Berlin who wished her well, contributed in no small degree to strengthen this hope. While at Aschersleben, near Wolfenbüttel, before the marriage, he wrote to her as follows :

"MADAME : As I am so near your highness I cannot allow the duke to depart without

humbling myself at your feet, while I hope that you are well, and I wish soon to embrace you in my own home. We will do all in our power to make our dear princess contented with us. Accept the inclosed gift as a remembrance for my dear princess, whom I highly esteem, and welcome into my family with joy.

“I am convinced that my son will prove himself worthy to share your heart, and I can give you the assurance that I am perfectly satisfied with his conduct. I beg your highness to give my humble compliments to her highness, your worthy and dear mother. Be assured that I esteem you with my whole heart, and that I shall remain until death

“Your affectionate father,

“FREDERICK WILLIAM.”

It will scarcely seem credible that the Austrian court, after having used every means in its power to effect a betrothal between the

Crown Prince of Prussia and the Princess of Bevern, should suddenly and unexpectedly wish to have it annulled. But this was the case. The Vienna Cabinet, having become friendly in its relations toward England, had in view to sacrifice the Princess Elizabeth Christine to this friendship. They aimed to unite the Crown Prince of Prussia with his cousin Amelia, and the Prince of Wales to Elizabeth Christine, of Bevern. The impending marriage was, as is customary, announced to the European courts. At the time of this occurrence the King and Queen of Prussia had arrived at the castle of Salzdahlum, a few miles from Wolfenbüttel, May, 1773, in order to complete the marriage contract of their son with the Bevern princess.


Count von Seckendorf communicated in person the new plan of the Vienna court, at the same time delivering to the king a letter from Prince Eugene respecting it. It can easily be imagined how that honest and sturdy

king received the news of this diplomatic artifice. His anger knew no bounds, and he opposed it in the severest manner. He replied, "If I did not know Prince Eugene to be an honest man, I should think he dreamed." He returned the letter of the prince to the count, with the direction to return it to his cabinet, and to apprise the court that he, for no advantage whatever, would be induced to fasten such a blot upon his word and honor as to annul a marriage contract which was to be consummated in twenty-four hours. By this firm answer, alike worthy of a king and a man of honor, the unprincipled scheme of the court of Vienna was brought to shame, and the marriage contract was concluded.



#### IV.

##### Marriage Festivities.

N the 12th of May, 1733, in the royal palace of Elizabeth Christine's grandfather—one of the grandest ducal palaces in Germany—at Salzdahlum, near Wolfenbüttel, the marriage contract was formally and festally arranged. The old Duke Ludwig Rudolph promised to pay to his granddaughter, Elizabeth Christine, within a year and one day, a dowry of twenty-five thousand thalers, and, besides, to provide her with a princely wardrobe, jewels, ornaments, silver-plate, and other appliances of the same nature which were necessary to his princely house.

It was here decided that the household of Elizabeth Christine should consist of a house-keeper, two maids of honor, a steward, a gen-

tleman-in-waiting, a secretary, two pages, two valets, three lackeys, two waiting women, a seamstress, and a laundress, as well as a maid for the housekeeper, and a lackey and a maid for the maids of honor. The engaging and salarying, as well as the discharging of servants, was placed in the power of the princess, with the express condition that no person could be engaged or discharged against the will of the king or the crown-prince.

King Frederick, also, settled a legacy of twenty-five thousand thalers upon Elizabeth Christine, and ordered that it should be added to her dowry, making fifty thousand thalers; and that from this sum ten per cent. should be given to her as an annuity in case of widowhood. This sum the king promised, under certain conditions, to increase by the addition of nine thousand thalers, making fourteen thousand thalers in all. Further, she should receive twenty thousand thalers in case of widowhood. This sum the king made payable



to his daughter-in-law in the town and office of Ruppín, which place he selected as her residence, if the crown-prince were to die before she did.

After all of these courtly formalities were completed the marriage was solemnly consecrated in the chapel of the palace, at eight o'clock in the evening, by the Abbot of Dreisigmark. The sound of drums and trumpets, and the booming of cannon, accompanied the conclusion of the sacred ceremony, which was followed by a magnificent banquet. The grandfather of Elizabeth Christine, the aged Duke Ludwig Rudolph, had exerted himself to the utmost to have the marriage of his granddaughter celebrated with a splendor commensurate with her rank.

On the following Sunday, the 14th of May, the distinguished Abbot Mosheim, author of the well-known "Ecclesiastical History," gave a benedictory address. His discourse was on the blessing of the Lord on the marriage

of the righteous, from the following lines: "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon the earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed." Unfortunately, the royal auditors did not take much interest in this long and elaborate discourse, but gladly hastened to the festivities which awaited them, and which concluded the wedding ceremonies at Brunswick. These were two Italian operas, *Lo Epechio della Fedelta*, (The Mirror of Fidelity,) by Graun, and the *Parthenope*, by Handel, together with the comedy *Le Glorieux*, by Destouches. There was nothing wanting in splendor to render this royal marriage one of the most, if not the most, magnificent of the times in which it transpired.

On the Tuesday following the marriage the king and queen returned to Berlin, in order to prepare for the reception of their daughter-in-law. The crown-prince left at the same time

to bring his regiment from Neu-ruppin, that it might be present at the approaching festivities to be given in honor of himself and his bride. Elizabeth Christine, with her parents and grandparents, followed slowly after them.

On the 20th of May they were received on the frontier by the nobility of Magdeburg, and entered Potsdam on the 24th of June. The king and the crown prince, as well as the son-in-law of the king, the hereditary Prince of Baireuth, accompanied by a great number of generals and officers, rode out to meet the young bride. The queen and the princesses received them at the entrance of the royal palace. The king then led his daughter-in-law into the room of the queen, and commanded his son to accompany her to her own apartments. Wilhelmina, the sister of the crown-prince, accompanied them. Elizabeth Christine now saw her sister-in-law for the first time, and was introduced to her by her brother

in the following language, which we find in Wilhelmina's "Memoirs:" "This is a sister I adore, and am obliged to beyond measure. She is so good as to promise me that she will take care of you, and assist you with her good advice. I wish you to respect her even beyond the king and queen, and never to do the least thing until you have consulted with her. Do you understand?"

"I embraced the princess," Wilhelmina relates, "and assured her of my attachment. As no waiting-maid was in the room, I repowdered her face myself, and arranged her dress a little more becomingly. She gave no sign of thanks, and made no response to my caresses, doubtless owing to her great embarrassment. My brother became impatient and spoke harshly to her, bidding her thank me. Without a word she looked me in the face, and made a profound courtesy. Not much pleased with such a display of genius, I took her back to the queen's apart-

ment.” \* Wilhelmina did not abandon her *protégé*. She gives herself great credit, however, for having done her utmost to polish this rough diamond presented to her as a sister-in-law.

We may imagine the feelings of the young bride, who could not fail to see how she was esteemed at the Prussian court, and with what indifference she was there received.

As the cherished plan of Queen Sophia's life had been frustrated in this marriage, it could not be expected that she could have much affection for her new daughter—indeed, she treated her very rudely. The crown-prince tried to conceal the fact as much as possible that his young wife was forced upon him by his father, and endeavored to conduct himself with as much dignity as possible.

The king was the only one in the royal family who manifested a hearty and friendly good-

*\*Memoires de Frederique Sophie Wilhelmina de Prusse, Margrave de Bairüth. London, 1812.*

will toward her. He knew how to value her good qualities, although he considered her a child who needed to receive much instruction. Wilhelmina, the Margravine of Baireuth, gives, in her "Memoires," the following description of her sister-in-law: "The crown-princess is large, and of bad form and manners; her face is of dazzling white, and this complexion is heightened by the loveliest color; her eyes are of a pale blue, and do not bespeak much spirit or animation; her mouth is small; all her features are fine, without being beautiful. Taking her face as a whole, it is so charming and child-like that one would almost think the head belonged to a child of twelve years. Her hair is blonde, and curls naturally; her teeth are discolored, and very irregular. She has very little grace, and is awkward in conversation—so much so, that one is obliged to anticipate what she wishes to say, which produces much embarrassment."

On the day following their reception in

Potsdam the king had a review of the great royal regiment in the presence of his guests, which was very imposing. After dinner he and the crown-prince returned to Berlin, while the other princely personages, and among them the young bride, repaired to Charlottenburg.

On Saturday, the 27th of June, the crown-princess made her entrance into the capital through the Brandenburg gate, amid the booming of cannon, and with an escort of sixty State carriages, each being drawn by six pairs of horses. At five o'clock in the afternoon the *cortege* arrived at the royal palace, where dinner was served. At nine o'clock in the evening the king and queen, as well as the whole royal court, accompanied the crown-princess to her palace, opposite the arsenal.

The day following being Sunday, the royal family attended St. Peter's Church, which had been rebuilt, and was on this occasion solemnly re-consecrated. In the evening the crown-



princess received, in her palace, the clergy and the royal and the municipal authorities of Berlin. Although this finished the ceremonies connected with the marriage, the festivities which awaited her in the court were not yet ended. Only three days later, July 1, the marriage of her eldest brother, the hereditary Prince Karl, of Brunswick, with the sister of her husband, Princess Philippine Charlotte, was celebrated with great pomp and renewed festivities, and the young bride must again appear in public with her royal relatives.

It may well be imagined that Elizabeth Christine, in the midst of all these gay surroundings, longed sometimes for the quietness of her early home, where she could have that freedom that it was not possible for her to have in her new situation. The vows that she had solemnly taken before the altar, and the obligations that she had pledged, severed all the ties that had been so dear and precious to her in childhood. Her greatest and most

sacred desire now was to win the heart of her husband, which she hoped to do by tender, devoted, and faithful love. She gladly accompanied Frederick from Berlin to his headquarters at Neu-ruppin, where they spent the most of their time until they went to occupy the castle at Rheinsberg. The uniform quiet of Elizabeth Christine's rural life at Neu ruppin was interrupted only by occasional journeys. She visited the king at Wusterhausen in the fall of 1733, and was received by him with great friendliness. On her return home she wrote to him how much pleasure her visit had given her, and expressed to him the gratitude that she felt in being so kindly received. Accompanying this letter were several delicacies for his majesty's table, which the princess had prepared herself. The king received these tokens of love with more than ordinary pleasure, but what gratified him most was the assurance that his daughter-in-law had overcome her first unfavorable im-

pressions, and was happy in conducting her household at Neu-ruppin.

In January of the following year she visited Wolfenbüttel. How long she remained in her childhood's home is not known. We find, however, that in April she was again in Neu-ruppin, and can find no record that she ever again visited her paternal home.

The crown-prince at this time was engaged in the campaign on the Rhine, under the leadership of Prince Eugene. The remainder of the time, with the exception of the annual revenue journey, on which he always accompanied his father, he spent in company with his wife, either at Neu-ruppin or Berlin.



## V.

### In Rheinsberg Castle.

**S**OON after the marriage of the crown-prince King Frederick presented him with the charming old castle of Rheinsberg, with money sufficient to properly refit it. He was successful, with the sum appropriated, in having the grounds and castle beautifully renovated.

A historian who saw it about the time of its completion gives the following description of it :

“The position of this old feudal castle is delightful. A great lake almost washes its walls on one side, and on the other side of it there is a beautiful amphitheater of woods of oak and beech. The old castle consisted only of a main building with a wing, at the end of which stood an old, dilapidated tower.

The principal edifice was improved and beautified by arches, statues, and all manner of adornments that ingenuity could furnish. On the other side a wing and tower were built, and these two towers were united by a double row of columns adorned with statuary. By these arrangements the whole took the form of a quadrangle. At the entrance there is a bridge, decorated with statues, which serve as supports for lamps. One enters the court by a beautiful portal, over which is placed the words: *Friderico tranquillitatem colenti*.

“The interior of the edifice is most magnificent. In every direction that one may turn he sees frescoing, sculpture, and painting, which has been done by the most eminent artists. As the crown-prince loved only delicate colors, his taste was minutely observed. The furniture and drapery are of a delicate violet, azure, light green, or flesh color, enchased with silver. The library is unique. It is situated in one of the towers, and there is

nothing wanting to it that the arts could furnish. The frescoing was done by the celebrated Pesné, the favorite of Frederick. From one of the windows one commands a view of the lake, with its little tufted islands—Remus Island, much noted, among them. The lake is lovely, lying between you and the sunset, with perhaps some other lakelet, or solitary pool in the wilderness, many miles away, ‘revealing itself as a cup of molten gold.’ The library does not contain a very large number, but a well-selected collection, of the best French and German authors. The bookcases are inclosed in glass, and decorated with the most exquisite gilt carving. A life-sized portrait of Voltaire hangs in the room. He is the favorite of the crown-prince, but he has a great admiration for all the best French poets and writers.

“Elizabeth Christine’s apartments are exceedingly beautiful, the anteroom especially. This room is twenty-five feet in height, and

contains six windows, three of them in the main front, looking toward the town, the other three toward the interior court. The light from these windows is heightened by mirrors covering the piers or interspaces of the walls to an uncommonly high degree, and shows the frescoing on the ceiling to great perfection. Pesné has succeeded in putting on his colors so softly, and with such delicate skill, that the light sunbeams seem to prolong themselves into the painted clouds and air, and it seems as if it were the real sky you had over your head. There, in that cloud-region, 'Mars is being disarmed by the Love-goddesses, and they are sporting with his weapons. He stretches out his arm toward the goddesses, who look upon him with fond glances. Cupids are spreading out a draping.'

"Weapon-festoons, in bass-relief, gilt, adorn the walls of this room, and there are two pictures, which represent in life-size the king and queen, Frederick William and Sophia. Over



each of the doors you see in low-relief the profiles of Hannibal, Pompey, Scipio, and Cæsar, introduced as medallions.

“While it seems impossible to surpass this room in artistic beauty, there is still another *salon* which connoisseurs pronounce almost an ideal. The representation on this ceiling of the Music *Salon*, is ‘Black Night making off, with all her sickly dewes, at one end of the ceiling, and at the other end, the steeds of Phœbus bursting forth—with cupids, love-goddesses, war-gods, not omitting Bacchus and his vines.’ The main avenue is finished with an obelisk, after the Egyptian style, containing hieroglyphics. Grottoes, pavilions, orangeries, artificial ruins, hermitages, arbors, and rustic seats are arranged in the most perfect taste. The crown-prince has two pleasure-boats on the lake to convey his friends to the edge of the wood.”

This castle was so far completed in 1736 that it could be occupied. The king and

queen then made an inaugural visit, and remained in it for several days, finding great amusement and pleasure in fishing, hunting, and other sports. Up to this time the crown-prince and Elizabeth Christine had divided their time between Berlin and Neu-ruppin. During these first years of their married life they seemed happy.

The crown-prince gave the most of his time to earnest study and pleasant amusements. He thus described his mode of life to his friend, the Privy Counselor von Suhm: "I do not fear displeasing you if I say a few words about our rural pastimes; for he whom one loves he wishes to make acquainted with the most important events of his life. We have divided our occupation into two classes—useful and pleasant. Among the useful I reckon the study of philosophy, history, and the languages. Among the pleasant are music, comedy, and tragedy, which we find necessary for the entertainment of our guests. Solid and

earnest occupations, however, have the preference, and I can say candidly, that we only make a reasonable use of pleasures, since they serve as a relaxation from the earnestness of philosophy, which cannot easily bring the graces to a friendly face."

A few months later he wrote to the same friend: "My house is not a place where one can enjoy himself with the bustle of the outside world. Are not quiet and a seeking after truth much to be preferred to the noisy and vain pleasures of the world? I have never spent such happy days as I am now spending here."

In the following year he wrote to his friend, Colonel Camas: "The report which I would make to you of what has befallen us during the last four months would not be very interesting. The events during that time have had no variety. You would see a man on every side with his nose chained to his book; you would see him leave this now and again in

order to take up his pen, and then exchange these employments for the flute. Such a picture is never wanting, so that there is not much to excite desire, or stir up envy. To tell the truth, I scarcely know what kind of weather we are having. The circle of my activity stretches no farther than from my chamber to my writing-desk. I am the only one in our circle who does not enjoy hunting. Indeed, I study for the whole company; thus each one is satisfied and no one deprived of his pleasure."

In 1738 he wrote to his teacher, M. Duhan: "I am more than ever buried among my books. I strive to redeem the time which I lost so thoughtlessly in my youth, and am collecting, as far as I can, all the information in my power. I am striving to acquire that knowledge which is necessary for me to discharge worthily all the duties that devolve upon me in my position. I wish to store my mind with all that is excellent in both ancient





Pleasure Party at Rheinsberg.



and modern history, with every part of which I wish to be perfectly familiar."

Besides earnest study, which the crown-prince describes to his friends, he and Elizabeth Christine found time for social enjoyment. A participator in these pleasures writes of them as follows: "All those who live in the castle enjoy an unlimited freedom as to the selection of their occupations and pleasures. We see the prince and princess only at table, at play, or on other occasions of recreation in which they participate. Each thinks, reads, paints, designs, plays an instrument, writes, and enjoys or occupies himself or herself in their room. The conversation of the prince at table is interesting and elevating. He talks much and well. When dinner is finished all the gentlemen repair to the room of one of the ladies, who prepare coffee alternately, from the chief house-keeper to the strangers. The whole court assemble in the room of the one whose day it is to serve the coffee. There



they chat, arrange plays, promenade, and enjoy a pleasant hour together. The crown-prince and princess take their coffee together in their own room. The evenings are generally devoted to music. The prince has concerts in his own apartments, to which no one has admittance without an invitation, and such an invitation is considered a great favor. He generally plays a *sonata* on the flute, which instrument he plays to perfection. He is particularly fond of all kind of amusements, except hunting, which he holds in abhorrence. In this manner we pass our days in peace and happiness. The royal table, English music, delightful promenades in the gardens and meadows, sailing parties, the fine arts and sciences, and intellectual conversation, are united in order to give a charm to life in this enchanted castle."

Elizabeth Christine had but one desire, and that was to live according to the pleasure of her husband. She followed his inclination and wishes even in her occupations. She was ac-

customed from childhood to listening to the conversation of men of culture and refinement, being much of her time at her grandfather's court. But Voltaire was scarcely known at Wolfenbüttel, and many authors whom her husband and his suite were perfectly familiar with she had never heard of. Thus the court life at Brunswick was quite different from that at Rheinsberg.

Christine exerted herself, however, out of love for her husband, to become familiar with whatever subject she thought would be pleasing to him. She received instruction in the French language, and her teacher advised and procured for her those authors who were at this time the most popular.

She read the most celebrated writers of antiquity, as is proved by her later literary labors, and did not remain unacquainted with the philosophical studies of her husband. It is not known whether she understood music, but that she had a great fondness for art is

shown by her paintings. She was able to sketch with great accuracy, but excelled especially in landscape painting. She could also make a correct portrait of any person whom she admired.

The years spent at Rheinsberg were certainly the happiest of her married, and, indeed, of her whole, life. If the crown-prince did not love his wife he manifested toward her, at this time, the greatest friendship and esteem. He said at one time to Count von Seckendorf: "I never loved her, but I should be the wickedest man in the world if I did not respect her, for she is of a gentle disposition, as docile as a child, and yielding and complaisant to a fault, while she anticipates me in whatever can give me pleasure."

Elizabeth Christine had changed very much to her advantage in her new surroundings, and it is evident that this change had a favorable influence on the crown-prince. Baron von Bielfeld, who first met her in Rheinsberg, de-


scribes her in a confidential letter to a friend :  
“ The crown princess is large and well made. I have never seen one whose form is so well-proportioned in every respect. She might serve a painter as a model. Her hair, which I specially noticed, is of a most beautiful ash-color ; it is somewhat blonde, and, when powdered, it gleams like pearls. Her countenance is of a delicate tint, and she has great blue eyes of a soft and lively expression, but which can be very fiery if animated. She has an open forehead, regular eyebrows, a small and somewhat pointed, though well-formed, nose, a pleasant mouth, red lips, and a chin and neck which are charming. Goodness gleams in her countenance, and one might say with justice that her whole form had been put together by the hands of the graces for the purpose of making a great princess. Even the little negligences which are occasionally noticed in her dress and demeanor do not affect her appearance.

“There is not a princess in Europe who possesses more beautiful diamonds, and there are certainly none who know better how to use them. She talks very little, especially at table, but what she does say is full of meaning. She appears to possess an acute understanding, which she improves by constant reading of the best French authors. Frau von Katsch, her chief maid, has assured me that her heart is pure and her character heavenly. Every moment she manifests qualities which delight me. Her deportment is at the same time majestic, deliberate, and yet perfectly unconstrained.”



## VI.

### Happy Days.

HE crown-prince at this time entertained a warm affection for his wife. When traveling he wrote frequent and friendly letters to her, and imparted confidential commissions. It was evident that, by her continual devotion, she had won an influence over him. Whenever a misunderstanding threatened to arise between Frederick and his father this influence was never exerted in vain to bring about a reconciliation. At one time, when there was a misunderstanding between them, she wrote to the king: "The greatest favor that your majesty can show to me is that of being merciful to my husband, your son. He has written to me concerning the trouble which your displeasure has given him, and he does not know in what

manner he has merited it. I do pray you to forgive him, for I can assure you that he loves you most sincerely, and that he will try to conduct himself according to the will of your majesty."

On another occasion, when the king had made the crown-prince a present of a very valuable horse, the crown-princess wrote her father-in-law :

" I herewith humbly thank your majesty for the favor that you have shown my husband by presenting him with such a valuable horse. He has written me about it, and is overcome with thankfulness for the favors which you are continually bestowing upon him. . . . You will always find in him a gentle, obedient, and devoted son. He truly merits the favors you confer upon him by the affection which I am well aware that he has for so kind a father, and I humbly beg your majesty to do him the justice which he deserves, and be convinced that he is devoted to your majesty with all



tenderness and esteem, and that he possesses nothing but that grateful love which a true son should bear to so kind and upright a father."

These letters throw a light upon the friendly and tender relations which at that time existed between the crown-prince and Elizabeth Christine, and which rendered her residence at Rheinsberg delightful. She expresses her happiness to her royal father-in-law in a letter written a short time after they had taken possession of this castle :

" My residence in Rheinsberg is as pleasant to me as it possibly can be in the company of him who is to me the dearest object on earth. I cannot become weary in the society of him I love above all others. My greatest pleasure is, when the weather is fine, to take a walk, a drive, or a sail on the lake with him ; otherwise I spend the time in work, for I occupy myself the whole day. I find that my health is better in the country than in the town.

Rural life is more congenial to my taste, and I prefer it to all the enjoyments of town life."

In the spring of 1736 the crown-princess visited Schönhausen without the slightest idea that this palace at a later period was to be the limit of her lonely life.

An amusing incident, and one which furnished the little court of Rheinsberg with gossip for a long time, is told of the king when on a visit to his children in the spring of 1737. As is well known, his majesty was a very devout Christian in his way, and would never neglect an opportunity of attending divine worship. Having arrived at Rheinsberg early on Whitsunday, and before paying his respects to the inmates of the castle, or giving any publicity to his arrival, he went immediately to church. The good old preacher, Pastor Johann Rossow, who was preaching, was so frightened at the entrance of this distinguished auditor that he almost lost

his power of speech, and was only able to conclude his sermon as rapidly as possible, and give the benediction with a trembling voice.

The king was so enraged at such timidity that he threatened to use his cane upon the frightened man, but it may easily be supposed that this threat totally failed in producing the desired effect.

In the years 1738 and 1739 Elizabeth Christine and the crown-prince often visited Berlin, and participated in the feasts and enjoyments which the court and the great city afforded them. How happy those six years were for this princess is proved by the pleasure with which, to the latest period of her life, she recalled those golden days. When in her seventy-first year, the day before the death of her husband, she spoke to Monsieur Mirabeau, who was visiting her, of the delightful days at Rheinsberg, and of the happiness which she enjoyed there.

In one of the rooms in the castle at Schönhofen, which is shown to strangers as her sleeping-room, hangs a picture of Rheinsberg Castle. How often in later years did her eyes rest upon this painting, recalling the happy years spent within its walls!

The happiness of Elizabeth Christine was greatly increased by the continued and unchanged love that her father-in-law constantly exhibited toward her. He very often surprised and delighted her with small presents of game and other delicacies for her table, and with carriages to make a winter tour to Berlin. He never failed to remember her birthday, always writing a kindly letter of congratulation, and often making her on these occasions very valuable presents. Requests and petitions which she occasionally sent to him for her friends, or even strangers, were generally complied with, if it were at all possible. How much the king loved and esteemed his daughter-in-law will be proved in

the following extracts from his last letters to her :

“ I have had the honor to receive your kind letter, and was much affected by the proof of your tender love and the interest which you take in the restoration of my health. As I know the uprightness of your heart, I feel all the more united to you, and I beg you to be convinced that your happiness and contentment will always be among the foremost wishes of my heart.”

On the day of his death he wrote :

“ I have had the honor of receiving your last letter, and you must have the goodness to believe that this proof of your inestimable love for me has rejoiced me exceedingly. I am greatly indebted to you for your tender sympathy, which you manifest toward me when my life is in danger. If God, in his goodness, does not hear your prayer, you will lose a father who loves you more than he can express.”

Queen Sophia appears to have become slightly reconciled to her daughter-in-law. The letters which she wrote at this time do not exhibit a cold courtesy, but a tolerably intimate and affectionate relationship. On account of the queen's opposition to this marriage it was feared that Elizabeth Christine would suffer much embarrassment, and lead a very unhappy life. But the careful training which she received in her youthful days, and the strict obedience which she was taught to render to the wise counsels of her parents, now bore rich and beautiful fruit. A letter from her father, the Duke of Brunswick, shows the anxiety that he had for her in this respect :

“ The manner in which you conduct yourself toward their majesties the king and queen of Prussia, and the crown prince, your husband, and, indeed, all of those with whom you come in contact, is truly very beautiful, and excites the admiration of all Berlin, as well as

of all those who are related to you and love you most dearly. Continue in this way, my dear daughter, and God will not fail to bless you and to make you always as happy as you in this manner deserve to be."

Unfortunately Elizabeth Christine was not to enjoy the tender love and wise counsel of this dear father much longer. The Duke of Brunswick died suddenly on the 3d of September, 1735. This was the saddest event that disturbed the happiness of those days. Her husband helped to assuage her grief as well as he possibly could. She was in Berlin when she received the unwelcome intelligence, but the crown-prince was absent, and wrote immediately the following to his father :

"I have just received the information that my dear father-in-law, the Duke of Brunswick, is dead. I thought I should have died from fright, as we did not even know that he was ill. I fear my wife will be very deeply affected by these unexpected tidings, and I beg of you,



my most gracious father, that you will allow me to come immediately to Berlin to comfort her."

The king naturally permitted this journey, and in a few days the crown-prince was with his wife. He wrote, on his arrival, to his father that he would exert himself to the best of his ability to have the princess become reconciled to her great loss and to the will of God, and to help her submit with patience to this severe affliction.

If Elizabeth Christine then learned to bear this painful loss patiently, it was certainly a great comfort to her later to know that her father, whom she loved so devotedly, died with the conviction that her marriage was a happy one. A few years subsequently he would have been convinced, to his great sorrow, to the contrary.



## VII.

### Death of King Frederick.



WHILE the Crown Princess Elizabeth Christine was mourning over the death of her father, who had been her faithful guide, she felt that she would soon be deprived also of her father-in-law, King Frederick, who had been, since her marriage, her truest friend and counselor. The health of the king had been for a long time in a precarious condition, but early in the year of 1740 he became so much worse that his life was despaired of. When he knew that he had but a few days to live, he summoned to his side his son and his old generals, who had done more to serve him in his imperial council-chamber than they had on the battle-field.

He made an impressive and sensible address to his son on the duties of a sovereign toward

his subjects, and then, reverting to recollections of the past, he warmly thanked the veterans for their faithfulness to him. It must be known that this austere but conscientious father had forgiven his son for his boyish errors more entirely than he had forgiven himself. The king had now become fond and proud of Frederick, and took paternal pleasure in recognizing his remarkable capabilities and his military talents. He often spoke to those about him of the gratitude he felt in thinking that he should leave the kingdom to so worthy a successor. It can plainly be seen that it grieved the king to think that he had lowered his son in the estimation of the world, and he tried to do all that he could to repair the error.

From a window in the king's room the royal stables could be seen. After King Frederick had expressed his gratitude to his old friends, he ordered some of his horses to be led out. He told his generals that they must each

choose one, "for," said he, "it is my last gift to you." To the Prince of Anhalt Dessau he said: "It is just that you, my oldest friend, should have the best horse; but you have chosen the worst. Take the other; I warrant him a good one." Then, looking on the time-worn faces of these brave soldiers, and seeing their hard struggle with deep grief, he said, "Nay, nay, it is a debt we all must pay."

To the last moment he was deeply sensible of his condition. Feeling quite unequal to the responsibilities which rested upon him, he desired to abdicate, and insisted upon doing so. He was told that the necessary legal documents should first be prepared. As he was then failing fast, every body about him saw that abdication was not necessary. His last thoughts rested not in justice but in mercy; feeling his great need of Divine protection, he sought it at the Fountain Head. "Lord Jesus, in thee I live; Lord Jesus, in

thee I die ; in life and death thou art mine ;” were Frederick William’s last words.

He died on May 31, and was buried at midnight on June 4, 1740. He had looked upon the strong oak casket before he closed his eyes in death, and had dictated how it was to be conveyed to the vaulted chamber beneath the pulpit in the Garrison Church, which had been prepared to receive it. That fine church had been completed five years before, as can be seen by the date over the main entrance : A. D. 1735.

Twelve tall captains of the Potsdam Guards bore the remains of the deceased monarch to the appointed resting-place, and that favorite regiment fired the farewell volley. This was their last service. The regiment was immediately disbanded after the death of the king.\*

Immediately after the death of the king the

\* Cf. Hudson, “Life and Times of Louisa, Queen of Prussia,” vol. i, pp. 93, 95, 96.

dowager queen dispatched a messenger to Rheinsberg to convey the sad intelligence to Elizabeth Christine. The young king had also sent a written message, beseeching his wife to come immediately to Berlin. The court ladies were at first embarrassed as to how they should communicate the painful tidings to their new queen. Fräulein Bartfeld, the chief lady of the household, was deputed, and, upon entering the bed-chamber, drew aside the curtain. The crown-princess awoke and demanded what she wanted. She replied that Baron von Mylich had arrived as courier from Potsdam, and had brought the sad intelligence that the king was dead.

Elizabeth Christine was deeply affected, but recovered sufficiently to appear in the audience chamber and receive the homage of her small court.

She left the same day for Berlin, accompanied by her suite. The carriage which conveyed the young queen thither was drawn by

eighty post-horses. As she drove out of Rheinsberg the gate of honor and splendor opened before her, but the gate of happiness, which she had enjoyed in the friendly quiet of this castle, and by the side of her husband, was forever closed behind her.

The young queen, on her entrance into Berlin, went immediately to her widowed mother-in-law, to see if she could not comfort her in her deep affliction. Her heart, which was ever full of sympathy, knew well how to give words of comfort and consolation to the sorrowing.







Frederick II. of Prussia.



## VIII.

### The New King and Queen.



FEW weeks after the funeral ceremonies Elizabeth Christine went to reside in the royal palace at Berlin. She occupied the rooms lying to the right of the Schweizersaal, in the third story. Frederick, now king, introduced his wife to the assembled court with the words: "This is your queen." He granted her a suitable household, and presented her with a costly set of jewels, the third precious stone in Europe, known as "the small Sancy." This she could really call her own property. In August of the same year he presented her the *château* of Schönhausen, near Berlin. Now she was provided for; she had every thing but her husband.

As the town and castle of Oranienburg are connected with the name of Louise Henriette of Orange, the wife of the great Elector ; and as Charlottenburg is associated with that of Sophia Charlotte, the wife of Frederick I., of Prussia, so is Schönhausen intimately connected with the name and life of Queen Elizabeth Christine. Rheinsberg was the only witness of her short happiness. Schönhausen was the place in which she hid her sorrow and loneliness, the asylum of her widowhood, and the roof under which she at length died.

When Elizabeth Christine was presented with this castle it was in a very dilapidated condition. It had been in possession of the royal family for more than half a century, and while improvements had been commenced at different periods, it had never been made attractive, or scarcely habitable. It was now renovated ; the grounds were enlarged, and the old wall by which it was surrounded replaced by a low hedge. Three years after-

ward, at the command of the new king, the beautiful Linden Avenue, which leads from the Schönhausen Gate, was laid out.

On August 28 the queen, in company with the Duchess of Anhalt-Zerbst and her daughter—afterward the Empress Catherine II., of Russia—visited her new residence. As she entered the grounds she gazed upon the palace and its surroundings with a melancholy pleasure, for she had a presentiment that the happy days of Rheinsberg were forever past. Loud and joyful music resounded through the grounds to welcome the queen and her guests. After partaking of a banquet which had been prepared in the palace for them they returned to the city. Three days later Elizabeth Christine gave a brilliant reception in honor of her sister-in-law, the Princess Ulrike, in her castle at Schönhausen. Every alley and grove in the grounds was beautifully illuminated, and at the end of the great avenue, which was lighted up by different colored

lights, stood a pyramid in which were reflected the words: *Vive la Princesse Louise Ulrike.*"

Two other happy events transpired in the same year, which filled Elizabeth Christine's heart with joy. One was the marriage of her sister, Luise Amelie, to Prince August William, the brother of her husband, the king. This marriage was arranged by the king himself, which certainly was a proof of the confidence that he placed in his wife, as it strengthened his connection with her family by a new tie. The queen cherished the hope of having a beloved sister near her, to whom she could unlock her whole heart, and from whom she might expect a sympathetic and comforting love. The other happy event was a visit to her beloved Rheinsberg. She remained nearly six weeks in this, to her, enchanted spot, with which were associated so many happy remembrances. She had an opportunity while there of again celebrating her birthday, November 8, 1740, returning to Berlin on the

28th of the same month. She wrote while there a joyful letter to her much-loved brother Ferdinand.

The young queen did not yet feel herself entirely forsaken by her husband. If his royal office, with its earnest and sacred duties, employed almost his entire time ; if he undertook many journeys upon which she could not accompany him ; if, as often as he came to Berlin, he dined with his mother and not with his wife, she could, nevertheless, always, on these occasions, be in his company, and see him, with whom, not only by solemn vow and duty, but also by devoted love and admiration, she felt forever united.

In December, 1740, the king left Berlin to join his army, and to commence war against Austria, and, if possible, to crown himself with imperishable laurels.

The first letters which he wrote from the camp to his wife were friendly, and even tender. On the 10th of April the battle of Moll-



witz was fought and won. All Europe was filled with astonishment, and the king and the army which had fought so bravely were held in universal admiration. After the victory the king wrote joyfully to his wife: "I am grateful for the signs of friendship which you give me; I will never prove myself unworthy of them, and you shall not find in me an ungrateful husband. Heaven has favored us to-day, and I hope from my whole soul that we may always be thus favored."

The victory of Mollwitz was celebrated by a thanksgiving service in all the churches of the capital. The hymn, "Lord God, we praise thee!" was sung by thankful hearts, and the booming of cannon sounded amid the songs of praise and the jubilee of the happy people. The queen was present on this occasion, and joined with the people in gratitude to God.

In November the dowager-queen gave a grand entertainment in honor of Elizabeth Christine's birthday. It was on this festal oc-

casion that the queen took possession of her newly-furnished suite of rooms in the royal palace. The expensive furniture and decorations of the apartments, and the massive gold chandeliers and brackets of the so-called "Golden Cabinet," excited general admiration. The festivities were prolonged until after midnight. But all this pomp and splendor could not compensate the loving wife for the absence of her husband. This was the first birthday that she had celebrated without the king since her marriage, but it was only the sad precursor of many which were to follow. From that time until his death, a period of forty-five years, Frederick the Great was present at but two of his wife's birthday festivities.

A few days after this great festal occasion the victor of Mollwitz returned from the field of battle, bringing with him handsome presents for Elizabeth Christine. But the most precious gift to her was his safe return. To add to her joy at this time, her beloved sister,

the Princess Luise Amelie, made her entrance into Berlin. One magnificent feast after another followed her arrival, and the marriage itself took place on January 6, 1742, after which the king again returned to his army.

Elizabeth Christine could see him depart at this time with more calmness, as she had a sister's heart near her in which at any time she could seek and find consolation. And this consolation she very soon needed, as she received information that there was a conspiracy against the king's life. With the most tender solicitude she warned him of his danger, and besought him to protect himself. For her anxiety and entreaties he thanked her most sincerely, and did not deny the report of his danger.

The battle of Ezaslau and Cholusitz was fought on May 18, 1742, and Frederick announced this victory to his wife himself. Later he wrote to her as follows: "You may be free from all care, and that the more so, because

the Austrians are so thoroughly beaten and discouraged that they have something to think about besides an assassination. Our campaign is now ended, and I hope to be again in Berlin in the month of July." This was certainly joyful news, but what pleased the loving wife most of all was to read in the same letter: "One who knows you must love you, and the goodness of your heart deserves the highest esteem."

A preliminary treaty between Prussia and Austria was arranged on June 11, and peace was announced on the 30th of the same month, and celebrated with great rejoicings in the capital. Elizabeth Christine shared in the joy of her subjects, in the blissful anticipation of the return of the king—the victor crowned with glory. On July 12 he entered the capital amid the rejoicing of his people. His victorious sword had won a whole province, and had increased his dominion by about one third of his former possessions. His wife and the

whole royal family received him with the greatest joy, but he remained with them but a few hours. He went to Charlottenburg, and from there to Potsdam. Elizabeth Christine was permitted to have his society, which she had anticipated with so much delight, but for a very short time.

What Frederick, as crown-prince, wrote to General von Grumbkow was now continually being more and more fulfilled: "I shall allow madame to do as she thinks best, and I, on my part, shall do as I please; then there will be freedom. . . . Good-day, madame! and good way!"

To the pain which the queen experienced on account of the separation from her husband was added that of the separation from Frau von Katsch, her chief lady of the household. An unbiased and impartial witness describes this lady-in-waiting in the following terms: "I know of no one more worthy of respect than this woman. She embraced in her character

great earnestness combined with gentleness, propriety with cheerfulness, dignity with politeness, and was the protectress of all upright people." King Frederick honored this woman ; but the queen loved her, and gave her her entire confidence.

Frau von Camas, at the request of the queen, succeeded Frau von Katsch. She was a woman of quick intellect and noble principles, a person whom the king highly respected, and to whom the queen was very much attached. In August King Frederick visited Aix-la-Chapelle, Minden, Breslau, and, later, Rheinsberg and Orainenberg, but Elizabeth Christine was never allowed to accompany him. She had only the choice between Berlin and Schönhofen, and of occasionally dining with the king when he visited his mother, the queen dowager.

It may be asked, What circumstances had caused the king to become so estranged from the one who loved him so devotedly? The

answer is not an easy one. We must not forget that there were many influences at work. We think that the king was nearest the truth when he said that "he was not of the stuff out of which good husbands are made." His ambitious and aspiring mind, which grasped the wide domains of science and the fields of glory and honor in all their magnitude, could not content itself in the narrow routine of domestic life. The royal eagle, with fixed eye and mighty outspread wings, soared aloft to meet the ascending sun of glory; and it mattered little to him if, on his victorious career, and in his path of triumph and fame, he did leave a faithful heart, wounded and uncared for, to grieve in solitude. Added to this was the fact that his wife had been forced upon him, at the price of his liberty, by an inexorably stern father. Besides, the queen, with her quiet, modest, and unpretending nature, might not satisfy the demands which a "Frederick the Great" would make upon a compan-



ion for life. Her firm biblical faith appeared to the royal philosopher as narrow-mindedness, which he might tolerate but could never sympathize with. And, furthermore, there were the manifold intrigues which were carried on in the royal court. The dowager-queen and her children really envied Elizabeth Christine the heart of her husband, whom they all loved and admired, and in whose risen splendor they were basking.



## IX.

### Prussian Victories.



As the Empress of Austria could not overcome the humiliation and loss that she had suffered, she resolved to commence a second Silesian war. In August King Frederick, accompanied by the Princes Ferdinand and Albert, brothers of Elizabeth Christine, and whom she devotedly loved, started for the field of battle. The tender solicitude that this sister felt for the lives of these loved ones can be clearly seen in the following letter, which she wrote to her brother Ferdinand:

“MY DEAR BROTHER—Although I have not received a letter from you in a long time, I will, nevertheless, write again, to remind you that you have a sister who loves you tenderly

and with her whole heart. I know very well that you have little time for correspondence, but, I beseech you, if it is in any way possible, to write at least a few words to our dear mother. She is very anxious and troubled about you, and fears that your love for her is decreasing, and that you have forgotten the duty which a son owes to his mother. I know you far too well, my dear brother, to think that you would intentionally give our dear mother, whose tenderness and care we can never sufficiently understand, the least anxiety or pain. I do not write to reproach you; so do not be angry with me, for what I have written has been prompted by the deepest affection and love.

“In conclusion, this same love compels me to beseech you to regulate your conduct so as to win more and more the favor of the king, and at the same time not to forget your duty to God. If you will keep these three objects in your mind you will certainly be happy. I



taken by the Prussians. To this joy was added another happy event—the birth of the son of the king's brother, Prince of Prussia. This was the first son and heir to the throne. If the queen greeted this birth, which was of the greatest importance to the royal house, and, indeed, to the whole country, with joy, she thanked God for the merciful fulfillment of her prayer. The child was christened Frederick William II. on October 11, and the dowager-queen—the grandmother—and Elizabeth Christine became his sponsors.

In December the king and Prince Ferdinand returned to Berlin. Although they remained but a short time, Elizabeth Christine knew that they were safe, and in good health. It was a source of great pleasure to her to know that the king had shown her brothers marked respect by appointing them to positions of trust. He gave Prince Ferdinand command of the infantry, and to Prince Albert the command of the Fusileer Guard. Elizabeth Chris-

tine, as we may well imagine, was lonely and sad when her husband and brothers left again for the army in Upper Silesia.

In June the Prussian troops won a great victory at Hohenfriedberg, and the queen celebrated it by a splendid feast in her palace at Schönhausen. In September another battle was fought, in which Prussia again gained a brilliant victory; but the queen's brother, the courageous Prince Albert, was killed. Elizabeth Christine had had serious apprehensions of this brother's life, and only a few days before she had written to Prince Ferdinand that Albert exposed himself entirely too much to danger, and she entreated him in her name to beg him to be cautious. As Prince Albert had lost his life in her husband's service, she expected at least a few words of sympathy from him. But none came for a long time, and she could not refrain from complaining to her brother Ferdinand, in a confidential way, that "the king has been so cruel as not to

write one syllable to either my sister or myself. I am quite accustomed to such neglect, but it pains me, especially on such an occasion as this, not to hear from him." But she continued with quiet resignation: "Patience! I have done nothing for which I can reproach myself. I have done my duty. God, in his goodness, will help me to bear and overcome this."

Frederick, doubtless ashamed of his neglect, did, later, write her a few comforting words. These tender sympathizing lines calmed her troubled heart, and she was ready to forgive all of his remissness.

In November Berlin was thrown into the greatest confusion by the threatened invasion of the Austrian General Grünne. All precautionary measures were taken to resist his attack, and to place the royal family, the archives, and the chief authorities in safety at Stettin. The queen remained calmly in the royal palace, and waited for the help of the



Lord. Her prayer was not in vain, for on December 16 the joyful message of the victory of Kesselsdorf arrived in Berlin, and was received with universal rejoicing. The peace of Dresden, which ratified the annexation of Silesia to Prussia, was concluded on December 25, and the victorious king made his triumphant entry into the capital. His wife received him with the deepest gratitude toward God, and with a heart overflowing with love and joy.

As the sun of peace arose again, bright and resplendent after the storm of war, Elizabeth Christine entertained the hope of once more spending happy and peaceful days by the side of her husband. She was willing to ascribe all the neglect and isolation that she had experienced to the exigencies of the times, which had compelled the king to forsake the quiet of his home. But peace had now come, and he whom she loved had returned home crowned with victory. He could now, with

cheerfulness, enjoy the quiet pleasures of domestic life. Only too soon did the queen experience that her hopes were not to be fulfilled. King Frederick liked best to spend his time at Potsdam, where he superintended the building of Sans-souci. He never went to Schönhausen, and when he occasionally visited Berlin he preferred the society of others to that of his wife.



## X.

### The Queen's Sorrows.

**I**N March of the following year the king celebrated his mother's birthday by inviting to the palace the dowager-queen, the Prince of Prussia, Prince Henry, and the Princess Amelia, with all the confidential officers of his household. Elizabeth Christine must suffer the embarrassment of not being invited. At another time the dowager, accompanied by the Princess of Prussia, visited the Prince of Prussia at Oranienburg, and Prince Henry in Rheinsberg, which castle the king had presented to him. The king met them at these places, gave them a hearty reception, and provided that magnificent festivities should be held; but the poor queen was entirely ignored.

She wrote in her grief to her brother Ferdinand, but with calm resignation :

“Although it pains me to be treated thus, I have become accustomed to it. I wish nothing more now than money enough to pay my debts, and then quietly to wait for death, if it will please God.”

These are the words of a queen, the wife of Frederick the Great, at thirty years of age.

How much this injured and neglected woman still loved her husband could be seen in her anxiety for him in a serious illness that he had in February, 1747. She wrote to her brother :

“Thank God, our dear king is better. He has been very ill, and I was greatly troubled about him. If I had dared I would have gone to Potsdam to see him. All danger is now passed, and there is nothing more to be apprehended. God, in his mercy, wishes to preserve his precious life for the good of his

country. I shall not rest until I have seen him."

Sans-souci and Schönhausen were only a few miles apart, yet the way was obstructed as with insurmountable walls and bars of brass.

On May 1 of this same year the palace of Sans-souci was inaugurated by a great banquet. The whole court and all of the friends of the king were present on this occasion, but there was no place for the queen. Indeed, she never saw Sans-souci. Not even on the occasions of the christenings of the princes and princesses, and only once as queen, was she in Potsdam, and this was when she accompanied her mother, who had been visiting her, on her return homeward. On that day the king was not in the palace, and she was too sensitive to look through apartments from which she had been unjustly excluded. With the few exceptions when, in times of war, she was obliged to be in Magdeburg, she never

left Schönhausen and Berlin, and never saw her childhood's home but once after she was married.

When the ambassadors of foreign courts and distinguished strangers from all parts of Europe visited the Prussian Court, they always went to Schönhausen, and paid their respects to her. The king was very particular that all due honor and deference be paid her as queen. But this attention could not satisfy the heart of the wife. The splendor with which she, on occasions of ceremony, commensurate with her rank, was obliged to surround herself, could give her neither satisfaction or pleasure. This outward display could not make amends for the loss of domestic happiness.

In May, 1747, King Frederick reviewed twenty-five battalions and six squadrons of his troops. As this was an extraordinary occasion the queen was present. She was magnificently dressed, and rode in a new

phaeton drawn by eight horses. The phaeton was elaborately cushioned with crimson velvet, and embroidered with gold. Over her head was a crimson canopy, exquisitely wrought and fringed with gold, and supported by a gilded Chinese statue. Every regiment passed before the queen, and the officers respectfully bowed and inclined their swords. These public demonstrations gave her more pain than diversion, and made her feel more than ever her loneliness.

Notwithstanding all of the king's neglect and indifference, she loved and praised him. In her helplessness she wrote to her brother : "God knows how I deliberate day and night on what I shall do in order not to displease his majesty. It is very hard for me to be in Berlin without seeing him ; but I believe it would be a still greater error for me not to go thither. If it be a crime to follow after him, then I glory in the same. Every intelligent person must love such a king as ours. . . . I



most sincerely wish that he may be preserved in good health, and that the troubles which he has to encounter may not do him any injury."

On the occasion of her next birthday the king wrote her a very friendly letter, accompanied by a beautiful present. Her heart was full of joy, and she wrote immediately to her brother Ferdinand: "You may imagine the joy which this proof of the king's favor has given me. I was quite beside myself with joy, and you can easily conceive the love that I entertain for him. He shows his goodness not to an ungrateful wife, but to one who knows how to appreciate his goodness. May God preserve him in health!" Later she wrote again to this same brother, to whom she confided nearly all of her sorrows: "I wish that my husband could read the inmost sentiments of my lonely heart. He would then know my affection for him, and how humbly and heartily I thank him. . . . May God preserve this dear king to us, and listen to the prayers which are

offered up for him by his people. I wish that I could exchange places with those who go unwillingly to Potsdam, and do not care to be in his presence. I should consider it the greatest happiness to have such an opportunity. But it is the way of the world that no one has all that he desires."

Every proof of respect or friendliness that the king manifested for her was received with the utmost gratitude. In the year 1752 it was found that, notwithstanding her rigid economy, she had become involved in debt. When she found that the king had liquidated these obligations she was moved to tears.

It is surprising how she could continue to love and admire this man with such perfect faithfulness and constancy, when she was almost entirely ignored by him. She felt most keenly her neglected position, and knew that the barrier between her husband and herself was becoming greater and greater. Only the consciousness of always faithfully doing her

duty and trusting in God enabled her to withstand these undeserved indignities. Fortunate was it for her that she had found this staff and support, for many long and weary years of sorrow still lay before her.



## XI.

### More Battle-fields.

**S**OON after the conclusion of the peace of Dresden, in 1746, Austria and Russia concluded a treaty with each other, in which one article was directed expressly against King Frederick and his right to Silesia. Saxony was secretly a party to this treaty, and was ready, as soon as war was declared, to join with the enemies of Prussia. Austria was trying to draw the King of France into this combination against Frederick. Even as early as March, 1756, the French ambassador at the court of Prussia, Marquis de Valori, had begged for a porcelain *bouquet* of flowers from the porcelain manufactory at Vincennes, to be presented to the queen, Elizabeth Christine. The marquis wrote : " Do you not believe that an opportunity could arise when this

present from a great king would place the queen under perpetual obligation? I venture to say that the respect shown to her would flatter the king. Although he seems to be very indifferent to her himself, it is apparent that if any one else fails to show her proper respect it excites his displeasure. I have seen many examples of it." In May, six weeks after the marquis had written the above, France and Austria had concluded a treaty against Frederick. This duplicity was used by the French ambassador to conceal the real hostility that was animating the French court against Prussia. Sweden was in close connection with France at this time, and it was expected that this power would also unite with the enemies of Prussia.

In July, 1756, the queen wrote to her brother Ferdinand :

"We live very quietly here. When it is not too warm I take a walk, and, taking a book with me, sit in some shady place. I

pass the greatest part of my time alone, and find that the society of books is more profitable than any train of courtiers."

On August 29 King Frederick opened the campaign against his numerous and powerful enemies. He advanced with sixty thousand men into Saxony, in order to cover the boundaries of Brandenburg, and to carry the war away from his own kingdom into Bohemia. The great Seven Years' War had now begun, which brought the heroic king and his people almost to the brink of ruin, but which was to cover the great commander and his army with imperishable glory, and to raise Prussia to greater power and importance than ever before. In October the Austrians were defeated, and the Saxon army was obliged to surrender as prisoners of war. Saxony thus fell into the hands of Frederick, and he spent the winter there with his troops. A heavy campaign was anticipated during the following year. France prepared a large army for the

purpose of crossing the Rhine. Sweden resolved to reconquer that part of Pomerania which had been taken from her, and Russia renewed her compact with Austria. The black cloud of war hung heavy and threatening over Prussia.

The queen remained in Berlin during this year, as it was not safe to be out of the capital. She spent the summer in the house of Minister von Marschall, No. 78 Wilhelm Strasse, where she found a delightful garden, with every convenience and comfort. After the battles of Prague and Collin, General Haddick advanced toward Berlin, and on October 16 took possession of it.

The queen, with the royal family, had been obliged to take refuge in the fortress of Spandau. After the retreat of the Austrians the court was again removed to Berlin. By the command of the king, however, the queen, together with the princes and princesses of the royal family, and the foreign ministers,



removed from the capital to Magdeburg. The queen entered this city on the afternoon of October 28, and was received amid salvos of artillery. She gave a magnificent banquet to the officers and authorities of the city of Magdeburg in return for their demonstrations of respect to her and their loyalty to the king. The defeat of Collin had been a severe blow for Frederick and his generals. Elizabeth Christine felt this reverse as queen and wife in a twofold degree.

The enemies of Prussia were greatly encouraged. They now advanced with all the more boldness and assurance to share the certain and easy spoil. The Russians pressed into Prussia in the north-east, the Swedes prepared to land in Pomerania, and two French armies advanced by way of Thuringia and Hanover into the very heart of Brandenburg. Amid all these calamities occurred the death of the dowager-queen. She died after a short illness. It was a source of great satis-

faction and consolation to Elizabeth Christine to know that her mother-in-law had, in her later years, learned to appreciate her real worth, and that they had conceived before her death a deep love for each other. These were exceedingly sorrowful days for the royal family, and they spent their time, as the queen wrote to her brother, "picking lint, and trying to console one another."

The closing months of the year, however, brought joy and comfort, for the king had defeated the French at Rossbach and the Austrians at Leuthen, so that at the end of the year the whole of Silesia, as far as the fortress of Schweidnitz, was again in the power of the Prussians. The messages of victory were received with the greatest jubilee, not only in Magdeburg, but throughout all Prussia. Nothing now prevented the royal family from returning to the capital. The queen, accompanied by her sister, the Princess of Prussia, arrived in Berlin on January

5, 1758. Elizabeth Christine was met by the authorities of the city, and welcomed by the applause of the assembled crowd and amid sounds of music. Her triumphant entrance at the Brandenburg Gate, which then consisted of two simple stone pillars, was greeted with the most jubilant shouts from the honest citizens. On the 24th of the same month Elizabeth Christine celebrated with great magnificence the birthday of her royal husband, the victorious hero. At the beginning of this year she looked forth with renewed energy and hope, but was obliged to suffer disappointment.

In January the Russians had left Memel and entered Königsberg. All of East Prussia had been compelled to do homage to the Empress of Russia, and, with all the horror of a wild foray, the northern army advanced as far as the Newmark. Every heart was now filled with the most gloomy forebodings. Another death added to the sorrows of the royal family.

The Prince of Prussia, the husband of the queen's sister, who had left the army after the battle of Collin, died, May 12, at Oranienburg, after a long illness. After communicating the painful news to the king, it also devolved upon the queen to convey the sad message to her sister, the wife of the Prince of Prussia. These sisters wept together, and Elizabeth Christine sought, with all prudence and tenderness, to comfort her.

In this deep affliction it was natural for the widowed princess to wish for the tender embrace and loving counsel of her mother. The queen immediately made arrangements to carry out her wishes, but it was not without much embarrassment on her part, for she was obliged to get permission from the king. The following is an extract from a letter which she wrote to him : " I promise you, with all sincerity, that not the slightest intrigue shall take place ; for I dislike such treachery as much as it is possible for a person to do, and have al-

ways had the greatest horror of it. Concerning the expense, I will not spend more than is actually necessary, and think that my mother will be satisfied with her usual mode of life. . . . Under all circumstances you can be assured that I will do nothing to call forth your displeasure."

The king granted the request of his wife, and the Duchess of Brunswick arrived at Schönhausen on July 17. The sorrowful sisters had now the happiness of seeing their beloved mother, and enjoying her society for fourteen days. On August 1 the duchess returned to Brunswick, and the queen accompanied her as far as Potsdam.

One misfortune after another came upon the royal house during this year. The Margravine of Baireuth, Wilhelmina, the favorite sister of the king, died on October 14. The same hour that she died the king suffered the sad reverse of Hochkirch. This fatal day robbed him of many of his best generals, besides five

thousand of his brave soldiers. The queen's brother, Frederick Franz, was among the slain. When he was told that the Austrians had surprised the Prussian camp, he cheerfully and courageously called out to his troops: "Then we will drive them forth again!" With the utmost bravery he advanced with his brigade into the village, which was already possessed and defended by the enemy. While urging on his troops he was instantly killed by a cannon-ball. He was only twenty-six years of age. Eight months before he had written to his sister in gloomy foreboding: "It must some time have an end, and I hope that the end for which I sigh will soon come." The body of the fallen hero was conveyed to Schönhausen, and the queen mourned deeply his loss. This was the second brother who had fallen on the field of battle while fighting under the banner of King Frederick.

In the following year, however, Elizabeth Christine had occasion to be joyful over the

success of her brother Ferdinand, the confidant of her heart. He gained the victory of Minden over the French, and compelled them to recross the Rhine. But this joy was but of short duration, for only twelve days after Prince Ferdinand's success the king suffered a most terrible and disheartening defeat at Kunersdorf. He ordered that the court and archives should be immediately removed from Berlin, as the capital was threatened by the victorious enemy. He wrote to Minister von Finkenstein : " It is a sad misfortune. I shall not survive it. The consequences have been worse than the battle itself. I have no further resources, and, if I must tell the truth, I consider every thing as lost. I shall not survive the ruin of my country."

The queen was compelled to flee again with the royal family to Magdeburg, where they were obliged to remain for nearly three and a half years. During this time she had the joy of seeing her mother and two of her sisters,



who came to Magdeburg. One deplorable event followed another. The brave and faithful General Fouqué was defeated and taken prisoner at Landshut, on June 23. In August the king won a victory over the Austrians at Leignitz, but without gaining any decided advantage. The king wrote to a friend: "Formerly the occurrence of the 15th would have decided much; now this engagement is but a light scratch. A great battle is necessary to decide our fate, which, according to all probability, will soon take place. Never in my life have I been in so critical a position as during this campaign. A kind of miracle is necessary to surmount the difficulties which I foresee. They are Herculean labors which I have to end, and at an age when strength forsakes me, when sickness attacks me, and, to speak the truth, when hope itself, the only comfort of the unfortunate, begins to fail."

On October 9, 1760, the Austrians and Russians entered Berlin with all the wantonness

of barbarous victors. The queen learned with great sorrow that her beloved Schönhausen had been plundered. The Cossacks laid waste the royal *château*, and sought for the treasure in it; finding none, they burned the castellan with a hot iron, to compel him to confess where it was supposed to be hidden. Fortunately, the queen had taken it with her to Magdeburg. Charlottenburg was also plundered by the Saxons, who gave themselves up to the grossest vandalism.

The news of the glorious victory which the king won over the Austrians at Forgau, in November, revived their sunken courage. Amid the rejoicings over the news of this splendid victory, the citizens of Magdeburg celebrated the birthday of the queen.



## XII.

### End of the Seven Years' War.

**T**HE year 1761 passed without any important battles. King Frederick, in his fortified camp at Bunzelwitz, defied the united attack of the Russian and Austrian armies. He could not prevent, however, the important fortress of Schweidnitz from again falling into the hands of the enemy, nor the Russians from firmly establishing themselves in Pomerania, by the conquest of Kolberg. To add to his embarrassments, the important alliance of England was withdrawn after the death of George II. The brave and pious hussar, General Ziethen, tried to comfort him by hinting at the great Helper above. "Ah," sighed Frederick, "he does no more miracles." A miracle was, indeed, necessary to surmount these difficulties;

and God, in his goodness, did perform that miracle.

The Empress Elizabeth of Russia, King Frederick's bitterest enemy, died on January 5, 1762, and her nephew and successor, Peter III., an enthusiastic admirer of the great Prussian king, ascended the imperial throne of Russia. He immediately released all Prussian prisoners without ransom, and concluded a peace with Prussia on May 5, in which he gave up all conquests without indemnification, and even joined his own troops to the Prussian army.

Sweden followed the example of Russia, and also entered into a treaty of peace. By means of this rapid and fortunate change the king was rescued from his unfortunate position. "He is right," he acknowledged to the pious Ziethen; "He has kept his word to his allies."

Peter III. was afterward dethroned by his wife Catherine, whom he had dethroned and

placed in a cloister. The Empress ratified the treaty of peace with Prussia, made by her predecessor, and Frederick had only now to combat with the French and Austrians.

In the same year the queen's mother, the Duchess of Brunswick, died, and her loss cast Elizabeth Christine into the deepest sorrow. But in this bitter grief she was greatly comforted to know that, amid the cares and anxieties of war, the king was thoughtful of her, and that he tried to console her with a sympathizing letter.

After this sorrow the queen was enabled to look above with renewed hope. The sun of happiness and joy, which had so long been hidden behind dark clouds, arose in fresh splendor over the beloved Fatherland. The king had defeated the Austrians at Burkersdorf and Leutsmannsdorf, and the fortress of Schweidnitz had been reconquered after a long siege and a brave resistance. Silesia had thus again come into the possession of the King of Prussia.

Prince Henry, the king's brother, had defeated the imperial troops at Freiburg, and Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick had defeated the French at Wilhelmsthal and at Lutterberg.

The preliminaries of a peace between France and Prussia were signed on November 3, 1762. Maria Theresa, forsaken by all her allies, was obliged to give up all hope of subduing the heroic king who had alone withstood so bravely and victoriously the confederate powers. She bade the electoral prince of Saxony, Frederick Christian, to undertake measures for the conclusion of peace. This he did, and received the assurance from the king that he would do all that was compatible with his honor for its restoration. On New-year's-eve of the year 1763 the plenipotentiaries of Prussia, Austria, and Saxony met together at Hubertsburg, Saxony, for the purpose of negotiating the terms upon which peace could be concluded. On February 15, the treaty was signed. Prussia and Austria renounced

all claims to the states and lands belonging to each other. All conquests made during the Seven Years' War were restored. Frederick remained in possession of the whole of Silesia, and gave back the land belonging to the Elector of Saxony.

In anticipation of the approaching conclusion of peace, the queen could again leave the fortress of Magdeburg. On February 16 she arrived in Berlin. She entered the city in a carriage drawn by eight pairs of horses, escorted by forty-eight postillions and the different corporations of the city. On the same evening a messenger arrived, announcing that peace had been proclaimed on the preceding day. The joyful people gave expression to their feelings by loud acclamations, booming of cannon, strains of music, and a brilliant illumination. The Sunday following was observed as a day of thanksgiving throughout the land.

The Seven Years' War was now ended, and



Elizabeth Christine looked forward to the return of her husband, trusting that, as he had satisfied his ambitious spirit and crowned his brow with imperishable laurels, he would now be willing to seek happiness in the domestic circle. For this happiness the queen longed with all the intensity that a loving and faithful heart could yearn. It was with the greatest joy that she received a letter from the king announcing that he would be in Berlin on the evening of March 30, and would dine with her. The time arrived, and the streets were lined with innumerable multitudes of people. Very early in the morning the citizens commenced thronging the streets until they formed a double human wall, two miles in length, extending to the Brandenburg gate, through which the king was to make his entrance.

Amid the shouts and cheers of his subjects, King Frederick rode through the city to the royal palace, where he descended from his

carriage and went immediately to the apartments of the queen. She gave him a tender and affectionate welcome. He dined with her and other members of the royal family, distributing among them rich and expensive gifts. The capital, and, indeed, all Prussia, was filled with joyful festivities. But all this rejoicing could not satisfy the disappointment of the queen. She experienced only too soon that the seven years' absence of her husband had alienated him more than ever from her.

King Frederick wrote to one of his friends soon after his return :

“Peace causes universal joy. As for me, I return as a gray-headed old man into a city in which I only know the walls, where I meet none of my old acquaintances, where endless labor awaits me, and where, in a short time, I shall lay my weary bones to rest ; where there is no more trouble, no war, no misery, and no deceit among men.”

At an earlier date he wrote as follows to Marquis d'Argens:

"MY DEAR MARQUIS: I hardly know any more whether there is a Sans-souci in the world, or where that place may be, so that the name pleases me no more. I am old, sad, and full of trouble. A semblance of my former vivacity returns from time to time, but it is as a spark which soon vanishes, because there is a want of fire to keep it alive. It is like a sunbeam which penetrates dark thunder-clouds. I will say more: if you were to see me, you would not recognize in me my former self. You would see in me a gray old man, who has lost the half of his teeth, without joyfulness, without animation, and without imagination. These, my dear marquis, are not the result of years, but of cares. They are the first-fruits of the frailty which the autumn of life inwardly brings."

Frederick the Great had not only, in his long and heavy wars, sacrificed the best part of his kingdom, the most confidential friends of his heart, and the best years of his life, but he had also, in his unprecedented battles and undertakings, completely exhausted the strength of his manhood. He had in seven years exhausted the strength of fourteen, and had really become an old man.

“ My joyfulness and my happy disposition,” he wrote to the marquis, “are buried with the dear ones that have been taken from me. The close of my life will now be sad and painful. . . . I alone have outlived this generation, and wish now to lay my old bones in peace in the grave.”

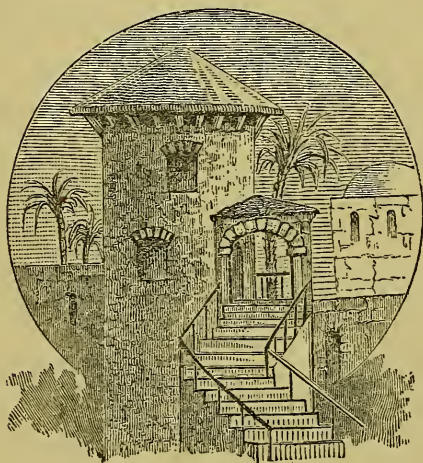
Frederick's first thought was to heal as quickly as possible the wounds which his country had suffered during the long years of war, and to raise his kingdom to renewed prosperity. He performed the duties of a king anxious for the welfare of his people, as

a true father of his country. He saw all the injuries that had been done to the Fatherland, and his heart beat with the warmest love for all his subjects. His hand was unwearied in fulfilling the duties of his royal office.

A few days after his return he went to Potsdam and Sans-souci, while Elizabeth Christine went to Schönhausen. It was a sad and mournful summer that she spent in her desolated and devastated palace. Measures were taken the following year for its restoration, and, when completed, it was far more beautiful than it was before the war. Among the improvements was a pediment raised above one of the porticoes, which can still be seen, with the initial letters, E. C., of the queen.

There, as formerly, Elizabeth Christine lived in painful, and yet contented, solitude. Conversation with a few true friends, correspondence with learned men at home and


abroad, especially with the clergymen of the capital, and, best of all, her beloved books, formed the chief occupation of her retired life.





### XIII.

#### Elizabeth Christine's Literary Labors.

N July, 1766, Countess von Camas, chief lady of the household, and Elizabeth Christine's faithful and devoted friend, died. She was not only esteemed by Frederick the Great, but by every one who knew her, as a lady of great nobleness of heart and dignity of character. Her death caused the queen the most intense sorrow, for she knew that her loss could never be replaced. This severe affliction drove the queen to a new and hitherto untried activity.

She immediately commenced translating the at that time much-read religious work by Cru-  
gott, "Christ in Solitude." She dedicated this book to her devoted and beloved brother, Ferdinand of Brunswick. The dedicatory let-



ter, which covers several pages, exhibits very clearly the feelings of the queen. It is, at the same time, so true a witness of her piety that we reproduce it unabridged :

“DEDICATORY LETTER TO MY BROTHER.

“To you who know so truly and deeply the worth of religion, to whom should I dedicate this translation in preference to you, my beloved brother? This blessed religion has preserved you upright in the world, and directed your life under all circumstances, even on the field of battle. You have always sought Almighty God for your support, and he has never forgotten you in the most dangerous periods of your life. You have always given him the honor due his name. Even after that victorious battle, when your friends congratulated you, I remember your reply: ‘Let us thank God, who has so visibly stood by us. I have only been the instrument in the hands of the Omnipotent by which he has given us the vic-

tory.' How many letters I have from you in which you give God the praise, and show the confidence which you place in him at all times ! Therefore this wise and beneficent Father has blessed you, and turned for you all evil into good. Your name is sufficiently known, by all your great and good deeds, for Christian people to do you justice. One word more of praise must I write, and which outweighs all of your deeds of heroism : it is, that you know what religion is, that you practice it, and make it the rule and guide of all your actions.

“ I will here relate the circumstance which caused me to undertake this translation. I had a dear friend, who was devoted to you with her whole heart, but who is now dead. She found so much pleasure in this book, in the original German, that she read it again and again. She often spoke to me concerning it, and told me that the reading of it made her truly happy, imbuing her with peace of mind, elevated thoughts, and faith in God. This

friend had a clear and searching mind, and to me was a devoted and loving companion. Her rare virtues were illuminated by her faith in God. Out of this faith flowed her zeal for the welfare of her friends and her true Christian love and heroism, which she manifested to her latest moment.

“The loss which I suffered by her death was very painful. After her burial this book fell into my hands, and I read it afresh. I found such beautiful and elevated thoughts in it that I determined to translate it into French, that I might be the more deeply impressed. Each page recalls to mind the conversations which we had together, and by which I was so much edified. They remind me, also, of the delightful interviews which I used to have with my two peerless sisters, who possessed all of those qualities of heart and mind which made them so amiable, companionable, and worthy of respect, and whose loss forms one of the most painful experiences of my life.

“ These departed ones proved, by their example, that true piety is consistent with the earthly life ; that one can enjoy all its pleasures without being made gloomy and melancholy, as so many people think, especially the fashionable and those of sprightly temperament. They showed, by their conversation and beautiful example, that only with faith in Christ can we live contentedly and joyfully. The younger of the two sisters manifested this faith in her sufferings. She was an invalid for many years, and often said to me, when I admired her patience in her affliction, ‘ God has sent it to me. Why should I not bear it patiently? Besides, he shows me so many favors that I try to place my whole confidence in him, and to be happy and contented. I know that when he takes me from this world I shall enjoy eternal happiness, and receive the reward that awaits me for all that I have suffered here below. This earthly life is but a pilgrimage to a happy eternity.’

“ How often both of these sisters used to encourage me to be firm in my faith in God, and in the hour of great trouble to trust him implicitly ! Such were the dear and Christian friends who continually strengthened me. They have been torn from me by death, and their loss is very grievous. But the Gospel teaches us to look not only to this life but to the life which is to come. They are happy, and I will not envy them. God has taken them from earth, and their presence is no longer here to cheer me ; but I shall meet them again in the other world, so that they are really not lost, but gone before. The Lord requires that we give him our whole heart. To him I will ever have recourse, and he will, at all times, to the end of my days, be my father, my friend, and my helper, and will at last receive me into his eternal kingdom. Without this hope I would be indeed alone and forsaken.

“ You, my dear brother, are still in the

world, although far from me. It troubles me much that I can no longer see you, and have the pleasure and profit of your conversations. Your friendship for me has been thoroughly tried, and the hope that I have of seeing you again before I die never forsakes me. I have arrived at an age when, perhaps, I have but a short time to live. But for you, my dear brother, I wish a long and happy life. When our earthly career is ended I know that we will again be united with all of our dear relatives and friends, and enjoy with them the unchangeable bliss of eternity.

“I am, with a devoted friendship, my beloved brother, your faithful sister,

“ELIZABETH CHRISTINE.”

The queen's life became more and more lonely and sorrowful. Her brother, Anton Ulrich, died in May, 1775, in his Siberian exile. A year later her sister, Princess Christine Charlotte, died, and two years after

her death a younger sister, Therese Natalie, Abbess of Gandersheim, died. But the most painful to her was the death of her widowed sister, the Princess of Prussia. She died January 13, 1780. This sister had lived for thirty-eight years at the same court, in the most intimate and confidential unity, and the queen mourned her loss with the most profound sorrow. It was at the death-bed of this Christian princess that the following lines of Paul Gerhardt's beautiful hymn were sung :

O when thou call'st me to depart,  
Turn not away thy face ;  
When death has pierced me with his dart,  
Uphold me with thy grace.

If terror and dismay  
Assail my fleeting breath,  
Lord, thou wilt all my fears allay,  
For thou hast conquered death.

While she mourned the loss of this devoted sister, she had the great comfort of having confided to her care this sister's granddaughter. The merry, joyful child became the



lively and cheerful companion of her solitude. Intrusting this girl to the care of Elizabeth Christine, which was brought about by the king, was certainly a pleasing proof of the confidence he had in her. This child, Princess Frederica, was the daughter of King Frederick's favorite niece, Elizabeth of Brunswick, and the king showed her much attention. The little princess in a few years became marriageable, and was united to Frederick, Duke of York, second son of King George III. The queens of Prussia and England were on friendly terms, and the English queen was very willing to receive the Prussian princess as her daughter-in-law. She wrote a kind letter to Elizabeth Christine, promising to be both a friend and mother to her son's young wife.

The Duchess of York, in her first letters from England, tells the Queen of Prussia how well Queen Charlotte, her mother-in-law, had kept this promise in the motherly reception


which she had given her. When the duchess arrived at her new home in Oatlands she found in her room a portrait of the Queen of Prussia, which had been placed there by Queen Charlotte. It was a speaking likeness, and the smile on the well-known face drew tears from the eyes of the young bride, even in the midst of her new happiness—tears of gratitude springing from the thought that for her, the once desolate child, two mothers had been provided by the providence of God.\*

\* Hudson, "Louisa, Queen of Prussia," vol. i, p. 197.



#### XIV.

Religious Life—Further Literary Labors.

 LIZABETH CHRISTINE began now, in connection with her other afflictions, to feel the weakness of age. In 1773 she became quite ill, and did not recover until the following year, when she again had a severe attack, and her physicians despaired of her life. King Frederick, on being advised of the state of the queen's health, wrote to the physician: "It would grieve me if such an event (her death) were to occur." She recovered, however, for her trials and sorrows were not yet at an end. Her books, her few confidential friends, and, above all, her hidden life in God, wholly occupied her time. In the same year, after her severe illness, she translated three books: a

work of Spalding's on "The Destiny of Man," the pious "Resolutions of Brandannus Gebharde," and another work, by an unknown author, entitled, "Love of God." Toward the close of the same year she wrote an original work, "Thoughts and Meditations for the New-year on the Care which God has for Mankind, and of the Way, full of Goodness, in which he leads Us." As this work thoroughly illustrates the character of the authoress, and her faith in God's goodness, we make a few selections from the closing pages :

"As I am sufficiently convinced that I am not guided by the thoughts of my own limited and defective understanding, but by the counsel and the thoughts of the everlasting, perfect, and all-merciful God, I will, in the future, bring all my thoughts and wishes as a sacrifice to his omniscience, and forego my own will and limited judgment. As I have often experienced that my heart is never more burdened

with sorrow than when it is misled by its own foolish imaginings, its perverse self-love, and its vain and frivolous desires, I will, therefore, make use of the present, and endeavor, in the future, to do my duty. I will consecrate myself fully to the Lord, and place my whole trust in him, in the firm conviction that he will guide me safely to the end.

“With these principles I will surrender myself during the new-year, without fear or care, entirely to the guidance of my heavenly Father, with the consciousness that nothing will occur but what is necessary for my temporal and spiritual well-being. If God gives me prosperity and happiness, I will praise and glorify his name. If, however, his omniscience sends affliction and sorrow, I will humiliate myself in perfect submission to his will. Should this year be the last of my life, I trust I will be prepared to say, ‘Thy will be done.’”

In 1777 the queen published a translation

of Sturm's "Meditations on the Works of God in Nature and Providence," in three volumes, of which the following is the preface :

"As it is the most sacred duty of man to love and revere his Creator, I think I do not make bad use of my time when I translate from the German into French these 'Meditations.' At first I only had in view my own edification, wishing to stimulate anew my heart to the praise of Almighty God. But friends, whom I could not deny, have begged me to publish this translation, which I consent to do, wishing from the inmost depths of my heart that those who read them, and who have not the least susceptibility of that divine care of which they are the continual objects, may be benefited, and brought out of their indolence and slothfulness.

"May we, dear reader, give to the great truths of which these reflections remind us, the attention which they deserve, and, that

we may from day to day become more and more perfect, is the earnest and sincere prayer of my heart.

CONSTANCE." \*

We add the preface of another translation, which she published in 1778: "Six Sermons by Sack." This preface gives very fully her faith in God and his promises.

"A just and certain living, and accurate knowledge of religion, is an inexhaustible source of joy and consolation. The precepts of the Gospels, and the example which our Saviour gave in his life to the world, cannot do otherwise than make us happy, and if we obey them, we will certainly be so. On the other hand, only in the seeking of true piety and virtue, with the hope of a favorable result, shall we aspire after that true blessedness

\* The king, when crown-prince, had founded at Rheinsberg an Order, whose patron saint was the French knight, Bayard, the well-known man "without fear and reproach." In the Order Frederick bore the name of "The Constant." In memory of those beautiful days, which had now been passed for thirty-seven years, the queen signed herself "Constance."



which was won for us by the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and which hope was strengthened by his resurrection and ascension. It is only when we obey the commands and follow the example of our Saviour that he promises us that we shall be with him, and with him rejoice in perfect happiness.

“O, if we only cling closely and are faithful to our Saviour, who ascended into heaven, and who has promised to be our Mediator with the Father, and to guide us by his Holy Spirit in the right way! If we sincerely believe that he will not forsake us, must we not be happy in this world and in the world to come? We shall be if we walk humbly before him; if we work out our salvation with fear and trembling. In order to become happy, we shall recognize the necessity of a holy life, and at the same time believe that not all who say, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but, as Jesus Christ himself testified, only those who do the will of their Father in heaven.

“We have no plea or excuse on account of our weakness or inability. Our Saviour said, ‘My yoke is easy, and my burden is light!’ He gives us courage, and strengthens us to follow his commandments. We can say with David, ‘But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works.’

“May the Almighty God help us through his grace to lead truly holy lives! May he, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh, infuse our hearts with the love of Jesus Christ, and lead and direct us by his Holy Spirit in this great work!”

“Meditations for Every Day of the Week” was the title of another little book that she translated the same year (1778) and dedicated to her young niece, Frederica.

This year promised to be a troubled one. The cloud of war again threatened the Prussian sky. The Elector, Maximilian Joseph, of Bavaria, died in December, 1777, without an heir.

His rightful successor was the Elector, Karl Theodore, of the Palatinate. The acting Emperor Joseph, of Austria, wished to take advantage of this event in order to strengthen his power in Germany. He therefore made out some specific claims, and advanced with his troops into Bavaria, with the intention of making the weak elector agree to a contract by which Austria would receive a large portion of Bavaria. Frederick the Great, who perceived in the proceeding an infraction of the German imperial laws, and a dangerous example for the future, determined at once to go forward and protect his rights. He had a declaration made in Vienna that he would never consent to a division of the Electoral States. The Austrians sought in every way to oppose him, and finally they tried to win him by seductive promises. But he remained steadfast to his determination to protect the independence of Bavaria. He sent troops into Bohemia, and later joined the army himself.

It appeared now as if the peace which had smiled upon Prussia for fifteen years, and which had healed the wounds of the country and advanced its power and prosperity, was once more to vanish before the horror and devastation of war.

Frederick's subjects looked upon their king with anxiety, yet with confidence. Elizabeth Christine, wishing to strengthen and encourage the Prussian people, wrote a little pamphlet entitled, "Meditations on the Position of Public Affairs in 1778." This she dedicated to all timorous people. We reproduce here the most interesting parts:

"We are, as it appears, threatened again with war. Fifteen years have passed away since the termination of the Seven Years' War, during which time we have enjoyed the blessings of peace. Have we been really thankful for the benefits of peace? Have we made a good use of the time in which we have enjoyed its blessings? Have we often

thought of the sad and dangerous positions in which we have been placed? Have we thought of our indebtedness to God, who saved us in those perilous times, and who has preserved our dear and incomparable king?

“This great king, a true father of his people, fought for the preservation of his country, without thinking of weariness or danger. His sublime spirit ever found fresh resources, even when misfortune had reached its summit and every thing appeared to be lost. . . .

“O, my beloved fellow-countrymen, never forget what your good and great king has done for you! Remain truly devoted to him! Love him as subjects ought to love their king, who loves them and has done every thing for them. . . . In war he is the terror of his enemies, while in peace he is, by his goodness and mildness, the true father of his people. But whom have we to thank for the happiness of having such a king? Is it not the Lord who, in his love, has given him to us? Is it not he

who has preserved him to us? . . . After so many wonderful tokens of his protection, would it not offend him if we were to look into the future timorously?

“ No, the most high King and Lord will not forsake us if we put our trust in him. We shall have every reason to praise him, and these days of disturbance and uncertainty will result in a durable peace.

“ But, dear fellow-countrymen, if it is God’s will to allow the torch of war again to be kindled for our chastisement, let us be of good cheer. The same God who has given us such wonderful victories in the past will not forsake us now. May the God of mercy go forth with our dear king, as he goes forth, the restorer and preserver of German freedom ! Let us unitedly pray that he may be successful, as the instrument of God, in carrying out justice and right. May the injustice of the Emperor of Austria be exposed, and our good king have reason to hope that he will have the

victory, that peace may once more be restored, and that the old order of things may be maintained, in which all the States of the empire, without fear of interference of other powers, may be preserved in peace and quietness."

This is the language of true patriotism and confidence in God which this devoted queen gave to the German people. Fortunately, however, the apprehensions which were entertained were not realized. Russia manifested an intention of joining Prussia, and the Austrian court immediately entered into negotiations for peace. Austria surrendered to the rightful heir the portions of Bavaria which she had taken possession of, and King Frederick again returned to Berlin from the bloodless campaign which he contemptuously designated as the "Potato War." Two days after the king's return to the capital he dined with the queen and other members of the royal family at Charlottenburg. In the afternoon of the same day Elizabeth Christine returned



to Schönhausen, and a few days later the king went to Sans-souci.

In the following year the queen translated an English religious work, by Richard Jones, into French: "Man as a Friend of God." This work had already been translated into German. It treats of the communion and friendship which may exist between God and man. In her preface, which she dedicated to her niece, the Princess Wilhelmina, of Prussia, she says: "Only in this intimate relation and union with God can we find that holy confidence which will preserve us upright and holy in all positions of life. If we do our part, God will certainly do his."

Her firm confidence in her God, her patience, submission, and resignation to his paternal will which we find expressed in all her writings, were the support which upheld and comforted her on her lonely pilgrimage. One after another of her relatives and dear friends whom she loved so fondly were being taken

from her by death. She had scarcely recovered from the shock occasioned by the death of her sister, the Princess of Prussia, when she was called to mourn the death of her brother Carl, the reigning Duke of Brunswick. Of the fourteen brothers and sisters whom she once had, only two brothers and two sisters now remained.

May 12, 1783, was the fiftieth anniversary of her marriage. Fifty years ! What fullness of joy so often commemorates the golden wedding of poor and humble subjects ! What sweet and hallowed remembrances encircle these periods ! How entirely different was it at the royal court of Prussia ! Neither in the royal palace nor in the country was this day celebrated. But Elizabeth Christine found consolation and happiness in quiet communion with God, and in the consoling words of the psalmist, "Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." In this peaceful and subdued state of mind

she translated the first volume of Herme's "Manual of Religion," which she published in the following year.

In January, 1785, King Frederick celebrated the birthday of his brother, Prince Henry, in the apartments of the queen, and, without doubt, this was the last time that he ever visited her. Soon after this his health became so unsettled as to require earnest attention. How long and fervently had this devoted woman prayed God to preserve this great king! Notwithstanding his indifference to her, she adored him as the hero whose glory had shed a halo over his country, and who was so truly worthy of being called the "father of his people."



## XV.

### Last Days of Frederick the Great.

**F**REDERICK the Great was now in his seventy-fifth year. Asthma and dropsy were gradually bringing down his strength, and the question was, How long will it last? Carlyle describes him as being at that last period of his life "an interesting, thin, little old man, of alert, though slightly-stooping figure, who used to be seen sauntering on the terrace of Sans-souci for a short time in the afternoon, or you might have met him at an earlier hour riding or driving in a rapid business-like manner in the open roads, or through the woods and avenues in the vicinity of Potsdam."\*

\* For the chief contents of this chapter we are largely indebted to Carlyle's "Life of Frederick the Great," and Hudson's "Life and Times of Louisa, Queen of Prussia."

“This was Frederick the Great of Prussia; so strangers called him, but at home among his own people, who so much loved and esteemed him, he was ‘Vater Fritz,’ a name of familiarity which, in that time, had not bred contempt. He is a king, every inch of him, though without the trappings of a king. He presents himself in a Spartan simplicity of vesture: no crown, but an old military cocked hat, generally old, or trampled or kneaded into absolute softness if new; no scepter, but one like Agamemnon’s, a walking-stick cut from the woods, which serves also as a riding-whip, with which he hits the horse between the ears. As for royal robes, a mere soldier’s blue coat with facings, coat likely to be old, and sure to have a good deal of Spanish snuff on the breast of it; the rest of the apparel, unobtrusive in color or cut, ending in high over-knee military boots.

“The man is not of God-like physiognomy, any more than of imposing stature or cos-

tume ; close-shut mouth, with thin lips, prominent jaws and nose, receding brow, by no means of Olympian height. His head, however, is of long form, and has superlative gray eyes in it. Not what is called a beautiful man, nor yet by all appearance what is called a happy man. On the contrary, his face bears evidence of many sorrows, as they are termed, of much hard labor done in the world, and seems to anticipate nothing but more still coming. . . . Yet great unconscious, and some conscious, pride, well-tempered with a cheery humor, are written on that old face, which carries its chin forward, notwithstanding the slight stoop about the neck."

Frederick was never so truly beloved as in his latter years, when a feeling of filial affection was combined with the loyal pride of its subjects. In time of war the attention and regard which he bestowed on his soldiers, caring for them as individual men as well as leading them in corps, was wonderful ; in time

of peace, with the same feeling he embraced all his people with a love that was felt by each one. In those tranquil days Frederick could stoop to lay siege to the heart of a child. He had not lost his winning manners, and his voice was still clear and pleasantly modulated.

Physical infirmities had tended to induce the slovenly habits which made the illustrious monarch present an appearance so strangely contrasting with that of the gay cavalier of Rheinsberg, so fastidious in his attire. Once a year he made a point of dressing as properly as the cruel maladies from which he suffered would permit. Very rarely, on special court occasions, he appeared as nearly as possible like the Frederick of bygone days. Sans-souci was his favorite palace, which he had built as a retreat from State ceremonial, as its name imports — without care. While Frederick's general character was in every respect firm, religiously he was



at times weak and wavering. The king once spoke irreverently in the presence of General Ziethen. The courageous old soldier stood up, and, bowing to his majesty, said, "I have fought for your majesty, I am ready to lay my gray head at your feet, your honor has ever been very dear to me, but I will not hear my Saviour insulted in my presence." The king rose from his seat, took both the general's hands in his, saying, "Happy Ziethen, I respect your faith; hold it fast; this shall not happen again."

General Ziethen had been trained in the late King Frederick William's military school. The founders of the Prussian army, from the days of the Great Elector, had made religion the groundwork of military education, and the God-fearing spirit in the army more than once startled Frederick the Great. He had known many generals sincerely attached to the Lutheran creed, and at the beginning of the Seven Years' War a religious spirit was

prevalent among Prussian soldiers. After the victory of Leuthen, as the troops remained all night on the battle-field, a wounded soldier began to sing the old Lutheran hymn, "Nun danket Alle Gott," by Rinkart :

Now all to God give thanks  
With hearts, and hands, and voices !  
'Tis he whose wondrous grace  
All, every-where, rejoices ;  
From birth through helpless years,  
He bore us safely on ;  
His love, throughout our course,  
Has countless favors done.

May God in mercy still,  
While earth remains our dwelling,  
His good bestow—our tongues  
With joy his goodness telling !  
And when our strength shall fail,  
May he display his power ;  
And, from the ills we fear,  
Defend us evermore !

Praise, honor, thanks to God !  
On high the Father seated,  
The Son and Spirit too,  
With equal language greeted !

He is the God of old,  
And right in all his ways ;  
To him, the Great and Good,  
Let all give endless praise !

The band immediately played the well-known tune, and all who had strength to raise their voices joined in this noble song of praise and thanksgiving. In those days Frederick expected to die on the battle-field ; several of his letters prove that he thought such would be his fate. But he was not to be thus suddenly cut down. The strength of his manhood, in which he had prided himself, was to fail with very perceptible rapidity, yet according to the course of nature. The extensive grounds at Sans-souci, which had been planted and ornamented under his direction, afforded him amusement until within a few months of his death. Since he had sheathed his sword, farming and gardening had been his favorite pursuits. He never talked of his sufferings, but conversed on the occurrences of the times

or on literary subjects. He took special pleasure in arranging his papers, jewels, and snuff-boxes.

Throughout his last illness Frederick maintained great fortitude. Although so distressed as to be unable to lie down in his bed, he preserved a serene countenance, and sometimes indulged in a jest ; for one of his shining qualities had been a talent for repartee, which he possessed in perfection. We know nothing satisfactory of Frederick's last thoughts concerning the interests of his eternal life. The awful blank reminds us of his father's grief and his passionate anger against those who had cast the seeds of infidelity over the heart of his son. Frederick was very patient, and no murmur escaped his lips ; he may have experienced more repentance and faith and Christian hope than he expressed.

Among his numerous friends he had numbered many religious men—earnest Romanists and Protestants—who had loved him and

prayed for him, but who had gone before him to the unseen world. Thoughts of them, or echoes of their thoughts, may have come back to him. What are twenty years when looked on from the brink of the grave? His strict love of justice often drew down on him the gratitude and the prayers of religious-minded men. He once especially protected the Moravian Brethren of Berlin, and, in acknowledging this, they wrote him an affectionate letter, expressing the warmest thankfulness and loyalty, at the same time adjuring the king to accept the mercies of God through the Saviour. The letter concluded with these words, "With God nothing is impossible. O, Jesus, help!" Frederick quietly returned it to the secretary who presented it, saying, "You must give these people a courteous answer, for they certainly mean well by me."

The night of August 16, 1786, was Frederick the Great's last night on earth. When, beneath a number of wraps, he was shivering

with the chills of death, he noticed one of his Italian grayhounds trembling as it sat on a stool beside him, and he directed that a covering should be thrown over the dog. He had a curious fancy for these little animals, and whiled away a great deal of his time in training them. At midnight he was musing or dreaming about climbing a mountain. On being aroused by a severe attack of coughing, he said, when he had regained composure, "We are over the hill ; we shall go better now." Thus did he struggle with something like the old spirit to the last. Two hours afterward he expired while his faithful attendant was holding him up, and his little dog watching at his side.

On the 18th the body was lying in state under a canopy in the yellow audience-room of the Palace of Potsdam ; on a tabouret by the side of it were his sword, his cocked hat, his crooked stick, and his sash. His face retained the stamp of greatness, and the thin white

hair had been slightly powdered and arranged in locks. In the evening, at eight o'clock, the coffin was conveyed to the Garrison Church, and Frederick the Great was placed there beside his father, in the vault behind the pulpit. The solemn funeral took place on September 9, about three weeks after the interment.





## XVI.

### The Country in Mourning.



HE death of the king convulsed all Europe, and filled the country and people with mourning. His loss was very deeply felt in the Prussian army. He had led his troops in twelve pitched battles, and had lost only three. The great cause of his success was the kindly feeling which existed between him and his soldiers. Although he was a strict disciplinarian, yet a very friendly relationship existed between him and his men. In every rank of the army there were those who had really profited by the religious privileges they had enjoyed in former days, and they went forth to battle looking upward to the Lord of hosts, singing Luther's hymns from the depths of their hearts, prepared to



Monument of Frederick the Great.



die, to suffer, or to triumph, according to God's will.

While Prussia mourned his loss, the queen felt it the most deeply. She was not at Sanssouci when he died, which aggravated her grief; for, as much as he had neglected her, she almost adored him. His reputation was dearer to her than her own life, and with the most perfect meekness she had always shielded him from censure. She had been to see him a few weeks before his death. His constitution was then, evidently, very much broken, but there was no appearance of immediate danger. The king would not allow her to be sent for, or alarmed, on his account; therefore the news of his death came upon her unexpectedly. She mourned sincerely. But her sorrow was not without hope, for she believed that her prayers were answered, and that her husband was not at the last insensible to the interests of the endless future.

“A few days before his death he was car-

ried out on the terrace, to bask in the warm sunbeams. Looking up to the sun he said, 'Je serai bientôt pres de lui.' His good wife believed that his thoughts were then soaring beyond the created to the uncreated Light.

"Elizabeth Christine had presented copies of all her works to her husband, who had them very handsomely bound, and seemed to value them. Who can tell how far they affected his mind, even though he might not consider them works of genius? We know that he once acknowledged that he had done wrong, adding, 'Perhaps, had I formerly had my present experience I should have traced out a different course from that which I have followed.' This was said to Madame de Kanneberg, one of the queen's ladies, who had ventured to remonstrate with him on his not going to church." \*

That King Frederick, notwithstanding all of his coldness and seeming indifference, hon-

\* Hudson, pp. 188, 189, 195, 196.

ored and even loved his wife at times is shown in a letter which he wrote to Doctor Mutzell during a severe illness :

“ I learn, to my great sorrow, that her majesty, the queen, is ill, and that her illness threatens to be serious unless speedy relief comes. I charge you, for that reason, immediately to visit her, and to consult with the two most celebrated and learned physicians of Berlin, in whom I have the most confidence, in order to render her all the assistance which your art and knowledge will afford. Bear in mind that it concerns a woman who is much loved, and who is indispensably necessary to the country, to the poor, and to me.”

The same sentiment is expressed in his last will and testament, which he wrote in January, 1769. After he had made the necessary dispositions concerning his interment, and named his nephew as his successor, he proceeds :

“ To the queen, my wife, I bequeath, in ad-



dition to the rent which she has already received, ten thousand thalers yearly, two barrels of wine annually, free wood, and wild game for her table. The queen has promised to appoint my nephew as her heir. As no more appropriate place as a residence for her can be found, Stettin may be mentioned nominally. Still, I expect that my nephew will allow her apartments in the palace of Berlin suitable to her position; also that he will show her the respect due to her as the widow of his uncle, and as a princess who *never departed* from the path of virtue."

The Prussian people sympathized with the queen in a most affectionate and tender manner. When the king's remains were being solemnly interred in the Garrison Church at Potsdam the merchants of Berlin presented the disconsolate widow a letter of condolence. The queen accepted it, and expressed in writing her gratitude and pleasure at their thoughtfulness of her in her deep affliction.



After her return from Schönhausen to Berlin the so-called mourning court took place in her apartments. The room, which, according to court etiquette, was only illuminated by single wax candles, was hung with black. The queen sat, clad in deep mourning, under a canopy on the throne, which was also enveloped in black. All of the ladies of the court who were present appeared in mourning and wearing crape caps. The entire mourning court passed through this solemn and impressive ceremony in profound silence.

This was certainly not a mere form of etiquette, in which Elizabeth Christine expressed her grief over the death of the great king, but it was to her emphatically a reminder of her own approaching death. Seventy-one years of her life had passed away. The earnest, last hour might quickly and unexpectedly strike at any time. She, therefore, immediately made arrangements with reference to her own burial. This direction is the only preserved

memorial of the queen in her own handwriting in the German language. We, therefore, translate it as accurately as we can, unabridged and unaltered :

“When I have departed from this world, and my soul is in eternity, my will is that my body shall not be exhibited, and that I shall be left in my night *négligé*; moreover, that I shall be wrapped in a sheet, and clothed in linen, and have a cap on my head, such as I usually wear in the morning. My coffin must be simply lined, and must be an ordinary coffin of oak, or black walnut, with simple silver handles. I desire not to be placed in public, and that no one see me except those who must necessarily be with me; also that I shall not be buried too soon. If possible, I wish that eight days pass after my death before burial. It is also my desire to be buried quite privately; my court can follow me. As it is quite near the cathedral, I prefer to have the

bearers carry me. If it is too much for them, they can place me upon a hearse. It is my wish and last desire that no public ceremony be made.

“ELIZABETH CHRISTINE.

“BERLIN, *February* 28, 1787.”

In July of the same year she made and signed her last will and testament, which contained five articles. In the first, according to her promise, she made the king, Frederick William II., her chief heir, and in the second, she directed that the twenty-five thousand thalers which she had brought as her dowry, and which had been expended in the purchase of Rheinsberg, should also be given to her nephew, the king. In the third article she commended her court and her servants to his care, and asked at the same time that all of those families and persons whom she had hitherto supported, a list of whom would be found in her desk, might still be afforded as-

sistance. The fourth article directed that whatever codicil might be added to her will should be of equal effect with the will itself. The fifth and last article revoked all other wills or pledges that she had previously made.

After the death of the king, Elizabeth Christine retired more than ever from public life. It was no longer necessary for her as queen to be present at the court ceremonies, and she was enabled more than formerly to enjoy the undisturbed quiet of rural life. Her nephew, the reigning king, bestowed upon her, in every way, that love and esteem which she so richly deserved. Each year her birthday was observed by the king and the whole court in a manner commensurate with her high position. In the year 1787 the king made her a visit of congratulation, and handed her a present of great value. A dinner was served in the Rittersaal, at which a golden service was used. This was followed by a

delightful interchange of thought, which was participated in by the entire court. A grand concert and supper closed the happy entertainment. The dowager-queen had every reason to be pleased with the attention that she received from the new king, and with the reverence that he showed to his great predecessor.

During the first years of his reign he devoted himself with great earnestness and zeal to the demands of his royal office. He rose early in the morning, and labored diligently with his ministers and counselors. Those who had served faithfully under Frederick the Great were royally rewarded with honors. He showed all possible friendliness and condescension to his subjects. In his walks in the Zoological Gardens he jested and chatted with the children and citizens whom he met. It was certainly no empty flattery which gave this king the name of "Frederick William, the well-beloved." He made many improve-

ments in the discipline of the soldiers, treating them with less severity, lowering the taxes as much as possible, and devoting himself with untiring energy to the well-being and education of his people.

The queen, who had always had such perfect confidence in her husband's government, did not always concur with the many seeming innovations of her nephew. She generally remained silent, but in a few instances expressed her opinion. On the new king's accession to the throne a part of the prayer, in the Common Prayer Book, which read thus: "Especially show thy grace and mercy to thy servant, our dearly beloved king," was changed, so that it now read, "to his majesty, our dearly beloved king." The following part: "Especially grant him wisdom for his government, royal thoughts, salutary resolutions, a courageous heart, a strong arm, prudent and true counsel, and obedient subjects," was entirely left out.

Elizabeth Christine took Provost Zöllner to

task for this alteration. When he defended himself because of the command of the king, she replied: "It is quite incomprehensible! My deceased husband was certainly a greater king, a man of greater talent! Still he was never too proud to be called the servant of God. He also had royal thoughts, wise resolutions, and yet was not ashamed to continually ask for more. I cannot understand how my nephew could so easily depart from the established way."





## XVII.

### Fifty Years in Schönhausen.

**T**HE queen's outer life remained almost the same as when Frederick the Great was living. In summer she lived at Schönhausen, and in winter in Berlin. In the royal palace she occupied the apartments lying to the right of the so-called Swiss-Saloon, in the third story. An instance is given of the manner in which she sometimes entertained her guests at Schönhausen. One Sunday, her nephew, the new king, paid her a visit. After receiving him, she immediately escorted him, in company with the princesses who were present, and the ladies and gentlemen of the court, to a shady place in the park, where she had refreshments served. The table was beautifully decorated with flowers,

while the repast consisted only of bread, milk, fruit, and confectionery. The ladies sat down, while the king remained standing, enjoying some of the milk, and taking part in the conversation. Thus simply and without constraint did she live.

Her literary labors were diligently continued during her widowhood. In 1788 she published the second volume of her French translation of the "Manual of Religion," by Hermes, and the following year she published a translation of Gellert's "Sacred Songs and Odes." In 1790 she translated his "Lectures on Morals," in two volumes. She had a great admiration for this good man and his writings. It was her pride and her joy, as she often herself expressed, to have been born in the same year in which he was. Her last work, completed in the last year of her life, 1796, was a new translation of Spalding's "Destiny of Man," which she had translated in 1776, but which had been revised.

In the midst of her diligence and advancing age she was often called to mourn the death of those she loved most dearly. In 1788 her brother, Ludwig Ernst, died, as imperial and general field-marshal of Holland; and a few years later, Prince Ferdinand, of Brunswick, her favorite and most intimate brother, died, with whom she had corresponded regularly since her marriage, and to whom she had confided her joys and sorrows. The love and esteem which was shown her by the new king somewhat ameliorated her grief. Indeed, his kind attentions gave her much happiness. In 1789 he presented her with a portrait of himself, and asked one in return from her. She complied with his request, and at the same time sent the following letter, which shows the cheerful and beautiful relationship which existed between them:

“MY BELOVED NEPHEW:—Some time ago you expressed a wish to possess a picture of

my *old* face. I hereby take the liberty of sending it, in accordance with your wish. The picture has no other merit than this, that it represents a good old aunt, who is attached to you with her whole heart and soul, and who ever feels, and ever will feel, toward you the tender friendship of a mother. I have always loved you as my son, and with such feelings I hope to live and die. I am, your majesty, my beloved nephew,

“Your true and devoted aunt,

“ELIZABETH CHRISTINE.”

In 1790 she gave a magnificent rural festival to the inhabitants of Schönhausen in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of her residence there. While it was a day of great rejoicing to the people, it was to her a day of melancholy pleasure. It brought vividly to her mind those fifty years that she had spent in that castle in seclusion, separated from, and almost ignored by, her husband, whom she so devotedly loved

and admired. Yet her heart was full of gratitude, for she had passed quiet and peaceful days in her apartments, and in rambling in the beautiful gardens and grounds connected with the castle.

She had here learned how to conquer and conceal her grief, and to ignore the pomp and vanity of court life. The society of a few devoted friends, the study of her dear books, surrounded by the beauties of nature, and, above all, the calm and sweet communion with her God, were the pure joys that she had experienced in such a rich measure during the past fifty years.

At the time of the death of Prince Ferdinand, and as the king was about to join his army, Elizabeth Christine wrote him a very affecting letter, expressing her interest in his welfare. His reply is certainly a beautiful proof of the confidence which he had in her piety, and of the tender sympathy that he felt for her in her affliction :

“MADAME:—As I am sensible in a high degree of the attention and the gracious letter of your majesty, I give you my sincere thanks for this, and for the sympathy which you show toward me in reference to the forthcoming campaign. There were only two reasons which made me resolve upon this undertaking, first, that it would contribute to the welfare of humanity, and second, the hope that it might prevent the dangerous outbreak of an anarchy whose center would be France, and which, later, would have disturbed all Europe. I have taken every precaution which human prudence could devise for the carrying out of my undertaking. My intentions are pure; and as to the result, I submit it and myself to the will of divine Providence.

“What my dear aunt has communicated to me concerning the worthy and deceased Ferdinand has affected me very much. Only the knowledge of his excellent character and his deep piety can lessen my grief, and make me

submissive to his loss. When I think of your majesty, I know that you will find consolation in divine Providence, who has vouchsafed to you such great faith, and that you can now have an opportunity of testing this faith. And, my dear aunt, I hope that this great treasure of happiness and bliss that you are striving after may be yours.

“I venture urgently to pray your majesty, during this time of sorrow, to take good care of your health, and to consider how precious your life is to me, and to all those who have the happiness to be related to you.

“As I leave the day after to-morrow for my army, my dear aunt will allow me, in these lines, to commend myself to her gracious remembrance, and to repeat to her the assurance of the sincerest and humblest affection, which I now have and ever hope to have.

“Your faithful nephew,

“FREDERICK WILLIAM.

“POTSDAM, *July* 8, 1792.”





## XVIII.

Incidents from Frederick William III.'s Boyhood.

**E**LIZABETH CHRISTINE, at this period of her life, had many attentions, and enjoyed the society of the king's children, her grand-nieces and nephews. She was never happier than when surrounded by them, and their cheerful life refreshed her last years like the sweet breath of Spring. Frederick William, the crown-prince, who succeeded his father to the throne, always manifested a very great attachment for his aged aunt. It was to her a day of great rejoicing when he married the beautiful and accomplished Princess of Mecklenburg - Strelitz, Louisa Augusta Wilhelmina Amalia, who was destined to be the most celebrated woman in Prussian history. On this festal occasion

Queen Elizabeth Christine was particularly honored.

The crown-prince, as well as his brothers, was also a great favorite of Frederick the Great, and had given him, in his old age, much amusement and pleasure. "One day, for example, while the king was writing in his library, the little boys were playing at ball in his room. One of the boys, Frederick William, repeatedly threw the ball close to the king, who at last caught it and put it into his pocket. The little prince repeatedly asked for it, but the king quietly went on writing, till at length there came, in a tone of indignation, 'Will not your majesty give me my ball?' The king looked up and saw the little Hohenzollern planted firmly, in determined position, wearing quite a peremptory air. 'Thou art a brave little fellow; they wont get Silesia out of thee!' cried he, laughing, and throwing the ball to the child."

The little princes had not had much of their

father's attention in their early days. Their mother, Frederica Louisa, of Hesse-Darmstadt, who was devotedly fond of them, had had much to depress her spirits, and they had been educated by a harsh tutor, Hofmeister Benich, an irritable, peevish man, whose nerves were not strong enough to bear with the noisy vivacity of boys. Under these circumstances the princes had grown up rather shy. Mons. Mirabeau, the French ambassador at the court of Berlin, says that their manners were awkward, and not always courteous. But that shrewd Frenchman had penetration to see strong elements in young Frederick William's character. "Every thing that is heard of him shows a fine character ; every thing in him has a decided stamp ; he asks the reason of every thing," says Mirabeau. He adds, "This young prince may have a great future before him." This opinion accords with the words of Frederick the Great, "*Il me recommencera.*" \*

\* Compare Hudson, *in loco*.

The prince's education was very carefully finished. Professor Engel, and Ramler the poet, gave him lessons in philosophy and in German literature. It is remarkable that his last governor, Count Bruhl, who performed the duties of the appointment with scrupulous conscientiousness, was a Polish nobleman of high descent, whose family had for generations sided against Prussia with all its strength and weight. Moreover, he was a Roman Catholic; but this circumstance does not seem to have affected the religious opinions of the prince, which have been fully put before the world by Bishop Eylert, who knew him very intimately.

Prince Frederick William had grown up under the eye of Frederick the Great, for he was nearly seventeen years of age when this aged monarch died. The aged Frederick seems to have looked beyond the immediate heir, the father of this young prince, and to have set his hopes upon the promising son, who, if he lived, would one day be King of Prussia. He

won the heart of the child, who grew up entertaining toward him that feeling of mingled love, respect, and confidence which ennoble those who give it as much as it dignifies those who receive it. The last conversation which closed this intercourse between the old king and his nephew's son made a deep impression on the young man's mind. It set a seal which gave reality, validity, and enduring power to all that had gone before.

Many years afterward Frederick William III. showed Bishop Eylert the garden-seat under the beech-trees at Sans-souci, on which he and Frederick the Great had sat together for the last time. "The king," said he, "spoke of my studies, and examined me, questioning me especially in history and mathematics. He then conversed with me in French; we talked together some little time, until he took from his pocket a volume of La Fontaine's Fables, and selected one for me to translate to him. When I had done so he praised me for having

construed it correctly and fluently. It happened to be a fable which I had previously translated to my tutor ; therefore I knew it well, and told him this. The king's stern face brightened with a smile as he patted my cheek, saying, ' That's right, Fritz ; always be honest and sincere ; never try to appear what you are not, but always be more than you appear ; above all things, try to be a sterling character.' He then arose and walked very slowly toward the entrance of the park, talking to me by the way more seriously and confidentially than he had hitherto done. ' Fritz,' said he, ' you should prepare yourself for the future which is preparing for you. My career has come to an end, my day's work is done. I am afraid that when I am gone there will be great confusion ; things will go on *pêle-mêle*. The whole world is in a ferment, and the rulers, especially those in France, unfortunately foster the exciting elements, instead of appeasing or neutralizing them. Unity is destroyed, the separated

masses are already beginning to move. And when this state of things comes to a crisis, it will be *Satan let loose*. I am afraid it will be thy lot, Fritz, to see troublesome times ; that you will sometimes find yourself in a difficult and dangerous position. Well, then, qualify yourself to pass through trials ; prepare to meet them firmly. When that day comes, think of me ; watch over the honor of our house ; be guilty of no injustice, but, at the same time, tolerate none.'

"While the king was speaking we had walked on slowly, and were approaching the obelisk. He fixed his fiery, penetrating eyes upon it, and lifted up his stick to point. 'Look at that, Fritz,' he said, 'look at it well, and let it always say to thee, "*Ma droiture est ma force*."' He then quietly bade me observe that the summit of the obelisk, tapering, lofty, and aspiring, overlooks and crowns the whole ; but that it does not support, but is itself supported, by all that is below it,



especially by the invisible, deeply-laid foundation under ground. Then said King Frederick, 'The supporting foundation is the people, the nation in its unity. Stand by it faithfully, that it may love and confide in you; through the people only can you be strong, prosperous, and happy.' He turned his eyes on me, looked at me from head to foot, and gave me his hand. Then came the parting kiss, and the last words, 'Do not forget this hour.' " "And I have not forgotten it," said Frederick William III. to Bishop Eylert.

The troublesome times foreseen by Frederick the Great had arrived before the youth whom he warned had attained to the prime of manhood. Evil spirits were, indeed, let loose, and passing events must often have reminded the crown-prince of that conversation in the park of Sans-souci. The crown-prince and his brother Louis shared all the dangers encountered by war, and cheerfully bore every inconvenience and hardship incidental to the

duties of active service. The crown-prince gained a high military reputation for a man of his age. The words of the immortal Frederick were remembered in those days of trial: "*Il me recommencera.*" Although the young prince was devotedly attached to the memory of his illustrious ancestor, the two characters were remarkably dissimilar in many respects, and nothing could be more opposite than the circumstances under which they were developed. The crown-prince's marriage to the accomplished and Christian Princess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz did much toward establishing his character.



## XIX.

### The Hackel Ganz.

**H**IS marriage was celebrated in Berlin on Christmas-eve, 1793, seven years after the death of Frederick the Great. All of the members of the royal family assembled in the apartments of the queen, the bridegroom's mother, where the diamond crown of the Hohenzollerns was placed upon the head of the bride. The whole court then repaired to the apartments occupied by the aged widow of Frederick the Great.

“ More than sixty years had passed away since Elizabeth Christine wore the bridal dress ; recalling that day, she may have thought how different are anticipations and retrospections. She had now reached the sunset hour of a truly Christian life, when

the glory that is overhead tones down the strong contrasts of earth; and in the power of that new light tranquillity becomes the blessing of the hour."

Elizabeth Christine accepted the formal invitation to grace the wedding with her presence, and they all proceeded to the white drawing-room, where, according to custom, the ceremony was to be performed. It was a very large and splendid room, entirely decorated in white and silver, glittering with mirrors and glass chandeliers. The style of magnificence is chaste and simple. The silver gallery, for an orchestra, was originally of pure silver, but when Frederick the Great needed money for the "Seven Years' War" he melted it down, since which time it has only been plated with silver.

"In the middle of the saloon a crimson canopy, embroidered with gold crowns, had been erected, beneath which stood a table covered with purple velvet. In front of this

table the royal family arranged themselves, forming a semicircle. Bishop Sack, who had baptized, confirmed, and administered the first communion to the crown-prince, now addressed the young couple in an appropriate discourse. Frederick William and Louisa exchanged their rings of betrothal, and were married according to the rules of the Lutheran Church.

“The wedding banquet was served in five State-apartments. The royal family sat at a table in the knights’ hall. The king, Queen Frederica, Queen Elizabeth Christine, the bride and bridegroom were seated under a baldachin of crimson velvet, embroidered in gold. The ministers, general officers, and noblemen sat in an adjoining apartment.

“The ball in the white saloon opened with the national *Fackel Tanz*. This solemn torchlight promenade is performed slowly as the *Minnet de la Cour*, but to more spirited music, which was adapted to the national dance in

the days of Prussia's first king—Frederick I. The dance itself is of much higher antiquity ; it was danced by the mail-clad warriors of the olden time, not only in the palaces of the kings, but also in baronial halls, in the flaring light of real torches, to the sound of very rude musical instruments. Only at the Prussian court is this old custom still observed at every royal wedding.

“The royal party ranged themselves in a semicircle and sat down, the sovereign being on his throne in the center. Gayly-dressed pages held the lights, which they gave to the cabinet ministers when drums and trumpets announced that the *Fackel Tanz* was about to begin. At a signal made by the great chamberlain, eighteen State ministers advanced, two by two, each bearing in his hand a large brilliant candle, which represented the torch of the Middle Ages. Then came the bridal pair, followed by their splendid suite. When the crown-prince and princess approached the

throne, and bent to the king, his majesty rose and took the bride's hand, while the crown-prince led his mother, Queen Frederica, and his aged aunt, Elizabeth Christine. In measured steps to the slow but loud martial music, they made the circle, inclosed by a golden cord drawn round by pages within that large saloon. When the king had resumed the throne, the bride led the procession around as many times as there were royal princes in the room; so each in his turn had the honor of handing her round, while the bridegroom took all the princesses in rotation, and every one bowed and courtesied profoundly when passing the king and queens.

“To picture this scene, we must remember that ladies wore very high plumes, generally fastened above the forehead with a large bow or brooch in front of the band of velvet, silk, or jewels which encircled the head. The dresses were very scanty, with tight corsage and long trains, so long as to require four or



six train-bearers. The bride's train was borne by maids of honor, the others by pages. The bride's dress was entirely of silver *glacé*, simply made, but the corsage glittered with diamonds corresponding with those of the crown on her head. The other dresses, plumes, and trains presented a great variety of color and material. Many robes were richly embroidered in gold and silver. Gentlemen still wore long embroidered coats, with lace ruffles, and displayed brilliant buckles at the knee and on the shoe, and the cocked hat was indispensable, carried under the arm in the room. Both ladies and gentlemen whitened their heads with powder.

“At length the *Fackel Tanz* was ended, and the minister gave back the candles to the pages, who lighted the bride and bridegroom, their nearest relatives, and a select train of attendants, to the suite of private apartments prepared for them in the king's palace.” \*


\* Hudson, vol. i., pp. 311-313.

Two years after this marriage, to the great joy of the royal family, a little prince was born, who received the name of Frederick William. It was Queen Elizabeth Christine's happy privilege, at the age of eighty years, to be one of the sponsors for this child. The christening took place in the crown-prince's palace at Berlin, under the throne canopy in the audience-chamber. Bishop Sack performed the baptismal service. The King of Prussia held his grandson at the font; and the child's maternal grandfather was also present. The infant prince had many sponsors. Besides the aged queen were his two grandfathers; the Empress Catherine, of Russia; Francis II., the last Germanic Roman Emperor; King George III., of England; and Queen Charlotte and the Duke of Brunswick. This little prince succeeded his father, and died in 1861, childless, when his next younger brother, William, the present German Emperor, ascended the throne.



## XX.

### Beautiful Old Age.

 HE household of the aged royal widow was conducted without ostentation, but in a manner commensurate with her high position. The ambassadors who appeared at the court of Berlin never failed to present themselves before her majesty, and were received with all honor. Distinguished foreigners, also, were invited to Schönhausen. Occasionally she gave a banquet, followed by a concert or some diverting entertainment for these celebrities. She generally dined with her maids of honor, a few chamberlains, and invited guests. It was her custom to invite a few persons to play in the evening, but, as a rule, she retired early.

She still occupied herself daily with elevated studies. Her literary labors were limited al-

most exclusively, as we have seen, to the translation of religious works, but her studies were more extended. She read, with great diligence, not only Greek and Roman classics, but studied the history of all countries, especially the history of her own country. Her writings testify how deeply she had penetrated into the spirit of the old philosophers. Her letters also are a proof of this. To one of her friends, Fraülein von Kamecke, she once wrote: "I have commenced the *Annals of Tacitus*, and find them charming to read. One recognizes in them the spirit of the great. This book captivates me, and while I read it I am often prompted to meditation, and many times to applications and comparisons."

The well-known scholar, Erman, gives the following notice of her in his "*Memoirs*:" "Queen Elizabeth Christine, the wife of Frederick the Great, adorned the throne by her virtuous and exalted character, which invested her name with reverence and admiration. Her

astonishing diligence enabled her, amid the duties and distractions of court life, and the most extensive household cares, to occupy herself with comprehensive studies and literary labors. One is astonished to see the great number of French translations which she has made from the best German authors on faith and morals. She spent several hours daily in the valuable library which she had collected, and which she has bequeathed to Prince Henry, the brother of the reigning king. She was familiar with both German and French literature, and her knowledge of history often astonished men of science whom she honored with her conversation."

Voltaire was several times in her society, and sent her, on different occasions, his published works. Notwithstanding the flattery he bestowed upon her, either verbally or by letter, he remained as a stranger to her. She could not respect a man who scoffed at sacred literature, and perverted the rich talents which

God had given him. Other learned men, such as Maupertius, d'Alembert, Erman, Farmey, Büsching, Teller, Silberschlag, Dietrich, Zollner, and Spalding, often appeared at court, and were invited to her table.

She often remarked : " I esteem it an inestimable treasure that I was early taught to be industrious, and accumulate as much knowledge as I possibly could. This discipline is now a source of great benefit to me." She educated in the same way her niece, the Princess Frederica, and inspired, by word and example, the same industry into her housenold, and even sought to exert her influence in wider circles.

When quite advanced in years she established a little colony or village, on the border of the beautiful pine and beech wood which stretches from Schönhausen to the Reineckendorfer heath, which to this day bears the name of the " Queen's Plantation," or Schönholtz. The colonists received their houses and

land free, for which they had only to work a certain number of days in the royal gardens at Schönholtz or Schönhausen. She also founded a free school for the children of these colonists, paying the teachers herself. Formerly Schönhausen had been surrounded by dense woods, but during the war these had been partially destroyed. The queen resolved to restore this forest, and wrote several times with reference to this project to the minister, von der Schulenburg. "If I cannot, on account of my years, live to see a full-grown forest," she wrote in one of her letters, "it will give me pleasure to see the young growth of it, and be able to picture to myself once more the country with all those charms which it used to have, when, in my young days, I used to go through it so often." In another letter she wrote, "As the king must pass this place every year on the occasion of his military reviews, I know that it will give him pleasure to see this sandy soil planted with young trees. I hope



this plan will be carried out, as it will be also a great benefit to the country and to the inhabitants of the neighborhood, who need shade and wood." It gave her great pleasure to see her proposition carried out, and to live to see the young trees growing up.

At that time Christian education and Church customs prevailed in the Prussian capital. A writer of the period, who described the state of religion in Prussia in a series of letters, says concerning it: "A great part of the upper classes of Berlin have distinguished themselves by their true genuine piety, and by dutiful attendance to public worship. There are good families, who, by the careful Christian training of their children, amid all the dissipations to which their high rank subjects them, by the most undeniable example of humanity and justice, and, especially, by noble exemplary conduct, make themselves honored and respected every-where." The same writer adds, "The exalted mother of the land, the queen,

who is so much beloved by all Prussians, stands at the head, and her example is certainly potent enough to make a strong and lasting impression upon the noble-minded courtiers and the well-disposed nobility. Nearly every Sunday she attends divine service with her court in her apartments. Her favorite ministers are Pastors Dietrich, Sack, Spalding, Troschel, Noltenius, Erman, Bruhn, and Kuster, who are summoned whenever she wishes them." She always partook of the Holy Sacrament in her apartments three or four times during the year, up to the latest period of her life. When in Berlin she was accustomed to regularly attend public worship in one or the other of the churches. While the Prussian royal family acknowledged the Reformed doctrines, Elizabeth Christine remained true to the Lutheran confession.

She sought to draw people of her own confession around her, and selected for her special pastor a clergyman of that faith. Provost

Reinbeck officiated in this capacity up to the year 1741; from that time to 1749, Inspector Jocardi; from 1749 to 1762, the Supreme Consistorial Councilor Baumgarten; and from 1762 up to the time of her death, 1797, the Archdeacon of the Marian Church, Johann Samuel Dietrich. Her chief consolation and joy were derived from reading and meditating upon the word of God. Her piety and faith gave to her life its strength and dignity. It was, therefore, no false flattery when, in the dedicatory address of a work inscribed to her, she was called, "A queen after God's own heart—a pious and truly Christian queen." Neither was it a mere stroke of courtly rhetoric or policy when Consistorial Councilor Kuster said, in the dedication of a book to her: "The voice of impartial truth testifies that your royal majesty has won from the noble-minded the deepest and most affectionate reverence, by your truly exalted moral actions. Of this I have been a witness for fifty years, and from

year to year my respect has increased ; for I have often observed, with joyful praises to God, how much good has been done for intellect, religion, humanity, morality, and the welfare of all classes through your majesty's example and active influence. Never shall I forget the hour when, during the war, I saw and heard your majesty, as an example of the most sublime reverence and heroic confidence in God, publicly offer up prayer. Then, when the cowardly trembled and the worldly-wise were thoughtful, your royal majesty, a heroine unshakably strengthened by God, maintained a joyful hope in the future."

This faith was proven alike by word and deed. She was deeply sensible of the truth, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," and exemplified it throughout her whole life, and in her unhappy marriage. As she never allowed herself to yield to revengeful thoughts, so she watched over her surroundings. Passion, enmity, and evil intrigue

were banished from her quiet circle. Her life was one of suffering and love, and in both respects she proved herself to be a true and tried Christian. One of her most conspicuous traits of character was her humble benevolence. She settled an annual scholarship on the Science School of Berlin, which, to this time, is paid to poor pupils. She gave her active assistance and sympathy to the deaf and dumb asylum in Schönhausen. She gave to the poor more than half of the money that was settled upon her at the time of her marriage. She even deprived herself of luxuries that she might be able to help the needy. It was very painful to her not to be able to assist all who presented their petitions to her.

She was particularly fond of beautiful pearls. One day an exquisite necklace, such as she had never seen before, was offered to her for sale. She could not determine whether to purchase it or not, and allowed it to remain a long time without deciding. One day she ex-

amined it again with great delight, and turned smiling to those around her with the question, "Shall I buy it?" They answered, "Your majesty can very well afford to do so; you give so much to others, why should you not retain this for your own pleasure?" After reflecting a moment, she said, "Take it away! It pleases me, but for the money which it would cost I could make many poor people happy." That she was charitable in the true evangelical sense is seen by the fact that she exercised her benevolence entirely in secret. She did not allow her left hand to know what her right hand did, and unwillingly heard her gifts and charities spoken of.

Her sociability was another attractive trait in her character. She was never more delighted than when the palace grounds and gardens were filled with people. The more crowded the avenues were, the happier she was. She always had a pleasant word for those she met in her walks. Dr. Eschke, to

whose asylum she gave much assistance, relates that she very often conversed with his deaf and dumb orphans in the most friendly manner. Children were very fond of the godly queen, for she always talked with them as she met them in her rambles.

A pious gardener of Berlin, in company with his little daughter, visited his uncle at Schönhausen, who was a gardener in the service of the queen. Elizabeth Christine frequently met the little girl, and became quite fond of her, so much so that she expressed a wish later to see her again. Her father, accordingly, brought her to Schönhausen. The queen was informed of her arrival one day, as she was about to sit down to dinner, and ordered her servant to bring the child immediately to her, and place her in a chair that she might see all that was on the table. The queen wished to hear what *naïve* expression the child would make at the splendor of the royal table. Her large eyes gazed first at the



richly dressed guests, and then at the elegant service that was on the table. Folding her little hands she prayed aloud :


“ The blood of Christ, and righteousness,  
These are my only festal dress ;  
With them I shall 'fore God appear,  
When I am called to his heavenly sphere.”

This confession made a deep impression on the guests. The queen drew the child to her with emotion and kissed her fervently. One of the court ladies said, with tears, “ O the happy child ! how far we stand behind her ! ” It was as if the voice of the Saviour sounded in their midst : “ Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” And yet such faith was not strange at the court of Schönhausen. Elizabeth Christine had, as her words and works testify, made the motto of the apostle her confession : “ For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”



## XXI.

### Rest at Last.

HRIST is my life ! This confession was visible throughout the entire life of the queen. And because Christ was her life, death was her victory. During her last years she completed a second translation of the work of Pastor Spalding on the "Destiny of Man," which she had translated and published in the year 1776. This book was a great favorite, and had passed through thirteen editions. The author had revised it, and made many valuable additions ; for this reason the queen resolved to make a new translation, which she did. In the preface to this translation—and it is her last literary confession—she says :

"We must not be strangers to ourselves, to our own hearts and consciences. We must

often, and with all carefulness, investigate and prove our thoughts, our leading principles, and our plans of life. So long as we fail in that we shall only cast inquisitive glances around us on the subjects which excite our curiosity and engage our attention. The object itself, the destiny of man, is of the most weighty importance for the whole of humanity. Our talents can find no more glorious employment than by becoming acquainted with, and attempting to employ, those means which lead man the most easily and surely into the sanctuary in which true wisdom is enthroned. While we examine ourselves, we shall with reverence and with perfect submission hear the decree of the eternal God who gives to conscience its law."

Ever nearer and louder Elizabeth Christine heard the decree of the eternal God, and she felt that she must prepare to meet him. In April, 1796, she added a codicil to her last will, in which she bequeathed some valuables

to the crown-prince and the other princes of the royal house, remembering also Duke Frederick of Brunswick-Oels and the ladies of her court. In this codicil she expressed a wish that the members of her household might remain after her death in possession of their salaries as long as they lived, and at the same time the hope that the king would neglect none of them, nor allow them ever to suffer from want. A letter to the king, which she apparently wrote at this time, makes mention of this subject, and reads as follows:

“SIRE: I wish to give you my thanks, and to testify my gratitude for all the goodness and friendship which you, my dear nephew, have manifested toward me during my life. If I have in any way merited the same, it is because I have ever been sincerely devoted to you, and have entertained the tender love of a mother toward you, for I always looked upon you as my son. I wish you, my dear

nephew, a long and happy reign. May your subjects long have the happiness of retaining and looking upon you as a father! May God long preserve your dear family, and all who add to your happiness or contribute to the welfare of your country! Such are the sincere wishes which I have at all times cherished toward your majesty.

“I now commend to you my entire household, and the poor whom I have been accustomed to assist. Let them still enjoy the perquisites which I have afforded them during my lifetime, according to my power and possessions. The list of the poor, as well as of my household, is added here. In the same desk the inventory of both palaces will be found. The list of my jewels is in the casket. You will have the goodness to let my otherwise trifling heritage be distributed according to the accompanying list.

“I remain until death, with unchangeable affection and the most perfect friendship,

“Your majesty’s humblest, truest, and most devoted aunt and servant,

“ELIZABETH CHRISTINE.”

The new year, 1797, began. On the second day of it the queen became ill, and lived only twelve days. Some of the court ladies who were with her tried to inspire her with hopes of restoration to health. She replied, “I have lived long enough; I am much indebted to the goodness of God. I can now be of little more use either to myself or any one else by living longer. I shall be better in heaven.” This hope was the bright sunbeam which illuminated her last hours and sufferings. Shortly before she closed her eyes in death she gave her faithful companions her parting blessing. She said to them, “I know that you will not forget me.” On January 13, 1797, at the age of eighty-one years, two months, and five days, the godly queen departed this life for her heavenly home. It

was the same year in which her nephew, the reigning king, was to die, and on the same day in which, seventeen years before, her beloved sister Louisa, the dowager Princess of Prussia, had died.

The directions which she had written down in the year 1787 concerning her funeral were strictly fulfilled. Her body was interred at eight o'clock in the evening, on January 20, in the Cathedral of Berlin, in great quietness and without any pomp. On January 22 memorial services in her honor were held in all of the churches throughout Prussia. At this time the glorified princess received from her faithful subjects the praise which she so richly merited. Since that time her name has been almost obliterated from Prussian history. The heroic deeds of Frederick the Great fill pages upon pages in history, but the life of his exalted and devoted Christian wife has been almost forgotten. And yet the great king once testified that she was "a princess who



had never departed from the path of virtue."

Preuss, the Prussian historian, who has written a history of "Frederick the Great and His Times," has given the following sentence in her praise, "So long as the crown of Prussia beams, so long will the virtues of Queen Elizabeth Christine be glorified in its splendor."

She deserved such a sentence in a high degree. She justly merits a prominent place among the noble princesses and queens of Prussia and of all countries. Her meekness, Christian patience, and amiable disposition, which were always perceptible, even amid heavy contests, adorn her brow with more splendor than the royal crown ever did. Her truly Christian faith makes her example ever memorable to those who believe in the Saviour. She was, and remains, to all women a noble example of womanly, Christian virtue. By gentleness and trust she had

fought a good fight ; she had finished her course ; she had kept her faith ; henceforth there was laid up for her the crown of righteousness.

“Weary one, thou now dost see where God hath led thee,  
His darkest dealings trace ;  
And by those fountains where his love will feed thee  
Behold him face to face.”

















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