

THE PRINZENRAUB.

1. *Schreiter's Geschichte des Prinzenraubs* (Schreiter's History of the Stealing of the Princes). Leipzig, 1804.
2. *Johann Hübner's, Rectoris der Schule zu S. Johannis in Hamburg, Genealogische Tabellen* (Genealogical Tables: by Johann Hübner, Rector of St. John's School in Hamburg). 3 vols. oblong 4to. Leipzig, 1725-1728. 5
3. *Genealogische Tafeln zur Staatengeschichte der Germanischen und Slawischen Völker im 19^{ten} Jahrhundert* (Genealogical Tables for the State History of the Germanic and Slavic Nations in the 19th Century). By Dr. Friedrich Maximilian Cœrtel. 1 vol. oblong 12mo. Leipzig, 1846. 10

OVER seas in Saxony, in the month of July, 1455, a notable thing befel; and this in regard to two persons who have themselves by accident become notable. Concerning which we are now to say something, with the reader's permission. Unluckily, few English readers ever heard of the event; and it is probable there is but one English reader or writer (the present reviewer, for his sins) that was ever driven or led to inquire into it: so that it is quite wild soil, very rough for the ploughshare; neither can the harvest well be considerable. "English readers are so deeply ignorant of foreign history, especially of German history!" exclaims a learned professor. Alas, yes; English 15 20

readers are dreadfully ignorant of many things, indeed of most things;— which is a lamentable circumstance, and ought to be amended by degrees.

5 But however all this may be, here is somewhat in relation to that Saxon business, called the *Prinzenraub*, or Stealing of the Princes, and to the other “pearls of memory” (do not call them old buttons of memory!) which string themselves upon the threads of that. Beat-
 10 ing about in those dismal haunted wildernesses; painfully sorting and sifting in the Historical lumber-rooms and their dusty fusty imbroglios, in quest of far other objects,—this is what we have picked up on that accidental matter. To which the reader, if he can make any use of it, has our welcome and our blessing.

The *Wettin* Line of Saxon Princes, the same that yet endures, known by sight to every English creature (for the high individual, Prince Albert, is of it), had been lucky enough to combine in itself,
 15 by inheritance, by good management, chiefly by inheritance, and mere force of survival, all the Three separate portions and divided dignities of that country: the Thüringen Landgraviate, the Meissen Markgraviate, and the ancient Duchy and Electorate of Saxony,—and to become
 20 very great among the Princes of the German Empire. It was in 1423 that Elector Frederick, named *der Streitbare* (the Fencible, or Prompt-to-fight), one of the notables of this line, had got from Emperor Sigismund, for help rendered (of which poor Sigismund had always need, in all kinds), the vacant *Kur* (Electorship) and Dukedom of
 25 Saxony; after which accession, and through the earlier portion of the fifteenth century, this Saxon House might fairly reckon itself the greatest in Germany, till Austria, till Brandenburg gradually rose to overshadow it. Law of primogeniture could never be accepted in that country; nothing but divisions, redivisions, coalescings, splittings
 30 and never-ending readjustments and collisions were prevalent in consequence: to which cause first of all, the loss of the race by Saxony may be ascribed.

To enter into all that, be far from us. Enough to say that this
 35 *Streitbare*, Frederick the *Fencible*, left several sons, and none of them without some snack of principality taken from the main lot: several sons, who however by death and bad behaviour pretty soon reduced themselves to two: 1st, the eldest, a Frederick, named the Placid, Peaceable, or Pacific (*Friedrich der Sanftmüthige*), who possessed the

Electorate and indivisible, inalienable land thereto pertaining (Wittenberg, Torgau, &c.; a certain 'circle' or province in the Wittenberg region; of which, as Prussia has now got all or most of it, the exact boundaries are not known to me); and 2nd, a Wilhelm, who in all the other territories 'ruled conjointly' with Frederick. 5

Conjointly: were not such lands likely to be beautifully 'ruled'? Like a carriage team with *two* drivers on the box! Frederick however was Pacific, probably an excellent good-natured man, for I do not find that he wanted fire either, and conclude that the friendly elements abounded in him. Frederick was a man that could be lived with; and the conjoint government went on without visible outbreak between his Brother Wilhelm and him for a series of years. For twelve years, better or worse;—much better than our own red and white *Roses* here at home, which were fast budding into battles of St. Albans, battles of Towton, and other sad outcomes about that time! Of which twelve years we accordingly say nothing. 10 15

But now in the twelfth year, a foolish second-cousin, a Friedrich the Silly (*Einfältige*), at Weimar, died childless, A.D. 1440; by which event extensive Thuringian possessions fell into the main lot again; whereupon the question arose, How to divide them? A question difficult to solve; which by-and-by declared itself to be insoluble; and gave rise to open war between the Brothers Frederick Pacific and Wilhelm of Meissen. Frederick proving stronger, Wilhelm called in the Bohemians,—confused Hussite, Ziska-Podiebrad populations, bitter enemies of orthodox Germany; against whom Frederick sent celebrated fighting Captains, Kunz von Kaufungen and others; who did no good on the Bohemians, but shewed all men how dangerous a conflagration had arisen here in the heart of the country, and how needful to be quenched without delay. Accordingly the neighbours all ran up, Kaiser Frederick III. at the head of them (a cunning old Kaiser, Max's father); and quenched it was, after four or five years' ruinous confusion, by the 'Treaty of Naumburg' in 1450,—most obscure treaty, not necessary to be laid before the reader;—whereby, if not joint government, peaceable division and separation could ensue. 20 25 30

The conflagration was thus put out; but various coals of it continued hot for a long time;—Kunz von Kaufungen above-mentioned the hottest of all. Kunz or Conrad, born squire or ritter of a certain territory and old tower called Kaufungen, the *site* of which old tower, 35

if now no ruins of it, can be seen near Penig on the Mulde river, some two hours' ride south-east of Altenburg in those Thuringian or Upper Saxon regions,—Kunz had made himself a name in the world, though unluckily he was short of property otherwise at present. For one thing, Kunz had gained great renown by beating Albert of Brandenburg, the Albert named *Achilles*, third Hohenzollern Elector of Brandenburg, and the fiercest fighter of his day (a terrible hawk-nosed square-jawed lean ancient man, ancestor of Frederick the Great); Kunz, I say, had beaten this Potentate being hired by the Town of Nürnberg, Albert's rebellious Town, to do it; or if not beaten him (for Albert prevailed in the end) had at least taken him captive in some fight, and made him pay a huge ransom. He had also been in the Hussite wars, this Kunz, fighting up and down: a German *Condottiere*, I find, or Dugald Dalgetty of the epoch; his last stroke of work had been this late engagement, under Frederick the Peaceable, to fight against Brother Wilhelm and his Bohemian Allies.

In this last enterprise Kunz had prospered but indifferently. He had indeed gained something they called the 'victory of Gera,'—loud honour, I doubt not, and temporary possession of that little town of Gera;—but in return had seen his own old tower of Kaufungen and all his properties wasted by ravages of war. Nay, he had at length been taken captive by the Bohemians, and been obliged to ransom himself by huge outlay of money;—4,000 gold gulden, or about £2,000 sterling; a crushing sum! With all which losses, why did not Kunz lose his life too as he might easily have done? It would have been better for him. Not having lost his life, he did of course, at the end of the war, claim and expect indemnity: but he could get none, or not any that was satisfactory to him.

Electors Frederick had had losses of his own; was disposed to stick to the letter of his contracts in reference to Kunz: not even the 4,000 gold gulden of Bohemian ransom would he consent to repay. Elector Frederick alleged that Kunz was not his liegeman whom he was bound to protect, but only his soldier, hired to fight at so much per day and stand the risks himself. In fine, he exasperated Kunz very much; and could be brought to nothing except to agree that arbitrators should be named, to settle what was really due from one to the other;—a course of little promise to indigent, indignant Kunz. The arbitrators did accordingly meet; and Kunz, being summoned, made his

appearance; but not liking the figure of the court, went away again without waiting for the verdict; which accordingly did fall out infinitely short of his wishes or expectations; and made the indigent man still more indignant. Violent speeches were heard from him in consequence, and were officiously reported; nay, some say, were heard by the Elector himself: for example, That a man might have vengeance, if he could get nothing else; that an indigent, indignant fighting man, driven utterly desperate, would harry and destroy; would do this and also that, of a direful and dreadful nature. To which the Elector answered, “Don’t burn the fishponds, at any rate; the poor fishes in their ponds!”—still farther angering Kunz. Kunz was then heard growling about “vengeance not on this unjust Elector’s land and people, but on his flesh and blood:” in short, growing ever more intemperate, grim of humour and violent of speech, Kunz was at last banished the country; ordered flatly to go about his business, and growl elsewhere. He went, with certain indigent followers of his, across into Bohemia; where after groping about, he purchased an old castle, Isenburg the name of it; castle hanging somewhere on the western slopes of the *Erzgebirge* (Metal Mountains, so-called), convenient for the Saxon frontier, and to be had cheap: this empty damp old castle of Isenburg, Kunz bought; and lived there in such humour as may be conceived. Revenge on this unjust Elector, and “not on his land and people but on his flesh and blood,” was now the one thought of Kunz.

Two Misnian squires, Mosen and Schönberg, former subalterns of his, I suppose, and equally disaffected as himself, were with him at Isenburg; besides these, whose connexions and followers could assist with head or hand, there was in correspondence with him one Schwalbe, a Bohemian by birth, officiating now as cook (cook or scullion, I am uncertain which) in the Electoral Castle itself at Altenburg; this Schwalbe, in the way of intelligence and help for plotting, was of course the most important of all. Intelligence enough from Schwalbe and his consorts; and schemes grounded thereon; first one scheme and then another in that hungry castle of Isenburg, we need not doubt. At length word came from Schwalbe, That on the 7th of July (1455), the Elector was to take a journey to Leipzig; Electress and two Princes (there were but two, still boys) to be left behind at Altenburg; whether anything could follow out of that? Most of the servants, Schwalbe added, were invited to a supper in the Town, and

would be absent drinking. Absent drinking; Princes left unguarded? Much can follow out of that! Wait for an opportunity till Doomsday, will there ever come a better? Let this, in brief, be the basis of our grand scheme; and let all hands be busy upon it. Isenburg expects every man to do his duty!—Nor was Isenburg disappointed.

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The venerable little Saxon town of Altenburg lies, among intricate woods and Metal-Mountain wildernesses, a good day's riding west from Isenburg: nevertheless, at the fit date, Isenburg has done its duty; and in spite of the intricacies and the hot weather, Kunz is on the ground in full readiness. Towards midnight, namely, on the 7th of July 1455, Kunz with a party of thirty men, his two Misnian squires among them, well mounted and armed, silently approaches the rendezvous under the Castle of Altenburg; softly announces himself, by whew of whistling, or some concerted signal, audible in the stillness of the ambrosial night. Cook Schwalbe is awake; Cook Schwalbe answers signal; flings him down a line, fixes his rope ladders: Kunz, with his Misnian squires and a select few more, mounts aloft, leaving the rest below to be vigilant, to seize the doors especially, when once we are masters of them from within.

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Kunz, who had once been Head Chamberlain here, knows every room and passage of this royal Castle, probably his Misnians also know it, or a good deal of it, from of old. They first lock all the servants' doors; lock the Electress's door; walk then into the room where the two Princes sleep in charge of their ancient governess, a feeble old lady, who can give no hindrance;—they seize the two Princes, boys of twelve and fourteen; descend with them, by the great staircase, into the court of the Castle, successfully so far;—or rather, not quite successfully, but with a mistake to mend. They find, when in the court of the Castle, that here indeed is Prince Ernst, the eldest boy, but that instead of Prince Albert we have brought his bedfellow, a young Count Barby, of no use to us. This was Mosen the Misnian's mistake; stupid Mosen! Kunz himself runs aloft again; finds now the real Albert who had hid himself below the bed; descends with the real Albert. "To horse now, to horse, my men, without delay!" These noises had awakened the Electress; to what terrors and emotions we can fancy. Finding her door bolted, but learning gradually what is toward, she speaks or shrieks from the window a passionate prayer in the name of Earth and Heaven, Not to take her children from her.

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“Whatsoever your demands are, I will see them granted; only leave my children!”—“Sorry we cannot, high Lady!” thought Kunz, and rode rapidly away; for all the Castle is now getting awake, and locks will not long keep every one imprisoned in his room.

Kunz, forth again into the ambrosial night, divides his party into two, one Prince with each; Kunz himself leading the one, Mosen to lead the other. They are to ride by two different roads towards Bohemia; that if one misluck, there may still be another to make terms. Kunz himself, with the little Albert he has got on hand (no time to *change* princes at present), takes the more northerly road:—and both dive into the woods. Not a moment to be lost; for already the alarm-bell is out at Altenburg,—some servant having burst his door, and got clutch of it; the results of which will be manifold! Result *first* could not fail: the half-drunk servants who are out at supper, come tumbling home; listen open-mouthed, then go tumbling back into the little Town, and awaken *its* alarm-bell; which awakens in the usual progression all others whatsoever; so that Saxony at large, to the remotest village, from all its belfries big and little, is ringing madly; and all day Kunz at every thin place of the forest hears a ding-dong of doom pronounced against him, and plunges deviously forward all the more intently.

A hot day, and a dreadful ride through boggy wastes and intricate mountain woods; with the alarm-bell, and shadow of the gallows, dogging one all the way. Here, however, we are now, within an hour of the Bohemian border;—cheerily, my men, through these wild woods and hills! The young Prince, a boy of twelve, declares himself dying of thirst. Kunz, not without pity, not without anxiety on that head, bids his men ride on; all but himself and two squires shall ride on, get everything ready at Isenburg, whither we and his young Highness will soon follow. Kunz encourages the Prince; dismounts, he and his squires, to gather him some bilberries. Kunz is busy in that search,—when a black figure staggers in upon the scene; a grimy *Köhler*, namely (Collier, Charcoal-burner), with a long poking-pole (what he calls *Schürbaum*) in his hand: grimy Collier, just awakened from his after-dinner nap; somewhat astonished to find company in these solitudes. “How, what! Who is the young gentleman? What are my Herren pleased to be doing here?” inquired the Collier. “Pooh, a youth who has run away from his relations; who has fallen thirsty:—do you know

where bilberries are?—No?—Then why not walk on your way, my grim one!” The grim one has heard ringing of alarm-bells all day; is not quite in haste to go; Kunz whirling round to make him go is caught in the bushes by the spurs, falls flat on his face; the young Prince whispers eagerly, “I am Prince Albert, and am stolen!”—Whew-wew!—One of the squires aims a blow at the Prince, so it is said; perhaps it was at the Collier only; the Collier wards with his poking-pole, strikes fiercely with his poking-pole, fells down the Squire, belabours Kunz himself. During which the Collier’s dog lustily barks; and, behold, the Collier’s Wife comes running on the scene, and with her shrieks brings a body of other Colliers upon it: Kunz is evidently done! He surrenders with his squires and Prince; is led by this black bodyguard, armed with axes, shovels, poking-poles, to the neighbouring Monastery of Grünhain (Green Grove), and is there safe warded under lock and key. The afternoon of July 8th, 1455; what a day, for him and for others!—I remark, with certainty, that dusty riders, in rather unusual numbers, and of miscellaneous equipment, are also entering London City, far away, this very evening; a constitutional parliament having to take seat at Westminster, tomorrow, 9th July, 1455, of all days and years,¹ to settle what the battle of St. Albans, lately fought, will come to. For the rest, that the King of England has fallen imbecile, and his she-wolf of France is on flight; that probably York will be Protector again (till he lose his head),—and that the troubles of mankind are not limited to Saxony and its Metal Mountains, but that the Devil everywhere is busy, as usual!—This consideration will serve at least to date the affair of Kunz for us, and shall therefore stand unerased.

From Grünhain Monastery the Electress, gladdest of Saxon mothers, gets back her younger Boy to Altenburg, with hope of the other, praised be Heaven forever for it. “And you, O Collier of a thousand! what is your wish, what is your want:—How dared you beard such a lion as that Kunz, you with your simple poking-pole, you Collier sent of Heaven!”—“Madam, I *drilled* him soundly with my poking-pole (*hab ihn weidlich getrillt*);” at which they all laughed, and called the Collier *der Triller*, the *Driller*.

¹ Henry’s History of Britain, vi. 108.

Meanwhile Mosen the Misnian is also faring ill; with the alarm-bells all awake about him, and the country risen in hot chace. Six of his men have been caught; the rest are diving ever deeper into the thickets. In the end, they seek shelter in a cavern, stay there perdue for three days, not far from the Castle of Steina, still within the Saxon border. Three days,—while the debate of Westminster is prosperously proceeding, and imbecile Henry the Sixth takes his ease at Windsor,—these poor fellows lie quaking, hungry, in their cave; and dare not debate, except in whispers; very uncertain what the issue will be. The third day they hear from Colliers or wandering Woodmen, accidentally talking together in their neighbourhood, that Kunz is taken, tried and most probably beheaded. Well-a-day! Well-a-day! Hereupon they open a correspondence with the nearest Amtmann, him of Zwickau, to the effect, That if free pardon is granted, they will at once restore Prince Ernst, if not they will at once kill him. The Amtmann of Zwickau is thrown into excitement, it may well be supposed: but what can the Amtmann or any official person do? Accede to their terms, since as desperate men they have the power of enforcing them. It is thought, had they even demanded Kunz's pardon, it must have been granted; but they fancied Kunz already ended, and did not insist on this. Enough, on the 11th of the month, fourth day since the flight, third day in this hunger-cave of Steina, Prince Ernst was given up; and Mosen, Schönfels and Co., refreshed with food, fled swiftly, unharmed, and 'were never heard of more,' say my authorities.

Prince Ernst was received by his glad Father at Chemnitz, soon carried to his glad Mother and brother at Altenburg: upon which the whole court with trembling joy made a pilgrimage to Ebersdorf, a monastery and shrine in those parts. They gave pious thanks there one and all; the mother giving suitable dotation furthermore, and what is notable, hanging up among her other votive gifts two coats (she, says rumour and prints; but I guess it was the lucrative showmen after *her*): the coat of Kunz, leather buff I suppose, and the coat of the Driller, Triller, as we call that Heaven-sent Collier, coat grimy black, and made of what stuff I know not. Which coats were still shewn in the present generation; nay, perhaps are still to be seen at this day, if a judicious tourist made inquiry for them.

On the 14th, and not till then, Kunz of Kaufungen, tried and doomed before, laid his head on the block at Freyburg; some say, pardon *had* been got for him from the joyful Serene Highnesses, but came an hour too late. This seems uncertain, seems improbable: at
 5 least poor Dietrich of Kaufungen, his younger Brother, was done to death at Altenburg itself some time after, for ‘inconsiderate words’ uttered by him,—feelings not sufficiently under one’s controul. That Schwalbe the Bohemian Cook was torn with ‘red-hot pincers,’ and otherwise mercilessly mangled and strangled, need not be stated. He
 10 and one or two others supposed to be concerned in his peculiar treason, were treated so; and with this the gallows part of the transaction ended.

As to the Driller himself, when asked what his wish was, it turned out to be modest in the extreme: Only liberty to cut, of scraggs and waste wood, what would suffice for his charring purposes, in those
 15 wild forests. This was granted to the man and his posterity; made sure to him and them by legal deed; and to this was added, So many yearly bushels of corn from the Electoral stockbarns, and a handsome little farm of land to grow cole and *sauerkraut* and support what cows and
 20 sheep, for domestic milk and wool, were necessary to the good man and his successors. ‘Which properties,’ I am vaguely told, but would go to see it with my eyes, were I touring in those parts, ‘they enjoy to this day.’ Perhaps it was a bit of learned jocularly on the part of the old conveyancers, perhaps in their high chancery at Altenburg they did not know the man’s real name, or perhaps he had no very
 25 fixed one; at any rate, they called him merely *Triller* (Driller), in these important documents; which courtly nickname he or his sons adopted as a surname that would do very well; surname borne by them accordingly ever since, and concerning which there have been Treatises
 30 written.²

This is the Tale of Kunz of Kaufungen; this is that adventure of the *Prinzenraub* (Stealing of the Princes), much wondered at, and talked of, by all princes and all courtiers in its own day, and never quite forgotten since; being indeed apt for remembrance, and worthy

35 ² Groshupf’s *Oratio de gentis Trilleriana ortu* (cited in Michaelis, *Geschichte der Chur-und Fürstlichen Häuser in Teutschland*, i. 469) is one.—See, for the rest, Schurzfleisch, *Dissertatio de Conrado Kaufungo* (Wittenberg, 1720); Tenzel (Gotha, 1700); Rechenberg, *De Raptu Ernesti et Alberti*; Sagittarius, Fabricius, &c. &c.

of it, more or less. For it actually occurred in God's Creation, and was a fact, four hundred years ago; and also is, and will forever continue one,—ever-enduring part and parcel of the Sum of Things, whether remembered or not. In virtue of which peculiarity it is much distinguished from innumerable other tales of adventures which did *not* occur in God's Creation, but only in the waste chambers (to be let unfurnished) of certain human heads, and which are part and parcel only of the Sum of No-things: which nevertheless obtain some temporary remembrance, and lodge extensively, at this epoch of the world, in similar still more unfurnished chambers. In comparison, I thought this business worth a few words to the ingenuous English reader, who may still have rooms to let, in that sense. Not only so, but it seemed to deserve a little nook in modern memory for other peculiar reasons,—which shall now be stated with extreme brevity.

The two Boys, Ernst and Albert, who, at the time of their being stolen, were fourteen and twelve years old respectively, and had *Fredrick the Peaceable, the Placid or Pacific*, for father, came safe to manhood. They got, by lucky survivorship, all these inextricable Saxon Territories combined into Two round lots;—did not, unfortunately, keep them so; but split them again into new divisions,—for new despair of the Historical Student, among others!—and have at this day extensive posterity of thrice-complex relationship, of unintelligible names, still extant in the high places of the world. Unintelligible names, we may well say; each person having probably from ten to twenty names: not John or Tom; but Joachim *John* Ferdinand Ernst Albrecht; Theodor *Tom* Carl Friedrich Kunz;—as if we should say, Bill Walter Kit all as one name; every one of which is good, could you but omit the others! Posterity of unintelligible names, thrice-complex relationship;—and in fine, of titles, qualities, and territories, that will remain forever unknown to man. Most singular princely nomenclature, which has often filled me with amazement. Designations *worse* than those of the Naples Lazzaroni; who indeed “have no names,” but are, I conclude, distinguished by Numbers, No. 1, No. 2, and can be *known* when mentioned in human speech! Names, designations, which are too much for the human mind;—which are intricate, long-winded; abstruse as the Sibyl's oracles; and flying about, too, like her leaves, with every new accident, every new puff of wind. Ever-fluctuating,

ever-splitting, coalescing, re-splitting, re-combining, insignificant little territories, names, relationships and titles; inextricably indecipherable and not worth deciphering; which only the eye of the Old Serpent could or would decipher!—Let us leave them there; and remark that they are all divided, after our little stolen Ernst and Albert, into Two main streams or Lines, the Ernst or *Ernestine Line*, and the Albert or *Albertine Line*; in which two grand divisions they flow on, each of them many-branched, through the wilderness of Time ever since. Many-branched each of the two, but conspicuously separate each from the other, they flow on; and give us the comfort of their company, in great numbers, at this very day. We will note a few of the main phenomena in these two Saxon Lines,—higher trees that have caught our eye in that sad wilderness of princely shrubbery unsurveyable otherwise.

ERNESTINE LINE.

Ernst, the elder of those two stolen boys, became *Kurfürst* (Elector); and got for inheritance, besides the ‘inalienable properties’ which lie round Wittenberg, as we have said, the better or Thüringian side of the Saxon Country—that is, the Weimar, Gotha, Altenburg, &c. Principalities:—while the other youth, Albert, had to take the ‘*Osterland* (Easternland), with part of Meissen,’ what we may in general imagine to be (for no German Dryasdust will do you the kindness to say precisely) the Eastern region of what is Saxony in our day. These Albertines, with an inferior territory, had, as their main towns, Leipzig and Dresden, a *Residenz-Schloss* (or sublime enough Ducal Palace) in each city, Leipzig as yet the grander and more common one. There at Leipzig chiefly, I say, lived the august younger or Albertine Line; especially there lived Prince Albert himself, a wealthy and potent man, though younger. But it is with Ernst that we are at present concerned.

As for Ernst, the elder, he and his lived chiefly at Wittenberg, as I perceive; there or in the neighbourhood, was their high Schloss; distinguished among palaces. But they had Weimar, they had Altenburg, Gotha, Coburg,—above all they had the *Wartburg*, one of the most distinguished Strong Houses any Duke could live in, if he were of frugal and heroic turn. Wartburg, built by fabulous Ludwig the Spring-

er, which grandly overhangs the Town of Eisenach, grandly the general Thuringian Forest; it is now,—Magician Klingsohr having sung there, St. Elizabeth having lived there and done conscious miracles, Martin Luther having lived there and done unconscious ditto,—the most interesting *Residenz*, or old grim shell of a mountain Castle turned into a tavern, now to be found in Germany, or perhaps readily in the world. One feels,—standing in Luther's room, with Luther's poor old oaken table, oaken inkholder still there, and his mark on the wall which the Devil has not yet forgotten,—as if here once more, with mere Heaven and the silent Thuringian Hills looking on, a grand and grandest battle of "One man *versus* the Devil and all men" was fought, and the latest prophecy of the Eternal was made to these sad ages that yet run,—as if here in fact of all places that the Sun now looks upon, were the *holiest* for a modern man. To me, at least, in my poor thoughts, there seemed something of *authentically* divine in this locality; as if immortal remembrances, and sacred influences and monitions were hovering over it; speaking sad, and grand, and valiant things to the hearts of men. A distinguished person, whom I had the honour of attending on that occasion, actually stooped down, when he thought my eye was off him; *kissed* the old oaken table, though one of the grimmest men now living; and looked like lightning and rain all the morning after, with a visible moisture in those sun-eyes of his, and not a word to be drawn from him. Sure enough, Ernst and his line are not at a loss for Residences, whatever else he and they may want.

Ernst's son was *Frederick the Wise*, successor in the *Kur* (Electorship) and paternal lands, which as Frederick did not marry and there was only one other Brother, were not farther divided on this occasion. Frederick the Wise, born in 1463, was that ever-memorable *Kurfürst*, who saved Luther from the Diet of Worms in 1521. A pious Catholic, with due horror of heresy up to that time, he listened with all his faculties to the poor Monk's earnest speech of four hours; knew not entirely what to think of it; thought at least, "We will hear this man farther, we will not burn this man just yet!"—and snatched him up accordingly, and stuck him safe into the Wartburg for a year. Honour to such a *Kurfürst*:—and what a luck to him and us that he was there to do so ever-memorable a thing, just in the nick of time! A *Kurfürst* really memorable and honourable, by that and by many

other acts of wisdom, piety, and prudent magnanimity; in which qualities History testifies that he shone. He could have had the Kaisership, on Max's death, some years before, but preferred to have young Charles V., Max's grandson, elected to it. Whereby it came that the grand Reformation Cause, at once the grandest blessing and the grandest difficulty, fell to the guidance, not of noble German veracity and pious wisdom, but of long-headed obstinate Flemish cunning; and Elector Frederick indeed had an easier life, but Germany has ever since had a much harder one! Two portraits of this wise Frederick, one by Albert Dürer, and another of inferior quality by Lucas Kranach, which represent to us an excellent rather corpulent elderly gentleman, looking out from under his electoral cap, with a fine placid honest, and yet vigilant and sagacious aspect, are well known to print-collectors: but his history, the practical physiognomy of his life and procedure in this world, is less known to hereditary governing persons, and others, than it ought to be,—if there were any chance of their taking pattern by him! He was twenty years Luther's senior; they never met personally, much as they corresponded together, during the next four years, both living oftenest in the same town. He died in 1525, and was succeeded by his brother, John the Steadfast (*Johann der Beständige*).

This brother, Johann *der Beständige*, was four years younger; he also was a wise and eminently Protestant man. He struggled very faithfully for the good Cause, during his term of sovereignty; died in 1532 (fourteen years before Luther) having held the Electorate only seven years. Excellent man, though dreadfully *fat*; so that they had to screw him up by machinery when he wished to mount on horseback in his old days.—His son was Johann Friedrich, the Magnanimous by epithet (*der Grossmüthige*), under whom the Line underwent sad destinies, *lost* the Electorship, lost much; and split itself after him, into innumerable branches, who are all of a small type ever since—and whom we shall leave for a little till we have brought forward the Albertine Line.

35 ALBERTINE LINE.

Albert the Courageous (*der Beherzte*) was the name this little stolen Boy attained among mankind, when he grew to maturity and came to

his properties in Meissen and the Osterland. What he did to merit such high title might, at this date, in this place, be difficult to say. I find he was useful in the Netherlands, assisting Kaiser Max (or rather young Prince Max, Kaiser indeed, and Charles V.'s grandfather, in time coming) when the said young Max wedded the beautiful young Mary of Burgundy, the great heiress in those parts. Max got the Netherlands by this fine match, and came into properties enough; and soon into endless troubles and sorrows thereby; in all which, and in others that superadded themselves, Albert the Courageous was helpful according to ability; distinguishing himself indeed throughout by loyalty to his Kaiser; and in general, I think, being rather of a conservative turn. The rest of his merit in History,—we conclude, it was work that had mainly a Saxon, or at most a German fame, and did not reach the ear of the general world. However, sure enough it all lies safely *funded* in Saxon and German Life to this hour, Saxony reaping the full benefit of it (if any); and it shall not concern us here. Only on three figures of the posterity begotten by him shall we pause a little, then leave him to his fate. Elector Moritz, Duke George, August the Strong: on these three we will glance for one moment; the rest, in mute endless procession, shall rustle past unseen by us.

Albert's eldest son, then, and successor in the eastern properties and residences was Duke George of Saxony,—called 'of Saxony,' as all those Dukes, big and little, were and still are,—*Herzog Georg von Sachsen*: of whom to make him memorable it is enough to say that he was Luther's Duke George! Yes, this is he with whom Luther had such wrangling and jangling. Here for the first time English country gentlemen may discern "Duke George" as a fact, though a dark one, in this world; see dimly who begat him, where he lived, how he actually *was* (presumably) a human creature, and not a mere rumour of a name. "Fear of Duke George?" said Luther: "No, not that. I have seen the King of Chaos in my time, Sathanas himself, and thrown my inkbottle at him. Duke George! Had I had business in Leipzig, I should have gone thither, if it had rained Duke Georges for nine days running!" Well reader, this is he: George the Rich, called also the *Barbatus* (Beardy), likewise the Learned: a very magnificent Herr; learned, Bearded, gilded to a notable degree, and much revered by many though Luther thought so little of him.

He was strong for the old religion, while his cousins went so valiantly ahead for the new. He attended at Diets, argued, negotiated, offered to risk life and fortune, in some diplomatic degree, but was happily never called to do it. His Brother and most of his people gradually became Protestants, which much grieved him. Pack, 5
unfortunate Herr Pack, whose ‘revelations’ gave rise to the Schmalkaldic League, and to the first Protestant War, had been his secretary. Pack ran off from him, made said ‘revelations,’ That there was a private bargain between Duke George, and others headed by the Kaiser, to cut off and forfeit Phillip of Hesse, the chief Protestant, that &c. &c.: 10
whereby, in the first place, poor Pack lost his head; and, in the second place, poor Duke George’s troubles were increased fourfold and tenfold.

Poor soul, he had lost most of his ten children, some of them in 15
infancy, others in maturity and middle age, by death; was now himself getting old, within a year or two of seventy, and his troubles not in the least diminishing. At length he lost his wife; the good old Dame, a Princess of Bohemia, who had been his stay in all sorrows, she too was called away from him. Protestantism spreading, the Devil broken 20
loose, all was against Duke George; and he felt that his own time must now be nigh. His very Brother, now heir apparent, by the death of all the young men, was of declared Protestant tendencies. George wrote to his Brother, who, for the present, was very poor, offering to give him up the government and territories at once, on condition that the Catholic Religion should be maintained intact: Brother respectfully 25
refused. Duke George then made a will to the like effect, summoned his Estates to sanction it; Estates would not sanction: Duke George was seized with dreadful bowel-disorders, and lay down to die. Sorrow on it! Alas, alas!

There is one memorability of his sad last moments: A reverend 30
Pater was endeavouring to strengthen him by assurances about his own good works, about the favour of the Saints and such like, when Dr. Rothe, the Crypto-Protestant medical gentleman, ventured to suggest in the extreme moment, “*Gnädiger Herr*, you were often wont to say, Straightforward is the best runner! Do that yourself; go 35
straight to the blessed Saviour and eternal Son of God who bore our sins; and leave the dead Saints alone!”—“Ey, then—help me, thou,” George groaned out in low sad murmur, “true Saviour, Jesus Christ;

take pity on me, and save me by thy bitter sorrows and death!" and yielded up his soul in this manner. A much afflicted, hard struggling, and not very useful man. He was so learned, he had written his Father Albert's exploits in Latin; of which respectable 'Monograph,' Fabricius in his Chronicle has made use. Fabricius: not that big Hamburg Fabricius of the *Bibliothecas*; but an earlier minor one, *Georg Goldschmied* his vernacular name, who was 'crowned poet by Kaiser Max,' became head schoolmaster in Meissen, and wrote meritorious chronicles, indifferently exact, *Rerum Misnicarum*, and such like,—*he* is the Fabricius to whom the respectable Monograph fell. Of this poor Duke's palaces and riches, at Leipzig and elsewhere, I say nothing, except that they were very grand. He wore a magnificent beard, too, dagger-shaped and very long; was of heroic stature and carriage: truly a respectable-looking man. I will remember nothing more of him except that he was withal an ancestor of Frederick the Great: no doubt of that small interesting fact. One of his daughters was married to Philip the Magnanimous of Hesse,—wife insufficient for magnanimous Philip, wherefore he was obliged to marry a second, or supplement to her, which is a known story! But another of Duke George's daughters, who alone concerns us here, was spouse to Joachim II., sixth *Kurfürst* of Brandenburg, who bore him Johann George, seventh ditto, in lawful wedlock; and so was Frederick the Unique's great grandfather's great-grandmother, that is to say, lineal ancestress in the seventh generation. If it rained Duke Georges for nine days running, I would say no more about them.

We come now to *Elector Moritz*, our second figure. George's Brother Henry succeeded; lived only for two years; in which time all went to Protestantism in the Eastern parts of Saxony, as in the Western. This Henry's eldest son and first successor was *Moritz*, the "Maurice" known in English Protestant books; who, in the Schmalkaldic League and War, played such a questionable game with his Protestant cousin, of the elder or Ernestine Line,—quite ousting said cousin, by superior jockeyship, and reducing his Line and him to the second rank ever since. This cousin was Johann Frederick the Magnanimous, of the Ernestine Line; whom we left above, waiting for that catastrophe: and it came about in this manner.

Duke Moritz refused, namely, to join his poor cousin and other fellow Protestants in the Schmalkaldic League or War, in spite of

Secretary Pack's denunciations and the evidence of facts. Duke Moritz waited till the Kaiser (Charles V., year 1547) and their own ill-guidance had beaten to pieces and ruined said League and War, till the Kaiser had captured Johann Frederick the Magnanimous in person, and was about to kill him. And then, at this point of the game, by dextrous management Duke Moritz got the Electorship transferred to himself; Electorship, with Wittenberg and the 'inalienable lands and dignities;'—his poor cousin sitting prisoner the while, in imminent danger of his life; not getting loose for five years, but following the Kaiser like condemned luggage, up and down, in a very perilous and uncomfortable manner! This from Moritz, who was himself a Protestant, only better skilled in jockeyship, was not thought handsome conduct,—nor could it be.

However, he made it good; succeeded in it,—what is called succeeding. Neither is the game yet played out, nor Moritz publicly declared (what he fully surely *is*, and can by discerning eyes be seen to be) the *loser*. Moritz kept his Electorship, and, by cunning jockeying, his Protestantism too; got his Albertine or junior Line pushed into the place of the Ernestine or first; in which dishonourably acquired position it continues to this day; performing ever since the chief part in Saxony, as Electors, and now as Kings of Saxony;—which seems to make him out rather as winner in the game? For the Ernestine, or honourable Protestant Line is ever since in a secondary, diminished, and as it were, *disintegrated* state, a Line *broken small*; nothing now but a series of small Dukes, Weimar, Gotha, Coburg and the like, in the Thuringian region, who, on mere genealogical grounds, put Sachsen to their name: Sachsen-Coburg, Sachsen-Weimar &c.;—and do not look like winners. Nor perhaps are they,—if they also have played too ill! Perhaps neither of the two is winner; for there are many other hands in the game withal: sure I am only that Moritz has *lost*, and never *could* win! As perhaps may appear yet, by and by.

But however that may be, the Ernestine Line has clearly got *disintegrated*, broken small, and is not in a culminating condition. These, I say, are the Dukes who in the present day put Sachsen to their name: sons of Ernst, sons of Johann Frederick the Magnanimous, all now in a reduced condition; while the sons of Albert, nephews of George the Dagger-bearded ("if it rain Duke-Georges") are Kings of Saxony, so-called Kings. No matter: nay, who knows

whether it is not perhaps even *less* than nothing to them, this grand dignity of theirs? Whether, in very truth, if we look at substance and not semblance, the Albertine Line has *risen* since Moritz's time; or in spite of all these crowns and appearances, sublime to the valet judgment, has fallen and is still falling? I do not find in fact that it has ever *done* anything considerable since; which is the one sure symptom of rising. My probable conjecture rather is, that it has done (if Nature's Register, if the Eternal Daybook, were consulted) very little indeed, except dwindle into more and more contemptibility, and impotence to *do* anything considerable whatever! Which is a very melancholy issue of Moritz's great efforts; and might give rise to unspeakable considerations, in many a high man and many a low,—for which there is not room in this place. 5 10

Johann Frederick, it is well known, sat magnanimously playing chess while the Kaiser's sentence of death was brought in to him: he listened to the reading of the sentence; said a polite word or two; then turning round, with "*Pergamus*, Let us proceed!" quietly played on till the checkmate had been settled.³ Johann Frederick magnanimously waited out his five years of captivity, excellent old Lucas Kranach, his painter and humble friend, refusing to quit him, but steadfastly sharing the same; then quietly returned (old Lucas still with him) to his true loving-hearted wife, to the glad friends whose faith had been tried in the fire. With such a wife waiting him, and such a Lucas attending him, a man had still something left, had his lands been all gone; which in Johann Frederick's case, they were still far from being. He settled at Weimar, having lost electoral Wittenberg and the inalienable properties; he continued to do here, as formerly, whatever wise and noble thing he could, through the short remainder of his life,—one wishes he had not founded all that imbroglio of little Dukes! But perhaps he could not help it: law of primogeniture, except among the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns, always a wise, decisive, thrifty and growing race, who *had* the fine talent of 'annihilating rubbish,' was not yet known in those countries. Johann Frederick felt, most likely, that he, for one, in this aspect of the stars, was not founding kingdoms! But indeed it was not he, it was his successors, his grandson and great-grandson chiefly, that made these multiplex divisions and 15 20 25 30 35

³ De Wette: *Lebens-Geschichte der Herzoge zu Sachsen* (Weimar, 1770), i. 39.

confusions on the face of the German mother-earth, and perplexed the human soul with this inextricable wilderness of little dukes. From him, however, they do all descend: this let the reader know, and let it be some slight satisfaction to him to have got a historical double-girth tied round them in that manner, and see Two compact Bundles made of them, in the meanwhile.

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Moritz, the new Elector, did not last long. Shortly after Johann Frederick got home to Weimar, Moritz had already found his death, in prosecution of that game begun by him. It is well known, he had no sooner made the Electorate sure to himself than he too drew sword against the Kaiser, beat the Kaiser, chased him into the Tyrol mountains, could have taken him there, but—"I have no cage big enough to hold such a bird," said Moritz: so he let the Kaiser run; and made the Treaty of Passau with him instead. Treaty of Passau (A.D. 1552), by which Johann Frederick's liberty was brought about, for one thing, and many liberties were stipulated for the Protestants; upon which Treaty indeed Germany rested from its religious battles, of the blood-shedding sort, and fought only by ink thenceforth,—till the Thirty-years War came, and a new Treaty, that of Münster or Westphalia (1648), had to succeed.

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Shortly after Passau, Moritz, now on the Kaiser's side, and clear for peace and submission to said treaty, drew out against his oldest comrade, Albert Hohenzollern of Anspach,—'Albert *Alcibiades*,' as they call him, that farshining too-impetuous Failure of a Frederick the Great;—drew out, I say, against this Alcibiades, who would not accept the Treaty of Passau; beat Alcibiades in the battle of Sievershausen, but lost his own life withal in it,—no more, either of fighting or diplomatizing, needed from him;—and thus, after only some six years of Electorship, slept with his fathers, no Elector but a clod of the valley.

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His younger brother succeeded; from whom in a direct line come all the subsequent Saxon Potentates and the present King of Saxony, with whom one has no acquaintance, nor much want of any. All of them are *nephews*, so to speak, of Elector Moritz, grand-nephews of Duke George the Dagger-bearded ('if it rained Duke Georges'). Duke George is, as it were, the grand-uncle of them all; as Albert, our little stolen boy for whom Kunz von Kaufungen once gathered bilberries, is father of him and of them all. A goodly progeny, in point of

numbers; and handsomely equipt and decorated by a liberal world: most expensive people,—in general not admirable otherwise. Of which multifarious progeny I will remember farther only one, or at most two; having no esteem for them myself, nor wish to encumber anybody's innocent memory with what perhaps deserves oblivion better, and at all events is rapidly on the way to get it, with or without my sanction. Here, however, is our third figure, *August the Strong*. 5

Friedrich August the big King of Poland, called by some of his contemporaries August the Great, which epithet they had to change for *August der Starke*, August the Physically Strong; this August of the three hundred and fifty-four Bastards, who was able to break a horse-shoe with his hands, and who lived in this world regardless of expense,—he is the individual of this junior-senior Albertine Line, whom I wish to pause one moment upon;—merely with the remark, That if Moritz had any hand in making him the phenomenon he was, Moritz may well be ashamed of his work. More transcendent king of Gluttonous Flunkeys seldom trod this lower Earth. A miracle to his own century,—to certain of the flunkey species a quasi-celestial miracle, bright with diamonds, with endless mistresses, regardless of expense,—to other men a prodigy, portent and quasi-infernal miracle, awakening insoluble inquiries: Whence this, ye righteous gods, and above all, whither! Poor devil, he was full of good humour too, and had the best of stomachs. A man that had his own troubles withal. His miscellany of mistresses, very pretty some of them, but fools all, would have driven most men mad. You may discern dimly in the flunkey histories, in babbling *Pöllnitz* and others, what a set they were; what a time he must have had with their jealousies, their sick vapours, megrims, angers, and infatuations;—springing, on occasion, out of bed in their shift, like wild cats, at the throat of him, fixing their mad claws in him, when he merely enters to ask, “How do you do, *mon chou?*”⁴ Some of them, it is confidently said, were his own children. The unspeakably unexemplary mortal! 10 15 20 25 30

He got his skin well beaten,—cowed as we may say,—by Charles XII., the rough Swede clad mostly in leather. He was coaxed and driven about by Peter the Great, as Irish posthorses are,—long miles, with a bundle of hay, never to be attained, stuck upon the pole of the coach. He reduced himself to utter bankruptcy. He had got the crown 35

⁴ Pöllnitz: *La Saxe Galante; Mémoires et Lettres, &c.*

of Poland by pretending to adopt Papistry,—the apostate, and even pseudo-apostate; and we may say he has made Protestant Saxony, and his own House first of all, spiritually bankrupt ever since. He died at last at Warsaw (year 1733), of an ‘old man’s foot;’ highly composed, 5
eupeptic to the last; busy in scheming out a Partition of Poland,—a thing more than once in men’s heads, but not to be completed just yet. Adieu to him forever and a day.

One of his bastards was Rutowsky, long conspicuous in poor Saxony as their chief military man; whom the Prussians beat at 10
Kesselsdorf,—who was often beaten; whom Frederick the Great at last shut up in Pirna. Another was the *Chevalier de Saxe*, also a kind of general, good for very little. But by far the notablest was he of Aurora von Königsmark’s producing, whom they called *Comte de Saxe* in his own country, and who afterwards in France became *Maréchal de Saxe*; a man who made much noise in the world for a time. Of him 15
also let us say an anecdotic word. Baron d’Espagnac and the biographers had long been uncertain about the date of his birth,—date and place alike dubious. For whose sake, here at length, after a century of searching, is the extract from the baptismal register, found by an 20
inquiring man. Poor Aurora, it appears, had been sent to the Harz Mountains, in the still autumn, in her interesting situation; lodges in the ancient highland town of Goslar, anonymously, very privately; and this is what the books of the old *Marktkirche* (Market-Church) in that remote little place still bear:

25 ‘*Den acht-und-zwenzigsten October*’—But we must translate: ‘The twenty-eighth of October, in the year Sixteen hundred and ninety-six, in the evening, between seven and eight o’clock, there was born, by the high Lady (*von der vornehmen Frau*) who lodges in R. Heinrich Christoph Winkel’s house, a Son; which Son, on the 30th *ejusdem*, 30
was in the evening baptized, in M. S. Alb’s house, and, by the name *Mauritius*, incorporated to the Lord Jesus (*dem Herrn Jesu einverleibt*). Godfathers were Herr Dr. Triumph, R. N. Dusings, and R. Heinrich Christoph Winkel.’⁵ Which ought to settle that small matter, at least.

On the authority of Baron d’Espagnac, I mention one other thing 35
of this *Mauritius*, or Moritz, Maréchal de Saxe; who, like his father, was an immensely strong man. Walking once in the streets of London, he came into collision with a scavenger, had words with the scaven-

⁵ Cramer: *Aurora von Königsmark* (Leipzig, 1836), i. 126.

ger, who perhaps had splashed him with his mud-shovel, or the like. Scavenger would make no apology; willing to try a round of boxing instead. Moritz grasps him suddenly by the back of the breeches; whirls him aloft, in horizontal position; pitches him into his own mudcart, and walks on.⁶ A man of much physical strength, till his wild ways wasted it all. 5

He was tall of stature, had black circular eyebrows, black bright eyes,—brightness partly intellectual, partly animal,—oftenest with a smile in them. Undoubtedly a man of unbounded dissoluteness; of much energy, loose native ingenuity; and the worst *speller* probably 10 ever known. Take this one specimen, the shortest I have, not otherwise the best; specimen achieved, when there had a proposal risen in the obsequious Académie Française to elect this Maréchal a member. The Maréchal had the sense to decline. *Ils veule me fere de la Cadémie*, writes he; *sela miret com une bage a un chas*; meaning probably, *Ils 15 veulent me faire de l'Académie; cela m'iroit comme une bague à un chat*: 'They would have me in the Academy; it would suit me as a ring would a cat,'—or say, a pair of breeches a cock. Probably he had much skill in war; I cannot judge: his victories were very pretty; but it is to be remembered he gained them all over the Duke of 20 Cumberland, who was beaten by everybody that tried, and never beat anything except once some starved Highland peasants at Culloden.

To resume and conclude. August the Physically Strong, be it known in brief then, is great grandson of an Elector called Johann Georg I., who behaved very ill in the Thirty-years' War; now joining with the 25 great Gustavus, now deserting him; and seeking merely, in a poor tortuous way, little to the honour of German Protestantism in that epoch, to save his own goods and skin; wherein, too, he did not even succeed: August the Physically Strong, and Pseudo-Papist apostate, is great grandson of that poor man; who again is grand nephew of the 30 worldly-wise Elector Moritz, Passau-Treaty Moritz, questionable Protestant, questionable friend and enemy of Charles V., with 'No cage fit to hold so big a bird,'—and is therefore also great grandnephew of Luther's friend, 'If it rained Duke Georges.' To his generation there are six from Duke George's, five from Elector Moritz's: that is 35 the genealogy. And if I add that the son of August the Physically Strong was he who got to be August III., King of Poland; spent his

⁶ Espagnac: *Vie du Maréchal de Saxe* (ii. 274, of the German Translation).

time in smoking tobacco; and had Brühl for minister,—Brühl of the three hundred and sixty-five suits of clothes, who brought Frederick of Prussia and the Seven-years War into his country, and thereby, so to speak, quite broke the back of Saxony,—I think we may close our excerpts from the Albertine Line. Of the elder or Ernestine Line, in its *disintegrated* state, I will hastily subjoin yet a word, with the reader's leave, and then end.

ERNESTINE LINE (*in the disintegrated state, or broken small*).

Noble Johann Frederick, who lost the Electorate, and retired to Weimar, nobler for his losses, is not to be particularly blamed for splitting his territory into pieces, and founding that imbroglio of little dukedoms, which run about, ever shifting, like a mass of quicksilver cut into little separate pools and drops; distractive to the human mind, in a geographical and in far deeper senses. The case was not peculiar to Johann Frederick of the Ernestine Line; but was common to all German dukes and lines. The pious German mind grudges to lop anything away; holds by the palpably superfluous; and in general 'cannot annihilate rubbish;'—that is its inborn fault. Law of primogeniture, for such small sovereignties and dukedoms, is hardly yet, as the general rule, above a century old in that country; which, for sovereigns and for citizens, much more than for geographers, was certainly a strange state of matters!

The Albertine Line, Electoral though it now was, made apanages, subdivisions, unintelligible little dukes and dukeries of a similar kind, though perhaps a little more charily: almost within a century we can remember little sovereign dukes of that line. A Duke of Weissenfels, for instance; foolish old gawk, whom Wilhelmina Princess Royal collects for his distracted notions,⁷—which were well shaken-out of him by Wilhelmina's Brother afterwards. Or again, contemporaneously, that other little Duke,—what was the title of him?—who had built the biggest bassoon ever heard of; thirty feet high, or so; and was seen playing on it from a trap-ladder;⁸—poor soul, denied an employment in this world, and obliged to fly to bassoons!

⁷ *Mémoires de Wilhelmine de Prusse, Margrave de Bareith.*

⁸ Pöllnitz: *Mémoires et Lettres.*

Then, too, a Duke of Merseburg,⁹ who was dining solemnly, when the “Old Dessauer” (Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, conqueror at Kesselsdorf afterwards, and a great rough Prussian son of Mars) broke in upon him, in a friendly manner, half drunk, with half-drunk grenadiers whom he had been reviewing; and reviewed and paraded them again *there* within the sublime ducal dining-room itself, and fired volleys there (to the ruin of mirrors and cut-glass); and danced with the princesses, his officers and he,—a princess in your left-hand, a drawn sword in your right;—and drank and uproared, in a Titanic manner, for about eight hours; making a sorcerer’s sabbath of the poor duke’s solemn dinner.¹⁰ Sachsen-Weissenfels, Sachsen-Merseburg, Sachsen-Zeitz:—there were many little dukes of the Albertine Line, too, but happily they are now all dead, childless; and their apanages have fallen home to the general mass, which does not henceforth make subdivisions of itself. The Ernestine Line was but like the Albertine, and like all its neighbours, in that respect.

So, too, it would be cruel to say of these Ernestine little Dukes that they have no history; though it must be owned, in the modern state of the world, they are ever more, and have long been, almost in the impossibility of having any. To build big bassoons, and play on them from trap-ladders; to do hunting, build opera-houses, give court-shows: what else, if they do not care to serve in foreign armies, is well possible for them? It is a fatal position; and they really ought to be delivered from it. Perhaps then they might do better. Nay, perhaps already here and there they have more history than we are all aware of. The late Duke of Weimar was beneficent to men of letters; had the altogether essential merit, too, which is a very singular one, of finding out, for that object, the real men of letters instead of the counterfeit. A Duke of Sachsen-Gotha, of earlier date, went into the *Grumbach’sche Handel* (sad ‘Grumbach Brabble,’ consisting of wild justice in high quarters, by assassination or sudden homicide in the street, with consequences; of all which the English reader happily knows nothing),—went into it bravely, if rashly, in generous pity for Grumbach, in high hope for himself withal; and got thrown into jail for life, poor Duke! Where also his Wife attended him, like a brave

⁹ Same as the Bassoon Duke.—Ed.

¹⁰ *Des weltberühmten Fürstens Leopoldi von Anhalt-Dessau Leben, &c.* (Leipzig, 1742), pp. 108-112.

true woman, 'for twenty years.'—On the whole, I rather think they would still gladly have histories if they could; and am willing to regret that brave men and princes, descended presumably from Witekind and the gods, certainly from John the Steadfast and John Frederick the Magnanimous, should be reduced to stand inert in the whirling arena of the world in that manner, swathed in old wrappages and pack-thread meshes, into inability to move; watching sadly the Centuries with their stormful opulences rush past you, Century after Century in vain!

But it is better we should close. Of the Ernestine Line, in its disintegrated state, let us mention only two names, in the briefest manner, who are not quite without significance to men and Englishmen, and therewith really end. The first is Bernhard of Weimar, champion of Elizabeth Stuart, Ex-queen of Bohemia; famed captain in the Thirty-years War, a really notable man. Whose *Life* Goethe once thought of writing; but prudently (right prudently as I can now see) drew out of it, and wrote nothing. Not so easy to dig out a Hero from the mountainous owl-droppings, deadening to the human nostril, which moulder in Record Offices and Public Libraries; patrolled over by mere irrational monsters, of the gryphon and vulture and chimera species! Easier a good deal to versify the Ideal a little, and stick by ballads and the legitimate drama. Bernhard was Johann Frederick the Magnanimous's great grandson: that is his genealogy,—great grandson of little stolen Ernst's grandson. He began in those Bohemian Campaigns (1621), a young lad of seventeen; *Rittmeister* to one of his elder Brothers; some three of whom, in various capacities, fought in the Protestant wars of their time. Very ardent Protestants, they and he; men of devout mind withal; as generally their whole Line, from Johann Frederick the Magnanimous downwards, were distinguished by being. He had risen to be a famed captain, while still young; and, under and after the great Gustavus, he did exploits to make the whole world know him. He 'was in two-and-thirty battles;' gained, or helped to gain, almost all of them; but unfortunately *lost* that of Nördlingen, which, next to Lützen, was the most important of all. He had taken Breisach (in the Upper-Rhine country), thought to be inexpugnable; and was just in sight of immense ulterior achievements and advancements, when he died suddenly (1639), still only in his thirty-

fifth year. The Richelieu French poisoned him (so ran and runs the rumour); at least he died conveniently for Richelieu, for Germany most inconveniently;—and was in truth a mighty kind of man; distinguished much from the imbroglio of little Dukes: ‘grandson’s great-grandson,’ as I said, ‘of’—Or, alas, is it hopeless to charge a modern reader’s memory even with Bernhard! 5

Another individual of the Ernestine Line, surely notable to Englishmen, and much to be distinguished amid that imbroglio of little Dukes, is the ‘*Prinz ALBRECHT Franz August Karl Emanuel von Sachsen-Coburg-Gotha;*’ whom we call, in briefer English, Prince Albert 10 of Saxe-Coburg; actual Prince Consort of these happy realms. He also is a late, very late, grandson of that little stolen Ernst. Concerning whom both English History and English Prophecy might say something,—but not conveniently in this place. By the generality of thinking Englishmen he is regarded as a man of solid sense and 15 worth, seemingly of superior talent, placed in circumstances beyond measure singular. Very complicated circumstances; and which do not promise to grow less so, but the contrary. For the Horologe of Time goes inexorably on; and the Sick Ages ripen (with terrible rapidity at present) towards—Who will tell us what! The human wisdom of 20 this Prince, whatever share of it he has, may one day be unspeakably important to mankind!—But enough, enough. We will here subjoin his Pedigree at least; which is a very innocent Document, riddled from the big Historical cinderheaps, and may be comfortable to some persons: 25

‘Ernst the Pious, Duke of Sachsen-Gotha (1601-1675), was one of Bernhard of Weimar’s elder brothers; great-grandson of Johann Frederick the Magnanimous, who lost the Electorate. Had been a soldier in his youth; succeeded to Gotha and the main part of the Territories; and much distinguished himself there. A patron of learning, among other good things; set Seckendorf on compiling the *History of the Reformation*. To all appearance, an excellent prudent and really *pious* Governor of men. He left seven sons; who at first lived together at Gotha, and ‘governed conjointly;’ but at length divided the Territories; Frederick the eldest taking Gotha, where various other Fredericks succeeded him, and the line did not die out till 1824. The 30 35

other six brothers likewise all founded 'Lines,' Coburg, Meinungen, Römheld, Eisenberg, Hildburghausen, Saalfeld, most of which soon died out; but it is only the youngest brother, he of *Saalfeld* with his Line, that concerns us here.

5 1° JOHANN ERNST (1658-1729), youngest son of Ernst the Pious; got *Saalfeld* for his portion. The *then* Coburg Line died out in 1678, upon which arose great arguings as to who should inherit; arguings, bargainings; and, between Meinungen and Saalfeld especially, a law-suit in the *Reichshofrath* (Imperial Aulic Council, as we call it), which
10 seemed as if it would never end. At length, in 1735, Saalfeld, 'after two hundred and six *Conclusa* (Decrees) in its favour,' carried the point over Meinungen; got possession of 'Coburg Town, and nearly all the Territory,' and holds it ever since. Johann Ernst was dead in the interim; but had left his son,

15 2° FRANZ JOSIAS (born 1697), Duke of *Sachsen-Saalfeld*,—who, as we see, in 1735, after these '206 Decrees,' got Coburg too, and adopted that town as his *Residenz*; Duke of Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld henceforth. A younger son of this Franz Josias was the "Cobourg" (Austrian General) thrice-famous in the French Newspapers of 1792-
20 '94, if now forgotten. His (Franz Josias's) eldest son and successor was

3° ERNST FRIEDRICH (1724-1800);—and his

4° FRANZ FRIEDRICH ANTON (1750-1806). He left three daughters, one of whom became Duchess of Kent, and mother of Queen Victoria: likewise three sons; the youngest of whom is Leopold, now King
25 of the Belgians; and the eldest of whom was

5° ERNST ANTON KARL LUDWIG (1784-1844); to whom *Sachsen-Gotha* fell in 1824;—whose elder son is now reigning Duke of *Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld-Gotha* (chief Residence Gotha); and whose
30 younger is

6° PRINCE ALBERT, whom we know.¹¹

So that the young gentleman who will one day (it is hoped, but not till after many years) be King of England, is visibly, as we count,
35 Thirteenth in direct descent from that little boy Ernst whom Kunz von Kaufungen stole. Ernst's generation and Twelve others have blos-

¹¹ Hübner, tab. 163; Ertel, tab. 70; Michaelis, *Chur-und Fürstlichen Häuser in Teutschland*, i. 511-525.

somed out and grown big, and have faded and been blown away; and in these 400 years, since Kunz did his feat, we have arrived so far. And that is the last 'pearl, or odd button,' I will string on that Transaction.

, Here is a Letter since received, which may be worth printing:

'Royal Society, Somerset House, 6th August 1856.

'DEAR SIR,—I am a stranger to you, though not to your works; and would not intrude on your time and attention, were it not that the subject on which I write may perhaps procure me your indulgence.

'I have taken a walk into Bohemia, and visited, on the way, some of the places identified with the Prinzenraub. The old town of Altenburg is picturesque in situation, architecture and the costume of its Wendish population. In the castle, which stands on a hill resembling that at Edinburgh, are to be seen the dresses worn by the young Princes at the time of their kidnapping, ancient weapons, armour, &c., old chambers and modern halls, and a walled-up window marking the situation of the one through which Kunz carried-off his princely booty.

'The estate which was given to the Driller is situate about half-an-hour's walk to the east of Zwickau; a town that recalls Luther to memory. He (Luther) often ascended the tall church-tower to enjoy the prospect around; and there remains on the top an old clumsy table said to have been his.

'The Driller family is not extinct. Three male representatives are living at Freyberg and other places in Saxony; but the estate has been out of their possession for many years. It lies pleasantly on one side of a narrow glen, and is now the site of a large brewery—*Driller Bierbrauerei*—famed in all the country round for the excellence of its beer. By experience acceptably gathered on the spot on a hot afternoon, I can testify that the *Driller beer* is equal to its reputation. Hence there is something besides a patriotic sentiment to attract customers to the shady gardens and spacious guest-chambers of the brewery; and to justify the writing over the entrance,—*Dulcius ex ipso fonte bibuntur aquæ.*

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‘In one of the rooms I saw a full-length painting of the Driller; a sturdy, resolute-looking fellow, with ample black beard, grasping his pole, and supporting the young Prince whom he has just rescued. Also two miniatures; one inscribed *Georg Schmidt od. Triller*; the other, a likeness of his Wife, a rustic dame of quiet expression, with gray eyes and arched eyebrows. Also a portrait of Kunz, very different from what I expected. He bears a striking resemblance to our portraits of Sir Philip Sidney; with crisp curly hair, ample forehead, well-opened eye, pointed beard, and wearing a gold chain. Also a thin quarto containing a history of the *Prinzenraub*, with portraits, and engravings of the incidents: The stealing of the princes from the castle—the rescue—the joyful return—the beheading of Kunz, &c. All these things help to keep-up a little enthusiasm among the Saxons, and perhaps encourage trade.

‘On the 8th of July of last year (1855), a festival was held to celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of the *Prinzenraub*. A long procession, headed by Herr Ebert, the chief proprietor (since deceased), walked from Zwickau to the brewery, passing under two triumphal-arches on the way. The leader was followed by a long file of coalers, by friends on foot and in carriages, and bands of music in wagons; altogether about eight-hundred persons. They kept-up the celebration with right good will, and drank, so the Braumeister told me, a hundred *eimers* of beer.

‘A similar festival was held on the same day at Altenburg, Hartenstein, Grünhain, attended by people from all the neighbouring villages, when not a few paid a visit to the *Prinzenhöhle*,—the cave in which Prince Ernst was hidden.

‘I did not see the monastery of Ebersdorf; but I was informed by sundry persons that the Driller’s coat is still to be seen there.

‘I remain, yours with much respect,

‘WALTER WHITE.

‘THOMAS CARLYLE, ESQ.’