

were put under arrest, and Keith only saved himself by the accidental discovery of the king's order, which enabled him to escape to the Hague. The two prisoners were handcuffed and taken to Potsdam, where Frederick was brought into the presence of his royal father. The rage of the king was ungovernable: at first he endeavoured to strangle his son with his own hands, and then drew his sword to run him through the body, but following the advice of his courtiers, he committed his son to prison, so that in due form he might be arraigned and treated as a traitor. Accordingly Frederick and Katte were brought before a board of twelve officers, charged with the crime of desertion—the result of the examination being that only two members of the court-martial were in favour of an acquittal, the remainder, mere creatures of the king, being base enough to pander to his unbridled ferocity by condemning both "criminals" to be executed. The king had made up his mind that his son should die on the scaffold, and had fully resolved upon the exhibition of an awful tragedy which should inspire all Christendom with terror. He said—"He will always be a disobedient subject—and I have three other boys who are more than his equals." This savage decision would doubtless have been carried into effect, had not the powers of Europe, particularly the Emperor of Austria and the States-General, interceded on behalf of the young Prince; the consequence being, that the sentence, so far as he was concerned, was commuted to imprisonment for life. The unfortunate Katte, however, was not so lucky, for by the King's command he was executed immediately before Prince Frederick's cell, who, by a refinement of cruelty, was forcibly held up to the window in order that he might witness the ignominious death of his faithful adherent. As Katte passed by on his way to the scaffold he exclaimed—"Death is sweet for a Prince I love so well!" Whilst the Prince remained in the closest confinement at Custrin, the King sent a proposal to him to renounce the succession. "I accept the proposal," said the Prince, "if my father declares that I am not really his son." Upon this answer, the king, who looked on conjugal fidelity with religious respect, relinquished his plan.

After being imprisoned for more than a year—during which time all intercourse and luxury had been denied to the Prince—the king began to abate somewhat of his severity towards his heir, and Frederick was accordingly ordered to proceed to Berlin, where, at a grand *fête* at the Palace, he was permitted to sit behind his mother's chair, clothed in a sombre suit of grey—the only colour since his disgrace that he had been permitted to wear. His father would never forgive his dislike for a military life, yet from that time he treated him with great kindness. Shortly afterwards he compelled him, much against his inclination, to marry the Princess of Brunswick Wolfenbützel. The young Prince then devoted himself during the period of his retirement between his forced marriage and his accession to the throne, chiefly to literary pursuits, composing several works, and corresponding with Voltaire and other eminent men.

Singular to relate, whatever may have been Frederick's disinclination in youth to warfare, he had not ascended the throne long, before he added Lower Silesia to his own dominions, and afterwards took Prague with its garrison of 16,000 men! It is unnecessary to refer to the Seven Years' War, in which he contended single-handed against the united armies of Russia, France, Austria, Sweden, and the majority of the German states. Sufficient it is to say, that by it he established the military renown of Prussia, annexed nearly fifteen hundred square miles of territory, and earned for himself the reputation of being one of the most famous generals in modern history.

Additional Notes to August.

ATTEMPTS TO ASSASSINATE GEORGE III.

(2c).—On the morning of August 2, 1786, as George III. was alighting from his carriage, at the garden-entrance to St. James's Palace, a woman, who was waiting there, pushed forward and presented a paper to his Majesty. As he was in the act of receiving it, she struck at him with a knife which she had previ-

ously concealed. She aimed at the heart, but the blade of the knife being weak in the middle from frequent grinding, doubled or bent, and the king stepped back without receiving the slightest wound. As she was making a second thrust, one of the yeomen caught her arm, and at the same instant one of the king's footmen wrenched the knife out of her hand. The king, with great temper and fortitude, exclaimed: "I have received no injury: do not hurt the woman, the poor creature appears insane." On being examined before the Privy Council, it appeared that her name was MARGARET NICHOLSON; she was a needle-woman, and came from Stockton-on-Tees, and was decidedly insane—having taken it into her head that the crown of England was hers by right, and that England would be drowned in blood for a thousand generations if she did not get her rights! After a long examination before the Privy Council, they were "clearly and unanimously of opinion that she was, and is, insane."

Although the event was scarcely a subject for jesting, yet the wits of the opposition party took up the matter as one of joke and burlesque. They ridiculed the notion of a sempstress-regicide, and said that there had not been the slightest danger from the attempt. Several addresses of congratulation were presented to his Majesty from loyal counties, boroughs, universities, and bodies corporate; and it was the king's pleasure to confer the honour of knighthood on some of the bearers of these addresses, and the recipients became popularly known as "Peg Nicholson's Knights; and the Knights of St. Margaret!" The poor woman was committed to Bethlehem Hospital, in Moorfields, and thence removed to the new hospital, in St. George's Fields, where she died in 1821, in her 99th year, after a confinement of forty-two years!

On the 11th of May, 1800, while his Majesty was present at a review in Hyde Park, a gentleman standing near him was wounded by a musket-ball. Whether this was the effect of accident or not no one could tell; but it produced a great sensation in the minds of the king's ministers, who endeavoured to persuade him to forego his intention of visiting Drury Lane Theatre that evening. The king, however, was not to be dissuaded—the royal visit had been publicly announced, and the king and queen, with some of the princesses, accordingly went. A moment after the king had entered his box, and whilst in the act of bowing to the audience, a man, of the name of HATFIELD, who sat in the middle of the pit fired a pistol at him; but the assassin's arm having fortunately been a little elevated by a person near him, who had observed his intention, the bullet lodged in the roof of the royal box. The king stepped back, with the greatest composure, to the box-door, saying to the queen and princesses who were entering—"Keep back, keep back; they are firing squibs for diversion; and perhaps there may be more!" On this occasion the loyalty of the spectators was raised to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. The audience rose, and, amid repeated cheers, "God Save the King!" was three times sung by the whole house, with the following stanza, supplied impromptu by Sheridan:—

*From every latent foe,
From the assassin's blow,
God save the king!
O'er him thine arm extend,
For Britain's sake defend
Our father, prince, and friend;
God save the king!"*

Hatfield (who had been in the army, and had received eight sabre-wounds in the head) was indicted for high treason; but the jury being satisfied that he was of unsound mind, he was transferred to Bethlehem Hospital; where he remained until his death, which took place in the year 1841. Singular to say, he survived his sentence forty-one years—nearly the same length of time as Margaret Nicholson—and he outlived not only George the Third, but all the judges, and all the jurymen, and all the counsel, who had taken part in his trial! During his confinement Hatfield employed himself in writing verses on the death of his birds and cats—his only companions in his long and weary imprisonment.