

from its own madness. Being just upon the point of losing him, its attention was more taken up with the thoughts of a future leader than with the divisions that had disturbed its peace for the three last years. They who carried their views beyond their own country were divided between the Electors of Bavaria and Saxony and the Prince of Conti. They who were for choosing at home, mentioned Joblowski or Konski; the partisans of the present royal family talked of Prince James or Prince Alexander. The King, in the few easy moments that his disease left him, had a prospect of nothing but misfortunes; his kingdom disturbed by factions within, and attacked by enemies without; the crown, which he had gained by merit and worn with glory, just going to become a prey to factions; uncertain whether it would continue in his family, and that family, by separating into different interests, completing the anxieties of his mind. In this situation he gave up everything to fortune, and, next to the consolations of religion, had recourse to letters and philosophy for mitigating the evils he felt.

During the whole winter of 1696 weekly reports of his death were spread over Europe and Asia. At the approach of spring the increasing warmth of the sun seemed to revive in him a few sparks of life, and he went to his fine gardens at Villanow to breathe a purer air, but, alas! he was too far gone to enjoy it.