

came into my head, and the sight of the ruined fortifications of Kehl gave my laughter fresh force, from the recollection that the mighty Louis, whose great mind had it in contemplation to annex the small dependencies of the Nord and the *pais bas*, together with Italy, Spain, &c. to the French monarchy, had built this fort as a key to his conquests on the other side the Rhine. 'By my troth,' said I, as I considered the barracks and vestiges of the old fortifications, 'this is pleasant.' And it is pleasanter still, that Beaumarchais meant to print his *Voltaire* in these barracks. 'In the name of merriment,' said I (and my internal laugh then broke out) 'is the great France grown too small; since the days of the mighty Louis, to hold a dozen letter presses in it?'

The small contraband trade with Strasburg excepted, France has nothing to fear from this same Kehl. The place, which is contemptible in every respect, belongs, with some other villages, to the margraves of Baden, but the states of the Holy Roman Empire claim a right to the ruined fortifications.

The way to Carlsruhe raised many thoughts in my mind. On sight of the castle of Rastadt, where a termination was put to the war between France and Austria in 1714, I felt myself a Frenchman all over. All the great chiefs and statesmen, who from the beginning of the last century to this period had adorned our annals, and set us far above the nations of the earth, seemed to rise before me, and I sat for some time in a kind of trance, fighting their battles and inventing their civil improvements over again. In an unlucky minute, however, I was awakened by the recollection that this was now all at an end; that in 1714 our greatness terminated; that my country no longer produced great men; and that the powers whom we had then sunk so low were now rising, nay, that some of them had already risen, to sink us. I would then have wished to have forgotten that I was a Frenchman, and sought for consolation in the thought of being a citizen of the world, and that much as we had lost, Europe in general had gained still more in the time that had elapsed; but this was impossible, the traces of desolation which many of our generals had left in the places I was travelling through, made me lament my having been so proud of their exploits before.

I stayed some time at Carlsruhe, and was lucky enough to get acquainted with a gentleman, who, to the best of hearts, and excellent understanding, and unremitting exertions in the service of his prince, unites a very fine taste for German, French, and English literature. The court of Carlsruhe possesses many such persons, some of whom I had been fortunate enough to know at Strasburg. With this gentleman I went to Spires to visit some of his relations. Our way lay by Bruchsal, the residence of the bishop of Spires. The country we went through had many woods, which, however, were broken by a few well cultivated vales. These woods, the timber of which is carried to Holland (where it sells very well) by the Rhine, makes a great part of the revenue of the courts of Spires and Carlsruhe. The wood through which we travelled afforded a striking instance of the advantage an hereditary kingdom has over an elective one. The woods of Baden are kept up with the greatest economy and attention, because the prince knows they will be sources of wealth to his remotest descendants; whereas at Bruchsal, where the descendants of the prince have nothing to hope, every thing gives way to present enjoyment. It is needless to add that in this respect the woods are an emblem of the whole country.

Bruchsal is a pretty little town, and the bishop's palace a handsome building. The present prince bishop, some effusions of ill humour only excepted, is no bad governor. This humour principally shews itself against the young women. I am assured that if he could he would make all the girls nuns. He cannot see one without falling into a passion. His revenue is about three hundred thousand florins, or thirty thousand