his dominions; Henry was an equally devoted Protestant. Maurice (1541-1553) was also a Protestant, but he was too astute to permit his religion to blind him to his political interests. His ruling motive seems to have been ambition to increase his personal power and the consequence of his country. He refused to join the Schmalkald League with the other Protestant princes, and made a secret treaty with the emperor instead. By invading the Ernestine lands in John Frederick’s absence during the Schmalkald War, he forced that prince to return hastily from the Danube, and thus weakened the army opposed to the emperor. Though he was compelled to retreat before his indignant and surprised kinsman, his fidelity to the emperor was rewarded, as we have seen, at the capitulation of Wittenberg. All the lands torn from the Ernestines were not, however, assigned to Maurice; he was forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of Bohemia over the Voigtland and the Silesian duchy of Sagan, and to renounce his own superiority over the Reuss dominions. The Roman Catholic prelates were moreover reinstated in the three great bishoprics of Meissen, Merseburg, and Naumburg- Zeitz. Recognizing as a Protestant sovereign that the best alliance for securing his new possessions was not with the Roman Catholic emperor but with the other Pro­testant princes, Maurice now began to withdraw from the former and to conciliate the latter. In 1552, suddenly marching against the emperor at Innsbruck, he extorted from him the peace of Passau, which accorded religious freedom throughout Germany. Thus, at the close of his life (he died of a wound in battle in 1553), Maurice came to be regarded as the champion of German national and religious freedom. Amid the distractions of outward affairs, Maurice had not neglected the internal interests of Saxony. To the already conspicuous educational advant­ages in the country he added the three grammar schools (Fürstenschulen) at Pforta, Grimma, and Meissen ; and for administrative purposes, especially for the collection of the taxes which had now become practically annual, he divided the country into the four “ circles ” of the Electorate, Thuringia, Leipsic, and Meissen. In 1542 the first coal mine was opened. Over two hundred convents were suppressed in Saxony; Leipsic, Wittenberg, Jena, and Erfurt had each a university; books began to increase, and the Saxon dialect became the ruling dialect of German in virtue of Luther’s translation of the Bible. Augustus I. (1553-1586), brother of Maurice, was one of the best domestic rulers that Saxony ever had. He increased the area of the country by the “circles” of Neustadt and the Voigtland, and by parts of Henneberg and the silver-yielding Mansfeld, and he devoted his long reign to the development of its resources. He visited all parts of the country himself, and personally encouraged agriculture ; he introduced a more economical mode of mining and smelting silver ; he favoured the importation of finer breeds of sheep and cattle ; and he brought foreign weavers from abroad to teach the Saxons. Under him lace-making began on the Erzgebirge, and cloth-making flourished at Zwickau. He was the first to fortify the Königstein, the one fortress in modern Saxony, and he built other castles. With all his virtues, however, Augustus was an intolerant Lutheran, and used very severe means to exterminate the Calvinists ; in his electorate he is said to have expelled one hundred and eleven Calvinist preachers in a single month. Under his son Christian I. (1586-1591) the chief power was wielded by the chancellor Crell, who strongly favoured Calvinism, but, when Christian II. (1591-1611) came to the throne a mere child, Crell was sacrificed to the Lutheran nobles. The duke of Weimar was made regent, and continued the persecution of crypto-Calvinism, in spite of the breach •with

the Reformed imperial diet which this course involved. Christian II. was succeeded by his brother John George I. (1611-1656), under whom the country was devastated by the Thirty Years’ War. John George was an amiable but weak prince, totally unfitted to direct the fortunes of a nation in time of danger. He refused the proffered crown of Bohemia, and, when the Bohemian Protestants elected a Calvinist prince, he assisted the emperor against them with men and money. The Restitution Edict, however, in 1629, opened his eyes to the emperor’s projects, and he joined Gustavus Adolphus. Saxony now became the theatre of war. The first battle on Saxon soil was fought in 1631 at Breitenfeld, where the bravery of the Swedes made up for the flight of the Saxons. Wallenstein entered Saxony in 1632, and his lieutenants Holk and Gallas plundered, burned, and murdered through the length and breadth of the land. After the death of Gustavus Adolphus at the battle of Lützen, not far from Leipsic, in 1632, the elector, who was at heart an imperialist, detached himself from the Swedish alliance, and in 1635 concluded the peace of Prague with the emperor. By this peace he was confirmed in the possession of Upper and Lower Lusatia, a district of 180 square miles and half a million inhabitants, which had already been pledged to him as a reward for his services against the Bohemians. Lusatia had once belonged to Conrad of Meissen, whose descendants, however, had lost it to Brandenburg at the beginning of the 14th century. Saxony had now to suffer from the Swedes a repetition of the devastations of Wallenstein. No other country in Germany was so terribly scourged by this terrible war. Immense tracts were rendered absolutely desolate, and whole villages vanished from the map ; the people were tortured to reveal their treasures, or from wanton brutal­ity ; famine was followed by plague; civilization was thrown back and barbarism revived. In eight years the population sank from three to one and a half millions. When the war was at length ended by the peace of Westphalia in 1648, Saxony found that its influence had begun to decline in Germany. Its alliance with the Catholic party deprived it of its place at the head of the Protestant German states, which was now taken by Brandenburg. John George’s will made the decline of the electorate even more inevitable by detaching from it the three subsidiary duchies of Saxe-Weissenfels, Saxe- Merseburg, and Saxe-Zeitz in favour of his younger sons. By 1746, however, these lines were all extinct, and their possessions had returned to the main line. Saxe- Neustädt was a short-lived branch from Saxe-Zeitz, extinct in 1714. The next three electors, who each bore the name of John George, had uneventful reigns. The first made some efforts to heal the wounds of his country; the second wasted the lives of his people in foreign wars against the Turks ; and the third was the last Protestant elector of Saxony. John George IV. was succeeded by his brother Frederick Augustus I., or Augustus the Strong (1694- 1733). This prince was elected king of Poland as Augustus II. in 1697, but any weight which the royal title might have given him in the empire was more than counterbalanced by the fact that he, though the ruler of an almost exclusively Protestant electorate, became a Roman Catholic in order to qualify for the new dignity. The connexion with Poland was disastrous for Saxony. In order to defray the expenses of his wars with Charles XII., which resulted from his Polish policy, Augustus pawned and sold large districts of Saxon territory, while he drained the electorate of both men and money. For a year before the peace of Altranstädt in 1706, when Augustus gave up the crown of Poland, Saxony was occupied by a Swedish army, which had to be supported at an expense of twenty-