enough tn ſave 5000 waggons of thoſe provisions designed for the diſtressed Swedes. A ſtrong detachment was ſent to purſue Lewenhaupt ; but ſo terrible did he appear, that the Russian general offered him an honourable capitulation. This was refuſed with diſdain; and the battle renewed with the ſame vigour as before. The Swedes, though reduced to 4000, again defeated their enemies, and killed 5000 on the ſpot. After this, Lewenhaupt was suffered to purſue his march without moleſtation, but alſo without cannon or provisions. Prince Menzſkoff, indeed, was detached to haraſs him ; but such was the formidable appearance of the Swedes even in their diſtreſs, that he was afraid to attack them : ſo that at laſt the 4000 arrived ſafe in the camp of Charles, after having killed upwards of 30,000 of the ene­my on their march.

This, we may say, was the laſt effort of Swediſh valour. The difficulties they had now to undergo exceeded what human nature could bear ; yet still they hoped, by conſtancy and courage, to overcome every obſtacle. In the ſevereſt winter known for a long time even in Russia, they made long marches, clothed like ſavages in the ſkins of wild beaſts ; all the draught-horses periſhed ; thousands of ſoldiers dropped dead with cold and hunger : ſo that by the month of February 1709, the whole army was reduced to 18,000 Swedes. Amidſt numberleſs difficulties theſe pe­netrated at laſt to Pultowa, a town on the eaſtern frontier of the Ukrain, where the Czar had laid up magazines; and of theſe Charles reſolved to get posseſſion. Mazeppa adviſed the king to inveſt the place, in conſequence of his ha­ving correſpondence with ſome of the inhabitants, by whoſe means he hoped it would be ſurrendered. However, he was deceived ; the beſieged made an obſtinate defence, the Swedes were repulsed in every assault, and 8000 of them were defeated, and almoſt entirely cut off, in an engagement with a party of Russians. To complete his misfortunes, Charles received a ſhot from a carabine in his heel, which ſhattered the bone. For six hours after he continued calm­ly on horſeback, giving orders, till he fainted with the loſs of blood ; after which he was carried into his tent. It was imagined that amputation would be neceſſary, as the wound had already begun to mortify ; but one Newman un­dertook to ſave the limb. It was told the king that deep inciſions would be neceſſary. “ Fall to work then (said he), cut boldly, and fear nothing.” He held out his leg while the operation was performing ; never changed countenance; and while the dressing was laid on, ordered an aſſault for the next morning.

For ſome days the Czar, with an army of 70*,000* men, had lain at a ſmall diſtance, haraſſing the Swediſh camp, and cutting off the convoys of proviſion ; but now intelli­gence was received, that he was advancing as if with a deſign of attacking the lines. In this ſituation, Charles, wounded, diſtreſſed, and almoſt ſurrounded by enemies; is ſaid to have, for the first time, aſſembled a grand council of war ; the reſult of which was, that it was expedient to march out and attack the Russians. Voltaire, however, to­tally denies that the king relaxed one jot of his wonted obſtinacy and arbitrary temper : but that, on the 7th of July, he ſent for general Renſchild, and told him, without any emotion, to prepare for attacking the enemy next morning.

The 8th of July 1709 is remarkable for the battle which decided the fate of Sweden. Charles having left 8000 men in the camp to defend the works and repel the sallies of the beſieged, began to march againſt his enemies by break of day with the rest of the army, conſiſting of 26,000 men, of whom 18,000 were Coſſacks. The Russians were drawn up in two lines behind their intrenchments, the horſe in front, and the foot in the rear, with chasms to ſuffer the horſe to fall back in caſe of neceſſity. General Slippenbach was diſpatched to attack the cavalry; which he did with ſuch impetuoſity, that they were broken in an inſtant. However, they rallied behind the infantry, and re­turned to the charge with ſuch vigour, that they disordered the Swedes in their turn, and took Slippenbach priſoner. Charles was now carried in his litter to this scene of confuſion. The troops were animated by his preſence, and re­turned to the charge ; the battle became doubtful, when ge­neral Creuk was diſpatched by Charles to attack the enemy in flank. Creuk miſtook his way, or, according to others, who had the beſt opportunities of information, was bribed by Russian gold, which occaſioned the loſs of the battle, Peter now diſpatched prince Menzikoff with a ſtrong de­tachment, to post himſelf between the Swedes and Pultowa, to cut off their communication with their camp, and to fall upon their rear. He executed his orders with great ſuccess ; cut off a corps de reserve of 3000 men; and thus de­cided the fortune of the day. The king, however, had ranged his remaining troops in two lines ; the foot in the centre, and the horſe in the two wings. They had already been twice rallied, and were now attacked with fury on all ſides. Charles, in his litter, with his ſword drawn in one hand, and a piſtol in the other, ſeemed to be everywhere preſent. New misfortunes, however, awaited him. A can­non ball killed both horses in the litter ; and ſcarce were others put in their place, when a ſecond broke the litter itſelf in pieces, and overturned the king. The ſoldiers now believing him killed, fell back in conſternation. The first line was broke, and the ſecond fled. Charles did every thing in his power to reſtore order; but the Russians preſſed ſo hard, that rallying was impoſſible, eſpecially as powder was alſo wanting. Renſchild and ſeveral other general of­ficers were taken priſoners ; and the king himſelf muſt have fallen into the hands of the enemy, had not count Poniatowſky drawn up 500 horſe, ſurrounded the royal perſon, and with deſperate fury broke through ten regiments of the enemy. With theſe the king arrived on the banks of the Boriſthenes. The Russians forced the Swediſh camp, where they found six millions in ſpecie ; but could not hinder Lewenhaupt, with 4000 foot and all the remaining cavalry, from retreating to the banks of the Boriſthenes. This, however, availed them but little ; for being purſued by prince Menzikoff, they were obliged, for want of boats or bridges, to ſurrender at diſcretion. Charles fled in a mean calaſh, attended by a little troop inviolably attached to his person, ſome on foot, and ſome on horſeback. They were obliged to cross a ſandy deſert, where neither herb nor tree was to be ſeen, and where the burning heat and want of wa­ter were more intolerable than the extremities of cold they had formerly ſuffered. The whole had almoſt periſhed for want of water, when a ſpring was fortunately diſcovered ; after which they reached Oczakow, a town in the Turkiſh dominions, the bashaw of which supplied the king with eve­ry neceſſary. It was some time, however, before boats could be got ready for tranſporting the whole of the king’s attendants ; by which accident 500 Swedes and Coſſacks fell into the hands of the enemy. This loſs affected him more than all his other misfortunes. He ſhed tears at ſeeing across the river Bog the greater part of his few re­maining friends carried into captivity, without having it in his power to aſſiſt them. The baſhaw waited upon him to apologize for the delay, and was ſeverely reprimanded by Charles, as if he had been his own subject.

The king remained but a few days at Oczakow, when the ſeraſquier of Bender ſent an aga to compliment him on his ar­rival in the Turkiſh dominions, and to invite him to that