Nevertheless Prince Ferdinand drew up before it and met the French plundering raids by a threat on their communication with Cassel, and as a further inducement to tempt Contades to attack him, he detached a column under Wangenheim, which entrenched itself across the only outlet by which the right of the French army could debouch from behind the marshes which lie in the angle between the Weser and the Bastau, a small tributary joining the former below Minden. The bait took, and during the early hours of the 1st of August the French army moved out to attack Wangenheim. But Ferdinand’s troops had been lying in instant readiness for action, and as soon as the outposts gave the alarm they were in motion in eight columns, *i.e.* practically deployed for action to meet the French as they emerged from their positions. Unfortunately the outpost reports were delayed by about two hours, owing to the heavy gale and storm that was prevailing, and the French had made far greater progress with their deployment than Ferdinand had reckoned on. An almost front-to- front engagement ensued. Things were going badly with the Prussians when, through a mistake in the delivery of an order, the British brigade (12th, 20th, 23rd, 25th, 37th, 51st), followed by some Hanoverian battalions, began to advance straight upon the masses of French cavalry who stood protected by the cross­fire of several batteries. Once launched, neither fire nor shock could check their progress; halting for a moment to pour volleys into the charging squadrons hastily thrown against them, they swiftly resumed their advance. French infantry too were hurled against them, but were swept away by fire and bayonet, and presently they had pierced right through the French line of battle. Now came the moment when cavalry should have been at hand to complete the victory, and this cavalry, the Blues, the 1st and 3rd Dragoons, Scots Greys and 10th Dragoons under Lord George (afterwards Viscount) Sackville *(q.v.)* stood ready, waiting only the order to advance. This Sackville refused to give, though called on three times by the prince; no satisfactory explanation of his conduct has ever been discovered, but he was tried by a general court-martial and cashiered. Nevertheless, so brilliant had been the conduct of all the troops engaged, especially of the infantry brigade that the victory was won even in spite of this failure of the, cavalry, and before evening the French were retreating as a demoralized mass towards Cassel, leaving some 10,000 men, 17 colours and 45 guns in the hands of the victors, who on their side out of 43,000 had lost 2600 killed and wounded. Of the six British regiments that went into action 4434 strong, 1330 (30%) had fallen, but their feat is not to be measured only by the losses victoriously borne— these were not unusual in the period—but by the astounding discipline they maintained throughout the advance, resuming their march after beating off cavalry charges with the cool precision of a review in peace-time. Ferdinand followed up his victory by a pursuit which was vigorous for three days and had all but reached the Rhine when his movement was stayed by the necessity of detaching 12,000 men to the king to make good the losses of Kunersdorf.

*Campaign of 1760.—*The year opened gloomily for Frederick. His embarrassment both for men and money was extreme, and his enemies had at last agreed on a combined plan against him. They purposed to advance in three columns concentrically upon him: Daun with 100,000 men in Saxony, Loudon with 50,000 from Silesia, Soltikov’s Russians from East Prussia; and, against whichever column the king turned, the others were to continue towards Berlin. Only in Hanover were the conditions more favourable, for Ferdinand had 70,000 (20,000 British) against the 125,000 of the French.

Early in April the king stood with 40,000 men, west of the Elbe near Meissen facing Daun, Prince Henry with 34,000 in Silesia from Crossen to Landeshut, 15,000 under Forcade and Jung-Stutterheim in Pomerania facing the Swedes and Russians. Towards the end of May Loudon moved to besiege Glatz, and Fouqué, who commanded at Landeshut, marched with 13,000 to cover Breslau. Loudon at once seized Landeshut, and Fouqué, returning in response to urgent orders from the king, was attacked by Loudon with 31,000 men and almost destroyed. Meanwhile,

Prince Henry had moved to Landsberg against the Russians, but failed to seize his opportunities and thus Silesia lay open to the Austrians. Frederick decided to march with his main body against Loudon and attack him if unsupported, but, if his movement induced Daun to move to Loudon’s support, then to double back and besiege Dresden. For this purpose a siege train was held in readiness at Magdeburg. He marched rapidly on Bautzen, then hearing that Daun was approaching to support Loudon he returned and besieged Dresden (July 12th). The town was bombarded, there being no time for regular siege approaches, but it held out, and by the 28th of July Daun’s army returning had almost surrounded Frederick. The siege had to be raised, and during the night of the 29th of July the Prussians slipped away to Meissen. On the same day Frederick learnt that Glatz, the key to Southern Silesia, had fallen into the hands of the Austrians, but as a set-off the news shortly afterwards arrived of Prince Ferdinand’s brilliant victory at Warburg, in which the British cavalry led by the marquis of Granby amply wiped out the disgrace incurred by Sackville. On the 1st of August Frederick began his march into Silesia, summoning Prince Henry from Landsberg to join him, which he did by a splendid march of some 90 m. in three days. The king’s march was almost as remarkable, for the roads were very bad and the Austrians had freely obstructed them, nevertheless in five days he reached Bautzen, having marched more than 100 m. from his starting- point, and crossed five considerable rivers on his way. Thence he continued more easily to Bunzlau. Daun was in front of him and Lacy with clouds of light troops on his right, the Russians under Czernicheff with Loudon not far away to his left front, 114,000 men in all to his 30,000, but he held to his decision to reach Schweidnitz. With this purpose in view he moved south- east on Jauer, marching 25 m. on the 9th of August, but the enemy was still in front of him and hovering on his flanks. On the 10th he tried the Liegnitz road with the same result, and his position became desperate as his food was almost exhausted. He had already covered 15 m. that day, but at 11 p.m. he called on his men for a night march and formed up again on his old position next morning, the 11th of August. He appeared to be completely surrounded, and things looked so desperate that Mitchell, the British ambassador, burnt his papers and cipher key. At sunset on the 12th, however, Frederick again broke camp and by a night march evaded the enemy’s scouts and reached Liegnitz at noon on the 13th, the Austrians appearing a couple of hours later. The troops rested during the 13th and 14th, but at nightfall, leaving their watch- fires burning, marched off by the Glogau road, and the only way of escape still open. The Austrians, however, had planned a night attack, and Loudon’s columns were moving to close this last loophole of escape. Fortunately for the Prussians they arrived just a few minutes too late, and in the combat that ensued 15,000 Prussians inflicted a loss of 10,000 men and 82 guns upon their assailants, afterwards resuming their march undisturbed.

But the danger was not yet over. Czernicheff was known to be in the immediate vicinity; so as to get him out of the way, Frederick gave to a peasant a despatch addressed to Prince Henry containing the words: “Austrians totally defeated to-day, now for the Russians. Do what we agreed upon.” The peasant was to take care to be captured by the Russians and only give up the paper to save his life. The plan worked as he had anticipated, the paper duly reached Czernicheff’s hands and he immediately evacuated the dangerous neighbourhood. Elated with his success the king now abandoned his retreat on Glogau and determined to press on at all hazards to Breslau, which in spite of many anxious moments he reached on the 17th of August.

The Russians now abandoned the campaign in the open field and besieged Colberg on the Baltic coast. Frederick m Silesia manoeuvred for some weeks between Breslau, Schweidnitz and Glatz, but was suddenly recalled by the news of the capture of Berlin on the 9th of October by Cossacks and portions of the Empire Army and Austrians from Saxony. On the nth of October the king was in full march, but the news of his approach was enough and the enemy dispersed, the