120. January 27, 1711. A letter from the King of Prussia to his minister at Bern: again he declares himself ready to settle the refugees, promises them greater advantages than they would ever enjoy in Holland, but fears that authorities will keep the well-off in Holland and shove the poor onto him. This was accompanied by a translation into Dutch.

[page 1]

Copy of the letter of His Majesty, the King of Prussia, written

to his minister at Bern, dated Berlin,

January 27, 1711.

By the grace of God Frederick[[1]](#footnote-1)

King of Prussia, Margrave of Brandenburg, etc., etc.

First, our gracious greeting to you, etc. We have learned from two letters delivered here with the dates the 7th and 10th of this month that you have kept in mind our positive decision concerning the affair of the Mennonites there.

Now in the meantime you will have received our most gracious reply of the 6th of this month, and will have perceived our opinion from the same as well as from those previous. We likewise remain of that opinion that We would be glad if these people could be placed in our lands and would find sufficient opportunity and advantage. Also in our lands they will have such benefits to expect from us that they will have reason to be satisfied; the like of which they will scarcely find in Holland itself.

It appears, however, that they will want to move these people either collectively or at least the well-off among them to Holland, and afterwards burden us with the indigent. [page 2] We will not put up with this, for it would be best if the indigent would remain also at the location where the well-off make their settlement.

Accordingly, We will await your report in response to our afore-mentioned reply of the 6th of this month because We then want to render a final decision in the affair.

May favor be granted to you.

Dated at Cöln on the Spree, the 27th of January 1711.

Frederick

Ilgen[[2]](#footnote-2)

Concerning the Mennonites

in Switzerland

1. 120 Frederick (1657-1713), first King of Prussia, Elector (Kurfürst) of Brandenburg, ruled beginning in 1688, but was crowned king in 1701. He, as his father before him, received numerous Protestant refugees from France and the Palatinate into his lands. Meyers, VII, 129-130, 131. See also note in Document 98. Gratz in Bernese Anabaptists calls him Wilhelm I. p. 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Heinrich Rüdiger von Ilgen (1650-1728), high-ranking official of Prussia in various offices, director of foreign affairs. Meyers, IX, 753. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)