

ABBOTT JOHN CABOT

THE EMPIRE OF AUSTRIA;
ITS RISE AND PRESENT
POWER

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John S. C. Abbott

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PREFACE

The studies of the author of this work, for the last ten years, in writing the "History of Napoleon Bonaparte," and "The French Revolution of 1789," have necessarily made him quite familiar with the monarchies of Europe. He has met with so much that was strange and romantic in their career, that he has been interested to undertake, as it were, a *biography* of the Monarchies of Continental Europe—their birth, education, exploits, progress and present condition. He has commenced with Austria.

There are abundant materials for this work. The Life of Austria embraces all that is wild and wonderful in history; her early struggles for aggrandizement—the fierce strife with the Turks, as wave after wave of Moslem invasion rolled up the Danube—the long conflicts and bloody persecutions of the Reformation—the thirty years' religious war—the meteoric career of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. shooting athwart the lurid storms of battle—the intrigues of Popes—the enormous pride, power and encroachments of Louis XIV.—the warfare of the Spanish succession and the Polish dismemberment—all these events combine in a sublime tragedy which fiction may in vain attempt to parallel.

It is affecting to observe in the history of Germany, through what woes humanity has passed in attaining even its present position of civilization. It is to be hoped that the human family may never again suffer what it has already endured. We shall be indeed insane if we do not gain some wisdom from the struggles and the calamities of those who have gone before us. The narrative of the career of the Austrian Empire, must, by contrast, excite emotions of gratitude in every American bosom. Our lines have fallen to us in pleasant places; we have a goodly heritage.

It is the author's intention soon to issue, as the second of this series, the History of the Empire of Russia.

JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

Brunswick, Maine, 1859.

CHAPTER I. RHODOLPH OF HAPSBURG

From 1232 to 1291

Hawk's Castle.—Albert, Count of Hapsburg.—Rhodolph of Hapsburg.—His Marriage and Estates.—Excommunication and its Results.—His Principles of Honor.—A Confederacy of Barons.—Their Route.—Rhodolph's Election as Emperor of Germany.—The Bishop's Warning.—Dissatisfaction at the Result of the Election.—Advantages Accruing from the Possession of an Interesting Family.—Conquest.—Ottocar Acknowledges the Emperor; yet breaks his Oath of Allegiance.—Gathering Clouds.—Wonderful Escape.—Victory of Rhodolph.—His Reforms.

In the small canton of Aargau, in Switzerland, on a rocky bluff of the Wulpelsberg, there still remains an old baronial castle, called Hapsburg, or Hawk's Castle. It was reared in the eleventh century, and was occupied by a succession of warlike barons, who have left nothing to distinguish themselves from the feudal lords whose castles, at that period, frowned upon almost every eminence of Europe. In the year 1232 this castle was occupied by Albert, fourth Count of Hapsburg. He had acquired some little reputation for military prowess, the only reputation any one could acquire in that dark age, and became ambitious of winning new laurels in the war with the infidels in the holy land. Religious fanaticism and military ambition were then the two great powers which ruled the human soul.

With the usual display of semi-barbaric pomp, Albert made arrangements to leave his castle to engage in the perilous holy war against the Saracens, from which few ever returned. A few years were employed in the necessary preparations. At the sound of the bugle the portcullis was raised, the drawbridge spanned the moat, and Albert, at the head of thirty steel-clad warriors, with nodding plumes, and banners unfurled, emerged from the castle, and proceeded to the neighboring convent of Mari. His wife, Hedwige, and their three sons, Rhodolph, Albert and Hartman, accompanied him to the chapel where the ecclesiastics awaited his arrival. A multitude of vassals crowded around to witness the imposing ceremonies of the church, as the banners were blessed, and the knights, after having received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, were commended to the protection of God. Albert felt the solemnity of the hour, and in solemn tones gave his farewell address to his children.

"My sons," said the steel-clad warrior, "cultivate truth and piety; give no ear to evil counselors, never engage in unnecessary war, but when you are involved in war be strong and brave. Love peace even better than your own personal interests. Remember that the counts of Hapsburg did not attain their heights of reputation and glory by fraud, insolence or selfishness, but by courage and devotion to the public weal. As long as you follow their footsteps, you will not only retain, but augment, the possessions and dignities of your illustrious ancestors."

The tears and sobs of his wife and family interrupted him while he uttered these parting words. The bugles then sounded. The knights mounted their horses; the clatter of hoofs was heard, and the glittering cavalcade soon disappeared in the forest. Albert had left his ancestral castle, never to return. He had but just arrived in Palestine, when he was taken sick at Askalon, and died in the year 1240.

Rhodolph, his eldest son, was twenty-two years of age at the time of his father's death. Frederic II., one of the most renowned monarchs of the middle ages, was then Emperor of that conglomeration of heterogeneous States called Germany. Each of these States had its own independent ruler and laws,

but they were all held together by a common bond for mutual protection, and some one illustrious sovereign was chosen as Emperor of Germany, to preside over their common affairs. The Emperor of Germany, having influence over all these States, was consequently, in position, the great man of the age.

Albert, Count of Hapsburg, had been one of the favorite captains of Frederic II. in the numerous wars which desolated Europe in that dark age. He was often at court, and the emperor even condescended to present his son Rhodolph at the font for baptism. As the child grew, he was trained to all athletic feats, riding ungovernable horses, throwing the javelin, wrestling, running, and fencing. He early gave indications of surprising mental and bodily vigor, and, at an age when most lads are considered merely children, he accompanied his father to the camp and to the court. Upon the death of his father, Rhodolph inherited the ancestral castle, and the moderate possessions of a Swiss baron. He was surrounded by barons of far greater wealth and power than himself, and his proud spirit was roused, in disregard of his father's counsels, to aggrandize his fortunes by force of arms, the only way then by which wealth and power could be attained. He exhausted his revenues by maintaining a princely establishment, organized a well-selected band of his vassals into a military corps, which he drilled to a state of perfect discipline, and then commenced a series of incursions upon his neighbors. From some feeble barons he won territory, thus extending his domains; from others he extorted money, thus enabling him to reward his troops, and to add to their number by engaging fearless spirits in his service wherever he could find them.

In the year 1245, Rhodolph strengthened himself still more by an advantageous marriage with Gertrude, the beautiful daughter of the Count of Hohenberg. With his bride he received as her dowry the castle of Oeltingen, and very considerable territorial possessions. Thus in five years Rhodolph, by that species of robbery which was then called heroic adventure, and by a fortunate marriage, had more than doubled his hereditary inheritance. The charms of his bride, and the care of his estates seem for a few years to have arrested the progress of his ambition; for we can find no further notice of him among the ancient chronicles for eight years. But, with almost all men, love is an ephemeral passion, which is eventually vanquished by other powers of the soul. Ambition slumbered for a little time, but was soon roused anew, invigorated by repose.

In 1253 we find Rhodolph heading a foray of steel-clad knights, with their banded followers, in a midnight attack upon the city of Basle. They break over all the defenses, sweep all opposition before them, and in the fury of the fight, either by accident or as a necessity of war, sacrilegiously set fire to a nunnery. For this crime Rhodolph was excommunicated by the pope. Excommunication was then no farce. There were few who dared to serve a prince upon whom the denunciations of the Church had fallen. It was a stunning blow, from which few men could recover. Rhodolph, instead of sinking in despair, endeavored, by new acts of obedience and devotion to the Church, to obtain the revocation of the sentence.

In the region now called Prussia, there was then a barbaric pagan race, against whom the pope had published a crusade. Into this war the excommunicated Rhodolph plunged with all the impetuosity of his nature; he resolved to work out absolution, by converting, with all the potency of fire and sword, the barbarians to the Church. His penitence and zeal seem to have been accepted, for we soon find him on good terms again with the pope. He now sought to have a hand in every quarrel, far and near. Wherever the sounds of war are raised, the shout of Rhodolph is heard urging to the strife. In every hot and fiery foray, the steed of Rhodolph is rearing and plunging, and his saber strokes fall in ringing blows upon cuirass and helmet. He efficiently aided the city of Strasbourg in their war against their bishop, and received from them in gratitude extensive territories, while at the same time they reared a monument to his name, portions of which still exist. His younger brother died, leaving an only daughter, Anne, with a large inheritance. Rhodolph, as her guardian, came into possession of the counties of Kyburg, Lentzburg and Baden, and other scattered domains.

This rapidly-increasing wealth and power, did but increase his energy and his spirit of encroachment. And yet he adopted principles of honor which were far from common in that age of barbaric violence. He would never stoop to ordinary robbery, or harass peasants and helpless travelers, as was constantly done by the turbulent barons around him. His warfare was against the castle, never against the cottage. He met in arms the panoplied knight, never the timid and crouching peasant. He swept the roads of the banditti by which they were infested, and often espoused the cause of citizens and freemen against the turbulent barons and haughty prelates. He thus gained a wide-spread reputation for justice, as well as for prowess, and the name of Rhodolph of Hapsburg was ascending fast into renown. Every post of authority then required the agency of a military arm. The feeble cantons would seek the protection of a powerful chief; the citizens of a wealthy town, ever liable to be robbed by bishop or baron, looked around for some warrior who had invincible troops at his command for their protection. Thus Rhodolph of Hapsburg was chosen chief of the mountaineers of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden; and all their trained bands were ready, when his bugle note echoed through their defiles, to follow him unquestioning, and to do his bidding. The citizens of Zurich chose Rhodolph of Hapsburg as their prefect or mayor; and whenever his banner was unfurled in their streets, all the troops of the city were at his command.

The neighboring barons, alarmed at this rapid aggrandizement of Rhodolph, formed an alliance to crush him. The mountaineers heard his bugle call, and rushed to his aid. Zurich opened her gates, and her marshaled troops hastened to his banner. From Hapsburg, and Rheinfelden, and Suabia, and Brisgau, and we know not how many other of the territorial possessions of the count, the vassals rushed to the aid of their lord. They met in one of the valleys of Zurich. The battle was short, and the confederated barons were put to utter flight. Some took refuge in the strong castle of Balder, upon a rocky cliff washed by the Albis. Rhodolph selected thirty horsemen and thirty footmen.

"Will you follow me," said he, "in an enterprise where the honor will be equal to the peril?"

A universal shout of assent was the response. Concealing the footmen in a thicket, he, at the head of thirty horsemen, rode boldly to the gates of the castle, bidding defiance, with all the utterances and gesticulations of contempt, to the whole garrison. Those on the ramparts, stung by the insult, rushed out to chastise so impudent a challenge. The footmen rose from their ambush, and assailants and assailed rushed pell mell in at the open gates of the castle. The garrison were cut down or taken captive, and the fortress demolished. Another party had fled to the castle of Uttleberg. By an ingenious stratagem, this castle was also taken. Success succeeded success with such rapidity, that the confederate barons, struck with consternation, exclaimed,

"All opposition is fruitless. Rhodolph of Hapsburg is invincible."

They consequently dissolved the alliance, and sought peace on terms which vastly augmented the power of the conqueror.

Basle now incurred the displeasure of Rhodolph. He led his armies to the gates of the city, and extorted satisfaction. The Bishop of Basle, a haughty prelate of great military power, and who could summon many barons to his aid, ventured to make arrogant demands of this warrior flushed with victory. The palace and vast possessions of the bishop were upon the other side of the unbridged Rhine, and the bishop imagined that he could easily prevent the passage of the river. But Rhodolph speedily constructed a bridge of boats, put to flight the troops which opposed his passage, drove the peasants of the bishop everywhere before him, and burned their cottages and their fields of grain. The bishop, appalled, sued for a truce, that they might negotiate terms of peace. Rhodolph consented, and encamped his followers.

He was asleep in his tent, when a messenger entered at midnight, awoke him, and informed him that he was elected Emperor of Germany. The previous emperor, Richard, had died two years before, and after an interregnum of two years of almost unparalleled anarchy, the electors had just met, and, almost to their own surprise, through the fluctuations and combinations of political intrigue,

had chosen Rhodolph of Hapsburg as his successor. Rhodolph himself was so much astonished at the announcement, that for some time he could not be persuaded that the intelligence was correct.

To wage war against the Emperor of Germany, who could lead almost countless thousands into the field, was a very different affair from measuring strength with the comparatively feeble Count of Hapsburg. The news of his election flew rapidly. Basle threw open her gates, and the citizens, with illuminations, shouts, and the ringing of bells, greeted the new emperor. The bishop was so chagrined at the elevation of his foe, that he smote his forehead, and, looking to heaven, profanely said,

"Great God, take care of your throne, or Rhodolph of Hapsburg will take it from you!"

Rhodolph was now fifty-five years of age. Alphonso, King of Castile, and Ottocar, King of Bohemia, had both been candidates for the imperial crown. Exasperated by the unexpected election of Rhodolph, they both refused to acknowledge his election, and sent ambassadors with rich presents to the pope to win him also to their side. Rhodolph, justly appreciating the power of the pope, sent him a letter couched in those terms which would be most palatable to the pontiff.

"Turning all my thoughts to Him," he wrote, "under whose authority we live, and placing all my expectations on you alone, I fall down before the feet of your Holiness, beseeching you, with the most earnest supplication, to favor me with your accustomed kindness in my present undertaking; and that you will deign, by your mediation with the Most High, to support my cause. That I may be enabled to perform what is most acceptable to God and to His holy Church, may it graciously please your Holiness to crown me with the imperial diadem; for I trust I am both able and willing to undertake and accomplish whatever you and the holy Church shall think proper to impose upon me."

Gregory X. was a humane and sagacious man, influenced by a profound zeal for the peace of Europe and the propagation of the Christian faith. Gregory received the ambassadors of Rhodolph graciously, extorted from them whatever concessions he desired on the part of the emperor, and pledged his support.

Ottocar, King of Bohemia, still remained firm, and even malignant, in his hostility, utterly refusing to recognize the emperor, or to perform any of those acts of fealty which were his due. He declared the electoral diet to have been illegally convened, and the election to have been the result of fraud, and that a man who had been excommunicated for burning a convent, was totally unfit to wear the imperial crown. The diet met at Augsburg, and irritated by the contumacy of Ottocar, sent a command to him to recognize the authority of the emperor, pronouncing upon him the ban of the empire should he refuse. Ottocar dismissed the ambassadors with defiance and contempt from his palace at Prague, saying,

"Tell Rhodolph that he may rule over the territories of the empire, but he shall have no dominion over mine. It is a disgrace to Germany, that a petty count of Hapsburg should have been preferred to so many powerful sovereigns."

War, and a fearful one, was now inevitable. Ottocar was a veteran soldier, a man of great intrepidity and energy, and his pride was thoroughly roused. By a long series of aggressions he had become the most powerful prince in Europe, and he could lead the most powerful armies into the field. His dominions extended from the confines of Bavaria to Raab in Hungary, and from the Adriatic to the shores of the Baltic. The hereditary domains of the Count of Hapsburg were comparatively insignificant, and were remotely situated at the foot of the Alps, spreading through the defiles of Alsace and Suabia. As emperor, Rhodolph could call the armies of the Germanic princes into the field; but these princes moved reluctantly, unless roused by some question of great moment to them all. And when these heterogeneous troops of the empire were assembled, there was but a slender bond of union between them.

But Rhodolph possessed mental resources equal to the emergence. As cautious as he was bold, as sagacious in council as he was impetuous in action, he calmly, and with great foresight and deliberation, prepared for the strife. To a monarch in such a time of need, a family of brave sons and beautiful daughters, is an inestimable blessing. Rhodolph secured the Duke of Sclavonia by

making him the happy husband of one of his daughters. His son Albert married Elizabeth, daughter of the Count of Tyrol, and thus that powerful and noble family was secured. Henry of Bavaria he intimidated, and by force of arms compelled him to lead his troops to the standard of the emperor; and then, to secure his fidelity, gave his daughter Hedwige to Henry's son Otho, in marriage, promising to his daughter as a dowry a portion of Austria, which was then a feeble duchy upon the Danube, but little larger than the State of Massachusetts.

Ottocar was but little aware of the tremendous energies of the foe he had aroused. Regarding Rhodolph almost with contempt, he had by no means made the arrangements which his peril demanded, and was in consternation when he heard that Rhodolph, in alliance with Henry of Bavaria, had already entered Austria, taken possession of several fortresses, and, at the head of a force of a thousand horsemen, was carrying all before him, and was triumphantly marching upon Vienna. Rhodolph had so admirably matured his plans, that his advance seemed rather a festive journey than a contested conquest. With the utmost haste Ottocar urged his troops down through the defiles of the Bohemian mountains, hoping to save the capital. But Rhodolph was at Vienna before him, where he was joined by others of his allies, who were to meet him at that rendezvous. Vienna, the capital, was a fortress of great strength. Upon this frontier post Charlemagne had established a strong body of troops under a commander who was called a margrave; and for some centuries this city, commanding the Danube, had been deemed one of the strongest defenses of the empire against Mohammedan invasion. Vienna, unable to resist, capitulated. The army of Ottocar had been so driven in their long and difficult march, that, exhausted and perishing for want of provisions, they began to mutiny. The pope had excommunicated Ottocar, and the terrors of the curse of the pope, were driving captains and nobles from his service. The proud spirit of Ottocar, after a terrible struggle, was utterly crushed, and he humbly sued for peace. The terms were hard for a haughty spirit to bear. The conquered king was compelled to renounce all claim to Austria and several other adjoining provinces, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola and Windischmark; to take the oath of allegiance to the emperor, and publicly to do him homage as his vassal lord. To cement this compulsory friendship, Rhodolph, who was rich in daughters, having six to proffer as bribes, gave one, with an abundant dowry in silver, to a son of Ottocar.

The day was appointed for the king, in the presence of the whole army, to do homage to the emperor as his liege lord. It was the 25th of November, 1276. With a large escort of Bohemian nobles, Ottocar crossed the Danube, and was received by the emperor in the presence of many of the leading princes of the empire. The whole army was drawn up to witness the spectacle. With a dejected countenance, and with indications, which he could not conceal, of a crushed and broken spirit, Ottocar renounced these valuable provinces, and kneeling before the emperor, performed the humiliating ceremony of feudal homage. The pope in consequence withdrew his sentence of excommunication, and Ottocar returned to his mutilated kingdom, a humbler and a wiser man.

Rhodolph now took possession of the adjacent provinces which had been ceded to him, and, uniting them, placed them under the government of Louis of Bavaria, son of his firm ally Henry, the King of Bavaria. Bavaria bounded Austria on the west, and thus the father and the son would be in easy coöperation. He then established his three Sons, Albert, Hartmann, and Rhodolph, in different parts of these provinces, and, with his queen, fixed his residence at Vienna.

Such was the nucleus of the Austrian empire, and such the commencement of the powerful monarchy which for so many generations has exerted so important a control over the affairs of Europe. Ottocar, however, though he left Rhodolph with the strongest protestations of friendship, returned to Prague consumed by the most torturing fires of humiliation and chagrin. His wife, a haughty woman, who was incapable of listening to the voice of judgment when her passions were inflamed, could not conceive it possible that a petty count of Hapsburg could vanquish her renowned husband in the field. And when she heard that Ottocar had actually done fealty to Rhodolph, and had surrendered to

him valuable provinces of the kingdom, no bridle could be put upon her woman's tongue. She almost stung her husband to madness with taunts and reproaches.

Thus influenced by the pride of his queen, Cunegunda, Ottocar violated his oath, refused to execute the treaty, imprisoned in a convent the daughter whom Rhodolph had given to his son, and sent a defiant and insulting letter to the emperor. Rhodolph returned a dignified answer and prepared for war. Ottocar, now better understanding the power of his foe, made the most formidable preparations for the strife, and soon took the field with an army which he supposed would certainly triumph over any force which Rhodolph could raise. He even succeeded in drawing Henry of Bavaria into an alliance; and many of the German princes, whom he could not win to his standard, he bribed to neutrality. Numerous chieftains, lured to his camp by confidence of victory, crowded around him with their followers, from Poland, Bulgaria, Pomerania, Magdeburg, and from the barbaric shores of the Baltic. Many of the fierce nobles of Hungary had also joined the standard of Ottocar.

Thus suddenly clouds gathered around Rhodolph, and many of his friends despaired of his cause. He appealed to the princes of the German empire, and but few responded to his call. His sons-in-law, the Electors of Palatine and of Saxony, ventured not to aid him in an emergence when defeat seemed almost certain, and where all who shared in the defeat would be utterly ruined. In June, 1275, Ottocar marched from Prague, met his allies at the appointed rendezvous, and threading the defiles of the Bohemian mountains, approached the frontiers of Austria. Rhodolph was seriously alarmed, for it was evident that the chances of war were against him. He could not conceal the restlessness and agitation of his spirit as he impatiently awaited the arrival of troops whom he summoned, but who disappointed his hopes.

"I have not one," he sadly exclaimed, "in whom I can confide, or on whose advice I can depend."

The citizens of Vienna perceiving that Rhodolph was abandoned by his German allies, and that they could present no effectual resistance to so powerful an army as was approaching, and terrified in view of a siege, and the capture of the city by storm, urged a capitulation, and even begged permission to choose a new sovereign, that they might not be involved in the ruin impending over Rhodolph. This address roused Rhodolph from his despondency, and inspired him with the energies of despair. He had succeeded in obtaining a few troops from his provinces in Switzerland. The Bishop of Basle, who had now become his confessor, came to his aid, at the head of a hundred horsemen, and a body of expert slingers. Rhodolph, though earnestly advised not to undertake a battle with such desperate odds, marched from Vienna to meet the foe.

Rapidly traversing the southern banks of the Danube to Hamburg, he crossed the river and advanced to Marchegg, on the banks of the Morava. He was joined by some troops from Styria and Carinthia, and by a strong force led by the King of Hungary. Emboldened by these accessions, though still far inferior in strength to Ottocar, he pressed on till the two armies faced each other on the plains of Murchfield. It was the 26th of August, 1278.

At this moment some traitors deserting the camp of Ottocar, repaired to the camp of Rhodolph and proposed to assassinate the Bohemian king. Rhodolph spurned the infamous offer, and embraced the opportunity of seeking terms of reconciliation by apprising Ottocar of his danger. But the king, confident in his own strength, and despising the weakness of Rhodolph, deemed the story a fabrication and refused to listen to any overtures. Without delay he drew up his army in the form of a crescent, so as almost to envelop the feeble band before him, and made a simultaneous attack upon the center and upon both flanks. A terrific battle ensued, in which one party fought, animated by undoubting confidence, and the other impelled by despair. The strife was long and bloody. The tide of victory repeatedly ebbed and flowed. Ottocar had offered a large reward to any of his followers who would bring to him Rhodolph, dead or alive.

A number of knights of great strength and bravery, confederated to achieve this feat. It was a point of honor to be effected at every hazard. Disregarding all the other perils of the battle, they watched their opportunity, and then in a united swoop, on their steel-clad chargers, fell upon the

emperor. His feeble guard was instantly cut down. Rhodolph was a man of herculean power, and he fought like a lion at bay. One after another of his assailants he struck from his horse, when a Thuringian knight, of almost fabulous stature and strength, thrust his spear through the horse of the emperor, and both steed and rider fell to the ground. Rhodolph, encumbered by his heavy coat of mail, and entangled in the housings of his saddle, was unable to rise. He crouched upon the ground, holding his helmet over him, while saber strokes and pike thrusts rang upon cuirass and buckler like blows upon an anvil. A corps of reserve spurred to his aid, and the emperor was rescued, and the bold assailants who had penetrated the very center of his army were slain.

The tide of victory now set strongly in favor of Rhodolph, for "the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." The troops of Bohemia were soon everywhere put to rout. The ground was covered with the dead. Ottocar, astounded at his discomfiture, and perhaps fearing the tongue of his wife more than the sabers of his foes, turned his back upon his flying army, and spurred his horse into the thickest of his pursuers. He was soon dismounted and slain. Fourteen thousand of his troops perished on that disastrous day. The body of Ottocar, mutilated with seventeen wounds, was carried to Vienna, and, after being exposed to the people, was buried with regal honors.

Rhodolph, vastly enriched by the plunder of the camp, and having no enemy to encounter, took possession of Moravia, and triumphantly marched into Bohemia. All was consternation there. The queen Cunegunda, who had brought these disasters upon the kingdom, had no influence. Her only son was but eight years of age. The turbulent nobles, jealous of each other, had no recognized leader. The queen, humiliated and despairing, implored the clemency of the conqueror, and offered to place her infant son and the kingdom of Bohemia under his protection. Rhodolph was generous in this hour of victory. As the result of arbitration, it was agreed that he should hold Moravia for five years, that its revenues might indemnify him for the expenses of the war. The young prince, Wenceslaus, was acknowledged king, and during his minority the regency was assigned to Otho, margrave or military commander of Brundenburg. Then ensued some politic matrimonial alliances. Wenceslaus, the boy king, was affianced to Judith, one of the daughters of Rhodolph. The princess Agnes, daughter of Cunegunda, was to become the bride of Rhodolph's second son. These matters being all satisfactorily settled, Rhodolph returned in triumph to Vienna.

The emperor now devoted his energies to the consolidation of these Austrian provinces. They were four in number, Austria, Styria, Carinthia and Carniola. All united, they made but a feeble kingdom, for they did not equal, in extent of territory, several of the States of the American Union. Each of these provinces had its independent government, and its local laws and customs. They were held together by the simple bond of an arbitrary monarch, who claimed, and exercised as he could, supreme control over them all. Under his wise and energetic administration, the affairs of the wide-spread empire were prosperous, and his own Austria advanced rapidly in order, civilization and power. The numerous nobles, turbulent, unprincipled and essentially robbers, had been in the habit of issuing from their castles at the head of banditti bands, and ravaging the country with incessant incursions. It required great boldness in Rhodolph to brave the wrath of these united nobles. He did it fearlessly, issuing the decree that there should be no fortresses in his States which were not necessary for the public defense. The whole country was spotted with castles, apparently impregnable in all the strength of stone and iron, the secure refuge of high-born nobles. In one year seventy of these turreted bulwarks of oppression were torn down; and twenty-nine of the highest nobles, who had ventured upon insurrection, were put to death. An earnest petition was presented to him in behalf of the condemned insurgents.

"Do not," said the king, "interfere in favor of robbers; they are not nobles, but accursed robbers, who oppress the poor, and break the public peace. True nobility is faithful and just, offends no one, and commits no injury."

CHAPTER II. REIGNS OF ALBERT I, FREDERIC, ALBERT AND OTHO

FROM 1291 TO 1347

Anecdotes Of Rhodolph.—His Desire For The Election Of His Son.—His Death.—Albert.—His Unpopularity.—Conspiracy Of The Nobles.—Their Defeat.—Adolphus Of Nassau Chosen Emperor.—Albert's Conspiracy.—Deposition Of Adolphus And Election Of Albert.—Death Of Adolphus.—The Pope Defied.—Annexation Of Bohemia.—Assassination Of Albert.—Avenging Fury.—The Hermit's Direction.—Frederic The Handsome.—Election Of Henry, Count Of Luxemburg.—His Death.—Election Of Louis Of Bavaria.—Capture Of Frederic.—Remarkable Confidence Toward a Prisoner.—Death Of Frederic.—An Early Engagement.—Death Of Louis.—Accession Of Albert.

Rhodolph of Hapsburg was one of the most remarkable men of his own or of any age, and many anecdotes illustrative of his character, and of the rude times in which he lived, have been transmitted to us. The Thuringian knight who speared the emperor's horse in the bloody fight of Murchfield, was rescued by Rhodolph from those who would cut him down.

"I have witnessed," said the emperor, "his intrepidity, and never could forgive myself if so courageous a knight should be put to death."

During the war with Ottocar, on one occasion the army were nearly perishing of thirst. A flagon of water was brought to him. He declined it, saying,

"I can not drink alone, nor can I divide so small a quantity among all. I do not thirst for myself, but for the whole army."

By earnest endeavor he obtained the perfect control of his passions, naturally very violent. "I have often," said he, "repented of being passionate, but never of being mild and humane."

One of his captains expressed dissatisfaction at a rich gift the emperor made to a literary man who presented him a manuscript describing the wars of the Romans.

"My good friend," Rhodolph replied, "be contented that men of learning praise our actions, and thereby inspire us with additional courage in war. I wish I could employ more time in reading, and could expend some of that money on learned men which I must throw away on so many illiterate knights."

One cold morning at Metz, in the year 1288, he walked out dressed as usual in the plainest garb. He strolled into a baker's shop, as if to warm himself. The baker's termagant wife said to him, all unconscious who he was,

"Soldiers have no business to come into poor women's houses."

"True," the emperor replied, "but do not be angry, my good woman; I am an old soldier who have spent all my fortune in the service of that rascal Rhodolph, and he suffers me to want, notwithstanding all his fine promises."

"Good enough for you," said the woman; "a man who will serve such a fellow, who is laying waste the whole earth, deserves nothing better."

She then, in her spite, threw a pail of water on the fire, which, filling the room with smoke and ashes, drove the emperor into the street.

Rhodolph, having returned to his lodgings, sent a rich present to the old woman, from the emperor who had warmed himself at her fire that morning, and at the dinner-table told the story with great glee to his companions. The woman, terrified, hastened to the emperor to implore mercy. He ordered her to be admitted to the dining-room, and promised to forgive her if she would repeat to the company all her abusive epithets, not omitting one. She did it faithfully, to the infinite merriment of the festive group.

So far as we can now judge, and making due allowance for the darkness of the age in which he lived, Rhodolph appears to have been, in the latter part of his life, a sincere, if not an enlightened Christian. He was devout in prayer, and punctual in attending the services of the Church. The humble and faithful ministers of religion he esteemed and protected, while he was ever ready to chastise the insolence of those haughty prelates who disgraced their religious professions by arrogance and splendor.

At last the infirmities of age pressed heavily upon him. When seventy-three years old, knowing that he could not have much longer to live, he assembled the congress of electors at Frankfort, and urged them to choose his then only surviving son Albert as his successor on the imperial throne. The diet, however, refused to choose a successor until after the death of the emperor. Rhodolph was bitterly disappointed, for he understood this postponement as a positive refusal to gratify him in this respect. Saddened in spirit, and feeble in body, he undertook a journey, by slow stages, to his hereditary dominions in Switzerland. He then returned to Austria, where he died on the 15th of July, 1291, in the seventy-third year of his age.

Albert, who resided at Vienna, succeeded his father in authority over the Austrian and Swiss provinces. But he was a man stern, unconciliating and domineering. The nobles hated him, and hoped to drive him back to the Swiss cantons from which his father had come. One great occasion of discontent was, that he employed about his person, and in important posts, Swiss instead of Austrian nobles. They demanded the dismissal of these foreign favorites, which so exasperated Albert that he clung to them still more tenaciously and exclusively.

The nobles now organized a very formidable conspiracy, and offered to neighboring powers, as bribes for their aid, portions of Austria. Austria proper was divided by the river Ens into two parts called Upper and Lower Austria. Lower Austria was offered to Bohemia; Styria to the Duke of Bavaria; Upper Austria to the Archbishop of Saltzburg; Carniola to the Counts of Guntz; and thus all the provinces were portioned out to the conquerors. At the same time the citizens of Vienna, provoked by the haughtiness of Albert, rose in insurrection. With the energy which characterized his father, Albert met these emergencies. Summoning immediately an army from Switzerland, he shut up all the avenues to the city, which was not in the slightest degree prepared for a siege, and speedily starved the inhabitants into submission. Punishing severely the insurgents, he strengthened his post at Vienna, and confirmed his power. Then, marching rapidly upon the nobles, before they had time to receive that foreign aid which had been secretly promised them, and securing all the important fortresses, which were now not many in number, he so overawed them, and so vigilantly watched every movement, that there was no opportunity to rise and combine. The Styrian nobles, being remote, made an effort at insurrection. Albert, though it was in the depth of winter, plowed through the snows of the mountains, and plunging unexpectedly among them, routed them with great slaughter.

While he was thus conquering discontent by the sword, and silencing murmurs beneath the tramp of iron hoofs, the diet was assembling at Frankfort to choose a new chief for the Germanic empire. Albert was confident of being raised to the vacant dignity. The splendor of his talents all admitted. Four of the electors were closely allied to him by marriage, and he arrogantly felt that he was almost entitled to the office as the son of his renowned father. But the electors feared his ambitious and despotic disposition, and chose Adolphus of Nassau to succeed to the imperial throne.

Albert was mortified and enraged by this disappointment, and expressed his determination to oppose the election; but the troubles in his own domains prevented him from putting this threat into

immediate execution. His better judgment soon taught him the policy of acquiescing in the election, and he sullenly received the investiture of his fiefs from the hands of the Emperor Adolphus. Still Albert, struggling against unpopularity and continued insurrection, kept his eye fixed eagerly upon the imperial crown. With great tact he conspired to form a confederacy for the deposition of Adolphus.

Wenceslaus, the young King of Bohemia, was now of age, and preparations were made for his coronation with great splendor at Prague. Four of the electors were present on this occasion, which was in June, 1297. Albert conferred with them respecting his plans, and secured their coöperation. The electors more willingly lent their aid since they were exceedingly displeased with some of the measures of Adolphus for the aggrandizement of his own family. Albert with secrecy and vigor pushed his plans, and when the diet met the same year at Metz, a long list of grievances was drawn up against Adolphus. He was summoned to answer to these charges. The proud emperor refused to appear before the bar of the diet as a culprit. The diet then deposed Adolphus and elected Albert II. to the imperial throne, on the 23d of June, 1298.

The two rival emperors made vigorous preparations to settle the dispute with the sword, and the German States arrayed themselves, some on one side and some on the other. The two armies met at Gelheim on the 2d of July, led by the rival sovereigns. In the thickest of the fight Adolphus spurred his horse through the opposing ranks, bearing down all opposition, till he faced Albert, who was issuing orders and animating his troops by voice and gesture.

"Yield," shouted Adolphus, aiming a saber stroke at the head of his foe, "your life and your crown."

"Let God decide," Albert replied, as he parried the blow, and thrust his lance into the unprotected face of Adolphus. At that moment the horse of Adolphus fell, and he himself was instantly slain. Albert remained the decisive victor on this bloody field. The diet of electors was again summoned, and he was now chosen unanimously emperor. He was soon crowned with great splendor at Aix-la-Chapelle.

Still Albert sat on an uneasy throne. The pope, indignant that the electors should presume to depose one emperor and choose another without his consent, refused to confirm the election of Albert, and loudly inveighed him as the murderer of Adolphus. Albert, with characteristic impulsiveness, declared that he was emperor by choice of the electors and not by ratification of the pope, and defiantly spurned the opposition of the pontiff. Considering himself firmly seated on the throne, he refused to pay the bribes of tolls, privileges, territories, etc., which he had so freely offered to the electors. Thus exasperated, the electors, the pope, and the King of Bohemia, conspired to drive Albert from the throne. Their secret plans were so well laid, and they were so secure of success, that the Elector of Mentz tauntingly and boastingly said to Albert, "I need only sound my hunting-horn and a new emperor will appear."

Albert, however, succeeded by sagacity and energy, in dispelling this storm which for a time threatened his entire destruction. By making concessions to the pope, he finally won him to cordial friendship, and by the sword vanquishing some and intimidating others, he broke up the league. His most formidable foe was his brother-in-law, Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia. Albert's sister, Judith, the wife of Wenceslaus, had for some years prevented a rupture between them, but she now being dead, both monarchs decided to refer their difficulties to the arbitration of the sword. While their armies were marching, Wenceslaus was suddenly taken sick and died, in June, 1305. His son, but seventeen years of age, weak in body and in mind, at once yielded to all the demands of his imperial uncle. Hardly a year, however, had elapsed ere this young prince, Wenceslaus III., was assassinated, leaving no issue.

Albert immediately resolved to transfer the crown of Bohemia to his own family, and thus to annex the powerful kingdom of Bohemia to his own limited Austrian territories. Bohemia added to the Austrian provinces, would constitute quite a noble kingdom. The crown was considered elective, though in fact the eldest son was almost always chosen during the lifetime of his father. The death of

Wenceslaus, childless, opened the throne to other claimants. No one could more imperiously demand the scepter than Albert. He did demand it for his son Rhodolph in tones which were heard and obeyed. The States assembled at Prague on the 1st of April, 1306. Albert, surrounded by a magnificent retinue, conducted his son to Prague, and to confirm his authority married him to the widow of Wenceslaus, a second wife. Rhodolph also, about a year before, had buried Blanche, his first wife. Albert was exceedingly elated, for the acquisition of Bohemia was an accession to the power of his family which doubled their territory, and more than doubled their wealth and resources.

A mild government would have conciliated the Bohemians, but such a course was not consonant with the character of the imperious and despotic Albert. He urged his son to measures of arbitrary power which exasperated the nobles, and led to a speedy revolt against his authority. Rhodolph and the nobles were soon in the field with their contending armies, when Rhodolph suddenly died from the fatigues of the camp, aged but twenty-two years, having held the throne of Bohemia less than a year.

Albert, grievously disappointed, now demanded that his second son, Frederic, should receive the crown. As soon as his name was mentioned to the States, the assembly with great unanimity exclaimed, "We will not again have an Austrian king." This led to a tumult. Swords were drawn, and two of the partisans of Albert were slain. Henry, Duke of Carinthia, was then almost unanimously chosen king. But the haughty Albert was not to be thus easily thwarted in his plans. He declared that his son Frederic was King of Bohemia, and raising an army, he exerted all the influence and military power which his position as emperor gave him, to enforce his claim.

But affairs in Switzerland for a season arrested the attention of Albert, and diverted his armies from the invasion of Bohemia. Switzerland was then divided into small sovereignties, of various names, there being no less than fifty counts, one hundred and fifty barons, and one thousand noble families. Both Rhodolph and Albert had greatly increased, by annexation, the territory and the power of the house of Hapsburg. By purchase, intimidation, war, and diplomacy, Albert had for some time been making such rapid encroachments, that a general insurrection was secretly planned to resist his power. All Switzerland seemed to unite as with one accord. Albert was rejoiced at this insurrection, for, confident of superior power, he doubted not his ability speedily to quell it, and it would afford him the most favorable pretext for still greater aggrandizement. Albert hastened to his domain at Hapsburg, where he was assassinated by conspirators led by his own nephew, whom he was defrauding of his estates.

Frederic and Leopold, the two oldest surviving sons of Albert, avenged their father's death by pursuing the conspirators until they all suffered the penalty of their crimes. With ferocity characteristic of the age, they punished mercilessly the families and adherents of the assassins. Their castles were demolished, their estates confiscated, their domestics and men at arms massacred, and their wives and children driven out into the world to beg or to starve. Sixty-three of the retainers of Lord Balne, one of the conspirators, though entirely innocent of the crime, and solemnly protesting their unconsciousness of any plot, were beheaded in one day. Though but four persons took part in the assassination, and it was not known that any others were implicated in the deed, it is estimated that more than a thousand persons suffered death through the fury of the avengers. Agnes, one of the daughters of Albert, endeavored with her own hands to strangle the infant child of the Lord of Eschenback, when the soldiers, moved by its piteous cries, with difficulty rescued it from her hands.

Elizabeth, the widow of Albert, with her implacable fanatic daughter Agnes, erected a magnificent convent on the spot at Königsburg, where the emperor was assassinated, and there in cloistered gloom they passed the remainder of their lives. It was an age of superstition, and yet there were some who comprehended and appreciated the pure morality of the gospel of Christ.

"Woman," said an aged hermit to Agnes, "God is not served by shedding innocent blood, and by rearing convents from the plunder of families. He is served by compassion only, and by the forgiveness of injuries."

Frederic, Albert's oldest son, now assumed the government of the Austrian provinces. From his uncommon personal attractions he was called Frederic the Handsome. His character was in conformity with his person, for to the most chivalrous bravery he added the most feminine amiability and mildness. He was a candidate for the imperial throne, and would probably have been elected but for the unpopularity of his despotic father. The diet met, and on the 27th of November, 1308, the choice fell unanimously upon Henry, Count of Luxemburg.

This election deprived Frederic of his hopes of uniting Bohemia to Austria, for the new emperor placed his son John upon the Bohemian throne, and was prepared to maintain him there by all the power of the empire. In accomplishing this, there was a short conflict with Henry of Carinthia, but he was speedily driven out of the kingdom.

Frederic, however, found a little solace in his disappointment, by attaching to Austria the dominions he had wrested from the lords he had beheaded as assassins of his father. In the midst of these scenes of ambition, intrigue and violence, the Emperor Henry fell sick and died, in the fifty-second year of his age. This unexpected event opened again to Frederic the prospect of the imperial crown, and all his friends, in the now very numerous branches of the family, spared neither money nor the arts of diplomacy in the endeavor to secure the coveted dignity for him. A year elapsed after the death of Henry before the diet was assembled. During that time all the German States were in intense agitation canvassing the claims of the several candidates. The prize of an imperial crown was one which many grasped at, and every little court was agitated by the question. The day of election, October 9th, 1314, arrived. There were two hostile parties in the field, one in favor of Frederic of Austria, the other in favor of Louis of Bavaria. The two parties met in different cities, the Austrians at Saxenhausen, and the Bavarians at Frankfort. There were, however, but four electors at Saxenhausen, while there were five at Frankfort, the ancient place of election. Each party unanimously chose its candidate. Louis, of Bavaria, receiving five votes, while Frederic received but four, was unquestionably the legitimate emperor. Most of the imperial cities acknowledged him. Frankfort sung his triumph, and he was crowned with all the ancient ceremonials of pomp at Aix-la-Chapelle.

But Frederic and his party were not ready to yield, and all over Germany there was the mustering of armies. For two years the hostile forces were marching and countermarching with the usual vicissitudes of war. The tide of devastation and blood swept now over one State, and now over another, until at length the two armies met, in all their concentrated strength, at Muhldorf, near Munich, for a decisive battle. Louis of Bavaria rode proudly at the head of thirty thousand foot, and fifteen hundred steel-clad horsemen. Frederic of Austria, the handsomest man of his age, towering above all his retinue, was ostentatiously arrayed in the most splendid armor art could furnish, emblazoned with the Austrian eagle, and his helmet was surmounted by a crown of gold.

As he thus led the ranks of twenty-two thousand footmen, and seven thousand horse, all eyes followed him, and all hearts throbbed with confidence of victory. From early dawn, till night darkened the field, the horrid strife raged. In those days gunpowder was unknown, and the ringing of battle-axes on helmet and cuirass, the strokes of sabers and the clash of spears, shouts of onset, and the shrieks of the wounded, as sixty thousand men fought hand to hand on one small field, rose like the clamor from battling demons in the infernal world. Hour after hour of carnage passed, and still no one could tell on whose banners victory would alight. The gloom of night was darkening over the exhausted combatants, when the winding of the bugle was heard in the rear of the Austrians, and a band of four hundred Bavarian horsemen came plunging down an eminence into the disordered ranks of Frederic. The hour of dismay, which decides a battle, had come. A scene of awful carnage ensued as the routed Austrians, fleeing in every direction, were pursued and massacred. Frederic himself was struck from his horse, and as he fell, stunned by the blow, he was captured, disarmed and carried to the presence of his rival Louis.

The spirit of Frederic was crushed by the awful, the irretrievable defeat, and he appeared before his conqueror speechless in the extremity of his woe. Louis had the pride of magnanimity and endeavored to console his captive.

"The battle is not lost by your fault," said he. "The Bavarians have experienced to their cost that you are a valiant prince; but Providence has decided the battle. Though I am happy to see you as my guest, I sympathize with you in your sorrow, and will do what I can to alleviate it."

For three years the unhappy Frederic remained a prisoner of Louis of Bavaria, held in close confinement in the castle at Trausnitz. At the end of that time the emperor, alarmed at the efforts which the friends of Frederic were making to combine several Powers to take up arms for his relief, visited his prisoner, and in a personal interview proposed terms of reconciliation. The terms, under the circumstances, were considered generous, but a proud spirit needed the discipline of three years' imprisonment before it could yield to such demands.

It was the 13th of March, 1325, when this singular interview between Louis the emperor, and Frederic his captive, took place at Trausnitz. Frederic promised upon oath that in exchange for his freedom he would renounce all claim to the imperial throne; restore all the districts and castles he had wrested from the empire; give up all the documents relative to his election as emperor; join with all his family influence to support Louis against any and every adversary, and give his daughter in marriage to Stephen the son of Louis. He also promised that in case he should fail in the fulfillment of any one of these stipulations, he would return to his captivity.

Frederic fully intended a faithful compliance with these requisitions. But no sooner was he liberated than his fiery brother Leopold, who presided over the Swiss estates, and who was a man of great capacity and military energy, refused peremptorily to fulfill the articles which related to him, and made vigorous preparations to urge the war which he had already, with many allies, commenced against the Emperor Louis. The pope also, who had become inimical to Louis, declared that Frederic was absolved from the agreement at Trausnitz, as it was extorted by force, and, with all the authority of the head of the Church, exhorted Frederic to reassert his claim to the imperial crown.

Amidst such scenes of fraud and violence, it is refreshing to record an act of real honor. Frederic, notwithstanding the entreaties of the pope and the remonstrances of his friends, declared that, be the consequences what they might, he never would violate his pledge; and finding that he could not fulfill the articles of the agreement, he returned to Bavaria and surrendered himself a prisoner to the emperor. It is seldom that history has the privilege of recording so noble an act. Louis of Bavaria fortunately had a soul capable of appreciating the magnanimity of his captive. He received him with courtesy and with almost fraternal kindness. In the words of a contemporary historian, "They ate at the same table and slept in the same bed;" and, most extraordinary of all, when Louis was subsequently called to a distant part of his dominions to quell an insurrection, he intrusted the government of Bavaria, during his absence, to Frederic.

Frederic's impetuous and ungovernable brother Leopold, was unwearied in his endeavors to combine armies against the emperor, and war raged without cessation. At length Louis, harassed by these endless insurrections and coalitions against him, and admiring the magnanimity of Frederic, entered into a new alliance, offering terms exceedingly honorable on his part. He agreed that he and Frederic should rule conjointly as emperors of Germany, in perfect equality of power and dignity, alternately taking the precedence.

With this arrangement Leopold was satisfied, but unfortunately, just at that time, his impetuous spirit, exhausted by disappointment and chagrin, yielded to death. He died at Strasbourg on the 28th of February, 1326. The pope and several of the electors refused to accede to this arrangement, and thus the hopes of the unhappy Frederic were again blighted, for Louis, who had consented to this accommodation for the sake of peace, was not willing to enforce it through the tumult of war. Frederic was, however, liberated from captivity, and he returned to Austria a dejected, broken-hearted man. He pined away for a few months in languor, being rarely known to smile, and died at the castle of

Gullenstein on the 13th of January, 1330. His widow, Isabella, the daughter of the King of Arragon, became blind from excessive grief, and soon followed her husband to the tomb.

As Frederic left no son, the Austrian dominions fell to his two brothers, Albert III. and Otho. Albert, by marriage, added the valuable county of Ferret in Alsace to the dominions of the house of Austria. The two brothers reigned with such wonderful harmony, that no indications can be seen of separate administrations. They renounced all claim to the imperial throne, notwithstanding the efforts of the pope to the contrary, and thus secured friendship with the Emperor Louis. There were now three prominent families dominant in Germany. Around these great families, who had gradually, by marriage and military encroachments, attained their supremacy, the others of all degrees rallied as vassals, seeking protection and contributing strength. The house of Bavaria, reigning over that powerful kingdom and in possession of the imperial throne, ranked first. Then came the house of Luxembourg, possessing the wide-spread and opulent realms of Bohemia. The house of Austria had now vast possessions, but these were widely scattered; some provinces on the banks of the Danube and others in Switzerland, spreading through the defiles of the Alps.

John of Bohemia was an overbearing man, and feeling quite impregnable in his northern realms beyond the mountains, assumed such a dictatorial air as to rouse the ire of the princes of Austria and Bavaria. These two houses consequently entered into an intimate alliance for mutual security. The Duke of Carinthia, who was uncle to Albert and Otho, died, leaving only a daughter, Margaret. This dukedom, about the size of the State of Massachusetts, a wild and mountainous region, was deemed very important as the key to Italy. John of Bohemia, anxious to obtain it, had engaged the hand of Margaret for his son, then but eight years of age. It was a question in dispute whether the dukedom could descend to a female, and Albert and Otho claimed it as the heirs of their uncle. Louis, the emperor, supported the claims of Austria, and thus Carinthia became attached to this growing power.

John, enraged, formed a confederacy with the kings of Hungary and Poland, and some minor princes, and invaded Austria. For some time they swept all opposition before them. But the Austrian troops and those of the empire checked them at Landau. Here they entered into an agreement without a battle, by which Austria was permitted to retain Carinthia, she making important concessions to Bohemia. In February, 1339, Otho died, and Albert was invested with the sole administration of affairs. The old King of Bohemia possessed vehemence of character which neither age nor the total blindness with which he had become afflicted could repress. He traversed the empire, and even went to France, organizing a powerful confederacy against the emperor. The pope, Clement VI., who had always been inimical to Louis of Bavaria, influenced by John of Bohemia, deposed and excommunicated Louis, and ordered a new meeting of the diet of electors, which chose Charles, eldest son of the Bohemian monarch, and heir to that crown, emperor.

The deposed Louis fought bravely for the crown thus torn from his brow. Albert of Austria aided him with all his energies. Their united armies, threading the defiles of the Bohemian mountains, penetrated the very heart of the kingdom, when, in the midst of success, the deposed Emperor Louis fell dead from a stroke of apoplexy, in the year 1347. This event left Charles of Bohemia in undisputed possession of the imperial crown. Albert immediately recognized his claim, effected reconciliation, and becoming the friend and the ally of the emperor, pressed on cautiously but securely, year after year, in his policy of annexation. But storms of war incessantly howled around his domains until he died, a crippled paralytic, on the 16th of August, 1358.

CHAPTER III.

RHODOLPH II., ALBERT IV. AND ALBERT V

From 1339 to 1437

Rhodolph II.—Marriage of John to Margaret.—Intriguing for the Tyrol.—Death of Rhodolph.—Accession of Power to Austria.—Dividing the Empire.—Delight of the Emperor Charles.—Leopold.—His Ambition and Successes.—Hedwige, Queen of Poland.—"The Course of true Love never did run smooth."—Unhappy Marriage of Hedwige.—Heroism of Arnold of Winkelreid.—Death of Leopold.—Death of Albert IV.—Accession of Albert V.—Attempts of Sigismund to bequeath to Albert V. Hungary and Bohemia.

Rhodolph II., the eldest son of Albert III., when but nineteen years of age succeeded his father in the government of the Austrian States. He had been very thoroughly educated in all the civil and military knowledge of the times. He was closely allied with the Emperor Charles IV. of Bohemia, having married his daughter Catherine. His character and manhood had been very early developed. When he was in his seventeenth year his father had found it necessary to visit his Swiss estates, then embroiled in the fiercest war, and had left him in charge of the Austrian provinces. He soon after was intrusted with the whole care of the Hapsburg dominions in Switzerland. In this responsible post he developed wonderful administrative skill, encouraging industry, repressing disorder, and by constructing roads and bridges, opening facilities for intercourse and trade.

Upon the death of his father, Rhodolph removed to Vienna, and being now the monarch of powerful realms on the Danube and among the Alps, he established a court rivaling the most magnificent establishments of the age.

Just west of Austria and south of Bavaria was the magnificent dukedom of Tyrol, containing some sixteen thousand square miles, or about twice the size of the State of Massachusetts. It was a country almost unrivaled in the grandeur of its scenery, and contained nearly a million of inhabitants. This State, lying equally convenient to both Austria and Bavaria, by both of these kingdoms had for many years been regarded with a wistful eye. The manner in which Austria secured the prize is a story well worth telling, as illustrative of the intrigues of those times.

It will be remembered that John, the arrogant King of Bohemia, engaged for his son the hand of Margaret, the only daughter of the Duke of Carinthia. Tyrol also was one of the possessions of this powerful duke. Henry, having no son, had obtained from the emperor a decree that these possessions should descend, in default of male issue, to his daughter. But for this decision the sovereignty of these States would descend to the male heirs, Albert and Otho of Austria, nephews of Henry. They of course disputed the legality of the decree, and, aided by the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, obtained Carinthia, relinquishing for a time their claim to Tyrol. The emperor hoped to secure that golden prize for his hereditary estates of Bavaria.

When John, the son of the King of Bohemia, was but seventeen years of age, and a puny, weakly child, he was hurriedly married to Margaret, then twenty-two. Margaret, a sanguine, energetic woman, despised her baby husband, and he, very naturally, impotently hated her. She at length fled from him, and escaping from Bohemia, threw herself under the protection of Louis. The emperor joyfully welcomed her to his court, and promised to grant her a divorce, by virtue of his imperial power, if she would marry his son Louis. The compliant princess readily acceded to this plan, and the divorce was announced and the nuptials solemnized in February, 1342.

The King of Bohemia was as much exasperated as the King of Bavaria was elated by this event, for the one felt that he had lost the Tyrol, and the other that he had gained it. It was this successful intrigue which cost Louis of Bavaria his imperial crown; for the blood of the King of Bohemia was roused. Burning with vengeance, he traversed Europe almost with the zeal and eloquence of Peter the Hermit, to organize a coalition against the emperor, and succeeded in inducing the pope, always hostile to Louis, to depose and excommunicate him. This marriage was also declared by the pope unlawful, and the son, Meinhard, eventually born to them, was branded as illegitimate.

While matters were in this state, as years glided on, Rhodolph succeeded in winning the favor of the pontiff, and induced him to legitimate Meinhard, that this young heir of Tyrol might marry the Austrian princess Margaret, sister of Rhodolph. Meinhard and his wife Margaret ere long died, leaving Margaret of Tyrol, a widow in advancing years, with no direct heirs. By the marriage contract of her son Meinhard with Margaret of Austria, she promised that should there be failure of issue, Tyrol should revert to Austria. On the other hand, Bavaria claimed the territory in virtue of the marriage of Margaret with Louis of Bavaria.

Rhodolph was so apprehensive that Bavaria might make an immediate move to obtain the coveted territory by force of arms, that he hastened across the mountains, though in the depth of winter, obtained from Margaret an immediate possession of Tyrol, and persuaded her to accompany him, an honored guest, to his capital, which he had embellished with unusual splendor for her entertainment.

Rhodolph had married the daughter of Charles, King of Bohemia, the emperor, but unfortunately at this juncture, Rhodolph, united with the kings of Hungary and Poland, was at war with the Bavarian king. Catherine his wife, however, undertook to effect a reconciliation between her husband and her father. She secured an interview between them, and the emperor, the hereditary rival of his powerful neighbor the King of Bavaria, confirmed Margaret's gift, invested Rhodolph with the Tyrol, and pledged the arm of the empire to maintain this settlement. Thus Austria gained Tyrol, the country of romance and of song, interesting, perhaps, above all other portions of Europe in its natural scenery, and invaluable from its location as the gateway of Italy. Bavaria made a show of armed opposition to this magnificent accession to the power of Austria, but soon found it in vain to assail Rhodolph sustained by Margaret of Tyrol, and by the energies of the empire.

Rhodolph was an antiquarian of eccentric character, ever poring over musty records and hunting up decayed titles. He was fond of attaching to his signature the names of all the innumerable offices he held over the conglomerated States of his realm. He was Rhodolph, Margrave of Baden, Vicar of Upper Bavaria, Lord of Hapsburg, Arch Huntsman of the Empire, Archduke Palatine, etc., etc. His ostentation provoked even the jealousy of his father, the emperor, and he was ordered to lay aside these numerous titles and the arrogant armorial bearings he was attaching to his seals. His desire to aggrandize his family burned with a quenchless flame. Hoping to extend his influence in Italy, he negotiated a matrimonial alliance for his brother with an Italian princess. As he crossed the Alps to attend the nuptials, he was seized with an inflammatory fever, and died the 27th of July, 1365, but twenty-six years of age, and leaving no issue.

His brother Albert, a young man but seventeen years of age, succeeded Rhodolph. Just as he assumed the government, Margaret of Tyrol died, and the King of Bavaria, thinking this a favorable moment to renew his claims for the Tyrol, vigorously invaded the country with a strong army. Albert immediately applied to the emperor for assistance. Three years were employed in fightings and diplomacy, when Bavaria, in consideration of a large sum of money and sundry other concessions, renounced all pretensions to Tyrol, and left the rich prize henceforth undisputed in the hands of Austria. Thus the diminutive margrave of Austria, which was at first but a mere military post on the Danube, had grown by rapid accretions in one century to be almost equal in extent of territory to the kingdoms of Bavaria and of Bohemia. This grandeur, instead of satisfying the Austrian princes, did but increase their ambition.

The Austrian territories, though widely scattered, were declared, both by family compact and by imperial decree, to be indivisible. Albert had a brother, Leopold, two years younger than himself, of exceedingly restless and ambitious spirit, while Albert was inactive, and a lover of ease and repose. Leopold was sent to Switzerland, and intrusted with the administration of those provinces. But his imperious spirit so dominated over his elder but pliant brother, that he extorted from him a compact, by which the realm was divided, Albert remaining in possession of the Austrian provinces of the Danube, and Leopold having exclusive dominion over those in Switzerland; while the magnificent new acquisition, the Tyrol, lying between the two countries, bounding Switzerland on the east, and Austria on the west, was shared between them.

Nothing can more clearly show the moderate qualities of Albert than that he should have assented to such a plan. He did, however, with easy good nature, assent to it, and the two brothers applied to the Emperor Charles to ratify the division by his imperial sanction. Charles, who for some time had been very jealous of the rapid encroachments of Austria, rubbed his hands with delight.

"We have long," said he, "labored in vain to humble the house of Austria, and now the dukes of Austria have humbled themselves."

Leopold the First inherited all the ambition and energy of the house of Hapsburg, and was ever watching with an eagle eye to extend his dominions, and to magnify his power. By money, war, and diplomacy, in a few years he obtained Friburg and the little town of Basle; attached to his dominions the counties of Feldkirch, Pludenz, Surgans and the Rienthal, which he wrested from the feeble counts who held them, and obtained the baillages of Upper and Lower Suabia, and the towns of Augsburg and Gingen. But a bitter disappointment was now encountered by this ambitious prince.

Louis, the renowned King of Hungary and Poland, had two daughters, Maria and Hedwige, but no sons. To Maria he promised the crown of Hungary as her portion, and among the many claimants for her hand, and the glittering crown she held in it, Sigismund, son of the Emperor Charles, King of Bohemia, received the prize. Leopold, whose heart throbbed in view of so splendid an alliance, was overjoyed when he secured the pledge of the hand of Hedwige, with the crown of Poland, for William, his eldest son. Hedwige was one of the most beautiful and accomplished princesses of the age. William was also a young man of great elegance of person, and of such rare fascination of character, that he had acquired the epithet of William the Delightful. His chivalrous bearing had been trained and polished amidst the splendors of his uncle's court of Vienna. Hedwige, as the affianced bride of William, was invited from the more barbaric pomp of the Hungarian court, to improve her education by the aid of the refinements of Vienna. William and Hedwige no sooner met than they loved one another, as young hearts, even in the palace, will sometimes love, as well as in the cottage. In brilliant festivities and moonlight excursions the young lovers passed a few happy months, when Hedwige was called home by the final sickness of her father. Louis died, and Hedwige was immediately crowned Queen of Poland, receiving the most enthusiastic greetings of her subjects.

Bordering on Poland there was a grand duchy of immense extent, Lithuania, embracing sixty thousand square miles. The Grand Duke Jaghellon was a burly Northman, not more than half civilized, whose character was as jagged as his name. This pagan proposed to the Polish nobles that he should marry Hedwige, and thus unite the grand duchy of Lithuania with the kingdom of Poland; promising in that event to renounce paganism, and embrace Christianity. The beautiful and accomplished Hedwige was horror-struck at the proposal, and declared that never would she marry any one but William.

But the Polish nobles, dazzled by the prospect of this magnificent accession to the kingdom of Poland, and the bishops, even more powerful than the nobles, elated with the vision of such an acquisition for the Church, resolved that the young and fatherless maiden, who had no one to defend her cause, should yield, and that she should become the bride of Jaghellon. They declared that it was ridiculous to think that the interests of a mighty kingdom, and the enlargement of the Church, were to yield to the caprices of a love-sick girl.

In the meantime William, all unconscious of the disappointment which awaited him, was hastening to Cracow, with a splendid retinue, and the richest presents Austrian art could fabricate, to receive his bride. The nobles, however, a semi-barbaric set of men, surrounded him upon his arrival, refused to allow him any interview with Hedwige, threatened him with personal violence, and drove him out of the kingdom. Poor Hedwige was in anguish. She wept, vowed deathless fidelity to William, and expressed utter detestation of the pagan duke, until, at last, worn out and broken-hearted, she, in despair, surrendered herself into the arms of Jaghellon. Jaghellon was baptized by the name of Ladislaus, and Lithuania was annexed to Poland.

The loss of the crown of Poland was to Leopold a grievous affliction; at the same time his armies, engaged in sundry measures of aggrandizement, encountered serious reverses. Leopold, the father of William, by these events was plunged into the deepest dejection. No effort of his friends could lift the weight of his gloom. In a retired apartment of one of his castles he sat silent and woful, apparently incapacitated for any exertion whatever, either bodily or mental. The affairs of his realm were neglected, and his bailiffs and feudal chiefs, left with irresponsible power, were guilty of such acts of extortion and tyranny, that, in the province of Suabia the barons combined, and a fierce insurrection broke out. Forty important towns united in the confederacy, and secured the cooperation of Strasburg, Mentz and other large cities on the Rhine. Other of the Swiss provinces were on the eve of joining this alarming confederacy against Leopold, their Austrian ruler. As Vienna for some generations had been the seat of the Hapsburg family, from whence governors were sent to these provinces of Helvetia, as Switzerland was then called, the Swiss began to regard their rulers as foreigners, and even Leopold found it necessary to strengthen himself with Austrian troops.

This formidable league roused Leopold from his torpor, and he awoke like the waking of the lion. He was immediately on the march with four thousand horsemen, and fourteen hundred foot, while all through the defiles of the Alps bugle blasts echoed, summoning detachments from various cantons under their bold barons, to hasten to the aid of the insurgents. On the evening of the 9th of July, 1396, the glittering host of Leopold appeared on an eminence overlooking the city of Sempach and the beautiful lake on whose border it stands. The horses were fatigued by their long and hurried march, and the crags and ravines, covered with forest, were impracticable for the evolutions of cavalry. The impetuous Leopold, impatient of delay, resolved upon an immediate attack, notwithstanding the exhaustion of his troops, and though a few hours of delay would bring strong reinforcements to his camp. He dismounted his horsemen, and formed his whole force in solid phalanx. It was an imposing spectacle, as six thousand men, covered from head to foot with blazing armor, presenting a front of shields like a wall of burnished steel, bristling with innumerable pikes and spears, moved with slow, majestic tread down upon the city.

The confederate Swiss, conscious that the hour of vengeance had come, in which they must conquer or be miserably slain, marched forth to meet the foe, emboldened only by despair. But few of the confederates were in armor. They were furnished with such weapons as men grasp when despotism rouses them to insurrection, rusty battle-axes, pikes and halberts, and two-handed swords, which their ancestors, in descending into the grave, had left behind them. They drew up in the form of a solid wedge, to pierce the thick concentric wall of steel, apparently as impenetrable as the cliffs of the mountains. Thus the two bodies silently and sternly approached each other. It was a terrific hour; for every man knew that one or the other of those hosts must perish utterly. For some time the battle raged, while the confederates could make no impression whatever upon their steel-clad foes, and sixty of them fell pierced by spears before one of their assailants had been even wounded.

Despair was fast settling upon their hearts, when Arnold of Winkelreid, a knight of Underwalden, rushed from the ranks of the confederates, exclaiming—

"I will open a passage into the line; protect, dear countrymen, my wife and children."

He threw himself upon the bristling spears. A score pierced his body; grasping them with the tenacity of death, he bore them to the earth as he fell. His comrades, emulating his spirit of self-

sacrifice, rushed over his bleeding body, and forced their way through the gate thus opened into the line. The whole unwieldy mass was thrown into confusion. The steel-clad warriors, exhausted before the battle commenced, and encumbered with their heavy armor, could but feebly resist their nimble assailants, who outnumbering them and over-powering them, cut them down in fearful havoc. It soon became a general slaughter, and not less than two thousand of the followers of Leopold were stretched lifeless upon the ground. Many were taken prisoners, and a few, mounting their horses, effected an escape among the wild glens of the Alps.

In this awful hour Leopold developed magnanimity and heroism worthy of his name. Before the battle commenced, his friends urged him to take care of his own person.

"God forbid," said he, "that I should endeavor to save my own life and leave you to die! I will share your fate, and, with you, will either conquer or perish."

When all was in confusion, and his followers were falling like autumn leaves around him, he was urged to put spurs to his horse, and, accompanied by his body-guard, to escape.

"I would rather die honorably," said Leopold, "than live with dishonor."

Just at this moment his standard-bearer was struck down by a rush of the confederates. As he fell he cried out, "Help, Austria, help!" Leopold frantically sprang to his aid, grasped the banner from his dying hand, and waving it, plunged into the midst of the foe, with saber strokes hewing a path before him. He was soon lost in the tumult and the carnage of the battle. His body was afterward found, covered with wounds, in the midst of heaps of the dead.

Thus perished the ambitious and turbulent Leopold the 1st, after a stormy and unhappy life of thirty-six years, and a reign of constant encroachment and war of twenty years. Life to him was a dark and somber tempest. Ever dissatisfied with what he had attained, and grasping at more, he could never enjoy the present, and he finally died that death of violence to which his ambition had consigned so many thousands. Leopold, the second son of the duke, who was but fifteen years of age, succeeded his father, in the dominion of the Swiss estates; and after a desultory warfare of a few months, was successful in negotiating a peace, or rather an armed truce, with the successful insurgents.

In the meantime, Albert, at Vienna, apparently happy in being relieved of all care of the Swiss provinces, was devoting himself to the arts of peace. He reared new buildings, encouraged learning, repressed all disorders, and cultivated friendly relations with the neighboring powers. His life was as a summer's day—serene and bright. He and his family were happy, and his realms in prosperity. He died at his rural residence at Laxendorf, two miles out from Vienna, on the 29th of August, 1395. All Austria mourned his death. Thousands gathered at his burial, exclaiming, "We have lost our friend, our father!" He was a studious, peace-loving, warm-hearted man, devoted to his family and his friends, fond of books and the society of the learned, and enjoying the cultivation of his garden with his own hands. He left, at his death, an only son, Albert, sixteen years of age.

William, the eldest son of Leopold, had been brought up in the court of Vienna. He was a young man of fascinating character and easily won all hearts. After his bitter disappointment in Poland he returned to Vienna, and now, upon the death of his uncle Albert, he claimed the reins of government as the oldest member of the family. His cousin Albert, of course, resisted this claim, demanding that he himself should enter upon the post which his father had occupied. A violent dissension ensued which resulted in an agreement that they should administer the government of the Austrian States, jointly, during their lives, and that then the government should be vested in the eldest surviving member of the family.

Having effected this arrangement, quite to the satisfaction of both parties, Albert, who inherited much of the studious thoughtful turn of mind of his father, set out on a pilgrimage to the holy land, leaving the government during his absence in the hands of William. After wanderings and adventures so full of romance as to entitle him to the appellation of the "Wonder of the World," he returned to Vienna. He married a daughter of the Duke of Holland, and settled down to a monkish life. He entered a monastery of Carthusian monks, and took an active part in all their discipline and devotions.

No one was more punctual than he at matins and vespers, or more devout in confessions, prayers, genuflexions and the divine service in the choir. Regarding himself as one of the fraternity, he called himself brother Albert, and left William untrammelled in the cares of state. His life was short, for he died the 14th of September, 1404, in the twenty-seventh year of his age, leaving a son Albert, seven years old. William, who married a daughter of the King of Naples, survived him but two years, when he died childless.

A boy nine years old now claimed the inheritance of the Austrian estates; but the haughty dukes of the Swiss branch of the house were not disposed to yield to his claims. Leopold II., who after the battle of Sempach succeeded his father in the Swiss estates, assumed the guardianship of Albert, and the administration of Austria, till the young duke should be of age. But Leopold had two brothers who also inherited their father's energy and ambition. Ernest ruled over Styria, Carinthia and Carniola. Frederic governed the Tyrol.

Leopold II. repaired to Vienna to assume the administration; his two brothers claimed the right of sharing it with him. Confusion, strife and anarchy ensued. Ernest, a very determined and violent man, succeeded in compelling his brother to give him a share of the government, and in the midst of incessant quarrels, which often led to bloody conflicts, each of the two brothers strove to wrest as much as possible from Austria before young Albert should be of age. The nobles availed themselves of this anarchy to renew their expeditions of plunder. Unhappy Austria for several years was a scene of devastation and misery. In the year 1411, Leopold II. died without issue. The young Albert had now attained his fifteenth year.

The emperor declared Albert of age, and he assumed the government as Albert V. His subjects, weary of disorder and of the strife of the nobles, welcomed him with enthusiasm. With sagacity and self-denial above his years, the young prince devoted himself to business, relinquishing all pursuits of pleasure. Fortunately, during his minority he had honorable and able teachers who stored his mind with useful knowledge, and fortified him with principles of integrity. The change from the most desolating anarchy to prosperity and peace was almost instantaneous. Albert had the judgment to surround himself with able advisers. Salutary laws were enacted; justice impartially administered; the country was swept of the banditti which infested it, and while all the States around were involved in the miseries of war, the song of the contented husbandman, and the music of the artisan's tools were heard through the fields and in the towns of happy Austria.

Sigismund, second son of the Emperor Charles IV., King of Bohemia, was now emperor. It will be remembered that by marrying Mary, the eldest daughter of Louis, King of Hungary and Poland, he received Hungary as the dower of his bride. By intrigue he also succeeded in deposing his effeminate and dissolute brother, Wenceslaus, from the throne of Bohemia, and succeeded, by a new election, in placing the crown upon his own brow. Thus Sigismund wielded a three-fold scepter. He was Emperor of Germany, and King of Hungary and of Bohemia.

Albert married the only daughter of Sigismund, and a very strong affection sprung up between the imperial father and his son-in-law. They often visited each other, and cooperated very cordially in measures of state. The wife of Sigismund was a worthless woman, described by an Austrian historian as "one who believed in neither God, angel nor devil; neither in heaven nor hell." Sigismund had set his heart upon bequeathing to Albert the crowns of both Hungary and Bohemia, which magnificent accessions to the Austrian domains would elevate that power to be one of the first in Europe. But Barbara, his queen, wished to convey these crowns to the son of the pagan Jaghellon, who had received the crown of Poland as the dowry of his reluctant bride, Hedwige. Sigismund, provoked by her intrigues for the accomplishment of this object, and detesting her for her licentiousness, put her under arrest. Sigismund was sixty-three years of age, in very feeble health, and daily expecting to die.

He summoned a general convention of the nobles of Hungary and Bohemia to meet him at Znaim in Moravia, near the frontiers of Austria, and sent for Albert and his daughter to hasten to that place. The infirm emperor, traveling by slow stages, succeeded in reaching Znaim. He immediately

summoned the nobles to his presence, and introducing to them Albert and Elizabeth, thus affectingly addressed them:

"Loving friends, you know that since the commencement of my reign I have employed my utmost exertions to maintain public tranquillity. Now, as I am about to die, my last act must be consistent with my former actions. At this moment my only anxiety arises from a desire to prevent dissension and bloodshed after my decease. It is praiseworthy in a prince to govern well; but it is not less praiseworthy to provide a successor who shall govern better than himself. This fame I now seek, not from ambition, but from love to my subjects. You all know Albert, Duke of Austria, to whom in preference to all other princes I gave my daughter in marriage, and whom I adopted as my son. You know that he possesses experience and every virtue becoming a prince. He found Austria in a state of disorder, and he has restored it to tranquillity. He is now of an age in which judgment and experience attain their perfection, and he is sovereign of Austria, which, lying between Hungary and Bohemia, forms a connecting link between the two kingdoms.

"I recommend him to you as my successor. I leave you a king, pious, honorable, wise and brave. I give him my kingdom, or rather I give him to my kingdoms, to whom I can give or wish nothing better. Truly you belong to him in consideration of his wife, the hereditary princess of Hungary and Bohemia. Again I repeat that I do not act thus solely from love to Albert and my daughter, but from a desire in my last moments to promote the true welfare of my people. Happy are those who are subject to Albert. I am confident he is no less beloved by you than by me, and that even without my exhortations you would unanimously give him your votes. But I beseech you by these tears, comfort my soul, which is departing to God, by confirming my choice and fulfilling my will."

The emperor was so overcome with emotion that he could with difficulty pronounce these last words. All were deeply moved; some wept aloud; others, seizing the hand of the emperor and bathing it in tears, vowed allegiance to Albert, and declared that while he lived they would recognize no other sovereign.

The very next day, November, 1437, Sigismund died. Albert and Elizabeth accompanied his remains to Hungary. The Hungarian diet of barons unanimously ratified the wishes of the late king in accepting Albert as his successor. He then hastened to Bohemia, and, notwithstanding a few outbursts of disaffection, was received with great demonstrations of joy by the citizens of Prague, and was crowned in the cathedral.

CHAPTER IV. ALBERT, LADISLAUS AND FREDERIC

From 1440 to 1489

Increasing Honors of Albert V.—Encroachments of the Turks.—The Christians Routed.—Terror of the Hungarians.—Death of Albert.—Magnanimous Conduct of Albert of Bavaria.—Internal Troubles.—Precocity of Ladislaus.—Fortifications raised by the Turks.—John Capistrun.—Rescue of Belgrade.—The Turks dispersed.—Exultation over the Victory.—Death of Hunniades.—Jealousy of Ladislaus.—His Death.—Brotherly Quarrels.—Devastations by the Turks.—Invasion of Austria.—Repeal of the Compromise.—The Emperor a Fugitive.

The kingdom of Bohemia thus attached to the duchies of Austria contained a population of some three millions, and embraced twenty thousand square miles of territory, being about three times as large as the State of Massachusetts. Hungary was a still more magnificent realm in extent of territory, being nearly five times as large as Bohemia, but inhabited by about the same number of people, widely dispersed. In addition to this sudden and vast accession of power, Albert was chosen Emperor of Germany. This distinguished sovereign displayed as much wisdom and address in administering the affairs of the empire, as in governing his own kingdoms.

The Turks were at this time becoming the terror of Christendom. Originating in a small tribe between the Caspian Sea and the Euxine, they had with bloody cimeters overrun all Asia Minor, and, crossing the Hellespont, had intrenched themselves firmly on the shores of Europe. Crowding on in victorious hosts, armed with the most terrible fanaticism, they had already obtained possession of Bulgaria, Servia, and Bosnia, eastern dependencies of Hungary, and all Europe was trembling in view of their prowess, their ferocity and their apparently exhaustless legions.

Sigismond, beholding the crescent of the Moslem floating over the castles of eastern Hungary, became alarmed for the kingdom, and sent ambassadors from court to court to form a crusade against the invaders. He was eminently successful, and an army of one hundred thousand men was soon collected, composed of the flower of the European nobility. The republics of Venice and Genoa united to supply a fleet. With this powerful armament Sigismond, in person, commenced his march to Constantinople, which city the Turks were besieging, to meet the fleet there. The Turkish sultan himself gathered his troops and advanced to meet Sigismond. The Christian troops were utterly routed, and nearly all put to the sword. The emperor with difficulty escaped. In the confusion of the awful scene of carnage he threw himself unperceived into a small boat, and paddling down the Danube, as its flood swept through an almost uninhabited wilderness, he reached the Black Sea, where he was so fortunate as to find a portion of the fleet, and thus, by a long circuit, he eventually reached his home.

Bajazet, the sultan, returned exultant from this great victory, and resumed the siege of Constantinople, which ere long fell into the hands of the Turks. Amurath, who was sultan at the time of the death of Sigismond, thought the moment propitious for extending his conquests. He immediately, with his legions, overran Servia, a principality nearly the size of the State of Virginia, and containing a million of inhabitants. George, Prince of Servia, retreating before the merciless followers of the false prophet, threw himself with a strong garrison into the fortress of Semendria, and sent an imploring message to Albert for assistance. Servia was separated from Hungary only by the Danube, and it was

a matter of infinite moment to Albert that the Turk should not get possession of that province, from which he could make constant forays into Hungary.

Albert hastily collected an army and marched to the banks of the Danube just in time to witness the capture of Semendria and the massacre of its garrison. All Hungary was now in terror. The Turks in overwhelming numbers were firmly intrenched upon the banks of the Danube, and were preparing to cross the river and to supplant the cross with the crescent on all the plains of Hungary. The Hungarian nobles, in crowds, flocked to the standard of Albert, who made herculean exertions to meet and roll back the threatened tide of invasion. Exhausted by unremitting toil, he was taken sick and suddenly died, on a small island of the Danube, on the 17th of October, 1439, in the forty-third year of his age. The death of such a prince, heroic and magnanimous, loving the arts of peace, and yet capable of wielding the energies of war, was an apparent calamity to Europe.

Albert left two daughters, but his queen Elizabeth was expecting, in a few months, to give birth to another child. Every thing was thus involved in confusion, and for a time intrigue and violence ran riot. There were many diverse parties, the rush of armed bands, skirmishes and battles, and all the great matters of state were involved in an inextricable labyrinth of confusion. The queen gave birth to a son, who was baptized by the name of Ladislaus. Elizabeth, anxious to secure the crown of Hungary for her infant, had him solemnly crowned at Alba Regia, by the Archbishop of Gran when the child was but four months old.

But a powerful party arose, opposed to the claims of the infant, and strove by force of arms to place upon the throne Uladislaus, King of Poland and Lithuania, and son of the pagan Jaghellon and the unhappy Hedwige. For two years war between the rival parties desolated the kingdom, when Elizabeth died. Uladislaus now redoubled his endeavors, and finally succeeded in driving the unconscious infant from his hereditary domain, and established himself firmly on the throne of Hungary.

The infant prince was taken to Bohemia. There also he encountered violent opposition. "A child," said his opponents, "can not govern. It will be long before Ladislaus will be capable of assuming the reins of government. Let us choose another sovereign, and when Ladislaus has attained the age of twenty-four we shall see whether he deserves the crown."

This very sensible advice was adopted, and thirteen electors were appointed to choose a sovereign. Their choice fell upon Albert of Bavaria. But he, with a spirit of magnanimity very rare in that age, declared that the crown, of right, belonged to Ladislaus, and that he would not take it from him. They then chose Frederic, Duke of Styria, who, upon the death of Albert, had been chosen emperor. Frederic, incited by the example of Albert, also declined, saying, "I will not rob my relation of his right." But anxious for the peace of the empire, he recommended that they should choose some illustrious Bohemian, to whom they should intrust the regency until Ladislaus became of age, offering himself to assume the guardianship of the young prince.

This judicious advice was accepted, and the Bohemian nobles chose the infant Ladislaus their king. They, however, appointed two regents instead of one. The regents quarreled and headed two hostile parties. Anarchy and civil war desolated the kingdom, with fluctuations of success and discomfiture attending the movements of either party. Thus several years of violence and blood passed on. One of the regents, George Podiebrad, drove his opponent from the realm and assumed regal authority. To legitimate its usurped power he summoned a diet at Pilgram, in 1447, and submitted the following question:

"Is it advantageous to the kingdom that Ladislaus should retain the crown, or would it not be more beneficial to choose a monarch acquainted with our language and customs, and inspired with love of our country?"

Warm opposition to this measure arose, and the nobles voted themselves loyal to Ladislaus. While these events were passing in Bohemia, scenes of similar violence were transpiring in Hungary. After a long series of convulsions, and Uladislaus, the Polish king, who had attained the crown of

Hungary, having been slain in a battle with the Turks, a diet of Hungarian nobles was assembled and they also declared the young Ladislaus to be their king. They consequently wrote to the Emperor Frederic, Duke of Styria, who had assumed the guardianship of the prince, requesting that he might be sent to Hungary. Ladislaus Posthumous, so-called in consequence of his birth after the death of his father, was then but six years of age.

The Austrian States were also in a condition of similar confusion, rival aspirants grasping at power, feuds agitating every province, and all moderate men anxious for that repose which could only be found by uniting in the claims of Ladislaus for the crown. Thus Austria, Bohemia and Hungary, so singularly and harmoniously united under Albert V., so suddenly dissevered and scattered by the death of Albert, were now, after years of turmoil, all reuniting under the child Ladislaus.

Frederic, however, the faithful guardian of the young prince, was devoting the utmost care to his education, and refused to accede to the urgent and reiterated requests to send the young monarch to his realms. When Ladislaus was about ten years of age the Emperor Frederic visited the pope at Rome, and took Ladislaus in his glittering suite. The precocious child here astonished the learned men of the court, by delivering an oration in Latin before the consistory, and by giving many other indications of originality and vigor of mind far above his years. The pope became much attached to the youthful sovereign of three such important realms, and as Frederic was about to visit Naples, Ladislaus remained a guest in the imperial palace.

Deputies from the three nations repaired to Rome to urge the pope to restore to them their young sovereign. Failing in this, they endeavored to induce Ladislaus to escape with them. This plan also was discovered and foiled. The nobles were much irritated by these disappointments, and they resolved to rescue him by force of arms. All over Hungary, Bohemia and Austria there was a general rising of the nobles, nationalities being merged in the common cause, and all hearts united and throbbing with a common desire. An army of sixteen thousand men was raised. Frederic, alarmed by these formidable preparations for war, surrendered Ladislaus and he was conveyed in triumph to Vienna. A numerous assemblage of the nobles of the three nations was convened, and it was settled that the young king, during his minority, should remain at Vienna, under the care of his maternal uncle, Count Cilli, who, in the meantime, was to administer the government of Austria. George Podiebrad was intrusted with the regency of Bohemia; and John Hunniades was appointed regent of Hungary.

Ladislaus was now thirteen years of age. The most learned men of the age were appointed as his teachers, and he pursued his studies with great vigor. Count Cilli, however, an ambitious and able man, soon gained almost unlimited control over the mind of his young ward, and became so arrogant and dictatorial, filling every important office with his own especial friends, and removing those who displeased him, that general discontent was excited and conspiracy was formed against him. Cilli was driven from Vienna with insults and threats, and the conspirators placed the regency in the hands of a select number of their adherents.

While affairs were in this condition, John Hunniades, as regent, was administering the government of Hungary with great vigor and sagacity. He was acquiring so much renown that Count Cilli regarded him with a very jealous eye, and excited the suspicions of the young king that Hunniades was seeking for himself the sovereignty of Hungary. Cilli endeavored to lure Hunniades to Vienna, that he might seize his person, but the sagacious warrior was too wily to be thus entrapped.

The Turks were now in the full tide of victory. They had conquered Constantinople, fortified both sides of the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, overrun Greece and planted themselves firmly and impregably on the shores of Europe. Mahomet II. was sultan, succeeding his father Amurath. He raised an army of two hundred thousand men, who were all inspired with that intense fanatic ferocity with which the Moslem then regarded the Christian. Marching resistlessly through Bulgaria and Servia, he contemplated the immediate conquest of Hungary, the bulwark of Europe. He advanced to the banks of the Danube and laid siege to Belgrade, a very important and strongly fortified town at the point where the Save enters the great central river of eastern Europe.

Such an army, flushed with victory and inspired with all the energies of fanaticism, appalled the European powers. Ladislaus was but a boy, studious and scholarly in his tastes, having developed but little physical energy and no executive vigor. He was very handsome, very refined in his tastes and courteous in his address, and he cultivated with great care the golden ringlets which clustered around his shoulders. At the time of this fearful invasion Ladislaus was on a visit to Buda, one of the capitals of Hungary, on the Danube, but about three hundred miles above Belgrade. The young monarch, with his favorite, Cilli, fled ingloriously to Vienna, leaving Hunniades to breast as he could the Turkish hosts. But Hunniades was, fortunately, equal to the emergency.

A Franciscan monk, John Capistran, endowed with the eloquence of Peter the Hermit, traversed Germany, displaying the cross and rousing Christians to defend Europe from the infidels. He soon collected a motley mass of forty thousand men, rustics, priests, students, soldiers, unarmed, undisciplined, a rabble rout, who followed him to the rendezvous where Hunniades had succeeded in collecting a large force of the bold barons and steel-clad warriors of Hungary. The experienced chief gladly received this heterogeneous mass, and soon armed them, brought them into the ranks and subjected them to the severe discipline of military drill.

At the head of this band, which was inspired with zeal equal to that of the Turk, the brave Hunniades, in a fleet of boats, descended the Danube. The river in front of Belgrade was covered with the flotilla of the Turks. The wall in many places was broken down, and at other points in the wall they had obtained a foothold, and the crescent was proudly unfurled to the breeze. The feeble garrison, worn out with toil and perishing with famine, were in the last stages of despair. Hunniades came down upon the Turkish flotilla like an inundation; both parties fought with almost unprecedented ferocity, but the Christians drove every thing before them, sinking, dispersing, and capturing the boats, which were by no means prepared for so sudden and terrible an assault. The immense reinforcement, with arms and provisions, thus entered the city, and securing the navigation of the Danube and the Save, opened the way for continued supplies. The immense hosts of the Mohammedans now girdled the city in a semicircle on the land side. Their tents, gorgeously embellished and surmounted with the crescent, glittered in the rays of the sun as far as the eye could extend. Squadrons of steel-clad horsemen swept the field, while bands of the besiegers pressed the city without intermission, night and day.

Mohammed, irritated by this unexpected accession of strength to the besieged, in his passion ordered an immediate and simultaneous attack upon the town by his whole force. The battle was long and bloody, both parties struggling with utter desperation. The Turks were repulsed. After one of the longest continuous conflicts recorded in history, lasting all one night, and all the following day until the going down of the sun, the Turks, leaving thirty thousand of their dead beneath the ramparts of the city, and taking with them the sultan desperately wounded, struck their tents in the darkness of the night and retreated.

Great was the exultation in Hungary, in Germany and all over Europe. But this joy was speedily clouded by the intelligence that Hunniades, the deliverer of Europe from Moslem invasion, exhausted with toil, had been seized by a fever and had died. It is said that the young King Ladislaus rejoiced in his death, for he was greatly annoyed in having a subject attain such a degree of splendor as to cast his own name into insignificance. Hunniades left two sons, Ladislaus and Matthias. The king and Cilli manifested the meanest jealousy in reference to these young men, and fearful that the renown of their father, which had inspired pride and gratitude in every Hungarian heart, might give them power, they did every thing they could to humiliate and depress them. The king lured them both to Buda, where he perfidiously beheaded the eldest, Ladislaus, for wounding Cilli, in defending himself from an attack which the implacable count had made upon him, and he also threw the younger son, Matthias, into a prison.

The widow of Hunniades, the heroic mother of these children, with a spirit worthy of the wife of her renowned husband, called the nobles to her aid. They rallied in great numbers, roused to

indignation. The inglorious king, terrified by the storm he had raised, released Matthias, and fled from Buda to Vienna, pursued by the execrations and menaces of the Hungarians.

He soon after repaired to Prague, in Bohemia, to solemnize his marriage with Magdalen, daughter of Charles VII., King of France. He had just reached the city, and was making preparations for his marriage in unusual splendor, when he was attacked by a malignant disease, supposed to be the plague, and died after a sickness of but thirty-six hours. The unhappy king, who, through the stormy scenes of his short life, had developed no grandeur of soul, was oppressed with the awfulness of passing to the final judgment. In the ordinances of the Church he sought to find solace for a sinful and a troubled spirit. Having received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, with dying lips he commenced repeating the Lord's prayer. He had just uttered the words "deliver us from evil," when his spirit took its flight to the judgment seat of Christ.

Frederic, the emperor, Duke of Styria, was now the oldest lineal descendant of Rhodolph of Hapsburg, founder of the house of Austria. The imperial dignity had now degenerated into almost an empty title. The Germanic empire consisted of a few large sovereignties and a conglomeration of petty dukedoms, principalities, and States of various names, very loosely held together, in their heterogeneous and independent rulers and governments, by one nominal sovereign upon whom the jealous States were willing to confer but little real power. A writer at that time, Æneas Sylvius, addressing the Germans, says:

"Although you acknowledge the emperor for your king and master, he possesses but a precarious sovereignty; he has no power; you only obey him when you choose; and you are seldom inclined to obey. You are all desirous to be free; neither the princes nor the States render to him what is due. He has no revenue, no treasure. Hence you are involved in endless contests and daily wars. Hence also rapine, murder, conflagrations, and a thousand evils which arise from divided authority."

Upon the death of Ladislaus there was a great rush and grasping for the vacant thrones of Bohemia and Hungary, and for possession of the rich dukedoms of Austria. After a long conflict the Austrian estates were divided into three portions. Frederic, the emperor, took Upper Austria; his brother Albert, who had succeeded to the Swiss estates, took Lower Austria; Sigismund, Albert's nephew, a man of great energy of character, took Carinthia. The three occupied the palace in Vienna in joint residence.

The energetic regent, George Podiebrad, by adroit diplomacy succeeded, after an arduous contest, in obtaining the election by the Bohemian nobles to the throne of Bohemia. The very day he was chosen he was inaugurated at Prague, and though rival candidates united with the pope to depose him, he maintained his position against them all.

Frederic, the emperor, had been quite sanguine in the hopes of obtaining the crown of Bohemia. Bitterly disappointed there, he at first made a show of hostile resistance; but thinking better of the matter, he concluded to acquiesce in the elevation of Podiebrad, to secure amicable relations with him, and to seek his aid in promotion of his efforts to obtain the crown of Hungary. Here again the emperor failed. The nobles assembled in great strength at Buda, and elected unanimously Matthias, the only surviving son of the heroic Hunniades, whose memory was embalmed in the hearts of all the Hungarians. The boy then, for he was but a boy, and was styled contemptuously by the disappointed Frederic the boy king, entered into an alliance with Podiebrad for mutual protection, and engaged the hand of his daughter in marriage. Thus was the great kingdom of Austria, but recently so powerful in the union of all the Austrian States with Bohemia and Hungary, again divided and disintegrated. The emperor, in his vexation, foolishly sent an army of five thousand men into Hungary, insanely hoping to take the crown by force of arms, but he was soon compelled to relinquish the hopeless enterprise.

And now Frederic and Albert began to quarrel at Vienna. The emperor was arrogant and domineering. Albert was irritable and jealous. First came angry words; then the enlisting of partisans, and then all the miseries of fierce and determined civil war. The capital was divided into hostile factions, and the whole country was ravaged by the sweep of armies. The populace of Vienna,

espousing the cause of Albert, rose in insurrection, pillaged the houses of the adherents of Frederic, drove Frederic, with his wife and infant child, into the citadel, and invested the fortress. Albert placed himself at the head of the insurgents and conducted the siege. The emperor, though he had but two hundred men in the garrison, held out valiantly. But famine would soon have compelled him to capitulate, had not the King of Bohemia, with a force of thirteen thousand men, marched to his aid. Podiebrad relieved the emperor, and secured a verbal reconciliation between the two angry brothers, which lasted until the Bohemian forces had returned to their country, when the feud burst out anew and with increased violence. The emperor procured the ban of the empire against his brother, and the pope excommunicated him. Still Albert fought fiercely, and the strife raged without intermission until Albert suddenly died on the 4th of December, 1463.

The Turks, who, during all these years, had been making predatory excursions along the frontiers of Hungary, now, in three strong bands of ten thousand each, overran Servia and Bosnia, and spread their devastations even into the heart of Illyria, as far as the metropolitan city of Laybach. The ravages of fire and sword marked their progress. They burnt every village, every solitary cottage, and the inhabitants were indiscriminately slain. Frederic, the emperor, a man of but little energy, was at his country residence at Lintz, apparently more anxious, writes a contemporary, "to shield his plants from frost, than to defend his domains against these barbarians."

The bold barons of Carniola, however, rallied their vassals, raised an army of twenty thousand men, and drove the Turks back to the Bosphorus. But the invaders, during their unimpeded march, had slain six thousand Christians, and they carried back with them eight thousand captives.

Again, a few years after, the Turks, with a still larger army, rushed through the defiles of the Illyrian mountains, upon the plains of Carinthia. Their march was like the flow of volcanic fire. They left behind them utter desolation, smouldering hearth-stones and fields crimsoned with blood. At length they retired of their own accord, dragging after them twenty thousand captives. During a period of twenty-seven years, under the imbecile reign of Frederic, the very heart of Europe was twelve times scourged by the inroads of these savages. No tongue can tell the woes which were inflicted upon humanity. Existence, to the masses of the people, in that day, must indeed have been a curse. Ground to the very lowest depths of poverty by the exactions of ecclesiastics and nobles, in rags, starving, with no social or intellectual joys, they might indeed have envied the beasts of the field.

The conduct of Frederic seems to be marked with increasing treachery and perfidy. Jealous of the growing power of George Podiebrad, he instigated Matthias, King of Hungary, to make war upon Bohemia, promising Matthias the Bohemian crown. Infamously the King of Hungary accepted the bribe, and raising a powerful army, invaded Bohemia, to wrest the crown from his father-in-law. His armies were pressing on so victoriously, in conjunction with those of Frederic, that the emperor was now alarmed lest Matthias, uniting the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, should become too powerful. He therefore not only abandoned him, but stirred up an insurrection among the Hungarian nobles, which compelled Matthias to abandon Bohemia and return home.

Matthias, having quelled the insurrection, was so enraged with the emperor, that he declared war against him, and immediately invaded Austria. The emperor was now so distrusted that he could not find a single ally. Austria alone, was no match for Hungary. Matthias overran all Lower Austria, took all the fortresses upon the Danube, and invested Vienna. The emperor fled in dismay to Lintz, and was obliged to purchase an ignominious peace by an immense sum of money, all of which was of course to be extorted by taxes on the miserable and starving peasantry.

Poland, Bohemia and the Turks, now all pounced upon Hungary, and Frederic, deeming this a providential indication that Hungary could not enforce the fulfillment of the treaty, refused to pay the money. Matthias, greatly exasperated, made the best terms he could with Poland, and again led his armies in Austria. For four years the warfare raged fiercely, when all Lower Austria, including the capital, was in the hands of Matthias, and the emperor was driven from his hereditary domains; and,

accompanied by a few followers, he wandered a fugitive from city to city, from convent to convent, seeking aid from all, but finding none.

CHAPTER V. THE EMPERORS FREDERIC II. AND MAXIMILIAN I

From 1477 to 1500

Wanderings of the Emperor Frederic.—Proposed Alliance with the Duke of Burgundy.—Mutual Distrust.—Marriage of Mary.—The Age of Chivalry.—The Motive inducing the Lord of Praunstein to declare War.—Death of Frederic II.—The Emperor's Secret.—Designs of the Turks.—Death of Mahomet II.—First Establishment of standing Armies.—Use of Gunpowder.—Energy of Maximilian.—French Aggressions.—The League to expel the French.—Disappointments of Maximilian.—Bribing the Pope.—Invasion of Italy.—Capture and Recapture.—The Chevalier De Bayard.

Adversity only developed more fully the weak and ignoble character of Frederic. He wandered about, recognized Emperor of Germany, but a fugitive from his own Austrian estates, occasionally encountering pity, but never sympathy or respect. Matthias professed his readiness to surrender Austria back to Frederic so soon as he would fulfill the treaty by paying the stipulated money. Frederic was accompanied in his wanderings by his son Maximilian, a remarkably elegant lad, fourteen years of age. They came to the court of the powerful Duke of Burgundy. The dukedom extended over wide realms, populous and opulent, and the duke had the power of a sovereign but not the regal title. He was ambitious of elevating his dukedom into a kingdom and of being crowned king; and he agreed to give his only daughter and heiress, Mary, a beautiful and accomplished girl, to the emperor's son Maximilian, if Frederic would confer upon his estates the regal dignity and crown him king. The bargain was made, and Maximilian and Mary both were delighted, for they regarded each other with all the warmth of young lovers. Mary, heiress to the dukedom of Burgundy, was a prize which any monarch might covet; and half the princes of Europe were striving for her hand.

But now came a new difficulty. Neither the emperor nor duke had the slightest confidence in each other. The King of France, who had hoped to obtain the hand of Mary for his son the dauphin, caused the suspicion to be whispered into the ear of Frederic that the Duke of Burgundy sought the kingly crown only as the first step to the imperial crown; and that so soon as the dukedom was elevated into a kingdom, Charles, the Duke of Burgundy, would avail himself of his increased power, to dethrone Frederic and grasp the crown of Germany. This was probably all true. Charles, fully understanding the perfidious nature of Frederic, did not dare to solemnize the marriage until he first should be crowned. Frederic, on the other hand, did not dare to crown the duke until the marriage was solemnized, for he had no confidence that the duke, after having attained the regal dignity, would fulfill his pledge.

Charles was for hurrying the coronation, Frederic for pushing the marriage. A magnificent throne was erected in the cathedral at Treves, and preparations were making on the grandest scale for the coronation solemnities, when Frederic, who did not like to tell the duke plumply to his face that he was fearful of being cheated, extricated himself from his embarrassment by feigning important business which called him suddenly to Cologne. A scene of petty and disgraceful intrigues ensued between the exasperated duke and emperor, and there were the marching and the countermarching of hostile bands and the usual miseries of war, until the death of Duke Charles at the battle of Nancy on the 5th of January, 1477.

The King of France now made a desperate endeavor to obtain the hand of Mary for his son. One of the novel acts of this imperial courtship, was to send an army into Burgundy, which wrested a large portion of Mary's dominions from her, which the king, Louis XI., refused to surrender unless Mary would marry his son. Many of her nobles urged the claims of France. But love in the heart of Mary was stronger than political expediency, and more persuasive than the entreaties of her nobles. To relieve herself from importunity, she was hurriedly married, three months after the death of her father, by proxy to Maximilian.

In August the young prince, but eighteen years of age, with a splendid retinue, made his public entry into Ghent. His commanding person and the elegance of his manners, attracted universal admiration. His subjects rallied with enthusiasm around him, and, guided by his prowess, in a continued warfare of five years, drove the invading French from their territories. But death, the goal to which every one tends, was suddenly and unexpectedly reached by Mary. She died the 7th of August, 1479, leaving two infant children, Philip and Margaret.

The Emperor Frederic also succeeded, by diplomatic cunning, in convening the diet of electors and choosing Maximilian as his successor to the imperial throne. Frederic and Maximilian now united in the endeavor to recover Austria from the King of Hungary. The German princes, however, notwithstanding the summons of the emperor, refused to take any part in the private quarrels of Austria, and thus the battle would have to be fought between the troops of Maximilian and of Matthias. Maximilian prudently decided that it would be better to purchase the redemption of the territory with money than with blood. The affair was in negotiation when Matthias was taken sick and died the 15th of July, 1490. He left no heir, and the Hungarian nobles chose Ladislaus, King of Bohemia, to succeed him. Maximilian had been confident of obtaining the crown of Hungary. Exasperated by the disappointment, he relinquished all idea of purchasing his patrimonial estates, but making a sudden rush with his troops upon the Hungarians, he drove them out of Austria, and pursued them far over the frontiers of Hungary. Ladislaus, the new King of Hungary, now listened to terms of peace. A singular treaty was made. The Bohemian king was to retain the crown of Hungary, officiating as reigning monarch, while Maximilian was to have the *title* of King of Hungary. Ladislaus relinquished all claim to the Austrian territories, and paid a large sum of money as indemnity for the war.

Thus Austria again comes into independent existence, to watch amidst the tumult and strife of Europe for opportunities to enlarge her territories and increase her power. Maximilian was a prince, energetic and brave, who would not allow any opportunity to escape him. In those dark days of violence and of blood, every petty quarrel was settled by the sword. All over Germany the clash of steel against steel was ever resounding. Not only kings and dukes engaged in wars, but the most insignificant baron would gather his few retainers around him and declare formal war against the occupant of the adjacent castle. The spirit of chivalry, so called, was so rampant that private individuals would send a challenge to the emperor. Contemporary writers record many curious specimens of these declarations of war. The Lord of Praunstein declared war against the city of Frankfort, because a young lady of that city refused to dance with his uncle at a ball.

Frederic was now suffering from the infirmities of age. Surrendering the administration of affairs, both in Austria and over the estates of the empire, to Maximilian, he retired, with his wife and three young daughters, to Lintz, where he devoted himself, at the close of his long and turbulent reign, to the peaceful pursuits of rural life. A cancerous affection of the leg rendered it necessary for him to submit to the amputation of the limb. He submitted to the painful operation with the greatest fortitude, and taking up his severed limb, with his accustomed phlegm remarked to those standing by,

"What difference is there between an emperor and a peasant? Or rather, is not a sound peasant better than a sick emperor? Yet I hope to enjoy the greatest good which can happen to man—a happy exit from this transitory life."

The shock of a second amputation, which from the vitiated state of his blood seemed necessary, was too great for his enfeebled frame to bear. He died August 19th, 1493, seventy-eight years of age, and after a reign of fifty-three years. He was what would be called, in these days, an ultra temperance man, never drinking even wine, and expressing ever the strongest abhorrence of alcoholic drinks, calling them the parent of all vices. He seems to have anticipated the future greatness of Austria; for he had imprinted upon all his books, engraved upon his plate and carved into the walls of his palace a mysterious species of anagram composed of the five vowels, A, E, I, O, U.

The significance of this great secret no one could obtain from him. It of course excited great curiosity, as it everywhere met the eye of the public. After his death the riddle was solved by finding among his papers the following interpretation—

Austri Est Imperare Orbi Universo.

Austria Is To govern The world Universal.

Maximilian, in the prime of manhood, energetic, ambitious, and invested with the imperial dignity, now assumed the government of the Austrian States. The prospect of greatness was brilliant before Maximilian. The crowns of Bohemia and Hungary were united in the person of Ladislaus, who was without children. As Maximilian already enjoyed the title of King of Hungary, no one enjoyed so good a chance as he of securing both of those crowns so soon as they should fall from the brow of Ladislaus.

Europe was still trembling before the threatening cimeter of the Turk. Mahomet II., having annihilated the Greek empire, and consolidated his vast power, and checked in his career by the warlike barons of Hungary, now cast a lustful eye across the Adriatic to the shores of Italy. He crossed the sea, landed a powerful army and established twenty thousand men, strongly garrisoned, at Otranto, and supplied with provisions for a year. All Italy was in consternation, for a passage was now open directly from Turkey to Naples and Rome. Mahomet boasted that he would soon feed his horse on the altar of St. Peter's. The pope, Sextus IV., in dismay, was about abandoning Rome, and as there was no hope of uniting the discordant States of Italy in any effectual resistance, it seemed inevitable that Italy, like Greece, would soon become a Turkish province. And where then could it be hoped that the ravages of the Turks would be arrested?

In this crisis, so alarming, Providence interposed, and the sudden death of Mahomet, in the vigor of his pride and ambition, averted the danger. Bajazet II. succeeded to the Moslem throne, an indolent and imbecile sultan. Insurrection in his own dominions exhausted all his feeble energies. The Neapolitans, encouraged, raised an army, recovered Otranto, and drove the Turks out of Italy. Troubles in the Turkish dominions now gave Christendom a short respite, as all the strength of the sultan was required to subjugate insurgent Circassia and Egypt.

Though the Emperor of Germany was esteemed the first sovereign in Europe, and, on state occasions, was served by kings and electors, he had in reality but little power. The kings who formed his retinue on occasions of ceremonial pomp, were often vastly his superiors in wealth and power. Frequently he possessed no territory of his own, not even a castle, but depended upon the uncertain aids reluctantly granted by the diet.

Gunpowder was now coming into use as one of the most efficient engines of destruction, and was working great changes in the science of war. It became necessary to have troops drilled to the use of cannon and muskets. The baron could no longer summon his vassals, at the moment, to abandon the plow, and seize pike and saber for battle, where the strong arm only was needed. Disciplined troops were needed, who could sweep the field with well-aimed bullets, and crumble walls with shot and shells. This led to the establishment of standing armies, and gave the great powers an immense advantage over their weaker neighbors. The invention of printing, also, which began to be operative about the middle of the fifteenth century, rapidly changed, by the diffusion of intelligence, the state of society, hitherto so barbarous. The learned men of Greece, driven from their country by the Turkish invasion, were scattered over Europe, and contributed not a little to the extension of the love of letters.

The discovery of the mariner's compass and improvements in nautical astronomy, also opened new sources of knowledge and of wealth, and the human mind all over Europe commenced a new start in the career of civilization. Men of letters began to share in those honors which heretofore had belonged exclusively to men of war; and the arts of peace began to claim consideration with those who had been accustomed to respect only the science of destruction.

Maximilian was at Innsbruck when he received intelligence of the death of his father. He commenced his reign with an act of rigor which was characteristic of his whole career. A horde of Turks had penetrated Styria and Carniola, laying every thing waste before them as far as Carniola. Maximilian, sounding the alarm, inspired his countrymen with the same energy which animated his own breast. Fifteen thousand men rallied at the blast of his bugles. Instead of intrusting the command of them to his generals, he placed himself at their head, and made so fierce an onset upon the invaders, that they precipitately fled. Maximilian returned at the head of his troops triumphant to Vienna, where he was received with acclamations such as had seldom resounded in the metropolis. He was hailed as the deliverer of his country, and at once rose to the highest position in the esteem and affection of the Austrians.

Maximilian had encountered innumerable difficulties in Burgundy, and was not unwilling to escape from the vexations and cares of that distant dukedom, by surrendering its government to his son Philip, who was now sixteen years of age, and whom the Burgundians claimed to be their ruler as the heir of Mary. The Swiss estates were also sundered from Austrian dominion, and, uniting with the Swiss confederacy, were no longer subject to the house of Hapsburg. Thus Maximilian had the Austrian estates upon the Danube only, as the nucleus of the empire he was ambitious of establishing.

Conscious of his power, and rejoicing in the imperial title, he had no idea of playing an obscure part on the conspicuous stage of European affairs. With an eagle eye he watched the condition of the empire, and no less eagerly did he fix his eye upon the movements of those great southern powers, now becoming consolidated into kingdoms and empires, and marshaling armies which threatened again to bring all Europe under a dominion as wide and despotic as that of Rome.

Charles VIII., King of France, crossed the Alps with an army of twenty-two thousand men, in the highest state of discipline, and armed with all the modern enginery of war. With ease he subjugated Tuscany, and in a triumphant march through Pisa and Siena, entered Rome as a conqueror. It was the 31st of December, 1394, when Charles, by torchlight, at the head of his exultant troops, entered the eternal city. The pope threw himself into the castle of St. Angelo, but was soon compelled to capitulate and to resign all his fortresses to the conqueror. Charles then continued his march to Naples, which he reached on the 22d of February. He overran and subjugated the whole kingdom, and, having consolidated his conquest, entered Naples on a white steed, beneath imperial banners, and arrogantly assumed the title of King of Naples, Sicily and Jerusalem. Alphonso, King of Naples, in despair, abdicated in favor of his son, Ferdinand; and Ferdinand, unable to oppose any effectual resistance, abandoned his kingdom to the conqueror, and fled to the island of Ischia.

These alarming aggressions on the part of France, already very powerful, excited general consternation throughout Europe. Maximilian, as emperor, was highly incensed, and roused all his energies to check the progress of so dangerous a rival. The Austrian States alone could by no means cope with the kingdom of France. Maximilian sent agents to the pope, to the Dukes of Milan and Florence, and to the King of Arragon, and formed a secret league to expel the French from Italy, and restore Ferdinand to Naples. It was understood that the strength of France was such, that this enterprise could only be achieved through a long war, and that the allies must continue united to prevent France, when once expelled from Italy, from renewing her aggressions. The league was to continue twenty-two years. The pope was to furnish six thousand men, and the other Italian States twelve thousand. Maximilian promised to furnish nine thousand. Venice granted the troops of the emperor a free passage through her dominions.

These important first steps being thus taken secretly and securely, the emperor summoned a diet of Germany to enlist the States of the empire in the enterprise. This was the most difficult task, and yet nothing could be accomplished without the coöperation of Germany. But the Germanic States, loosely held together, jealous of each other, each grasping solely at its own aggrandizement, reluctantly delegating any power to the emperor, were slow to promise coöperation in any general enterprise, and having promised, were still slower to perform. The emperor had no power to enforce the fulfillment of agreements, and could only supplicate. During the long reign of Frederic the imperial dignity had lapsed more and more into an empty title; and Maximilian had an arduous task before him in securing even respectful attention to his demands. He was fully aware of the difficulties, and made arrangements accordingly.

The memorable diet was summoned at Worms, on the 26th of May, 1496. The emperor had succeeded, by great exertion, in assembling a more numerous concourse of the princes and nobles of the empire than had ever met on a similar occasion. He presided in person, and in a long and earnest address endeavored to rouse the empire to a sense of its own dignity and its own high mission as the regulator of the affairs of Europe. He spoke earnestly of their duty to combine and chastise the insolence of the Turks; but waiving that for the present moment, he unfolded to them the danger to which Europe was immediately and imminently exposed by the encroachments of France. To add to the force of his words, he introduced ambassadors from the King of Naples, who informed the assembly of the conquests of the French, of their haughty bearing, and implored the aid of the diet to repel the invaders. The Duke of Milan was then presented, and, as a member of the empire, he implored as a favor and claimed as a right, the armies of the empire for the salvation of his duchy. And then the legate of the pope, in the robes of the Church, and speaking in the name of the Holy Father to his children, pathetically described the indignities to which the pope had been exposed, driven from his palace, bombarded in the fortress to which he had retreated, compelled to capitulate and leave his kingdom in the hands of the enemy; he expatiated upon the impiety of the French troops, the sacrilegious horrors of which they had been guilty, and in tones of eloquence hardly surpassed by Peter the Hermit, strove to rouse them to a crusade for the rescue of the pope and his sacred possessions.

Maximilian had now exhausted all his powers of persuasion. He had done apparently enough to rouse every heart to intensest action. But the diet listened coldly to all these appeals, and then in substance replied,

"We admit the necessity of checking the incursions of the Turks; we admit that it is important to check the progress of the French. But our first duty is to secure peace in Germany. The States of the empire are embroiled in incessant wars with each other. All attempts to prevent these private wars between the States of the empire have hitherto failed. Before we can vote money and men for any foreign enterprise whatever, we must secure internal tranquillity. This can only be done by establishing a supreme tribunal, supported by a power which can enforce its decisions."

These views were so manifestly judicious, that Maximilian assented to them, and, anxious to lose no time in raising troops to expel the French from Italy, he set immediately about the organization of an imperial tribunal to regulate the internal affairs of the empire. A court was created called the Imperial Chamber. It was composed of a president and sixteen judges, half of whom were taken from the army, and half from the class of scholars. To secure impartiality, the judges held their office for life. A majority of suffrages decided a question and in case of a tie, the president gave a casting vote. The emperor reserved the right of deciding certain questions himself. This court gradually became one of the most important and salutary institutions of the German empire.

By the 7th of August these important measures were arranged. Maximilian had made great concessions of his imperial dignity in transferring so much of his nominal power to the Imperial Chamber, and he was now sanguine that the States would vote him the supplies which were needed to expel the French from Italy, or, in more honest words, to win for the empire in Italy that ascendancy

which France had attained. But bitter indeed was his disappointment. After long deliberation and vexatious delays, the diet voted a ridiculous sum, less than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, to raise an army "sufficient to check the progress of the French." One third of this sum Maximilian was to raise from his Austrian States; the remaining two thirds he was permitted to obtain by a loan. Four years were to be allowed for raising the money, and the emperor, as a condition for the reception of even this miserable boon, was required to pledge his word of honor that at the expiration of the four years he would raise no more. And even these hundred and fifty thousand dollars were to be intrusted to seven treasurers, to be administered according to their discretion. One only of these treasurers was to be chosen by the emperor, and the other six by the diet.

Deeply chagrined by this result, Maximilian was able to raise only three thousand men, instead of the nine thousand which he had promised the league. Charles VIII., informed of the formidable coalition combining against him, and not aware of the feeble resources of the emperor, apprehensive that the armies of Germany, marching down and uniting with the roused States of Italy, might cut off his retreat and overwhelm him, decided that the "better part of courage is discretion;" and he accordingly abandoned his conquests, recrossed the Apennines, fought his backward path through Italy, and returned to France. He, however, left behind him six thousand men strongly intrenched, to await his return with a new and more powerful armament.

Maximilian now resolved chivalrously to throw himself into Italy, and endeavor to rouse the Italians themselves to resist the threatened invasion, trusting that the diet of Germany, when they should see him struggling against the hosts of France, would send troops to his aid. With five hundred horse, and about a thousand foot soldiers, he crossed the Alps. Here he learned that for some unknown reason Charles had postponed his expedition. Recoiling from the ridicule attending a quixotic and useless adventure, he hunted around for some time to find some heroic achievement which would redeem his name from reproach, when, thwarted in every thing, he returned to Austria, chagrined and humiliated.

Thus frustrated in all his attempts to gain ascendancy in Italy, Maximilian turned his eyes to the Swiss estates of the house of Hapsburg, now sundered from the Austrian territories. He made a vigorous effort, first by diplomacy, then by force of arms, to regain them. Here again he was frustrated, and was compelled to enter into a capitulation by which he acknowledged the independence of the Helvetic States, and their permanent severance from Austrian jurisdiction.

In April, 1498, Charles VIII. died, and Louis XII. succeeded him on the throne of France. Louis immediately made preparations for a new invasion of Italy. In those miserable days of violence and blood, almost any prince was ready to embark in war under anybody's banner, where there was the least prospect of personal aggrandizement. The question of right or wrong, seemed seldom to enter any one's mind. Louis fixed his eyes upon the duchy of Milan as the richest and most available prize within his grasp. Conscious that he would meet with much opposition, he looked around for allies.

"If you will aid me," he said to Pope Alexander VI., "I will assist you in your war against the Duke of Romagna. I will give your son, Caesar Borgia,¹ a pension of two thousand dollars a year, will confer upon him an important command in my army, and will procure for him a marriage with a princess of the royal house of Navarre."

The holy father could not resist this bribe, and eagerly joined the robber king in his foray. To Venice Louis said—

"If you will unite with me, I will assist you in annexing to your domains the city of Cremona, and the Ghiaradadda." Lured by such hopes of plunder, Venice was as eager as the pope to take a share in the piratic expedition. Louis then sent to the court of Turin, and offered them large sums of money and increased territory, if they would allow him a free passage across the Alps. Turin

¹ Caesar Borgia, who has filled the world with the renown of his infamy, was the illegitimate son of Alexander VI., and of a Roman lady named Yanozza.

bowed obsequiously, and grasped at the easy bargain. To Florence he said, "If you raise a hand to assist the Duke of Milan, I will crush you. If you remain quiet, I will leave you unharmed." Florence, overawed, remained as meek as a lamb. The diplomacy being thus successfully closed, an army of twenty-two thousand men was put in vigorous motion in July, 1499. They crossed the Alps, fought a few battles, in which, with overpowering numbers, they easily conquered their opposers, and in twenty days were in possession of Milan. The Duke Ludovico with difficulty escaped. With a few followers he threaded the defiles of the Tyrolese mountains, and hastened to Innspruck, the capital of Tyrol, where Maximilian then was, to whom he conveyed the first tidings of his disaster. Louis XII. followed after his triumphant army, and on the 6th of October made a triumphal entry into the captured city, and was inaugurated Duke of Milan.

Maximilian promised assistance, but could raise neither money nor men. Ludovico, however, succeeded in hiring fifteen hundred Burgundian horsemen, and eight thousand Swiss mercenaries—for in those ages of ignorance and crime all men were ready, for pay, to fight in any cause—and emerging from the mountains upon the plains of Milan, found all his former subjects disgusted with the French, and eager to rally under his banners. His army increased at every step. He fell fiercely upon the invaders, routed them everywhere, drove them from the duchy, and recovered his country and his capital as rapidly as he had lost them. One fortress only the French maintained. The intrepid Chevalier De Bayard, *the knight without fear and without reproach*, threw himself into the citadel of Novarra, and held out against all the efforts of Ludovico, awaiting the succor which he was sure would come from his powerful sovereign the King of France.

CHAPTER VI. MAXIMILIAN I

From 1500 to 1519

Base Treachery of the Swiss Soldiers.—Perfidy of Ferdinand of Arragon.—Appeals by Superstition.—Coalition with Spain.—The League of Cambray.—Infamy of the Pope.—The Kings's Apology.—Failure of the Plot.—Germany Aroused.—Confidence of Maximilian.—Longings for the Pontifical Chair.—Maximilian Bribed.—Leo X.—Dawning Prosperity.—Matrimonial Projects.—Commencement of the War of Reformation.—Sickness of Maximilian.—His Last Directions.—His Death.—The Standard by which his Character is to be Judged.

Louis XII., stung by the disgrace of his speedy expulsion from Milan, immediately raised another army of five thousand horse and fifteen thousand foot to recover his lost plunder. He also sent to Switzerland to hire troops, and without difficulty engaged ten thousand men to meet, on the plains of Milan, the six thousand of their brethren whom Ludovico had hired, to hew each other to pieces for the miserable pittance of a few pennies a day. But Louis XII. was as great in diplomacy as in war. He sent secret emissaries to the Swiss in the camp of Ludovico, offering them larger wages if they would abandon the service of Ludovico and return home. They promptly closed the bargain, unfurled the banner of mutiny, and informed the Duke of Milan that they could not, in conscience, fight against their own brethren. The duke was in despair. He plead even with tears that they would not abandon him. All was in vain. They not only commenced their march home, but basely betrayed the duke to the French. He was taken prisoner by Louis, carried to France and for five years was kept in rigorous confinement in the strong fortresses of the kingdom. Afterward, through the intercession of Maximilian, he was allowed a little more freedom. He was, however, kept in captivity until he died in the year 1510. Ludovico merits no commiseration. He was as perfidious and unprincipled as any of his assailants could be.

The reconquest of Milan by Louis, and the capture of Ludovico, alarmed Maximilian and roused him to new efforts. He again summoned the States of the empire and implored their coöperation to resist the aggressions of France. But he was as unsuccessful as in his previous endeavors. Louis watched anxiously the movements of the German diet, and finding that he had nothing to fear from the troops of the empire, having secured the investiture of Milan, prepared for the invasion of Naples. The venal pope was easily bought over. Even Ferdinand, the King of Arragon, was induced to loan his connivance to a plan for robbing a near relative of his crown, by the promise of sharing in the spoil. A treaty of partition was entered into by the two robber kings, by which Ferdinand of Arragon was to receive Calabria and Apulia, and the King of France the remaining States of the Neapolitan kingdom. The pope was confidentially informed of this secret plot, which was arranged at Grenada, and promised the plunderers his benediction, in consideration of the abundant reward promised to him.

The doom of the King of Naples was now sealed. All unconscious that his own relative, Ferdinand of Arragon, was conspiring against him, he appealed to Ferdinand for aid against the King of France. The perfidious king considered this as quite a providential interposition in his favor. He affected great zeal for the King of Naples, sent a powerful army into his kingdom, and stationed his troops in the important fortresses. The infamous fraud was now accomplished. Frederic of Naples, to his dismay, found that he had been placing his empire in the hands of his enemies instead of friends;

at the same time the troops of Louis arrived at Rome, where they were cordially received; and the pope immediately, on the 25th of June, 1501, issued a bull deposing Frederic from his kingdom, and, by virtue of that spiritual authority which he derived from the Apostle Peter, invested Louis and Ferdinand with the dominions of Frederic. Few men are more to be commiserated than a crownless king. Frederic, in his despair, threw himself upon the clemency of Louis. He was taken to France and was there fed and clothed by the royal bounty.

Maximilian impatiently watched the events from his home in Austria, and burned with the desire to take a more active part in these stirring scenes. Despairing, however, to rouse the German States to any effectual intervention in the affairs of southern Europe, he now endeavored to rouse the enthusiasm of the German nobles against the Turks. In this, by appealing to superstition, he was somewhat successful. He addressed the following circular letter to the German States:

"A stone, weighing two hundred pounds, recently fell from heaven, near the army under my command in Upper Alsace, and I caused it, as a fatal warning from God to men, to be hung up in the neighboring church of Encisheim. In vain I myself explained to all Christian kings the signification of this mysterious stone. The Almighty punished the neglect of this warning with a dreadful scourge, from which thousands have suffered death, or pains worse than death. But since this punishment of the abominable sins of men has produced no effect, God has imprinted in a miraculous manner the sign of the cross, and the instruments of our Lord's passion in dark and bloody colors, on the bodies and garments of thousands. The appearance of these signs in Germany, in particular, does not indeed denote that the Germans have been peculiarly distinguished in guilt, but rather that they should set the example to the rest of the world, by being the first to undertake a crusade against the infidels."

For a time Maximilian seemed quite encouraged, for quite a wave of religious enthusiasm seemed to roll over Europe. All the energies of the pope were apparently enlisted, and he raised, through all the domains of the Church, large sums of money for the holy enterprise of driving the invading infidels out of Europe. England and France both proffered their co-operation, and England, opening her inexhaustible purse, presented a subsidy of ten thousand pounds. The German nobles rallied in large numbers under the banner of the cross. But disappointment seemed to be the doom of the emperor. The King of France sent no aid. The pope, iniquitously squandered all the money he had raised upon his infamous, dissolute son, Cæsar Borgia. And the emperor himself was drawn into a war with Bavaria, to settle the right of succession between two rival claimants. The settlement of the question devolved upon Maximilian as emperor, and his dignity was involved in securing respect for his decision. Thus the whole gorgeous plan of a war against the Turks, such as Europe had never beheld, vanished into thin air, and Maximilian was found at the head of fourteen thousand infantry, and twelve thousand horse, engaged in a quarrel in the heart of Germany. In this war Maximilian was successful, and he rewarded himself by annexing to Austria several small provinces, the sum total of which quite enlarged his small domains.

By this time the kings of France and Spain were fiercely fighting over their conquest of Naples and Sicily, each striving to grasp the lion's share. Maximilian thought his interests would be promoted by aiding the Spaniards, and he accordingly sent three thousand men to Trieste, where they embarked, and sailing down the Adriatic, united with the Spanish troops. The French were driven out of Italy. There then ensued, for several years, wars and intrigues in which France, Spain, Italy and Austria were involved; all alike selfish and grasping. Armies were ever moving to and fro, and the people of Europe, by the victories of kings and nobles, were kept in a condition of misery. No one seemed ever to think of their rights or their happiness.

Various circumstances had exasperated Maximilian very much against the Venetians. All the powers of Europe were then ready to combine against any other power whatever, if there was a chance of obtaining any share in the division of the plunder. Maximilian found no difficulty in secretly forming one of the most formidable leagues history had then recorded, the celebrated league of Cambray. No sympathy need be wasted upon the Venetians, the victims of this coalition, for they

had rendered themselves universally detestable by their arrogance, rapacity, perfidy and pride. France joined the coalition, and, in view of her power, was to receive a lion's share of the prey—the provinces of Brescia, Bergamo, Cremona, and the Ghiradadda. The King of Arragon was to send ships and troops, and receive his pay in the maritime towns on the shores of the Adriatic. The pope, Julius II., the most grasping, perfidious and selfish of them all, demanded Ravenna, Cervia, Faenza, Rimini, Immola and Cesena. His exorbitant claims were assented to, as it was infinitely important that the piratic expedition should be sanctioned by the blessing of the Church. Maximilian was to receive, in addition to some territories which Venice had wrested from him, Roveredo, Verona, Padua, Vicenza, Treviso, and the Friuli. As Maximilian was bound by a truce with Venice, and as in those days of chivalry some little regard was to be paid to one's word of honor, Maximilian was only to march at the summons of the pope, which no true son of the Church, under any circumstances, was at liberty to disobey. Sundry other minor dukes and princes were engaged in the plot, who were also to receive a proportionate share of the spoil.

After these arrangements were all completed, the holy father, with characteristic infamy, made private overtures to the Venetians, revealing to them the whole plot, and offering to withdraw from the confederacy and thwart all its plans, if Venice would pay more as the reward of perfidy than Rome could hope to acquire by force of arms. The haughty republic rejected the infamous proposal, and prepared for a desperate defense.

All the powers of the confederacy were now collecting their troops. But Maximilian was dependent upon the German diet for his ability to fulfill his part of the contract. He assembled the diet at Worms on the 21st of April, 1509, presented to them the plan of the league, and solicited their support. The diet refused to cooperate, and hardly affecting even the forms of respect, couched its refusal in terms of stinging rebuke.

"We are tired," they said, "of these innumerable calls for troops and money. We can not support the burden of these frequent diets, involving the expense of long journeys, and we are weary of expeditions and wars. If the emperor enters into treaties with France and the pope without consulting us, it is his concern and not ours, and we are not bound to aid him to fulfill his agreement. And even if we were to vote the succors which are now asked of us, we should only be involved in embarrassment and disgrace, as we have been by the previous enterprises of the emperor."

Such, in brief, was the response of the diet. It drew from the emperor a long defense of his conduct, which he called an "Apology," and which is considered one of the most curious and characteristic documents of those days. He made no attempt to conceal his vexation, but assailed them in strong language of reproach.

"I have concluded a treaty with my allies," he wrote, "in conformity to the dictates of conscience and duty, and for the honor, glory and happiness of the empire and of Christendom. The negotiation could not be postponed, and if I had convoked a diet to demand the advice of the States, the treaty would never have been concluded. I was under the necessity of concealing the project of the combined powers, that we might fall on the Venetians at once and unexpectedly, which could not have been effected in the midst of public deliberations and endless discussions; and I have, I trust, clearly proved, both in my public and my private communications, the advantage which is likely to result from this union. If the aids hitherto granted by diets have produced nothing but disgrace and dishonor, I am not to blame, but the States who acted so scandalously in granting their succors with so much reluctance and delay. As for myself, I have, on the contrary, exposed my treasure, my countries, my subjects and my life, while the generality of the German States have remained in dishonorable tranquillity at home. I have more reason to complain of you than you of me; for you have constantly refused me your approbation and assistance; and even when you have granted succors, you have rendered them fruitless by the scantiness and tardiness of your supplies, and compelled me to dissipate my own revenues, and injure my own subjects."

Of course these bitter recriminations accomplished nothing in changing the action of the diet, and Maximilian was thrown upon the Austrian States alone for supplies. Louis of France, at the head of seventeen thousand troops, crossed the Alps. The pope fulminated a bull of excommunication against the Venetians, and sent an army of ten thousand men. The Duke of Ferrara and the Marquis of Mantua sent their contingents. Maximilian, by great exertions, sent a few battalions through the mountains of the Tyrol, and was preparing to follow with stronger forces. Province after province fell before the resistless invaders, and Venice would have fallen irretrievably had not the conquerors begun to quarrel among themselves. The pope, in secret treaty, was endeavoring to secure his private interests, regardless of the interests of the allies. Louis, from some pique, withdrew his forces, and abandoned Maximilian in the hour of peril, and the emperor, shackled by want of money, and having but a feeble force, was quite unable to make progress alone against the Venetian troops.

It does not seem to be the will of Providence that the plots of unprincipled men, even against men as bad as themselves, should be more than transiently prosperous. Maximilian, thus again utterly thwarted in one of his most magnificent plans, covered with disgrace, and irritated almost beyond endurance, after attempting in vain to negotiate a truce with the Venetians, was compelled to retreat across the Alps, inveighing bitterly against the perfidious refusal to fulfill a perfidious agreement.

The holy father, Julius II., outwitted all his accomplices. He secured from Venice very valuable accessions of territory, and then, recalling his ecclesiastical denunciations, united with Venice to drive the *barbarians*, as he affectionately called his French and German allies, out of Italy. Maximilian returned to Austria as in a funeral march, ventured to summon another diet, told them how shamefully he had been treated by France, Venice and the pope, and again implored them to do something to help him. Perseverance is surely the most efficient of virtues. Incredible as it may seem, the emperor now obtained some little success. The diet, indignant at the conduct of the pope, and alarmed at so formidable a union as that between the papal States and Venice, voted a succor of six thousand infantry and eighteen hundred horse. This encouraged the emperor, and forgetting his quarrel with Louis XII. of France, in the stronger passion of personal aggrandizement which influenced him, he entered into another alliance with Louis against the pope and Venice, and then made a still stronger and a religious appeal to Germany for aid. A certain class of politicians in all countries and in all ages, have occasionally expressed great solicitude for the reputation of religion.

"The power and government of the pope," the emperor proclaimed, "which ought to be an example to the faithful, present, on the contrary, nothing but trouble and disorder. The enormous sums daily extorted from Germany, are perverted to the purposes of luxury or worldly views, instead of being employed for the service of God, or against the infidels. As Emperor of Germany, as advocate and protector of the Christian Church, it is my duty to examine into such irregularities, and exert all my efforts for the glory of God and the advantage of the empire; and as there is an evident necessity to reëstablish due order and decency, both in the ecclesiastical and temporal state, I have resolved to call a general council, without which nothing permanent can be effected."

It is said that Maximilian was now so confident of success, that he had decided to divide Italy between himself and France. He was to take Venice and the States of the Church, and France was to have the rest. Pope Julius was to be deposed, and to be succeeded by Pope Maximilian. The following letter from Maximilian to his daughter, reveals his ambitious views at the time. It is dated the 18th of September, 1511.

"To-morrow I shall send the Bishop of Guzk to the pope at Rome, to conclude an agreement with him that I may be appointed his coadjutor, and on his death succeed to the papacy, and become a priest, and afterwards a saint, that you may be bound to worship me, of which I shall be very proud. I have written on this subject to the King of Arragon, intreating him to favor my undertaking, and he has promised me his assistance, provided I resign my imperial crown to my grandson Charles, which I am very ready to do. The people and nobles of Rome have offered to support me against the French and Spanish party. They can muster twenty thousand combatants, and have sent me word that they

are inclined to favor my scheme of being pope, and will not consent to have either a Frenchman, a Spaniard or a Venetian.

"I have already began to sound the cardinals, and, for that purpose, two or three hundred thousand ducats would be of great service to me, as their partiality to me is very great. The King of Arragon has ordered his ambassadors to assure me that he will command the Spanish cardinals to favor my pretensions to the papacy. I intreat you to keep this matter secret for the present, though I am afraid it will soon be known, for it is impossible to carry on a business secretly for which it is necessary to gain over so many persons, and to have so much money. Adieu. Written with the hand of your dear father Maximilian, future pope. The pope's fever has increased, and he can not live long."

It is painful to follow out the windings of intrigue and the labyrinths of guile, where selfishness seemed to actuate every heart, and where all alike seem destitute of any principle of Christian integrity. Bad as the world is now, and selfish as political aspirants are now, humanity has made immense progress since that dark age of superstition, fraud and violence. After many victories and many defeats, after innumerable fluctuations of guile, Maximilian accepted a bribe, and withdrew his forces, and the King of France was summoned home by the invasion of his own territories by the King of Arragon and Henry VIII. of England, who, for a suitable consideration, had been induced to join Venice and the pope. At the end of this long campaign of diplomacy, perfidy and blood, in which misery had rioted through ten thousand cottages, whose inhabitants the warriors regarded no more than the occupants of the ant-hills they trampled beneath their feet, it was found that no one had gained any thing but toil and disappointment.

On the 21st of February, 1513, Pope Julius II. died, and the cardinals, rejecting all the overtures of the emperor, elected John of Medici pope, who assumed the name of Leo X. The new pontiff was but thirty-six years of age, a man of brilliant talents, and devoted to the pursuit of letters. Inspired by boundless ambition, he wished to signalize his reign by the magnificence of his court and the grandeur of his achievements.

Thus far nothing but disaster seemed to attend the enterprises of Maximilian; but now the tide suddenly turned and rolled in upon him billows of prosperity. It will be remembered that Maximilian married, for his first wife, Mary, the daughter of the Duke of Burgundy. Their son Philip married Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, whose marriage, uniting the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon, created the splendid kingdom of Spain. Philip died young, leaving a son, Charles, and Joanna, an insane wife, to watch his grave through weary years of woe. Upon the death of Ferdinand, in January, 1516, Charles, the grandson of Maximilian, became undisputed heir to the whole monarchy of Spain; then, perhaps, the grandest power in Europe, including Naples, Sicily and Navarre. This magnificent inheritance, coming so directly into the family, and into the line of succession, invested Maximilian and the house of Austria with new dignity.

It was now an object of intense solicitude with Maximilian, to secure the reversion of the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, which were both upon the brow of Ladislaus, to his own family. With this object in view, and to render assurance doubly sure, he succeeded in negotiating a marriage between two children of Ladislaus, a son and a daughter, and two of his own grand-children. This was a far pleasanter mode of acquiring territory and family aggrandizement than by the sword. In celebration of the betrothals, Ladislaus and his brother Sigismund, King of Poland, visited Vienna, where Ladislaus was so delighted with the magnificent hospitality of his reception, that he even urged upon the emperor, who was then a widower, fifty-eight years of age, that he should marry another of his daughters, though she had but attained her thirteenth year. The emperor declined the honor, jocularly remarking—

"There is no method more pleasant to kill an old man, than to marry him to a young bride."

The German empire was then divided into ten districts, or circles, as they were then called, each of which was responsible for the maintenance of peace among its own members. These districts were, Austria, Burgundy, the Upper Rhine, the Lower Rhine, Franconia, Bavaria, Suabia, Westphalia,

Upper Saxony and Lower Saxony. The affairs of each district were to be regulated by a court of a few nobles, called a diet. The emperor devoted especial attention to the improvement of his own estate of Austria, which he subdivided into two districts, and these into still smaller districts. Over all, for the settlement of all important points of dispute, he established a tribunal called the Aulic Council, which subsequently exerted a powerful influence over the affairs of Austria.

One more final effort Maximilian made to rouse Germany to combine to drive the Turks out of Europe. Though the benighted masses looked up with much reverence to the pontiff, the princes and the nobles regarded him only as a *power*, wielding, in addition to the military arm, the potent energies of superstition. A diet was convened. The pope's legate appeared, and sustained the eloquent appeal of the emperor with the paternal commands of the holy father. But the press was now becoming a power in Europe, diffusing intelligence and giving freedom to thought and expression. The diet, after listening patiently to the arguments of the emperor and the requests of the pontiff, dryly replied—

"We think that Christianity has more to fear from the pope than from the Turks. Much as we may dread the ravages of the infidel, they can hardly drain Christendom more effectually than it is now drained by the exactions of the Church."

It was at Augsburg in July, 1518, that the diet ventured thus boldly to speak. This was one year after Luther had nailed upon the church door in Wittenberg, his ninety-five propositions, which had roused all Germany to scrutinize the abominable corruptions of the papal church. This bold language of the diet, influenced by the still bolder language of the intrepid monk, alarmed Leo X., and on the 7th of August he issued his summons commanding Luther to repair to Rome to answer for heresy. Maximilian, who had been foiled in his own attempt to attain the chair of St. Peter, who had seen so much of the infamous career of Julius and Alexander, as to lose all his reverence for the sacred character of the popes, and who regarded Leo X. merely as a successful rival who had thwarted his own plans, espoused, with cautious development, but with true interest, the cause of the reformer. And now came the great war of the Reformation, agitating Germany in every quarter, and rousing the lethargic intellect of the nations as nothing else could rouse it. Maximilian, with characteristic fickleness, or rather, with characteristic pliancy before every breeze of self-interest, was now on the one side, now on the other, and now, nobody knew where, until his career was terminated by sudden and fatal sickness.

The emperor was at Innsbruck, all overwhelmed with his cares and his plans of ambition, when he was seized with a slight fever. Hoping to be benefited by a change of air, he set out to travel by slow stages to one of his castles among the mountains of Upper Austria. The disease, however, rapidly increased, and it was soon evident that death was approaching. The peculiarities of his character were never more strikingly developed than in these last solemn hours. Being told by his physicians that he had not long to live and that he must now prepare for the final judgment, he calmly replied, "I have long ago made that preparation. Had I not done so, it would be too late now."

For four years he had been conscious of declining health, and had always carried with him, wherever he traveled, an oaken coffin, with his shroud and other requisites for his funeral. With very minute directions he settled all his worldly affairs, and gave the most particular instructions respecting his funeral. Changing his linen, he strictly enjoined that his shirt should not be removed after his death, for his fastidious modesty was shocked by the idea of the exposure of his body, even after the soul had taken its flight.

He ordered his hair, after his death, to be cut off, all his teeth to be extracted, pounded to powder and publicly burned in the chapel of his palace. For one day his remains were to be exposed to the public, as a lesson of mortality. They were then to be placed in a sack filled with quicklime. The sack was to be enveloped in folds of silk and satin, and then placed in the oaken coffin which had been so long awaiting his remains. The coffin was then to be deposited under the altar of the chapel of his palace at Neustadt, in such a position that the officiating priest should ever trample over his head and heart. The king expressed the hope that this humiliation of his body would, in some

degree, be accepted by the Deity in atonement for the sins of his soul. How universal the instinct that sin needs an atonement!

Having finished these directions the emperor observed that some of his attendants were in tears. "Do you weep," said he, "because you see a mortal die? Such tears become women rather than men." The emperor was now dying. As the ecclesiastics repeated the prayers of the Church, the emperor gave the responses until his voice failed, and then continued to give tokens of recognition and of faith, by making the sign of the cross. At three o'clock in the morning of the 11th of January, 1519, the Emperor Maximilian breathed his last. He was then in the sixtieth year of his age.

Maximilian is justly considered one of the most renowned of the descendants of Rhodolph of Hapsburg. It is saying but little for his moral integrity, to affirm that he was one of the best of the rulers of his age. According to his ideas of religion, he was a religious man. According to his ideas of honesty and of honor, he was both an honest and an honorable man. According to his idea of what is called *moral conduct*, he was irreproachable, being addicted to no *ungenteel* vices, or any sins which would be condemned by his associates. His ambition was not to secure for himself ease or luxury, but to extend his imperial power, and to aggrandize his family. For these objects he passed his life, ever tossed upon the billows of toil and trouble. In industry and perseverance, he has rarely been surpassed.

Notwithstanding the innumerable interruptions and cares attendant upon his station, he still found time, one can hardly imagine when, to become a proficient in all the learning of the day. He wrote and spoke four languages readily, Latin, French, German and Italian. Few men have possessed more persuasive powers of eloquence. All the arts and sciences he warmly patronized, and men of letters of every class found in him a protector. But history must truthfully declare that there was no perfidy of which he would not be guilty, and no meanness to which he would not stoop, if he could only extend his hereditary domains and add to his family renown.

CHAPTER VII. CHARLES V. AND THE REFORMATION

From 1519 to 1531

Charles V. of Spain.—His Election as Emperor of Germany.—His Coronation.—The first Constitution.—Progress of the Reformation.—The Pope's Bull against Luther.—His Contempt for his Holiness.—The Diet at Worms.—Frederic's Objection to the Condemnation of Luther by the Diet.—He obtains for Luther the Right of Defense.—Luther's triumphal March to the Tribunal.—Charles urged to violate his Safe Conduct.—Luther's Patmos.—Marriage of Sister Catharine Bora to Luther.—Terrible Insurrection.—The Holy League.—The Protest of Spires.—Confession of Augsburg.—The two Confessions.—Compulsory Measures.

Charles V. of Spain, as the nearest male heir, inherited from Maximilian the Austrian States. He was the grandson of the late emperor, son of Philip and of Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and was born on the 24th of February, 1500. He had been carefully educated in the learning and accomplishments of the age, and particularly in the arts of war. At the death of his grandfather, Ferdinand, Charles, though but sixteen years of age, assumed the title of King of Spain, and though strongly opposed for a time, he grasped firmly and held securely the reins of government.

Joanna, his mother, was legally the sovereign, both by the laws of united Castile and Arragon, and by the testaments of Isabella and Ferdinand. But she was insane, and was sunk in such depths of melancholy as to be almost unconscious of the scenes which were transpiring around her. Two years had elapsed between the accession of Charles V. to the throne of Spain and the death of his grandfather, Maximilian. The young king, with wonderful energy of character, had, during that time, established himself very firmly on the throne. Upon the death of Maximilian many claimants rose for the imperial throne. Henry VIII. of England and Francis of France, were prominent among the competitors. For six months all the arts of diplomacy were exhausted by the various candidates, and Charles of Spain won the prize. On the 28th of June, 1519, he was unanimously elected Emperor of Germany. The youthful sovereign, who was but nineteen years of age, was at Barcelona when he received the first intelligence of his election. He had sufficient strength of character to avoid the slightest appearance of exultation, but received the announcement with dignity and gravity far above his years.

The Spaniards were exceedingly excited and alarmed by the news. They feared that their young sovereign, of whom they had already begun to be proud, would leave Spain to establish his court in the German empire, and they should thus be left, as a distant province, to the government of a viceroy. The king was consequently flooded with petitions, from all parts of his dominions, not to accept the imperial crown. But Charles was as ambitious as his grandfather, Maximilian, whose foresight and maneuvering had set in train those influences which had elevated him to the imperial dignity.

Soon a solemn embassy arrived, and, with the customary pomp, proffered to Charles the crown which so many had coveted. Charles accepted the office, and made immediate preparations, notwithstanding the increasing clamor of his subjects, to go to Germany for his coronation. Intrusting the government of Spain during his absence to officers in whom he reposed confidence, he embarked on shipboard, and landing first at Dover in England, made a visit of four days to Henry VIII. He then continued his voyage to the Netherlands; proceeding thence to Aix-la-Chapelle, he was crowned

on the 20th of October, 1520, with magnificence far surpassing that of any of his predecessors. Thus Charles V., when but twenty years of age, was the King of Spain and the crowned Emperor of Germany. It is a great mistake to suppose that youthful precocity is one of the innovations of modern times.

In the changes of the political kaleidoscope, Austria had now become a part of Spain, or rather a prince of Austrian descent, a lineal heir of the house of Hapsburg, had inherited the dominion of Spain, the most extensive monarchy, in its continental domains and its colonial possessions, then upon the globe. The Germanic confederation at this time made a decided step in advance. Hitherto the emperors, when crowned, had made a sort of verbal promise to administer the government in accordance with the laws and customs of the several states. They were, however, apprehensive that the new emperor, availing himself of the vast power which he possessed independently of the imperial crown, might, by gradual encroachments, defraud them of their rights. A sort of constitution was accordingly drawn up, consisting of thirty-six articles, defining quite minutely the laws, customs and privileges of the empire, which constitution Charles was required to sign before his coronation.

Charles presided in person over his first diet which he had convened at Worms on the 6th of January, 1521. The theological and political war of the Reformation was now agitating all Germany, and raging with the utmost violence. Luther had torn the veil from the corruptions of papacy, and was exhibiting to astonished Europe the enormous aggression and the unbridled licentiousness of pontifical power. Letter succeeded letter, and pamphlet pamphlet, and they fell upon the decaying hierarchy like shot and shell upon the walls of a fortress already crumbling and tottering through age.

On the 15th of July, 1520, three months before the coronation of Charles V., the pope issued his world-renowned bull against the intrepid monk. He condemned Luther as a heretic, forbade the reading of his writings, excommunicated him if he did not retract within sixty days, and all princes and states were commanded, under pain of incurring the same censure, to seize his person and punish him and his adherents. Many were overawed by these menaces of the holy father, who held the keys of heaven and of hell. The fate of Luther was considered sealed. His works were publicly burned in several cities.

Luther, undaunted, replied with blow for blow. He declared the pope to be antichrist, renounced all obedience to him, detailed with scathing severity the conduct of corrupt pontiffs, and called upon the whole nation to renounce all allegiance to the scandalous court of Rome. To cap the climax of his contempt and defiance, he, on the 10th of December, 1520, not two months after the crowning of Charles V., led his admiring followers, the professors and students of the university of Wittemberg, in procession to the eastern gate of the city, where, in the presence of a vast concourse, he committed the papal bull to the flames, exclaiming, in the words of Ezekiel, "Because thou hast troubled the Holy One of God, let eternal fire consume thee." This dauntless spirit of the reformer inspired his disciples throughout Germany with new courage, and in many other cities the pope's bull of excommunication was burned with expressions of indignation and contempt.

Such was the state of this great religious controversy when Charles V. held his first diet at Worms. The pope, wielding all the energies of religious fanaticism, and with immense temporal revenues at his disposal, with ecclesiastics, officers of his spiritual court, scattered all over Europe, who exercised almost a supernatural power over the minds of the benighted masses, was still perhaps the most formidable power in Europe. The new emperor, with immense schemes of ambition opening before his youthful and ardent mind, and with no principles of heartfelt piety to incline him to seek and love the truth, as a matter of course sought the favor of the imperial pontiff, and was not at all disposed to espouse the cause of the obscure monk.

Charles, therefore, received courteously the legates of the pontiff at the diet, gave them a friendly hearing as they inveighed against the heresy of Luther, and proposed that the diet should also condemn the reformer. Fortunately for Luther he was a subject of the electorate of Saxony, and neither pope nor emperor could touch him but through the elector. Frederic, the Duke of Saxony,

one of the electors of the empire, governed a territory of nearly fifteen thousand square miles, more than twice as large as the State of Massachusetts, and containing nearly three millions of inhabitants. The duchy has since passed through many changes and dismemberments, but in the early part of the sixteenth century the Elector of Saxony was one of the most powerful princes of the German empire. Frederic was not disposed to surrender his subject untried and uncondemned to the discipline of the Roman pontiff. He accordingly objected to this summary condemnation of Luther, and declared that before judgment was pronounced, the accused should be heard in his own defense. Charles, who was by no means aware how extensively the opinions of Luther had been circulated and received, was surprised to find many nobles, each emboldened by the rest, rise in the diet and denounce, in terms of ever-increasing severity, the exactions and the arrogance of the court of Rome.

Notwithstanding the remonstrances of the pope's legates, the emperor found it necessary to yield to the demands of the diet, and to allow Luther the privilege of being heard, though he avowed to the friends of the pope that Luther should not be permitted to make any defense, but should only have an opportunity to confess his heresy and implore forgiveness. Worms, where the diet was in session, on the west banks of the Rhine, was not within the territories of the Elector of Saxony, and consequently the emperor, in sending a summons to Luther to present himself before the diet, sent, also, a safe conduct. With alacrity the bold reformer obeyed the summons. From Wittemberg, where Luther was both professor in the university and also pastor of a church, to Worms, was a distance of nearly three hundred miles. But the journey of the reformer, through all of this long road was almost like a triumphal procession. Crowds gathered everywhere to behold the man who had dared to bid defiance to the terrors of that spiritual power before which the haughtiest monarchs had trembled. The people had read the writings of Luther, and justly regarded him as the advocate of civil and religious liberty. The nobles, who had often been humiliated by the arrogance of the pontiff, admired a man who was bringing a new power into the field for their disenthralment.

When Luther had arrived within three miles of Worms, accompanied by a few friends and the imperial herald who had summoned him, he was met by a procession of two thousand persons, who had come from the city to form his escort. Some friends in the city sent him a warning that he could not rely upon the protection of his *safe conduct*, that he would probably be perfidiously arrested, and they intreated him to retire immediately again to Saxony. Luther made the memorable reply,

"I will go to Worms, if as many devils meet me there as there are tiles upon the roofs of the houses."

The emperor was astonished to find that greater crowds were assembled, and greater enthusiasm was displayed in witnessing the entrance of the monk of Wittemberg, than had greeted the imperial entrance to the city.

It was indeed an august assemblage before which Luther was arrayed. The emperor himself presided, sustained by his brother, the Archduke Ferdinand. Six electors, twenty-four dukes, seven margraves, thirty bishops and prelates, and an uncounted number of princes, counts, lords and ambassadors filled the spacious hall. It was the 18th of April, 1521. His speech, fearless, dignified, eloquent, unanswerable, occupied two hours. He closed with the noble words,

"Let me be refuted and convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by the clearest arguments; otherwise I can not and will not recant; for it is neither safe nor expedient to act against conscience. Here I take my stand. I can do no otherwise, so help me God, Amen."

In this sublime moral conflict Luther came off the undisputed conqueror. The legates of the pope, exasperated at his triumph, intreated the emperor to arrest him, in defiance of his word of honor pledged for his safety. Charles rejected the infamous proposal with disdain. Still he was greatly annoyed at so serious a schism in the Church, which threatened to alienate from him the patronage of the pope. It was evident that Luther was too strongly entrenched in the hearts of the Germans, for the youthful emperor, whose crown was not yet warm upon his brow, and who was almost a stranger

in Germany, to undertake to crush him. To appease the pope he drew up an apologetic declaration, in which he said, in terms which do not honor his memory,

"Descended as I am from the Christian emperors of Germany, the Catholic kings of Spain, and from the archdukes of Austria and the Dukes of Burgundy, all of whom have preserved, to the last moment of their lives, their fidelity to the Church, and have always been the defenders and protectors of the Catholic faith, its decrees, ceremonies and usages, I have been, am still, and will ever be devoted to those Christian doctrines, and the constitution of the Church which they have left to me as a sacred inheritance. And as it is evident that a simple monk has advanced opinions contrary to the sentiments of all Christians, past and present, I am firmly determined to wipe away the reproach which a toleration of such errors would cast on Germany, and to employ all my powers and resources, my body, my blood, my life, and even my soul, in checking the progress of this sacrilegious doctrine. I will not, therefore, permit Luther to enter into any further explanation, and will instantly dismiss and afterward treat him as a heretic. But I can not violate my safe conduct, but will cause him to be conducted safely back to Wittemberg."

The emperor now attempted to accomplish by intrigue that which he could not attain by authority of force. He held a private interview with the reformer, and endeavored, by all those arts at the disposal of an emperor, to influence Luther to a recantation. Failing utterly in this, he delayed further operations for a month, until many of the diet, including the Elector of Saxony and other powerful friends of Luther, had retired. He then, having carefully retained those who would be obsequious to his will, caused a decree to be enacted, as if it were the unanimous sentiment of the diet, that Luther was a heretic; confirmed the sentence of the pope, and pronounced the ban of the empire against all who should countenance or protect him.

But Luther, on the 26th of May, had left Worms on his return to Wittemberg. When he had passed over about half the distance, his friend and admirer, Frederic of Saxony, conscious of the imminent peril which hung over the intrepid monk, sent a troop of masked horsemen who seized him and conveyed him to the castle of Wartburg, where Frederic kept him safely concealed for nine months, not allowing even his friends to know the place of his concealment. Luther, acquiescing in the prudence of this measure, called this retreat his Patmos, and devoted himself most assiduously to the study of the Scriptures, and commenced his most admirable translation of the Bible into the German language, a work which has contributed vastly more than all others to disseminate the principles of the Reformation throughout Germany.

It will be remembered that Maximilian's son Ferdinand, who was brother to Charles V., had married Anne, daughter of Ladislaus, King of Hungary and Bohemia. Disturbances in Spain rendered it necessary for the emperor to leave Germany, and for eight years his attention was almost constantly occupied by wars and intrigues in southern Europe. Ferdinand was invested with the government of the Austrian States. In the year 1521, Leo X. died, and Adrian, who seems to have been truly a conscientious Christian man, assumed the tiara. He saw the deep corruptions of the Church, confessed them openly, mourned over them and declared that the Church needed a thorough reformation.

This admission, of course, wonderfully strengthened the Lutheran party. The diet, meeting soon after, drew up a list of a hundred grievances, which they intreated the pope to reform, declaring that Germany could no longer endure them. They declared that Luther had opened the eyes of the people to these corruptions, and that they would not suffer the edicts of the diet of Worms to be enforced. Ferdinand of Austria, entering into the views of his brother, was anxious to arrest the progress of the new ideas, now spreading with great rapidity, and he entered—instructed by a legate, Campegio, from the pope—into an engagement with the Duke of Bavaria, and most of the German bishops, to carry the edict of Worms into effect.

Frederic, the Elector of Saxony, died in 1525, but he was succeeded by his brother John the Constant, who cordially embraced and publicly avowed the doctrines of the Reformation; and Luther, in July of this year, gave the last signal proof of his entire emancipation from the superstitions of

the papacy by marrying Catharine Bora, a noble lady who, having espoused his views, had left the nunnery where she had been an inmate. It is impossible for one now to conceive the impression which was produced in Catholic Europe by the marriage of a priest and a nun.

Many of the German princes now followed the example of John of Saxony, and openly avowed their faith in the Lutheran doctrines. In the Austrian States, notwithstanding all Ferdinand's efforts to the contrary, the new faith steadily spread, commanding the assent of the most virtuous and the most intelligent. Many of the nobles avowed themselves Lutherans, as did even some of the professors in the university at Vienna. The vital questions at issue, taking hold, as they did, of the deepest emotions of the soul and the daily habits of life, roused the general mind to the most intense activity. The bitterest hostility sprung up between the two parties, and many persons, without piety and without judgment, threw off the superstitions of the papacy, only to adopt other superstitions equally revolting. The sect of Anabaptists rose, abjuring all civil as well as all religious authority, claiming to be the elect of God, advocating a community of goods and of wives, and discarding all restraint. They roused the ignorant peasantry, and easily showed them that they were suffering as much injustice from feudal lords as from papal bishops. It was the breaking out of the French Revolution on a small scale. Germany was desolated by infuriate bands, demolishing alike the castles of the nobles and the palaces of the bishops, and sparing neither age nor sex in their indiscriminate slaughter.

The insurrection was so terrible, that both Lutherans and papists united to quell it; and so fierce were these fanatics, that a hundred thousand perished on fields of blood before the rebellion was quelled. These outrages were, of course, by the Catholics regarded as the legitimate results of the new doctrines, and it surely can not be denied that they sprung from them. The fire which glows on the hearth may consume the dwelling. But Luther and his friends assailed the Anabaptists with every weapon they could wield. The Catholics formed powerful combinations to arrest the spread of evangelical views. The reformers organized combinations equally powerful to diffuse those opinions, which they were sure involved the welfare of the world.

Charles V., having somewhat allayed the troubles which harassed him in southern Europe, now turned his attention to Germany, and resolved, with a strong hand, to suppress the religious agitation. In a letter to the German States he very peremptorily announced his determination, declaring that he would exterminate the errors of Luther, exhorting them, to resist all attacks against the ancient usages of the Church, and expressing to each of the Catholic princes his earnest approval of their conduct.

Germany was now threatened with civil war. The Catholics demanded the enforcement of the edict of Worms. The reformers demanded perfect toleration—that every man should enjoy freedom of opinion and of worship. A new war in Italy perhaps prevented this appeal to arms, as Charles V. found himself involved in new difficulties which engrossed all his energies. Ferdinand found the Austrian States so divided by this controversy, that it became necessary for him to assume some degree of impartiality, and to submit to something like toleration. A new pope, Clement VII., succeeded the short reign of Adrian, and all the ambition, intrigue and corruption which had hitherto marked the course of the court of Rome, resumed their sway. The pope formed the celebrated Holy League to arrest the progress of the new opinions; and this led all the princes of the empire, who had espoused the Lutheran doctrines, more openly and cordially to combine in self-defense. In every country in Europe the doctrines of the reformer spread rapidly, and the papal throne was shaken to its base.

Charles V., whose arms were successful in southern Europe, and whose power was daily increasing, was still very desirous of restoring quiet to Europe by reëstablishing the supremacy of the papal Church, and crushing out dissent. He accordingly convened another diet at Spire, the capital of Rhenish Bavaria, on the 15th of March, 1529. As the emperor was detained in Italy, his brother Ferdinand presided. The diet was of course divided, but the majority passed very stringent resolutions against the Reformation. It was enacted that the edict of Worms should be enforced; that the mass should be reëstablished wherever it had been abolished; and that preachers should promulgate no new

doctrines. The minority entered their protest. They urged that the mass had been clearly proved to be contrary to the Word of God; that the Scriptures were the only certain rule of life; and declared their resolution to maintain the truths of the Old and New Testaments, regardless of traditions. This *Protest* was sustained by powerful names—John, Elector of Saxony; George, Margrave of Brandenburg; two Dukes of Brunswick; the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel; the Prince of Anhalt, and fourteen imperial cities, to which were soon added ten more. Nothing can more decisively show than this the wonderful progress which the Reformation in so short a time had made. From this Protest the reformers received the name of Protestants, which they have since retained.

The emperor, flushed with success, now resolved, with new energy, to assail the principles of the Reformation. Leaving Spain he went to Italy, and met the pope, Clement VII., at Bologna, in February, 1530. The pope and the emperor held many long and private interviews. What they said no one knows. But Charles V., who was eminently a sagacious man, became convinced that the difficulty had become far too serious to be easily healed, that men of such power had embraced the Lutheran doctrines that it was expedient to change the tone of menace into one of respect and conciliation. He accordingly issued a call for another diet to meet in April, 1530, at the city of Augsburg in Bavaria.

"I have convened," he wrote, "this assembly to consider the difference of opinion on the subject of religion. It is my intention to hear both parties with candor and charity, to examine their respective arguments, to correct and reform what requires to be corrected and reformed, that the truth being known, and harmony established, there may, in future, be only one pure and simple faith, and, as all are disciples of the same Jesus, all may form one and the same Church."

These fair words, however, only excited the suspicions of the Protestants, which suspicions subsequent events proved to be well founded. The emperor entered Augsburg in great state, and immediately assumed a dictatorial air, requiring the diet to attend high mass with him, and to take part in the procession of the host.

"I will rather," said the Marquis of Brandenburg to the emperor, "instantly offer my head to the executioner, than renounce the gospel and approve idolatry. Christ did not institute the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to be carried in pomp through the streets, nor to be adored by the people. He said, 'Take, eat;' but never said, 'Put this sacrament into a vase, carry it publicly in triumph, and let the people prostrate themselves before it.'"

The Protestants, availing themselves of the emperor's declaration that it was his intention to hear the sentiments of all, drew up a confession of their faith, which they presented to the emperor in German and in Latin. This celebrated creed is known in history as the *Confession of Augsburg*. The emperor was quite embarrassed by this document, as he was well aware of the argumentative powers of the reformers, and feared that the document, attaining celebrity, and being read eagerly all over the empire, would only multiply converts to their views. At first he refused to allow it to be read. But finding that this only created commotion which would add celebrity to the confession, he adjourned the diet to a small chapel where but two hundred could be convened. When the Chancellor of Saxony rose to read the confession, the emperor commanded that he should read the Latin copy, a language which but few of the Germans understood.

"Sire," said the chancellor, "we are now on German ground. I trust that your majesty will not order the apology of our faith, which ought to be made as public as possible, to be read in a language not understood by the Germans."

The emperor was compelled to yield to so reasonable a request. The adjacent apartments, and the court-yard of the palace, were all filled with an eager crowd. The chancellor read the creed in a voice so clear and loud that the whole multitude could hear. The emperor was very uneasy, and at the close of the reading, which occupied two hours, took both the Latin and the German copies, and requested that the confession should not be published without his consent. Luther and Melancthon drew up this celebrated document. Melancthon was an exceedingly mild and amiable man, and such a lover of peace that he would perhaps do a little violence to his own conscience in the attempt to

conciliate those from whom he was constrained to differ. Luther, on the contrary, was a man of great force, decision and fearlessness, who would speak the truth in the plainest terms, without softening a phrase to conciliate either friend or foe. The Confession of Augsburg being the joint production of both Melancthon and Luther, did not *exactly* suit either. It was a little too uncompromising for Melancthon, a little too pliant and yielding for Luther. Melancthon soon after took the confession and changed it to bring it into more entire accordance with his spirit. Hence a division which, in oblivion of its origin, has continued to the present day. Those who adhered to the original document which was presented to the emperor, were called Lutherans; those who adopted the confession as softened by Melancthon, were called German Reformed.

The emperor now threw off the mask, and carrying with him the majority of the diet, issued a decree of intolerance and menace, in which he declared that all the ceremonies, doctrines and usages of the papal church, without exception, were to be reëstablished, married priests deposed, suppressed convents restored, and every innovation, of whatever kind, to be revoked. All who opposed this decree were to be exposed to the ban of the empire, with all its pains and penalties.

This was indeed an appalling measure. Recantation or war was the only alternative. Charles, being still much occupied by the affairs of his vast kingdom of Spain, with all its ambitions and wars, needed a coadjutor in the government of Germany, as serious trouble was evidently near at hand. He therefore proposed the election of his brother Ferdinand as coadjutor with him in administering the affairs of Germany. Ferdinand, who had recently united to the Austrian territories the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia, was consequently chosen, on the 5th of January, 1531, King of the Romans. Charles was determined to enforce his decrees, and both parties now prepared for war.

CHAPTER VIII. CHARLES V. AND THE REFORMATION

From 1531 to 1552

Determination to crush Protestantism.—Incursion of the Turks.—Valor of the Protestants.—Preparations for renewed Hostilities.—Augmentation of the Protestant Forces.—The Council of Trent.—Mutual Consternation.—Defeat of the Protestant Army.—Unlooked for Succor.—Revolt in the Emperor's Army.—The Fluctuations of Fortune.—Ignoble Revenge.—Capture of Wittemberg.—Protestantism Apparently Crushed.—Plot against Charles.—Maurice of Saxony.—A Change of Scene.—The Biter Bit.—The Emperor humbled.—His Flight.—His determined Will.

The intolerant decrees of the diet of Augsburg, and the evident determination of the emperor unrelentingly to enforce them, spread the greatest alarm among the Protestants. They immediately assembled at Smalkalde in December, 1530, and entered into a league for mutual protection. The emperor was resolved to crush the Protestants. The Protestants were resolved not to be crushed. The sword of the Catholics was drawn for the assault—the sword of the reformers for defense. Civil war was just bursting forth in all its horrors, when the Turks, with an army three hundred thousand strong, like ravening wolves rushed into Hungary. This danger was appalling. The Turks in their bloody march had, as yet, encountered no effectual resistance; though they had experienced temporary checks, their progress had been on the whole resistless, and wherever they had planted their feet they had established themselves firmly. Originating as a small tribe on the shores of the Caspian, they had spread over all Asia Minor, had crossed the Bosphorus, captured Constantinople, and had brought all Greece under their sway. They were still pressing on, flushed with victory. Christian Europe was trembling before them. And now an army of three hundred thousand had crossed the Danube, sweeping all opposition before them, and were spreading terror and destruction through Hungary. The capture of that immense kingdom seemed to leave all Europe defenseless.

The emperor and his Catholic friends were fearfully alarmed. Here was a danger more to be dreaded than even the doctrines of Luther. All the energies of Christendom were requisite to repel this invasion. The emperor was compelled to appeal to the Protestant princes to coöperate in this great emergency. But they had more to fear from the fiery persecution of the papal church than from the cimeter of the infidel, and they refused any coöperation with the emperor so long as the menaces of the Augsburg decrees were suspended over them. The emperor wished the Protestants to help him drive out the Turks, that then, relieved from that danger, he might turn all his energies against the Protestants.

After various negotiations it was agreed, as a temporary arrangement, that there should be a truce of the Catholic persecution until another general council should be called, and that until then the Protestants should be allowed freedom of conscience and of worship. The German States now turned their whole force against the Turks. The Protestants contributed to the war with energy which amazed the Catholics. They even trebled the contingents which they had agreed to furnish, and marched to the assault with the greatest intrepidity. The Turks were driven from Hungary, and then the emperor, in violation of his pledge, recommenced proceeding against the Protestants. But it was the worst moment the infatuated emperor could have selected. The Protestants, already armed and marshaled, were not at all disposed to lie down to be trodden upon by their foes. They renewed their

confederacy, drove the emperor's Austrian troops out of the territories of Wirtemberg, which they had seized, and restored the duchy to the Protestant duke, Ulric. Civil war had now commenced. But the Protestants were strong, determined, and had proved their valor in the recent war with the Turks. The more moderate of the papal party, foreseeing a strife which might be interminable, interposed, and succeeded in effecting a compromise which again secured transient peace.

Charles, however, had not yet abandoned his design to compel the Protestants to return to the papal church. He was merely temporizing till he could bring such an array of the papal powers against the reformers that they could present no successful resistance. With this intention he entered into a secret treaty with the powerful King of France, in which Francis agreed to concentrate all the forces of his kingdom to crush the Lutheran doctrines. He then succeeded in concluding a truce with the Turks for five years. He was now prepared to act with decision against the reformed religion.

But while Charles had been marshaling his party the Protestants had been rapidly increasing. Eloquent preachers, able writers, had everywhere proclaimed the corruptions of the papacy and urged a pure gospel. These corruptions were so palpable that they could not bear the light. The most intelligent and conscientious, all over Europe, were rapidly embracing the new doctrines. These new doctrines embraced and involved principles of civil as well as religious liberty. The Bible is the most formidable book which was ever penned against aristocratic usurpation. God is the universal Father. All men are brothers. The despots of that day regarded the controversy as one which, in the end, involved the stability of their thrones. "Give us light," the Protestants said. "Give us darkness," responded the papacy, "or the submissive masses will rise and overthrow despotic thrones as well as idolatrous altars."

Several of the ablest and most powerful of the bishops who, in that day of darkness, had been groping in the dark, now that light had come into the world, rejoiced in that light, and enthusiastically espoused the truth. The emperor was quite appalled when he learned that the Archbishop of Cologne, who was also one of the electors of the empire, had joined the reformers; for, in addition to the vast influence of his name, this conversion gave the Protestants a majority in the electoral diet, so many of the German princes had already adopted the opinions of Luther. The Protestants, encouraged by the rapidity with which their doctrines were spreading, were not at all disposed to humble themselves before their opponents, but with their hands upon the hilts of their swords, declared that they would not bow their necks to intolerance.

It was indeed a formidable power which the emperor was now about to marshal against the Protestants. He had France, Spain, all the roused energies of the pope and his extended dominions, and all the Catholic States of the empire. But Protestantism, which had overrun Germany, had pervaded Switzerland and France, and was daily on the increase. The pope and the more zealous papists were impatient and indignant that the emperor did not press his measures with more vigor. But the sagacious Charles more clearly saw the difficulties to be surmounted than they did, and while no less determined in his resolves, was more prudent and wary in his measures.

With the consent of the pope he summoned a general council to meet at Trent on the confines of his own Austrian territories, where he could easily have every thing under his own control. He did every thing in his power, in the meantime to promote division among the Protestants, by trying to enter into private negotiations with the Protestant princes. He had the effrontery to urge the Protestants to send their divines to the council of Trent, and agreed to abide by its decisions, even when that council was summoned by the pope, and was to be so organized as to secure an overwhelming majority to the papists. The Protestants, of course, rejected so silly a proposition, and refused to recognize the decrees of such a council as of any binding authority.

In preparation for enforcing the decrees which he intended to have enacted by the council of Trent, Charles obtained from the pope thirteen thousand troops, and five hundred thousand ducats (one million one hundred thousand dollars). He raised one army in the Low Countries to march upon Germany. He gathered another army in his hereditary States of Austria. His brother Ferdinand, as

King of Hungary and Bohemia, raised a large army in each of those dominions. The King of France mustered his legions, and boasted of the condign punishment to which he would consign the heretics. The pope issued a decree offering the entire pardon of all sins to those who should engage in this holy war for the extirpation of the doctrines of the reformers.

The Protestants were for a moment in consternation in view of the gatherings of so portentous a storm. The emperor, by false professions and affected clemency, had so deceived them that they were quite unprepared for so formidable an attack. They soon, however, saw that their only salvation depended upon a vigorous defense, and they marshaled their forces for war. With promptness and energy which even astonished themselves, they speedily raised an army which, on the junction of its several corps, amounted to eighty thousand men. In its intelligence, valor, discipline and equipments, it was probably the best army which had ever been assembled in the States of Germany. Resolutely they marched under Schartlin, one of the most experienced generals of the age, toward Ratisbon, where the emperor was holding a diet.

Charles V. was as much alarmed by this unexpected apparition, as the Protestants had been alarmed by the preparations of the emperor. He had supposed that his force was so resistless that the Protestants would see at once the hopelessness of resistance, and would yield without a struggle. The emperor had a guard of but eight thousand troops at Ratisbon. The Duke of Bavaria, in whose dominions he was, was wavering, and the papal troops had not commenced their march. But there was not a moment to be lost. The emperor himself might be surrounded and taken captive. He retired precipitately about thirty miles south to the strong fortress of Landshut, where he could hold out until he received succor from his Austrian territories, which were very near, and also from the pope.

Charles soon received powerful reinforcements from Austria, from the pope, and from his Spanish kingdom. With these he marched some forty miles west to Ingolstadt and intrenched himself beneath its massive walls. Here he waited for further reinforcements, and then commencing the offensive, marched up the Danube, taking possession of the cities on either bank. And now the marshaled forces of the emperor began to crowd the Protestants on all sides. The army became bewildered, and instead of keeping together, separated to repel the attack at different points. This caused the ruin of the Protestant army. The dissevered fragments were speedily dispersed. The emperor triumphantly entered the Protestant cities of Ulm and Augsburg, Strasbourg and Frankfort, compelled them to accept humiliating conditions, to surrender their artillery and military stores, and to pay enormous fines. The Archbishop of Cologne was deposed from his dignities. The emperor had thrown his foes upon the ground and bound them.

All the Protestant princes but two were vanquished, the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse. It was evident that they must soon yield to the overwhelming force of the emperor. It was a day of disaster, in which no gleam of light seemed to dawn upon the Protestant cause. But in that gloomy hour we see again the illustration of that sentiment, that "the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong." Unthinking infidelity says sarcastically, "Providence always helps the heavy battalions." But Providence often brings to the discomfited, in their despair, reinforcements all unlooked for.

There were in the army of Ferdinand, gathered from the Austrian territories by the force of military conscription, many troops more or less influenced by the reformed religion. They were dissatisfied with this warfare against their brothers, and their dissatisfaction increased to murmurs and then to revolt. Thus encouraged, the Protestant nobles in Bohemia rose against Ferdinand their king, and the victorious Ferdinand suddenly found his strong battalions melting away, and his banners on the retreat.

The other powers of Europe began to look with alarm upon the vast ascendancy which Charles V. was attaining over Europe. His exacting and aggressive spirit assumed a more menacing aspect than the doctrines of Luther. The King of France, Francis I., with the characteristic perfidy of the times, meeting cunning with cunning, formed a secret league against his ally, combining, in that league,

the English ministry who governed during the minority of Edward VI., and also the coöperation of the illustrious Gustavus Vasa, the powerful King of Sweden, who was then strongly inclined to that faith of the reformers which he afterwards openly avowed. Even the pope, who had always felt a little jealous of the power of the emperor, thought that as the Protestants were now put down it might be well to check the ambition of Charles V. a little, and he accordingly ordered all his troops to return to Italy. The holy father, Paul III., even sent money to the Protestant Elector of Saxony, to enable him to resist the emperor, and sent ambassadors to the Turks, to induce them to break the truce and make war upon Christendom, that the emperor might be thus embarrassed.

Charles thus found himself, in the midst of his victories, suddenly at a stand. He could no longer carry on offensive operations, but was compelled to prepare for defense against the attacks with which he was threatened on every side.

Again, the kaleidoscope of political combination received a jar, and all was changed. The King of France died. This so embarrassed the affairs of the confederation which Francis had organized with so much toil and care, that Charles availed himself of it to make a sudden and vigorous march against the Elector of Saxony. He entered his territories with an army of thirty-three thousand men, and swept all opposition before him. In a final and desperate battle the troops of the elector were cut to pieces, and the elector himself, surrounded on all sides, sorely wounded in the face and covered with blood, was taken prisoner. Charles disgraced his character by the exhibition of a very ignoble spirit of revenge. The captive elector, as he was led into the presence of his conqueror, said—

"Most powerful and gracious emperor, the fortune of war has now rendered me your prisoner, and I hope to be treated—"

Here the emperor indignantly interrupted him, saying—

"I am *now* your gracious emperor! Lately you could only vouchsafe me the title of Charles of Ghent!"

Then turning abruptly upon his heel, he consigned his prisoner to the custody of one of the Spanish generals. The emperor marched immediately to Wittemberg, which was distant but a few miles. It was a well fortified town, and was resolutely defended by Isabella, the wife of the elector. The emperor, maddened by the resistance, summoned a court martial, and sentenced the elector to instant death unless he ordered the surrender of the fortress. He at first refused, and prepared to die. But the tears of his wife and his family conquered his resolution, and the city was surrendered. The emperor took from his captive the electoral dignity, and extorted from him the most cruel concessions as the ransom for his life. Without a murmur he surrendered wealth, power and rank, but neither entreaties nor menaces could induce him in a single point to abjure his Christian faith.

Charles now entered Wittemberg in triumph. The great reformer had just died. The emperor visited the grave of Luther, and when urged to dishonor his remains, replied—

"I war not with the dead, but with the living. Let him repose in peace; he is already before his Judge."

The Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, now the only member of the Protestant league remaining in arms, was in a condition utterly hopeless, and was compelled to make an unconditional submission.

The landgrave, ruined in fortune, and crushed in spirit, was led a captive into the imperial camp at Halle, in Saxony, the 19th of June, 1547. He knelt before the throne, and made an humble confession of his crime in resisting the emperor; he resigned himself and all his dominions to the clemency of his sovereign. As he rose to kiss the hand of the emperor, Charles turned contemptuously from him and ordered him to be conveyed to one of the apartments of the palace as a prisoner. Most ignobly the emperor led his two illustrious captives, the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, as captives from city to city, exhibiting them as proofs of his triumph, and as a warning to all others to avoid their fate. Very strong jealousies had now sprung up between the emperor and the pope, and they could not cooperate. The emperor, consequently, undertook to settle the religious differences himself. He caused twenty-six articles to be drawn up as the basis of pacification, which

he wished both the Catholics and the Protestants to sign. The pope was indignant, and the Catholics were disgusted with this interference of the emperor in the faith of the Church, a matter which in their view belonged exclusively to the pope and the councils which he might convene.

The emperor, however, resolutely persevered in the endeavor to compel the Protestants to subscribe to his articles, and punished severely those who refused to do so. In his Burgundian provinces he endeavored to establish the inquisition, that all heresy might be nipped in the bud. In his zeal he quite outstripped the pope. As Julius III. had now ascended the pontifical throne, Charles, fearful that he might be too liberal in his policy towards the reformers, and might make too many concessions, extorted from him the promise that he would not introduce any reformation in the Church without consulting him and obtaining his consent. Thus the pope himself became but one of the dependents of Charles V., and all the corruptions of the Church were sustained by the imperial arm. He then, through the submissive pope, summoned a council of Catholic divines to meet at Trent. He had arranged in his own mind the decrees which they were to issue, and had entered into a treaty with the new King of France, Henry II., by which the French monarch agreed, with all the military force of his kingdom, to maintain the decrees of the council of Trent, whatever they might be.

The emperor had now apparently attained all his ends. He had crushed the Protestant league, vanquished the Protestant princes, subjected the pope to his will, arranged religious matters according to his views, and had now assembled a subservient council to ratify and confirm all he had done. But with this success he had become arrogant, implacable and cruel. His friends had become alienated and his enemies exasperated. Even the most rigorous Catholics were alarmed at his assumptions, and the pope was humiliated by his haughty bearing.

Charles assembled a diet of the States of the empire at Augsburg, the 26th of July, 1550. He entered the city with the pomp and the pride of a conqueror, and with such an array of military force as to awe the States into compliance with his wishes. He then demanded of all the States of the empire an agreement that they would enforce, in all their dominions the decrees of the council of Trent, which council was soon to be convened. There is sublimity in the energy with which this monarch moved, step by step, toward the accomplishment of his plans. He seemed to leave no chance for failure. The members of the diet were as obsequious as spaniels to their imperious master, and watched his countenance to learn when they were to say yes, and when no.

In one thing only he failed. He wished to have his son Philip elected as his successor on the imperial throne. His brother Ferdinand opposed him in this ambitious plan, and thus emboldened the diet to declare that while the emperor was living it was illegal to choose his successor, as it tended to render the imperial crown hereditary. The emperor, sagacious as he was domineering, waived the prosecution of his plan for the present, preparing to resume it when he had punished and paralyzed those who opposed.

The emperor had deposed Frederic the Elector of Saxony, and placed over his dominions, Maurice, a nephew of the deposed elector. Maurice had married a daughter of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel. He was a man of commanding abilities, and as shrewd, sagacious and ambitious as the emperor himself. He had been strongly inclined to the Lutheran doctrines, but had been bought over to espouse the cause of Charles V. by the brilliant offer of the territories of Saxony. Maurice, as he saw blow after blow falling upon his former friends; one prince after another ejected from his estates, Protestantism crushed, and finally his own uncle and his wife's father led about to grace the triumph of the conqueror; as he saw the vast power to which the emperor had attained, and that the liberties of the German empire were in entire subjection to his will, his pride was wounded, his patriotism aroused, and his Protestant sympathies revived. Maurice, meeting Charles V. on the field of intrigue, was Greek meeting Greek.

Maurice now began with great guile and profound sagacity to plot against the despotic emperor. Two circumstances essentially aided him. Charles coveted the dukedoms of Parma and Placentia in Italy, and the Duke Ottavia had been deposed. He rallied his subjects and succeeded in uniting France

on his side, for Henry II. was alarmed at the encroachments the emperor was making in Italy. A very fierce war instantly blazed forth, the Duke of Parma and Henry II. on one side, the pope and the emperor on the other. At the same time the Turks, under the leadership of the Sultan Solyman himself, were organizing a formidable force for the invasion of Hungary, which invasion would require all the energies of Ferdinand, with all the forces he could raise in Austria, Hungary and Bohemia to repel.

Next to Hungary and Bohemia, Saxony was perhaps the most powerful State of the Germanic confederacy. The emperor placed full reliance upon Maurice, and the Protestants in their despair would have thought of him as the very last to come to their aid; for he had marched vigorously in the armies of the emperor to crush the Protestants, and was occupying the territories of their most able and steadfast friend. Secretly, Maurice made proposals to all the leading Protestant princes of the empire, and having made every thing ready for an outbreak, he entered into a treaty with the King of France, who promised large subsidies and an efficient military force.

Maurice conducted these intrigues with such consummate skill that the emperor had not the slightest suspicion of the storm which was gathering. Every thing being matured, early in April, 1552, Maurice suddenly appeared before the gates of Augsburg with an army of twenty-five thousand men. At the same time he issued a declaration that he had taken up arms to prevent the destruction of the Protestant religion, to defend the liberties of Germany which the emperor had infringed, and to rescue his relatives from their long and unjust imprisonment. The King of France and other princes issued similar declarations. The smothered disaffection with the emperor instantly blazed forth all over the German empire. The cause of Maurice was extremely popular. The Protestants in a mass, and many others, flocked to his standard. As by magic and in a day, all was changed. The imperial towns Augsburg, Nuremberg and others, threw open their gates joyfully to Maurice. Whole provinces rushed to his standard. He was everywhere received as the guardian of civil and religious liberty. The ejected Protestant rulers and magistrates were reinstated, the Protestant churches opened, the Protestant preachers restored. In one month the Protestant party was predominant in the German empire, and the Catholic party either neutral or secretly favoring one who was humbling that haughty emperor whom even the Catholics had begun to fear. The prelates who were assembling at Trent, alarmed by so sudden and astounding a revolution, dissolved the assembly and hastened to their homes.

The emperor was at Innspruck seated in his arm chair, with his limbs bandaged in flannel, enfeebled and suffering from a severe attack of the gout, when the intelligence of this sudden and overwhelming reverse reached him. He was astonished and utterly confounded. In weakness and pain, unable to leave his couch, with his treasury exhausted, his armies widely scattered, and so pressed by their foes that they could not be concentrated from their wide dispersion, there was nothing left for him but to endeavor to beguile Maurice into a truce. But Maurice was as much at home in all the arts of cunning as the emperor, and instead of being beguiled, contrived to entrap his antagonist. This was a new and a very salutary experience for Charles. It is a very novel sensation for a successful rogue to be the dupe of roguery.

Maurice pressed on, his army gathering force at every step. He entered the Tyrol, swept through all its valleys, took possession of all its castles and its sublime fastnesses, and the blasts of his bugles reverberated among the cliffs of the Alps, ever sounding the charge and announcing victory, never signaling a defeat. The emperor was reduced to the terrible humiliation of saving himself from capture only by flight. The emperor could hardly credit his senses when told that his conquering foes were within two days' march of Innspruck, and that a squadron of horse might at any hour appear and cut off his retreat. It was in the night when these appalling tidings were brought to him. The tortures of the gout would not allow him to mount on horseback, neither could he bear the jolting in a carriage over the rough roads. It was a dark and stormy night, the 20th of May, 1552. The rain fell in torrents, and the wind howled through the fir-trees and around the crags of the Alps. Some attendants wrapped the monarch in blankets, took him out into the court-yard of the palace, and placed him in a litter.

Attendants led the way with lanterns, and thus, through the inundated and storm-swept defiles of the mountains, they fled with their helpless sovereign through the long hours of the tempestuous night, not daring to stop one moment lest they should hear behind them the clatter of the iron hoofs of their pursuers. What a change for one short month to produce! What a comment upon earthly grandeur! It is well for man in the hour of most exultant prosperity to be humble. He knows not how soon he may fall. Instructive indeed is the apostrophe of Cardinal Wolsey, illustrated as the truth he utters is by almost every page of history:

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