"I will tell her," replied Eugene. "I will tell her that all honor, all humanity, all justice, forgetting, a father has cruelly betrayed his own daughter, and has cursed her life forever. Your wicked action has broken the hearts of two of God's creatures, and has consigned them to a misery that can only end with death. I say not, 'May God forgive you.' No! may God avenge my Laura's wrongs, and may he choose Eugene of Savoy as the instrument of His wrath! for every pang that rends the heart of my beloved, and for every throe that racks my own, you shall answer to me, proud minister of France: and, as there lives a God in heaven, you shall regret one day that you rejected me for your son-in-law."

Without another word or look toward Louvois, he left the room, and returned to his carriage. When he re-entered the cabinet of madame, his ghastly face, the very incarnation of woe, told its own story.

"You bring me evil tidings," said she, mournfully. "My darling is lost to us both!"

"Alas, my prophetic heart! She is married!" was his cry of despair.

"Poor Laura! poor Eugene!" sobbed the duchess, unable to restrain her tears.

"If you weep, what shall *I* do?" asked Eugene. "Why do you take it so much to heart?"

"Why?" exclaimed she. "Because I am no longer young, and I have lost my last hope of happiness. You, at least, have life and the world before you."

"And I," said he, languidly—"I am young, and have a lifetime wherein to suffer. The world is before me! Yes; but it is a waste, without tree or flower. With scorched eyes and blistered feet, I must tread its burning sands alone. Forgive me, dear lady, if I ask permission to go. If I stay much longer, my aching head will burst."

"You are wan as a spectre, my poor Eugene," returned the duchess, laying her hand upon his arm, and looking him compassionately in the face.

"And, in truth, I am but the corpse of the living man of yesterday," sighed he. "Let me go home, that I may bury myself and my dead hopes together."

The duchess rang for her gentleman in waiting, and requested him to accompany the prince to his carriage, and thence to the Hôtel de Soissons; but Eugene gently refused the proffered escort, and begged to be allowed to depart alone. He turned away, and as the duchess watched his receding figure, she saw him reel from side to side, like a man intoxicated.

At last he was at home. He had strength left to alight, to ascend the long marble staircase, whose balustrade was now hidden by a thicket of climbing jessamines, and to enter the antechamber leading to the apartments of state.

Monsieur Louis, with the élite of his workmen, was decorating its walls with hangings of white satin, looped with garlands suspended from the bills of cooing doves. When he beheld the prince, he came triumphantly forward.

"See, your highness, this is but the vestibule of the temple! When you will have seen its interior, you will confess that it is worthy the abode of the loveliest bride that ever graced its princely halls."

Eugene neither interrupted nor answered him. He raised his large, mournful eyes to the festooned roses, the gilded doves, the snowy, shimmering satin, and to his fading senses they seemed gradually to darken into cypress-wreaths and funereal palls. He pressed his hand upon his bursting heart, and fell insensible to the floor.

CHAPTER III.

THE REPULSE.

EIGHT weeks had passed away since the disappearance of the Marchioness de Bonaletta—eight weeks of suffering and delirium for Eugene of Savoy. A nervous fever had ensued, which, if it had well-nigh proved mortal, had proved, in one sense, beneficent; for it had stricken him with unconsciousness of woe. Blissful dreams of love hovered about his couch, and lit up with feverish brilliancy his pallid countenance. At

such times *she* seemed to sit beside him; for he smiled, held out his hand, and addressed her in words of burning love and ecstasy. Perhaps these joyful phantasms gave him strength to recuperate from his terrible prostration, for he recovered; and, after four weeks of struggle between life and death, was declared convalescent. His grandmother and his sisters had nursed him tenderly throughout, and they had the satisfaction of hearing from his physician, that to their loving care he owed his restoration to health. The poor sufferer himself could not find it in his heart to be grateful for the boon. With returning reason came awakening anguish, sharp as the first keen stroke that had laid low the beautiful fabric of his ephemeral happiness.

But he was resolved to face his sorrow—not to fly from it. "It shall kill me or make a man of me, whom no shaft of adversity can ever wound again," thought he. He confided his troubles to no one, little dreaming that his secret was known not only to his grandmother and his sisters, but to the Princes de Conti, who, throughout their long watches by his bedside, had heard the history of his love, its return by the beloved one, and its disastrous end. But each and all respected the secret, and tacitly agreed to cover it with a veil of profound silence.

So Eugene suffered and struggled alone, until the tempest of his grief had passed, and light once more dawned upon his soul. His dreamy eyes, in whose depths one visionary object had been mirrored, now rested upon things with quick and apprehensive intelligence; his ears, that had been pained with one monotonous dirge of woe, now opened to the sounds of the outer world around; and his thoughts, which hitherto had kept unceasing plaint for their buried love, now shook off repining, and hearkened to the trumpet-call of ambition.

One morning he called Conrad, who (accustomed of late to see his master reclining languidly on a sofa, seemingly interested in nothing) was quite surprised to find him in the arsenal, busily engaged in examining and cleaning his arms.

Conrad could not repress a smile, and a glance of mingled astonishment and delight. Eugene saw it, and replied at once.

"You see," said he, gently, "that I am better, Conrad. I

was very slow to recover from my severe illness, but I believe that I am quite sound again. I thank you for all your self-sacrificing devotion to me, during that season of suffering; and never while my heart beats will I forget it. Let me press your friendly hand within my own, for well I know that your highest reward is to be found in my esteem and affection."

Conrad grasped the hand that was so kindly proffered, and tears of joy fell upon its pale, attenuated fingers.

"My dear lord," sobbed he, "how you have suffered! and oh, how gladly I would have suffered for you!"

"I believe it, good, true heart; but let us try to forget the past, and make ready for the future. First—tell me whether the letter you took for me yesterday is likely to reach the cabinet of his majesty."

"Yes, your highness," replied Conrad, with a happy smile. "My cousin Lolo washes the plate at the Louvre, and is engaged to be married to the king's second valet. I gave it to her, and charged her, as she valued her salvation, to see that Leblond remitted it."

"So far, so well, then. Order my state-carriage, livery, and outriders; and then return to assist me in dressing. I must go to court in half an hour."

While Eugene was preparing to visit the king, his majesty with his prime minister was in his cabinet, writing; while, not too far to be out of reach of his majesty's admiring eyes, sat the demure De Maintenon, profoundly engaged in tapestry-work. The conference over, Louis signed to Louvois to gather up the papers to which the royal signature had been attached, and to take his leave. Louvois hastened to obey; put his portfolio under his arm, and was about to retire, when the king bade him remain.

"Apropos," said he, "I was about to forget a trifle that may as well be attended to. I have received a letter from Prince Eugene of Savoy. There is a vacancy in the dragoons, and the little prince asks for it. Methinks it can be granted."

Louvois smiled. "What, your majesty! Give a captaincy of dragoons to that poor little weakling? Why, he would not survive one single campaign." As he uttered these careless

words, he glanced at the marquise, who understood him at once.

"In truth," observed she, in her soft, musical voice, whose melody was as bewitching as that of the sea-maids of Sicily "in truth, poor Prince Eugene seems as unsuited to the career of a soldier as to that of an ecclesiastic. The dissipated and debauched life which, in imitation of his mother, he has led since his boyhood, has exhausted his energies. He is prematurely old—older far than your majesty."

A complacent smile flitted over the features of the vain monarch. "He certainly looked more dead than alive the last time we saw him, and since then he has been very ill, has he not?"

"Yes," replied Louvois, carelessly, "and for a long time his recovery was considered doubtful."

"Madame told me of it," resumed the king. "She seems very much interested in the little prince."

"Madame is the impersonation of goodness," observed De Maintenon, "and by her very innocence is unfitted to judge of character. The old Princess de Carignan imposed upon her credulity with some story of an unhappy attachment, while veritably his illness is nothing more than the natural consequence of his excesses."

Louvois thanked his coadjutor with a second glance, and the marquise acknowledged the compliment by a slight inclination of her head, imperceptible to the king.

"Be all this as it may," replied the latter, "I cannot refuse so paltry a favor to the nephew of Cardinal Mazarin. If we do no more, we ought at least to throw him a bone to gnaw."*

"Sire," said Louvois, hastily, "you do not know Prince Eugene. He is a dangerous man, though a weakly one, for he is possessed of insatiable ambition. He desires renown at any price."

"At any price!" repeated Louis, with a shrug. "Such a poor devil as that covet renown at any price!"

"Sire!" exclaimed Louvois, earnestly, "he is an offshoot

* Louis' own words.—"Mémoires de Jeanne d'Albret de Luynes," vol. i., p. 85.

of the ambitious house of Savoy, and a stranger besides. Strangers always bring us ill-luck."

"You are right," interposed the marquise, with a sigh. "Strangers never bring us any but ill-luck."

Louis turned and fixed his eyes upon her. Their glances met, and there was such unequivocal love expressed in that of the pious marquise, that her royal disciple blushed with gratification. He went up to her and extended both his hands.

She took them passionately within her own, and covered them with kisses. Then raising her eyes pleadingly to his, she whispered, "Sire, he is the son of his mother; and if your majesty show him favor, I shall think that you have not ceased to love the Countess de Soissons, and my heart will break."

Louis was so touched by the charming jealousy unconsciously betrayed by these words, that he whispered in return:

"I will prove, then, that I love nobody but yourself."

"Be so good," added he aloud to Louvois, "as to say to the usher that the Prince of Savoy will have an audience."

This being equivalent to a dismission, Louvois backed out of his master's presence, and retired. As he was passing through the antechamber, congratulating himself upon having effectually muzzled his adversary, the minister saw his pale, serious face at the door. Eugene was in the act of desiring the usher to announce him.

"His majesty awaits the Prince of Savoy," said Louvois, and he stepped aside to allow him entrance.

Eugene came in, and the door was closed. The two enemies were alone, face to face; and they surveyed each other as two lions might do on the eve of a deathly contest.

"It has pleased you to make an attempt to beg a commission in the army, and to address yourself directly to the king," said Louvois, after a pause. "And you presumed to do so without the intervention of his majesty's minister of war."

"I have no business with the servants of his majesty," replied Eugene, tranquilly. "If I have a request to make, I address it to the king my kinsman, and require no influence of his subordinates."

"Sir!" exclaimed Louvois, angrily, "I counsel you—"

"I desire no counsel from a man whom I despise," interrupted Eugene.

"You shall give me satisfaction for this word," returned Louvois, laying his hand on his sword. "You are a nobleman, and therefore—"

"And therefore," interrupted Eugene again, "you shall have no satisfaction from me, for you are *not* a nobleman, and I shall not measure swords with you. Peace, monsieur," continued he, as Louvois was about to insult him, "we are in the antechamber of the king, and a servant may not resent his grievances within earshot of his master. Take care that you become not too obstreperous, lest I publish to the world the story of your crimes toward your unhappy daughter. And now let me pass: the king awaits me."

With these words Eugene crossed the antechamber, and stood near the door that led to the king's cabinet. There he stopped, and, addressing the indignant minister—

"Now, sir," said he, imperatively, "you can go out to the vestibule and send the usher to announce me to his majesty."

Louvois made a rush at the prince, and almost shrieked with rage. "Sir, this insolence—"

But at that moment the door of the king's cabinet opened, and the voice of Louis asked, "Who presumes to speak so loud?" His angry glances were launched first at one and then at the other offender, and, as neither made any reply, his majesty resumed:

"Ah, you are there, little abbé? You asked for an audience: it is granted."

He returned to his cabinet, Eugene following. The marquise was assiduously occupied with her tapestry, but her large eyes were raised for one glance; then, as quickly casting them down, she appeared to be absorbed in her embroidery.

The king threw himself carelessly back in an arm-chair, and signed to Eugene to advance.

"You would like to command a company of dragoons?" said Louis, shortly.

"Such is my desire, your majesty. I wish to become a soldier; I hope—a brave one."

Louis surveyed him with scorn. "I cannot grant your request," said he. "You are too sickly to enter my service."

He then rose from his chair and turned his back. This of course signified that the audience was at an end; but, to his unspeakable astonishment, he felt the touch of a hand upon his arm, and, turning round, beheld Eugene!

"Is that all your majesty has to say to me?" said the prince.

"That is all," cried Louis, imperiously. "The audience is at an end—begone!"

"Not yet," replied Eugene, "not yet."

Madame de Maintenon uttered a cry of horror, and her tapestry fell from her hands.

"Do you know that you are a traitor?" exclaimed the king.

"No, sire. I am but a man who, driven to despair, can no longer withhold the cry of a heart wrung by every species of contumely and injustice. Were I tamely to submit to all that you have done to wound me, I were a hound unfit to bear the name of nobleman. By the memory of Cardinal Mazarin, your benefactor, nay, more, the spouse of your mother, I claim the right to remonstrate with your majesty, and to ask you to reverse your decision."

"You have summoned to your aid a name which I have ever cherished and honored," replied Louis. "For his sake I grant you fifteen minutes' audience. Be quick, then, and say what you will at once."

"Then, sire, may I ask if you remember the solemn promise you made to the cardinal on his death-bed?"

"I do."

"To the man who, during your minority, transformed a distracted country into a powerful and peaceful empire, you promised friendship and protection for his kindred. But how has this promise been fulfilled? The family of Mazarin have, one and all, been given over to persecution and injustice, and that by a sovereign who—"

"Prince," cried Louis, "you forget that you address your king!"

"My king! when has your conduct ever been to me that

of a king, and therefore of a father? I know that my uncle was once king of the King of France; and by the God above us! he was a gracious monarch, for he left to his successor a prosperous kingdom and an overflowing treasury!"

"Which was not fuller than his own private purse," retorted Louis.

"The cardinal named you his heir, sire—why did you not accept the heritage?"

"Because I would not enrich myself at the expense of his family," replied Louis, haughtily.

"Because you knew very well that what you affected to relinquish, that the world might admire your magnanimity, you intended to take back by piecemeal. And to do this, you have persecuted the unhappy family of your best friend with an ingenuity of malice that is beneath the dignity not only of your station, but of your manhood!"

"Sire," cried Madame de Maintenon, hastening to the king, "I beseech you, drive from your presence this insolent madman."

"Let him speak," said Louis, in a voice of suppressed rage. "I wish to see how far he will carry his presumption."

"Sire, it reaches past your crown, as far as the judgment-seat of God, where it stands as your accuser. Sire, what have we done to merit your aversion? My mother—that you allowed your minions to traduce and drive her into exile? My father—who fought and bled for you, that you offered him public insult, and so wounded his proud spirit, that he died from the effects of your cruelty? My sisters—that you have robbed them of their patrimony! And I!—what have I done that you should hold me up to the mockery of your court, and deny me the paltry boon of a petty commission in your army? I had forgiven your public affronts, so unworthy of a king and a gentleman; and I had offered my hand and sword to your majesty as proofs of my loyalty and superiority to resentment. As a kinsman and your subject you have repulsed me: for the future, know me as an alien and enemy."

The king laughed scornfully. "Puny braggart, what care I for your enmity?"

"Time will show, sire; and, as truly as a lion once owed

his life to a mouse, your majesty will repent of your injustice to me."

"I never repent," returned the king, hastily.

"A day of repentance must come for all who have sinned, and it must dawn for you. Beware lest it come so late that the prayers of yonder sanctimonious marquise avail you nothing."

"By heavens!" cried the king, starting from his seat and clutching his bell, "my patience is exhausted. This arch-traitor shall—"

But Madame de Maintenon was at his side in a moment. "Sire," said she, beseechingly, "in the name of the love and loyalty I bear my sovereign, pardon this misguided youth. Remember that the highest prerogative of power is the exercise of mercy. I, for my part, forgive him freely, and I thank God that I am here to mediate between him and your majesty's just anger."

"You are an angel," cried Louis, clasping her hand in his own, and covering them with kisses. "You are an angel whom God has sent for my happiness in this world and the next." And turning to Eugene with a lofty gesture, he said: "Go, young man. Madame de Maintenon's magnanimity has earned your pardon. Go—that I may forget you and your existence."

"Sire," replied Eugene with emphasis, "I do not intend that you shall forget me. In your pride of power, you have likened yourself to a god, but, great as you are, you shall rue the day on which Eugene of Savoy turned his back upon your kingdom!"

"So you persist in believing yourself to be a man, do you?"

"Yes, sire; such is my conviction. I aim at renown, and, in spite of my enemies, of my poverty, and of my friendless condition, I have strength and energy to attain it. I am no longer a subject of France. I bid farewell to my country forever."

With a slight inclination of his head, and without waiting for permission, he turned his back, and left the room.

Louis gazed upon his receding figure, with an expression

so strange, that Madame de Maintenon in great alarm flew to his side. His eyes were fixed, and great drops of sweat stood out upon his forehead. The marquise wiped them away with her handkerchief, all the while whispering words of tender encouragement.

Louis shivered, and seemed like one awakening from a dream. His eyelids fell, the strained eyeballs moved, and he tried to smile.

"Dearest friend," said he, "I know not what has happened; but, as the Prince of Savoy disappeared from my sight, a voice seemed to speak to my soul, and say that his threats had been prophetic, and that I would dearly rue the day on which the nephew of Mazarin had left me in anger. Can such things be? or am I the sport of—"

"Sire, sovereign, beloved," cried the marquise, kneeling and clasping his knees in her arms, "give no heed to this mocking voice. 'Tis but a temptation of the Evil One. Let us pray together."

"Yes, let us pray. Send for Père la Chaise, and let us away to the chapel."

CHAPTER IV.

THE FAREWELL.

PRINCE EUGENE, meanwhile, was on his way to visit the Duchess of Orleans. She met him with unaffected cordiality, and gave him a hearty welcome.

"Indeed," said she, extending both her hands, "I am rejoiced to see you again. I made you many a visit of inquiry during your illness; and it pained me deeply to hear from your grandmother that no effort of those who love you had so far prevailed upon you to leave your room. I am glad to see that your heart is returning to us, for you know that I am foremost in the rank of your friends."

"I know it, gracious lady," said Eugene, feelingly, "and for that reason I am here."

"And although you are pale, you are looking well. You

have a brave spirit, Eugene, and have met your sorrow like a man."

"Yes. Suffering has made a man of me, and he that has received its chrism with courage has overcome grief. I have come to give your highness a proof of my fortitude. I"—but he paused, and his face grew of a deadly pallor, while a convulsive sigh was upheaved from his bosom.

"Speak, poor boy," said the duchess, compassionately.

"I wanted to ask if your highness has news from the Marchioness de Bonaletta?" resumed he, with an effort.

"Yes," replied the duchess, mournfully.

"Has she written to you?" was the hurried rejoinder.

The duchess shook her head. "She has not, and thereby I judge that she is closely watched. For, if my darling were free to do so, she would long ago have poured her sorrows into my heart. Sometimes I feel her soft arms twining about my neck, and hear her voice, as, in the simplicity of her trust, she said to me one day: 'Pray for me, that I may never love, for if I should, I would forsake every thing for the man of my choice—even yourself, my best friend.'"

"She spoke thus?" cried Eugene, brightening.

"She did; and, not long after, she glided up to me, and, giving me a kiss, said: 'I have found him, I have found him—him whom I shall love throughout all eternity.' 'Gracious Heavens!' I exclaimed, 'it is not Prince Eugene!' whereupon she kissed me again, and said, 'But it *is* he; and I shall love him forever!'"

"Ah! I thought I had been stronger!" murmured Eugene, his eyes filling with tears. "I had armed myself against misfortune, but the memory of her love unmans me."

"Poor Eugene! I have been thoughtlessly cruel: forgive me, for you are the first one to whom I have dared, as yet, to mention her name. Let me not probe your wounds further, but tell you at once what I know. I have heard from Laura through the medium of her father only. The day after her shameful immolation, he communicated his daughter's marriage to the king; and, the evening after, gave a grand ball in honor of the event. He excused her absence, and the secrecy attending her wedding, by saying that her betrothed having

been suddenly summoned away, he had yielded to the solicitation of the lovers, and had consented to have them married without formality."

"Liar and deceiver!" cried Eugene, gnashing his teeth.

"Ay, indeed, liar and deceiver!" echoed the duchess. "And I had to sit there, and hear him congratulated; and listen to the flattering comments of his guests, every one of whom knew that not a word of truth was being spoken on either side. Of course I had no choice whether to absent myself or not; I was ordered to appear, and to confirm the lie. And once or twice, when my face unconsciously expressed my indignation, my husband was at hand to remind me that my lady of the bedchamber had married with my consent and approbation! The day after, Louvois distributed largesses among his household, and bestowed princely sums upon the poor, all in honor of the happy event! For a whole week I could neither eat nor sleep for grief and anger. I can never recover from this blow. If *you* had robbed me of Laura, I could have forgotten my own loss in her gain; but to know that she is chained to the galley of an unhappy marriage almost breaks my heart!"

"She is not chained to that galley," said Eugene; "the oath she took was not to the man whom the world calls her husband—it was pledged to me. But do not fear that I will lay claim to her, duchess. Far be it from me to take one step that could endanger her safety, or unsettle her convictions. If *she* considers the oath binding which she took to one man, supposing him to be another, I will bear my fate with resignation; but if she scorns the lie that calls her *his* wife, she will find means to let me know it; and, let her summons come when it may, I shall be ready to obey it. Let her heart seek mine, and I will take care that renown shall tell her where to find me."

"I feared as much," said the duchess. "I knew that you would not remain at this false, corrupt court. Whither do you travel?"

"I shall follow my brother. Your highness knows that he was banished for having married the girl whom he loved, whose only fault was her obscure birth. He is in the service

of the Emperor of Austria; and, if his imperial majesty will accept of me, I, too, will join the Austrian army."

"And you will live to replace the lost myrtles of your love with the laurels of fame."

"God grant that you may be a true prophetess! And now, your highness, I have one more favor to ask. May I visit the room in which I saw her last?"

"Come. We can take a turn in the park, and enter the pavilion as if by accident. Every thing is just as she left it."

Accompanied by two maids of honor, and followed at a distance by two lackeys, they descended to the gardens. For a time they confined their stroll to the principal walks; but when they had reached the pathway that led to the pavilion, the duchess, turning to her maids of honor, requested them to await her at the intersection of the avenues, and continued her way with the prince. Not a word was spoken on either side until they had ascended the steps leading to the room where, in one short hour, Eugene had seen the birth and death of his ephemeral happiness.

He opened the door; then, standing on the threshold, gazed mournfully around him. Not an object in the room was missing. There, in the embrasure of the window, stood her harp; there, on the table, lay her books and drawings; and there, alas! hung the silver chandelier whose solitary light was to have guided him to his bridal. Every thing was there, as before, and yet nothing remained, for she, who had been the soul of the habitation, had left it forever!

And now, as his wandering gaze rested upon the arm-chair where, kneeling at her feet, he had received the intoxicating confession of her love, he started forward, and, burying his face in its cushions, wept aloud.

The duchess, meanwhile, had remained outside on the *perron*. She would not invade the sanctity of Eugene's grief by her presence, for she felt that, in a moment of such supreme agony, the soul would be alone with its Maker.

Presently she heard the door open and Eugene joined her on the balcony. For a while he looked at her in silence; then his lips began to move, and she caught these words, uttered almost inaudibly:

"I am about to go. Will you grant me one more request?"

"Yes—what is it?"

"You told me that, when she confided to you her love for me, she put her arms around your neck, and kissed you. May I have that kiss from your lips, dear duchess?"

Instead of a reply, Elizabeth embraced the poor youth. "God bless you, Eugene!" said she, fondly. "Go forth into the world to fight the battle of life, and win it."

CHAPTER V.

A PAGE FROM HISTORY.

THE year 1683 was full of significance for Austria. It was a period of victory and defeat, of triumph and humiliation. Austria's wounds were many and dangerous, but her cure was rapid. In the spring of this momentous year she was threatened simultaneously from the East and the West, and she had every reason to fear that she would be similarly assailed from her northern and southern frontiers.

Her troubles originated, as they had often done before, with Hungary—that land of haughty Magyars and enthusiastic patriots. Leopold I. ascended the throne in 1658, and from that time forward every year of his reign had been marked by intestine wars. Sometimes, by force of numbers, the rebellious Hungarians were, for a time, held in subjection; but the fire of patriotism, though smothered, was never extinguished in their hearts. Deep buried under the ashes of many a deluded hope, it lived on, until some friendly breath of encouragement fanned it to activity, and its flames leaped upward, and defied the emperor anew.

Hungary would not submit to be considered as a provincial dependency on Austria. She claimed the constitutional rights guaranteed to her from time immemorial, and recorded in the golden bull of King Andreas. In 1654 the Emperor Ferdinand had promised, both for himself and his successors, that this constitution should be held inviolate; that all foreign troops

should be withdrawn from Hungary, while no Hungarians should be called upon to fight elsewhere than on their native soil; that the crown lands were to be inalienable; all offices bestowed upon native-born Hungarians; Protestants secured in the exercise of their religion; and no war undertaken, nor treaty concluded, with any foreign power, without the consent of the Hungarian Diet.

The Emperor Leopold had promised to ratify the constitution. But, in 1664, Austria declared war against Turkey, and called for money and troops from Hungary. The Magyars, not having been consulted as to the expediency of the war, refused to have any thing to do with it. With the help of France, peace was made with the Porte; and, as soon as his foreign difficulties were settled, Leopold bethought himself of his turbulent Hungarians at home. Austrian troops were marched into Hungary, and the Protestant Magyars, in the enjoyment of high offices, were superseded by Catholics.

The indignation of the Hungarians knew no bounds. They took up arms, and swore never to lay them down until they had freed their native land. The revolution broke out in 1670; and such was the fanaticism of the patriots, that their banners bore the cross as their emblem, and every soldier wore a cross upon his shoulder. By this sign they swore eternal enmity to the detested Austrian lancers; and, however they might be outnumbered, they hoped in God, and rushed by thousands to fill up the ranks whence thousands had fallen. Undaunted by reverses, undismayed by danger, new armies of warriors seemed to spring from the blood of the slain. Nor were the brave Hungarians without sympathy in their struggle for freedom: they had allies both powerful and efficient.

Two of their ablest generals, Zriny and Frangipany, had fallen into the hands of the Austrians, and had perished ignominiously on the scaffold; and another hero, Count Tököly, had fallen at the siege of Arva. But his son survived, a boy who had been rescued from the enemy and conveyed to Transylvania. There he was taught to hate the oppressors of his country; and no sooner was he of an age to serve, than he entered the army. He brought with him succor from Prince Apafy, of Transylvania, and the promise of aid from the Porte.

Fired by the enthusiasm of young Emerich Tököly, the Hungarians renewed the contest with Leopold, and fortune so favored their youthful leader, that he conquered Upper Hungary, marched to Presburg, drove out the Austrians, and called an imperial Diet to consult as to the propriety of deposing the Emperor Leopold from the throne of Hungary.

But Emerich did not tarry at Presburg to attend the Diet. He marched on to Buda to confer with Kara Mustapha, the grand-vizier of Mohammed IV., on the affairs of Hungary. The victories of the young hero had more effect upon Mustapha than any amount of pleading could have done; he was therefore prepared to receive him favorably. Mustapha was ambitious, covetous, and vindictive; he had latterly felt some uneasiness as to the security of his own influence with the Sultan, and he burned to reinstate himself by gaining a victory or two over the Austrians. Moreover, he thought of the booty which would follow each victory; and, in the hope of retrieving his defeat at St. Gotthard's, he concluded a treaty with Count Emerich, which was specially directed against Austria. He promised, in the Sultan's name, arms, money, and men; and, as an earnest of the friendship of his new ally, Emerich was declared King of Hungary.

Under the ruined walls of the fortress of Fulek, which Emerich had taken from the enemy, Mustapha handed him the diploma of royalty which had been drawn up in Constantinople; at the same time bestowing upon him the rank of a Turkish general, and presenting him with a standard and a horsetail.

The newly-appointed king pledged himself, in return, to consider the Sultan as his lord-paramount, and to pay him a yearly tribute of forty thousand florins. He was so elated with his title, and so desirous of humiliating Austria, that, to free himself from the emperor, he consented to become a vassal of the Porte. He signed the treaty, whereupon Kara Mustapha rejected the proposals of alliance which Leopold was making, and began to dream of extending the dominion of the Crescent, and of founding a Moslem empire in the West, whose capital should be Vienna. He dismissed the Austrian ambassadors with cold indifference, and promised the Sultan that the

green banner of the Prophet should carry terror and devastation into the very heart of Austria. This was the danger which threatened the emperor from the East. He had equally powerful enemies in the West. Hungary had sent ambassadors to the court of Louis XIV. These ambassadors had been received in Paris as the accredited envoys of an independent and recognized kingdom; and King Louis, a son of the Catholic Church, had carried his hatred to Austria so far, that he entered into a secret alliance with the unbelieving Porte, and promised assistance to the Protestant rebels of Hungary. This assistance he sent at once in the form of money and arms. French officers were dispatched to Hungary, to join the insurgents and discipline their soldiers. And, while Louis was secretly upholding Turkey and Hungary, he was calling councils at home to establish claims to a portion of the imperial dominions of Austria.

These juridical councils were established at Metz and Brisach, and they had instructions from Louis to reannex to his crown all the domains which had ever been held in fief by any of his predecessors, however remote. They began by summoning the lords of the Trois-Evêchés to acknowledge their vassalage to France; and they went on to cite before their tribunal the Elector Palatine, the King of Spain, and the King of Sweden; all and each of whom were called upon to do homage to the king, or have their possessions sequestrated.

All Europe was aghast at these monstrous pretensions, but nobody ventured to put them down, for Louis had a standing army of one hundred and forty thousand men, while the German empire, still suffering from its losses in the Thirty Years' War, could scarcely put into the field one-third of this number.

So that, without the drawing of a sword, Louis was suffered to possess himself of the important city of Strasburg, and subsequently of all Alsatia. Finally he claimed the cloister of Wasserburg and the province of Germersheim, and pushed his greed and arrogance to such a height, that Germany at last awakened from her lethargy, and found resolution enough to protest against the aggressions of this royal robber. Louis,

in return, proposed to call a universal council at Frankfort, and have his claims investigated. This was agreed to, and each sovereign sent his plenipotentiaries. Meanwhile the King of France kept possession of all the lands in dispute, and stationed his troops at Strasburg, and at every other town in Alsatia.

Here was danger enough for the Emperor Leopold, from the west; while, north and south, his horizon darkened also. The ambitious Victor Amadeus, seeing that Austria was encompassed by enemies, now bethought himself of annexing Lombardy to his dominions, while there was every reason to fear that the bold and enterprising Peter the Great would extend his frontiers to the Baltic Sea, and, with quite as much right as Louis ever had to Strasburg, declare Dantzic to be a part of his Russian territories.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EMPEROR LEOPOLD I.

THE Emperor Leopold had just returned from early mass. Throughout the services, and during the excellent sermon of his celebrated court-preacher Father Abraham, the face of his imperial majesty had worn a troubled aspect; it had not even brightened at the appearance of the Empress Eleonora. But when, in his cabinet, he saw his professor of music, Herr Kircher, Leopold smiled, and his brow cleared at once. The professor was occupied in putting a new string to the emperor's spinet, which the evening before had been broken by his majesty at a concert; and, having his back turned to the door, was not aware of the emperor's entrance until the latter laid his hand upon Kircher's shoulder.

The musician would have risen, but Leopold gently forced him back into his seat, observing that it was unbecoming in a teacher to rise at the entrance of his pupil.

"Of his pupil, your majesty, to whom there remains nothing for a teacher to teach; for in good sooth, if your majesty

felt disposed, you are competent to fill the chair of a musical professorship, or to become the *maestro* of your own imperial chapel."

"I prefer my own position," replied Leopold, laughing, "although there are times when the berth of an emperor is not an easy one. But when as at present I am here with you, then I am truly happy, for your conversation and music awaken in me pleasant thoughts and noble aspirations. Let me enjoy the hour, for indeed, Kircher, I need recreation."

The emperor sighed, and sank slowly into an arm-chair, where, taking off his plumed hat, he threw it wearily down on a tabouret close by.

"Has your majesty any cause for vexation?" asked Kircher.

"Not for vexation, but much for sorrow," returned Leopold. "Let me forget it, and if you have no objection, take up that piece of music on the table, and give me your opinion of it."

Professor Kircher obeyed at once. "Your majesty has been composing, I perceive, and your composition is in strict accordance with the rules of counterpoint."

"I have translated my sorrows into music," returned Leopold. "I could not sleep last night, and there was running through my head the words of a sad and beautiful Latin poem. I rose from my bed, and treading softly so as not to disturb the empress, I came hither, and set the poem to music. It gave me indescribable pleasure, and I wish you would try it, that I may know whether my interpretation has meaning for others as well as for myself."

"My voice will not do it justice, your majesty; let me call Vittorio Carambini to sing it, while I accompany him."

"No," returned Leopold. "Carambini's voice would so beautify my composition, that I would not recognize it. I prefer to hear it from you. So sit you down, dear Kircher, and begin."

Kircher made no further opposition, and commenced the prelude. The emperor leaned back his head, and closed his eyes, as he was accustomed to do, when listening attentively. Reclining among the purple-velvet cushions of his luxurious arm-chair, Leopold presented a handsome picture of imperial