HISTORY OF MODERN TIMES

I

PROGRESS OF ROYALTY IN FRANCE

Principal Divisions of Modern History. — The Middle Ages have been characterized by the predominance of local powers like fiefs and communes, and by the small consideration paid the state. Modern Times until the nineteenth century are characterized by the preponderance of a central power or absolute royalty, and by governmental action substituted for that of individuals and communities. But while the political life of the nations was becoming concentrated in their chiefs, the intellect by an opposite tendency was bursting its bonds and diffusing itself over everything to renew all.

The political revolution will result in the Italian wars and the rivalry through centuries of the houses of France and Austria.

The intellectual movement will cause: a pacific revolution in art, science and letters, or the Renaissance; an economical revolution, or the discovery of the New World and of the route to India, thereby creating a prodigious commerce which will place personal property in the hands of the common people; a religious revolution, or the Reformation of Luther and Calvin, against which fanaticism will excite abominable wars; a philosophic revolution, brought about by Bacon and Descartes and continued in the eighteenth century. The latter will result in a new political and social revolution whose success unhappily will be compromised by blind resistance and criminal violence.

This in its general features is the history of the centuries which compose the period from 1453 to 1848, called Modern

Times. First, then, we have to show how the political institutions of the Middle Ages gave way in the principal states of Europe to a new system of government.

Louis XI (1461–1483). **The League of Public Welfare** (1465). — Charles VII had reconquered France from the English. He had also to reconquer it from the nobles. The work was already begun. More than one rebellious noble had been drowned or beheaded or banished. The dauphin himself, the son of Charles, who afterwards became Louis XI, had entered into every plot against his father and had been forced to demand a refuge with the Duke of Burgundy. He was with him when Charles VII died (1461). When this former leader of discontent ascended the throne, it was thought that the good old days of feudalism were returning. Such expectation was quickly undeceived. At first Louis bungled. He dismissed most of the officers whom his father had appointed, increased the perpetual villein tax from 1,800,000 livres to 3,000,000, and notified the University of Paris of the papal prohibition to interfere in the affairs of the king and the city. By other acts he offended the parliaments of Paris and Toulouse. He incensed the ecclesiastics and the nobility, and rendered the great dukes of Brittany and Burgundy his enemies. Five hundred princes and nobles formed the League of Public Welfare against him.

The danger was great. Louis met it with little heroism but with much cleverness. After a show of military activity he shut himself behind the walls of his capital and labored to dissolve the League by offering pensions and lands to those greedy nobles. By a variety of public and private arrangements he promised them each whatever each one desired. As for the public welfare, no one spoke or thought of that.

Interview of Péronne (1468). — After the confederates were satisfied and all had returned home, he began systematically to retract everything he had granted. To the Duke of Berri he had ceded Normandy, which it was most important to the king to retain. Inciting insurrections in several Burgundian towns, he thus occupied Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and at the same time purchased the neutrality of the Duke of Brittany by the present of 100,000 crowns. Then he entered Normandy and made himself its master. Meanwhile by seasonable gifts or bribes

of money or office he shrewdly attached to himself some of the most influential persons in France.

Charles the Bold tried to revive the whole feudal system and to make an alliance with Edward IV, king of England. As an English army was preparing to disembark in France, Louis went to the court of Charles to negotiate in person and avert the danger. At that moment a rebellion, which he had previously incited and which he had forgotten to countermand, broke out at Liège. Charles, profoundly incensed, imprisoned his guest in the castle of Péronne. Louis obtained his freedom only by hard concessions and by marching with the duke against Liège. That unhappy city, whose inhabitants fought to the cry of "Long live the king," was given over to sack (1468).

The treaty of Péronne was the last mistake of Louis XI. To his one rival, the Duke of Burgundy, it was the beginning of impossible dreams and enterprises. Louis sent his brother, the Duke of Berri, to the other end of France by giving him Guyenne instead of Champagne. He shut up the cardinal La Balue and the bishop of Verdun for ten years in an iron cage because they had betrayed him. The king of England, allied to the Duke of Burgundy, had a mortal enemy in the Earl of Warwick. Louis reconciled the latter to Margaret of Anjou and furnished him the means of overthrowing Edward IV and restoring Henry VI. Now sure of having isolated Charles the Bold, he convoked at Tours an assembly of notables. He caused this assembly to repudiate the treaty of Péronne. Forthwith he seized Saint Quentin, Montdidier, Amiens and other towns. He set on foot 100,000 men and a powerful artillery (1471).

Death of the Duke of Guyenne (1472). — The rage of Charles was raised to frenzy by the death of the Duke of Guyenne or Berri, upon whom rested the hopes of feudalism (1472). Rumors of poison circulated. Charles the Bold openly accused Louis XI of fratricide, and entered the kingdom dealing everywhere fire and blood. At Nesle the entire population was butchered. The inhabitants of Beauvais resisted with a heroism of which the women and especially Jeanne Hachette set the example. Charles was forced to retrace his steps. Moreover ambition called him in another direction. He signed the truce of Senlis.

Mad Enterprises and Death of Charles the Bold (1477). — The chief attention of the Duke of Burgundy was now di-

rected toward Germany, Lorraine and Switzerland. He wished to unite his two duchies and his possessions in the Netherlands by the acquisition of the intermediate countries, Lorraine and Alsace. That done, he aimed at conquering Provence and Switzerland and restoring old Lotharingia under the name of Belgian Gaul. He already held Upper Alsace and the county of Ferrette, which the Austrian Archduke Sigismund had pawned to him for money, and he was soliciting from the Emperor Frederick III the title of king. Louis XI, by his activity and his money caused the shipwreck of these ambitious plans. The archduke suddenly paid the duke the 80,000 florins agreed upon as the ransom of Alsace. Hagenbach, the agent of Charles in that country, was seized and beheaded by the inhabitants of Brisach (1474). Lastly the Swiss, whom he had molested, entered Franche-Comté and gained over the Burgundians the battle of Héricourt. While these events were taking place in the south, Charles himself in the north was meeting failure in his attempt to support the archbishop of Cologne against the Pope and the Emperor. Edward IV, who had landed in France at his invitation, concluded the treaty of Pecquigny with Louis XI, who loaded him with money and sent him back to his island.

That he might be free to finish his affairs with Lorraine and Switzerland, the duke signed with the king of France a new treaty at Soleure. A few days later he entered Nancy and conquered Lorraine. The Swiss remained to be dealt with. He made a foolish attack and was completely routed at Granson (1476). Three months later he was again defeated at Morat. Then Lorraine rose in favor of René de Vaudemont, and Charles went to his death in battle under the walls of Nancy (1477).

Union of the Great Fiefs with the Crown. — While the mightiest feudal house of France was thus crumbling to ruin on the plains of Lorraine, Louis XI was destroying the others. Many lords were guilty either of plots against the king or of monstrous crimes. Jean V of Armagnac had married his sister and slew whoever opposed him. Besieged and captured in Lectoure, he and his wife were put to death. The Duke of Nemours was beheaded in the market-place. The Duke of Alençon was imprisoned and the constable of Saint Pol also executed. Louis confiscated not only their heads, but their property.

As to the immense possessions left by Charles the Bold, he could obtain only a portion. His disloyal policy forced Mary, the heiress of Burgundy, to marry the Archduke Maximilian. From this marriage, unfortunate for France, arose the enormous power of Charles V, which caused the houses of France and Austria long and bloody struggles. Nevertheless Louis succeeded in incorporating Picardy and part of Burgundy into the royal domain. He even compelled the conditional cession of Franche-Comté. During the preceding year he acquired all the inheritance of the house of Anjou. Thus when he died in 1483 he had rescued from feudalism and added to France, Provence, Maine, Anjou, Roussillon and Cerdagne, Burgundy with the Maçonnais, Charolais, and Auxerrois, Franche-Comté, Artois, half of Picardy, Boulogne, Armagnac, Etampes, Saint Pol and Nemours.

Administration of Louis XI. — He rendered tenure of office permanent, established posts, created the parliaments of Grenoble, Bordeaux and Dijon, enlarged opportunity of appeal to the royal tribunal, assured the public tranquillity and the safety of the highways, multiplied fairs and markets, and attracted from Venice, Genoa and Florence artisans who founded at Tours the first manufactures of silk. He encouraged mining industry and entertained the idea of giving France a common system of weights and measures. He delighted in learned men, founded the Universities of Caen and Besançon and favored the introduction of printing. "Everything considered, he was a king." Villon and his councillor Commines are the poet and the prose writer of his reign.

Charles VIII (1483). — Charles VIII succeeded, a child of thirteen, feeble in mind and body. His guardian was his eldest sister, Anne of Beaujeu, in shrewdness and decision the worthy daughter of her father. A violent reaction against the late policy made many victims, but the nobles could not overthrow the work of Louis XI. They demanded and obtained the convocation of the States General, but their expectations were disappointed. The deputies, especially those of the Third Estate, would not make themselves the tools of feudal grudges. They reformed some abuses, but left entire power to Anne of Beaujeu, together with guardianship of the king's person, whom they declared of age. This princess continued her father's policy without his cru-

elty. The Duke of Orleans entered into an alliance with the Duke of Brittany and the Archduke Maximilian to overthrow her. He was defeated and captured in what is called the Mad War. The regent won another triumph as to the succession in Brittany. That great fief was almost as formidable as Burgundy. She married its heiress to Charles VIII, and thus paved the way for its union with France. Unfortunately the king broke away from his sister's guardianship in ambition for distant expeditions. Eager to put his dreams into execution, he signed three deplorable treaties. By that of Etaples he continued to Henry VII the pension which his father had paid to Edward IV. By that of Barcelona, he restored Roussillon and Cerdagne to the king of Aragon. Lastly by that of Senlis, still more disastrous, he enabled Maximilian to gain Artois and Franche-Comté. Thus through the folly of her sovereign France receded on three frontiers. It required nearly two centuries and the astuteness of Richelieu and Louis XIV to regain what Charles VIII threw away in pursuit of a dangerous chimera.

II

PROGRESS OF ROYALTY IN ENGLAND. WAR OF THE ROSES

Houses of Lancaster and York. — England had outstripped Europe in her political institutions. Parliament and the jury system gave the English control of the taxes and trial by their peers, the double guarantee of political and civil liberty. The nobles, united with the commoners, did not allow the kings to abandon themselves to their caprices. Then came a civil war of thirty years' duration, which overrode all these pledges of prosperity and opened to royalty the path of absolutism. This was the War of the Roses, originating in the rivalry of the house of Lancaster, or Red Rose, and the house of York, or White Rose.

The house of Lancaster, seated on the throne by the accession of Henry IV, had given England the glorious Henry V and his successor, the feeble and imbecile Henry VI. Under the latter France was lost, and the national pride of the English was greatly wounded by their reverses. They beheld with indignation the truce of 1444, and were incensed at the marriage of the king with Margaret of Anjou, who as a French princess became the object of their aversion. Richard, Duke of York, thought the moment propitious to assert his claims to the throne. The house of Lancaster descended from the third son of Edward III. The house of York was in the female line descended from the second son, and in the male line from the fourth son. Richard caused the Duke of Suffolk, the king's favorite minister, to be attainted by the House of Commons. The court enabled the accused to escape, but he was overtaken on the high seas by an English vessel, whose crew seized, condemned and beheaded him (1450).

At the same time an Irishman, Jack Cade, stirred up the county of Kent to rebellion. He got together a crowd of 60,000 men, and was master of London for several days. The robberies committed by this mob armed every one

against them, and an amnesty offered by the king brought about their dispersion. Their leader was captured and executed (1459). He was regarded as an agent of the Duke of York.

As the king suffered from a mental trouble, Richard caused himself to be appointed protector (1454). When the monarch on restoration to health tried to take away his powers, he took up arms. He was abetted by the high aristocracy, especially by Warwick, surnamed the king-maker, who was rich enough to feed daily 30,000 persons on his estates. Victorious at Saint Albans (1455), the first battle in that war, and master of the king's person, Richard had Parliament again confer on him the title of protector. After a second battle at Northampton (1460), he was declared legitimate heir to the throne. Margaret protested in the name of her son. Aided by the support of Scotland which she purchased by the cession of Berwick castle, she defeated and slew Richard at Wakefield. The head of the rebel was adorned in derision with a paper crown, and exposed on the walls of York. His youngest son, the Earl of Rutland, aged barely eighteen, was butchered in cold blood. From that time on the massacre of prisoners, the proscription of the vanquished and the confiscation of their goods became the rule with both parties.

Edward IV (1460). — Richard of York was avenged by his eldest son, who had himself proclaimed king in London under the name of Edward IV. The Lancastrians gained the second battle of Saint Albans, but suffered that same year (1461) a sanguinary defeat at Towton, southwest of York. Margaret took refuge in Scotland, and fled thence to France where Louis lent her 2000 soldiers on her promise to restore Calais, but the battle of Hexham destroyed her hopes (1463). She herself was able to regain the continent, but Henry VI, a prisoner for the third time, was confined in the Tower of London, where he remained seven years.

The new king displeased Warwick, who rebelled, defeated him at Nottingham (1470), and forced him to flee to the Netherlands to his brother-in-law, Charles of Burgundy. Parliament, docile to the will of the strongest, reëstablished Henry VI.

This triumph of the Lancastrians was brief. Their excesses roused bitter discontent. Edward was able to reappear with a small army, which Charles the Bold had

helped him get together. Warwick fell at Barnet (1471) and Margaret was no more fortunate at Tewksbury. This last action had decisive results. The Prince of Wales murdered, Henry VI dead, Margaret a prisoner, the partisans of the Red Rose killed or exiled, Edward IV remained in peaceable possession of the throne. The rest of his reign was marked by an expedition to France, terminated by the treaty of Pecquigny, and by the trial of his brother Clarence, whom he put to death. He died in consequence of his debauches in 1483.

Richard III (1483). — His brother Richard of York, Duke of Gloucester, took advantage of the youth of Edward's children to usurp their rights, and smother them in the Tower of London. Horror of his crimes divided his followers. The Duke of Buckingham revolted and invited to England Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, the last scion on the female side of the Lancastrian house. Henry hired 2,000 men in Brittany, landed in Wales and at Bosworth overthrew Richard, who fell fighting bravely (1485).

Henry VII. — He united the two Roses by wedding the heiress of York, the daughter of Edward IV. He founded the Tudor dynasty, which reigned until the accession of the Stuarts, 118 years afterward. Though a few plots were formed by such obscure impostors as Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, he ruled as absolute master over the remnants of the decimated aristocracy. Eighty persons of royal blood had perished. Nearly one-fifth of the lands of the kingdom through confiscation had become part of the domains of the crown. Thus when the War of the Roses ended English royalty found increased resources at its disposal and fewer enemies to fear.

Henry VII rarely assembled Parliament. The money which he would not ask for fear of making himself dependent, he procured by forced loans or benevolences, and by confiscations, which he multiplied on every sort of pretext. The Star Chamber became a servile tribunal to strike down those whom a jury would not have permitted him to reach. The ruin of the aristocracy was completed by the abolition of the rights of maintenance, whereby the nobles had been able to rally round them a whole army of followers, and of substitution, whereby the nobles had been prevented from alienating or dividing their lands. By the treaties which he concluded, by the voyages which he caused to be under-

taken and by his attention to the shipping, he favored commerce and industry, to which the nation devoted itself with zeal. He paved the way for the union of Scotland and England by marrying his daughter Margaret to James IV. He died in 1506. Perfidious, rapacious and cruel, without grandeur of mind or action to redeem his vices, he founded like Louis XI in France and Ferdinand the Catholic in Spain an absolute government, which in England became truly great only under Elizabeth.

III

PROGRESS OF ROYALTY IN SPAIN

Abandonment of the Crusade against the Moors.— The Spanish people had thus far remained almost entirely aloof from European affairs. They had been obliged to wrest their soil foot by foot from the Moors. That task, the first condition of their national existence, was not yet finished. The southern extremity of the peninsula still belonged to the Mussulmans and formed the kingdom of Granada, the last of the nine states into which the caliphate of Cordova had been broken. Thus Spain had lived a life apart throughout the Middle Ages. She had been engrossed in the single undertaking of expelling the Moors, odious both as Mussulmans and as foreigners. This isolation and this perpetual crusade gave her a peculiar character. Nowhere else has religion exercised such ascendency over the mind. It was the sole bond which united the various states of the peninsula.

We have seen however that, forgetting the Moors, the four Christian states had diverted their attention and their forces in different directions: Portugal toward the ocean, Aragon toward Sicily and Italy, Navarre toward France, while Castile was rent by internal discords. Everywhere royalty was in a humiliating position. A spirit of independence reigned in the cities which had their fueros, and among the nobles who defended their privileges of war and brigandage. But the need of uniting for mutual protection against violence made itself felt as early as 1260 in the cities of Aragon, and afterward in those of Castile. The Santa Hermandad or Holy Brotherhood, a confederation of the principal cities, was instituted. This organization became so prosperous that it furnished the king at the siege of Granada 8000 armed men and 6000 beasts of burden.

Marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon with Isabella of Castile (1469).— In Aragon John II poisoned his son Charles, Prince of Viana, who disputed his claim to the kingdom of

Navarre (1461). The Catalans, rising in revolt, gave themselves in succession to the king of Castile, to Pedro of Portugal and to the house of Anjou. They submitted only after eleven years of war.

In Castile Henry IV rendered himself odious and despicable by his predilection for Bertrand de la Cueva, a greedy and cowardly favorite who disgraced him. The nobles went through the form of deposing the king in effigy in the plain of Avila, and in his place proclaimed Don Alphonso, who died in 1467. Then they forced Henry IV to recognize as princess of the Asturias his sister Isabella, to the prejudice of his own daughter (1468). From many suitors to her hand Isabella chose Ferdinand, the eldest son of the king of Aragon, and married him secretly at Valladolid (1469). It was stipulated in the contract that the government of Castile should remain vested exclusively in her. She took possession at the death of her father (1474) and strengthened her authority by defeating the king of Portugal, who undertook to dispute her rights. Three years afterward Ferdinand, her husband, became king of Aragon (1479).

Conquest of Granada (1492). — From that day Spain existed. The firm Isabella and the clever though perfidious Ferdinand toiled vigorously to establish national unity for the benefit of royalty. First of all, they rendered the whole peninsula Christian by destroying the last remnants of Mussulman domination. Granada had more than 200,000 inhabitants. The Moors were promised after the capture of their city (1492) that they should be allowed to remain in the country and enjoy their own laws, property and religion.

The Inquisition. The Power of Royalty. — The population of the peninsula then presented a singular mixture of Mussulmans, Jews and Christians. Isabella and Ferdinand decided to bring dissenters to a common religious faith by persuasion, and above all by terror. With this intent they had already instituted that tribunal of melancholy fame, the Holy Office or Inquisition. It was established in Castile about 1480, and in Aragon four years later. Between January and November, 1481, in Seville alone the inquisitors sent to torture 298 Christian proselytes, accused of Judaizing in secret, and 2000 in the provinces of Cadiz and Seville. In 1492 they expelled the Jews of whom 800,000 departed from Spain. In 1499 they deprived the Moors of the religious liberty which the treaty of Granada had guaranteed. Torquemada, the first grand inquisitor, alone condemned 8800 persons to the flames.

The king controlled the terrible tribunal, for he appointed its chief and the property of the condemned was confiscated to his use. Thus the Inquisition was for Spanish royalty not only a means of ruling the conscience but an instrument of government. Any rebellious or suspicious person could be denounced to the Holy Office. This was a mighty engine. Ferdinand acquired another together with considerable revenues by making himself grand master of the orders of Calatrava, Alcantara and Saint James. He reorganized the Holy Brotherhood, announced himself its protector, that is to say its master, and employed it for the police service of the country at the expense of the barons, whose castles he razed to the ground. In a single year forty-six fortresses were demolished in Galicia. Commissioners were sent into all the provinces, who listened to the complaints of the people and made the nobles tremble.

At the death of Isabella (1504) Ferdinand became regent of Castile. As king of Aragon, he acquired the Two Sicilies. The acquisition of Navarre put him in possession of one of the two gates of the Pyrenees. The other, Roussillon, had been ceded to him by Charles VIII (1493). Already Christopher Columbus had given America to the crown of Castile (1492). This immense heritage reverted on his death in 1516 to his grandson Charles, already master of Austria, the Netherlands and Franche-Comté, whose history we shall trace farther on.

In the absence of the new king, Cardinal Ximenes exercised the power with an energy which forced obedience from the nobles. The communeros, taking alarm too late at the menacing progress of royalty, formed a Holy League, which committed the mistake of demanding the abolition of the pecuniary immunities of the nobility. The aristocracy separated its cause from that of the cities and rallied around the sovereign. The army of the League was routed at Villalar and its leader, Don Juan de Padilla, died on the scaffold (1521). Thus Spanish royalty triumphed over the burgher class as it had triumphed over the nobles, but the nation was about to lose its wealth, its vigor and its honor for the sake of serving the ambition of its masters.

Progress of Royalty in Portugal. — In Portugal the same

revolution was accomplished. John II restored alienated property to the royal domain, withdrew from the lords the right of life and death over their vassals, sent the Duke of Braganza to the scaffold and stabbed the Duke of Viseu with his own hand. He transmitted absolute power to his son Manuel the Fortunate (1495), who during twenty years did not assemble the Cortes. Under the latter prince the Portuguese discovered the road to the Cape of Good Hope and the Indies.

Thus throughout all Western Europe royalty became predominant. This condition indicated the approach of great wars. Because the countries of Central Europe remained divided, they were to become the battlefield of royal ambitions.

IV

GERMANY AND ITALY FROM 1453 TO 1494

Frederick III (1440) **and Maximilian** (1493). — In Germany the house of Austria had just recovered possession of the imperial crown (1438), to which hardly a shadow of authority was attached. Frederick III was not a man to modify this state of affairs, but was content with bare existence. His reign of fifty-three years is marked only by an unfortunate war against Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, and by the marriage of his son Maximilian to Mary of Burgundy, daughter of Charles the Bold and heiress of the Netherlands.

Maximilian endeavored to restore the public peace in Germany. The Diet, which exercised legislative power, prohibited all war between the states. The empire was divided into ten circles, in each of which a military director was charged with maintaining order. This police organization did not succeed, because the German princes had no idea of being checked in their enterprises. They had seized upon the absolute power in their lands, as the kings had done in their kingdoms. The monarchical revolution accomplished in France, England and Spain had also taken place in the empire, but not to the profit of the emperor. In 1502 the seven electors concluded the Electoral Union and decided to convene every year for the purpose of consultation as to the best means of preserving their independence from imperial authority. With another object in view several of the cities had already set up the Hanseatic League. This was the mercantile association of all the cities along the banks of the Rhine and the German coast. It had counting houses in the Netherlands, France, England and even in the heart of Russia, and was prosperous for centuries.

As archduke of Austria and sovereign of the Netherlands, Maximilian acquired by the treaty of Senlis (1493) Artois and Franche-Comté. Then in an erratic manner he